

# Shalom 06|26

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

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## Israeli soldiers get warm welcome in Reading

**By Adi Shalev Smitheman**  
*Program Director*

On the week of April 20, our community was fortunate to welcome R, E, and A—three brave soldiers from Israel.

R, 39 years old, lives in Rosh HaAyin, is married, and is a father of two. A former emissary of The Jewish Agency for Israel and Hillel International, R has been serving in the reserves since Oct. 7, 2023, as a liaison officer to government ministries.

E, 22 years old, is from Beersheba. In March 2022, he enlisted in the Givati Brigade. After completing eight months of training, he attended the company commander course and became a commander in advanced training, entering the officers' course in August 2023. Just three weeks after stepping into his role as a company officer in the 424th 'Shaked' Battalion, E was wounded by a bullet in the leg. Despite his injury, he is determined to return to service as soon as his medical condition allows. In the meantime, he began his studies at Reichman University on Oct. 25.

A, 26 years old, lives in Usfiya. Coming from a Zionist Druze family with a proud military heritage, A is a major in the Golani Brigade. He joined the IDF in 2018 and has since held numerous command positions. Seven months ago, A was injured in Gaza and has been in rehabilitation ever since. He is set to begin his academic studies at the end of the year. Before his military service, he was a dedicated soccer player for 12 years.

The soldiers visited our community in honor of Yom HaZikaron (Israel's Memorial Day) and Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel's Independence Day). We were proud to be one of 47 Jewish communities across North America to host the Shlichim B'Madim (Soldiers in Uniform) program. This year, all program participants were wounded soldiers who came to share their personal journeys of resilience and recovery.

During their stay, the soldiers participated in a meaningful four-day itinerary across our community:

- **Day One (Yom HaZikaron Eve):** R, E, and A shared their personal connections to this solemn day. Their moving and powerful talks gave us a profound understanding of how Yom HaZikaron is truly felt and commemorated in Israel.

- **Day Two:** The day began with a presentation at the Highlands, followed by a deeply moving visit with Holocaust survivor Esther Bratt. We then moved to the JCC for an open community lecture, followed by a visit to the Hebrew school. In the evening, the soldiers met with the JFR board and leadership.

- **Day Three (Yom Ha'atzmaut):** We celebrated Israel's Independence Day at Chabad, where the soldiers warmly



Highlights of a visit by honored guests from Israel to the area in April. Top, at the Highlands, middle, with Hebrew school students, and above with local teens.

engaged with community members.

- **Day Four:** The soldiers enjoyed lunch with our seniors at the Friendship Circle. In the evening, they held a powerful and meaningful program with our teens, engaging in an open dialogue filled with many interesting questions. The teens and soldiers connected so beautifully, talking and playing ball together that the program flew by and lasted for over two hours.

- **Day Five:** Calvary Church in Lancaster welcomed the soldiers with open

arms. R, E, and A shared their personal stories and answered many questions from the audience. They were deeply grateful to connect with the non-Jewish community and felt their warm support.

Everyone who met R, E, and A was deeply moved by their courage, recovery, and insights into daily life in Israel. Each of them has served their country in a profoundly meaningful way, risking their lives for the safety of the State of Israel.

**Continued on Page 4**

# Looking back at an eventful year

# Development

**By Richard Bradbury**  
*Director of Development*

Happy June, Shalom readers! I hope you are enjoying the springtime weather. No allergies here, but I live with someone who suffers terribly with seasonal allergies. While I revel in the open windows and time spent outside, they are sniffing, tearing up and nursing headaches. So sorry if you are an allergies sufferer.



I have reached a significant milestone here at Jewish Federation. As of June, I have been serving as your Development Director for one year! It is so surprising that one year went by so quickly. My predecessor, Laurie Waxler, used to call her monthly *Shalom* column "My Learning Curve." I never created a name for my column, but truthfully this has been a year of learning. Learning about holidays and commemorations, pronouncing phrases in Hebrew, names of our community members, office procedures, equipment, new software programs, phone systems, *Shalom* deadlines and when NOT TO send emails. It was, and in some cases still is, a lot to take in — and retain!

The above paragraph may have sounded a like a "pity party," but I happily assure you it has been quite the opposite! Joining Jewish Federation and learning from so many has been a privilege and an honor. The past and current staff at Jewish Federation have taught me so much! I've worked with two CEO's since my arrival, each with special talents, skills and personalities and it has always been an opportunity to learn.

I work alongside the kindest, most helpful, intelligent and patient group of women. If I did not have them as my mentors, historians, proofreaders, walking databases, language and Judaica protocol consultants, techno-digital wizards and cultural authorities, I would have been totally lost.

This last year has been filled with so many opportunities that I either a) always wanted to experience, or b) experienced something I never thought I would be interested in learning about. How fortunate we all are to have a local Jewish Federation that boasts a treasure trove of opportunities and events for all ages and interests — even for this old guy of German/Viking descent!

