



Shalom 12|17

The Journal of the Reading Jewish Community published by the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks

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Food Pantry

Friendship Circle

Chevra

Community Shabbat

Reading Jewish Film Series

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Jewish Family Service

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& Resource Center

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Leo Camp Lecture

Shabbat B'Yachad

Community sends message of solidarity with Jewish people



State Sen. Judy Schwank speaks at a packed Wyomissing service in memory of the Tree of Life synagogue victims.

The people of Berks County and beyond came out to show support for the Jewish community in the days following the murder of 11 people at Shabbat service at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh. More than 800 people attended an interfaith gathering organized by our Jewish community. The following week, a crowd packed Christ Church in Reading the following week for a candlelight vigil and service commemorating the 80th anniversary of the night of Nazi atrocities known as Kristallnacht but with recent events on everyone's mind.

Photos courtesy of Reading Eagle



Candlelight inside and outside the Christ Church sanctuary brought a message of hope as the community commemorated the 80th anniversary of Kristallnacht.



Thank you to all who participated in Family Volunteer Day



Jewish Community Family Volunteer Day was a great success on Nov. 16. More than 60 people took part and filled 67 backpacks for immigrant children. See Page 4 for details..

The Berks community is a Tree of Life

By Richard Nassau
Development Director

Growing up in a small Jewish community, Etz Chaim — Tree of Life, was an idea, a term, I always associated with my synagogue and my Jewish community. Now I know that our entire Berks County community is a Tree of Life. The compassion and support shown by so many after the horrific anti-Semitic attack on Oct. 27 and the murder of 11 worshippers in Pittsburgh was beyond measure.



Part of Federation's mission is strengthening connections, both within and outside our Jewish community. We do so with your support and understanding. Most people are aware of the work we do within our community. Federation's Community Shabbat is just one example of many joint efforts and programs that are the result of partnerships with our community's synagogues.

Federation's best-known partnership outside of the Jewish community is as a partner agency of United Way of Berks County. United Way and other less well-known partnerships outside of our Jewish community are important. Through these partnerships we are able to expand our JCC programming and our Jewish Family Service social services.

As a partner of United Way, Jewish Family Service helps individuals and families by providing food, transportation, case management and information and referral services. Jewish Family Service is also affiliated with the Greater Berks Food Bank. The Jewish Family Service Food Pantry distributes 7,000 pounds of food each month to more than 150 families. The Pantry's location is also a cooperative effort as we set up each month at the Olivet Boys and Girls Club at Pendorf Park in Reading.

Another partnership is the Reading Jewish Film Series offered in conjunction



A tremendous crowd gathers in Wyomissing for a service in memory of those killed in a Pittsburgh synagogue.

with Fox Theaters. The series, supported by Federation's Rubin Educational Fund, is open to the entire community. It just began its fifth season and now averages 75 people at each film.

The list goes on.....

The Lakin Holocaust Library and Resource Center is in its 25th year. This is a partnership between Federation and Albright College. The Lakin HRC hosts events for college students and offers timely public lectures such as the Richard J. Yashek Memorial Lecture. Federation and the Lakin HRC also facilitate presentations at school assemblies throughout Berks County.

In 2017, Federation led the effort to form the Greater Reading Unity Coalition as a response to hateful incidents in the community. Coalition members — NAACP Reading Branch, Islamic Center of Reading

and Daniel Torres Hispanic Center — are working together to promote diversity and acceptance and to combat hate and ignorance.

Federation partnerships also extend internationally. Through our global networks we are able to respond to humanitarian crises and ongoing needs wherever they may be; we reach natural disasters in the United States, isolated seniors in the Former Soviet Union and Israeli charities helping disadvantaged kids.

Federation's work promotes greater understanding between people. We reach-out and are proud to partner with others inside and outside of the Jewish community, proud to be part of the Berks County community's Tree of Life.

We will always stand with our neighbors to support one another as we engage and enrich lives.

REMINDER: Save with Qualified Charitable Distribution

By Richard Nassau

If you are over the age of 70 ½, donating directly from your traditional IRA to a qualified charity such as the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks can satisfy your RMD (required minimum distribution) and lower your taxes.

The IRS allows qualified charitable distributions (QCD) to be excluded from your adjusted gross income when made directly to public charities, such as

Federation.

You can transfer a portion directly to Federation and withdraw the balance for yourself. If the distribution is payable to you, even if intended for use as a charitable donation, it would need to be included in your adjusted gross income.

The IRS also does not allow you to make distributions to a donor-advised fund, even if it is with a public charity, or

a private foundation.

For more information, call Richard at 610 921 0624 or email RichardN@JFReading.org.

This material is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to provide or be relied upon for, tax, legal or accounting advice. You should always consult your own financial advisor to determine if a qualified charitable distribution is right for you.

Development

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today!**

Women's Philanthropy



Jewish Women: Their Pivotal Role in Society

Letty Cottin Pogrebin

Tuesday April 16, 2019

Author - *Deborah, Golda, and Me: Being Female and Jewish in America*

Advocate – a founding editor *Ms. magazine*

Activist - co-founder National Women's Political Caucus

We need to talk

By William D. Franklin
President

In 1981, musician Theodore Bikel met Rabbi Menachem Schneerson at a Hassidic gathering. Rabbi Schneerson was aware of the fundamental differences in world view and religious ideology between them. Bikel had grown up in a left-wing Socialist-Zionist family and championed secular Yiddish culture. At the other end of the spectrum, the Rebbe objected to rejection of the central tenets of Jewish belief, and he opposed secular nationalism. He repeatedly spoke out about Israel's security and argued that Jewish law prohibits



giving up land, because it would open the door to terrorism.

The Rebbe, who was not a Kohen, knew that Bikel was. Only a Kohen can bestow the Priestly Blessing, and the Rebbe, transcending their differences, asked Bikel to bless him. Bikel obliged. The Rebbe asked further that Bikel be a "worthy emissary of G-d, to give his blessings." Despite their differences, the Rebbe saw in Bikel his unique position with respect to the Jewish people. This became a bridge for dialogue and cooperation.

We will be having programs to discuss our community's relationship with Israel. These will be held with the services of a mediator to ensure that we acknowledge each other's points of view while staying true to our individual ideals and beliefs

and respecting each our right to have healthy disagreements. Though our positions may differ, as with the Rebbe and Bikel, I know that both sides have a real passion and commitment to Israel and the Jewish people. Hopes are that we will be able to create an overall collective purpose, recognizing that we share a mutual responsibility. And in the process, create a stronger Jewish community with a sense of purpose.

Last month in Israel the Jewish Federations of North America General Assembly's theme was – "It's time to talk." As Jews, we have a long history of civil discourse end engagement.

I know that we all share a deep concern for the Jewish people- here in Reading, in Israel and throughout the world. "We need to talk."

Making Jewish camp affordable for every child

Participation in Jewish summer camp can make a big difference in a child's Jewish identity. The cost may seem prohibitive for many families, but the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks offers a pilot financial assistance program. It will work with parents, our synagogues and Jewish summer camps to ensure that every child who wants to attend camp can do so.

Key aspects are:

- JFR will act as the central application entry point and will notify the appropriate

camp and synagogue of the potential applicant and the potential need for financial assistance;

- For families requiring financial assistance, JFR will work with parents for payment registration deposit; JFR will fund as first dollars if necessary; deposits are refundable

Requirements:

- a) JFR member
- b) Synagogue members (at some level) to be eligible for synagogue financial support

c) Students submit short essay to be submitted with financial aid request application on why they want to attend camp

d) Camper submit and/or present short synopses of experiences & value after camp session

Financial support:

JFR Jewish Camp Funding Levels
Family income Range — \$30,000-\$39,999; Parents' Portion —10 percent
Family income Range — \$40,000-\$59,999; Parents' Portion — 25

percent
Family income Range — \$60,000-\$89,999; Parents' Portion — 50 percent
Family income Range — \$90,000-\$125,000; Parents' Portion —75 percent

To learn more:

The information and financial assistance application are available on the JFR web site (readingjewishcommunity.org). Please contact Bill Franklin at 610-921-0624 or williamf@jfreading.org if you have any questions.

How you can join us in helping victims of California wildfires

Jewish communities have been severely impacted by the California wildfires. Lives have been lost, homes burned to the ground, families have been evacuated and Jewish institutions destroyed or damaged.

The Camp Fire that destroyed the town of Paradise has become the most destructive and one of the deadliest in the state's history. The Woolsey and Hill fires in Southern California have impacted the Malibu and Thousand Oaks communities. In particular, the Ilan Ramon Day School was destroyed, and Camp JCA Shalom and the Wilshire Boulevard Camps Hess Kramer and Gindling Hilltop Camp have suffered significant damage.

Jewish Federations have been asked to respond in this time of need. We have mobilized our extended network and are moving forward with the greatest possible

speed to take critically-needed action. Our goal is to ensure the safety, care, and well-being of people and support those who have been affected by these wildfires. Here are some of the ways you can help:

- **jewishlac.org** — The Butte County Camp Fire has been determined to be the most destructive fire in California history. The Jewish Federation of the Sacramento Region, which includes Butte County, has opened a fund to help those affected by the Camp Fire, with 100 percent of funds raised to be allocated to the victims.

