



Shalom08|26

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

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- Food Pantry
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- Jewish Cultural Center
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- Israel Trips
- Noontime Knowledge
- Young Adults Division
- Emergency Support
- Richard J. Yashek Lecture
- Transportation
- Maimonides Society
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- Meir Panim
- Annual Campaign
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- Greater Reading Unity Coalition
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- Youth Events
- Great Decisions Series
- Community Holiday Programs
- Women's Philanthropy
- Counseling Services
- Leo Camp Lecture
- Lakin Holocaust Library
- & Resource Center
- Jewish Community
- Relations Council
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- of North America

Celebrating community at Annual Meeting

The Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks celebrated another year of accomplishment at its annual meeting on May 31 at the Yocum Institute for Arts Education. The event featured plenty of family fun, including arts activities, along with the annual work of electing officers and celebrating the past year's accomplishments and the great opportunities ahead of us.



Annual Meeting highlights, clockwise from top left, James Rowe and Bryanna Gulotta with daughter Gwendolyn; Jennifer Koosed and Rob Seesengood enjoy ice cream from Sweet Ride; Jan Simon, Mike Schein and Sharon Syret enjoying ice cream.

Fun and fellowship at summer Happy Hour



Members of the community gathered in July for a summer Happy Hour event at the Bar Cart in West Reading. More photos on Page 10.

The next Happy Hour is set for Aug. 4 at Schaylor Brewing Company in Shillington. See page 14 to learn more.

Keep Federation on your mind in summer

By Richard Bradbury
Development Director

Hello *Shalom* readers! I hope you and yours have been knocking it out of the park this summer. Summer is my favorite season, and I pine for it each winter, but so far it's been rather sticky to the point of uncomfortable; making being outside unbearable. Makes me wonder how years ago I was able to sleep in the attic of a third-floor row home in Reading without the benefit of air conditioning. Remembering back, it didn't seem to bother me. In my early teens my grandparents installed something called "central air conditioning". How did we ever live without it?

Summer makes me very nostalgic. By this time each summer my great-grandparents and I would have visited Gettysburg at least twice, been to Hershey Park (we were Hershey people; not so much Dorney people), and made day trips to Rehoboth Beach, Del., to go crabbing and let me jump in the ocean (I love the beach!). Yes, folks I said day trips. Nana and Pop did not believe in staying in hotels. While back in Reading, I practically lived at Second & Oley playground and made sure I had friends whose families were members at most of the local pools. Pools and beaches are still the biggest highlights of my summers.

END-OF-SUMMER BASH
Speaking of connections to great pools, community member Galen Newman, pool manager at Green Valley Swim Club, is hosting our event there on Aug. 16 from 1 to 4 p.m.

Federation's End-of-Summer Bash will be a very casual afternoon with friends, kids (playground and splash pool available), snacks and lots of splishin' and splashin'. If you haven't registered yet, call the Federation office or register on our website!

Entrance fees are \$10 per adult or \$18 for a family. Children under 4 are free! Green Valley's Snack Bar and Cabana Bar will be open, or bring a picnic lunch and hang out in the shady grove between dips in the pool!

Thank you, Galen, for your kind invitation to gather at your pool and lovely grounds!

OPPORTUNITIES FOR TZEDAKAH

Kindness has been bustin' out all over since our June issue. Former Federation Program Director, Vicki Haller Graff, in her new position as executive director at Yocum Institute, gave Jewish Federation a huge gift by opening Yocum, at no charge, to host our Annual Meeting on May 31. Thank you, Vicki, for a wonderful experience and

for your in-kind gift!

At the same meeting, attendees, with Dr. Philip Teitbohl, put their brains and creative powers to the task of creating a group poem about our Federation, characterizing our culture and reaffirming our mutual values. It is a powerful poem. Thank you, Dr. T! A member of our community was so moved by the experience and the poem that he turned the poem into a beautiful (and framed) work of art! Please note the photo on this article! Dr. Ivan Bub, thank you for your kindness and sharing your talents with us. The poem, entitled L'Vor D'Vor, proudly hangs in our JCC for all to enjoy! If you haven't seen it, please stop by for a look, and a read. The next time you see Ivan, please tell him "Thank You and Great Work!" You may also want to thank Ivan and his wife, Paula, for their kindness by supporting our Happy Hour at Bar Cart! Missed that one? Be sure to join us Tuesday, Aug. 4, for our next Happy Hour at Schaylor's on Lancaster Avenue (5:30 - 7:30 p.m.). Please register online or call!

As you can see, there are so many ways for you to support your Jewish Federation; kindness and generosity can take many forms (time, materials, and of course, financial support):

- Volunteer to help JFED staff crank out a huge bulk mailing (High Five to recent helpers Dorie Karp and Robert Schneier!).
- Recycle/Reuse your plastic bags for our food pantries
- Give gently used clothes and houseware items to CommunityAid.
- Donate your old car, real estate or boat to the Federation.
- Advertise your business or side hustle in *Shalom*, where 600-700 people will see your ad. Contact us to learn more about our extremely affordable rates!
- Join the JCC and help sustain our impressive number of curated programs.
- Send New Year's Greetings to friends and family and donate directly to *Shalom* to sustain our much-loved community newspaper.

YOUR 2026 ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

Of course, your contribution to our 2026 Annual Campaign remains the lifeblood that keeps our Federation solvent and our Jewish community vibrant. Federation programs and services grow, deepen and thrive through financial support from our community.

If you have already made your gift to the 2026 Annual Campaign, we sincerely thank you. If your personal situation permits, we politely ask you to consider an end-of-year gift to help us meet our goal.



An inspirational poem created at this year's annual meeting is posted at the JCC, thanks to Ivan Bub.

If you haven't made your gift to the 2026 campaign, we genuinely need your support, and we kindly ask you to consider increasing your annual gift by 10% of your 2025 gift. Contact me if you'd like to make a pledge. Pledges delay your gift until mid-November but let Federation know we can depend on receiving your gift.

If you have never made a gift, or it's been a few years, we welcome you to become our partner in creating a vibrant Jewish Community in Berks County by attending our programs or volunteering. If your personal situation allows, we would appreciate your financial participation as well!

If you receive and enjoy

reading *Shalom*, kick off your giving with a gift of just \$36 to cover the annual cost of creating, printing and mailing your monthly issue of *Shalom*.

Before I sign off, I leave you with a poignant quote from Anne Frank: "No one has ever become poor by giving".

As always, I would love to meet you and will make myself available to meet for coffee, tea, lunch or a walk to talk about your involvement and history with Jewish Federation. You can reach me at richardb@jfreeding.org or 610-921-0624. *Shalom* and Happy Summer!

See you at the pool on Aug. 16! I'll be the one covered in SPF 50!