In my one little year I have been in the company of 12 published authors, film directors, a former U.S. ambassador, geo-political professors, leaders and professionals. I've listened and learned with great enthusiasm to three rabbis, art historians, Jewish theater professionals, musicians, Judaica anthropologists and scholars and health care professionals.

With you, our community, I broke bread as we celebrated joyful holidays. I shared in grief and reflection during solemn and meaningful commemorations. I stood with you in Reading City Park as we watched Israel's flag raised alongside the flag of the United States. I beamed and applauded proudly at commemorations received from Reading's City Council. I met you during programs and lectures, shared meals with you at Friendship Circle and ran into you at the grocery store, while dining out or at the theater. Thank you for making me feel so welcome; I have enjoyed every meeting and interaction. It has been my pleasure and honor to be a member of the tapestry that is the Reading/Berks Jewish Community.

Some of my most impactful experiences of the last year involved spending time with, getting to know and understanding guests visiting from Israel. Meeting Adi Shalev Smitheman's mother and older sister was such a treat, and hearing her sister Moran

speaking from firsthand experience about Israel's humanitarian aid to Gaza during the war was simultaneously heartbreaking and fulfilling. I also had the "best day" spending the day with Adi's little girl, Ella. Such a sweetheart! She no longer lives in Israel, but she was born there!

One of the highlights of the year was meeting our three honored guests from Israel. Meeting them (after 15 hours of travel and still so interested, charming and polite), getting to know them in a casual setting, then hearing stories of their service, injuries and struggles, recovery and determination was something I will not forget. As they relaxed during their time with us, they transformed from ambassadors and emissaries to friends deserving of our appreciation for protecting their people and homeland.

Lastly, please accept my thanks for your continued generosity to the Federation. Nothing I mentioned, every program — every occasion — every gathering, that we have all enjoyed and benefited from, would have been possible without your commitment and financial support!

Right now, the paper and print you touch and read is not only for you but happens because of you! You are the engine that keeps these fascinating, meaningful, celebratory and educational events happening.

If you have already given or made a pledge to the 2026 Annual Campaign, please accept our sincere gratitude. If you haven't made your contribution to your Jewish Federation, please consider making your gift or pledge today. It's as easy as a phone call (610-921-0624) or an email ([info@jfreading.org](mailto:info@jfreading.org)) or visiting our website at [ReadingJewishCommunity.org](http://ReadingJewishCommunity.org). And always feel free to contact me directly at [richardb@jfreading.org](mailto:richardb@jfreading.org).

Recently you received a letter and membership form for your JCC (Jewish Cultural Center). Membership rates remain unchanged from previous years, and of course with your membership,



*Richard Bradbury with Adi Shalev-Smitheman and Rabbi Brian Michelson during the MLK Day of Service in January, one of the Federation development director's many meaningful experiences during his first year in the post.*

you receive your JCC calendar for 2026-2027!

- Would you like an extra calendar for work, a vacation home or a friend? They are only \$15.
  - Or consider sponsoring a special month to send holiday wishes to your friends and community. Sponsoring one month in the JCC calendar is only \$100 — and you get to pick your month! First come — first served!
  - On the same form is another opportunity for you to make your contribution to the 2026 Annual Campaign.
  - Let Federation help you create a recurring donation, spreading your generous gift across the remaining months of 2026!
  - Make a pledge that will not be due until mid-November.
- Your entire community, including the amazing work of Jewish Family Service, benefits from your generosity.
- Wishing you a wonderful summer 2026! Please come celebrate and mingle at Federation Happy Hours on July 7 and Aug. 19.

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



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Please visit [ReadingJewishCommunity.org](http://ReadingJewishCommunity.org)

**Make your gift today!**

## Annual Campaign 2026



**Make your pledge or donate today!**

**Two ways to make your pledge:**

- 1) Complete the form in this ad and mail it.
- 2) Email your Development Director, Richard Bradbury, at [richardb@jfreading.org](mailto:richardb@jfreading.org) with "pledge" in the subject line.

**Mail this form to: Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks**  
1100 Berkshire Blvd., Suite 125  
Wyomissing, PA 19610

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Pledge Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

A Message from the CEO

# Transparency about Federation money — Just the facts, Jack!

**By Cindy Gerber Tomlinson**  
Chief Executive Officer



So, where does the money that donors contribute to the Federation actually go? Let's get into the facts — just the facts. To dispel any rumors, assumptions or otherwise, I want to be very clear about what happens to your dollars when you donate to the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks. The great majority of our funds are spent in Reading/Berks to support our Jewish community. Only 4%, yes, 4%, of the 2025 Annual Campaign dollars went to Israel.

The operating budget of the JFR is composed of funds from the campaign, plus 4.5% of the funds held by the Foundation of the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks. This income goes toward running programs, most of which are pure expense and hardly offset by any very small amount of income related to the event.

