



Shalom01|18

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

Your Federation Supports:

- Jewish Education
- Food Pantry
- Friendship Circle
- Chevra
- Community Shabbat
- Reading Jewish Film Series
- PJ Library
- Jewish Family Service
- Jewish Cultural Center
- Lakin Holocaust Library
- & Resource Center
- Israel & Overseas
- Camp Scholarships
- Israel Trips
- Jewish Community
- High School
- Emergency Support
- Lakin Preschool
- Richard J. Yashek Lecture
- Transportation
- Maimonides Society
- Your Jewish Legacy
- 92ND ST Y Programs
- Joint Distribution Committee
- Meir Panim
- Annual Campaign
- Jewish Agency for Israel
- Yemin Orde
- School Education Programs
- Interfaith Unity Council
- Israel Advocacy
- Youth Events
- Great Decisions Series
- Jewish Community
- Relations Council
- Community Holiday Programs
- Women's Philanthropy
- Jewish Federations
- of North America
- Counseling Services
- Leo Camp Lecture
- Shabbat B'Yachad

New process in place to help local kids go to Jewish camps

The Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks' Camp Financial Aid committee has met with Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom and Keshet Zion Synagogue leaders to help develop and coordinate the application process for Jewish camp financial aid. The committee will serve as the central entry point and will work with and coordinate support from the Federation and the synagogues, if applicable. Our shared goal is, if possible, to provide sufficient funding so that any area Jewish parent who wants their child to attend a Jewish summer camp can afford to send them.

The committee will also help parents

coordinate applications with the camps' financial aid programs as well as the Grinspoon Foundation's PJ Goes to Camp, and the One Happy Camper scholarship program to maximize funding (The One Happy Camper program is only available to first-time campers who attend a session of two and a half weeks or longer).

Please join us at RCOS on Sunday, Jan. 21 at noon to learn more about regional Jewish summer camps and the community financial assistance plan. JFR Summer Camp Financial Assistance applications will be available.

As part of the application process, we ask that all potential campers submit

a short essay relating why they want to attend camp. In addition, when appropriate, we would like campers to speak about or write a short article about their summer experiences to be shared with the broader Reading community.

Certain sessions fill up very quickly, so the camps strongly encourage families to enroll in camp of their choice and apply for assistance as soon as possible. If you would like a JFR Summer Camp Financial Assistance prior to the Jan. 21 meeting or have any questions, please contact Bill Franklin at the Federation office: 610-921-0624; williamf@jfreading.org.

Hanukkah season filled with fun



Bill Franklin and Rabbi Yosef Lipsker lead the menorah lighting at the mall.

This year's local Hanukkah events were a big hit. The season kicked off Dec. 10 with "Hanukkah on Ice" at Body Zone in Spring Township, featuring skating, delicious treats and an amazing menorah carved out of ice.

It was followed by the annual "Hanukkah at the Mall" on Dec. 12, the first night of the holiday. A big crowd of Jews and non-Jews alike gathered near the Boscov's entrance at the Berkshire Mall to enjoy music, dancing, latkes and doughnuts. As part of the festivities, participants were encouraged to put coins in a menorah made out of cups. Proceeds were devoted to hurricane relief.

Photos by Jeremy Drey and Natalie Kolb, courtesy of the Reading Eagle



From left, something catches Seth Missan's eye at the mall; Matthew Spiegel chases Rabbi Matthew Abelson at Body Zone; and the ice menorah is lit.



Zalman Yanover and Yosef David, above, provide the right music for dancing. At right, Adalaine Woodward is excited to celebrate with her friends.

Thanks to all who support our community

By Richard Nassau
Development Director

The New Year is a time when many people take time to count. The seconds till midnight, the number of new additions to our families or sadly, the losses. Family members who have achieved milestones through graduations or enlistments or promotions.

Of course, it goes beyond just family. We look back to gain some measure of perspective for ourselves. It helps us to see where we came from. What we accomplished. What we can feel good about.

We, as a Jewish community, accomplished a lot this past year. I want to say thank you to everyone who has supported our community in 2017.



You have given in ways that we have seen and also in many ways we will never see. I know the many volunteer hours members of our community give to ensure a community dinner or program goes smoothly. There are also countless hours I do not know about. Hours such as those when a member of our community takes time to visit with someone who was ill or needed an opportunity to get out.

Your gifts of time, resources, and dollars are what makes us a Jewish community. Looking back allows us to acknowledge and sometimes celebrate all that was done. Looking back also helps us focus on the future. Where would we like to be going?

We are a small Jewish community. In some ways that is our strength. We rarely take things for granted. We care about each other. We also care about the future of our Jewish community. We don't wait for someone else to do it. If something is going to be done, we are the ones who volunteer

or contribute or just do it. The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) represents 148 Jewish Federation communities and an additional 300 Network communities. Together, these communities raise and distribute more than \$2 billion annually and through planned giving and endowment programs. These are programs and services, like those here in our community, that help support social welfare, social services and educational needs.

The Reading/Berks Jewish community consistently ranks in the top 25 percent for dollars raised and distributed per person based upon our Jewish population. Nationally, that puts us within the top 100 communities of any size. Here in Berks County no one should be surprised at this statistic.

We look back to gain perspective. Where we came from and what we accomplished. It is also the reason we should feel good about our community and where we are going in 2018.

Development

- Annual Campaign
- Women's Philanthropy
- Maimonides Society
- Your Jewish Legacy
- Chai Circle
- L'Chaim Society
- Book of Life
- Letter of Intent

Be Counted: Community Shabbat Dinner and Service

Shabbat *Shekalim* Service Hosted by Keshar Zion Synagogue

Annual Community Shabbat Dinner

Friday, February 9, 2018

6:00 p.m. Family Shabbat Service

7 p.m. Dinner

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom

555 Warwick Drive

Wyomissing, PA 19610



Sponsored by Chabad Lubavitch of Berks County, Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks, Keshar Zion Synagogue, and Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom

Boscov's Ala Carte Catering
Kosher meal served family style

- Vegetarian vegetable soup, beef short ribs, oven brown potatoes, walnut grilled asparagus, challah rolls, coffee, tea and dessert
- Chicken fingers and applesauce for the children
- Vegetarian option by request—wild mushroom ravioli with pesto sauce

Adults - \$20 per person*
Children & youth 18 years and under free
*Financial assistance available by calling Sari at 610-921-0624

Kindly RSVP by February 2, 2018

☆ Community Shabbat Dinner – Friday, February 9, 2018 ☆

Please make checks payable to Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks
Send to: PO Box 14925 Reading, PA 19612

RSVP by Feb. 2 – 610-921-0624

Name _____

_____ No. of Adults @ \$20

MC/Visa/Discover # _____

_____ No. of children 6-18 FREE

Exp. _____

Sec. Code _____

_____ No. of children 5 and under FREE

Name on card _____

Total payment \$ _____

Signature _____



2017 totals
as of Dec. 17

Jewish Community
Campaign
\$516,992

*Includes transfers from Donor
Advised Funds

December marks phenomenal end to 2017

By William D. Franklin
President

What a phenomenal December! On Dec. 7 at the Federation's Friendship Circle, more than 60 friends and family members came to the JCC to celebrate Herb Schneider's 100th birthday. Along with their best wishes, Sen. Judy Schwank gave Herb a Pennsylvania state commendation and Mayor Wally Scott, whose first job was working for Herb, gave Herb a Reading certificate of recognition. Both spoke of the many contributions Herb has made to our



Reading community.

On Dec. 10, about 100 ice skaters came to the Chabad/Federation Chanukah on Ice. Skaters from 3 to over 75 enjoyed skating, latkes, pizza bagels, laughter and schmoozing. Chanukah celebrations continued with Chabad's Chanukah at the Mall on the first night of Chanukah, Dec. 12. More than 75 members of our community showed up for music, dancing and, of course, latkes and doughnuts.

Later that week, close to 50 people came to the Reading Jewish Film Series' showing of 'There Are Jews Here', a movie about four U.S. communities where the Jewish communities are withering away. However, one of them Dothan, Ala., is successfully implementing a plan to bring

in 20 young Jewish families. It was not the most cheerful movie, but we also showed a short video of the many events and programs our synagogues and the Federation run for our community. We also have our challenges, but there is still a strong, vibrant Jewish community in Reading.