**DONATE NOW
TO OUR
JEWISH
COMMUNITY
CAMPAIGN**

Please visit
ReadingJewishCommunity.org

**Make your gift
today!**



SUMMER HAPPY
HOUR



TUESDAY, AUGUST 4, 5:30-7:30 PM

Schaylor Brewing Company

Join Jewish Federation staff for a
summer happy hour!

The event features complimentary appetizers
and a bar.

Scan the QR code to RSVP, and don't forget
to invite a friend!

All are welcome.



A Message from the CEO

A local gem is born in Mohnton — Berks Military History Museum and Holocaust Center

By Cindy Gerber Tomlinson

Chief Executive Officer

History was made on July 16 at 4 p.m. The Berks Holocaust Education Center of the Berks Military History Museum in Mohnton was dedicated by State Rep. Mark Gillen, who saw his vision come



to life. He was joined by our own Rabbi Yosef Lipsker, who gave a beautiful prayer, and Pastor Paul Caughill, who also led the invitees in prayer. Both of them focused on asking G-d for a long life for the museum, educating students of all ages for generations to come. Remarks were shared by elected officials — Democrat and Republican, Jew and non-Jew. Jewish Federation Board Member and Sen. Judy Schwank inspired the audience with her poignant perspective on the incredible significance of this major step forward for Holocaust remembrance, recognition and respect for the 6 million Jews who lost their lives there. Vic Hammel and Dick Ehst opined on their steadfast commitment to making this building and its exhibits happen, focusing on the power of this moment and the critical place in our shared present and future that this space holds.

Rep. Gillen explained that the Holocaust exhibit fills a void in the museum's mission to tell the story of World War II. "We realized that the Holocaust cannot be separated from World War II."

He scoured the world via the Internet and used the services of a broker in Europe to collect uniforms worn by those held in concentration camps and of Jewish freedom fighters in Israel, as well as many artifacts from the time.

The members of the engineering firm that designed the space said, "[Mark is] inspiring future generations to stand up against hatred and champion human dignity." Our own Susan Atkins Weiser stood with a display honoring her father, Carhell Bennett Atkins, who helped liberate the Ohrdruf concentration camp. I was honored to be invited to the dedication and pleased to have Federation Board Members Lisa Levine and Jacob Gurwitz in attendance with me. We had our own ribbon cutting for this historic moment.

This most important mission of the museum is to bring Berks County school students to it so that they become educated about the realities of the Holocaust and really understand what happened. This fits perfectly with Federation's objective of reaching out to local school districts to educate teachers and students about the Holocaust, October 7 and current hate campaigns against Jews. Holocaust denial, unfortunately, is a present-day component of antisemitism, and this museum, envisioned, built and staffed by non-Jews, is a brick-and-mortar statement of permanence against that way of thinking.

Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower is central to the exhibit. In fact, Gillen even had an "Ike" impersonator at the event. Eisenhower's quote regarding the Holocaust is prominently placed next to his picture, "Get it all on record now. Get the films, get the witnesses, because somewhere down the road of history, some bastard will get up and say that this never happened."

The Berks Holocaust Museum



Rabbi Yosef Lipsker delivered a prayer at the dedication.



Federation Board Member and state Sen. Judy Schwank discusses the power of the center.

marries nicely with the Lakin Holocaust Library and Resource Center. The Lakin Holocaust Library and Resource Center was established in 1993 by the Jewish Federation and Albright College to prevent this tragic event from happening again. The collection is housed in Roessner Hall at Albright College, 13th and Rockland streets, and consists of more than 2,300 book titles (2,600 volumes) and more than 290 video, sound and computer titles dealing with all aspects of the rise of Nazi Germany, World War II, and the Holocaust, as well as over 3 dozen taped interviews with survivors and liberators, many of whom are or were local to the Reading area. The Federation is excited to be reopening the coveted resource this winter.

All of these community resources support our "combatting antisemitism" initiative as the Federation grows and enhances it every day. We work closely with the Anti-Defamation League and Stand With Us, and this year we will be hosting social media personality Tessa Veksler. Tessa is a young public speaker, content creator and Jewish advocate who speaks out bravely about her experiences facing targeted harassment and antisemitism in the wake of October 7 while at the University of California. With over 7.5 million views on Instagram, she encourages Jewish people nationwide, especially teens and college students, to fight against hate. Stay tuned in February to learn more about her strong Jewish and Zionist voice.

To visit the Berks Holocaust Education Center and Museum, go to 198 E.Wyomissing Ave., Mohnton, Pa. 19540.

See the *Reading Eagle* article by Karen Shuey dated July 20 for further information, or visit <https://berksholocaustmuseum.org>.



Jewish Federation leaders Jacob Gurwitz, Lisa Levine and Cindy Gerber Tomlinson join Rep. Mark Gillen for a ribbon cutting at the Berks Holocaust Education Center of the Berks Military History Museum, Mohnton



Vic Hammel, left, is a leading supporter of the center. At right, one of the educational displays.



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



Jewish Federation
of Reading/Berks

RMDs and QCDs: Deciphering retirement Alphabet Soup

By Richard Bradbury
Development Director

Hello, *Shalom* readers! Four articles from me in one issue — lucky you! Now that I have reached “a certain age,” my mailbox and inbox seem to be overflowing with information about Medicare, Advantage plans, tax and financial advice. It can be a lot to sort through.

Thankfully, I have trusted health insurance, tax, and financial professionals I can call on. I hope you have good people in your corner too. With so much advice coming our way, it is helpful to know what—and whom—we can rely on.

Not long ago, my financial advisor shared a report with me about Required Minimum Distributions and Qualified Charitable Distributions. I found it helpful and the language very clear, so I wanted to pass along a few highlights. Of course, everyone’s financial situation is different, so please use this as shared information and talk with your own tax or financial advisor

about what makes sense for you.

Retirement brings a shift in thinking: instead of focusing mainly on saving for the future, we begin thinking about how and when to use those savings. Understanding when distributions are required, how withdrawals are taxed, and where you may have some flexibility can help you make thoughtful decisions and avoid unnecessary penalties.

So, let’s talk RMDs—yes, here comes the alphabet soup! Required Minimum Distributions, or RMDs, are withdrawals the IRS requires from certain retirement accounts once you reach a certain age. For traditional IRAs and most employer plans, such as 401(k)s, RMDs generally must begin by April 1 of the year after you turn 73. If you are still working, you may be able to delay RMDs from your current employer’s plan.

The amount you are required to withdraw is based on your account balance and age, using an IRS life expectancy table. It is important to pay attention to these deadlines, because

missing an RMD can lead to a penalty of 25% of the amount that should have been withdrawn.

If charitable giving is part of your plans, a Qualified Charitable Distribution, or QCD, may be worth asking about. A QCD can allow you to support causes you care about, such as the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks, while also satisfying part of your RMD. As with most things involving taxes, there are rules: the gift must go directly from a traditional IRA to a qualified charity. The amount may count toward your RMD and may be excluded from taxable income, up to \$111,000 per individual IRA owner for

2026. A few important reminders: you must be at least 70 1/2 years old, the gift must be transferred directly from your traditional IRA to the qualified charity, and QCDs are not available from 401(k)s. QCDs can be a meaningful way to give while also managing taxes.