Speakers' fees, food, venue rental and program operational expenses are all large expenditures. Think "Rachel's Mandolin," for example. This incredible duo came to Reading from Boston and wowed the large audience with their musical prowess and storytelling, making us feel as if we were right there at Auschwitz, watching Rachel play her mandolin in the Womens' Orchestra for the Nazi guards. The Federation hosted the musicians from Duo Mantar and paid their travel expenses, food, lodging and a performance fee. The WCR Center for the Arts space was the perfect venue, with world class acoustics, but there was a price for renting it for the evening.

Although we would like to find sponsors for this type of great cultural experience, we were not able to, aside from the generosity of Glenn Corbin, who placed an ad in the program. This was an expensive evening for the Federation, and well worth it.

In 2025, the Federation received \$464,625 from the Annual Campaign plus the Passover Campaign. Thank you so very much for the generosity and trust of our donors — we could not exist without you. So far in 2026, we have received \$25,000 of the \$443,000 budgeted for the Annual Campaign. We have a long way to go!

What are your thoughts about contributing to this year's campaign? How do you feel about your Federation? Do you believe that your quality of life is better because of us? Do you feel a greater connection to being Jewish as a result of our programs and events? Do you perceive Federation as doing a good job in terms of representing the Reading/Berks Jewish community within the Greater Berks County community? Are we representing you well when we go to City Council meetings and interact with City and County officials?

Did you know that, thanks to Mayor Eddie Moran, we had the first ever Israeli Independence Day acknowledgement and flag raising in City Park, and this will happen every year from now on? Were you proud when we received the Commendation for Jewish History Month from City Council? What about the Spirit of Civility Award we received from Common Ground USA with our partner, Alvernia University, for our Interfaith Dialogue program?

Are you aware of the workshop on Combatting Antisemitism that we held for our teenagers and their parents that was facilitated by the Anti-

Defamation League (ADL)? What about the support we are providing to our local school leadership in helping to educate students about hate and antisemitism and raising awareness among students who do not know any better when they cause emotional or other harm to our Jewish children and teenagers? Not to mention the approximately 50 programs we have run for our Jewish community since January.

How about the 302,000 pounds of food that we distributed to almost 8500 people at our food pantries in 2025, or the 100 clients that JFS takes care of with hospital visits, doctor appointments, utility bills, taxi service, finding affordable housing, job application support, and elder life planning?

So, do the majority of the funds we raise go to Israel? NO. It stays here. Right here. In Berks County. Only 4% of these funds go to Israel — and they are sent to two organizations: Meir Panim and Yemin Orde.

What are these groups and what do they do?

Meir Panim is a nonprofit organization in Israel dedicated to fighting poverty and providing immediate and long-term relief to vulnerable populations across Israel. Its name — which translates to "brighten faces" — reflects its mission to feed and support the needy while preserving their dignity and self-respect.

Yemin Orde is a youth village atop Mount Carmel in northern Israel that serves as a 24/7 safe haven, residential high school, and home for at-risk and immigrant youth. It provides a comprehensive,

therapeutic environment for children who have experienced trauma, poverty, or family instability. In 2025, the Federation sent a total of \$18,000, or just under 4%, of the total 2025 campaign revenue to these two nonprofits in Israel.

Does the JFR give money to the Israeli government? NO. Absolutely not. The Federation takes no political position regarding Israel, nor does it support anything other than these two humanitarian organizations. Does the Federation keep the money it receives from donations here at home, in Berks County? YES. 96% of the funds raised and received stay right here to run our programs, pay our staff, keep the lights on, liaise with the non-Jewish community, serve the population living under the poverty line, unify our community across our three congregations, and enhance the lives of the people in our Jewish Community.

As you consider giving to the 2026 Annual Campaign, please keep these facts in mind. We are here to serve YOU. Please support us so that we may continue to provide outstanding programming and services to our Jewish community and beyond and continue to evolve with the needs of our collective.

As always, I look forward to answering any questions you may have and listen to your ideas and suggestions. We cannot provide you with what you desire and what you need if you don't communicate back to us. Participate in making our Jewish community what you dream it can be. Call, text, email or visit me. Cindy 610-223-3983 cindygt@jfreading.org .

## Shalom

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

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



# GUESTS FROM ISRAEL

## Continued from Page 1

It was incredibly important for them to come here and speak with us. They understand the vital bond between Israel and Jewish communities worldwide, and felt a deep responsibility to share the truth of their personal experiences.

We hope to continue this wonderful program in 2027. If you would like to be a part of it, please mark your calendars for the week of Yom HaZikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut. This visit left a lasting impact on everyone involved, and we look forward to bringing even more community members together in future years.



Honored guests from Israel join members of the community at Chabad for an observance of Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's independence day.



Left, Adi Shalev-Smitheman leads a program for Yom HaZikaron, Israel's memorial day. Right, a program at Calvary Church in Lancaster, among the activities in which honored guests from Israel were involved.



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Don't miss out on this opportunity to grow your business. Contact Amanda Wertz now to secure your ad space!

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[wyo-opto.com](http://wyo-opto.com)

# A very busy spring around the community



Community members gather for the Next Gen Happy Hour on May 3.