On Dec. 6, the United States formally recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Jerusalem has been the spiritual capital of the Jewish people for 3,000 years and the political capital of the nation-state of Israel for the 70 years of its existence. Measures to formalize security and boundaries for Israelis and Palestinians need to be completed, however the formal recognition of the

reality is appreciated.

These events confirm that we Jews are not just practicing a religion. Our community is part of an extended family that shares a history and a destiny, religious customs, and a national home. We may be diverse with many different branches but we remain linked in a deep fundamental way and continue to delight in our shared experiences.

Looking forward to 2018, throughout the year we will be celebrating Israel's 70th birthday. Other celebrations will be Community Shabbat, a Purim Party, our annual meeting and more. We hope you will join us to share the programs being developed for our community to learn and celebrate together.

Visit to Israel, Poland offers valuable insights

By Margo Levin

In early December I embarked on an incredible journey to Poland and Israel as a fellow with the Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA). It was an honor to participate in this life-changing opportunity along with 12 other fellows from throughout the country.

The JCPA is the national public affairs umbrella group for the 125 Jewish community relations councils across the country and 16 national Jewish organizations. Overall the JCPA mission is to promote a just and pluralistic American society. The JCPA role is to convene our network to develop and effectively implement consensus on national issues and to advocate on these issues as part of broad-based coalitions. A large aspect of our work is to ensure strong relationships with civic, faith-based, and minority leaders locally and nationally and work to build community and stand together in common sense. It also provides strong, nuanced support for Israel.

With our different backgrounds and varied perspectives, we explored Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East, with all of its complexities. We met with representatives from the public and private sectors, including government officials, industry leaders, and social service organization activists. We also met with and heard from Palestinian representatives and members of other minority groups. We had the unique experience of seeing things as they were happening on the ground in real time, including a visit to the Knesset. History took place before our very eyes when the United States recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

There was so much information to process, and there are certainly no easy answers. All sides deserve a voice. However, what is most impressive is the spirit of the people of Israel, the beauty of the country, and the achievements of the state of Israel even in the midst of living in a pretty tough neighborhood. It is hoped that the information we obtained and the things we saw will enable us to constructively discuss the important issues confronting Israel and Jews around the world (peace efforts, anti-Semitism, Syrian refugees, etc.) and possibly even help in some small way to make a difference.

In future articles I plan to share details about some of my experiences while in Israel. However, a brief note here about one experience that really stands out is quite telling about the people of Israel. At the Ziv Medical Center in Safed, Israeli doctors and nurses have been treating countless wounded Syrians — men, woman, children and soldiers — all casualties of the civil war in Syria, without



A JCPA delegation visits Auschwitz

regard to which side they may be on.

It is both important and interesting to note that our mission started in Warsaw, Poland, with visits to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Auschwitz, of course, was the largest of the German Nazi concentration camps and extermination centers. Over 1.1 million men, women and children lost their lives there. Words cannot adequately describe the experience of being there. The cold weather and heavy snow during our visit matched our heavy hearts for the millions of Jews who lost their lives. Our visit to Poland served as an appropriate starting point before we headed on to Israel. On the last day of our mission, we were reminded of our visit to Poland when we visited Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial.

Our meetings took place across the diversity and spectrum of Israeli society with Palestinian and Israeli leaders, representatives of civil society, Christian faith leaders, Arab Israelis and issue experts and advocates. I now have a much better appreciation and understanding of the issues that confront Israel today. However, as JCPA President and CEO David Bernstein told us, when you visit Israel there is so much to learn that you leave confused at a higher level.

Israel is such an amazing country! The

epicenter of three of the major religions in the world — Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Such a rich and complicated history—may our future be filled with peace.

I look forward to sharing more information and details in upcoming issues of *Shalom* about my JCPA mission to Israel.

Shalom

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Women speak truth to power in Israeli comedic drama

An accident during a bar mitzvah celebration leads to a gender rift in a devout Orthodox community in Jerusalem, in “The Women’s Balcony,” a rousing, good-hearted Israeli comedy/drama about women speaking truth to patriarchal power. When the women’s balcony in an Orthodox synagogue collapses, leaving the rabbi’s wife in a coma and the rabbi in shock, the congregation falls into crisis. Charismatic young Rabbi David appears to be a savior after the accident but slowly starts pushing his fundamentalist ways and tries to take control. This tests the women’s friendships and creates a rift between the community’s women and men.

“The Women’s Balcony” is part of the 2018 Reading Jewish Film Series and will be shown on Wednesday, Jan. 24 at 7 p.m. at FOX EAST, 4350 Perkiomen Avenue, Exeter Township

(next to Boscov’s East).

The 2018 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, and all films will be shown on Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m. at FOX EAST. 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 complete list of dates and films for the 2018 Reading Jewish Film Series:

Jan. 24 — “The Women’s Balcony”

March 7 — “Body & Soul: An American Bridge”* with the Central Pennsylvania African American Museum

April 4 — “Fanny’s Journey”



May 16 — “The Venice Ghetto, 500 Years of Life”*

*Special event following screening

Israel Book Group

‘Danger! Three Jewish Peoples’ to be discussed in February

The Israel Book Group will be discussing Avraham Avi-Hai’s book, *Danger! Three Jewish Peoples* on Wednesday, Feb. 7, at 7 p.m. This thought-provoking book articulates the growing differences in the Jewish world today separating Israelis, modern and

secular in lifestyle; American Jews rapidly assimilating into the American lifestyle; and Haredi Jews, holding fast to a strongly traditional life. These schisms, the author warns, are creating dangerous rifts in the Jewish world that threaten our age-old feeling of “We are One.” He

also writes that these challenges are not insurmountable and proposes solutions to strengthen Jewish unity that are worth considering.

Join us at the home of Andi and Bill Franklin, 1110 Fairview Ave., Apt 4 in Wyomissing for a great discussion.

JCC Programming - Something for everyone



Here are just a few of the programs that are building an inclusive Jewish community and bringing people together in new ways.

Better Together – Teens and seniors meet to discuss Jewish texts, current events and share stories. The results are new connections and a better understanding of how the “other” generation lives and feels.

Community Shabbat — A Federation sponsored Shabbat service and dinner that rotates between Chabad, KZ, and RCOS. In 2017, over 200 community members of all ages attended this service at Chabad.

Film Series — The Reading Jewish Film Series is sponsored by the Rubin Educational Fund and Fox Theatres. The series continues to average about 70 people at each film. In 2017 the series began its fourth year.

Friendship Circle – Each week 20 to 30 seniors meet at the JCC for lunch. Programs provide social engagement, education, and entertainment. Special holiday programs are held throughout the year.

Great Decisions Series— JCC presents an 8-week series by the Foreign Policy Association featuring international topics. Discussions are led by local moderators, including educators from area universities.

Lakin Holocaust Library & Resource Center — Now in its 23rd year, the Lakin HRC is a partnership between Federation and Albright College. The Lakin HRC hosts events at Albright for students and the public each semester, including the annual Richard J. Yashek Memorial Lecture.

Maimonides Society – Reactivated in 2015, over 40 area medical professionals have joined the Society. The Society sponsors educational programs and brings together physicians who serve as a resource to the Jewish and general community.

92nd St Y— Free monthly screenings of lectures and discussions presented through the NYC 92nd St Y. The programs, featuring notable personalities, are held at both JCC and the Highlands.

For more information call 610 921 0624

Students and seniors celebrate Hanukkah

By Rabbi Barry Dov Lerner

Students and seniors in Better Together met at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom Dec. 17, using the synagogue's kitchen facilities to make latkes.

Rabbi Dov began by thanking Rabbi Brian Michelson and the staff of RCOS for coordinating with the Reading Jewish Community High School to facilitate and warmly welcome JCHS there.

As sometimes occur, several program participants began the evening with several questions. One involved conversion and the second the Jewish understanding of the history of Christianity

While Carole Robinson, Shira Simon and Barbara Lerner guided the mixing, adding the ingredients and preparing this recipe of “oven fried potato latkes,” others were studying with Rabbi Dov.

Before enjoying the latkes with sour cream or applesauce, everyone together lit Hanukkah candles reciting both appropriate blessings for the sixth night. Then everyone was encouraged to observe the tradition of then lighting their own Hanukkiah at home with their family.

Following the latkes, the group was treated to a Jerusalem Hanukkah Box and understanding of how for more than 2,000 years Jews have lit lamps and lights in Jerusalem to celebrate Hanukkah and Jerusalem as the center of Jewish life achieved by the Maccabees, who then established the Hasmonean dynasty of kings.