- **Text "CampFireRelief" to 91999** — Enloe Medical Center is the site of multiple evacuation centers for the Camp Fire. It is accepting donations for patients and families who have been displaced and to help Enloe caregivers, patients

and families who have lost their homes.

- **hflasf.org** — Hebrew Free Loan has interest-free disaster relief loans to provide a helping hand for those in the Northern California Jewish community rebuilding their lives after the devastation. Help is available for costs related to rebuilding homes, business, or life after a natural disaster. Loan amounts vary, according to the specific need.

- **jewishla.org/LAfires** — The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles has opened an LA Wildfire Relief Fund, with 100 percent of funds raised going to individuals and institutions affected by the fires.

- **Call 323-761-8100** — If you know someone affected or in need of assistance, the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles launched an Emergency Hotline.

- **Jfcs.org** — Jewish Family Service of San Francisco is helping families who are facing the loss of their homes, towns, and loved ones.

- **jewishla.org/program/ezra-network** — Ezra means *help* in Hebrew. This is an initiative of the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles in partnership with Jewish Family Service, Bet Tzedek Legal Services and JVS SoCal. The Ezra Network provides assistance to those facing hardships, offering counseling, legal assistance, and financial assistance.

The Jewish community sends our prayers to those in the path of the fires, the many who have lost their homes and to those suffering from the devastation. Jewish Federations and our extended network will continue to respond and do all we can to help people rebuild their lives.

All Around the Town



Alexa Antanavage



Jason Balthaser



Aaron Gantz



Jacob Stein

Congratulations to the following members of the Jewish community recognized in the *Reading Eagle Business Weekly* "40 Under 40" list of outstanding young professionals:

Alexa Antanavage, partner, Antanavage Farbiarz, PLLC, Hamburg.

Jason Balthaser, chiropractor/owner, Core Health Chiropractic, Wyomissing

Aaron Gantz, executive director

of Downtown Revitalization, Greater Reading Chamber Alliance
Jacob Stein, vice president, real estate, Boscov's Department Store

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

Until next time: Shalom!

Shalom

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Community Calendar



At left, Luba and Avi Karchevsky and Joe and Adelaine Woodward pack backpacks for children under age 10. At right, there were plenty of items for volunteers to pack.

Community gives back on Family Volunteer Day

By Amanda J. Hornberger

More than 60 people helped create an evening of service and giving back for the first Reading Jewish Community Family Volunteer Day on Nov. 16. Thanks to the generous donations from community members and local businesses we were able to exceed our goal of 50 backpacks! Our dedicated group of volunteers filled 67 backpacks!

Backpacks were filled with games, toys, coloring books, puzzles, paper and lots of snacks and drinks. They were delivered before Thanksgiving to ALDEA, The People's Justice Center. The bags will be given to immigrant children as they travel from Berks County to other locations throughout the United States. In fact, the day the backpacks were delivered they were immediately put to use as a family was being released that day! What a way to have an immediate impact!

Family Volunteer Day is a national initiative powered by generationOn and sponsored by The Walt Disney Company.

Thank you to our local sponsors for their generous donations: Boscov's Department Stores, Clover Farms, Keystone Tees, Redner's Warehouse Markets, Sweet Street Desserts, Tom Sturgis Pretzels, Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks and Reform Congregation Oheb Shalom.

Thank you to the many community members who donated materials to fill the bags and to our volunteers of all ages for joining together in service!

Please look for information about our next community day of service on Monday, Jan. 21 for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.



The concept of the Aldea (Village) is a community living together and caring for each other's needs. In that spirit, the mission of Aldea is to provide a holistic approach to meeting the multi-faceted needs of our immigrant community members, including through legal, social, educational, and medical services.

The main office for ALDEA – The People's Justice Center is located at 532 Walnut St., Reading. It provides quality pro bono or discounted legal representation across the state.

ALDEA – The People's Justice Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides low income individuals and families in immigration removal proceedings with access to quality pro bono or discounted fee legal representation. Although Aldea's legal services are open to all low income individuals, Aldea assists several specific categories of individuals:

1. Unaccompanied minors and minor immigrant children. Aldea represents many children who have entered the United States alone (unaccompanied minor) or entered with a parent where only the child has been placed into immigration removal proceedings;
2. Immigrant children who are eligible for relief such as Special Immigrant Juvenile Status and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals;
3. Immigrants detained in immigration detention centers, particularly parents and children detained at the Berks Family Residential (detention) Center;
4. Victims of crimes in the United States, including domestic violence.

For more information on ALDEA please visit <https://aldeapjc.org/>

Reading Jewish Film Series off to strong start

By Vicki Haller Graff

The Reading Jewish Film Series is off to a strong start with recent showings of the Argentinian road drama "The Last Suit" and the cheeky documentary "Shalom Bollywood." The series features something for everyone: films from around the world and a range of genres.

The next film, showing on Jan. 9, is "An Act of Defiance," a historical thriller set during South Africa's apartheid era. It follows a gutsy lawyer as he risks everything to defend Nelson Mandela and his inner circle.

Then, for something lighter, "And Then She Arrived," playing Feb. 6, is an Israeli romantic comedy following the "perfect guy" as he finds true love.

Two very different documentaries end the series: on March 6, see "Scandal in Ivansk," an eye-opening documentary that strives to understand why much of Poland won't accept "collaborator" to describe Polish

people who aided the Nazis and benefited from the genocide of Jews. Dr. John Inledon, professor in the Holocaust Studies Department at Albright College, will lead a post-film discussion.

The final film, "Heading Home: The Tale of Team Israel," plays April 10, and follows the David-and-Goliath story of Israel's national baseball team.

The 2019 Reading Jewish Film Series is co-sponsored by the Rubin Educational Fund of the Jewish Federation of Reading and Fox Theatres. Admission is \$5 per film. All films will be shown on Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m. at FOX EAST, 4350 Perkiomen Ave., Exeter Township. Tickets can be purchased at the theater beginning at 6:30 p.m. the day of the screening, and series tickets can be bought at the JCC. Cash and checks are accepted.

The remaining dates and films for the Reading Jewish Film Series are as follows:



Jan. 9 — "An Act of Defiance"

Feb. 6 — "And Then She Arrived"

March 6 — "Scandal in Ivansk"*

April 10 — "Heading Home: The Tale of Team Israel"

*Special event following screening

Join us for a cool Chanukah celebration Dec. 2

By Amanda J. Hornberger

Kick off Chanukah celebrations at Chanukah on Ice! The ice rink at Body Zone in Spring Township will be open for only our community to skate from 4:30-6:30 pm on Sunday, Dec. 2.

Sponsored by Chabad of Berks

and Jewish Federation of Reading/ Berks Chanukah on Ice is a fun event for the entire Jewish community.

The cost for participation is \$10 per person, which includes ice skate rental and snacks.

Additional kosher food options for

dinner will be available for purchase including warm soup, latkes and other treats.

Chanukah on Ice is for all ages: seniors to youngsters are invited to attend and smooze, enjoy the Jewish music and marvel at the menorah

made out of ice, even if you don't skate!

Body Zone is located at 3103 Papermill Road.

RSVP is requested to office@chabadofberks.org or 610-921-0624 today!

The next generation: ADL and education

By Amanda J. Hornberger

For my third session in the Anti-Defamation League's Glass Leadership Institute our focus was on education. Led by Randi Boyette and Lindsay Shafer, high school peer trainers led our group through bias training used throughout the region.

ADL's education programs are based on celebrating what's different about all of us while finding common ground. There are three areas of focus:

1. **A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE®** Institute creates training programs that are used by schools, universities, law enforcement agencies and community organizations throughout the United

States and abroad.

2. **Holocaust Remembrance and Education through its Echoes and Reflections and Bearing Witness Programs.**

a. **Echoes & Reflections** is the premier source for Holocaust educational materials and dynamic content, empowering teachers and students with the insight needed to question the past and foresight to impact the future.

b. **Bearing Witness** is an unique professional development opportunity for Catholic school educators, designed to provide participants with the training and resources necessary to

teach their students about the historical relationship between Jewish and Catholic communities and the impact of that relationship on Catholic teaching, catechesis and liturgy.

3. **Words to Action: Empowering Students to Address Anti-Semitism** is an interactive education program for middle, high school and college students designed to empower and equip them with constructive and effective responses to combat anti-Semitism and anti-Israel bias.

Another major program for the ADL Education department is **No Place for Hate**. This initiative is a school climate improvement framework that

provides PreK-12 schools with an organizing framework for combating bias, bullying and hatred, leading to long-term solutions for creating and maintaining a positive climate. This is a self-directed program helping all of the stakeholders take the lead on improving and maintaining school climate so all students can thrive.

If you or your school is interested in any of these ADL educational program please reach out to me at 610-921-0624 or amandah@jfreeding.org so I can connect you to Randi and her team. All of these amazing educational resources are offered free of charge thanks to the support of ADL donors.

Tot Shabbat, PJ Library to gather at Highlands

By Amanda J. Hornberger

Kids through grade 2 are invited to join Rabbi Michelson and PJ Library of Reading for Tot Shabbat at the Highlands on Saturday, Dec. 15, at 10 am.

Tot Shabbat is a fun way for children to learn about Shabbat and

includes music and stories. A pint-sized Oneg will follow.

