



THE NEW JEWISH VOICE

A PUBLICATION OF UNITED JEWISH FEDERATION

Tzahal Shalom Brings Israel To Your Home VIRTUALLY

This year, the pandemic won't stop the JCC from continuing to ignite the community's relationship with Israel through JCC Tzahal Shalom. Mark your calendar throughout April for a series of meaningful conversations with some familiar and extraordinarily talented men and women who represent the best of Israel.

Since 1978, JCC Tzahal Shalom, featuring an annual delegation of IDF soldiers



2015 JCC Tzahal Shalom delegation, many of whom will participate in 2021 virtual parlor meeting.
(no names for security reasons)

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Commemorating Yom HaShoah

The Stamford, New Canaan, Darien and Greenwich Jewish communities will commemorate Yom HaShoah on April 8th at 7pm with a virtual event on Zoom. The Yom HaShoah collaboration between the United Jewish Federation and UJA-JCC is the first of its kind. "Zoom events during the pandemic have allowed neighboring Federations to work together to bring their communities more substantive and meaningful programming," shared Sharon Lewis, UJF's Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) Director.

Community rabbis will participate in a virtual candle lighting followed by guest speaker, survivor Peter



Peter Somogyi



Shushannah Walshe

Somogyi. Peter will be interviewed by Shushannah Walshe, an American journalist and author based in Stamford, CT. Peter was born in Pecs, Hungary in 1933. In April 1944, he was placed in a ghetto in Hungary with all the Jews of Pecs.

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Community All-Star Yom Ha'Atzmaut Celebration Concert

Israel marks its 73rd birthday and the entire Jewish community of Greater Stamford, New Canaan, Darien and Greenwich will be celebrating on Thursday, April 15th at 5:30 pm with a star-studded Yom Ha'Atzmaut concert featuring David Broza, Rick Recht, Joshua Nelson, Nefesh Mountain and many

other talented artists. The concert is presented in partnership between the Stamford JCC, United Jewish Federation of Greater Stamford, New Canaan and Darien, and UJA-JCC Greenwich. Tickets are free of charge through the generous sponsorship of Eleanor and Mort Lowenthal and Beverly and David Stein.

The event is also supported by BBYO, Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy, Chabad of Stamford, Chavurat Aytz Chayim, Congregation Agudath Sholom, Friends of the Israel Defense Force, Israel Cancer Research Fund, Jewish Historical Society of Fairfield County, Stamford Hadassah, Temple Beth El, Temple

Sinai and Young Israel of Stamford. (List in formation).

Although admission is free, registration is required in order to receive a Zoom link for the virtual concert. Register online at www.stamfordjcc.org; www.ufj.org; or www.ujajcc.org.

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Children Celebrate Purim!



Gan Yeladim children celebrate Purim with music and fun with a bubble truck. (l-r) Eli Small and Alexa Mishal. See more photos on page 13



Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy 3rd-graders show off their Purim costumes...while maintaining their social distance. See more photos on page 12

From UJF's Chief Executive Officer

Federation Helps Community - in Good Times and Bad!

BY DIANE SLOYER

On Pesach we say, "let all who are hungry come and eat"! While we cannot literally open our homes, metaphorically we know our Passover table has room for those we count on and all who count on us. And we at Federation make every effort to help those in need as best we can.

I am so proud of the role of United Jewish Federation of Greater Stamford, New Canaan and Darien in aiding our community in life-saving work, especially this year, and I am grateful for the continued dedication of our volunteers and staff to the community. Our team of lay and professional leaders from UJF have worked so hard to secure close to \$300,000 of COVID and Human Service Relief for our local community. And a UJF committee, chaired by Rhonda Schaffer-Maron, met in January, recognized the need for emergency pandemic relief for those in our

community and awarded additional funds for this purpose. This additional funding, over and above our regular UJF funding and special emergency allocations, will help synagogues, agencies and schools continue their critical work. A full listing of recipient organizations can be found on our website at www.ujf.org.

Our Federation was built for this moment and for every moment where there are people in need. Beyond COVID, we have recently helped families in Texas due to the recent critical weather conditions and helped Ethiopians make their way to Israel to begin their new lives.

Beyond a successful campaign that



Diane Sloyer, UJF CEO

provided vital support, Federation continues to bring the community together in a variety of ways. We have been working closely with the Secure Community Network of Jewish Federation of North America to hire a regional security director. The person holding this new position, which we anticipate to be filled by mid-spring, will work closely with all our local institutions to ensure that community safety and secu-

rity are maintained. Keeping our community strong and vital for the future is being addressed via the Life & Legacy program. Facilitated by UJF, the eleven Life & Legacy participating community organizations have thus far received commitments of over 6 million

dollars from community members willing to sign letters of intent for future legacy gifts. We are nearing the end of year one of this four year program, originated and run through The Harold Grinspoon Foundation, and UJF looks forward to celebrating community successes in early summer.

As we finish one year of COVID, I think about the lives lost and the lives forever changed by this horrific pandemic. Although there is uncertainty of what our community and world will look like in the years ahead, I am comforted in knowing that UJF is here now and will be here in the future - always ready to help!

I am forever proud of the role of Federation in aiding our community and grateful for the continued dedication of all to the community.

Chag kasher V'Sameach

Wishing you and your families a Passover filled with health, joy and love.

UJF President's Message

Silos, Silos and More Silos

BY DAVID GORDON

The rule of three in public speaking says: "Tell them what you are going to tell them; tell them; then tell them what you just told them".

So here it is. I said it in my first speech to you as President of UJF - In my opinion, our community is dividing itself into silos and this

is not a good thing for our community.

Now, in the middle of my two-year term, I need to say it again: Our community is dividing itself into silos and this is not a good thing for our community. We get news from the same place that others in our silo get their news, which is different news than others get in their silos. We talk only to those in our silos. As individuals and institutions, we don't mind stepping on the toes of others because we look out only for those in our silo, and we don't particularly think about the others. This leads to conflicts where "we" are right and "they" are wrong. It is a zero-sum game. If you win, I lose, and vice versa.

To be sure, COVID has not helped us one bit. We cannot meet other people. We sit in our respective bunkers, often oblivious to what others are doing.



UJF President David Gordon

But that doesn't mean that it has to be this way. A fundamental purpose of UJF is to build community and not silos or bunkers. Building community is what we do best. We build community in everything we do. Our PJ Library program is available to every Jewish family across the community with a young child. Our New Jewish Voice newspaper brings news of interest from all the local Jew-

ish agencies to every Jewish family across the community. Our Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) is the address where the Jewish community meets the non-Jewish community regarding matters of interfaith concern, and provides the Mayor, Governor, and others with a central address where they can reach the Jewish community. Our Life & Legacy program helps all of our congregations and institutions raise legacy gifts which will help sustain our entire community well

into the future. Through the Secure Community Network (SCN), UJF is about to hire a high-caliber security professional who will work with all of our institutions to heighten and "harden" our physical security. Most recently, UJF raised funds for COVID relief for all of our institutions and congregations and helped them obtain forgivable government PPP loans to keep the lights on during the pandemic.

Hopefully, when COVID releases its grip, UJF will again be able to build community further by returning to community programs such as Shabbat Across Stamford, an in-person Holocaust Remembrance Day program, Tapestry - An Evening of Learning, and others. We still hope to have a community mission to Israel in November/December 2021 where we can make new friends across our community. But, until that happens, it is up to every one of us, in whatever silo we find ourselves in, to remind our leaders that they are part of a larger community and it is their responsibility and ours to not only strengthen their own organizations, but be mindful of others in our community.

CANDLE LIGHTING TIMES

March 19.....	6:47 pm
March 26.....	6:55 pm
April 2.....	7:02 pm
April 9.....	7:10 pm
April 16.....	7:17 pm
April 23.....	7:25 pm
April 30.....	7:32 pm
May 7.....	7:40 pm
May 14.....	7:47 pm
May 21.....	7:53 pm



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Chag Kasher V'sameach

The Board of Directors and Staff of
United Jewish Federation of
Greater Stamford, New Canaan and
Darien wish you and your families a
healthy and joy-filled Passover.

David Gordon
President

Diane Sloyer
Chief Executive Officer

Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy Unveils New Administrative Team

BY JUDIE JACOBSON

(Courtesy of BCHA) Rabbi Tzvi Bernstein, who currently serves as Dean of Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy of Connecticut (BCHA), has been appointed BCHA Interim Head of School, and Rachel Haron, currently the school's Lower School Principal, has been named Interim Associate Head of School, it was announced by David Pitkoff, President of the BCHA Board of Trustees.

Along with these appointments to the school's top administrative team, Rabbi Josh Rosenfeld, who serves as Middle School Principal of Manhattan Day School, as well as assistant rabbi at Manhattan's Lincoln Square Synagogue, has been appointed Bi-Cultural's new Head of Judaic Studies for pre-K through grade 12.

The new team will take over leadership of the school on August 1, when long-time Head of School Jacqueline Herman steps down from her post. During the transition period, Mrs.

Herman will serve as an advisor to both Rabbi Bernstein and Mrs. Haron, as well as the Board.

Though the Search Committee first looked outside the school for someone to fill Mrs. Herman's shoes, said Mr. Pitkoff, they ultimately realized that, along with the hire of Rabbi Rosenfeld, the perfect fit for Bi-Cultural lay within the school's own walls.

"Yes, there were other candidates available, but as we started to consider our options, we quickly focused on the stars in our own school — our own highly qualified and experienced academic leadership team, who have already displayed an unparalleled commitment to excellence and the success of every one of our children," wrote Mr. Pitkoff in a letter to the community. "In the end, none of the candidates available could match the quality, commitment, and excellence of our current administrators."

The in-house to administrative team — which also includes Upper School Principal Rabbi Shimmy Trencher and Middle School Principal David Giver, will be immeasurably enhanced by the addition of Rabbi Rosenfeld, said Mr. Pitkoff.

Previously, Rabbi Rosenfeld also served on the faculty of SAR High School.

"Rabbi Rosenfeld brings a wealth of knowledge, talent, enthusiasm, and ruach to his new position," said Mr. Pitkoff, adding that as an educator, Rabbi Rosenfeld "was known for the energy and excitement he brought to his classroom and the impact he had on teaching his students. When someone of Rabbi Rosenfeld's caliber became available, we knew we had to seize the opportunity."

Noting that Rachel Haron will be the first Bi-Cultural alumni to serve as Associate Head of School, Mr. Pitkoff said, "As someone who has worked closely with both Tzvi and Rachel these past five years, I can attest

to their commitment to academic excellence in both general and Judaic studies, the strong academic and leadership experience they bring to the task, and their commitment to filling the halls of our school and the hearts of our children with joy, and a love of learning.

"Rabbi Bernstein and Rachel Haron, along with Rabbi Rosenfeld, Rabbi Trencher and David Giver, deserve our support and appreciation for enriching our children's lives with a joy of learning and educational excellence that are the hallmark of a Bi-Cultural education."

DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES

The deadlines for the next issues of

The New Jewish Voice are:

May: April 5th

June/July: May 3rd

Send New Jewish Voice article submissions to Sandy Golove at

sandy@ujf.org marked

"Stamford Voice" in the subject line.

Expect an acknowledgment;

please re-send if you do not

receive one.

"Keeping the Connections" at Temple Sinai's Annual Gala

(Courtesy of Temple Sinai) The Temple Sinai Gala, "Keeping the Connections", will be held virtually on Saturday, April 17th. This year Temple Sinai will honor the Temple Sinai Tech Team that brings everyone together... while everyone remains apart. The Tech Team honorees are Peter Ebstein, Grant Kallen, Patrick Kramer, Stu Madison and Marty Newman.

Peter, Grant, Patrick, Stu and Marty are congregants who have been engaged in serving both the temple community and the greater community in many ways over the years. Temple Sinai has chosen to honor this talented group for the work they have done to keep the temple congregation connected during the pandemic. This combined team has utilized their vast expertise in the digital world to successfully produce hundreds of religious services, educational events including on-line classes for religious school students as well as other events for Temple Sinai during these times while the congregation was kept safely apart. Through vibrant participation by the congregation, these numerous virtual

gatherings have kept the connections alive in the temple community.

The annual gala raises funds to support spiritual, educational and social programming for Temple Sinai and the community at large and this year will be no different as a portion of the proceeds from the Gala will be donated to local charities, to ensure that the whole community is kept connected.

The Gala will be a night of celebration and fun, and a great opportunity to connect on Zoom with Temple Sinai friends. The evening will feature a performance by world-renowned mind reader, Eric Dittleman, who will entertain everyone with a live interactive experience using his unique blend of mind reading with stand-up and improvisational comedy to blow minds!

During the week before April 17th, Temple Sinai will hold a virtual paddle raise, and an on-line auction which will include many unique items. The evening of the 17th will conclude with a raffle drawing. Marcia Selden Catering will supply delicious snack and grazing boxes to all Gala sponsors who attend the event.

To reserve a ticket for the Temple Sinai Virtual Gala or to place a tribute ad in honor of the Tech Team please RSVP online at TempleSinaiStamford.org. For more information about the Gala, contact Shelly Welfeld at Temple Sinai at 203-322-1649 or Shelly@templesinaistamford.org.

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Back row (l-r): Patrick Kramer, Stu Madison, Peter Ebstein.

Front row (l-r): Grant Kallen, Marty Newman.

Spreading Chesed at The JCC Sara Walker Nursery School

(Courtesy of The JCC) Every parent and teacher hopes and dreams that their children will grow up to be kind, caring, human beings, but how can we ensure that this goal will be accomplished? By highlighting a Jewish value each year that is incorporated into the curriculum and working together with families, The JCC Sara Walker Nursery School staff has found success with this endeavor.

Chesed/Kindness is this year's theme at the school and everyone has benefitted from its impact. Encouraging children to show *chesed* to themselves, others, animals, the

environment, our community and world, teaches them how to be empathetic and compassionate. Participating in ongoing *chesed* projects such as food, clothing and toy drives demonstrates to children that even at a young age, they have the power to make a difference.

Anne Liss Johnson, Associate Executive Director said, "Everyone is born with the capacity to be kind. By providing our children with opportunities to practice loving kindness and role modeling these behaviors, we can teach them that caring for others is a priority, therefore nurturing the kindness in each of them."

On February 19, The JCC Sara Walker Nursery School students participated in mitzvah projects at their annual *Chesed* Day. Purim Shalach Manot food packages and personalized cards were assembled by the two's, three's and four-year-olds. Forty bags were delivered to the homes of JCC Seniors (sponsored by Betsey & Arthur Selkowitz) and eighty-six bags were donated to the Elayne and James Schoke Jewish Family Service of Fairfield County. After collecting 111 new pairs of pajamas for the children at Inspirica (a local Women's shelter), the Pre-K and Kindergarten children sorted and packaged them, adding notes wishing the Inspirica children warm and cozy nights.