The discussion ranged over why such a box became a custom in Jerusalem. There were issues of keeping the lights undisturbed by Jerusalem winds and weather, which often can be thunderstorms, rain, sleet and snow.

We then considered the purpose of Hanukkah and the Hanukkiah — eight lights and the Shamash, different from the Jerusalem Temple Menorah of seven branches. “Pirsumei nisa” is the frequently repeated talmudic phrase for what we do on Hanukkah. It means “publicizing the miracle.” Pirsumei means to reveal or



Better Together participants work on making latkes.

divulge, and comes from the word paras, meaning spread, even as in a tablecloth. (In modern Hebrew, pirsomet is an advertisement.) “Nisa” is Aramaic meaning a “miracle.” It also means a “banner” which explains the use of flags and banners for Hanukkah decorations.

Pirsumei nisa is the guiding principle of many Hanukkah practices. Lighting the menorah for pirsumei nisa is interpreted to mean we are lighting the oil lamps or candles in a place where it will be visible to passers-by, e.g. in our window or outside the door (except in times of genuine persecution).

Because the exposed, lit lamps could cause a fire in the narrow streets of Jerusalem and harm people or animals carrying burdens, the box keeps the flames contained and protects people and property from damage.

Rabbi Dov concluded the program with several examples from his antique Middle Eastern-Israel coin collection.

We began with a silver tetrachm, from Alexander the Great ca. 320 BCE. Alexander conquered ancient Israel, and because the Jews did not resist him militarily, he allowed them a certain degree of independence. For this reason, “Alexander” became historically a very



A Hanukkah box

“Jewish” name. But when Alexander died, after a great deal of fighting, his three generals divided the kingdom between them- Ptolemy, Seleucus and Antigonos.

The Seleucid dynasty ruled the Seleucid Empire was a Hellenistic state which existed from 312 to 63 BCE, founded by Seleucus I Nicator following the division of the Alexander’s Macedonian empire.

Celebration at Lakin Preschool



Kindergarten students at Lakin Preschool celebrate Hanukkah. The school at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom in Wyomissing is operated by the synagogue with support from the Jewish Federation of Reading.

- [Camp Scholarships](#)
- [Israel Trips](#)
- [Jewish Community](#)
- [High School](#)
- [Lakin Preschool](#)
- [Better Together](#)

Book offers insight into making most of senior living

By Sari Incledon, M.Ed.

There is a reason Atul Gawande’s “Being Mortal” has been on the *New York Times* best seller list for 13 weeks in 2017. His thoughts on how we can better live with age-related frailty, serious illness and approaching death will be relevant to all of us at some point in our lives. He calls for a change in the philosophy of health care as well.



Gawande is the author of three other best-selling books and is a surgeon in Boston, a staff writer for *The New Yorker*, a professor at Harvard Medical School and the Harvard School of Public Health. He has won prizes for his writing and a MacArthur Fellowship among many honors. He was born in Brooklyn to Indian immigrants, both doctors and grew up in Athens, Ohio. During a break from medical school in the 1990’s he worked on health care policy in the Clinton administration.

In the first part of the book Gawande explores different models of senior living. His own grandparents in India relied on multigenerational households where children and grandchildren would care

for their elders. This dynamic was true in the neighborhood I grew up on in Long Island, where a majority of families on my block had a grandparent living with the family in the 1960s and ’70’s, including my own. Economic development in many traditional cultures has changed opportunities for the younger generation. So just like in our country, the younger generation in many Asian countries moves away from the family home and is unable to help with caring for their parents and grandparents. In Asia, the idea of an elderly parent living alone was traditionally regarded as shameful. Now statistics show the percentage of elderly living alone in China, Japan and Korea is rising rapidly.

Gawande goes on to describe new models of care in residential communities that promote frail people’s ability to live a meaningful life. He describes the positive changes that a nursing home in central New York state underwent when the director brought in cats, dogs and birds, and a day care for children along with plants and thriving vegetable and flower gardens. Researchers found that the number of prescriptions, including psychotropic drugs per resident decreased by half as did the death rate. The purpose of these and other changes gave residents a reason to live.

In the Boston area the author visited other innovative residential programs for seniors that were less institutional and gave residents more autonomy. One nursing center, New Bridge, had floors divided into smaller pods housing no more than 16 residents. Residents had private rooms that were built around a common living area with dining room, kitchen and activity room — like a home. Gawande cited research that found that in programs like these residents were less anxious and depressed, socialized more and had an increased sense of safety.

The second part of the book addresses how physicians, patients and hospice organizations address end-of-life issues. Gwande writes that some members of the medical profession, himself included have been wrong about what their job is. Often they perform procedures that in end extend suffering. He calls for a change in the philosophy of health care — rather than promoting survival it should be to enable well-being.

Full of interesting research and storytelling, “Being Mortal” asserts that medicine can comfort and enhance our experience even to the end, providing not only a good life but also a good end. “Being Mortal” is a valuable contribution to the growing literature on aging, death and dying.

Celebrating Hanukkah with Friendship Circle



Friendship Circle celebrated Hanukkah in a lively fashion. Bob Cisik, a Klezmer clarinetist, and Gene Gelfenson, a gifted keyboardist, entertained the group with Klezmer tunes, Hanukkah songs, and a few show tunes. The musicians began with “Tumbalalaika,” bringing smiles to everyone’s face. Within a few minutes, the group was dancing to Klezmer favorites and singing familiar Hanukkah lyrics. It was a delight to hear Gelfenson’s Chopin solo. The group especially enjoyed singing and dancing along to songs from “Fiddler on the Roof.”

A tribute to Herb Schneider

Herbert Schneider celebrated his 100th birthday at Friendship Circle on Dec. 7 with a festive lunch attended by 50 friends and family members. Mayor Wally Scott reminisced about his first job working for “Mr. Schneider” at Harold’s Furniture and then presented Herb with a Certificate of Recognition from the City of Reading. State Sen. Judy Schwank also lauded Herb’s achievements and read a proclamation from the General Assembly honoring Herb. After tributes from other guests, Herb took the podium to “roast” himself. The festivities ended with laughter as Herb regaled his guests with several well-told centenarian jokes.



Reading Mayor Wally Scott presents a certificate from the city to Herb Schneider during Herb’s 100th birthday party at the JCC.

Thanks to the community for the many greetings and donations in honor of my 100th birthday.

Herb Schneider

Jewish Family Service

thanks the following professionals for providing services to members of the Jewish Community and the JFS staff:

- Dr. Eric Bluestone
- Dr. Geoffrey Zinberg
- Benjamin Leisawitz
- Phyllis Dessel

Jewish Family Service

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

All Around the Town

Mazel Tov to **Jackye and Jim Barrer** on the birth of their granddaughter Jordyn Alexandra, daughter of Rachel and Michael of Syosset, N.Y.

Congratulations to Jewish Federation’s Program Director **Amanda Hornberger and her husband, Jason**, on the birth of their second child George Shepherd on Dec. 5.

Congratulations to **Missy Zimmerman** for being a co-winner of the Voices for Change Award from Safe Berks.

Mazel Tov to **Kelli and Steve Strause and to Allen and Missy Zimmerman** on the birth of twin sons and grandsons, Marcus Ryan and Maximus Allen.

Obituaries

Floyd M. Ruttenberg, 98, formerly of Muhlenberg Township. Floyd was a graduate of Reading High School and served in the Army Air Corps during World War II. He was the owner/operator of John Ruttenberg & Sons Auto Glass, Auto Parts & Used Cars & Trucks in Reading for 38 years and then worked part time as a real estate associate until he retired. Floyd served as president of Reading B’nai B’rith Men’s Lodge and was a member of Jewish War Veterans. He is survived by his niece Charon Snyder and her family of Reading and several other nieces and nephews.

Jason Adlestein, 50, of Fleetwood. Jason attended Miami Dade Community College and earned a degree in TV, Video and Film, which led him to working with film crews doing productions in Miami. He worked for several years with an events security company that placed him at many major events (World Series, concerts, etc.). Jason then changed jobs and worked for several years as a Resident Counselor for Shepard Pratt Hospital in Baltimore working with troubled kids. He is survived by his parents, Gary and Linda Adlestein of Fleetwood.