On May 11, Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks received commendations from Reading City Council in recognition of Jewish American Heritage Month and Israel's Independence Day, Yom Ha'atzmaut. We are building a positive and collaborative relationship with the city through Jewish Community Relations Council.



It was a great evening of coping and laughter. Thank you to Benji Lovitt for coming to Reading and sharing humor during challenging times.



The ladies of the JULIET (Just Us Ladies Into Eating Together) enjoyed a nice lunch at the Wyomissing Family Restaurant.



Cindy Schweich Handler, author of "A German Jew's Triumph," takes part in a May 13 Literatour Berks event.



Facilitators from the Anti-Defamation League led an engaging workshop for teens and their parents, providing practical tools and strategies to recognize and respond to antisemitism, bias, and hate in their everyday lives.



There's been plenty going on at Chabad. At left, arrangements of many different flowers and colors brought out participants' creative sides and made for a really enjoyable and fun evening together. At right, family fun at the Lag B'Omer barbecue. Other activities included the Garden Party and a Shuk-style market event as part of Federation's Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration. And Chabad Hebrew School wrapped up its year with kids showcasing the lessons they learned. The Tzedakah money collected every Sunday will be going to Chayal el Chayal, a group that takes care of people from all over the world who fight in the Israeli army from home, taking care of their every need.



# JUNE 2026

Upcoming events offered by the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks (listed as JCC, JFS, JFR), Keshet Zion Synagogue (KZ), Reform Congregation Oheb Shalom (RCOS), and Chabad-Lubavitch of Berks (Chabad). To learn more about any event listed here, read articles throughout the Shalom or see our online calendar at [readingjewishcommunity.org/calendar](http://readingjewishcommunity.org/calendar). Contact 610.921.0624 or [info@jfreaing.org](mailto:info@jfreaing.org) with questions.

SUN	MON	TUE
	01	02 Romeo Club - 12:00 PM at Paolo's
07 RCOS Annual Meeting - 10 AM at RCOS	08 JCC Arts, Culture, Ideas - 1:30 PM at The Highlands	09
14	15	16
21 Father's day	22 Movie Monday, "The Angel" - 1:00 PM at JCC	23 American Scripture Project - 10:30 AM at JCC
28	29	30

# SIVAN - TAMMUZ, 5786

WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<p>03</p> <p><b>RCOS Membership Happy Hour</b></p> <p><b>Juliet lunch meet- 12:00 PM at Wyomissing Family Restaurant</b></p>	<p>04</p> <p><b>JFS Friendship Circle - 1 PM at JCC</b></p>	<p>05</p>	<p>06</p>
<p>10</p> <p><b>Literatour Berks "Fear No Pharaoh" - 12 PM at JCC</b></p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> <p><b>Tot Shabbat - 10 AM at RCOS</b></p>
<p>17</p>	<p>18</p> <p><b>JFS Friendship Circle - 1 PM at JCC</b></p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>



Oheb Sholom

Kesher Zion

National Days/ Holidays

# Keeping the memories

**By Carole Robinson**  
*Jewish Family Service*

Many of my friends and community members are downsizing to smaller homes or moving to retirement communities, locally and out of town. They are all faced with a similar dilemma — what to do with all their belongings!



We all tend to accumulate things over the years, some of us more than others. My family thinks of me as somewhat of a hoarder. I keep what brings me joy — my mother’s crystal, my children’s favorite books and toys, jigsaw puzzles, porcelain teacups, art supplies, etc. My list is rather extensive, so I guess I’m very happy! However, I admit that I also tend to keep everything that might be useful at some point in the unknown future.

The bottom line is that I don’t need all of it! And neither do you! If you are ready to declutter or downsize, here are some questions to consider:

- Do you use it regularly?
- Does it have any real value or practical purpose?
- Does it have sentimental value?

## Options for donating

If you have a large quantity of items to donate and would like them picked up, the following list may prove helpful to you:

Where to give	Donations Accepted
Rudden Family Foundation	Furniture, household goods, appliances Joe@TRFFoundation.org or 610-207-9251
Opportunity House/Opp Shop	Extensive list at opphouse.org or call 484-957-3861
Habitat for Humanity ReStore	Furniture, appliances, housewares, building materials 610-921-1315
Salvation Army	Clothing, furniture, household goods, appliances 610-373-5208

You might be thinking, “What about my kids? What if they want something?” Or more realistically, if they’re like my kids, “How will I feel if they don’t want my stuff?” Consider if you actually care about the stuff or is it the story associated with the thing? Think about ways to preserve the story for your family. It may be as simple as taking photos of your cherished item(s) and sharing its history.

After you figure out what to keep, you need to decide what to toss, what to sell, and what to donate. If it’s broken, outdated, or no longer useful, throw it away. If an item has value, you can consider selling it through an auctioneer, Facebook Marketplace, or a consignment shop. And if you are ready to donate clothing and household items, I have some recommendations for you.