Every Friday, the children donate *tzedakah* (charity) money to their class *tzedakah* box. On *Chesed* Day, the classes combined



Pajamas collected by the nursery school families were sorted by the pre-k and kindergarten and donated to FINInspirica.

their *tzedakah* money and contributed it to the Back to School Shop, which provides economically disadvantaged elementary school children in our community with brand new clothing and school supplies.

This joyful and special *Chesed* Day concluded with all of the children creating beautiful *chesed* friendship bracelets to share with

their classmates and families. Educational coordinator, Sandi Waldstreicher said, "It's stated in Psalms 100, *Ivdu et hashem b'simcha*, worship G-d with joy. When we do a mitzvah like performing an act of *chesed*, we have to do it with joy so that we will inspire others to be kind and make the world a better place."



Purim shalach manot bags were packed by 3 year olds and donated to JFS.



The children pooled their class *tzedakah* money and donated it to the Back to School Shop.

Commemorating Yom HaShoah

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On July 9, 1944, he was deported to Auschwitz with his mother, sister, and twin brother Thomas. When they arrived at Auschwitz, after four days packed in cattle cars, Thomas and Peter were separated from their mother and sister and chosen by Dr. Josef Mengele for use in his diabolical research on twins.

Thankfully, Mr. Somogyi and his brother were liberated from Auschwitz. In May 1949, they were reunited with their father and moved to Israel. After

seven years Peter and his family moved to England and then Canada. He currently resides in the United States and is married with two children and four grandchildren.

Shushannah Walshe is the co-author of *Sarah From Alaska: The Sudden Rise and Brutal Education of a New Conservative Superstar*. Shushannah was a reporter and producer at the Fox News Channel from August 2001 until the end of the 2008 presidential campaign. Shushannah is currently the editor-at-large at Independent Journal Review (IJR), previously

she was the deputy political director at ABC News. She is a graduate of Boston University.

Select readings and prayers will round out the commemoration. We will recite a communal kaddish for the six million we remember and ask that you have a Yahrzeit candle on hand. This event is free and open to the public. Registration is required and can be found at www.ujf.org/YH2021. A Zoom link will be provided upon registration. For more information contact Sharon Lewis, Director, JCRC at (203) 321-1373, ext. 115, slewis@ujf.org.

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The New Jewish Voice welcomes letters on subjects of interest to the Jewish community. All letters must be signed and include a phone number. The editor may withhold the name upon request.

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UJF Raises Funds For Local Initiatives

(Courtesy of UJF) United Jewish Federation took part in Fairfield County Giving Day on February 25th and raised funds for four UJF initiatives: local communal security, COVID Relief, 3SQUARE (feeding food-insecure children on the weekends), and Dignity Grows (providing personal care items for women in need).

Everyone who donated was entered into a raffle. The winners are: Rachel and Sol Redlich, Ellen Weber, and Jill Kaplan. A special thank you to 613 Restaurant, Darien Sport Shop, and Trader Joe's.



Robin Fischel and her family share the Trader Joe's gift basket her mother, Ellen Weber, won as part of UJF's FC Giving Day raffle.



Jill Kaplan won the \$50 gift card from Darien Sport Shop.



Sol and Rachel Redlich won UJF's FC Giving Day raffle grand prize: Dinner for six from 613.

Tzahal Shalom Brings Israel to Your Home VIRTUALLY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

hosted in Stamford, has deeply enriched the community. To date, 275 host families have opened their homes and hearts to 275 IDF soldiers who have stepped right in and have been adopted by their American families. Tens of thousands of students and adults have learned from and been inspired by these highly accomplished and courageous Israeli men and women and countless IDF units are aware of the community love and support they found.

"These unique bonds have lasted for years, even decades and have inspired a greater interest in and connection to Israel," says Nancy Schiffman, JCC Associate Executive Director, Development & Signature Programs. "Many host families have traveled to Israel for the first time after experiencing JCC Tzahal Shalom and have returned multiple times to see their soldier. Weddings, births, graduations, career advancements have been celebrated together."

On Sunday, April 11 at 1 p.m. a program entitled **The Heart of Israel @ The J** will take place, reconnecting via Zoom, with all eight past JCC Israeli Shlichim (Adam Weiss

2010-2011; Ayellet Azura 2011-2012; Tal Benshahar 2012-2013; Matan Samovsky 2013-2014; Or Berger 2014-2016; Yael Stolarsky 2016-2018; and Noa Bober 2018-2019).

On Sunday, April 18 at 11 a.m. the **Spotlight on JCC Tzahal Shalom Alumni** will occur via a virtual parlor meeting featuring Amir Yaniv – 2015 Delegation hosted by Karen and Larry Cowit; Rivka Cohen Rozenblat – 2015 Delegation hosted by Stella and Isaac Cohen; Yaakov Selavan – 2015 Delegation hosted by Ivy and Marvin Schildkraut; and Menachem Abraham – 2013 Delegation hosted by Michal Smart and James Smart. All taking place in the comfort of your living room!

On Sunday, April 25 at 11 a.m. the JCC will present **Israel in the News** with Shaked Igal, an Israeli journalist and producer for INews24, who serves in the IDF reserves and was scheduled to appear at last spring's program that, of course, did not take place. Topics will include results and implications of Israel's election, the Abraham Accord and other current affairs, moderated by Or Berger, past JCC Israeli Shaliach.

Finally, join Ariel Bar Lev, fitness instructor, hosted in 2016 by Caryn and Andrew

Moss, as she conducts a virtual **Rookie Boot Camp** on Sunday, April 11 and a **Major Boot Camp** on Sunday, April 25, both at 10 a.m.

Initiated by a few passionate philanthropists, the longevity of JCC Tzahal Shalom

continues to be solely dependent on the generosity and commitment of the community.

For more information contact Nancy Schiffman at nschiffman@stamfordjcc.org or visit the JCC website, www.stamfordjcc.org.

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Reconnect with past JCC Israeli Shlichim! Top (l-r) Adam Weiss, Ayellet Azura and Tal Benshahar. Bottom (l-r) Matan Samovsky, Or Berger, Yael Stolarsky and Noa Bober.

Jewish Community Relations Council Update

BY SHARON LEWIS, JCRC DIRECTOR

The Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) is the public affairs arm of the United Jewish Federation. Its mission is to represent the interests of the Stamford, New Canaan and Darien Jewish communities to public officials and agencies, the media and the larger community. We convene and mobilize the Jewish community, build relationships with and beyond the Jewish community, and engage in non-partisan work focusing on education, advocacy, social justice, communal security, support for Israel and combating antisemitism. Since January 1st, the JCRC in concert with other community organizations has presented programs on

antisemitism and participated in virtual advocacy events.

The year started off with a lecture about the long history of antisemitism by leading scholar, Steve Goldberg, co-sponsored with the Jewish Historical Society of Fairfield County. (Interestingly, Steve told us that among those who study this hatred, the proper spelling of the word is without a hyphen and thus we have adopted this spelling in our materials.) In addition, beginning in late January and continuing throughout February, the JCRC and the UJA/JCC Greenwich presented several programs about different faces of antisemitism.

On January 27th, the artist Lauren Bergman spoke about her narrative paintings which

seek to give new, reimagined life to iconic photographs from the Holocaust. The Composer Ella Milch-Sheriff discussed the musical pieces she composed to accompany the artwork. On February 9th, Dr. Manhasz Afridi and Dr. Charles Asher Smith were in conversation about Muslim Antisemitism and Islamophobia based upon Dr. Afridi's new book *Shoah Through Muslim Eyes*.

On February 24th leading film producer and playwright Marc Lapadula discussed antisemitism in American films such as *Gentleman's Agreement*. There will be several more programs about different aspects of antisemitism through April.

In terms of advocacy, JCRC participated in Jewish Federation of North America's first Virtual Mission to Washington D.C. on February 1st and 2nd. The Virtual Mission allowed participants to hear from leading legislators and thought leaders. There were seven separate sessions discussing topics such as Securing the Jewish Community, What to Expect in the First Hundred Days, and Jews and Civic Engagement. Dozens of participants from our Federation joined more than



Sharon Lewis

3,000 Jews from across the country. If you would like to watch these sessions, they can be found at vimeo.com/showcase/8112551.

On January 31st, Jewish Federation Association of CT (JFACT) invited members of our community to participate in a conversation with members of our Congressional delegation to discuss how the next Congress will combat the rise in hate that has been boiling for

years and culminated in the insurrection at the United State Capitol. Senator Blumenthal, Congresswoman DeLauro, Congressman Himes, Congressman Courtney and Congresswoman Hayes attended this virtual event.

JCRC also participated in Jewish Disability Advocacy Month—a month of virtual lectures and panel discussions focusing on different ways to make our communities more inclusive and how to advocate for this cause with our legislators.

As you can see, the JCRC is an extremely active part of Federation. If you are interested in joining the JCRC or have questions or concerns, please contact Sharon Lewis, JCRC Director at slewis@ujf.org.



The Jewish Historical Society of Fairfield County (JHSFC) on Pesach and always wishes all of you happiness, prosperity, peace, and good health and may the days come soon when we can once again be together in person.

Photography

April 14 | 10:30 am

Photo Negatives: Linger Images of Anti Semitic Stereotypes

With Judith Cohen, former Director, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's Photo Archives and Chief Acquisitions Curator

Antisemitic imagery has gained increasing exposure with the advent of social media. But is this new? Dollar signs, rats, hooked noses, globes symbolizing world domination — explore how today's tropes draw on common stereotypes that date back hundreds of years.



Co-sponsors: Aperture & Holocaust & Human Rights Education Center

Culture & Politics

April 21 | 7:30 pm

Alternate History of Antisemitism & Fascism in American Culture:

What If or What Now?

With Gavriel Rosenfeld, PhD, Professor of History and Director of Judaic Studies at Fairfield University

Since the 1930s, many American novels, films, TV shows and comic books have explored the possibility that the U.S. might one day embrace fascism. Today pessimistic assessments have saturated American culture as never before, including through works of alternate history such as Amazon Prime's *The Man in the High Castle*, Netflix's *Hunters*, HBO's *The Plot Against America*, and *Watchmen*. We'll scrutinize fictitious scenarios of collaboration, racism and anti-Semitism in domestic culture and try to make sense of the popular response.



Co-sponsor: Judaic Studies Program, Fairfield University

Go To
www.ujf.org
to register

For More Information
Contact Sharon Lewis,
Director Jewish Community
Relations Council
slewis@ujf.org



United Jewish Federation



This program was made possible by a grant from Lois and Bruce Zenkel

UJF Women's Philanthropy Impacts Community Through Dignity Grows™

(Courtesy of UJF) United Jewish Federation of Greater Stamford, New Canaan and Darien became a Dignity Grows™ chapter in December and has hit the ground running, delivering bags of personal items to Schoke JFS, Inspirica, Building One Community, and New Covenant House.

"We are thrilled to come on board with this incredible initiative and so pleased to work with two community members, Terry Bernard and Nancy Fahey, who co-chair the program in Stamford," said Tara Shapiro, UJF's Women's Philanthropy President. "Dignity Grows will not only have a profound impact on helping individuals in need but will also provide a wonderful opportunity for volunteers to participate in a meaningful and important program," Shapiro continued.

"We are grateful that Congregation Agudath Sholom has stepped up to sponsor

the March bags with a donation of \$1,800. This month, the bags will be filled with toiletries and personal care products for men and women and will be delivered by CAS volunteers. CAS will work with Federation to pack bags for the Pacific House Men's Shelter and Domestic Violence Crisis Center. Funds for the Dignity Grows project have been raised by Facebook birthday donations, Fairfield County Giving Day, and recurring monthly donations of \$18. And Dignity Grows makes a wonderful Bar or Bat Mitzvah project," said Diane Sloyer, UJF CEO.

Dignity Grows was founded by the Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford's Women's Philanthropy, and provides "girls, women, and individuals assigned female at birth, with the human dignity that comes from having their most basic feminine hygiene needs met, one month at a time."

Each Dignity Tote is "Hope in a Bag" for neighbors in need, and provides essential products so they can attend school and work and participate in community life without interruption. Although the project began in West Hartford, it has been so successful, that it has been launched nationally.

For more information and sponsorship opportunities, contact Diane Sloyer at dianesloyer@ujf.org (203) 321-1373, ext. 105.



Dignity Grows co-chair Nancy Fahey (right) delivers bags to New Covenant House.

UJF's Cardozo Society Highlights "Complicity and the Bystander"

(Courtesy of UJF) United Jewish Federation's Cardozo Law Society held a virtual program on February 17th featuring



Amos Guiora, a law professor at University of Utah, spoke to UJF's Cardozo Society about "Complicity and the Bystander".

Amos Guiora. Mr. Guiora is a law Professor at University of Utah and is an expert in the areas of complicity, bystander, extremism, counterterrorism, criminal law, national security and religion. He is also the author of several books on the subject of the bystander and lectures all over the world.

At the UJF program, Mr. Guiora spoke about the criminal implications of the bystander, touching on his parent's experiences during the Holocaust in a concentration camp. He also

spoke about current day bystander crime, specifically sexual abuse.

UJA-JCC of Greenwich joined UJF of Greater Stamford, New Canaan and Darien for this program. Lawyers received one CLE credit sponsored by Rob

Hoff and the law firm Wiggin and Dana. Thank you to our co-chairs Julie Daniel and Adam Furmansky, and to Rob Hoff. For more information about the Cardozo Society, contact Sharon Franklin at sharon@ujf.org.



Over 60 guests attended the virtual Cardozo law program on February 17th.

The United Jewish Federation of Greater Stamford, New Canaan and Darien and UJA-JCC Greenwich invite you to join us as we

Commemorate Yom HaShoah

April 8th • 7pm • on Zoom
Free and open to the public

Community Rabbis will participate in a virtual candle lighting followed by guest speaker, survivor Peter Somogyi, interviewed by Shushannah Walshe, an American journalist and author.




Registration is required and can be found at www.ujf.org/YH2021
A zoom link will be provided upon registration.

For more information contact Sharon Lewis, Director, JCRC at (203) 321-1373, ext. 104, slewis@ujf.org






BCHA Celebrates Honorees at Virtual Gala



Guests of Honor Stephanie and Josh Bilenker accept the gift presented to them at the BCHA Virtual Celebration Dinner.