Samuel Silberstein, 93, of Reading. Sam was born in Gratz, Austria and came to America when he was 15. He worked at Robert Hall and then the Reading Eagle for many years. Sam enjoyed reading, listening to classical music, creamed spinach and dry martinis with extra olives. He is survived by his daughter Lea Berger of Reading, his two granddaughters; Molly and Bethany Berger, and his brother Otmar.

Irvin A. Berger of Audubon. He was a former president of Reform Congregation Oheb Shalom. He is survived by his wife, Betty; son Lee, husband of Amy White Berger; daughter-in-law Cindy; six grandchildren and nine great-granchildren.

Neal D. Shaffer, 75, of Florida. Neal graduated from the Tyler School of Fine Arts and took his sense of color and form to the Philadelphia marketplace as an independent florist for many years. His career highlight was participating in the Philadelphia Flower Show competitions. Neal is survived by his two brothers and their families: Dr. Eugene Shaffer and his wife, Helen, of Wyomissing and Dan Shaffer and his wife, Pier, of Florida.

There are Jews here

In December, the film “There Are Jews Here” was shown as part of the Reading Jewish Film Series. The film by Brad Lichtenstein interweaves the stories of four small communities that were once thriving and our now fighting for survival. The showing at Fox East also featured the premier of a four-minute film produced by the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks. The film highlights many of the programs offered in our community by our synagogues, Jewish Community Center, and Jewish Family Service. Federation felt it was important to produce a local film. Brad Lichtenstein in making his film said “I didn’t know 1 million Jews live in small American communities. I discovered a new world in making this film. A Jew myself, what I knew was my experience growing up in Atlanta and living in New York and Milwaukee — large cities where we are free to define ourselves Jewishly in any way we wish. But for Jews living in small communities, identity is a daily urgent challenge; if they don’t personally uphold their communities and live affirmative Jewish lives, they and their legacies could fade away forever.”

The local film will be available in January. For more information contact Richard Nassau – richardn@JFReading.org.

Support equal treatment for JBS

The Jewish Broadcasting Service has been in discussions with Comcast for more than five years and received hundreds of emails and requests for JBS to be carried on the cable system, but Comcast has not made a commitment to the Jewish community to provide JBS, even though it is free to Comcast and its customers.

It is unacceptable for a television provider to have multiple Christian channels, a wide array of ethnic and foreign-language channels and not to carry the free JBS Channel. It is Comcast’s responsibility as a television provider to provide programming that is important and meets their needs.

JBS is asking the community to contact Comcast and ask for JBS to be made available on the same level of service where Comcast provides its Christian channels.

Comcast Corporate Office telephone is 215-665-1700. Please ask for the Programming Department to make your request or write them at Comcast Corporation, 1701 JFK Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

You can also reach Corporate Customer Service via Twitter (<https://twitter.com/ComcastCares/>), and on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/Xfinity>)

Please ask your family and friends to contact Comcast. Perhaps only when enough viewers threaten to leave Comcast for TV providers who carry JBS in the same communities as Comcast like DirecTV, Verizon Fios, CenturyLink, Google Fiber TV or RCN will Comcast be moved to add JBS.

Your municipality has a franchise agreement with Comcast and perhaps if you complain to them also, it will help get the message to Comcast that they need to carry the Jewish channel, JBS.

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Wyomissing

THEHIGHLANDS.ORG

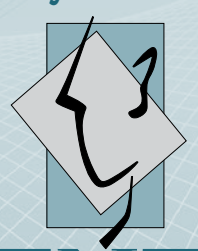
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Faces of hope, lives of dignity in former Soviet Union countries

For too many Jews around the world, poverty is a stark reality.

In the former Soviet Union, elderly Jews who endured Soviet oppression, and others who also survived the Holocaust, are left to piece together a life with only a few dollars a day. Not only must they contend with abject poverty and hunger, many are also alone, as family and friends have left the country or died from disease, tragic accidents, or old age.

For these needy elderly, aid programs like the IFCJ Lifeline, an operational partnership between the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) and the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, ensure that they have food on the table and the medications they need to survive.

Through this support, tens of thousands of people who are often forgotten and left behind, enjoy a renewed sense of joy, hope and dignity. The IFCJ Lifeline is part of a multi-faith coalition of partners – including the Claims Conference, Jewish Federations, and many others – who work with JDC to care for those in desperate need.

Here are a few of their stories.



Vera I., 62 years old from Kiev, Ukraine

Vera has faced more than her fair

share of heartbreak, from her struggle to make ends meet every month to a tragic fall that broke both her arms. Yet, with a quiet strength and persistent sense of joy, she perseveres, and gives back to her community, because of the strength she has drawn from the help she has received. "Even though I worked for many years, my pension is tiny. I would starve if I had to live on my pension alone. I don't want to think about it," she says of what would happen if she did not receive help through the Lifeline and JDC's network of Hesed social welfare centers. "I can't tell you how much this assistance is saving my life."



Tatiana P, 65 years old, from Odessa, Ukraine

"I've taught 160 students, I was a well-regarded nurse and medical masseuse. I've helped thousands of people and now I can't even help myself," says 65-year-old Tatiana from Odessa. Tatiana was forced to retire because of severe back pain caused by the hours she spent helping others ease their own pain. Her house is a poorly insulated two-room hovel and has not been repaired in years. It takes at least 2 tons of coal over the course of the winter to keep it warm. To save money on coal, Tatiana uses an electric heater, but that too has run her into debt. She cuts costs wherever she can, growing what she can in her backyard in addition

to benefiting from the food she receives through the Lifeline.



Yuliy K., Lifeline beneficiary, Kiev, Ukraine.

Although he spent much of his adult life working in construction, Yuliy, has little to show for it beyond a \$48 dollar a month pension that barely covers enough food for him to survive. Because much of his working life overlapped with

Soviet times, he never had savings or any type of personal retirement plan. The place he calls home is a bare, one-room apartment, where he lives, alone, in central Kiev. His daily diet consists of a piece of bread or a sandwich for breakfast and soup for lunch. "Soup is very important for my health," Yuliy says. Through the Lifeline, Yuliy receives a bank card to buy food and medicine, and special packages for Jewish holidays.

At its October board meeting, JDC paused to recognize its operational partnership with IFCJ and its founder Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein, who has served as a longtime JDC board member. Through its ongoing partnership with JDC, IFCJ has invested \$150 million, including \$26 million in the last two years, to address the challenges faced by the poorest Jews around the world – men and women like Yuliy, Tatiana and Vera, who can live today with a renewed sense of optimism.



5"11

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Cost: \$8

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Why a synagogue should have windows

By Rabbi Brian Michelson
Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom

There is a statement in the Babylonian Talmud I have always found very interesting. It comments that we should not pray in a synagogue without windows. The Talmud is full of all sorts of advice and rulings that cover everything from the work we do to the food we eat and how we are expected to celebrate the holidays all throughout the year, but why does it care that our worship space has windows? Aren't there more important things like making sure people are there and that the Torahs are properly kept? Why worry about the architectural details like windows.

The commentary to this section teaches us that the rabbis included the requirement of windows in a synagogue sanctuary as



a reminder that we do not just go into "our space" and worry about ourselves. We are not meant to cut ourselves off from the rest of the world. We are called to look out on the world and see it for what it is: both a place filled with goodness and a place that is less than perfect: a place waiting to be redeemed.

It would be easy for us to huddle together and only ask the question "Is it good for the Jews?" However, the ancient rabbis understood that, as Jews, we live in the world and not apart from it. Therefore, what happens beyond our walls or outside our windows does matter. We are called to care for our community both Jewish and non-Jewish. It is a mitzvah to feed the hungry, all of them, regardless of religious background. In fact, the rabbis taught that we do good for the Jewish community and the non-Jewish world for the sake of peace, friendship, and understanding.

I recently read an article written by a

man who was arguing that Tikkun Olam, the divine call to repair our world, was a misinformed fantasy. We should only be doing things that bring about desired results in the Jewish community and only if there is quid pro quo from the non-Jewish world. I found the article distressing, because it failed to understand that as Jews we are commanded to do what is right for our community and our world not because we expect a return on our investment; rather, because it is one of the ways we live out our Jewishness in the world.

The reminder to have windows in the synagogue is a command to care about the world outside: to look beyond the confines of our own community to make the world a better place for us and for all people. As we begin this new secular year, may we be inspired to look out the window celebrate the good that is in the world around us and endeavor to fix what is broken. This is the right thing to do. It is the Jewish thing to do.