Highlands residents as well as grandparents and great-grandparents who reside elsewhere are invited to join the fun! All children are welcome!

This event is free and no RSVP

is required.

The Highlands at Wyomissing is located at 2000 Cambridge Avenue in Wyomissing.

Please call the Federation office at 610-921-0624 or email amandah@jfreeding.org with any questions.

Obituary

Sanford Gary "Sy"

Youngerman, 86, of Reading. Sy graduated from Mount Penn High School and Penn State College. He worked for IBM as a system engineer and later as a data processing manager for Construction Fasteners. He also worked part time at various businesses in the downtown Reading area.

Sy was a member of the Reading Civic Opera Society (now Reading Civic Theater). He played the role of Tevye in its 1972 production of "Fiddler on the Roof" and received rave reviews. He reprised the role for RCT 17 years later, and played Tevye in a version of "Fiddler" at the JCC when it was located in Reading.

He is survived by his sons; Hank of Reading; Mitch and his wife, Jamie, of Pittsburgh; Brian and his wife, Denise, of Mount Joy, his grandsons Ben and Ryan, and his companion, Ethel Engel.

Nancee M. (Eberenz)

Goodman, 77, of Lower Alsace Township. Nancee worked at Martin's Dress Shop, Towne Shoes and Billard Barbell. She loved to cook, travel and helped raise money for local animal shelters. She is survived by her daughter Ann R. Goodman.

Charles Lock, 98, of Wyomissing and formerly of Harrisburg. Charles was a graduate of Penn State University and worked as a physicist for 20 years, including testing rockets in New Mexico during the war. When he returned to Harrisburg, he was a partner with his brother and sister in Chelsea Auto Parts for years. He is survived by his daughters; Lisa Levine and her husband, Alan, of Shillington; Shelley Kardon and her husband, Sean, of Philadelphia; and his son Evan Lock and his wife, Elisa, of Bryn Mawr. Other survivors include his five grandchildren and his sister Barbara Lock.

Introducing the Get Together program sponsored by PJ Library!



Make Jewish moments into memories!

- Applications **November 26, 2018 to April 30, 2019.**
- Families will receive **up to \$100 reimbursement** if they get together with at least two or more other families.
- Get Togethers can be anything families want to do with **two or more other families.**
 - Jewish holidays or Shabbat/Havdalah;
 - Family volunteering or service projects
 - Something else they think of!
- **Parent-only** and **PJ Our Way** kid Get Togethers are also allowed.
- Families must be a **current PJ Library or PJOW subscriber family** to be eligible to sign up to host.
- For more information visit <https://pjlibrary.org/gettogether2018>

Questions? Please email GetTogether@pjlibrary.org or Amanda Hornberger, AmandaH@jfreeding.org your local PJ Library Coordinator

Many great benefits available to veterans

By Sari Inledon, M. Ed.

This is being written as our nation celebrates the contributions and sacrifices our veterans have made for all of us. Our seniors viewed "GI Jews," an interesting documentary about the unique experience of 550,000 Jewish American men and women who served during World War II. Many described the anti-Semitism they endured within the military while fighting the enemy. We own this film and can lend it to anyone



interested.

At Jewish Family Service we feel that it is important to make sure all veterans and their families are aware of the great range of benefits and programs designed to help veterans and caregivers, especially as they age and need assistance.

One invaluable program is the Aid and Attendance Benefit. This program is for war-era veterans and their surviving spouses who require the regular attendance of another person to assist in at least two of the daily activities of living, such as eating, bathing, dressing, and toileting. A physician must state the need for this service.

This program can pay \$1,176 per month

for a surviving spouse, \$1,830 per month for a single veteran per month and \$2,169 per month for a married veteran. There is a cap on allowable assets of about \$80,000.

Another benefit that isn't widely known is a Veteran's Pension. The following are eligible: Veterans 65 years or older who are permanently disabled; those receiving care in a nursing home; those receiving Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income.

For more information about VA Health Benefits you can call 1-877-222-8387 – Monday- Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. or visit www.va.gov/health and www.va.gov/healthbenefits.

Jewish Family Service



Chanukah Klezmer Concert

Join Friendship Circle Thursday, Dec. 6, at 2 p.m. for a Chanukah Klezmer Concert. The Bob Cisik Duo will be back by popular demand! Enjoy a varied program of Klezmer and Chanukah music and more with Philadelphia musicians Bob Cisik and Gene Gelfenson. Bob is a Klezmer clarinetist with extensive classical training. Gene was born and raised in Ukraine into a family of musicians, later moving to the U.S. and soloing with the world-renowned Philadelphia Orchestra. This duo will have you dancing in the aisles and singing along!

Program sponsored by the Jacob Krumholz Fund.

Great events from Jewish Family Service



Phyllis Dessel presented an Informative program on Medicare on Wed. Nov. 7.



Recent interesting Friendship Circle programs included "Midterm Elections 101," left, with Victoria Williams, PhD, Associate Professor of Political Science at Aventura University, and a chance to chat with Rabbi Yosef Lipsker of Chabad of Berks. Friendship Circle meets at the Jewish Cultural Center Thursdays at 1 for lunch followed by an interesting, entertaining program. See the Centerpiece for details.

- Food Pantry
- Friendship Circle
- Counseling Services
- Transportation
- Financial Assistance
- Hospital and Home Visitations
- Living with Loss
- Information and Referral
- Case Management
- Holiday Programs

Berks interfaith pilgrims' remarkable experience in Israel

By Tom Flynn
President, Alvernia University

Originally published in the Reading Eagle and reprinted with the author's permission, with some details added by Bill Franklin.

Have you heard the one about the rabbi, the priest and the Muslim leader who flew to the Holy Land?

Well this is no joke. A local multifaith group recently visited Israel, where we toured sites dating back thousands of years while immersed in the realities of life in contemporary Israel. Superbly hosted by Jewish Federation of Reading President Bill Franklin, ours was an interfaith mission or pilgrimage, with Catholic, Muslim, Protestant and Jewish participants. It was not unusual to visit a synagogue, mosque and church in close proximity to one another.

A pilgrimage differs from a tourist trip, as I learned from Alvernia's Franciscan Sisters when their long-ago inauguration gift sent Helen and me for a week in St. Francis' hometown of Assisi. Reflection and prayer are interspersed with sightseeing; lectures cover religious beliefs and practices as well as history. And one has the opportunity to experience the spirituality of place. Overlooking the Sea of Galilee, I listened as never before to the Beatitudes from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount.

A highlight was our communal prayer gatherings: a Shabbat ritual at the Western Wall, led by Rabbi Brian Michelson, followed by Shabbat supper in an Orthodox home; a reflection on Muslim devotions by Elsayed Elmarzouky in the White Mosque at Nazareth; an evening Mass later that day, led by Monsignor Tom Orsulak. We heard the Scriptures read in Hebrew, learned the parallels between Muslim prayer beads and the Catholic rosary and experienced the similar blessing of bread and wine in the Eucharistic and Shabbat services. It seemed only natural that what tradition has identified as King David's tomb is located in the floor below the room believed to be the location of the Last Supper and Pentecost.

Our experience was, of course, not typical of daily life in Israel, where religious, cultural and national identities are dizzying in their complexity and contentious in their definition. While a small minority in the West Bank, where most residents are Arab Muslims, Jews constitute more than two-thirds of Israel's population, joined by Arab Israelis, most of them Muslim, with small numbers of Arab Christians, non-Arab Christians and Druze.

Most Jews and Arabs live (and attend schools) segregated from one another, and intercultural knowledge is minimal, according to our guest lecturers. Jews from the Reform and Conservative traditions are themselves minorities within a country embedded in the multidimensional Orthodox tradition, though paradoxically 42 percent identify as secular. Christians are a tiny minority, though it seems natural that their holiest site in Jerusalem, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, is delicately managed by negotiations among six denominations, each with its own altar.

Viewing the "security" or "separation" wall between Jerusalem and the West Bank (identified according to the commentator's perspective) or standing on the Golan Heights overlooking Syria and Lebanon, we understood why our guest commentators are not optimistic that respectful dialogue will become the norm. But they expressed hope, if not about peace, then at least for the absence of war.

And there are inspirational stories. We met a courageous teenager, the last of 1,500 Syrian refugees who temporarily escaped the civil war, aided by the Israeli military, to receive sophisticated medical treatment at Ziv Hospital in Sfat "where Jewish and Arab medical staff work side by side." Although he had lost 8" of bone in his leg and extensive damage to his patella, he is expected to be able to walk when he is finally discharged. His mother who has stayed in his room since he was admitted told us through an interpreter "I was taught that Israel is our enemy; I am grateful for the treatment given my son."

"We visited schools where diverse students study and provide community service together in equally diverse neighborhoods." At Ono Academic College we learned of the challenges of multi-culturalism on Israeli college campuses. We met three students: a 1st generation Ethiopian young man, whose mother is a cleaning woman and 2 Israeli Arab young women, both are studying to be accountants.

"A charismatic graffiti artist walked us though the neighborhood where a large artists' community creatively expresses disparate political perspectives. And on our last day, after visiting the hall where the State of Israel was announced in 1948, a transplanted New Yorker led us through textual analysis of the Israeli Declaration of Independence. While the Holy Land has existed for centuries, Israel is celebrating only its 70th birthday.