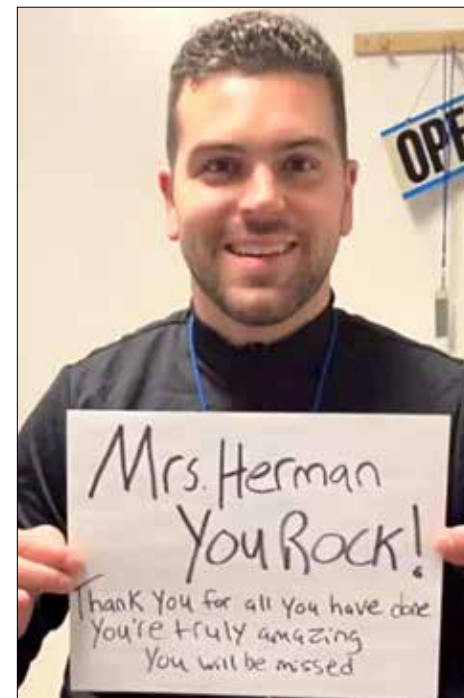
Jackie Herman, BCHA Head of School presents a gift to outgoing BCHA Board of Trustees President David Pitkoff.

(Courtesy of BCHA) A record-breaking 500 guests attended the annual Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy Virtual Celebration Dinner.

Of the dinner's theme, "Fortitude," BCHA Head of School Jackie Herman said, "It reminds us of the extraordinary challenge our community faced over the course of this past year, as the pandemic hit. And it epitomizes the strength, grace, determination and resilience which we drew upon to overcome that unprecedented challenge."

Mrs. Herman, who after 10 years at the helm will step down in June, was presented the school's inaugural Walter Shuchatowitz Award for Excellence in Education.

The evening's other honorees included Guests of Honor Stephanie and Josh Bilenker, Young Leadership Award recipients Nicole and Jonathan Makovsky, and eight BCHA graduates currently serving in the IDF who received the school's Alumni Award. The Morton G. Scheraga President's Award was presented to Doris Zelinsky by David Pitkoff — who was also honored for the completion of his five-year tenure as president of the BCHA Board of Trustees.



BCHA physical education teacher Stefan Driehuizen sends a message to outgoing Head of School Jackie Herman in a poignant video screened at the school's recent Celebration Dinner.

NEW AROUND TOWN

Leah Schechter, Chief Program Officer at Schoke Jewish Family Service

Leah Schechter rejoins Schoke JFS as the Chief Program Officer. Over a decade ago, Leah was the program coordinator for the Jewish Twenties and Thirties Program. Most recently, she was the Senior Director of Volunteer Services and Donor Relations at Met Council on Jewish Poverty in NYC. Leah has been a Jewish communal professional for fifteen years and has a background in informal Jewish education. She received her undergraduate degree at Boston University and



Leah Schechter

Masters of Nonprofit Management from The New School. She spent six years as the Assistant Director of UJA-JCC Greenwich, handling the operations and logistics for community, volunteer and donor events. Leah is thrilled to be back in the community and able to continue to make a difference in the lives of others. Recently engaged to Adam Spiewak, Leah looks forward to being a stepmom to his three daughters.



Building a World of Kindness

(Courtesy of Congregation Agudath Sholom) Making Mitzvah Moments, a Congregation Agudath Sholom Whatsapp group dedicated to performing acts of kindness, is providing meals from Soosh, 613 Restaurant and Navaratna to the National Guard and the Community Health Center workers administering COVID vaccines in the Lord and Taylor parking lot.

The group's effort sparked Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy and the Stamford JCC to make thank you cards for the volunteers and to offer to provide more meals in the future.

"There is so much that unites all of us and we can build a world of kindness one step at a

time," said Rabbi Daniel Cohen, spiritual leader of CAS.

Amy Taylor, Vice President of Community Health Center's western region, said, "Wow—this is wonderful. Your kindness is definitely felt by my team. They LOVED the warm food today and I know the artwork by the 8th graders will be so well received and appreciated. I have shared with so many people today how kind you were in coming to visit and deliver lunch and share a blessing for the team. The Mitzvah moment was wonderful."

To support this local effort or join the Making Mitzvah Moments movement, please contact Rabbi Cohen at rabbicohen@cas-stamford.org



Rabbi Daniel Cohen (left) and Making Mitzvah Moments volunteers brought food, blessings, and words of encouragement and appreciation to National Guard members and Community Health Center workers administering vaccines.

Happy 99th Birthday, Mr. Ohlenberg!

(Courtesy of UJF) Ali Korn, a senior at Staples High School in Westport, baked a birthday cake to celebrate Anachnu client Charles Ohlenberg's 99th birthday. Mr. Ohlenberg is a participant in Anachnu, a program for Holocaust survivors run by Schoke Jewish Family Service. Ali, her sister Jordan, and her mother Shari, have been delivering Shabbat meals every week to the Ohlenberg family since the start of the summer, and they have all fallen in love with each other.

The Anachnu program is the Holocaust Survivor Care program supported by Jewish Federations of North America and Schoke JFS and cares for the fragile senior population of Holocaust survivors in Fairfield County. If you know of a senior who could benefit, please contact Marina Sapir at 203-921-4161 or email at msapir@ctjfs.org



Ali Korn & Charles Ohlenberg

Intergenerational Tu B'Shevat Dinner Preparation

(Courtesy of Chabad of Stamford) 7th Grade students from Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy join Chabad of Stamford's Betsy's Buddies program to prepare dinner (and entertainment) for seniors throughout Stamford in the first intergenerational Tu B'Shevat Dinner.



From (l-r) David Giver, Liam Raz, Meg Haron and Liam Haron.

UJF's 3SQUARE Continues to Make An Impact



3SQUARE volunteers, Lenore Fogel, Jill Kaplan, Robin Madan, and Wendy Handler pack bags of food to help sustain families of Rogers elementary school students. Each week bags of shelf stable food are delivered to the students so that they will have food for the weekend.

JHSFC Book Talks

(Courtesy of JHSFC) Julie Zuckerman will present insights into her debut book, *The Book of Jeremiah*, a "novel-in-stories," on Wednesday, April 21 at 10:00 a.m., available on Zoom. Have you ever known anyone who is feisty, irreverent, combative, and sweet? The main character, Jeremiah Gerstler is that person. The story charts his life from boyhood to retirement on the backdrop of the twentieth century. Julie Zuckerman will be

speaking live from Israel, where she lives, but she grew up in the Bridgeport area!

The JHSFC Book Talks, free and open to the public, are underwritten by Marcie Schoenfeld in honor of her beloved parents, Rose and Abraham Schoenfeld, and by Eileen Bolinsky and Susan Trotz in memory of their beloved parents, Eleanor and Nathan Bolinsky.

The Zoom link for the Book Talks is on the JHSFC website: <http://jhsfc-ct.org/>.

Town Hall With Senator Blumenthal

Temple Beth El of Stamford and Stamford Union Baptist Church will present a Zoom Town Hall Meeting with Senator Richard Blumenthal on Tuesday April 6 at 7:00 p.m. This program is co-sponsored by the AJC, NAACP and United Jewish Federation of Stamford, New Canaan and Darien's Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC).

Temple Beth El member and

Connecticut's Senior Senator Richard Blumenthal will speak about the most pressing issues facing our community and will answer questions from attendees. The community is invited to register at: tinyurl.com/tbe-040621 Zoom information will be sent at registration. For further information, please contact Steven Lander, TBE Executive Director at execdir@tbe.org or 203-322-6901, ext. 304.

Schoke JFS Receives Grant for Senior Support Services

(Courtesy of Schoke JFS) The Board of Southwestern Connecticut Agency on Aging, Inc. (SWCAA) has awarded Schoke Jewish Family Service of Fairfield County a mini grant from the Older Americans Act Title III funds for the project period March 1, 2021-September 30, 2021. This is the first time Schoke JFS has received a grant from SWCAA.

The mission of the Southwestern CT Agency on Aging is to provide leadership and resources to meet the needs of the rapidly growing older adult population and to maintain and improve the quality of life and independence of older persons and persons with disabilities.

The grant is for \$18,000 and will be utilized to fund the Schoke JFS Senior Support

Program. Schoke JFS provides support and services to older seniors in the Schoke JFS catchment area. Three areas of assistance will be bolstered with this mini grant funding: (1) aid to seniors to obtain public assistance benefits (2) help for all seniors with education and enrollment in programs and (3) provide language translation for seniors who speak English as a second language.

Schoke JFS is grateful to SWCAA for this grant and will be reaching out to the community for seniors who could benefit from these services.

Assistance for seniors in the community can be obtained by contacting Rebekah Kanefsky, Case Management Director at Schoke JFS at 203-921-4161 or email at rkanevsky@ctjfs.org.

A Gift from Israel



Diane Sloyer, UJF CEO received hand sanitizer.



Tara Shapiro and Nancy Fahey add hand sanitizer to Dignity Grow bags.

The Consulate General of Israel to New England delivered 1000's of hand sanitizers

to UJF to be used in Dignity Grows and 3SQUARE packages.

The Power of Giving

BY JUDIE JACOBSON

On February 2, Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy Upper School launched the “Social Impact Initiative,” an inspirational online program that teaches Jewish teens about the power of giving. The BCHA program kicked off with a Zoom talk by social entrepreneur Orly Wahba, founder of Life Vest Inside, an organization that brings together people from 50 countries to spread kindness.

Through the Social Impact Initiative, students learn the skills and habits needed to develop their leadership abilities and enhance their capacity to effect positive change in the world.

“A goal of ours in the Upper School is to help our students become confident and competent contributors to the world. When I first heard about the Social Impact Initiative, which gives students tools and habits of mind to do just that, I knew that I wanted to connect our students with this opportunity,” says BCHA Upper School principal Rabbi Shimmy Trencher.

Wahba, whose video “The Kindness Boomerang” has received more than one hundred million views online and whose TED Talk has been heard by more than 300,000 people, is part of a team of Impact Initiative mentors who coach Jewish teens about business and social entrepreneurship.

“When she came to speak with us, Ms. Wahba discussed her background and how it influenced her decision to start the Social Impact Initiative,” says BCHA Upper School senior Jedidiah (“Jed”) Devillers. “She spoke about the desire to help the world that she first felt in early childhood and how she has parlayed that into a

career. The path she took through high school and college influenced her view of the world, and I think my peers and I were deeply struck by that as it came from a place of both passion and hurt.”

Jed was selected by Rabbi Trencher to serve as student advisor and student leader of the BCHA Social Impact Initiative.

“I’ve had prior experience running and participating in social entrepreneurship programs around the country, so I have the tools and knowledge that will come in handy to help budding social entrepreneurs,” he explained.

“For now, the program will start with a [free] six-week course generously provided by Ms. Wahba’s organization’s benefactors,” says Jed. “From there, we hope to have more students take an active role in giving back to the local community through all sorts of *chesed* (kindness) and volunteer opportunities and initiatives. I look forward to helping every one of them along the way, giving as much advice as I can. I’ve already talked to one student about her plans for a *chesed* opportunity and am looking forward to overseeing her project.”

The benefits of the program to the students are many, according to Jed.

“This is an especially important program for students as it will provide both an opportunity for them to give back to the community and bolster their resumes,” he said. “The experience they will gain from building *chesed* platforms will provide them with real-world skills which will, in turn, help them in college and beyond.”



Social entrepreneur Orly Wahba talks with Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy Upper School students on Zoom about the power of giving.

TBE's Temple Rock Proves to Be Smashing Success

(Courtesy Temple Beth El) Temple Beth El was in a quandary this year about its annual gala, Temple Rock, scheduled for February 6. How do you celebrate a 13-year tradition in a fun and meaningful way during a pandemic with a few hundred squares on a cold hard piece of technology called Zoom? The answer: bring the party to everyone's home under the banner, *Come Together—The Magic of Community*. And what a party it was!

The catered dinner by W Kosher Events was put in boxes (lots of them) for pickup and delivery. The bar was in a wine bag. And everything was packed in a huge caterer's tote along with lots of fun magical toys to spotlight the night's mind-blowing illusionist Tom Pesce. The Zoom breakout rooms also proved lots of fun, while Assaf Gleizner provided the musical entertainment as over 250 participants enjoyed their cocktails, appetizers, main courses, and dessert.

One of the highlights of the evening was the Temple Rock paddle raise. Each year, a paddle raise is held to raise money in support of a special need at TBE. However, this year, the Temple Rock Committee and TBE Board of Trustees determined there was an even greater need in the community—food scarcity—and dedicated the paddle raise to Schoke Jewish Family Service's Freedberg Kosher Food Pantry. Facilitated masterfully by Alan

Kalter, past president of TBE, the paddle raise brought in over \$21,000 from those in attendance and follow-up donations. Many of the contributions were made in honor of friends and loved ones.

Hats off to Barbara Rothstein and Steven Sosnick, who served as co-chairs of the event; Dana Weinberg, Suzanne Fruithandler and Emily Pomerantz, auction chairs; and Aviva Maller, event planner.



Check presentation from Temple Beth El's Temple Rock Paddle Raise to the Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry at Schoke Jewish Family Service. (l-r) Avi and Rhoda Freedberg, and Temple Rock co-chairs Barbara Rothstein and Steve Sosnick.

(CREDIT: AVIVA MALLER PHOTOGRAPHY)



(l-r) Sue Greenwald and Sharon Turshen, two of the 30 volunteers who stuffed and delivered catering bags of food and magical items for Temple Rock.

(CREDIT: AVIVA MALLER PHOTOGRAPHY)

UJF Welcomes Newcomers

United Jewish Federation's Shalom Welcome program delivers a complimentary welcome bag to residents new to Stamford, New Canaan and Darien.



Raquel Grover, who recently moved to downtown Stamford, receives a Shalom Welcome visit.

Shalom Baby provides a gift bag to families who have recently had a baby. Bags are filled with gifts, coupons and helpful information. Do you know anyone who



Izabella Josephine's family enjoys a visit with UJF's Sharon Franklin to learn about the community.

is new to the area or who has recently had a baby? Contact Sharon Franklin at sharon@ujf.org to arrange a safe and socially distanced outdoor bag drop off.



UJF's Sharon Franklin pays a Shalom Baby visit to Lisa Gavronsky. She recently gave birth to a baby girl.

Returning to Zion: CAS Scholar Series

Congregation Agudath Sholom invites the community to a Virtual Women's Scholar Series with Rachel Besser on Wednesday evenings in April at 8:00 pm. The topic is "Shivat Tziyon (Returning to Zion) - The Movement from Exile towards a Messy Redemption" and will cover the return to Jerusalem of Jews exiled to Babylon after the destruction of the first Temple, and the building of the second Temple.

The first session, on April 7th, is entitled "Zerubabel and the Founding of the Jewish State."

The topic for session two, on April 14th, is "Haggai and Zechariah - Partners in Rebuilding."

Session three, on April 21st, will cover "Ezra and the Establishment of Torah Law."