Jewish Family Service has a partnership with another local nonprofit — CommunityAid. They accept donations of new and used clothing, accessories, toys, household items, decorations and linens. JFS receives credit for donations of clothing and accessories, either made at our donation bin in our parking lot or at their store located at 5370 Allentown Pike in Muhlenberg Township. Please use our partner #50100 when donating at their store.

See the accompanying list for other places that will pick up our donations.

In the end, downsizing is not about what we give away, but what we carry forward — our memories, our values, our relations, our tradition. Letting go can make room for new beginnings!

## Braving rain to feed community



*A rainy JFS food pantry on May 6. Allison Althouse and Ryan Spengler. At right, Sharon Gernsheimer.*

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

Many thanks to our May Food Pantry heroes who distributed food in the rain to over 600 households.

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Alison Althouse    | Annette Peppard |
| Mary Anne Avins    | Jenn Reilly     |
| Marc Filstein      | Mike Robinson   |
| Sharon Gernsheimer | Susan Rundle    |
| Patty Hartman      | Mike Schein     |
| Katie Huey         | Ellen Schwartz  |
| John Incledon      | Paul Schwartz   |
| Pete Jacobson      | Russ Shanahan   |
| Sid Lempiner       | Ryan Spengler   |
| Alan Levine        | Oleg Umanov     |
| Lisa Levine        |                 |



# Derby Day at Friendship Circle



Friendship Circle was just horsin' around for our Kentucky Derby themed lunch!. The group meets twice a month with fun and educational programs and great fellowship. See the upcoming schedule below.

## FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE

### June 4- "Everybody's Birthday Party "

Come celebrate with your friends. Fun and games and cake for all!

### June 18- "Chair Yoga"



Discover your new favorite exercise with Jane Marie Klipman. Improve your flexibility, strength, balance and overall well-being with chair yoga.



Friendship Circle is held twice a month on Thursday afternoons at 1:00 p.m at the JCC. An optional lunch is served, followed by an entertaining or educational program or holiday celebration.

Programs are free; optional lunch is \$7. Contact Carole at 610-921-0624 to make lunch reservations.



June-Sivan★ Tammuz	
 Shabbat Candle Lightings	 Torah Portions
June 5 8:13 p.m.	June 6/21 Sivan Behalotecha (Numbers 8:1-12:16)
June 12 8:16 p.m.	June 13/28 Sivan Shlach (Numbers 13:1-15:41)
June 19 8:19 p.m.	June 20/5 Tammuz Korach (Numbers 16:1-18:32)
June 26 7:34 p.m.	June 27/12 Tammuz Chukat-Balak (Numbers 19:1-25:9)

# Respond to antisemitism with Jewish pride

By Rabbi Yosef Lipsker  
Chabad Center of Berks County

I have lived in Berks County for three decades as an openly observant Jew. I walk through the streets wearing my yarmulke and my tzitzit, visible and clearly identifiable as Jewish. Recently, I received a letter suggesting I consider removing my yarmulke in public due to rising antisemitism. That letter sparked an important conversation about fear, identity, and Jewish pride.



We are living in a time when antisemitism is no longer hidden. It appears openly online, on campuses, in public discourse, and sometimes

even in places where Jews once felt completely secure. Many people are understandably afraid, for themselves, for their children, and for their future.

But hiding who we are cannot be the answer.

If Jews become ashamed, or afraid to visibly express their identity, then antisemitism has already achieved part of its goal. Jewish survival throughout history has never come from concealment but from resilience and pride.

At the same time, fear is real and must be acknowledged. Some people are deeply anxious about expressing their Judaism openly. Fear is not irrational just because others do not share it. It is human, emotional and deserves compassion.

We must therefore hold two truths

at once: we must not surrender our identity to fear, and we must not dismiss those who are struggling with fear. Courage is not the absence of fear, it is moving forward while refusing to be defined by it.

After 30 years in Berks County, I remain convinced that the response to hatred is not less Judaism, but more Jewish pride, more Jewish visibility and more Jewish unity, expressed with quiet confidence, not arrogance.

It is also important to recognize the extraordinary work of the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks and community leaders who have spent years building bridges across our county. Their efforts have led to meaningful relationships, public solidarity, proclamations of support and moments such as the raising of the Israeli flag in City Park — signs of genuine partnership that should not be taken for granted.

Berks County is in many ways unique. It reflects what can happen when communities invest in relationships over generations. That legacy is real, and it matters.

At the same time, we have work to do within ourselves. Jewish pride does not happen automatically. It grows through learning, through engagement in Jewish life, through mitzvot and through reconnecting with our heritage. As we come from Shavuot, the moment of receiving the Torah, we are reminded that Jewish

identity is sustained through continual renewal.

In the aftermath of October 7, something else has become visible as well. Many Jews who once kept their identity quiet or private suddenly found themselves reconnecting in ways they never had before. Some who previously felt distant from Jewish practice began putting up mezuzahs, attending services, or expressing a sense of Jewish pride they had not previously felt. Tragedy awakened connection. Fear awakened belonging. And identity, for many, became something more openly embraced.