"Our pilgrimage was an inspirational reminder that, at a time when divisive voices too often dominate, each of us has the opportunity to embark on a journey of exploration and mutual understanding in search of shared values. That we returned to the horrors of Pittsburgh made us even more determined to battle hatred and promote dialogue through Common Heart and other local interfaith efforts.

A note from Bill Franklin on the trip: "At our last dinner together in Israel, I cited the words of Chief Tecumseh, who said, "A single twig breaks, but the bundle of twigs is strong." This interfaith strength was exhibited at the community service when our communities mourned together at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom and Keshar Zion Synagogue for the Pittsburgh victims."



Elsayed Elmarzouky, Rabbi Brian Michelson and the Rev. Thomas Orsulak at Capernaum



Interfaith Mission participants at Capernaum.



Dr. Tom Flynn, Helen Flynn, Susan Weiser, Carol Cohn and Cathy Elmarzouky at Jerusalem's Old City.

Two major events recalled on Nov. 11

By Rabbi Barry Dov Lerner

Reading Jewish Community High School

The teens of JCHS and the seniors in Better Together spent the morning of Nov. 11 recalling and celebrating two major events, each with a lighted “yahrzeit” candle. Upon asking them, it was clear that we needed to relearn the history of both of these famous American and Jewish events.

First we remembered the 80th anniversary of what the world has come to know as “Kristallnacht,” “the Night of Broken Glass.” Rabbi Dov spoke and then distributed a brief historical note:

We recalled that from Nov. 9 to Nov. 10, 1938, the Nazis in Germany torched synagogues, vandalized Jewish homes, schools and businesses and killed close to 100 Jews. In the aftermath of Kristallnacht, some 30,000 Jewish men were arrested and sent to concentration camps.

History recorded that Herschel Grynszpan, a 17-year-old ethnically Polish Jew who had been living in France for several years, shot a German diplomat in Paris in retaliation for the Nazi government’s persecution of Jews. Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi minister for public enlightenment and propaganda, immediately seized on the assassination to rile Hitler’s supporters into an anti-Semitic frenzy that resulted in Kristallnacht.

It was important to remind our JCHS teens that German Jews had been subjected to repressive policies since 1933, when Nazi Party leader Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) became chancellor of Germany. Prior to Kristallnacht, Nazi policies had been less violent, but after Kristallnacht Hitler and the Nazis implemented their so-called “Final Solution” to what they referred to as the “Jewish problem.”

This year we celebrate the 100th



Students and seniors gather Nov. 11 for Better Together.

anniversary of the end of World War I, what had been known as the “war to end all wars.” Thereafter, teens and seniors turned to light a second candle to memorialize Nov. 11, formerly known as Armistice Day but today observed as Veterans Day. It was a somber moment, and one that we hope will continue as a bridge in their hearts and minds to the future of American and Jewish history.

Curriculum note

The November *Shalom* included an edited portion of a paper written by college student Scott Goldberg, “On Music and Jewish Humor.” The paper came to Rabbi Dov’s attention when he answered an email from Scott and called him in Hawaii, where Scott is a graduate student. They discussed one of the current classes being taught in JCHS: “Jewish Humor and What It Teaches About Jewish History.” Using Jewish jokes as an entry portal, once engaged

we can discern the history necessary to explain why the joke is “funny” and when it no longer would be understood as humor. A full version of the paper is available by contacting Bill Franklin at the Federation office, 610-921-0624 or williamf@jreading.org.

Scheduling note

Classes for JCHS begin at 9:30 and conclude at noon.

Request for community assistance

Rabbi Dov often receives announcements for subsidies, internships, opportunities for teens as well as college and graduate students. We want to make all of these announcements available as early and completely as possible to our Greater Reading Jewish community. Please send your email address to the JCC/Federation office, even if your children are not or were not part of the Jewish Community High School.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG ADULTS IN GREATER READING JEWISH COMMUNITY

Aspiring writers, editors, and journalists interested in Jews, Judaism, modern Israel, and American democracy are invited to apply for the Krauthammer Fellowship.

Requirements: Open to anyone under age 27 and with a Bachelor of Arts degree as of May 2019.

Details: The fellowship begins in the summer of 2019. Candidates should submit (a) a résumé, (b) a detailed cover letter explaining why they are interested in the fellowship, (c) a short summary of three ideas for essays that they would like to pursue as a fellow, and (d) two writing samples.

Applications should be addressed to fellowship@mosaicmagazine.com and due Dec. 31. Winners will be selected by Feb. 15

Diller Teen Tikkun Olam Awards

The Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco has issued a national call for nominations for a prestigious national award that honors Jewish teens who are making the world a better place. The award grants up to 15 Jewish teens with \$36,000 each in recognition of their leadership in meaningful community service projects and social change initiatives.

Anyone interested in nominating a teen or any teen interested in applying can visit www.dillerteenawards.org to begin the nomination/application process. The deadline for nominations is Dec. 18, and the deadline for applications is Jan. 8. Jewish teens who are 13 to 19 years old on Jan. 8 are eligible.

For more information, email dillerteenawards@sfjcf.org or call 415-512-6432.

Join us next time, December 15th
at 10:00 am for an Intergenerational
Tot Shabbat at The Highlands!

Tot Shabbat

Members and non-members are invited. No registration is required. Tot Shabbat services are held Saturday mornings at 10:00 am at Reform Congregation Oheb Shalom, 555 Warwick Drive, Wyomissing unless noted. Please call the Temple office with any questions, 610.375.6034.

A musical, story-filled, interactive hour for children through grade 2. Bring your family & friends to celebrate with Rabbi Mielelson & stay for a pint-sized one of juice, challah, fruit, & child-friendly treats!

FUTURE TOT SHABBAT DATES:
January 12, February 23, March 23*
April 13, May 18, & June 8
Intergenerational Tot Shabbat at The Highlands

Jewish Education

Camp Scholarships

Israel Trips

Jewish Community

High School

Lakin Preschool

Better Together

Responding to darkness with Chanukah's light

By Rabbi Yosef Lipsker
Chabad Center of Berks County

There's a powerful story we read in the Torah about Aaron (the brother of Moses) when his two sons passed away. The Torah quotes the words of Aaron — va-yih-dom Aaron, "And Aaron was silent." He was stunned. He had no words to express his grief. We all felt the same way as we heard about the incomprehensible tragedy that took place in Pittsburgh, in the Tree of life synagogue. We can also use these words of Aaron to express our gratitude to the broader community which has supported us in a way I could not have imagined.



There are no words to really express the wonderment, the overwhelming feeling, as so many people gathered together in our community and felt our pain.

The other day I was dropping something off at UPS when a gentleman pulled his car up, stopped me and asked if it is OK if he

spoke to me. I said "sure". He grabbed my hand and said to me "I am so sorry for the terrible tragedies that have been going on in your world".

I thanked him from the depths of my heart and asked him if it was OK if I added something to what he said. He said "please"! I said to him "it's not my world, it's our world"!

This is just one of many such stories that have taken place since this terrible tragedy.

As we get ready to celebrate the joyous and light-filled holiday of Chanukah it is important to take a page out of the Chanukah story. It was a time of extreme darkness when the Hellenistic government did not allow our people to observe anything spiritual. A small Jewish army, the Maccabees, were able to overcome the large, well prepared Greek army. As a thanks to G-d for this great miracle, the Jews relit the menorah in the Holy Temple. It miraculously remained lit for eight days while using an amount of oil only sufficient for a day.

The holiday of Chanukah was then instituted, along with the beautiful traditions,

and the mitzvah of lighting the menorah.

The first night we light one candle, and each of the subsequent nights we light an additional light, thereby increasing the lights all eight nights.

The battle continues till this very day, and we are reminded that when we see darkness our response to it is to bring light. Chanukah is symbolic of what we have to integrate in our day-to-day life.

As we approach the holiday of Chanukah it's a good time for us to think about bringing more physical and spiritual light to the world that we live in. How wonderful it would be if every single person made sure to observe Chanukah more than they have done in the past. Let's not only celebrate with our own families, but share the light with others.

I hope you will be able to join in our community celebrations in solidarity with Jews everywhere, show our Jewish pride, and show ourselves and others that nothing will stop us from continuing to bring goodness and kindness to those around us, moving towards a better world.

Chana And I wish you and yours a joyous Chanukah with lots of light.

Understanding the unusual quality of Chanukah

By Rabbi Brian Michelson
Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom

Chanukah is a strange holiday. It is the only holiday that celebrates a military victory. It is particularly notable because our tradition has so little to say about it. Chanukah is not mentioned in the Hebrew Bible, and it is barely mentioned in the Talmud. The rabbis had more to say about how to light the Menorah than why we celebrate this holiday.



The truth is the sages were ambivalent about Chanukah. They were not fans of the Maccabees because of that group's militancy. The rabbis were interested in glorifying God, not recalling the military achievements of a particular group. In the end, it was the Maccabees' descendants, the Hasmonean Dynasty, who invited the Roman Empire into Jerusalem. This led

to the destruction of the Temple and the exile of the Jewish people from their land. In addition, the Maccabees were the only group in Jewish history who used force to convert people, after they conquered Idumea, a neighboring country. Despite the way the story is told today, the Maccabees made a mess of things, which is why the sages were apathetic towards Chanukah and tried to downplay it.