The final session, on April 28th, will be "Models of

Redemption: *Shivat Tziyon, Mashiach* (Messiah) and the Modern State of Israel."

Rachel Besser is the *Nach* (Prophets and Writings) Department Chair at the Frisch School in Paramus, NJ, where she also teaches *Tanach* (Bible) and Jewish philosophy and is a member of the Israel Guidance Department. A graduate of Stern College for Women, Rachel received her master's degree in English literature from Hunter College in New York City. At the OU Women's Initiative, Rachel has presented a Rosh Chodesh shiur and served as a Counting Toward Sinai Scholar-in-Residence. Rachel lives in Clifton, NJ, with her husband Donny and six children.

For information and to RSVP visit www.cas-stamford.org. The series is free and open to the entire community.

PROMOTIONAL PRICING OFFERED
for a limited time for seniors and families who have an immediate need!



The
CANNONDALE CAMPUS
PRIVATELY OWNED SINCE 1988
The Greens at Cannondale *Wilton Meadows*
Assisted Living Nursing & Rehabilitation



welcome to the **Cannondale Campus**

The same recipe that has earned the trust of our community for 30 years, remains our commitment and, as businesses nationwide begin their gradual re-opening, our Cannondale Campus has emerged with its singularly successful recipe intact. With a 5-star culture and commitment to integrity, compassion and quality, we are now setting the standard for care and welcoming new clients during this challenging time.

The Cannondale approach to health, well-being and creating a joyful environment remain second to none. Be it our "Peace of Mind" move in process or our wellness initiatives to manage chronic conditions, we encourage you to contact us if you or someone you know is in need of senior living.

Call now for availability 203.761.1191

Our "Peace of Mind" Process includes three simple steps:

①

New residents must receive a Covid-19 test prior to move in. Move-in date must be within 72 hours of negative test results.

②

New Residents will receive a 14 day "Peace of Mind" Stay and receive added care and concierge services at no extra charge.

③

All residents receive daily temperature and Oxygen level checks. Wellness visits from health specialists to ensure optimal balance, strength, nutrition and well-being are provided to give "Peace of Mind" to all our residents.

"My Mother is so fortunate to be in your care. Thank you to every single person who leaves home each day and goes to work at The Greens in this unprecedented pandemic. I know your family and friends are concerned for you, and those of us in the wider Greens community are too. I am enormously grateful for your dedication and commitment."

— GRATEFULLY, SALLY L (GREENS FAMILY MEMBER)

Friendship Circle Welcomes Purim With Joy for All

(Courtesy of Friendship Circle) Friendship Circle offered multiple opportunities for everyone to celebrate Purim throughout the month of February.

The first to celebrate were over fifteen Friendship Circle moms, who participated via Zoom in a fruit carving workshop. Master fruit carver Shaina Herra shared her expertise and taught the moms different techniques. Everyone received all the supplies needed via contactless delivery to their door by volunteers. Moms also heard from inspirational speaker, Leah Wilhem, who spoke about the joys and challenges of raising a child with special needs.

Marcy Nirschel, one of the moms who participated, said "Being part of the Friendship Circle Mom's group has always been very special, but knowing that we can still continue to connect on Zoom has made me so much more grateful for this group. Even a pandemic cannot affect the bonds we share! Listening to Leah speak was extremely meaningful; it's so important to know that other mothers understand the joys, humor, and challenges of raising our children with special needs. Especially now, it's easy to feel more isolated than ever. Creating fruit carvings afterwards with Shaina was a great way to relax, have fun, and learn something new!"

The next event offered by the Friendship Circle was a Family Pre-Purim MasCARade



Dina Pilnick was brave enough to wear a snake!

on February 21st. Children and young adults with special needs, and their families, drove to Chabad of Westport to enjoy the drive-through Purim carnival. Among the offerings were balloon creations, singing and dancing with Bobby Doowah, live animals and hot cocoa and marshmallows. Participants also learned about the many mitzvot of Purim at fun and interactive booths. Everyone was able to participate from the warmth of their car in a safe and fun manner. Chaya



Tamir Shashouah poses as King Achashveirosh.

Hanoka, Friendship Circle Adult Program Coordinator said "We had such a great time, and got to bring the Purim spirit to all of our friends. Everyone was smiling behind their masks."

That same week, families also gathered on Zoom to participate in hamentash baking. Once again, all supplies were safely delivered to the families' doors by volunteers. Participants and their families went into different breakout rooms where teen volunteers led their special friends in making the traditional Purim treat. "It was so fun to connect with our friends while making



Friendship Circle staff member Chani Cunin visited Daniel Radin on Purim day, and read him the Purim story.

the dough for the hamentashen", said Maya Fogel, a Friendship Circle volunteer. "The breakout rooms gave us the chance to have quiet time to talk and enjoy the activity together."

On the actual night and day of Purim, Friendship Circle staff and volunteers visited families at their homes outdoors, in a socially distanced celebration. Those who wished were able to hear a Megillah reading, and others participated in the exchange of Purim treats and songs! A jumbo book of the Purim story was easy to read together in a socially distanced manner. Malva Shmotkin, Friendship Circle Director, said "It was wonderful to be together in a safe, socially distanced way for Purim. The smiles and laughter were so heartwarming and gratifying."



United Jewish Federation Presents

Fly With Us Over Israel!

Sunday April 18 at 2:30 PM

Join UJF's Afula Gilboa partnership friends for an aerial flight over Israel with retired Israel Air Force pilot Lieutenant Colonel Alon Moller - in honor of Yom HaAtzmaut - Israel's Birthday!

Now a professional tour guide, Alon will show us an amazing bird's-eye view of the land and share the story of Israel through the lens of his family's journey.

Register at www.ujf.org/flyover



United Jewish Federation

Purim Is Back at Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy!

This time last year, COVID-19 came in like a lion...and Purim went out like a lamb, with all the fun inherent in that most raucous of Jewish holidays toned down to barely a whisper. A year later, however, Purim is back! Or

at least it was at Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy, where students got creative and figured out how to make the most of masks and have fun, while sticking strictly to the pandemic protocols that keep us all safe.



At her kindergarten Purim party, BCHA "butterfly" Bess Yasgur flitted about gracefully.



BCHA 2nd-grader Eliana Furmansky was everyone's favorite superhero!

Stamford JCC - Staying Connected to Seniors

(Courtesy of Stamford JCC) One of the most difficult realities of the COVID pandemic has been the isolation and loneliness that people are experiencing. While everyone is affected, this lack of contact has been particularly hard on seniors. The hallmarks of the JCC's Senior Program have been to nurture the personal relationships and sense of belonging that



Shalach Manot bags were delivered to all the JCC Seniors. Pictured here are Debbie & Ben Soifer.
(CREDIT: CONNIE CIRILLO FREEMAN)

seniors experience at The JCC. Despite the inability to come together in person, The JCC has been committed to sustaining these critically important connections.

The Stamford JCC has partnered with Schoke JFS to provide the weekly "Let's Talk" conversations virtually, with some people visually on Zoom and some on the phone. "I look forward to talking with my JCC ladies and the counselors are so helpful," is a common refrain. The core senior program participants, who are in their late 80's and 90's, are contacted by the dedicated volunteers on a regular basis, reaching out to simply check in with the seniors to see how they are doing. The seniors themselves call to inquire about many things ranging from questions about the health of fellow participants who they haven't heard from in a while to questions regarding vaccination scheduling and receipt.

Of course the highlights of the year are the JCC's celebratory holiday meals which attract not only JCC program participants but members of the larger Stamford community. Although the in-person gatherings were not possible because of the virus, seniors have continued to receive gift bags containing traditional food to mark the occasions, due to the caring and generosity of holiday luncheon sponsors. The family of Henry Stern, of blessed memory, sponsored Rosh Hashanah, with apples and honey, and Marsha Shendell



In celebration of Purim the JCC Sara Walker Nursery School students put together Shalach Manot bags for seniors, the contents of which were generously sponsored by Betsey and Arthur Selkowitz. (CREDIT: KATHRYN CURRY)

sponsored Thanksgiving, with pumpkin pie. Betsey and Arty Selkowitz sponsored Purim and the JCC Sara Walker Nursery School children filled the bags with candy, nuts, wine, and decorated notes to the seniors, and, of course, hamentaschen were added. Beverly Ferber will be sponsoring the Passover gift bags.

JCC volunteers helped to deliver the bags and received many thanks, positive comments and phone calls, with the most gratifying being "It's so special that the JCC always remembers

us!" and "When do you think we can be back together at the JCC?" The JCC looks forward to welcoming everyone back as soon as possible.

The JCC is committed to serving the ever-changing needs of the community. Please stay tuned for more activities and new initiatives coming in the next few months. For further information or if you are interested in volunteering or sponsoring a holiday celebration for our seniors, please contact Connie Cirillo Freeman, cfreeman@stamfordjcc.org.

Chabad of Stamford Celebrates Purim

(Courtesy of Chabad of Stamford) On Purim, Jews around the world emphasize the importance of unity and friendship by sending gifts of food to friends and family. It is a special mitzvah to give gifts of food to friends, traditionally known as Mishloach Manot or Shalach Manos. This year, Chabad of Stamford and Gan Yeladim shared their Shalach Manos Purim Project with the Stamford community for the 18th year in row, spreading Shabbat unity to almost 1,000 households. With Purim falling on a Friday, this year's gift was an exquisite Shabbat box.

Chabad of Stamford's Purim Project has consistently grown from 150 packages to almost 1,000 Shalach Manos gift packages sent to Jewish families all across Stamford. The Purim project allowed for sponsors, friends and family to join in and choose to greet the community with Purim wishes and friendship to spread the joy of the holiday. Specialized baskets and cards were also available to be ordered for personal use.

This year, more than ever, Chabad truly felt the strength and warmth of the community, as so many came together to sponsor, volunteer to pack and deliver the packages. The volunteers helped ensure that almost 1,000 packages went out spreading Purim joy, friendship and love across Stamford. For more information on how to be involved in the Purim



Chabad of Stamford hosts an outdoor family Purim Seudah Picnic with Rabbi Moshe Shemtov reading the Megillah as families enjoyed a boxed BBQ.

Project next year, email programs@stamford-chabad.org.

The Purim festivities also included Chabad opening its doors to round the clock Megillah readings with indoor and outdoor options available. This year, "Georgie the Mixologist"

was on hand with an outdoor bar to prepare his signature Purim cocktails for everyone to enjoy on Purim night. On Purim day itself, the children at Gan Yeladim were treated to a bubble truck (see front page photo) for outdoor fun and festivities at their Purim carnival while



Morah Irene Okun, Suzannah Ohrig and Gilad Coll help pack some of the almost 1000 Shabbat themed Shalach Manos boxes at Chabad of Stamford which were distributed throughout the Stamford community this Purim.

families were invited for a special outdoor Seudah picnic in the afternoon.

For those who were homebound, Chabad of Stamford also arranged personal megillah readings to ensure as many people as possible could enjoy the mitzvahs of Purim.

UNITED JEWISH FEDERATION: THE

UJF Makes a Difference in Israel

(Courtesy of UJF) United Jewish Federation of Greater Stamford, New Canaan and Darien is committed to maintaining the vibrancy and continuity of Jewish people worldwide and to building meaningful connections between the Jewish communities of Stamford, New Canaan and Darien and partners in Israel and around the world.

UJF, together with ten other federations in Southern New England, form the Southern New England Consortium or SNEC. Through the financial support provided by the consortium, social, cultural, economic, welfare and educational needs of those in the Afula Gilboa region in Israel are supported.

Dinah Miller Marlowe, chair of UJF's SNEC committee, indicated that "Israeli programming is one of the most effective ways for North American Jews to connect to their heritage and Jewish identity. Similarly, Israelis feel more connected to the larger Jewish world and are more aware of their Jewish identity when they foster relationships with Jews outside of Israel. In addition, our partnership fosters Jewish identity, Jewish pluralism and supports the values of a democratic Israeli shared society."

Throughout COVID, the SNEC partnership continued to help in the Afula Gilboa region. The HaEmek Medical Center, the regional hospital, received funds from the partnership to purchase an air filtration device. In November, 2020, Operation Zur Israel was launched in an effort to reunite Ethiopian families with those in Israel after more than a decade of separation. The first 500+ Ethiopians brought to Israel through this program, landed at Ben Gurion airport in early December 2020. The Beit Alfa absorption Center in Afula received many of these *olim* (immigrants) to Israel. Coming with few possessions, UJF and SNEC were able to purchase computers for each family.

"UJF is proud to share in this modern-day miracle. For more than 50 years, The Jewish Agency, The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) and Keren Hayesod, has assisted over 95,000 Ethiopian Jews in their journey to Israel and UJF is proud to play our part in this collective effort. But our job is not yet done; there are still thousands waiting to come to the Jewish State and be reunited with family members," shared UJF CEO Diane Sloyer.



Youth groups in the Afula Gilboa region packed and distributed Mishloach Manot (Purim treats) for frontline hospital workers and those in need.

IMPACT OF GLOBAL CONNECTIONS



With the support of the Jewish Agency for Israel and Jewish Federation's of North America, Ethiopians continue to arrive in Israel. Many are being placed in the Beit Alfa absorption Center in Afula.

UJF's Partnership With JDC Makes an Impact

(Courtesy of JDC and UJF) Tens of thousands of elderly Jews and families around the world live in dire poverty. UJF along with its partner, the Joint Distribution Committee, ensure they never have to choose between essentials like food and medicine. And additionally, they are provided with something invaluable — the knowledge that they are not forgotten, but remain part of a global Jewish community that will always have their back.

Across the former Soviet Union, from Western Ukraine to the Russian Far East, there is a quiet crisis hidden in plain sight. Elderly Jews in this region have seen — and endured — it all. Victims of both circumstance and oppression, they have faced the unimaginable:

Many are Holocaust survivors; all of them lived through the worst days of the Soviet regime. Though many were well-educated and trained as doctors, engineers, and musicians, today they eke out lives in unthinkable poverty.

Now, with pensions as low as \$2 a day, little (if any) family to rely on, and no personal savings or government safety net, these Jews are all alone. They are often forced to make the grim choice between heat and food. Most times, they give up meals or medicine just to get through the brutal winter.

UJF is proud to partner with the Joint Distribution Committee to bring quality of life to Jews in the former FSU and 69 countries around the globe.





Sandy Golove

Bits & Pieces

BY SANDY GOLOVE

To submit information, please call (203) 912-9945 or email sandy@ujf.org

MAZEL TOV TO GROWING FAMILIES:

Adrienne & Michael Alexander on the birth of a grandson.

Hillary & Joseph Amoyal on the birth of their son, Fisher Louis Amoyal.