One final note: I hope this information is helpful, but I am sharing it as your giving guide, not as a tax professional or financial advisor. This article is for informational purposes only and should not be considered tax or legal advice. Please talk with your own tax, financial, and legal advisors about your personal circumstances.

JULIET

---- stands for ----

Just Us Ladies Into Eating Together

Friday August 7
12:00pm at Wyomissing Family Restaurant

RSVP to info@jfreading.org



Jewish Federation
of Reading/Berks

Obituaries

Warren Sheaffer Jr., 79, of Exeter Township, passed away on May 23. Born in Montreal, he was a 1965 graduate of Exeter H. S. and earned a B.S. in Business from Alvernia and an M.B.A. from St. Joseph University. Warren was employed by Grossfillex in Robesonia as a computer technician and as an adjunct professor at RACC. He was inducted in the Exeter H.S. Sports Hall of Fame and the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame for his participation on the state champion 1964 Exeter team. Warren is survived by his wife, Charon Snyder, daughter Elizabeth Sheaffer, stepdaughter Lori Snyder, grandson Warren and three sisters

Allen Daniels, 92, died July 4 in Burlington, Vermont. Allen grew up in Reading, where he and his late wife, Marjory, raised their daughter Jennifer. For 40 years Allen was a successful furniture manufacturers’ representative, traveling the Mid-Atlantic region. He later enjoyed life in South Carolina with his wife Sue Lawrence, before moving to Vermont to be near Jennifer and her family. He is survived by his wife, daughter Jennifer (Rick Fox); grandchildren Stella, Ruby and Benjamin; and sister Eleanor Malkin.

All Around the Town

Mazel tov to **Tammy and Jeff Mitgang** on the birth of their first grandchild, Oren Gray, son of **Liza and Mitch Belkin** of Baltimore.

Mazel tov to **Casey and Andrew Nairin** of Wyomissing on the birth of their son Breeze Johnny. Delighted grandparents and great-grandparents are **Susan and Michael Fromm** and **Barbara and Bernie Fromm**.

Congratulations to **Marcia Goodman Hinnershitz**, the longtime director of planning and resource development at the Council for Chemical Abuse for receiving the 2026 Marcopol Award for Legacy in Prevention at the annual Commonwealth Prevention Alliance Conference in June.

Send good news to Marknem@aol.com or call 610-921-0624.

LET’S GET READY FOR THE KESHER ZION SECOND ANNUAL

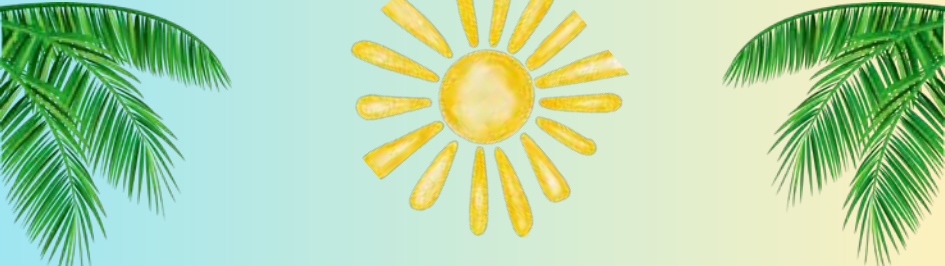
BINGO!

Fundraiser

Looking for donations, volunteers, and schmoozers!

Contact Sue Wilson and see how you can be a part of the fun!

Sunday, Oct 25, 2026
Grill Fire Company
Shillington, PA

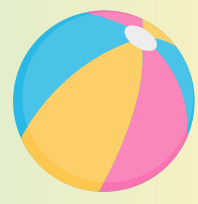


END-OF-SUMMER BASH!

Swimming! Snacks! Friends!

\$10 per adult / \$18 per family

Sunday, August 16, 1:00-4:00 pm
Green Valley County Club Pool
160 Green Valley Rd. Sinking Spring, PA 19608
Snack and Cabana Bar available!



Register Here or visit readingjewishcommunity.org



Honoring Juneteenth through learning, partnership



By Margo Levin
JCRC Coordinator

In recognition of Juneteenth, the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) was proud to partner with the Greater Reading Unity Coalition, the Juneteenth Reading PA Committee and the Reading Public Museum for an afternoon of learning, reflection, and conversation centered on the shared history of Black and Jewish Americans. Community members gathered to view Episode 3 of Henry Louis Gates Jr.'s acclaimed documentary series "Black and Jewish: An Interwoven History." The film explores the complex relationship between Black and Jewish communities in the United States, a history marked by both solidarity and challenges, while highlighting the enduring opportunities for understanding, collaboration and mutual

respect. Following the screening, participants engaged in thoughtful discussion about the documentary's themes and the importance of strengthening relationships across communities. The program offered an opportunity to reflect on the shared experiences of Black and Jewish Americans and the ongoing work of building partnerships rooted in justice, dialogue, and respect. Commemorating Juneteenth alongside our community partners was a meaningful reminder that learning from our shared history helps build a stronger, more inclusive future for all. The JCRC is grateful to the Greater Reading Unity Coalition, the Juneteenth Reading PA Committee, and the Reading Public Museum for their partnership in making this important program possible.



NOONTIME KNOWLEDGE

At the JCC, 1100 Berkshire Blvd., Ste. 125, Wyomissing

A PRE-RECORDED PROGRAM

BY 92NY

Governor Josh Shapiro in Conversation

with Gayle King:

Where We Keep the Light

Wednesday, August 12, at noon

“ Immigrant Songs, Yiddish Theater ”

AUGUST 6 2:00 P.M.

at the JCC, 1100 Berkshire Blvd Wyomissing

Documentary film tracing the history of Yiddish theater from its origins in Eastern Europe and early developments in America to the present day, with an emphasis on its musical dimensions. (45min)

Henry Singer celebrates 100 years

By Carole Robinson
Jewish Family Service

This is a big year for America — 250th, and as the U.S. celebrates this milestone, I want to take a few moments to celebrate a centennial birthday for a special member of our Jewish community.



Henry David Singer was born in Reading on July 10, 1926. His mother, Zelda Panitz, came to the U.S. from Lomza, Poland, when she was 16. Her uncle brought her to Philadelphia to save her from the pogroms in Poland. Henry’s father, Frederick J. Singer (Fred) was born in Reading. The Singers’ Reading roots are deep: Henry’s great -grandfather Morris was a blacksmith for the Reading Railroad.

Fred had to drop out of school at age 13 when his father died. He used his little wagon to carry women’s groceries home from the market and received tips of 25 cents. He also had a newspaper route and got extra commission if he opened a new account. In those days, new subscribers received a piece of china. This gave Fred an idea!