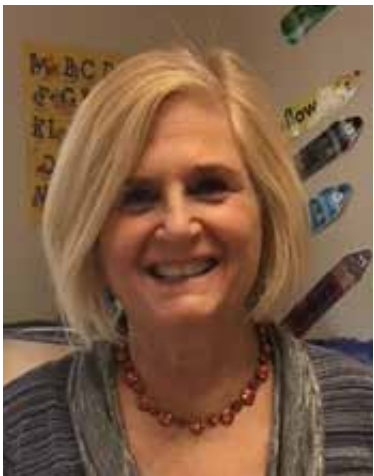
RCOS to honor Adrienne Cardinal for volunteerism

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom once again celebrates volunteerism with its seventh annual Ruth & Irvin Balis Volunteer Appreciation Award Dinner. This year's event will be held Saturday, March 17, with cocktails at 6 p.m. and dinner at 7.

This year's honorees is Adrienne Cardinal, a lifelong member of the congregation who has served RCOS in numerous capacities but is best known for her work on its annual Rummage Sale, the synagogue Sisterhood's big summer fundraiser.

She has been participating in the sale for more than three decades, first assisting her mother, Elaine Backer, and eventually assuming a leadership role.

The Rummage Sale is an important source of income for Sisterhood and its work supporting congregational activities. It requires an



enormous amount of work sorting through all the donated items, determining the right price for them and displaying the merchandise for sale in an attractive manner.

"Adrienne Cardinal is a perfect example of the sort of person the Balis Award was meant to honor," said Mark Nemirow, chairman of the committee that selected her from

a group of outstanding volunteers nominated by congregants. "She does a difficult, important job effectively but hasn't received much attention for it, nor does she seek it."

Adrienne said she appreciates being recognized but that it's a team effort that makes the sale a success.

"I really could not have the sale without the generous members donating their items to the Temple," she said. "Through the years, Norma Beckerman and Sharon Scullin have been my most dedicated volunteers. They come almost every day for the two-week set up and throughout the sale. They both hold a special place in my heart. Eve Pardo, Susan Wagner and Susan Backer have been consistent helpers as well."

Adrienne's daughter Lauren also has helped out over the years.

"It certainly is in our blood to enjoy and do this," Adrienne

said.

Adrienne said she is overwhelmed at the recognition, which she was not expecting.

"I am touched that I am being honored and don't question the work I do for the Rummage Sale and the Temple," she said. "I do this out of my love for the Temple and doing my share. This is just my piece of what we all do. The Rummage sale is a Temple / Sisterhood function, but it benefits the community and I feel proud to do my part.

The community is welcome to join in the celebration on March 17. The event is for adults only. Price per person is \$36. Your check is your reservation and can be mailed to RCOS, 555 Warwick Drive, Wyomissing PA, 19610, by March 2. Those who need assistance with the ticket fee may contact Rabbi Brian Michelson at rabbi@ohebsholom.org or 610-375-6034.

Kesher Zion Chinese Auction a tremendous success



Kesher Zion's 3rd Annual Chinese Auction on Nov. 12 was a huge success. There were more than 120 baskets and big raffle prizes offered. Kudos to the many volunteers who helped at the auction, including the auctioneers, young "runners," ticket sellers, cooks, and other helpers. Everyone who attended enjoyed a fun and exciting afternoon!

January Tevet-Shevat



Shabbat Candle Lightings



Torah Portions

January 5 4:34 p.m.	January 6/Tevet 19 Shemot (Exodus 1:1-6:1)
January 12 4:41 p.m.	January 13/Tevet 26 Va'eira (Exodus 6:2-9:35)
January 19 4:49 p.m.	January 20/Shevat 4 Bo (Exodus 10:1-13:16)
January 26 4:57 p.m.	January 27/Shevat 11 Beshalach (Exodus 13:17-17:16)

LOCAL CONGREGATIONS AND SERVICE TIMES

REFORM CONGREGATION OHEB SHOLOM (610) 375-6034
Friday, Jan. 5: Shabbat service, 6 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 12: Grades 2 & 3 Shabbat, 6 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 13: Tot Shabbat, 10 a.m.
Fridays, Jan. 19 and 26: 7:45 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 20: RCOS Night at the Planetarium, 5 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.; Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.
at Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom, 555 Warwick Drive, Wyomissing

CONGREGATION SHOMREI HABRITH

Yemin Orde helps reinforce Jewish identity

Yemin Orde graduate Miriam Ciesler grew up in a small village located in southern Poland, near the Czechoslovakian border.

Her parents discovered their Jewish identity after they were married and decided to raise their six children as Jews. Education, music and raising a Jewish family were important elements of Miriam's life.

Miriam and her family faced anti-Semitism as one of a few Jewish families in her community. When she was a youth, her family fled their home and moved to another town when a neighbor set fire to their property. Miriam embraced the idea of living in Israel where a better education and a safer Jewish life awaited her.

Miriam arrived at Yemin Orde when she was 14 years of age. Her parents and siblings remained in Poland, confident of the Village's supportive educational environment. She did not speak a word of Hebrew and attending classes proved to be extremely challenging. "I remember feeling overwhelmed. I was used to being a good student but since I did not understand anything, everything in school was very hard," said Miriam.

The Village's guidance counselors



provided needed emotional support and Yemin Orde's educational methodology, called the Village Way, helped to strengthen Miriam's confidence, Jewish identity and self-esteem. Eventually, Miriam mastered the Hebrew language and excelled in her studies. With the Village's help, she also returned to playing the violin, joined the Yemin Orde choir and traveled with them to the United States for performances.

Following high school graduation, Miriam attended a prestigious gap-year leadership program in Jerusalem to strengthen her academic and leadership skills. She served in the Israel Defense Forces as a commander and educator working with new immigrant soldiers.

Today, Miriam is working for Masa Israel as a guide and educator for young people from around the world. She currently lives in Jerusalem and remains connected to staff and friends from Yemin Orde. Her parents relocated to Israel while Miriam was completing her senior year at Yemin Orde High School.

Miriam has made many meaningful friendships and she is exploring her identity as an Israeli citizen and capable young woman while acquiring a range of new experiences. She remains closely connected to friends and staff at the Village and serves as a role model for younger students. "Even now, as I come back to the Village, I feel at home. Although it is five years since I graduated, people from the Village call me and continue to encourage me to do my best."

Yemin Orde is supported by local dollars through the Jewish Federation of Reading's Israel Now campaign.

Meir Panim volunteer sees other side of Jerusalem

Israel is often found on the front page of the news. Whether due to its ongoing struggle for survival, both on the ground fighting its enemies and in the realm of public relations, the dichotomy of the Holy Land is clear. Yet even those living in Israel can miss an aspect of the country which often goes unseen.

A recent visitor to Meir Panim's Jerusalem Restaurant-Style Soup Kitchen discovered a side of the city she had never before seen when she encountered a world of poverty hidden from public view.

Erica Schachne, editor of the "In Jerusalem" and "Metro" weekend sections at the *Jerusalem Post*, recently volunteered to serve meals at the soup kitchen. She was inspired to volunteer when Meir Panim organized a special event inviting Members of the Knesset, Bridges for Peace, and members of the media to see how the charity organization feeds hundreds of impoverished citizens living in Jerusalem daily. "It was rewarding to see the work of Meir Panim, feeding everyone who walked through their doors with care and dignity," Schachne stated. "This helped me see a side of Jerusalem I don't normally see."

There are 1.7 million Israeli citizens living below the poverty line,



along with 800,000 children. This often marginalized population can sometimes be seen panhandling near the Western Wall or in Jerusalem's pedestrian malls. However, the vast majority live lonely, isolated lives. "For many of Israel's impoverished citizens, coming to one of Meir Panim's five restaurant-style soup kitchens located throughout the country is their only meal of the day," shared Goldie Sternbuch, Director of Overseas Relations for Meir Panim. "We do our utmost to make their experience more than a meal. We try to sincerely care about their welfare and provide some socialization and stimulation as well."

Sternbuch explained the meaning

behind Meir Panim's restaurant-style soup kitchens. "The difference between what we do and a standard soup kitchen is that Meir Panim patrons walk in and sit down at a table. They are served their hot meal with a smile, just like one would be served in a restaurant," she said. "Except, their meal is free."