That moment must not fade.

The challenge now is to transform that awakening into something lasting: a Judaism lived with confidence, visibility, and pride. Not out of fear alone, but out of commitment. Not in reaction only, but in conviction.

My wearing a yarmulke is not the point, and it is not the reason one should or should not. It is not a reaction to the moment or to external circumstances. Rather, it reflects something more fundamental: a sense of identity that stands on its own. The reason to live visibly and proudly as a Jew should not depend on fear, pressure, or current events, but on a steady and enduring connection to who we are.

Our future will be shaped not by how well we hide, but by how proudly we live.

## JFS TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

This program provides transportation to members of the Jewish community, age 60 and over or those with disabilities, who have no other way of getting around. It allows participants to retain their independence and keeps them from becoming homebound and isolated. It can be used for medical appointments, synagogue attendance, shopping and other errands.

It is easy. Purchase a book of 25 taxi tickets from the Federation at a cost of \$25. Each coupon is worth \$3. The phone number for Reading Metro Taxi is on the ticket book. Call the company and arrange your ride. At the end of the ride, sign your coupon(s) before giving them to the driver. Tipping is left to the passenger's discretion. Coupon does not include cost of tipping.

*Program subsidized by  
The Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks*

## It's Summertime!

Clean out your closet and donate your gently used clothes to CommunityAid in our parking lot bin to help Jewish Family Service support those in need in Reading/Berks.



 Jewish Federation  
of Reading/Berks  
1100 Berkshire Blvd  
Wyomissing, PA 19610

JEWISH FEDERATION INVITES YOU TO

# Summer Happy Hour

Tuesday, July 7  
The Bar Cart  
713 Penn Ave. West Reading

COMPLIMENTARY APPETIZERS

CASH BAR

5:30-7:30 PM



The Bar Cart is Open exclusively for our event  
All are welcome



June 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>  
Berks County Evening  
Minyan @KZ  
All are welcome!  
7:00PM - 7:20PM



June 19<sup>th</sup>  
Kabbalat Shabbat  
6:30PM

For more information email us at  
keshetzionoffice@gmail.com  
or call (610) 374-1763

**Federation Honorarium-Memorial Card Information**

Please mail your payment with complete information to the Jewish Federation, 1100 Berkshire Blvd., Suite 125, Wyomissing 19610, or bring to the Jewish Cultural Center at the same address. You may set up a "savings account" for the purpose of sending cards. Please contact the Federation at 610-921-0624 for further information.

**Contributions as of May 15**

**Jewish Federation**

In memory of:  
**Sylvia Wenger** - Debbie Goodman  
**Gordon Perlmutter** - Lindsay and Lorenzo Rafer, Anzie Golden

In honor of:  
**Jonathan and Jan Simon's new grandchild** - Debbie Goodman

**Jewish Family Service Food Pantry**

In honor of:  
**Jonathan and Jan Simon's new granddaughter** - Doris and Elliott Leisawitz  
**Norman Wilikofsky's 100th birthday** - Esther Bratt, Corinne and Andy Wernick, Evelyn and Jay Lipschutz

**Jewish Family Service Friendship Circle**

In memory of:  
**Sylvia Wenger** - Louise Zeidman and family, Anzie Golden, Janet Werner  
**Jane Polosnki** - Louise Zeidman and Family

**Honorariums and Memorials**

Contributions may be made to the following Funds:

- Federation Jewish Community Campaign
- Jewish Family Service
- Leo Camp Lecture Fund
- JFS Food Bank
- JFS Taxi Transportation Program
- Holocaust Library & Resource Center
- Doris Levin Fund
- Sue B. Viener Memorial Fund for PJ Library
- Harry & Rose Sack Fund for Adult Programming
- Evelyn Thompson Fund
- Yvonne Frey Oppenheimer Fund for Community Engagement

**Jewish Family Service**

In memory of:  
**Jerome Weisberg** - Cheryl and Eric Farber, Carrie, Stephen, Josh and Robyn Latman, Anzie Golden, Judy Copeland

Get well:  
**For Anzie Golden's upcoming surgery** - Judy Copeland, Sue and Mel Blum

**PJ Library**

In memory of:  
**Kurt Gitter** - George Viener  
**Franco Toso** - George Viener  
**Gordon Perlmutter** - George Viener

**Doris Levin Fund**

In honor of:  
**Carole and Sari and the work JFS does** - Louise Zeidman and Family