The Haftarah portion they assigned to the Shabbat during Chanukah very clearly reveals their feelings about this holiday. The Haftarah, Zachariah 2:14-4:7, offers a vision of the Menorah, the central symbol of this holiday, but ends with a verse that continues to reverberate through history: "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, said the Lord of hosts." This verse led the rabbis to choose this Haftarah to be read during Chanukah. It was a not so subtle criticism of the Maccabees, a way of telling us that there are better ways of solving our

differences than brute force and violence.

Through much of Jewish history, all we had was the spirit of Judaism to sustain us. As strangers, a minority, we could not defend ourselves against hostile forces. We had to depend on our spiritual legacy to keep us alive. After the Shoah, however, things changed. Much of the Jewish world came to understand that spiritual forces are not enough to defend and protect our people. The founding of the state of Israel resulted from the realization that there are times when we must take up arms — just like the Maccabees. However, the story of the Maccabees is a cautionary tale. Arms were not enough: we need our faith, our spirit, and our identity, as well.

The words of Zachariah are among the most important in the Bible today, "Not by might nor by power, but by My spirit said the Lord of host." In an often-hostile world, we face a great challenge: to defend ourselves without becoming aggressors who have forgotten our spiritual legacy.

LOCAL CONGREGATIONS AND SERVICE TIMES

REFORM CONGREGATION OHEB SHOLOM (610) 375-6034
Friday, Dec. 7: Hanukkah Shabbat service, 6 p.m.
Fridays, Dec. 14 and 21: Shabbat service, 7:45 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 15: Intergenerational Tot Shabbat at the Highlands, 10 a.m.
Friday, Dec. 28: Shabbat service, 6 p.m.

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.; Thursdays, 7:30 p.m.

CONGREGATION SHOMREI HABRITH

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December Kislev-Tevet



Shabbat Candle Lightings



Torah Portions

December 7
Chanukah
4:17 p.m.

December 14
4:18 p.m.

December 21
4:21 p.m.

December 28
4:25 p.m.

December 1/Kislev 23
Vayeshev (Genesis 37:1-40:23)

December 8/Kislev 30
Chanukah Rosh Chodesh
Miketz (Genesis 41:1-44:17)

December 15/Tevet 7
Vayigash (Genesis 44:18-47:27)

December 22/Tevet 14
Vayechi (Genesis 47:28-50:26)

December 29/Tevet 21
Shemot (Isaiah 28:13-29:22-23)

Israel Book Group: 'Defending Identity' by Natan Sharansky

By Moisey Schneider & Andi Franklin

After Natan Sharansky finished his book "The Case for Democracy," he realized that the power of the idea of freedom was great but was insufficient to counter the great challenges that free peoples face. In his own struggles to be free, he recognized the power of identity as an essential ally to overcome the forces of tyranny and terror. Therefore, the main message of his next book, "Defending Identity," is that the power of identities is critical to every individual and to every democratic nation in defense of its cherished freedoms.

Sharansky states that in today's culture identity is under attack. Modern society is striving for a pure democracy freed from attachments because identities are seen to have been the primary cause of conflict and war. Sharansky said: "I have been extremely lucky. I was deprived of both identity and freedom, and then I discovered them simultaneously. I was a human rights dissident and a Jewish activist, so that each became a source of strength for the other. Initially, the only thing Jewish in my life was anti-Semitism. Then came a dramatic change with the Six Day War. Prior to Israel's great victory, to be called a Jew in Russia was an insult. After 1967, the jokes changed. Even completely assimilated Jews found a new meaning for themselves.

He said, "It was then that I started learning about my Jewish identity and realized that I was part of a unique history and a people that stretched back more than 3,000 years."

After Sharansky was arrested, taken to prison and accused of high treason, he was told that he would never get out alive. His survival was the result of the connection to his people and a history that burned inside him. He was no longer an isolated Soviet citizen but a part of a community that had left great empires in its wake. "I stood in solidarity with Soviet Jews, with Jews in Israel and Jews throughout the world." This gave me strength under the harsh conditions of a totalitarian regime and even under murderous interrogation in the Gulag. For me, the struggle of



Bill and Andi Franklin with Natan Sharansky, center.

identity for freedom will forever be one. Identity gave me the strength to become free. My years in the Gulag convinced me of this powerful alliance." Though their identities were different, those who had strong identities found that they could trust and rely on each other and withstand the terror tactics inflicted upon them.

The Soviet goal was to erase all identities, religious groups and nationalities. When Sharansky spoke at universities in the United States, he found a new form of attack on identities. University faculty and students championed multiculturalism, which denies special status to any one culture, including a nation's home culture. It nurtures a diversity that points to a global culture that ultimately deprives any given culture of its strength, value, and beauty.

Multiculturalism is firmly entrenched in Europe where each country's peoples are called upon to

weaken their own national uniqueness. In a meeting organized by Jewish-Parisian intellectuals, Sharansky was told, "You Israelis are part of us, part of the European culture and we need you for the real battle ... not between Islam and the West, but between civilized Europe and the United States."

Sharansky also shows that the idea of Jewish identity does not undermine loyal citizenship. When American Jews supported the powerful movement to free Soviet Jews, they were expressing both of their identities simultaneously. As Americans they were championing the rights that democratic societies have — freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly and freedom of immigration. As Jews they were standing in solidarity with their people. American Jews did not shy away from the struggle. Because they were Jews fighting for the rights of Soviet Jews, they gained a new sense of themselves both as Jews and as Americans and were comfortable fighting for the values of both of those identities. It was a great moment.

Since Sharansky best understands the importance of identity, he wonders why the world questions the importance of Israel remaining a Jewish state. Its survival depends on it, and it is crucial for the survival of the Jewish people, crucial for the free world, and it is just. Israel should remain a Jewish state. The readiness of the Jewish state to thin its Jewish identity in order to be accepted by the global community will not bring peace for itself, for the region or for the world. Whereas if Israel remains a strong Jewish and democratic state, it will stand as a model for all Middle Eastern states whose people are struggling to be free and maintain their identity. It will also be a home for Jews all over the world and protect them. Sharansky notes that when Jews abandon identity in the pursuit of universal freedom, they end up with neither. When they embrace identity in the name of freedom, they end up securing both.

The Israel book group will meet again on Feb. 13 to discuss Mosab Hassan Yousef, and Ron Brackin's "Son of Hamas."

ANNUAL COMMUNITY-WIDE

Chanukah at the Mall

MONDAY, DECEMBER 3RD, 2018 @6.00PM

BERKSHIRE MALL (BOSCOV'S ENTRANCE)

SPECIAL CHANUKAH PRESENTATION BY THE CHILDREN OF THE LAKIN PRESCHOOL OF RCOS

MUSICAL ENCORE BY SINGER/MUSICIAN JOSH ALPERT & HIS BAND

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Chabad and The Jewish Federation invite the community to

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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2018 · 4.30-6.30 PM

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Lighting of a carved ice menorah

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Chanukah crafts

Food for sale

\$10 PER PERSON /\$45 max per family

RSVP to office@chabadofberks.org or Brenda @ 610-921-0624

Co-sponsored by Chabad Lubavitch of Berks County & The Jewish Federation of Reading

Jewish Agency for Israel helping Pittsburgh recover

Our connections to one another are always important, and in times of tragedy, they are crucial. In the wake of the attack that took the lives of 11 Jews at the Tree of Life synagogue, The Jewish Agency for Israel played a critical role, together with Jews from around the world, in supporting the Pittsburgh Jewish community.

Immediately following the attack, The Jewish Agency partnered with the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh to dispatch a mission of five post-trauma and grief specialists from the Israel Trauma Coalition. They landed in Pittsburgh within 48 hours of the attack for a five-day trip. The specialists advised local leaders on best practices to help their constituents recover from trauma and provided the leaders with tools to manage their own anxiety. The group also began to develop

a long-term healing plan for the community that will guide The Jewish Agency on ways to provide future assistance.

Expressions of support for the Pittsburgh Jewish community poured in from around the world—notably from Pittsburgh’s partnership region of Karmiel-Misgav in northern Israel. These communities have shared deep communal and personal connections through the Jewish Agency for Israel’s Partnership2Gether platform for more than 20 years. A memorial service in Karmiel’s Culture Hall drew 200-300 people. At the ceremony, the outgoing Mayor of Karmiel, Adi Eldar, said that his final act as mayor had been to sign an order for a permanent memorial to be erected in Karmiel in memory of the victims at Tree of Life.

Jewish Agency Chairman of the



Jewish Agency for Israel Isaac Herzog with Gov. Tom Wolf outside the Tree of Life synagogue.

Executive, Isaac Herzog visited Pittsburgh for Shabbat to show solidarity as a representative of Jews from around the world. Herzog visited families of victims,

addressed the community and joined a Shabbat service attended by members of Tree of Life and other Pittsburgh synagogues.

Local Romeos meet for lunch

By Art Fischman

A group of men calling themselves Romeos has inaugurated a monthly social luncheon meeting.

Not designed for discussions of their romantic endeavors or conquests, this Romeo stands for Retired Old Men Eating Out.