As the granddaughter of Holocaust survivors, Schachne moved to Israel for both "good, old-fashioned Zionism" and wanting to "live in a place where the Holocaust would never happen again."

She found seeing so many hungry people in Jerusalem shocking. "The people who come to Meir Panim have fallen on hard times," she said. "They are deserving of our respect and any assistance they need to prop them up. Meir Panim is providing them with high-quality food served with a warm heart and are feeding Jerusalem's hungry in a respectful and cheerful environment. "Seeing the work of Meir Panim and being a volunteer was very rewarding," said Schachne. "I always admire people who volunteer their time and energy to help those less fortunate."

Meir Panim work for the needy in Israel is supported by local dollars through the Jewish Federation of Reading's Israel Now campaign.

EVERYTHING'S RELATIVE

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BECCA
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BETH
The Realist

BERNIE
The Idealist

Yael
The Perplexed

LOUIS
The Rebel

ZAYDS
The Traditionalist

BUBS
The Bubbe

IF THE SUPERBOWL WERE JEWISH...

PLEDGE CARDS
I'M THINKIN' OF TWICE CHAI. AND YOU, BUBBE?

HALFTIME HORA

ROOT FOR WHOEVER IS RUNNING AWAY
GET OFF OF HIM, YOU BOLSHEVIK!

Growing peace in the Middle East

The olive oil business introduced Ayala Noy Meir, an Israeli, to Khaled Hasan Hussein Yaseen Al-Juneidi, a Palestinian. The two met four years ago through the “Olive Oil Without Borders” project, funded by the U.S. government. Workshops on olive oil production techniques united them. Their shared love for their profession helped them see how much they could learn from each other’s expertise.

Noy Meir says the workshops introduced her to Palestinian farmers and olive oil producers — people whom she had rarely met beforehand.

Together, they have learned about pre-harvesting, parasite control, supplementary irrigation and quality control through olive oil tasting seminars and other activities.

In 2013 the project supported an

agreement that allowed Israeli citizens to purchase Palestinian olive oil for the first time in a decade. As a result, Palestinian farmers increased their revenue by \$20 million in less than two years.

In the past five years, USAID has helped more than 2,600 Israeli and Palestinian growers produce better olive oil through the Without Borders project. Implemented by the Near East Foundation, the initiative unites olive farmers, mill operators and olive oil distributors through workshops that improve their farming skills to increase olive oil production and profits.

This project is one of dozens supported through USAID’s Conflict Management and Mitigation program.

“The olive branch is a symbol of peace in the world,” Al-Juneidi says. “My wish for this land is an olive peace.”



Social Action Films at RCOS

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom’s Social Action Committee has selected a variety of films that will be shown throughout the year. These films will provide information and stimulate discussion on hotly debated topics. Information on related local programs and agencies will be included. Each film is about an hour long. There will be time set aside for discussion.

SCREENING TIME	FILM	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION
Sunday, Jan, 21 1 p.m.	DIVIDE IN CONCORD	Activism Environmental Issues	The film chronicles Jean Hill’s three-year battle to ban single-service bottled water due to environmental concerns. This is a great example of how to advocate!!
Sunday, Feb. 18 1 p.m.	JUST EAT IT	Food Waste, Sustainability, Advocacy	We all love food, so how could we possibly be throwing nearly half of it away? This film looks at food waste from farm to retail to home. The filmmakers show how they survived for 6 months only on food that would otherwise have been thrown away.
Sunday, May 20 1 p.m.	Multiracial Identity	Multiracial identity and related societal issues	"Multiracial people are the fastest growing demographic in America, yet there is no official political recognition for mixed-race people." The concept of grouping people by race is merely a social construct This film explores the social, political, and religious impact of the multiracial movement and the lived experience of being multiracial

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom
invites your family and friends to

A Night at the Planetarium

Reading Public Museum Planetarium
Saturday, January 20, 2018 (no snow date)
5:00pm-7:00pm

5:00pm: Pizza and Pasta Dinner
5:45pm Havdalah
6:00pm: Planetarium Show



Please return this RSVP form with your check to the Temple payable to RCOS by Friday, Jan 12th. 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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TEL AVIV — Within a few weeks of starting their military service, many Israeli women head to a tailor to have their oversize uniforms altered to be more form-fitting or more fashionable. But a cadre of women soldiers instead is opting for flowing pants or a modest knee-length skirt. They are religiously observant recruits, and although they are eligible for a faith-based exemption, their numbers are growing.

All Israelis are drafted into the military at age 18, with a few exceptions. Israeli Arabs, both male and female, are not required to serve, and the same goes for the ultra-Orthodox. Young, religiously observant women, known in Israel as modern Orthodox, traditionally have opted to enroll in national service, volunteering in schools or the community for a year or two, instead of the military.

But that is changing. Since 2010, the Israel Defense Forces has recorded a surge in the number of religious women who want to serve. These figures have almost tripled, from 935 in 2010 to 2,499 last year — a welcome development for a military whose recent efforts to draft ultra-Orthodox men have been largely unsuccessful.

The IDF has become more flexible in accommodating modern-Orthodox women, who increasingly are choosing to serve in the military out of a sense of duty to defend Israel, military officials and soldiers say. But the path from a modest, observant life to the military is not easy. Within the modern-Orthodox community, many frown upon women who want to serve, even as men are encouraged to try out for the most competitive units. If women manage to overcome pressure within their family or community, they still face the challenge of practicing their faith while serving in a secular military. “I was the only person in my unit who observed Shabbat [the Sabbath], and I had no place to light my candles,” said Netta Asner.

But she said the hardest part of her military service was fulfilling her duties on a Friday night or Saturday . “The first time in my life that I picked up the phone

on a Saturday, I had to switch something in my brain,” said Asner, who served in the military spokesman’s unit from 2014 to 2016. “It was a very weird feeling.” She also opted to wear a skirt. “There were certain people in my neighborhood who did not approve of me choosing to serve, but my immediate family was supportive,” Asner said. She said her experience has inspired her two younger sisters to sign up.

Not every Orthodox woman’s story is as smooth. In Safed, Chief Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu has spoken out against allowing women to serve in certain combat units and is especially critical about drafting religious women. They will be corrupted, he said. “The belief that men and women are the same is popular but not accurate,” he said. “The beauty of the world is that there are different kinds of people, with different views, different assets and different strengths. If we put men and women together in the same operation, it makes the world unhealthy.”

And, he said, it is impossible for Orthodox women to remain religious and modest while in the military. Twenty-one-year-old Bat Tzion Michlashvili disagrees. She is one of only a handful of religious women serving in a mixed-gender combat unit. “All over the world, people have realized that whatever boys do, girls can do it, too,” said Michlashvili. “I don’t see why I should give up on doing what I love: sports and exercise.”

As for compromising her religious beliefs, Michlashvili said that if anything, the military has made her feel closer to her Judaism: “If I thought it was important before to defend Israel’s borders, now I am doing the things I learned about in the Torah, and I see my job as even more important.”

Women make up roughly a third of Israel’s military, compared with about 14 percent in the U.S. armed forces. They are required to serve two years, while the requirement for men is 32 months. Since the 1990s, women have been allowed to take on combat roles, and the IDF says that today around 90 percent of all military jobs are open to women. There



are three co-ed combat units.

Brig. Gen. Sharon Nir, the adviser on gender affairs to the IDF chief of staff, said that while it might have been difficult for Orthodox women to feel comfortable in uniform in the past, the military is becoming more accommodating. “These women have realized the army is a very important component of feeling part of Israeli society, and they want to contribute to the state,” Nir said. “They are religious Zionists — their brothers serve, and now they want to, too.”

In September, the army’s computer and communication unit launched a course for Orthodox women. The 23 women who signed up will spend 18 months studying computers, engineering and cyberwarfare and another 18 months in active service. “We need people in

these units,” said Maj. Hagit Kalef, who leads the program. “Future wars will not be fought on the battlefield but through technology. The brain is more important.”

A growing number of religious leaders have voiced support for religious women who want to serve in the military. “While Israel still has enemies all around it, it is the duty of every person, no matter if they are male, female, Jew or non-Jew, to serve the country,” said Rabbi Binyamin Lau, a modern-Orthodox rabbi in Jerusalem. “All the reasons given as to why women should not serve have nothing to do with religion. They are either based on principle or politics,” he said. “We need to support these girls while at the same time helping them remain religious.”