**JFS Hospital and Outpatient Visits**

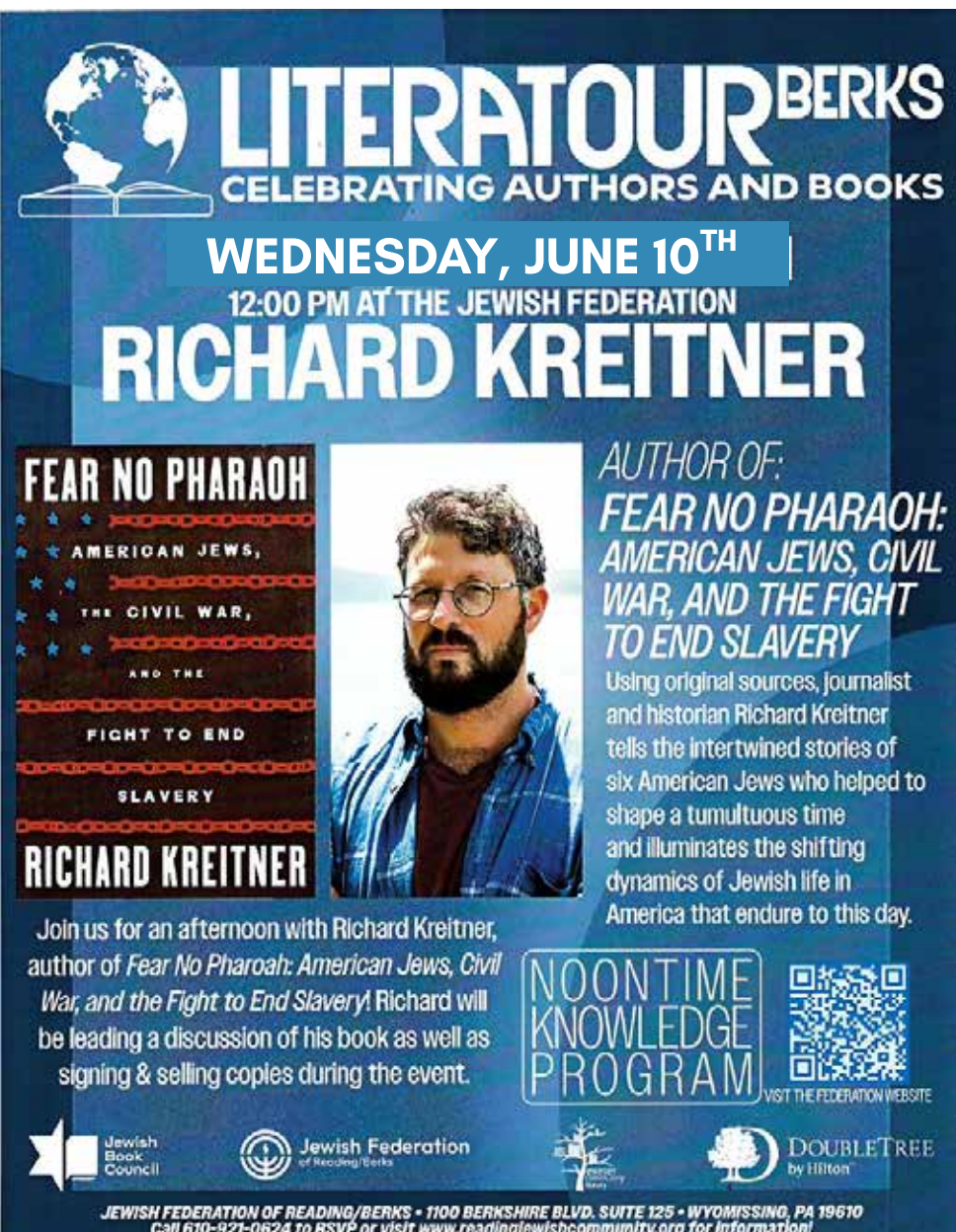
- Friendly and supportive visits
- Provide access to social services in conjunction with hospital case workers
- Information about home care, rehabs, and nursing homes
- Information about our taxi transportation services program

If you or a loved one are being treated at a local hospital or nursing home and would like a visit, please call JFS social workers Carole or Sari at 610-921-0624.

**Obituary**

**Dr. Jerome Weisberg**, 83, died on May 10, in Ithaca, N.Y., where he resided for the last two years. Jerry grew up in Philadelphia, graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, attended medical school at Hahnemann and then trained as a rheumatologist. He served in the Army as a major and was stationed in Hawaii. Following his military service, Jerry was a practicing rheumatologist in Berks County for about 40 years and is remembered by his patients for his

kindness and compassion. Jerry enjoyed traveling with his family and visited 49 states and numerous countries. He read widely and enjoyed talking about politics. Jerry was known for crafting elaborate Chanukah decorations and other creative pursuits including painting, refinishing furniture, latch-hooking rugs. In addition to Pam, his wife of 57 years he is survived by his daughters Beth (Curtis) Kretz and Georgia (Joseph) Kornblatt and grandchildren Ryan and David Kretz and Chava and



**LITERATOUR BERKS**  
 CELEBRATING AUTHORS AND BOOKS  
**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10<sup>TH</sup>**  
 12:00 PM AT THE JEWISH FEDERATION  
**RICHARD KREITNER**

**FEAR NO PHARAOH**  
 AMERICAN JEWS, THE CIVIL WAR, AND THE FIGHT TO END SLAVERY  
**RICHARD KREITNER**

*AUTHOR OF: FEAR NO PHARAOH: AMERICAN JEWS, CIVIL WAR, AND THE FIGHT TO END SLAVERY*

Using original sources, journalist and historian Richard Kreitner tells the intertwined stories of six American Jews who helped to shape a tumultuous time and illuminates the shifting dynamics of Jewish life in America that endure to this day.