In 1918, a friend drove Fred to Philadelphia’s wholesale area to buy china, but there was none, because the product was made in England and there were no imports due to World War I. Instead he used the \$50 he had borrowed from his uncle to buy a barrel of glasses. He had already rented a storefront on North Ninth Street. He put the glasses in the window and called the business Singer Crockery. This humble storefront was the start of Singer Equipment, a business that Henry would

develop into a large national enterprise. Henry and his brother, Bernard, grew up on Cumberland Street in Mount Penn. They played baseball in the street, watching for cars that drove by. They played hopscotch and rode bikes to explore the area. They went to Carsonia Park with its big pool surrounded by sand and grass. Henry remembers the amusement park and the penny arcade. The first movie he saw was operated by a little crank. Social life for boys and girls centered around the synagogue. Hebrew school, newspapers, plays and Bar Mitzvahs brought them together. That synagogue was Keshet Israel at Eighth and Court Streets — which became Keshet Zion after World War II. A place of special memories was a country estate owned by Max Hassel. There were tennis courts, a pool, a nine-hole golf course and card tables. Everyone looked forward to outings there.

After graduating from Mount Penn High School in 1944, Henry was drafted into the Army. He was assigned to the 70th Infantry Division, Company D, serving in the Rhineland campaign in Germany. After completing military service in occupied Germany, he studied economics at Colgate University under the GI Bill and graduated in three years. Elected to Phi Beta Kappa, he was the first person in his family to graduate from high school and college.

Upon graduation, Henry joined his father in business at Eighth and Penn. It was Henry’s idea to relocate the newly named “Singer Equipment Company, Inc.” to Woodland Road. in Wyomissing in 1967 in an area that was just being developed. He soon became president of the company and was never afraid to try new things. He added a kitchen design and installation department, increased the sales force and expanded its geographic reach. He grew the business from a storefront enterprise to



Henry Singer in front of one of his original paintings

the fourth largest food service equipment and supplies dealer in the United States. He assumed leadership roles in his industry, serving as president of the Dealers Organization and helping to found a national buying group. He accepted a speaking invitation to the Caterers Convention in England. Honored by his peers, he was inducted into the Hall of Fame, and Singer Equipment was twice named “Dealer of the Year.” As Henry celebrates his 100th birthday, his legacy extends far beyond the business he built. Henry is devoted to and adored by his wife Helene; his children, Paula, Julie, Fred and Andy; 12 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Through decades of hard work, integrity, dedication to the community and philanthropy, Henry has touched countless lives. The Jewish community joins in wishing him good health, happiness and continued blessings. As we continue to celebrate America’s birthday, let’s remember to give one of our very own community members a special toast, too. Henry, may you live to 120!

Food pantry volunteers keep up with need



Volunteers at the JFS Olivet pantry on July 1 and at the SDA pantry on June 9

Many thanks to our June/July Food Pantry heroes who endured the heat to distribute food to over 600 households.

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Marsha Adelman | John Incledon | Mike Robinson |
| Allison Althouse | Pete Jacobson | Susan Rundle |
| Mary Anne Avins | Elaine Jones | Mike Schein |
| Cindy Balchunas | Sid Lempiner | Ellen Schwartz |
| Paula Bub | Alan Levine | Paul Schwartz |
| Sarah Flamholz | Lisa Levine | Russ Shanahan |
| Sam Flamholz | Vicky Miller | Jacob Sileski |
| Sharon Gernsheimer | Paul Mintz | Finn Spengler |
| Patty Hartman | Annette Peppard | Reece Spengler |
| Katie Huey | Jenn Reilly | Ryan Spengler |
| | | Oleg Umanov |



Always fun at Friendship Circle



Summer activities at Friendship Circle: Everybody's Birthday Party celebration at on June 18 (Carole Robinson, Ingrid Soltysik, Ellen Schwickrath, Louise Zeidman, Susan Zeidman); Louise Zeidman, LuAnn Oatman (President, Berks Encore), Lila Shapiro and Mindy McIntosh (Director of Development, Berks Encore) at Friendship Circle on May 28. Friendship Circle enjoying yoga on June 4.

The Friendship Circle group meets twice a month with fun and educational programs and great fellowship. See the upcoming schedule below.

FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE

Aug 6- "Immigrant Songs, Yiddish Theater "

Documentary film tracing the history of Yiddish theater from its origins in Eastern Europe and early developments in America to the present day, with an emphasis on its musical dimensions. (45min)

Aug 20 -"Scoops of Summer: National Ice Cream Day "

Join us for an afternoon of sweet treats, laughter, and friendly competition as we celebrate National Ice Cream Day! We'll put your taste buds to the test with a blind ice cream flavor challenge and discover fun facts about our favorite frozen dessert!



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.

Upcoming events offered by the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks (listed as JCC, JFS, JFR), Keshar 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. Contact 610.921.0624 or info@jfreaing.org with questions.

AUGUST 2026

SUN	MON	TUE
02	03	04 Romeo Club - 12:00 PM at Paolo's Summer Happy Hour- 5:30pm at Schaylor Brewing Company Hebrew Reading Crash Course- 7 PM at KZ
09	10 JCC Arts, Culture, Ideas - 1:30 PM at The Highlands	11 Hebrew Reading Crash Course- 7 PM at KZ
16 End of summer bash- 1 PM at Green Valley Country Club	17	18
23	24 Movie Monday, “The Angel” - 1:00 PM at JCC	25
30 RCOS End of summer BBQ - 4:30 PM at RCOS	30 JFS Rosh Hashana program - 2 PM at The Highlands	

AV - ELUL , 5786

WED	THU	FRI	SAT
05	06 JFS Friendship Circle - 1 PM at JCC ----- JCC Evening Mahjong - 7 PM at JCC	07 JULIET Lunch - 12:00 PM at Wyomissing Family Restaurant	08
12 Noontime Knowledge: “Where We Keep the Light” - 12 PM at JCC	13	14	15 Tot Shabbat - 10 AM at RCOS
19	20 JFS Friendship Circle - 1 PM at JCC	21	22
26	27	28	29

Around the community



At Federation’s Summer Happy Hour, Michele Leisawita, Adi Shalev-Smitheman and Jodi Radosh. At right, Jewish Federation of Reading finished our last Literatour series with a fascinating presentation from author Richard Kreitner.



At left, the Chabad Hebrew School end of year ceremony showcased lessons learned throughout the year and included activities including a chance to make Pandora bracelets. Chabad’s Garden Party, right, featured an incredible presentation on color analysis by Roza (@cominguprozas).

Congratulations and many thanks to Karen Kabakoff

By Richard Bradbury
Development Director

I would like to draw your attention to the ad on this page. Look for the happy faces of Karen and Myron Kabakoff!