Conceived by the Jewish Federation and Bob Caster, there

is an initial roster of 10 men who meet on the first Tuesday of each month at the Wyomissing Restaurant. Members have stated that it is a great opportunity to socialize, interchange opinions and even keep the cognitive facilities active.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, Dec. 4 at noon. New members are welcome.

WHAT TIME IS IT?
YOGA TIME!

Visit www.serenityyoga.org for schedule and pricing information

Come to Serenity Yoga at Flying Hills Fitness. Mention this ad to receive your first class FREE!



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Join us for a complimentary lunch and learn about our affordable senior living community!

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(1714 State Hill Rd., Wyomissing)

Tuesday, Dec. 11 • 11:30 am

RSVP by 12/7 to Heather or Jill at 610-616-5112.

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ONEG SPEAKER SERIES

Building Alliances Between Jews and Communities of Color

Presented by Roy Waterman



FRIDAY, JAN. 18TH

Roy Waterman works for the Jewish Council for Public Affairs. In his role as the Criminal Justice Project Manager, he focuses on educating the Jewish community on criminal justice reform. He fosters relationships between Jews & communities of color, works to improve law enforcement practices, & develops projects to support communities in crises. Roy assists in mobilizing these communities against the modern day Civil Rights violation we call Mass Incarceration.



SHABBAT SERVICE AT 7:00 PM. SPEAKER/ONEG AT 8:00 PM

Appreciation is extended to the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks for supporting the Speaker Series oneg.

B'H CHABAD LUBAVITCH KOSHER COOKING CLASS FOR LADIES

Taste OF ISRAEL

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16
5.00PM
AT CHABAD CENTER - 2320 HAMPDEN BLVD

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\$15

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Village Way partner shows power of parent involvement

Miftan Tamra High School is a Village Way Educational Initiatives (VWEI) partner community with high rates of students leaving school before they graduate. Recently, this “last-chance” school developed a number of activities to involve its parent community which, in turn, positively impacted students’ willingness to learn.

VWEI uses methodologies developed at Yemin Orde Youth Village and is supported by local dollars through the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks’ Israel Now campaign.

Miftan Tamra High School educators encourage at-risk students to attend school. For example, the school organized activities in its pastry and carpentry workshops for parents and students. During the monthlong Muslim holiday of Ramadan, it hosted a special Iftar meal to end the daily fast. In addition, the school established a Parent-Teacher Association for the first time to involve the parents throughout

the year in school activities.

Miftan Tamra also implemented a program on encouraging more students to consistently return to school. The effort directly involves the parent community. This program was designed by Ibn Rushd High School, another Village Way school in Tamra. Ibn Rushd High School is in its fourth year of Village Way partnership and is considered a VWEI graduate community. It provides guidance to educators at Miftan, such as when a child is having difficulty coming to school. In order to encourage high school students to remain in school, Miftan established a protocol whereby on the second day of absence, the educator calls the student’s home to alert their parents. On the third day of absence, the educator and school staff members plan a home visit.

The purpose of these visits is to show the child and parents how much the educators care. The visits also help school



staff understand reasons for the student’s absence and provides an opportunity to explain the importance of attending school. When the child, hopefully, returns to school, an individualized plan is put into place to help the child face the difficulties identified at the visit.

One father noted: “This is the first time that an educator has come into our home for my child’s benefit since he was in first grade. Until now he has

been invisible, and I feel this is the first time that he is actually seen.”

Another parent noted, “It is exciting to see how much responsibility the school takes for the future of the student and how many are trying to find alternatives for the student to succeed.” Educators note how much the involvement of the parents, their enthusiasm and support, impacts the child’s willingness to return to the school setting.

Meir Panim’s Meals for Children

One out of every three children in Israel suffers hunger.

Innocent young children are very likely the most unfortunate victims of Israel’s economic crisis. The latest report on poverty statistics, issued in December 2014 by the National Insurance Institute, reveals there are now over 756,900 children living below the poverty line in Israel.

These children leave for school with empty stomachs and go to bed hungry. During lunchtime, they look on hungrily and despondently as their friends

enjoy a satisfying lunch from the school cafeteria — something they cannot afford. And there’s no hot dinner waiting for them at home, either. It comes as no surprise that they find it hard to concentrate on their schoolwork during a long day, and their academic performance suffers.

Meir Panim’s Meals for Children Program distributes hot, nourishing lunches to poverty-stricken children. Each day, hot meals are delivered to these needy children — satisfying their hunger, preserving their health, and restoring their smiles.

Thus, these underprivileged children are guaranteed at least one nutritious meal a day to safeguard their continued health and advancement.

Since the program was launched, children that received Meir Panim’s hot lunches have seen a remarkable improvement in their academic and overall performance. A well-fed child is not only happier and more cooperative than a child fighting off hunger pains, but is better able to absorb and retain knowledge necessary for a successful education.

Every Meir Panim children’s meal includes one serving of protein (meat), carbohydrate, vegetables and fruit. The meals are individually wrapped and delivered daily via Meir Panim’s refrigerated trucks and vans.

The goal of the Meals for Children Program is to ensure that every child in Israel receives at least one hot, nourishing meal a day — because every child has a right to basic nourishment.

Meir Panim is supported with local dollars through the Israel Now Campaign of the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks.

A Technion graduate’s journey to health entrepreneur

An expert in Einstein’s theory of relativity, Technion-Israel Institute of Technology alumnus Yaron Hadad has managed to strike a “healthy” balance between the esoteric and the every day. Integrating advanced mathematics and physics with an interest in nutrition, he launched the digital health and data analytics start-up, Nutrino Health.

Nutrino is a data platform that gets to know your personal biochemistry in an effort to help you eat healthier. Using state-of-the-art data science, natural language processing and mathematical models, Nutrino engines analyzes millions of recipes, restaurant menus and packaged foods to learn about food composition and nutrients, while aggregating anonymous information about individuals’ food preferences, dietary needs and health goals. Combining that information with metrics collected from a user’s wearable and medical devices can suggest an optimal diet in real-time.

“Everybody knows what foods they love, we help people find out which foods love them back,” Yaron said. “Just as individuals have unique footprints, they have unique FoodPrints™,” Yaron said, explaining the digital signature that he and his team invented to determine how specific foods affect your body. “We’re building models that help ‘digest’ data (pun intended) and understand what foods are better for each individual.”

Nutrino won the 2017 Israel Innovation Authority’s Biomed Startup in the digital health category.

Yaron has been a techie for as long as he can remember. Raised in Herzliya, Israel, he got his first personal computer when he was 7 years old.

“One of my best friend’s older brother wrote code, and I wanted to do the same,” he recalls.

He taught himself, and landed his first job at age 15, building the internal software for Mescon Technologies. In 2000, he was recruited by the Israel Defense Forces into intelligence but was mistakenly deployed as a truck driver. In time he was transferred to human resources, where he wanted to improve the assignment of other soldiers, following his bad experience.

Together with Jonathan Lipnik, his partner in Nutrino, they developed a personnel assignment system that matched soldiers to their ideal position, increasing job satisfaction and retention by more than 50 percent, for which they received the IDF Chief of Staff Excellence Award.

It was also during his military service that he first investigated the power of food. Suffering from migraine headaches, he had a hunch that certain foods might be affecting his health. He tried out different diets for months at a time and discovered that while following a vegan regime, he had more energy, fewer migraines and slept

better.

Following the army, Yaron entered the Technion — a natural fit due to his love for science and math.

He graduated cum laude in mathematics and physics in 2006.

“Innovation is part of the Technion DNA,” he said. Tapping into that entrepreneurial spirit while he was earning his doctorate at the University of Arizona in the mathematical foundations of Albert Einstein’s relativity theory, Yaron started Nutrino “in garage mode” in 2011.

Nutrino licenses its technology to medical device companies such as Medtronic and pharmaceutical giants such as Sanofi, which provide consumers with access to the technology. A diabetic, for instance, will be fitted with a continuous glucose monitor; download a Nutrino app into his smartphone and take photos of everything he eats for three days.

The app automatically differentiates food from friends, and by factoring in thousands of different aspects about the food and the individual, including his exercise and sleep patterns, analyzes each food’s effect on the patient with a score from A-F.

The result is that some people discover that they don’t have to restrict their diet to whole wheat avocado sandwiches.

“It can be very liberating, empowering,” Yaron said.



Hanukkah Word Search



w	c	o	i	n	s	u	x	x	n	a	v
z	m	r	d	f	w	r	e	t	y	t	g
c	l	e	k	j	a	z	u	r	l	l	h
x	e	y	n	l	a	w	i	e	c	a	v
l	v	l	t	o	f	e	g	k	k	v	z
e	f	i	e	e	r	g	f	k	o	i	a
d	n	m	n	b	i	a	u	b	j	t	s
i	y	a	w	f	r	n	h	y	e	s	t
e	e	f	t	d	a	a	a	e	i	e	k
r	d	s	x	h	m	c	t	g	g	f	l
d	c	a	n	d	l	e	s	e	h	w	i
n	x	b	p	d	u	w	o	e	t	s	o

- menorah
- hanukkah
- dreidel
- celebrate
- gifts
- family
- gelt
- candles
- coins
- oil
- festival
- eight



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Hanukkah Find the Differences

Can you find 11 differences between the two pictures below?