Join us for an afternoon with Richard Kreitner, author of *Fear No Pharaoh: American Jews, Civil War, and the Fight to End Slavery!* Richard will be leading a discussion of his book as well as signing & selling copies during the event.

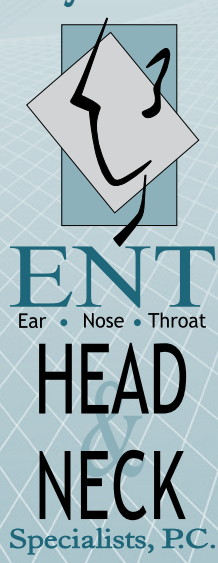
**NOONTIME KNOWLEDGE PROGRAM**

Visit the Federation Website

Jewish Book Council | Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks | DoubleTree by Hilton

JEWISH FEDERATION OF READING/BERKS • 1100 BERKSHIRE BLVD. SUITE 125 • WYOMISSING, PA 19610  
 Call 610-921-0624 to RSVP or visit www.readingjewishcommunity.org for information!

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 Jeffrey S. Driben, M.D., FACS, ECNU  
 Scott J. Cronin, M.D., FACS  
 Adam P. Vasconcellos, M.D., FACS

**Nurse Practitioner:**  
 Bettina L. Heinsohn, CRNP

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 Matthew R. Bonsall, AuD, FAAA  
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# Graduations and B'nai Mitzvah



**Claire J. Farbiarz**, had her Bat Mitzvah on Sept. 6 at RCOS. Parents Russell Farbiarz and Alexa Antanavage, and her brothers, Ben and Noah, are extremely proud of her accomplishments!



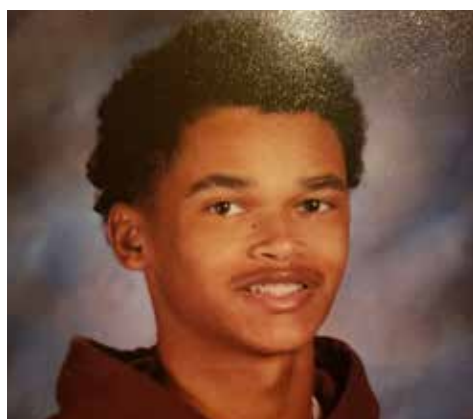
**Saoirse Fulcher**, granddaughter of Annette and Sean Peppard, graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from North Carolina State University Wilmington on May 8.



**Scott Goldberg**, son of Debbie and David Goldberg, graduated from the University of Delaware with his PhD in Marine Studies. Previously, Scott received his Master's Degree in Marine Biology from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and his Bachelor of Arts Degree from Northwestern University in Biological Sciences. Scott has accepted a position at the University of Georgia beginning in June.



**Gabrielle Nechama Gurwitz**, daughter of Jennifer and Jacob Gurwitz, was called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Oct. 18.



**Aidan Incledon**, son of Amy Garrison and grandson of Sari and John Incledon, will graduate from Wilson High school on June 5. He played on the varsity baseball team this spring, batted .400 and was ranked state and countywide in stolen bases. Aidan also played travel baseball for 3 Up 3 Down for several seasons. He plans to attend Northampton Community College and study sports management and play baseball.



**Rachel Radosh**, daughter of Jodi and Lee Radosh, sister of Danielle Radosh, graduated from Teachers College, Columbia University on May 19 with a master's degree in Curriculum and Teaching. She graduated Magna Cum Laude from Pennsylvania State University in 2024 with a major in Elementary and Early Childhood Education, and dual minors in Special Education and Child Development and Education. She is currently an elementary school teacher in Manhattan for the NYC Department of Education and a Hebrew School Teacher at Temple Israel of the City of New York.



**Eli Singer**, son of Andy and Alesia Singer of Oakland, Calif., and grandson of Henry and Helene Singer of Mohnton, graduated from Tufts University in Medford, Mass., in May. He will receive degrees in Mechanical Engineering and Architecture, with a minor in Ceramics. He graduates summa cum laude and has been elected to Phi Beta Kappa and Tau Beta Pi.

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MON JUNE 8  
1:30PM

CULTURAL CENTER AT THE HIGHLANDS AT WYOMISSING  
2000 CAMBRIDGE AVE.




EAT YOUR ICE CREAM:WHAT THE SCIENCE SAYS ABOUT LIVING WELL  
DR. EZEKIEL EMANUEL IN CONVERSATION WITH JENN SHERMAN  
PRE-RECORDED PROGRAM



Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks Art, Culture & Ideas is a monthly series. Upcoming dates:  
Jun 8

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