Stacy & Gregg Arenson on the birth of a daughter, Ruby Harlow Arenson; and to grandparents Elyce & Larry Arenson and Lois Stark & Garry Lessen.

Suelyn Bache on the birth of a great granddaughter, Abigail Tess Oppenheim.

Barbara & Ron Ashkenas on the birth of a grandson.

Miriam & Adam Berman on the birth of a daughter; and to grandparents Lynn & Harvey Berman.

Laura & Keith Brewer on the birth of a daughter, Sophia Charlotte Ellen Brewer; and to grandparents Carol & Wil Brewer.

Joyce & Barry Chavkin on the birth of a granddaughter.

Stacie & Brandon Espinosa on the birth of a daughter, Camryn Paige Espinosa; and to grandparents Amy & Bill Miller.

Lisa & Gadi Gavronsky on the birth of a daughter.

Arline Gewanter on the birth of a great grandson.

Roslyn & L. Morris Glucksman on the birth of a granddaughter.

Samantha & Emry Hadad on the birth of a son; and to grandmother, Helen Felder.

Wynd Harris on the birth of a grandson, Bodhi Harris.

Emily Kingsley-Ma & Zachary Harding on the birth of a son, Ethan Kingsley-Ma Harding; and to grandmother, Melanie Kieval.

Miriam & Yehuda Kotlyar on the birth of a grandson.

Marisa Levi & Andrew Staines on the birth of twins, Natalie Emma Staines and Evan David Staines.

Terri Ann Lowenthal on the birth of a grandson, Zayd Piper Fenton; and to great grandparents Ele & Mort Lowenthal.

Shari & Sam Raymond on the birth of a daughter, Eva Sylvie Raymond; and to grandparents Judy & Bob Raymond.

Hazzan Sydney G. Rabinowitz on the birth of three new great grandchildren, Orli Shir, Ilana Arielle and Shayna Gitel.

Kira Terrison & Josh Mandel on the birth of a daughter, Giorgia Rose Mandel; and to grandmother, Kathy Mandel.

Talia Zarbiv & Jeff Kilstein on the birth of a son.

MAZEL TOV ON ENGAGEMENTS & MARRIAGES:

Carol & Ed Abrams on the engagement of their daughter, Jenna, to Patrick Miles.

Darona & Rabbi Tzvi Bernstein and Cheryl & Ronnie Nael on the engagement of their children, Franni Bernstein and Josh Nagel; and to grandparents, Sarey & Sam Bernstein and Debbie Steinhorn.

Elise & Steven Cohen on the engagement of their daughter, Tamar Cohen to Josh Fink.

Meryl & Ron Japha on the engagement of their son, Alex, to Elizabeth Shulman.

Esther & Paul Liesman on the engagement of their daughter, Jackie Liesman to Alex Sable.

Amy & Bill Miller on the marriage of their daughter, Randy Miller to Ariel Katz.

Irma & Allan Paull on the engagement of their son, Michael, to Jillian Silbert.

Roz & Mitch Rubin on the engagement of their son, Amitan, to Sarah Stefurak.

Shelley Welfeld on the engagement of her son, Dylan to Paige Schwartz.

MAZEL TOV TO B'NAI MITZVAH:

Vanessa Amsellem, daughter of Marni Amsellem and David Amsellen.

Stephen Brown, son of Susan & Steve Brown.

Kira Dofit, daughter of Ziona & Eli Dofit.

Ella Dulitz, daughter of Jessica & Levi Dulitz.

Sammi Greenberg, son of Yomi & Elana Greenberg; and to grandparents, Pam Ehrenkranz & Matt Greenberg and Marsha & Chazzan Yaakov Motzen.

Eli Himelstein, son of Laura Himelstein & stepson of Robin Himelstein.

Max Lanson, son of Biana & Ben Lanson.

Liam Raz, son of Rebekah & Liran Raz.

Ari Rosenfeld, son of Jennifer & Ed Rosenfeld.

Sarah Strom, daughter of Lisa and Eric Strom.

Miri Young, daughter of Marcia Gordon & Seth Young.

WE MOURN THE LOSS OF:

Stratton Clark Adams: grandson of Joan Weisman.

Gloria Aisenberg: mother of Mara Hammerman.

Susan Baldwin: wife of Gary Gepner

Renate Bauman: mother of David Bauman

Joseph Abraham Braun: father of Ron Braun

Lynne Brandstrom: mother of Amanda Kelley

David Brody: father of Rick Brody

Michael Cohen: brother-in-law of Elizabeth Oritz Schwartz & Clifford Schwartz

Alvin Dern: father of Karen Dern

Bearice Feder: mother of Mark Feder and Ellen Snyder.

Sondra (Sandy) Gold: wife of Leo Gold.

Mickey Goldfarb: mother of Jane Himmel

Burton Gordon: father of Susie Stooenke

Jane Graber: wife of Syd Graber and mother of David Graber and Howard Graber.

Ernest M. Greenberg: father of Lynn Rakos

Marilynn Kaye Kornfeld: of Sean Kornfeld

Gayla Halbrecht: mother of Beth Boyer.

Sandra Rose Hoyal: mother of Gloria Skigen

Jed Isaacs: husband of Susan Isaacs, father of Jane Schoenholtz

Marcia Kahan: mother of Miriam Pell.

Bernard Kleinman: father of Joey Kleinman.

Judith Laichtman: mother of Arthur Laichtman.

Howard Lilienfeld: father of Debbie Berg

Roslyn Limner: Matriarch of Cantor Morgovsky's family

Gloria Mehlman

Ruth Neilson: grandmother of Heather LaFantano

David Nuri: father of Sarit Wiener.

Yetta Perlman: mother of Neil Perlman

Edward Price: father of Rabbi Daniel Price

Martin Pulver: husband of Sandra Pulver; and father of Shara Israel.

Ira Saunders: father of Jennifer Forman

Melvin Schneider: father of Mark Schneider

Marvin & Gertrude Shapiro

George Sherman: husband of Sharon Sherman, father of Amanda Sherman

Harriett R. Sherman: mother of Jen Torbick

Marie Spaulding: mother of Brad Spaulding

Cheryl Tuttle: stepmother of Kate Cik.

Anna Vayner: mother of Alex Vayner

Shirley Warren: stepmother of Judy Amster.

Tyr Wilbanks: husband of Elizabeth Zaff Wilbanks

Betty Young: mother of David Young and Denise Teicher.

United Jewish Federation's PJ Library
& Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy's

PRE-SHAVOVS BASH

Sunday, May 2nd 10:00am
Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy, 2186 High Ridge Road
Ages 5 and under · Siblings welcome

Ice cream truck Entertainment Crafts

Sign up at
www.ujf.org/pjbash

For more information contact
Sharon Franklin at sharon@ujf.org or
Miriam Sperber at msperber@bcha-ct.org

The Complexity of Polish-Jewish Relations

(Courtesy of Congregation Agudath Sholom) Congregation Agudath Sholom invites the community to "The Complexity of Polish-Jewish Relations: A Virtual Seminar" with Dr. David Bernstein, Dean of the Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies and leader of the congregation's Poland Journey. The seminar will take place on Sunday morning, April 11, 2021 at 10:00 am.

Dr. Bernstein has been the Dean of Pardes since 1998. Previously, he was the director of Midreshet Lindenbaum, popularly known as Brovender's, for 12 years. David was a

Jerusalem Fellow at the Mandel School for Jewish Education in Jerusalem from 1996-1998. Before making Aliyah in 1984, Dr. Bernstein was the director of informal education at the Ramaz Upper School in New York City, where he created and taught a two year curriculum integrating world and Jewish history. He holds a B.A. and M.A. in History and a Ph.D. in Religious Education from New York University. He also attended Yeshivat HaMivtar.

For information and to RSVP, visit www.cas-stamford.org. This event is open and free to the entire community.

Passover Treasure in the JHSFC Archives – The Szyk Haggadah

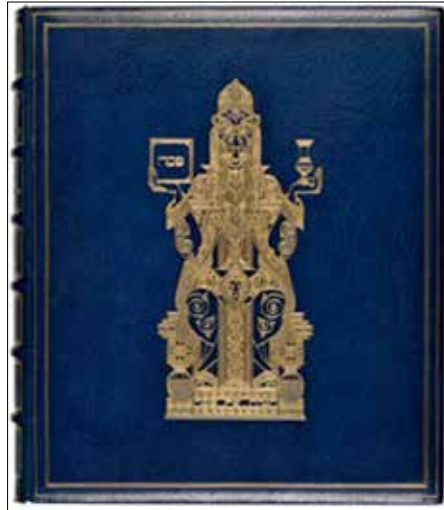
BY DAVID KAPLAN

The Jewish Historical Society of Fairfield County is fortunate to have a fabulous treasure in its collection, the Szyk Haggadah, a work at the pinnacle of the graphic illustrator's art. It is an exceptionally beautiful leather-bound work, including 48 of Szyk's illustrations and textual adornments. The Haggadah is one of the first edition, signed, and numbered copies (of 250) that sold for \$500 in 1940. It is considered rare and valuable today.

Who was this artist? Arthur Szyk was born in Lodz, Poland in 1884, moved to New York in 1940, and lived in New Canaan from 1945 to 1951. The Society thinks of him as our "adopted" native son. Szyk is considered one of the most important and famous illustrators of the twentieth century. His works were featured everywhere from the exalted to the commonplace, from the White House to the New York Yellow Pages, and from books to magazines in the United States, Europe, Palestine (pre-1948), and Israel. One aspect of Szyk's genius was infusing Jewish religious images and values into his work, including into his political pieces.

Szyk considered himself an activist who used his art as his sword. He created works of art that supported the fight against the Bolsheviks in his native Poland, commemorated George Washington and the American Revolution, advocated for a Jewish homeland in Palestine, and fought fascism. He was one of the first anti-Hitler cartoonists. Indeed, Hitler allegedly put a price on the head of his nemesis, Arthur Szyk.

Szyk even injected his anti-fascism into the Haggadah's paintings. One of the most famous examples is Szyk's illustration of the four sons. The Wicked Son is dressed in Bavarian attire and has a distinctive Hitlerian moustache. Szyk was also a staunch advocate of Zionism. Palestinian pioneers appear



Szyk Haggadah Cover

through the Haggadah. For example, The Son Who Does Not Know How to Ask is dressed as a "Chalutz," a pioneer.

All the illustrations in the Haggadah are magnificent. A reader will be drawn immediately to the vibrant colors and the use of gold foil in the illustrations. In addition, the Hebrew calligraphy, hand done by Szyk, is exquisite. The 48 illustrations depict the range of beauty, detail, and hyper-realism that contrasted greatly to the stylized or cartoonish illustrations found in other Haggadahs of the time.

The historian Cecil Roth said it well: "To call Arthur Szyk the greatest illuminator since the sixteenth century is no flattery. It is the simple truth which becomes manifest to any person who studies his work with the care which it deserves."

According to Leah Tillman, Chair of the Archives, "We are immensely proud to have Szyk's Haggadah both for its artistic value and for the Jewish values he imbued in the work."

Passover at Temple Beth El

(Courtesy of Temple Beth El) A Second Seder on Zoom will be led by Rabbi Hammerman and Cantorial Soloist Katie Kaplan on Sunday, March 28 at 7 p.m. All are welcome and there is no charge, but registration is required.

Passover Services will be held virtually at the following times:

Day 1 - Sunday, March 28 at 10 a.m.
Day 2 - Monday, March 29 at 10 a.m.
Day 7 - Saturday, April 3 at 10 a.m.
Day 8 - Yizkor - Sunday, April 4 at 10 a.m.

Zoom information for programs and services is available by calling TBE at 203-322-6901

Temple Sinai Hosts Second Night Passover Seder

(Courtesy of Temple Sinai) On Sunday, March 28th at 5:30 pm, Temple Sinai will once again be joining together for a Congregational Second Night Seder this year through Zoom. And you don't have to worry about getting your meal together because you can order all the fixin's from A+S Fine Foods. Dinner will include: Choice of brisket or salmon,

matzah ball soup, roasted potatoes, sauté mixed vegetables with fresh herbs, carrot tzimmes, a box of matzah, horseradish, and charoset. A disposable Seder plate with all the items on it can also be ordered separately! Pick up will be at Temple Sinai on Sunday, March 28.

Place your order by March 23 to the Temple office at 203.322.1649.

Schoke JFS Continues Passover Food Distribution



Andrew Schwidel and son, Danny make food contributions to Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry.

(Courtesy of Schoke JFS) For the past few decades, Schoke Jewish Family Service's Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry has been facilitating a food drive and distribution during Passover. This year, nearly 250 bags containing traditional food items vital to the seder table—such as grape juice, matzah, macaroons and much more—will be distributed to the neediest community members within the seventeen towns served by Schoke JFS. They could not do this without the dedicated leadership of the program chairs, Risa Goldblum, Liz Kitay and Marina Sapir, as well as the community organizations and corporate sponsors which support these efforts year after year.

Traditionally, food drives at community supermarkets would have been held and students from local synagogues and Hebrew schools would be packing the bags and learning a lesson on Passover. But due to COVID, some of the traditions usually associated with this program have changed. Instead, on February 28, Schoke Jewish Family Service held a "virtual" food drive, inviting everyone to drop off Passover goods any time between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. A Zoom lesson was taught to Temple Sinai Hebrew school students led by Rebekah Kanefsky and Tracy Daniels. And

smaller, family groups will help pack the Passover bags during designated times.

As always, local Stamford and upper-Fairfield county temples, synagogues, Jewish schools and organizations will be engaged in the collection process. Other community partners include United Jewish Federation of Greater Stamford, New Canaan and Darien's PJ Library, UJA-JCC Greenwich's PJ Library and Federation for Jewish Philanthropy of Upper Fairfield County. In addition, generous donations from Dan Katz of FoodTown supermarkets and Chris Farrugio of Dignity Funeral Homes will be included.

Want to get involved with our Passover program and don't know how? Donate Passover food to the Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry. Contact the office to be included in the list of volunteers for calling clients, bagging and delivering. There are so many ways to get involved this holiday at Schoke Jewish Family Service and everyone's helping hands are welcome.

If you know of someone who could benefit from our Food Pantry services, please have them contact Rebekah Kanefsky at (203) 921-4161 or rkanevsky@ctjfs.org. All services are strictly confidential.

Chabad of New Canaan Community Seder

(Courtesy of Chabad of New Canaan) Join Chabad of New Canaan for uplifting, joyous, delicious and spiritual Community Seders, outdoors, with social distancing, in a heated tent.

First seder: Shabbat evening, March 27 at 7:45 p.m.

Second seder: Sunday evening, March 28 at 7:45 p.m.

Both seders will take place at the Chabad House, 137 Putnam Road, New Canaan.

Space is limited. Please register today!