In June, Karen was called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah. Karen’s friends, family and our entire community are so proud of her! She encouraged her guests to donate food or funds to Jewish Family Service to support our successful and greatly needed, twice-monthly food pantries. Thank you, Karen, for your kindness and for exceeding your goal of \$2,000. Your gift will impact hundreds of our neighbors, struggling to feed their families during these difficult times. What a beautiful mitzvah. Thank you for embracing the spirit of Tikkum Olam.

If you have a birthday, graduation, or special event coming up for yourself or your family, consider making it a campaign to support your favorite Jewish Federation program. Choose your passion and support, like Karen, Jewish Family Service, Literatour, Berks, Reading Jewish Film Series, the Leo Camp or Richard J. Yashek Memorial Lectures, the Holocaust Library at Albright College or one of many funds dedicated to leaders from our community who have passed but their memory lives on through their legacies. Sponsorship opportunities are also available for major events.

Jewish Family Service extends our gratitude to
Karen Kabakoff
for encouraging donations to our Food Pantry
in honor of her Adult Bat Mitzvah!
\$ 2,230 was raised and 5 boxes of food were donated!



Save money shopping and help the Federation!

By Richard Bradbury
Development Director

Hello friends! It's time for Boscov's Annual FRIENDS HELPING FRIENDS event when our Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks joins other local not-for-profits selling Shopping Passes to our friends and supporters. Shopping Passes are only \$5, and every dollar goes directly to the not-for-profit agency. The more passes sold, the more funds are raised for Jewish Federation!

Shopping Passes are good for 25% off a huge selection of merchandise at any Boscov's Department Store (some exclusions apply).

Boscov's Shopping Pass is ONLY GOOD on Wednesday, Oct. 21, (8 a.m. to 11 p.m. – extended hours!). Customers purchasing the Shopping Pass may register to win a \$100 Boscov's Gift Card – one winner at each store!

Everyone deserves a little retail therapy, so purchase a few Shopping

passes for your family and friends. Boscov's FHF coupons are a great way to get a jump start on Chanukah shopping while supporting Jewish Federation!

For the "fundraisers" out there, consider selling a pack of Shopping Passes. There are five passes in a pack. Sell a full pack and the Jewish Federation makes \$25! JFR staff are dreaming up some fun incentives for Federation members who sell the most Shopping Passes! Use your Facebook, Instagram,

or other social media platforms to spread the word! Again, every Shopping Pass sold means \$5 for our Federation!

Fun Fact!! Boscov's FRIENDS HELPING FRIENDS event raises over \$3 MILLION annually for nonprofit organizations!

Useful Tactic! When talking to customers, say DONATE, not buy. (i.e. Please donate \$5 to support the Jewish Federation and get a 25% Off Boscov's Shopping Pass!)



Boscov's

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Shop. Save. Support a great cause!



WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2026

8:00 AM – 11:00 PM

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Purchase a Friends Helping Friends Shopping Pass for just \$5 and receive:



25% OFF

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Exclusive one-day savings opportunities



A chance to support a great cause in our community



Jewish Federation
of Reading/Berks

Your \$5 donation helps make a difference while giving you access to incredible savings at Boscov's.

SHOPPING PASS
DONATION:

\$5



DON'T MISS THIS EXCITING OPPORTUNITY

TO SHOP, SAVE, AND SUPPORT A WORTHY CAUSE!

Contact us today to purchase your shopping pass!

Federations back measure to stem tide of hatred

Jewish Federations of North America
Antisemitism has reached new heights in the aftermath of October 7, and online platforms have struggled to stem the tide of hate against the Jewish community. At the same time, deepfakes and synthetic media have become more realistic, allowing them to both create and spread antisemitic content with troubling speed.

Congress has a responsibility to act, which is why H.R. 9578, the bipartisan Spot the Fakes Act, is so important. The bill would require that all AI-generated content be labeled through metadata or other technological means, thereby helping users better identify when content has been created or manipulated by artificial intelligence. “As long as AI-generated content can proliferate on the internet unchecked, users are vulnerable to relentless hate,” said Omer Yarden-Oppenheim, Director of Government Relations at Jewish Federations of North America.

“By strengthening transparency and accountability online, the Stop the Fakes Act would help protect Jewish communities, and all vulnerable groups, from AI-enabled antisemitism, hate, impersonation, and targeted harassment.” Jewish Federations have been at the forefront of congressional efforts to curb the flow of AI-generated online antisemitism, advocating heavily for legislation that was ultimately included in the bipartisan KIDS Act, which passed the U.S. House this June. Federations also supported H.R. 8479, the Protecting Consumers from Deceptive AI Act, a bipartisan bill that would establish task forces dedicated to creating standards and guidelines for identifying AI-generated content. Jewish Federations applaud Rep. Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ) for his leadership on the bipartisan Spot the Fakes Act and look forward to working with our congressional partners on both sides of the aisle on this crucial issue.

Marking

October 7th

Wednesday, October 7

7pm

Kesher Zion Synagogue



Jewish Federation

of Reading/Berks

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

Jewish Family Service thanks Adrienne Cardinal and RCOS Sisterhood for donating rummage items left after your sale to CommunityAid, a JFS partner. A special thanks to Cindy Balchunas (KZ Social Action Committee), Sue Farrara, Russ Shanahan and Oleg Umanov for driving the rummage to CommunityAid.



Movie Monday at the JCC
August 24, 2026, 1pm



The Angel

Historical Drama

114 min



A gripping Israeli spy thriller, based on the true story of Ashraf Marwan, who played a crucial role in espionage during the Arab-Israeli conflict.



Grab a seat for a Jewish themed movie each month at the JCC (1100 Berkshire Blvd., Ste. 125, Wyomissing). It is usually held on the 4th Monday of the month, and the popcorn and the movie are both free!

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE NEEDS:

PLASTIC GROCERY BAGS FOR OUR FOOD PANTRIES!



DROP YOUR BAGS AT OUR OFFICE 1100 BERKSHIRE BLVD SUITE 125 MONDAY TO FRIDAY 9:00 AM TO 3:00PM.



Jewish Federation

of Reading/Berks

Leaders develop playbook to combat antisemitism

American Jewish Committee

For years, American Jewish Committee has advocated for a whole-of-society approach to counter the rise of antisemitism, urging all Americans to play a role in curbing the world’s oldest hatred. Dozens of committed Americans heard the call, and, in June, AJC debuted the Combating Antisemitism Playbook.

More than 60 leaders across society worked with AJC to develop a practical, coordinated approach to countering antisemitism grounded in real-world experience. It equips leaders in 13 sectors with clear, practical, and tailored guidance to identify, counter, and prevent antisemitism wherever it emerges.

On Jan. 15, 2022, neighbors in a Dallas-Fort Worth suburb watched for nearly 11 hours as hundreds of law enforcement officers descended on the

neighborhood synagogue to rescue four hostages inside.