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DINNER AT 7:00 PM

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Contributions as of Dec. 15

Jewish Family Service

In honor of:
Herb Schneider’s 100th birthday – Louise Zeidman, Ruth Isenberg, Marcia and George Eligman, Cheryl and Eric Farber

Get well/speedy recovery:
Mariette Jacobson – Berna Shermam

In memory of:
Phyllis Mirsky (Rabbi Abelson's grandmother) – Carol and Gordon Perlmutter
Neal Shaffer – Cheryl and Eric Farber

Federation Jewish Community Campaign

In honor of:
Birth of Jim and Jackye Barrer’s granddaughter Jordyn Alexandra – Debbie Goodman and John Moyer
Bob and Beth Caster’s 40th anniversary – Sondra Levinson

Get well/speedy recovery:
Julian Syret – Lynn and Richard Gordon

In memory of:
Herb Wachs – Lynn and Richard Gordon
Phyllis Mirsky (Rabbi Abelson's grandmother) – Rob and Yvonne Oppenheimer, Debbie Goodman and John Moyer
Sam Silberstein – Annette and Sean Peppard
Irvin Berger (Lee Berger’s father) – Hilde Gernsheimer

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
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Doris Levin Fund	\$10
PJ Library Fund	\$10
Harry & Rose Sack Fund	\$10
Evelyn Thompson Fund	\$10

PJ Library Program

In memory of:
Herb Wachs – Michele and Ben Leisawitz

Jewish Cultural Center

In memory of:
Sam Silberstein – Marcia Byrne, Andrea and Scott Hassler, David and Christine Disssinger, Lawrence and Paulette Molin, Reading Eagle Company, Linda and Stanley Molin

Friendship Circle Fund

In honor of:
Herb Schneider’s 100th birthday – Sid and Esther Bratt, Jay and Evelyn Lipschutz, Margaret Levine

In memory of:
Herb Wachs – Glenn and Gaye Corbin
Sam Silberstein – Ethel Engel

Evelyn Thompson Nursery School Fund

In memory of:
Neal Shaffer – Selma Cutler and Family

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While there is not yet a cure for diabetes, many Israeli researchers and companies are offering improved approaches for avoiding, managing and treating the condition.

Diabetes is a chronic disease that occurs when the pancreas cannot make insulin – the hormone that regulates blood sugar — or when the body cannot make good use of the insulin it makes. As of 2015, approximately 415 million adults in the world have diabetes and that number is expected to rise to 642 million by 2040. At least 90 percent of cases are type 2 diabetes, characterized by insulin resistance and/or deficiency. In addition, more than 542,000 children in the world live with type 1 diabetes, an autoimmune condition where the body attacks its own insulin-making cells. Diabetes is the leading cause of heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, non-traumatic lower-limb amputations and new cases of blindness among adults. Those with diabetes have twice the normal risk of death; in 2014, diabetes was listed as the seventh leading cause of death in the United States.

Here are some significant diabetes developments reported in Israel in recent years.

1. Oramed Pharmaceuticals

Oramed Pharmaceuticals hopes to revolutionize the treatment of type 1 and type 2 diabetes through its proprietary oral insulin capsule developed through research at Jerusalem’s Hadassah Medical Center. Currently, insulin must be injected. The company has completed multiple Phase II clinical trials under an Investigational New Drug application with the US Food and Drug Administration. Oramed CEO Nadav Kidron participated in the 2017 Disruptive Growth Company Showcase NYC Conference in September in New York.

2. DarioHealth

Dario makes a personalized,

pocket-sized, all-in-one glucose meter coupled with a real-time mobile app to track, monitor and manage diabetes from a smartphone. This Caesarea-based digital health company recently received the CE Mark for its Lightning-enabled Dario Blood Glucose Monitoring System, which will enable European consumers to use the metering device on the latest Apple devices. The regulatory process is now starting in the U.S., Canada and Australia. The company’s new B2B2C platform, Dario Engage, helps healthcare providers in all aspects of user engagement for diabetic patients, including enrollment, coaching and ongoing communication.

3. Betalin Therapeutics

Betalin is developing an implantable engineered micro-pancreas (EMP) using a natural micro-scaffold and all the cellular components present in a natural pancreas. These cells reconstruct the body’s internal insulin-producing capability in accordance with the blood-sugar levels. Type 1 and severe type 2 diabetes patients implanted with the micro-pancreas would no longer need to monitor their blood-sugar levels. In preclinical studies in a mouse model of diabetes, approximately 70 percent of the mice in which the Betalin EMP was implanted did not need further insulin injections even for the longest period tested of 90 days after implantation. This early-stage company, spun out of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, won in the pharmaceuticals category at the Biomed Startup of the Year competition held by the Israel Innovation Authority at MIXii Biomed 2017 in Tel Aviv last May.

4. GlucoTrack

The GlucoTrack sensor clips onto your earlobe. A patented combination of ultrasonic, electromagnetic and thermal technologies works with a proprietary algorithm to measure physiological parameters correlated with glucose level. Results are

displayed within about a minute on a USB-connected handheld control unit, which also stores and compares previous readings. The number is announced verbally, facilitating use by elderly and vision-impaired people with type 2 diabetes or pre-diabetes.

Another Israeli company, Cnoga Medical, offers a prick-free glucometer that uses a camera to observe changing color shades of the user’s finger to give accurate results comparable to those of a fingerprick, following a short “training” period in which the device learns to correlate the user’s optical skin-tone characteristics with camera readings. The COG device is certified in Israel, Europe, New Zealand, Turkey, India, Philippines, Thailand, Brazil and China. A new clinical study is starting in Sao Paolo.

5. Sweetch

The Sweetch app, now in clinical trials at Johns Hopkins Medical Center in Maryland, predicts personal diabetes risk and encourages long-term behavioral change to prevent diabetes. According to the Tel Aviv-based company, 79 million American and 63 million EU adults are pre-diabetic; 70 percent of these will convert to diabetes within a decade. However, 150 active minutes per week has proven, in large clinical trials, to reduce pre-diabetes to diabetes conversion by 58 percent. Sweetch CEO Dana Chanan sais, “We see very promising initial meaningful clinical results in all three aspects — increased activity, weight loss and A1C [average blood-sugar level over three months] reduction.” Sweetch is talking with healthcare stakeholders in the United States and United Kingdom regarding future implementation of the app.

6. DreaMed Diabetes

DreaMed has two products: Advisor decision-support technology to optimize and fine-tune patient-specific insulin treatment plans (FDA and CE approval pending); and

Glucositter, the first artificial pancreas system to receive the CE Mark for sales in Europe. When integrated with an insulin pump, Glucositter provides round-the-clock monitoring of glucose levels and precise, real-time adjustment of insulin levels.

7. Nutrino Health

Nutrino Health, the digital healthcare Biomed Startup of the Year winner at MIXii 2017, has developed an app that creates a digital individualized FoodPrint using data from the user’s medical devices, wearables, activity sensors and other biological markers. Taking into account personal parameters such as allergies, food preferences and more, the system offers menus and foods especially adapted to the user, and helps diabetics understand how food affects the management of glucose levels in their blood. The free version of the app allows users to log food, exercise and medication and track these measures according to goals, taste preferences and dietary needs. They also receive access to personalized daily health tips.

8. DayTwo

DayTwo, based on groundbreaking research at Israel’s Weizmann Institute of Science, aims to help people avoid developing diabetes by predicting individualized blood-glucose response to thousands of different foods and meals based on gut microbiome analysis and other personal parameters. DayTwo currently is running trials with the Mayo Clinic and other institutions, while the product is fully commercial in Israel and US. International Chief Commercial Officer Amir Golan tells ISRAEL21c that the UK and Canada are the next potential markets. Meanwhile, the company is working with professional athletes to control blood-sugar levels and is partnering with two diabetes medical centers in Israel as well as dieticians in Israel and the U.S..

How thousands of Arabs are getting into high-tech fields

He didn't know anyone. Hailing from a northern Israeli-Arab village, Karim Fanadka wanted to break into hi-tech but had no connections – until one friend got hired. “Every day I was calling my friend [at Amdocs]. So finally he said, ‘Leave me alone. I will arrange something – an interview.’ And I got a job there.”

Today, Fanadka, 32, works at Micro Focus (formerly run by HP), where he supervises some 50 engineers at an office in Yehud. He's been in hi-tech for 10 years and when he started, in 2007, there were only some 300 Arab engineers in the industry. Today, there are an estimated 5,000 Arab computer programmers and software engineers employed across Israel.