For more information, please contact rabbid@chabadnewcanaan.org.

*Wishing You all a Happy,
Healthy and Joy Filled Passover 2021!
Whether in person or virtual,
feel the love!*

Linda Hurwitz and Richard Fine

*We wish our friends
and the entire community
a Happy Pesach!*

Ilyse and Dean Schuckman

*Very best wishes for a happy
and healthy Passover!*

*Next year, let's hope we will all
be together with our families.*

Ellen and Richard Weber

**Wishing our family
and friends near and far
a Happy Passover filled
with health and joy!**

Nancy & Gadi Mimoun

**Wishing you
and your families
a happy, healthy,
& safe Passover**

Meryl and David Gordon

**May this Passover
bring you great health,
much love and
an abundance of joy.**

Sandy & Fred Golove

**We are wishing all our friends
and the Jewish Community
A Sweet and Happy Passover**

*and hope this Passover season
will be a beginning of being able
to spend more time together in person.*

**With warm good wishes,
Carol and Peter Lilienthal**

**Wishing you
a Passover
filled with health,
love, joy and freedom!**

Diane and Elliot Sloyer
And Family

Chabad of Stamford Covers Your Passover Needs

(Courtesy of Chabad of Stamford) Chabad of Stamford has you covered for all your Passover needs this Pesach, including shmurah matzah, selling your chametz, providing Passover funds for the poor, and "Seders to Go" Kits.

To kick off the Pesach preparations, Chabad's Jewish Women Connected Cooking Club will meet on Monday March 22nd at 8:00 p.m., on Zoom, to prepare a number of Pesach dishes to share with family and friends in honor of the holidays. Each participant can pick up a box with pre-measured ingredients to cook together.

Chabad of Stamford can also provide you with shmurah matzah for your Seder needs and can help you sell all your chametz before Passover. "Maos Chitim" (Passover funds for the poor) is one of the most significant observances of the Passover holiday and Chabad urges everyone to participate. Join Chabad and donate to share the festival of freedom with countless people throughout the community.

For the second year, Chabad of Stamford is offering "Seder to Go" kits for people to conduct a Seder at home. The kits will include shmurah matzah, wine or grape juice, an interactive and insightful Haggadah and all the items you need for the seder plate as well as the option of chicken soup with matzah balls.

For more information, please visit www.chabadstamford.org/Pesach or call 203-324-2223 X103, or email programs@stamfordchabad.org

Pantry Charoset: Something Old, Something New

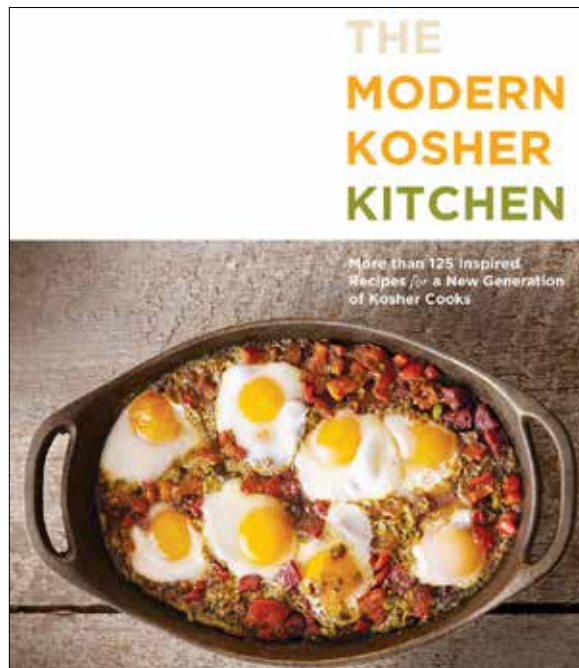
BY RONNIE FEIN

When I was growing up, like all other Ashkenazim I know, we thought of charoses as a symbolic dish that we only tasted during the reading of the Haggadah. My grandma (later, my mother) grated an apple or two, mixed it with some walnuts and Manischewitz Concord grape wine and that was that. It always turned brown and didn't look very appetizing.

Charoses wasn't considered a side dish until several years ago, when it (now charoset, haroset) became a big deal. It has taken a much more important place at Passover – gastronomically speaking, that is. It still sits proudly on the Seder plate and is eaten as commanded, but it's also part of dinner.

I still make the old apple mix, just as a token to the old days, but also make two other versions that we eat as a relish or salsa, like the way we eat cranberry sauce or apple sauce.

Last year I made what I called my special COVID-19 jumble. I wasn't shopping on my own during the pandemic, so I had to rely on what I could buy through a shopping



Book Cover

service and use what I had on hand in the way of dried fruit (plus an orange, which I always have in the fridge).

It was perfect, though of course only two of us ate it at our Zoom Seder.

This is the recipe. Should I call it COVID Charoset, Pantry Charoset or simply Completely Made Up Charoset? Does it matter? It is every bit as symbolic as the apple version that my grandma made.

Delicious too.

I don't use any nuts because of allergies, but you can add 1/3-1/2 cup of chopped nuts (any kind) to this recipe if you have some in your pantry.

PANTRY CHAROSET

- 1-1/2 cups chopped dates
- 1 cup chop dried figs
- 1 cup chopped dried apricots
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1 fresh apple, peeled and chopped
- 1/2 cup pomegranate jam (or any jam you have)
- 1/3 cup Passover wine (preferably Concord grape)
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh orange peel

Place the dates, figs, apricots, raisins and apple in a bowl and toss the fruit to distribute the pieces evenly. Add the pomegranate jam and stir to coat the fruit. Pour in the wine and orange juice; add the orange peel. Toss the ingredients. Let rest for at least one hour before serving.

Makes about 5 cups

Ronnie Fein is a cookbook author, food writer and cooking teacher in Stamford. She is the author of *The Modern Kosher Kitchen* and *Hip Kosher*. Visit her food blog, *Kitchen Vignettes*, at www.ronniefein.com, friend on Facebook at [RonnieVailFein](https://www.facebook.com/RonnieVailFein), Twitter at [@RonnieVFein](https://twitter.com/RonnieVFein), Instagram at [@RonnieVFein](https://www.instagram.com/RonnieVFein).

Passover is a celebration of freedom.

*Let all of us be free from pain
and suffering, from causeless hatred
and ignorance.*

*Let the spirit that moved our
ancestors move us to bring a bit
of light into the world.*

Lynn and Jeffrey Lowin



**Shalom and Warm Wishes to
the Jewish Community
for a Happy Passover!**



Susan Kostin

**Best Wishes for a Happy
and Meaningful Passover**

*From the Membership, Clergy
and Staff of Temple Sinai*



Wishing all members
of our community
**A Healthy and
Happy Passover!**

Nan and Paul Gordon



BCHA Upper School Raises Mental Health Awareness

BY JUDIE JACOBSON

Life can be tough for a teenager. After all, dealing with the emotional challenges of transitioning between childhood and adulthood can be difficult, even in the best of times. Add to that the stresses created by the pandemic, and the level of anxiety among teens is amped up even further.

Well aware that many teens were struggling with mental health issues that they did not feel comfortable sharing with others, Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy Upper School principal Rabbi Shimmy Trencher, school counselor Angela Wilson, and special programs coordinator Ilana Bauman came up with an idea to give a voice to these students. With their guidance, on January 21, BCHA Upper School hosted an all-day school-wide Mental Health Day program, designed and coordinated by a group of Upper School students.

"Ms. Bauman, Rabbi Trencher and I wanted to create a seminar-type event that allowed students to have fun and engage in meaningful activities," explained Wilson who is also a licensed psychiatric nurse practitioner. "We had four outside speakers, a presentation by our principal and an activity by our school counselor. The student committee consisted of five students who took the lead on different activities."

The day began with a keynote presentation by Jewish educator Marc Fein, who shared his own experience living with depression and presented an amusing and insightful perspective on what it means to live with a mental illness and how the teens can best support one another.



BCHA senior Danielle Hadge leads a panel discussion on anxiety at BCHA Upper School Mental Health Day.

"Marc Fein was honest and open with us. He set the tone for the day and inspired people to share their own experiences," said junior Shira Haron.

Other speakers included Rabbi Trencher, who is also a licensed clinical social worker; Eli Weinstein, LCSW, who created ELivation, a program to help inspire those struggling with mental health issues; Temimah Zucker, LCSW, who works with those suffering from eating disorders and body image dissatisfaction; Rabbi Chagie Rubin; and two BCHA students who spoke about their own experiences with mental health.

"It was difficult talking about personal experiences, but we did a great job creating a safe space for the discussions and to support each other," said senior Danielle Hadge, who led a panel discussion on anxiety and was a member of the Mental Health Day Committee, along with Izzy Kanefsky, Jaime Zaritsky, Josh Schulman, and Menucha Goldberg, a sophomore who also led a panel discussion on Body Dysmorphia.

For Bauman, the day met its goal...and then some.

"I am incredibly grateful and in awe of our school for creating a space that fosters student authenticity, love, and growth, and

I am even prouder of our students for diving into that environment head on... Attending panels in which students spoke about their own experiences with mental health and watching students lead discussions with grace, strength, and bravery, was one of my proudest moments as an educator," she said. "As the student panelists spoke about their own life experiences, other students started raising their hands to share their own experiences as well. One student's vulnerability encouraged other students to be vulnerable. One student's courage empowered others to be courageous. It was beautiful to witness."

Returning Home to Camp Laurelwood

(Courtesy of Camp Laurelwood) Jewish summer camps offer an unprecedented way to connect with identity and culture through fun and immersive activities. And, with the beginning of a new year, camps are once again opening applications up to campers, making this the perfect time for parents and families to select the camp that is right for their children. At Camp Laurelwood, Connecticut's only Jewish traditional overnight

camp, that means the staff is working hard to get ready for summer and to welcome campers back home.

Research shows that having immersive experiences in Jewish culture, like overnight summer camp, is formative to identity development and a long-term commitment to Jewish life. At Camp Laurelwood, campers in 2nd through 10th grade get to explore their identity, grow their community, and learn

important values. Plus, they can enjoy traditional amenities of summer camp, including two pools, 140-acres of open space, two beautiful lakes surrounded by trees and nature trails, and so much more.

Working alongside a team of medical professionals, as well as utilizing the guidance from the American Camp Association, the Centers for Disease Control and the State of Connecticut Reopening Task Force, Camp Laurelwood is implementing new health practices for this summer to ensure the safety of campers and staff. This will include wearing masks where appropriate and participating in routine health screenings and temperature checks. Campers and staff will only come to Camp after receiving a negative COVID-19 test, and they will be tested regularly throughout the summer. Intake procedures, dining procedures, and programming spaces have also been redesigned to maintain proper health standards. Camp will also provide more spacing with outdoor meals and program space, and campers will be grouped into smaller "cohorts" for their activities.

Although COVID-19 protocols will be in place, there are many exciting new things for this summer. This includes a new garden space and chicken coop, so campers can explore the natural world and interact with

animals in this new way. Additionally, renovations are being completed on the pools and pool house, and other spaces around Camp.

There is also a new partnership with area Jewish professionals who love Camp and who want to spend time with campers and staff. This new Camp Faculty program will have a faculty member come each week and work with a particular program area of their interest, live at Camp, and spend time connecting with campers and staff.

Eric Maurer, Executive Director at JT Connect in Hartford, will be one of those inaugural faculty members this summer. He noted that, "Summer camp is a magical place - a place where friendships are made, identity is reinforced and memories are made. I am thrilled to be spending some time experiencing the magic at Camp Laurelwood and working with the campers and staff to infuse experiences into camp to explore, deepen and celebrate their Judaism. Summer can't come soon enough!"

Camp Laurelwood is now accepting campers beginning in 2nd grade, and has sessions that range from one-week long to the full summer. Please go to info@camplaurelwood.org or call 203-421-3736 to arrange for a private, virtual tour. Space is still available.



Cooking a Shabbat Feast Together at Friendship Circle



Friends make Shabbat treats together.



Putting the chicken soup in the pot.



Making kugel together at home.

(Courtesy of Friendship Circle) The Friendship Circle did not let social distancing get in the way of the joy of cooking a Shabbat meal. Over 50 participants gathered online for a four-part cooking series. Each session of the series was stand alone, so friends could join all four or pick individual sessions to learn how to make their favorite foods.

Each participant, including the teen volunteers, had a bag with all the ingredients they needed for that session's specialty. The series included learning to make chicken soup and matzah balls, challah, noodle kugel and

a dessert. Teens watched a special cooking demonstration before each session to learn how to make the food and help their special friend make their own as well. Each teen cooked with their special friend in a breakout room so everyone could work at their own pace. Due to high demand, a second installment to the series was added with more Shabbat favorites.

One teen volunteer said "I loved bonding with my special friend in the cooking circle! It was very fun to cook together and teach her how to make matzah ball soup! I think that it went very well, I'm so glad I could be a part of it!"

Virtual Tour of Beit Hatfutsot Museum

(Courtesy of Stamford JCC) Join the Stamford JCC on Sunday, May 2, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. for a private, live virtual tour of Beit Hatfutsot, The Museum of the Jewish People in Tel Aviv with a museum educator. The tour will highlight the museum's new Core Exhibition. Come explore the unique and ongoing narrative of the Jewish People, including Jews around the world today, the historical journey,

foundations of Jewish life, and more. The diversity of the Jewish world is revealed through state-of-the-art displays, immersive video, world-class art, and new works commissioned by the museum.

Fee: JCC Members Free / Community \$10. To register, visit www.stamfordjcc.org. For more information contact Connie Cirillo Freeman at cfreeman@stamfordjcc.org.

Sylvia Plotkin Annual Mah Jongg Mania: Session 2

(Courtesy of JCC) The JCC will hold the second session of the Sylvia Plotkin Annual Mah Jongg Mania, virtually at The J from Wednesday, April 21 to Sunday, April 25. The keynote speaker, author Karen Goosen, will kick off the event with "New 2021 Mah Jongg Card: Tips & Strategies" on April 21 at 7:30 pm. Registration is \$25 and there will be prizes for top winners. All proceeds of Mah Jongg Mania and donations will be used to sponsor the Chanukah Holiday Luncheon for seniors at The J.

Whether you are a master Mah Jongg player or a novice, all levels are welcome. Play virtually in the comfort of your own home with the players of your choice. This event promises to be friendly competition and serious fun!

Sign up with your own foursome or you can be matched with other players if available or play against the computer. For more information or to register, visit www.stamfordjcc.org. For more information or to donate please contact Connie Cirillo Freeman at cfreeman@stamfordjcc.org.



ON PASSOVER
WE REMEMBER
THE STRUGGLE
AND LIBERATION
OF OUR ANCESTORS.