Hanukkah Word Scramble



- 1. GTSFI _____
- 2. ETIHG _____
- 3. MRHNEOA _____
- 4. CENADSL _____
- 5. HHANKKAU _____
- 6. DRDLIEE _____
- 7. FIYALM _____
- 8. GLTE _____



SAVE THE DATE!

A weekend of events to celebrate diversity and Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Friday, January 18 at 8 p.m.

RCOS Speaker Series Featuring Roy Waterman
Sponsored by Jewish Community Relations Council and RCOS

Saturday, January 19 at 7 p.m.

Afro-Semitic Experience
A musical concert sponsored by Jewish Federation of Reading and RCOS

Monday, January 21

PJ Our Way Day of Service
Youth day of service in honor of MLK Day

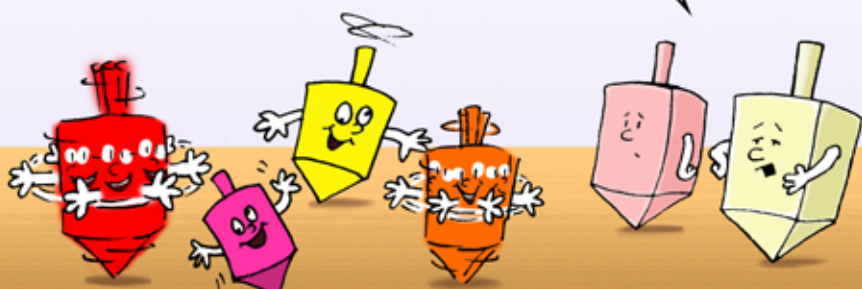
Look for more details on all these events in the January Shalom!

Kids in the kitchen



November's edition of Chabad of Berks' Kosher Kids in the Kitchen featured salad skewers along with pizza and other treats..

I used to spin like that too back in the day, but my back just isn't what it used to be.



Keren

Middle-aged dreidels

MEMBER ONLY

Join Rabbi Michelson for
Lunch and Learn
at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom
Tuesday, Dec. 11th
11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Catered lunch from Wegman's featuring bagels, cream cheese, lox, one side salad, drinks, & dessert.

\$10 per person.

Your check is your reservation.

Please submit payment to the Temple office by Friday, Dec. 7th.

Bring your friends!

Members & non-members welcome.

Transportation available from The Highlands. Please contact Catrina at 484.628.7662.



KOSHER RESTAURANT NIGHT

NY STYLE

KOSHER DELI

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5PM - 7.30PM

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► MATZA BALL SOUP

► AND OTHER TRADITIONAL FOODS ON THE MENU

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Israel developing measures to help prevent mass shootings

Ideally, one of the best ways to prevent mass shootings, experts say, is to control who can purchase and use a gun. In Israel, citizens who are licensed to own a personal weapon have generally undergone military training. Guns are a tool for self-defense only, not a hobby. Despite a few horrific experiences in the context of political violence, such as the assassination of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995, the gun death rate in Israel is consistently lower than international averages. But in the U.S., the politically powerful gun lobby coupled with recent Supreme Court decisions that apply the Constitution's Second Amendment to personal gun ownership make sweeping gun control legislation unlikely, especially during the administration of President Donald Trump, who has made gun owners a core political constituency.

In light of this reality, technological countermeasures, such as those being developed by Israeli entrepreneurs and data scientists, might soon be available to help American law enforcement and first responders reduce the scourge of gun violence plaguing their country. These generally fall into two categories: training and technology.

"The U.S. is far behind Israel in the prevention of mass shootings and other

dynamic threats," said Scott Goldstein, captain of the Pikesville Volunteer Fire Department in Maryland. "Israelis have many years of experience dealing with suicide bombers, stabbings in buses — not to mention the [constant] state of war." Goldstein added that despite all of these threats, he feels safer walking in the streets of Israel than he does at home in Baltimore. "Israelis have more built-in security measures in many places where there are large gatherings. The mind-set of the average Israeli is to be more vigilant."

Goldstein is the U.S. director of training for the Emergency Volunteers Project (EVP), an organization that prepares American first responders to deploy to Israel in time of crisis. Since its inception in 2009, EVP has trained close to 1,800 emergency responders throughout the U.S. and Israel.

While EVP's primary goal is to provide American assistance to Israel during natural disasters or terrorist attacks, Goldstein echoed that the partnership goes both ways. When it comes to dealing with a mass casualty incident, such as a shooting, Goldstein has brought back to Baltimore what he's learned from his Israeli peers.

A consultant in criminal investigations who works for an Israeli big data company and requested anonymity had an explanation

for the U.S. remaining behind Israel in preventing mass shootings. "The major problem is that U.S. police just don't have enough money to process the information," he said. "Technologies that overcome these challenges use artificial intelligence and big data. They utilize data management tools that can process virtually unlimited amounts of information," he said. He added that police don't have the time or resources to do what technology could quickly get done. "If police had more databases to put information into, they could easily use this. Right now, police would have to look manually through thousands of hours of video footage. The main thing is that technology allows you to search quickly and transform information into something that is searchable."

Police capability to quickly search through footage wouldn't just help them catch a suspect following a crime; it could provide tools to prevent a mass shooting. Preliminary signs can be identified, such as expressive language on social media. It never happens that someone didn't hate anyone yesterday and then suddenly wakes up and wants to shoot 20 people; there are always warning signs and you need to monitor from far back to prevent.

Researchers at Ben-Gurion University developed an algorithm based on those preliminary signs. Technology identifies school shooters based on personality traits that appear in their writing. In their study, the researchers selected writing by six shooters involved in major school massacres, including Virginia Tech. They compared their writings with 6,000 other people (who are not shooters), and had the computer identify the shooters. The computer would take a word, for example, "depressed" and then find words that appear in the same context, such as "suicidal," "lonely" or "sad." By doing so, it can determine the degree to which feeling depressed is expressed in the text. Once the number of times each word was used is found, the technology determines the distance between each word. The closer together each of the words are, the higher the expression of depression

is in the text. This method can be used for screening of depression in texts; the word that is used can change based on what is being tested for. While the computer was not able to select individual people, it did reduce the number of suspects to 3 percent of the original chosen people, which included the writing of all six shooters.

The criminal investigation consultant noted, "About 50 percent of [mass casualty] cases could have been prevented by using a thorough investigation with artificial intelligence." But what should be done about the the instances when technology wasn't enough to stop a gunman?

Amir Elichai founded Carbyne four years ago following his own traumatic event. When trying to call police in Tel Aviv, he found their reaction was dangerously slow. Carbyne, referred to as "the next generation of 911," is a call-handling platform that helps dispatchers analyze and process what is happening in real time, provide support and slash time-to-dispatch. The system integrates into already existing 911 technology. The company has an office in New York but has yet to be used during an American mass shooting, according to Elichai. Carbyne has been used — and saved lives — during a shooting in Israel.

Retired Israeli police bomb technician and counter-terrorism expert Moshe Guttman insists that technology should come second when preventing, and responding to, a mass shooting. "Human resources should be No. 1 before technology. Technology will assist, but it never trumps human resources. The world is too concerned right now with more cameras, more artificial intelligence," he said.

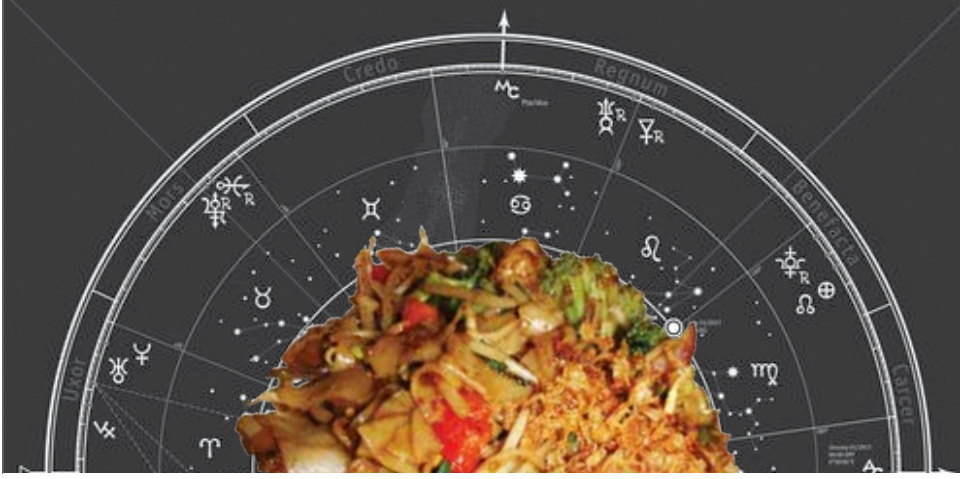
Guttman emphasized that most important aspects are prevention and response. "Israel is one of the only countries that deals with prevention. Most countries spend billions of dollars only on responding. But what about how to prevent? That is what Israel brings. My doctrine is if you do it well and put 70 percent of efforts into prevention, you won't need a response. Train, prepare, change the mind-set."