He also volunteers with a group called Tsafen, which seeks to get more Israeli-Arabs into hi-tech, visiting high schools and encouraging Arab pupils to study STEM (science, technology, engineering and math). “We need to help each other. We [Arabs] are a small community and we don't help each other enough,” he said.

While only 3 percent of the high-tech workforce nationwide is Arab, more than 20 percent of Israelis identify as such. That's where Tsafen comes into the picture, and it seeks to bridge the gap and get more underrepresented minorities into the lucrative and demanding profession.

Young Israeli-Arab entrepreneurs often face greater challenges finding work at start-ups – many fledgling firms employ only a handful of engineers, mostly buddies who met in the army intelligence or the prestigious unit 8200. Only about 90 start-ups in Israel are run by Arabs – some 40 of them in the northern Arab city of Nazareth alone – while there are at least 5,000 start-ups nationwide.

That often leaves multinational companies, which have affirmative action policies that prioritize diversity, as the best way to break into the industry.

“It's such a role model for young people, boys and girls, to see the Microsoft sign in Nazareth, see high-tech in their neighborhood, in their

backyard. It's a huge change,” said Hans Shakur, an entrepreneur and Tsafen consultant, commenting on how MNCs like Broadcom and Amdocs have opened up shop in Nazareth, with further high-tech industrial parks planned. “You cannot imagine what you cannot see.”

In terms of getting hired, many employers may prefer former soldiers who gained battle-tested skills in the field over Arab college graduates who offer classroom knowledge. Other problems arise from skeptical – and sometimes racist – interviewers who are not used to interacting with Arabs professionally or personally.

“There are so many obstacles,” said Avital Yanovsky, business development director for Tsafen. “If somebody did 8200 for six years in the army, of course you can't compare it to someone who only got experience in university or a mentorship program. And most of the Israeli hi-tech is in the center of Israel while most of the Arab workforce is in the north.”

Even right-leaning politicians who

may squabble with Arab politicians are jumping on the bandwagon, with Education Minister Naftali Bennett receiving more funding for computer science programming in Arab schools as a way to grow and strengthen the Israeli economy.

Israel is expected to face a shortage of some 10,000 high-tech employees in the next decade, according to a report last month by the Israel Innovation Authority, compelling the country to tap into its untapped Arab and ultra-Orthodox, or haredi, workforce. The Innovation Authority and private groups also provide special subsidies to start-up entrepreneurs who hail from both those sectors.

“[Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu knows and understands that there is no future for the Israeli economy without the Arabs and haredim,” said Abed Kanaaneh of the left-wing, co-existence NGO Sikkuy — criticizing the prime minister for his right-wing rhetoric against Arabs. “You can say a lot about him, but on economics, he knows what to do.”

Take a tour of Israel's new solar-energy valley in the desert

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Four Eiffel Towers could be built with the 28,000 tons of steel being used by Negev Energy to construct the Ashalim Thermo-Solar Power Station in Israel's Negev Desert. Spread flat over 988 acres of sand, the array is nevertheless an impressive sight that tourists will be able to view from a platform after the plant opens next summer.

The Negev Energy project is one of two gigantic thermo-solar plants going up side by side in Ashalim. The other one actually does incorporate a tall tower.

In addition to these two plants generating electricity from the sun's heat using different technologies, two other plants will produce a total of 70 megawatts of electricity from sunlight using photovoltaic panels. The combination of technologies in one spot is unprecedented in the world.

Altogether, the Ashalim complex will provide approximately 300 megawatts of electricity daily to the Israel Electric Company's national grid, contributing 2.5 percent toward the government's goal of 10 percent renewable energy by 2020. Currently, only 2.6 percent of Israel's electricity is generated from renewable sources.

“I think that Ben-Gurion is turning over in his grave, but from joy,” comments Eran Doron, head of the Ramat Hanegev Regional Council in whose jurisdiction Ashalim lies. Doron is referring to a 1955 speech by first Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, spelling out his vision for scientific innovation arising from the Israeli desert. Large-scale

water desalination and solar-energy generation were central to his dream and both are happening.

The Negev Energy's \$1.1 billion project said to be the largest energy project in Israel and one of the largest renewable energy projects in the world. The 121-megawatt plant's 16,224 parabolic troughs, fitted with half a million mirrors (cleaned twice weekly), will collect the sun's heat from any angle and transfer it through 203 kilometers of glass-insulated steel pipes that absorb the radiation. The radiation will heat thermal oil flowing through the pipes to 390 degrees Celsius. The hot oil will then turn water into steam to drive a turbine generating enough power for 60,000 homes. The net effect will be equivalent to taking 50,000 vehicles off the road, preventing emissions of some 245,000 tons of carbon dioxide. The plant will operate up to 18 hours per day, even in cloudy weather and after dark, using a molten salt heat-exchange and storage system to keep the oil hot. Some natural gas will be used as well.

The plant uses a combination of field-tested Israeli and foreign innovations. For example, the mirrors are imported from Spain, the oil from the United States and the insulated pipes are made by a company in Beit Shemes. “This is a game-changer,” said Negev Energy CEO Didi Paz. “It's the first time this proven technology is being used in Israel. Israel was one of the pioneers in developing the science behind thermo-solar technology, especially at the Weizmann Institute 30 or 40 years ago. But Israel lagged behind in applying the



technology.”

The companion to the Negev Energy installation is a 110-watt thermo-solar station consisting of 50,000 computer-controlled heliostat mirrors that concentrate the sun's heat onto a boiler atop a 250-meter tower.

Yuval Saragusty, Negev Energy's manager of energy, health, safety and security, oversees sustainability on site. His crew made 26 small-animal crossings, relocated rare desert plants and will restore truckloads of topsoil removed in construction. So as not to disturb animals active after dark, the plant won't have perimeter lights. Although there's no avoiding the intensive natural-resource consumption of any power plant – even one producing clean, green energy — the Ashalim project meets advanced international environmental standards, said Paz.

The thermal oil will be fully recycled, while the water (1.6 million cubic meters

annually, mainly from desalination plants) will be recycled as much as possible. Water that has gotten too salty from repeated recycling and evaporation will be released into two evaporation ponds rather than into the two streams bordering the plant.

The project also strives for social responsibility, Paz noted. About 300 of the more than 1,000 employees in the construction phase come from the neighboring Bedouin village of Bir Hadaj. All the schoolchildren of Bir Hadaj have toured the site and learned how the technology works. “We are giving preference to residents of the South. More than half of our employees now are residents of the Negev,” Paz said. “We are doing everything possible to make them benefit from the project by training and employing them.” About 60 workers will operate and maintain the plant during its 25 years of private operation.

Israeli sustainable development resolution adopted at U.N.

The United Nations has adopted an Israeli resolution to utilize agricultural technology for sustainable development. Israel will head efforts to assist agriculture worldwide through the analysis of satellite images derived from its Venus satellite.

The resolution was passed in the UN Second Committee, which deals with economic, financial and development issues. There were 124 countries voting in favor of Israel's proposal, while 37 abstained.

Israel's Rafael Advanced Defense Systems produced the satellite's

innovative electric propulsion system, and defense electronics contractor Elbit Systems provided advanced high-resolution cameras that will enable the satellite to better monitor the earth's vegetation and any changes on the ground.

Venus is Israel's first climate monitoring satellite. It takes images of 110 agricultural areas in Israel once every two days and its high-resolution cameras allow researchers to detect even the slightest changes in the environment.

Israel's Ambassador to the UN

Danny Danon called the achievement “a victory for Israeli innovation”. “Today's resolution is not only about agricultural technology,” Danon said. “It is about improving the lives and livelihoods of millions of people across the developing world.”

The Israeli Mission to the United Nations said the resolution was adopted after “complex diplomatic efforts” made over several months, and that the resolution marks a “diplomatic achievement for Israel” in light of the efforts made by Arab countries to prevent it from passing.

“Israeli innovation beats the UN's hypocrisy,” Danon added. “It is quite ironic that the group of nations blocking a consensus on this resolution is the same group who would benefit from it most – the Arab group.” “The need for agricultural technology in the Middle East is undeniable,” he said. “Yet, as we are all painfully aware, these governments continuously put politics before people and pride before progress.” The Israeli resolution promotes making agricultural technology more accessible in areas stricken by poverty, drought and hunger.