But why, if not
to guide us
in doing our
best for future
generations?

As we make the long journey to freedom from a modern-day plague, **you** can help ensure brighter days to come.

Will you walk alongside the hundreds of individuals and families in Stamford, New Canaan and Darien who have committed to supporting a strong Jewish future?

LIFE & LEGACY
Assuring JEWISH TOMORROWS
A program of the HAROLD GRINSPOON FOUNDATION



Contact: Lenore Fogel, Life and Legacy Coordinator • lenore@ujf.org • (203) 321-1373, ext. 115 • www.ujf.org

Be remembered forever by United Jewish Federation with a gift in your will, trust retirement account, or life insurance policy.

UJF LIFE & LEGACY Testimonials

In each edition of the New Jewish Voice, we feature the testimonials of members of our community just like you who have declared their intent to leave a legacy gift to an organization in the Stamford Jewish community through UJF's Life & Legacy program. Learn why they give and discover your reasons to join them. Together, we can all work to guarantee the future of the Stamford Jewish community we love!

MALERIE YOLEN-COHEN AND JEFF COHEN TESTIMONIAL

Jeff and I grew up very differently, so we come at Jewish charitable giving from two vastly different directions.

Malerie: I grew up in Greenwich CT, and went to Bi-Cultural Day School. Giving to Jewish causes was instilled in me practically before I could walk. We had a JNF tzedakah box at home for our spare change. My Mom was the local Hadassah president. During the High Holiday Israel Bond appeal, my grandfather was always the first to stand up and make a pledge. Giving is in my DNA.



Jeff Cohen & Malerie Yolen-Cohen

Jeff: My grandparents on my Dad's side escaped from Poland. I grew up in the small town of Murfreesboro, Tennessee where there were eight Jewish families. We went to a synagogue in Nashville - a 75-minute drive each way. Even though my family was not religious, or spent a lot of time at synagogue, we knew we were Jewish and what that meant. One of the first people I met

after moving to Stamford was Ben Zinbarg ז"ל. I remember, he put his arm around me and urged me to get involved and educated me about giving back.

Malerie: Even though I grew up in a Jewish community, and Jeff did not, it was important for both of us to be involved in a vibrant Jewish community where we could join the JCC, send our kids to Jewish day school, and be involved in our synagogue. And, of course, help others when we can.

Malerie and Jeff: If we don't make a financial gift to the organizations we care about, they may not survive, and the next generation might not be as involved as ours. We feel it's our responsibility to do our part.

NANCY MIMOUN TESTIMONIAL

Growing up in a "Federation Family", the Jewish community was always a big part of my life.

I was feeling guilty when I was renovating my kitchen, spending buckets of money on something frivolous, so I endowed a Lion of Judah gift to UJF. This was before I could afford to be a Lion!

When UJF first looked into the Life & Legacy program, I was a member of the UJF Board of Directors. I fully supported it and I continue to do so. I made an additional Legacy gift to support the program and to support the community.



Nancy Mimoun

Our children will have their own choices to make in their philanthropic giving. They know from example where our hearts lie, but I want to ensure that whoever wants or needs to make Aliyah can. I want to ensure that Stamford is a good place for Jews to live for generations to come. I need to know that there are Jews around the world that, if in danger, can get help.

My legacy gift will help that happen.

LIFE & LEGACY Honor Roll

United Jewish Federation is proud to partner with the Harold Grinspoon Foundation to bring the Stamford, New Canaan and Darien community the Harold Grinspoon Life and Legacy Program. Through our communal efforts, the following individuals have made a commitment to one or more Jewish communal institutions to secure our future.

For more information, contact Lenore Fogel or Diane Sloyer at (203) 321-1373 or lenore@ujf.org, dianasloyer@ujf.org.

Anonymous (12)
Adrienne and Michael Alexander
Jeri Appel
Mark Appel
Erica Snow Arbron
Suellyn Bache
Monica Becker and Edieal Pinker
Rachel Tyd and Robert Beldock
Gayle and Mitchell Bell
Devra Jafee-Berkowitz and Parry Berkowitz
Darona and Rabbi Tzvi Bernstein
Melody and Claude Bernstein
Bruce Blasnik
Judith B. Block
Marcia Braunstein
Amy and Henry Bubel
Alan Cohen
Andrea and David M. Cohen
Diane and Rabbi Daniel Cohen
Malerie Yolen-Cohen and Jeff Cohen
Judy and David S.* Cohen
Mimi Cohen
Rachel and Ephraim Cohen
Roberta Cohen
Saul Cohen*
Arthur Cramer*
Stephen Davidson
Helen and Marty Donner
Fran and Bob Dorf
Shoshana Dweck
Debra and Daniel Faizakoff
Michelle Fanwick
Jay and Esta Feinsod
Peggy and Jerry Fensterstock
Lenore and Dr. Ilan Fogel

Morton and Miriam Lavinsky Folb*
Sharon Franklin
Connie and Alan Freeman
Keith and Rachel Friedman
Marc Friedman
Donna and Edward Fuhrman
Nancy and Mark Funt
Lesley and Dennis Gehr
Carole Gladstone
Herbert Gladstone*
Sylvia and Herb Gladstone*
Leslie Glenn
Robin Frederick and Michael Gold
Cyndy and Eric Goldberg
Caryl Goldstein*
Meryl and David Gordon
Nan and Paul Gordon
Linda B. Gornitsky
Hank Green
Sharon and Larry Greenberg
Pam Ehrenkranz and Matt Greenberg
Grecia and Ron* Gross
Scott Handelman
Jacqueline Herman
Dr. Shara and Rabbi David Israel
Alan and Sari Jaffe
Meryl and Ron Japha
Judith and Grant Kallen
Helene and Harvey Kaminski
Chanie Kamman
Jason Kaplowitz
Joy Katz
Judith and Sheldon Katz
Larry Katz
Betsy and Peter Kempner

Liz and Marc Kitay
Elissa and Philip Klapper
Harris Kligman
Susan Kostin
Arthur Kramer*
Jeannie and Brian Kriftcher
Jackie and Marshall Kurland
Lorraine and David Kveskin
Helen and Ed Kveskin
Lieba and Steve Lander
Shelley Leibowitz
Lois D. Stark and Gary P. Lessen
Elizabeth Libner
J. and R. Licht
Vered and Mark Links
Eleanor and Mark Lowenthal
Stu Madison
Lisa and Jeff Manheim
Norma and Milton Mann*
Susan and Len Mark
Chris Maroc
Melanie Massell
Michal and Rabbi Levi Mendelow
Nancy Zinbarg Mimoun
Marsha and Lois Panzer
Leah and Doni Perl
Dr. Robin Evans and Dr. Jeffrey Perry
Caryl Ferber Poser and Peter Poser
Enid Randall*
Bonita and Stephen Rappoport
Judith Raymond
Lisa and Harry Rich
Judy and Adam Rin
Betty and Dan* Roberts
Brian and Sonia Roitman
Arlene and Carl Rosen
Irma Ross
Sandra Ross
Sally and Jim Rothkopf
Ruth Rothseid
Bonnie Russo
Edith Samers
Sharyn and Richard Sarner
Hilde Scheraga*

Jayne and Bud Schiff
Carol Ruth and Herman Shepherd*
Nancy Schiffman
Monica Smyth and Michael Schlessinger
Elayne and James Schoke*
Chaya and Levi Segal
Myrna and George Sessa
Jessica and Laurence Sheinman
Leah and Rabbi Moshe Shemtov
Stephanie and Bob Sherman
Malya Shmotkin
Ronnie Ness Sichel
Dr. Steven Sichel
Paula Simon
Diane Sloyer
Diane and Elliot Sloyer
Greta Solomon
Miriam and Steve Sosnick
Sandy and Moshe Speter
Ed Spilka
Eileen and Fred Springer
Beverly and David Stein
Betsy and Michael Stone
Gladys and Greg Teitel
Dr. Julie and Rabbi Jay TelRav
The Estate of Sheila Carmine*
The Estate of Thomas Gilmartin*
The Estate of Ronald Gross*
Ellen and Richard Weber
Linda B. Gornitsky and Harvey Weber
Dana and Carl Weinberg
Leon Weisburgh
Janet Welkovich
Robyn and Mark Winarksy
Neda Khaghan and Robert Yaghoubian
Sheryl and Dan Young
Joan Zinbarg*
Renee Zinn

*Of Blessed Memory

This is the list provided to UJF at time of publishing. We apologize for any names that have been omitted. Please let us know and the missing names will be added to the next issue of the paper.

Roll Up a Cozy Work of Art Onto Your Feet

Collectoe doesn't just make fun socks; every sale supports the artists featured in this unusual collective.



An assortment of Collectoe socks. (CREDIT: AMIT MOZER)



Collectoe socks come in pink-and-black and many other designs. (CREDIT: AMIT MOZER)



Collectoe socks come boxed for gift-giving. (CREDIT: AMIT MOZER)

**BY ABIGAIL KLEIN LEICHMAN/
ISRAEL21C**

We fell head over heels for a Tel Aviv-based enterprise that lets us support artists simply by putting on a pair of socks.

There's certainly no shortage of socks available in all colors and designs, but Collectoe

was created to showcase and support international artists in a unique, wearable way.

"Around two years ago, our founder – serial entrepreneur and art lover Assaf Balulu – had the idea to create a brand with a meaning behind it and that does some good," says Metav Djemal, product manager for Collectoe.

"People collect socks and art – so he just put them together," she explains.

In partnership Eyal Katz and Saar Friedman of creative agency OPEN Tel Aviv, Collectoes scoured online artists platforms and Instagram for artists to approach from genres including graphic design, tattoo, graffiti and traditional.

Sales were launched in September 2020 with socks by a curated group of artists – 10 now, with more to come – from Israel, Italy, Mexico, South Africa, Spain, Ireland and Australia.

"We give them the template of the socks and say, 'Go for it.' They are all partners in the process," Djemal says.

"We aren't the first to bring beautiful art to socks. But while most brands purchase rights

to the design, our process is 100 percent collaborative," she tells ISRAEL21C.

"The artists get a percentage of each sale of their design. They have a dashboard connected to our website and a sales program to see how many were sold, what is their bestseller and to keep track of their earnings. I don't know of other brands that do that."

The top-selling Collectoe socks currently are from Koketit – aka Israeli artist Shira Barzilay, whose abstract line drawings have a sensual feminine twist.

I'm thinking I will have to buy some "Pink & Black" socks by In-House Artists for my 10-year-old granddaughter whose wardrobe colors are influenced by K-pop girl band Blackpink. Personally, I'm partial to "Fruits" by Gal Shir.

"The people who have ordered Collectoe socks range in age from 16 to 60," Djemal says. "Many people bought them for Christmas



These Collectoe socks by Rocio Montoya are called "Jazz-Romance 2." (CREDIT: AMIT MOZER)

presents. We had collaborations with [Israeli] companies such as Wix and Amdocs that ordered socks for their employees."

The socks are manufactured in China and Turkey, and warehoused in Tel Aviv. Price per pair ranges from \$10-\$18.

"We have international shipping through our website, and we do delivery in Israel," says Djemal. "Our socks also are available in three stores in Tel Aviv, as well as Canvas Collection in London's Carnaby Street."

Djemal says Collectoe plans to launch new designs and sock styles, expand its children's offerings, and seek out more collaborations.

The Glaucoma Treatment That Only Takes Seconds

Belkin Laser's Eagle device delivers healing laser beams quickly and without touching the patient; any ophthalmologist can use it.



The Belkin Laser Eagle treats glaucoma quickly with no contact. (CREDIT: YOSEE LETOVA)

BY BRIAN BLUM/ISRAEL21C

One hundred and forty million people suffer from glaucoma, a degenerative eye disease that can lead to blindness. It is most prevalent among people aged 60 and up.

Glaucoma is generally preventable, either by eye drops or laser surgery. Patients have

poor compliance with drops, and laser surgery is cumbersome, uncomfortable and usually performed only by a specialist.

Israeli startup Belkin Laser has developed an alternative laser treatment that is fast, guided by sophisticated image-processing software, and can be offered by any of the 200,000 general ophthalmologists worldwide – and ultimately by non-physician optometrists.

Given that just 11 percent of ophthalmologists specialize in glaucoma, expanding who can offer treatment represents a game-changer.

Glaucoma is a progressive degeneration of the optic nerve, mostly associated with increased intraocular pressure (IOP) inside the eye. IOP increases due to problems with the drainage of the aqueous humor, the fluid that fills the space between the cornea and the vitreous and delivers nutrients to the transparent parts of the eye.

The eyes are constantly producing a small amount of new aqueous humor; it must then drain out via the trabecular meshwork (TM) – a spongy tissue located around the colored part of the eye. If the TM is clogged up or on a too-narrow angle, IOP increases and glaucoma can develop.

An approved form of laser eye surgery known as SLT (selective laser trabeculoplasty) involves contact with the eye for about 10 minutes. The doctor places a large lens against the eye and rotates it to fire 100 separate laser beams manually.

"It's not very pleasant to have a rotating lens on your eye," Daria Lemann-Blumenthal, Belkin Laser's CEO, tells ISRAEL21C.

Only 25% of non-specialist eye doctors in the US offer the SLT procedure. "A device where anyone can use it will help ophthalmologists manage their flow of patients,"



Belkin Laser CEO Daria Lemann-Blumenthal. (CREDIT: BELKIN LASER)

Lemann-Blumenthal says. "And because of Covid-19, there is a backlog of patients."

Belkin Laser's approach to the glaucoma laser procedure is automatic, without contact,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

PJ Library Corner

BY SHARON FRANKLIN

New and exciting community activities are happening at United Jewish Federation's PJ Library & PJ Our Way! There are more ways for families to share Jewish stories and experiences!

- UJF's PJ Library is partnering with Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy for a **Pre-Shavuot Outdoor Bash** on Sunday, May 2nd. Ice cream, crafts and entertainment! 10am-11:30pm (two shifts). Contact Sharon@ujf.org for more details.



Sharon Franklin

- Join UJF's PJ Library for a **Story Time & Craft**, part of Temple Sinai's Mitzvah day, on Sunday, May 2nd at 12:30pm. Contact Temple Sinai for more details 203-322-1649.

- Remember, families are eligible to receive "One Book Per Child". It's easy to sign up! Just go to www.pjlibrary.org and fill out the online form, and free books will arrive within several months. For kids ages **six months to eight years old**.

- **PJ Our Way** offers kids **nine-11 years old a free chapter book each month**. Tweens can choose from a selection of four high-quality titles that have been reviewed by a panel of PJ educators, kids, and parents. To sign up go to www.pjourway.org.

- **PJ Library just launched "Together Experiences"** in February. Select from one of five virtual experiences, and host two to four families, and **you can be reimbursed \$50**. To apply go to <https://pjlibrary.org/together>.