While the gunman’s motive was crystal clear to those familiar with the antisemitic conspiracy of Jewish control and power, it was less clear to the FBI.

“We do believe from our engagement with this subject that he was singularly focused on one issue and it was not specifically related to the Jewish community,” said the Special Agent in Charge of the FBI’s Dallas Field Office. ”

Holly Huffnagle, AJC’s U.S. Director for Combating Antisemitism at the time, could not believe her ears.

“I remember sitting in my office and thinking: ‘How was this missed?’” Huffnagle recounted. “Law enforcement has a duty to protect citizens. We expect law enforcement to ensure Jews are safe, and yet they didn’t recognize the

conspiratorial form of antisemitism?”

Huffnagle and her AJC colleagues rolled up their sleeves and began their work to marshal all Americans —, not just the Jewish community or law enforcement, but all of society — to understand, respond to, and prevent this scourge.

After Colleyville, AJC drafted an initial set of recommendations for social media companies, influencers, media, different levels of government and corporations.

In February 2023, AJC convened a meeting of antisemitism envoys from other nations to meet with the Biden administration and share best practices. At the top of the list? Developing a national strategy with clear action items.

In May 2023, the White House unveiled its U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism, which included action items for the federal government, local and state governments, and civil society.

AJC assembled a task force to help the White House implement the plan.

But the ground suddenly shifted on Oct. 7, 2023, when Hamas terrorists murdered more than 1,200 Israelis, taking 251 hostages and triggering a proliferation of antisemitism around the world.

Since then, the sources and shapes of antisemitism have continued to shift and grow. In May the organization released an updated and expanded set of guidelines for understanding, preventing,

and responding to antisemitism.

AJC solicited feedback from leaders with the power to change policies critical to fight antisemitism. Dozens of volunteers — many of them not Jewish — signed up to participate.

While the updated Combating Antisemitism Playbook doesn’t give a pass to politicians who wield antisemitism for their own benefit, it clarifies the language with the particularity that lawmakers need.

The new Combating Antisemitism Playbook includes specific recommendations for 13 sectors of society, including local, state and federal government, academia, and tech companies, as well as new categories such as U.S.-based-diplomats, research institutions and think tanks.

Julie Fishman Rayman, AJC’s Senior Vice President of Policy and Political Affairs, noted the Jewish community can’t do it alone. The more voices at the table developing the messages and the strategies, the better the outcome.

The Combating Antisemitism Playbook’s publication is not the conclusion of the effort, but the beginning.

Now comes the harder part: ensuring these recommendations do not simply sit on shelves, but shape policies, institutions, technologies, and public life — first in the United States, and ultimately as part of a broader global effort to strengthen democratic resilience against antisemitism and hate.



It’s Time to Order your Lulav and Etrog Again!

Your cost to purchase through Keshar Zion is **\$55.00/set** which includes shipping and handling

Please fill out the form below and mail it with your check no later than 9/2/2026 to Keshar Zion Synagogue
555 Warwick Drive
Wyomissing, Pa. 19610

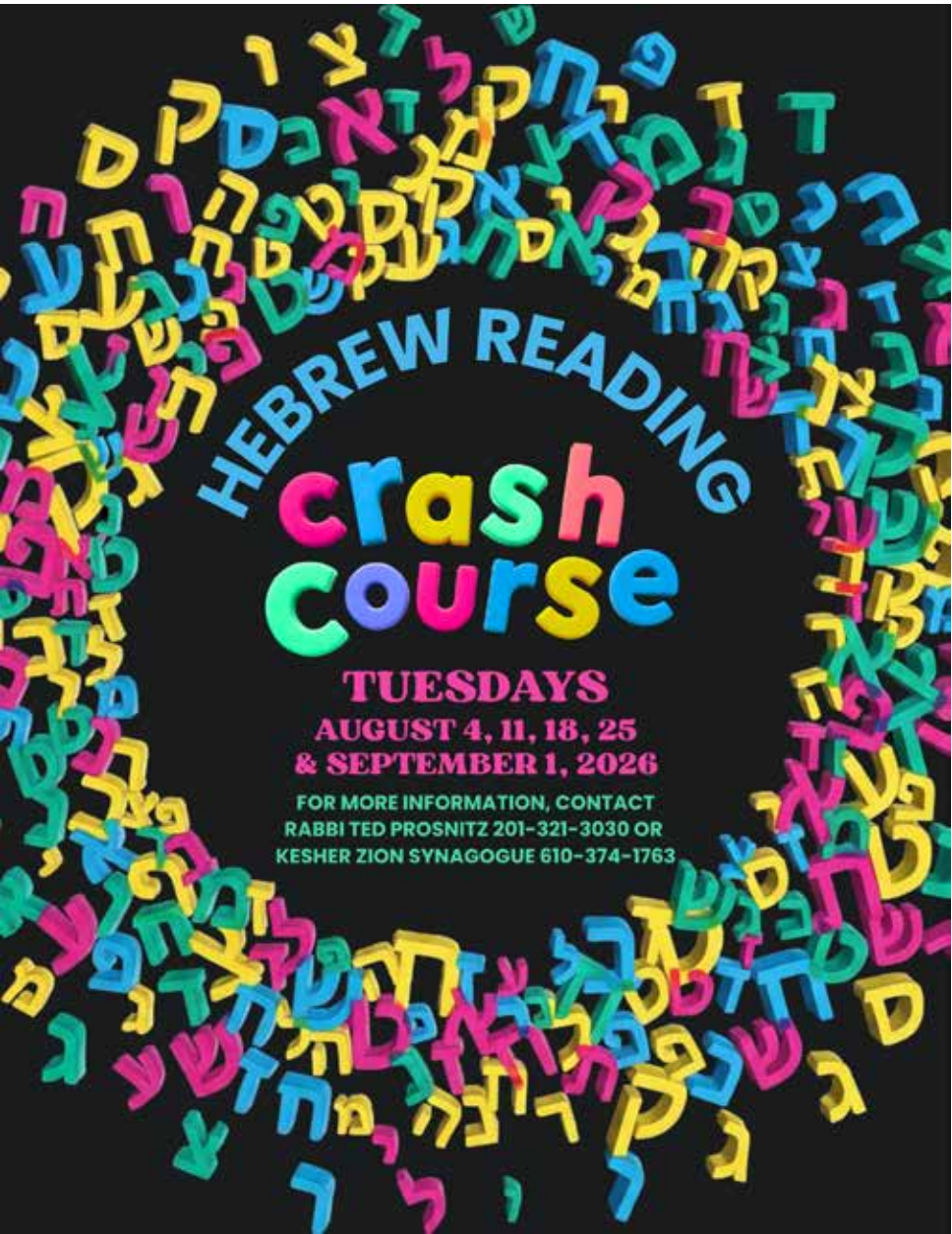
Name _____
of sets _____
Phone # _____
Email address _____

Poetry corner

Something of comfort

*Bring me something of comfort
Something of joy
Show me the inside of an apple.
or squirrels chasing each other
at the base of a tree in the spacious backyard
Let me let go of woe
each morning*

— Nancy Knoblauch



HEBREW READING crash course

TUESDAYS
AUGUST 4, 11, 18, 25 & SEPTEMBER 1, 2026

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT
RABBI TED PROSNITZ 201-321-3030 OR
KESHER ZION SYNAGOGUE 610-374-1763

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Jewish Family Service is grateful to our committed volunteers!