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom invites you to A Tropical Night Under the Stars

Reading Public Museum Planetarium
Friday, February 1, 2019 (no snow date)

Warm up on a winter night with the taste of the Islands! Dinner sponsored by Island Noodles, owned by congregants Boris & Tatiana Schneider. Enjoy soba noodles & seasonal vegetables simmered in a light island sauce with the option to add teriyaki chicken.

6:30: Dinner
7:00: Service featuring song leader & guitarist Gabriella Michelson
7:30: Planetarium Show
8:30 Dessert



Please return this RSVP form with your check to the Temple payable to RCOS by Friday, Jan 25th. Your check is your reservation. Members and non-members are welcome to attend with a reservation

Dinner and Show Fee:
\$12: Adult 18-64 years of age
\$10: Seniors (65+ years of age), children (ages 3-17) & college students
Free for children under 3 years of age

Attendee names: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Number of Adults attending _____ x \$12 = \$ _____

Number of seniors, children & college students attending _____ x \$10 = \$ _____

Number of children 3 years and younger attending: _____

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Food and fun plentiful at annual festival



Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom hosted its 18th Jewish Food & Cultural Festival Nov. 6, drawing throngs from throughout the surrounding community. People were lined up to get in when the doors opened, and the crowds hardly let up for six hours.

In addition to enjoying hot platters, deli sandwiches, a vast array of desserts and much more, visitors were given an opportunity to learn about the Jewish religion and culture thanks to educational displays and sanctuary tours. Entertainment was provided by Gabriella Michelson, student cantor Meara Lebovitz and the Greater Reading Encore Chorale.

The festival raises funds for synagogue activities, most notably its student cantor program.

Photos courtesy of Paul Missan



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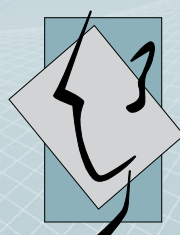
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- Jeffrey S. Driben, M.D., FACS, ECNU
- Scott J. Cronin, M.D.

Nurse Practitioner:

- Rosemarie Montgomery
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Federation Honorial - Memorial Card Information

Please mail your payment with complete information to the Jewish Federation, PO Box 14925, Reading, PA 19612-4925 or bring to the Jewish Cultural Center, 1100 Berkshire Blvd, Suite 125, Wyomissing. You may set up a "savings account" for the purpose of sending cards. Please contact the Jewish Federation at 610-921-0624 for further information.

Contributions as of Nov. 16

Edwin and Alma '51 Lakin Holocaust Library & Resource Center

In honor of:
 Elaine Safir's special birthday – Rosalye Yashek, Ruth Isenberg, Louise Zeidman

Federation Jewish Community Campaign

In memory of:
 Cindy Boscov – Saul and Donna Eisenberg
 Sanford "Sy" Yongerman – Rob and Yvonne Oppenheimer
 Charles Lock (Lisa Levine's father) – Rob and Yvonne Oppenheimer, Debbie Goodman and John Moyer, Gary Charlestein

In honor of:
 Rosalye Yashek's special birthday – Hilde Gernsheimer
 Danielle Radosh's Bat Mitzvah – Debbie and David Goldberg and family
 Andi Franklin's hospitality and good company – Yvonne Oppenheimer

Jewish Family Service

In honor of:
 Sarah Simon's engagement – Andy and Corinne Wernick

In memory of:
 Sanford "Sy" Youngerman – Barbara Nazimov, Ruth Isenberg, Robert and Sheila Spector
 Harold Spector — Robert and Sheila Spector and family
 Charles Lock (Lisa Levine's father) – Andy and Corinne Wernick, Al and Betsy Katz, Louise Zeidman

JFS Food Pantry

In honor of:
 Elaine Safir's special birthday – Harriet Baskin

Harry and Rose Sack Fund (Adult Programming)

In honor of:
 Joan Silverman's new home – Albert and Nancy Sack

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	\$25
Holocaust Library & Resource Center	\$18
Doris Levin Fund	\$10
PJ Library Fund	\$10
Harry & Rose Sack Fund	\$10
Evelyn Thompson Fund	\$10

JFS Taxi Transportation Program

In honor of:
 Elaine Safir's special birthday – Esther and Sid Bratt

In memory of:
 Sanford "Sy" Youngerman – Nancy Knoblauch

Friendship Circle Fund

In honor of:
 Rosalye Yashek's special birthday – Judy and Jim Schwank

In memory of:
 Sy Youngerman – Lila and Janine Shapiro, Sid and Esther Bratt, Judy and Jim Schwank
 Charles Lock (Lisa Levine's father) – Judy and Jim Schwank

Lakin Preschool

In memory of:
 Edwin Lakin – Irene and Bruce Schragger

Evelyn Thompson Nursery School Fund

In honor of:
 Sarah Simon's engagement – Bob and Beth Caster
 Marriage of Sharyn and Bruce Cohen's daughter Jackie – Bob and Beth Caster

In memory of:
 Charles Lock (Lisa Levine's father) — Bob and Beth Caster

Israeli researchers taking part in exciting diabetes research

There are more than 30 million people in the U.S. living with diabetes, according to the 2017 National Diabetes Statistics Report. That's close to 1 in 10 people.

Type 1 diabetes, also known as juvenile diabetes, and type 2 diabetes are chronic diseases that affect the way the body regulates blood sugar, or glucose, resulting in higher than normal levels of blood sugar (hyperglycemia). While the disease can be managed, there is still no cure.

That could change in the not-so-distant future as a result of the experimental work being conducted at

the Rina & Avner Schneur Center for Diabetes Research at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology. Traditional diabetes research focuses on improving insulin injections. But the Schneur Center is thinking outside the box, employing Professor Shulamit Levenberg's expertise in tissue engineering to treat the more common, insulin-resistant type 2 diabetes, which accounts for 90 to 95 percent of all diabetes cases in the U.S.

For example, in 2012, Levenberg, Dean of Biomedical Engineering, led a group of Technion researchers in building pancreatic tissue with

insulin-secreting cells, surrounded by a three-dimensional network of blood vessels.

The engineered tissue could pave the way for improved tissue transplants to treat diabetes. Now, Levenberg is developing new approaches to cure diabetes using tissue engineering and gene therapy to reduce blood glucose levels.

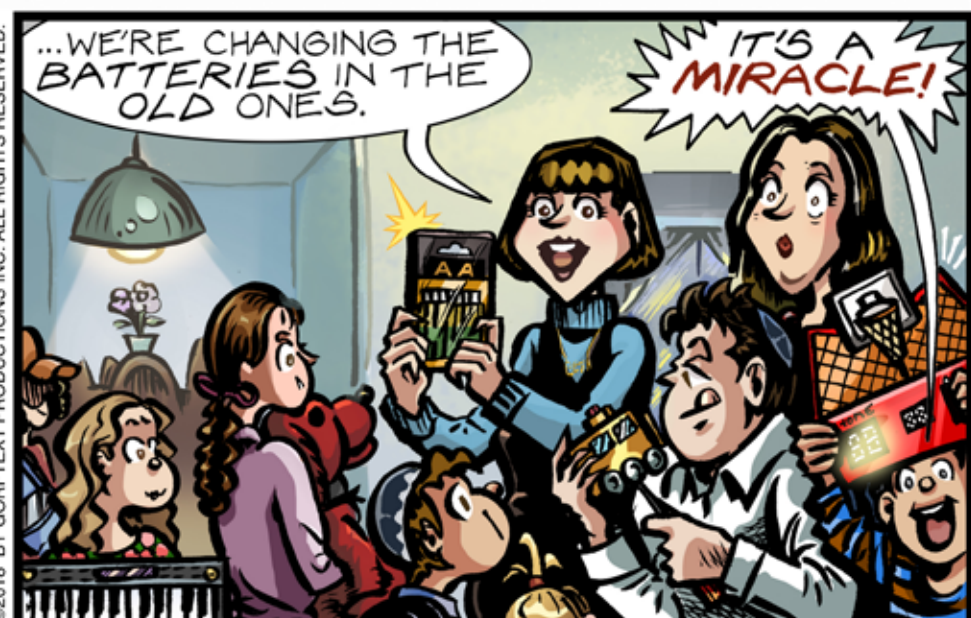
Technion is planning to consolidate all its diabetes research under one multidisciplinary umbrella. Marcelle Machluf has worked on an innovative cell-based insulin delivery platform. Medical Professor Emeritus Derek LeRoith has been involved

in research on the role of insulin and diseases. Researchers in the Faculty of Chemical Engineering are investigating the formation of toxic fibrils and their role in neurodegenerative diseases and other conditions, including type 2 diabetes. And there are more. "The idea of the Center is to promote all diabetes research on campus, to establish a more collaborative approach to diabetes research," Levenberg said. "With more funding, we could identify all of the projects at the Technion and find collaboration between the projects so one can enhance the other."

EVERYTHING'S RELATIVE
 by Jordan B. Gorfinkel • www.jewishcartoon.com



BECCA The Altruist, BETH The Realist, BERNIE The Idealist, YAEL The Perplexed, LOUIS The Rebel, ZAYDS The Traditionalist, BUBS The Bubbe



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Making a better world takes the right ingredients.

This Chanukah, while you're frying up the latkes, serve something that will make it an even happier holiday for the whole family — especially your global family. Everything you need is within reach. And the recipe is simple.

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