Here are some ways that you can help:

Help Fight Hunger

Join us at a JFS Food Pantry to distribute food to our hungry neighbors.

Share your Professional Expertise

Present a program on travel, photography, or your unique interests or hobbies to our seniors.

Share your time

A small investment of your personal time can make a profound difference in someone’s life. Visit a shut-in, shop for a homebound senior, or take someone to a doctor’s appointment.

Donate your vehicle to JFS or donate clothing to CommunityAid

Enjoy tax benefits of donating a car or help our clients through our partnership with CommunityAid.



Contact Us
Carole Robinson at
610-921-0624



Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks

The Doorway

By Cindy Chronister

Inside the shadow box I carried to World War II Weekend are my grandparents' passports, each stamped with a large red "J." Beside them sits my grandfather's reissued birth certificate, altered by the Nazi government, and an envelope marked *geöffnet*, "opened." Nazi authorities had read that letter before my grandparents did.

Years ago, my mother handed me a box filled with family letters and documents. At the time, I thought I had inherited a collection of papers.

Instead, I inherited the story of my grandparents Karl and Mathilde Reiser, Austrian Jews who escaped Vienna in 1939, and of the parents, siblings, and relatives they left behind, most of whom would be deported and murdered.

I brought some of those documents to WWII Weekend, the Mid-Atlantic Air Museum's annual World War II living history event held each June at Reading Regional Airport in Bern Township, where visitors experience military encampments, aircraft, vehicles, reenactments, and personal stories from the war.

Representing 3G Philly, an organization of grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, I invited visitors to explore my grandparents' story through the documents they carried as they fled Nazi Vienna, answering questions and giving presentations throughout the weekend.

The Nazis intended these documents to isolate and mark Jews. The large red "J" on my grandparents' passports was designed to separate them from the society around them, to identify them as different, and to restrict where they could belong.

Eighty years later, those same documents do something the Nazis never intended.

They invite people closer.

Throughout the weekend, visitors stopped at our exhibit where my grandparents' passports, letters, photographs and other documents were displayed. The large red "J" stamped across the passports was difficult to ignore. So were the Nazi seals covering the documents. People leaned in, trying to make sense of what they were seeing. These were not reproductions or museum artifacts. They were the documents my family carried as antisemitic laws narrowed where Jews could live, work, travel, and belong.

The documents stopped people.

The questions that followed kept them there.

One man studying the passports remarked that it was fortunate my grandparents had them, since they were able to leave.

I explained that the passports were not symbols of freedom. The red "J," the forced names imposed on Jewish men and women and countless other regulations were all part of a system of exclusion. These documents were evidence of rights being stripped away long before deportation and murder.

He had never considered that the passport itself was part of the persecution.

What struck me was how often that happened throughout the weekend.

People lingered over maps and photographs. They wanted to understand how a Jewish community of nearly 200,000 people in Vienna in 1938 could be reduced to only a few hundred visible Jews by 1942 through emigration, deportation and murder.

Again and again, I found myself explaining that the Holocaust did not begin with gas chambers. It began years



Cindy Chronister at World War II Weekend at Reading Regional Airport, where she shared her grandparents' Holocaust story.

earlier with words, laws, paperwork, restrictions and the gradual exclusion of Jews from public life. Many visitors understood the Holocaust through its ending. I wanted them to see it as a process.

Yet the questions people asked were rarely only about history.

One of the most meaningful conversations came after a 40-minute presentation about my family's story. A man approached me afterward. He had listened as I spoke about Karl and Mathilde and the family members whose letters survived even when they did not.

For several minutes, he asked questions about my family, the Holocaust, and the rise in antisemitism today. Eventually, he became emotional.

"I don't understand hatred like this," he said.

Then he asked, "What can I do?"

I told him that when a non-Jewish person speaks out against antisemitism, it carries a different weight than when a Jewish person does. That education matters. That speaking up matters. That refusing indifference matters.

He listened carefully before looking at me and saying, "You can count on me."

His words reminded me of another visitor I had met the year before, someone who left our conversation asking the same question.

What can I do?

Unlike most visitors, he did not let the question end there.

Within days of World War II Weekend, I stood before a room of retired businessmen. The gentleman introducing me had first stopped at our exhibit the year before.

He smiled, looked around the room, and said, "Last year, after meeting Cindy and hearing her family's story, I left asking myself, 'What can I do to help?'"

Then he gestured toward the audience.

"I have Cindy here today. This is my answer."

That sentence has stayed with me.

Neither man could change what had happened to my family. Neither could

undo the history that brought them to my table. But both chose something that was still available to them. One chose to speak. The other chose to act. History had become responsibility.

Years ago, when my mother handed me the box of letters and documents, I never imagined it would lead to moments like these.

What I inherited was more than a family archive.

The objects in the shadow box are evidence of lives that existed before the machinery of persecution tried to erase them. Yet they do their most important work when they spark a question, challenge an assumption, or invite someone to see the past differently.

Once, those documents were used to separate people.

Now they bring people together.

Again and again, people step through that opening. They arrive asking about documents and leave thinking about people.

Years ago, I thought I had inherited a box of papers.

What I actually inherited was a doorway.

Note: While I attended WWII Weekend as a representative of 3G Philly, I am grateful to the Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks for its support of Holocaust education.

Special thanks to Margo Levin, JCRC/Program Coordinator, and Debbie Goldberg, JCRC Committee Chair, Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks, who joined me during the event and shared in many of the conversations described here.

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 Carole at 610-921-0624.

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.



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 July 18

Jewish Federation
In memory of:
Tzvia Kaikov, Adi’s grandmother - Debbie and David Goldberg
Allen Daniels - Vic and Dena Hammel, Rob Oppenheimer, The Rudolph Family
Julian Syret - Julia and Bruce Swan

In honor of:
Henry Singer’s 100th birthday - Dr. Larry Rotenberg and Elaine Hausman, Sue Wachs, Debbie Goodman
Michael and Susan Fromm’s new grandchild - Vic and Dena Hammel

Jewish Family Service Food Pantry
In honor of:
Karen Kabakoff’s Adult Bat Mitzvah - Andrea and Ivan Levenson, Alan and Lisa Levine, Marvin Kabakoff, Robert Heisler and Maureen O’Meara, Susan and Arthur Kabakoff, Janine Schneider-Ure, Jennifer Koosed on behalf of KZ, Judy and Jim Schwank, Lenore Dickinson, Sue Wilson, Michele Kramer, Larry, Roz, Mike and Diane Weiss, Carol Perlmutter, Ralph and Kristin Kabakoff, Sam Kabakoff, Hasu and Ramilia Gavan, Diane and Shannon Taylor, Snehul Putel, Jonathan and Jan Simon, Debbie and David Goldberg, Bill and Andi Franklin, Alexander and Naomi Knoll

PJ Library
In honor of:
Ruby Viener’s engagement to Jeremy Cole - George Viener
Casey and Andrew Nairin’s new baby - Sue Wachs
Michael and Susan Fromm’s new grandchild - Sue Wachs, Debbie Goodman
Barbara and Bernie Fromm’s new great-grandchild - Sue Wachs, Debbie Goodman

In memory of:
Allen Daniels - Debbie Goodman

Jewish Family Service
In honor of:
The continued excellent work of Jewish Family Service (Carole Robinson and Sari Incledon) - Jonathan and Jan Simon
Aidan Incledon’s graduation from Wilson H.S.- Jonathan and Jan Simon
Scott Goldberg on receiving his PhD in Marine Studies from University of Delaware - Jonathan and Jan Simon
Gabrielle Gurwitz on her Bat Mitzvah - Jonathan and Jan Simon
Henry Singer’s 100th birthday - Roger Schein
Karen Kabakoff’s Bat Mitzvah - Doris and Elliott Leisawitz

In memory of:
Beth Shor’s father - Corinne and Andy Wernick
Tzvia Kaikov, Adi’s grandmother - Lynn and Jeff Driben
Allen Daniels - Sue Wachs, John and Kathie Wachs, Beth and Howard Mortman, Michelle Wachs and Owen Gross, Carrie, Stephen, Joshua and Robyn Latman,

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

Harry & Rose Sack Fund for Adult Programming
In honor of:
Austin Sack’s high school graduation - Albert and Nancy Sack

In memory of:
James Auchter - Albert and Nancy Sack

Holocaust Library
In memory of:
Gordon Perlmutter - Maralyn Goldstein

August ✨ Av- Elul	
	
	August 1/18 Av Elkev (Deuteronomy 7:12-11:25)
August 7 7:53 p.m.	August 8/25 Av Re’eh (Deuteronomy 11:26-16:17)
August 14 7:44 p.m.	August 15/2 Elul Shoflim (Deuteronomy 16:18-21:9)
August 21 7:35 p.m.	August 22/9 Elul Ki Teitzei (Deuteronomy 21:10-25:19)
August 28 7:24 p.m.	August 29/16 Elul Ki Tavo (Deuteronomy 26:1-29:8)

KESHER ZION SYNAGOGUE SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Please support our donation drive to collect basic hygiene supplies and provide shower assistance to our housing-insecure neighbors through the efforts of LGBT Center of Greater Reading and Refresh Berks.

Most Needed Donations

- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Body Wash
- Sunscreen
- Towels (new or gently used and in good condition)





Please place donations in the black bin in the lobby of the synagogue at 555 Warwick Drive, Wyomissing.

If you have questions or need an at home pickup of items, please call the KZ office at 610-374-1763

**NOW
THROUGH
SEPTEMBER
22ND**



THANK YOU

for helping us make a meaningful difference in our community!

August Minyanim

August 6th and 20th

AT KESHER ZION
@7PM

Teens putting Jewish pride front and center

Jewish Federations of North America
With antisemitism proliferating throughout North American schools, hundreds of Jewish teens are putting their Jewish pride front-and-center, utilizing peer-to-peer interactions to reverse a concerning trend.

That work was on full display at Jewish Federation of North America's fifth annual Student to Student coordinators' conference, held in St. Louis in June.

Coordinators gathered amid a year of immense growth in the STS program; of 30 Student to Student communities reporting, 714 Jewish teen participants gave 687 presentations in 216 schools, reaching over 28,500 high school students during the 2025-26 school year. The program is poised for further

expansion this coming school year.

"I am continually inspired by our colleagues across the U.S. and Canada, whose outstanding work empowers our young people to share their Jewish stories with pride and confidence—especially at a time when those voices are needed most," said Fawn Chapel, Program Director of Student to Student. "In difficult moments, the impact of Student to Student's model of direct engagement and community building is felt even more strongly."

Student to Student was created in 1992 by the Jewish Community Relations Council of St. Louis and had just six participants at its inception. The program grew steadily for 25 years and began to expand to other communities in 2018. In

2024, Student to Student became part of the Jewish Federations umbrella and has since enjoyed substantial growth, expanding its reach to 49 communities.

As Student to Student ambassadors, Jewish teens across North America are trained to give presentations in high schools that have no Jewish presence. Surveys of students and teachers confirm the significant impact of the program on their perceptions of Jewish people. The peer-to-peer program has created thousands of young Jewish leaders who are proud of their Judaism and share that pride with their non-Jewish peers.

Jewish high schoolers face an increasingly hostile environment, and STS coordinators work tirelessly to ensure student presenters have the tools

and support they need to be effective ambassadors for the Jewish community. .

During workshops at the June conference, veteran coordinators discussed how to navigate the increasingly complex high school landscape and deliver effective presentations.

Student to Student's growth comes at a critical moment. Many Jewish teens are navigating a sharp rise in antisemitism and often feel misunderstood or singled out. The STS program offers something powerful: the confidence to speak up, the pride to share their Jewish identity, and the opportunity to replace stereotypes with real human connection. By telling their own stories, participants not only educate their peers — they realize the strength of their own voices and become leaders for their communities.

JEWISH EDUCATION

Scholarship

GIVEN BY

THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF READING/BERKS

The Federation is proud to offer Jewish children/students who are residents of our Berks County Jewish community monetary awards of \$1000 to support their participation in programs that nurture Jewish identity, leadership, and connections to their culture, history, and Israel.

Our goal is to ensure that every Jewish child in the Reading community has access to meaningful Jewish experiences. While Jewish summer camps are a primary driver of identity, we recognize that families have diverse needs. Therefore, this scholarship is designed to be flexible: it supports summer camps, youth groups, and any structured Jewish educational content.

To receive the scholarship, parents need to submit an online form and include supporting documentation to ensure the participation of their child in the program.





Jewish Federation
of Reading/Berks

Evening Mahjong

at the JCC

Beginners level

On the first Thursday of each month,
we will meet for a night of Mahjong
between 7:00 and 9:00 pm, at the
JCC.

It is recommended to bring your own set.
Registration is required.



Follow us on social media!



Jewish Federation of Reading &
Jewish Cultural Center of Reading



@jfedreadingberks

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the latest Community news!

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Enriching Lives מעשרים חיים



Shalom

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

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- We offer affordable rates and can customize your advertising schedule to fit your needs

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