- **Calling all Grandparents, Bubbies and**

Zadies! UJF has started a grandparents group! There will be local virtual educational and informative programming throughout the year. Sign up for a free subscription to PJ's PROOF Magazine and receive two free books each year at www.pjlibrary.org/grandparent-enrollment. For more information, contact Sharon Franklin at sharon@ujf.org.

Make Eggs Ranchero with your kids- Passover style!



Ingredients:

- 1 piece of matzo
 - 2 tablespoons smashed avocado, or several slices of avocado
 - 1 tablespoon salsa
 - 1 fried, poached or boiled egg
 - 1-2 tablespoon grated Cheddar cheese
- Place matzo on a plate. Spoon on the smashed avocado and salsa.

Top avocado and salsa with fried, poached or boiled egg.

Sprinkle on grated cheese. (to melt the cheese, put under the broiler for 30 seconds).

PJ Library Feature Family: The Gilboa Family

(Courtesy of UJF) The Gilboas are a family of five, recently transplanted to Stamford, CT from Manhattan. They are loving the suburban life - especially after a difficult eight months spent in their city apartment during lockdown prior to moving. David is an Assistant General Counsel for Sema4, a health intelligence company based in Stamford, and Shira is a Senior User Experience Researcher at Google, working on the Google Sheets team. Their older children are in 1st grade and Pre-K at Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy and their youngest is in the toddler room at Chabad Gan Yeladim.



Shira and David Gilboa and their children.

What is your favorite PJ Library book(s)?

"Izzy the Whiz and the Passover McClean", by Yael Mermelstein is a fun favorite we read a lot, especially around Passover! "Bim and Bom: A Shabbat Tale", by Melissa Iwai is loved in our home too. Our boys love shouting toward the end "Bim will say Bom! 'Bom will say Bim!' And they run to each other and say Shabbat Shalom."

Do you have a favorite PJ Library program you have attended?

We really enjoyed the recent Havdalah event in conjunction with Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy. Our boys loved making the candles and the music and dancing portion was a blast!

Why is PJ Library important in your home?

Our kids look forward to getting their books - well frankly, they love just getting their own mail. But they also genuinely love reading the new books each month! More than that though, a few weeks before every holiday I collect all of the relevant books and we start reading them to prepare for the holiday. They're the perfect tools for getting us in the holiday spirit, teaching us about traditions, and grounding us in our love of Judaism throughout the year.

What is your bedtime routine like in your home?

Once we convince everyone to head upstairs, we change quickly and hop into bed to read! We look forward to it every night.

UJF Launches PJ Library Grandparents Group

BY SHARON FRANKLIN

United Jewish Federation of Greater Stamford, New Canaan and Darien held its first PJ Library Grandparents program on March 3rd as a Zoom event featuring Diana Ganger, MSW, and founder and director of "Ideal 18". Ganger is an intergenerational expert who brings generations together through intentional creative experiences for the mutual benefit of all generations.

Over thirty grandparents learned about creating meaningful experiences with their grandchildren, sharing traditions, navigating boundaries in relationships with children, and connecting with grandchildren during the pandemic. Virtual breakout sessions occurred during the program so grandparents could interact with one another and share the experiences they've had as a grandparent. Specifically, they addressed thoughts about what surprised them at being a grandparent and the legacy they would like to leave to their grandchildren.

If you are interested in joining future programs, have an idea for an event, or would like to get involved, contact UJF's Sharon Franklin at sharon@ujf.org /203-321-1373 ext. 109.



Grandparents on Zoom listen to Diana Ganger (top row, 3rd from left) speak about creating meaningful experiences with grandchildren.

A Busy Winter With UJF's PJ Library



The Palker family says the blessings using the candle they made at the PJ and BCHA Havdalah program.



Josh Licht and his son take part in a virtual Havdalah event.

(Courtesy of UJF) United Jewish Federation's PJ Library partnered with Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy for a musical Havdalah program on January 6th. Havdalah kits were provided to all who signed up. BCHA teacher Nicole Mokovsky led a candle making craft, followed by the Havdalah blessings with Rabbi Tzvi Bernstein. Kids and parents danced and sang along to a musical program led by music teacher Sandy Shmueli.

On February 21st, UJF's PJ Library got crafty during a virtual Purim program featuring educator Meg Nicoll of the Eric Carle Picture Book Museum. Kids had a chance to get their creative juices flowing by creating different shapes and textures out of paper, followed by the main art project using scissors, tape, glue, stickers, paper, and a variety of other supplies they could find at home. The children's imaginations soared as they made picture books, tool belts, funny hats, story



Ryan Zwany made a tool belt at UJF's PJ Library Purim program.



Bess Yasgur gets crafty at PJ Library's Purim program.

scrolls, and more.

For more information about PJ Library

or PJ Our Way, contact Sharon Franklin at sharon@ujf.org/203-321-1373 ext. 109.

PJ Library Parent Ambassadors Deliver Purim Cheer



UJF PJ Parent Ambassador Mel Vorm (on left) delivers a Purim bag to the Ophir family in North Stamford.

PJ Library's "Together Experiences" Help Families Stay Connected

BY SHARON FRANKLIN

Harold Grinspoon Foundation's PJ Library, a program supported by United Jewish Federation of Greater Stamford, New Canaan and Darien, introduced a brand-new program in mid-February called "Together Experiences". Knowing the past year has been an unusual and difficult one, PJ Library created this social opportunity so young families, from two to no more than five families, can connect and socialize with friends and acquaintances via virtual gatherings. You can apply to host a Together Experience through May 1, 2021. Virtual gathering options include Zoom, Facetime, and Google Hangouts.

It's easy to apply. Go to www.pjlibrary.org/together, select from one of five "Together Experiences" options, fill out the online form, and wait for approval. Once approved, a family will receive up to \$50 for reimbursement of expenses. Think of an idea on your own or choose from the list of suggestions including pajama havdalah, a book club discussion featuring the book *Becoming a Soulful Parent*, a Jewish food experience or enjoy a game night. Each link on the "Together Experiences" page of the PJ Library website has a host of ideas



A virtual cooking experience with friends is one of five ideas you can select from when applying for "Together Experiences".

to help you plan your social gathering. The get-together should be a Jewish themed experience, and a post-event report is required to be submitted by May 31, 2021.

For more information on PJ Library "Together Experiences", contact UJF's Sharon Franklin at sharon@ujf.org.



Wendy Siegel's daughter Luca samples her Purim bag delivered by a UJF PJ Parent Ambassador.

Look, No Hands! Automated PPE Dispensers Cut Down on Germs

Two Israeli technologies suit up healthcare and food-service workers without them having to touch a thing, reducing both infections and waste.

BY ABIGAIL KLEIN LEICHMAN/
ISRAEL21C

Even before COVID – remember those days? – gloves and clean uniforms were essential for employees in healthcare, food service and many industrial settings to keep the work environment as clean and germ-free as possible.

The coronavirus pandemic has only intensified the need for employers to provide personal protective equipment to workers 24/7.

Now two Israeli companies have developed innovative solutions for outfitting healthcare and other workers in gloves and uniforms in a more hygienic, controlled and convenient manner.

“The system we are launching is revolutionizing one of the most common parts of medical treatment — wearing sterile gloves,” says Orna Goldberg, CEO of Tel Aviv-based IGIN Tech, a subsidiary of AIDOR Group.

“Today, 5.8 billion sterile gloves are used every day around the world, so we are talking about a significant source of contamination.”

IGIN’s smart device stores 500 gloves in special cartridges. When a worker inserts a hand into the opening of the machine, a glove



IGIN units put gloves on automatically. (CREDIT: HAREL COHEN)

is inflated and the hand slides right inside. The automatic fitting is done in less than five seconds.

The device also addresses another major problem: Close to half of the disposable gloves used worldwide are discarded even before use.

One reason is that disposable gloves are

difficult to put on, especially on damp hands, and they often tear. Sometimes, healthcare workers grab several gloves out of the box accidentally and must discard the extras.

Goldberg tells ISRAEL21c that hospitals therefore have difficulty tracking inventory and deciding when and how many gloves to order. The IGIN device takes care of that, too.

“Our system is the first in the world that lets you know exactly how many gloves you have left so that you know when to order more,” says Goldberg. “This means a significant saving in operating costs, because it tracks the usage process with its built-in, cloud-based management software.”

The company’s main source of revenue will be replacement gloves – a medium size that fits most hands, says Goldberg – in a business model similar to printers and ink. The machine also includes a dispenser for hand sanitizer, and a bin for glove disposal. Indicators show levels of all consumables.

The next generation of the IGIN machine will have a mechanism for automatic glove removal.

IGIN units are also suitable for “clean rooms” in pharma or food plants, and in airports or train stations. A smaller countertop model could be used in food-service facilities.

Designed by Israeli engineering company Geomatrix, the device was presented at the recent GITEX technology exhibition in Dubai.

IGIN’s booth received a lot of traffic from representatives of hospitals and distributors from the United Arab Emirates, United States and African countries, says Head of Business Development Noa Kroll Keter.

“We are starting to take orders. We’re opening a factory in Israel and finding partners in other regions to open factories for mass production,” says Keter. “The interest is amazing because this device will solve so many problems.”

Gloves are just one part of a healthcare worker’s garb. Ready access to clean scrubs also is essential to prevent the spread of viruses and bacteria.



Yariv Matzliach, CEO of Polytex Technologies.

(CREDIT: BENNY GAM ZO LETOVA)

“Medical staff uniforms have become a potential health hazard as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and this has led to tremendous interest in our solution from medical institutions around the world in new and existing markets,” said Yariv Matzliach, CEO of Polytex Technologies.

Medical institutions in 20 countries in North America, Europe and Asia already have installed a total of 3,000 Polytex machines to dispense clean uniforms and collect used ones in a fully automated, hands-free system.

The sealed units are opened only by laundry professionals for collection and restocking. Built-in software and a centralized cloud-based management system monitors turnover and inventory.

“Our solution allows medical staff to change uniforms faster, often many times a day, without fear of contamination,” says Matzliach.

The units come in various sizes and can be moved wherever needed.

In Israel, one Polytex scrub-dispensing machine was installed as a test in Sheba Medical Center’s rehab unit in 2019. By the end of 2020, Sheba had deployed 20 stations around the hospital serving more than 4,500 doctors, nurses, and lab technicians. Other hospitals have installed the units as well.

Sheba reported that Polytex installations have led to a 45% reduction in annual uniform purchase costs, and improved hygiene and staff satisfaction levels.

Although the healthcare sector is the largest market for Polytex, other target markets include hotels, sports and health clubs and industrial facilities where hygienic workwear is a must.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

by transmitting the laser beam to the TM through the sclera – the white part of the eye. The 100-plus laser beams can be delivered almost simultaneously in seconds.

The Belkin Laser Eagle system’s advanced image-processing algorithms determine precisely where to aim the laser beams even if the target isn’t directly visible. A proprietary eye tracker allows for easy automation of the treatment, called DSLT – direct selective laser trabeculoplasty.

Belkin Laser is named after its founder, Prof. Michael Belkin, an ophthalmologist and serial entrepreneur who initially approached the Rad BioMed accelerator with his idea.

Belkin was behind another glaucoma company, Optonol, which he sold to Alcon in 2009 for \$200 million. Belkin serves as medical director in his new company.

CEO Lemann-Blumenthal’s late father, ophthalmologist Prof. Michael Blumenthal, was Belkin’s mentor for many years.

Her grandparents were also ophthalmologists, so it’s no surprise that Lemann-Blumenthal got into the eye business, serving as CEO of the Ein Tal Eye Center, Israel’s largest medical facility dedicated to eye care and surgery, for six years. She has a law degree from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and an executive MBA from Tel Aviv University.



Ophthalmologist and serial entrepreneur Prof. Michael Belkin.

(CREDIT: SHLOMO SHOHAM)

Belkin Laser is currently conducting a large-scale clinical study in Europe and Israel, with 124 patients at more than 10 sites. The company received \$3 million for the study from the EU’s Horizon 2020 program.

Lemann-Blumenthal says Belkin Laser hopes to receive a CE mark for the Eagle to operate in Europe in 2021. Commercialization in the EU is planned for 2022. Approval by the US FDA will be the next step.

But China may be the company’s biggest opportunity. China’s population has the highest amount of narrow angle TM closure in the world. Belkin Laser will start clinical trials in China, Hong Kong and Singapore in 2021 with an “eye” towards commercialization in Asia by 2023.

The overall market for glaucoma treatment is \$4 billion worldwide. Most of that is for drops but Lemann-Blumenthal expects laser treatment to jump to 25% of the total by 2027.

Belkin Laser has 11 employees in its Yavneh headquarters. The team has been working nonstop, even during Covid-19, says the CEO.

Nor has corona impacted Belkin Laser’s ability to raise money – the company added \$12.25 million to its coffers just in July 2020. That followed \$6.6 million from the Israel Innovation Authority and Rad BioMed, \$3 million from the European Union and a Series A investment of \$2.5 million from ZIG Ventures in Singapore.

WHY I CARE...

Focus on: Jessica Batkin

"Imagine if you could open your eyes to see only the good in every person, the positive in every circumstance, and the opportunity in every challenge."

— Rabbi M. Schneerson

BY JANE LEVENE

Jessica Batkin has lived in Stamford since 2010, and prior to that she lived abroad and in New York State. Her husband, Adam, was born in Stamford but joined Jessica while she studied abroad. They have three children ages 2 1/2, 6 and 8 years old. Jessica is a veterinarian and the family also shares their home with two cats. In addition to her hectic schedule as wife, mother and caring for our animal friends, Jessica has been very active in the Stamford Jewish community on numerous projects that have an impact on both children and families.

Here's why she cares...

Describe your current and past involvement with UJF and how long you have been involved.

My husband, Adam, and I have supported UJF since moving to Stamford. We believe

that community organizations are the backbone to any vibrant Jewish community. Over the past year, I have volunteered in creating PJ Library videos about cooking and crafts, which were shared with area families during COVID. Recently, I joined the UJF board and look forward to helping to grow and nurture UJF.

Have you been involved with other Jewish organizations in the community and elsewhere?

I was the chair of the Minnie Manger Marcia Lieberman Mikva for several years. I'm an active member at both Stamford orthodox synagogues as well as a supporter of Chabad of Stamford. I was also President of the parent association at Carmel Academy. I believe that a community is stronger when all its members work together, and I enjoy being part of a diverse group of Jewish organizations.

Why is it important for you to give back in this way?

I believe Jewish communities are diverse and changing places, and helping provide support, education and access to all our member groups is a huge task! My hope is that by doing what we can, we not only

help these organizations directly but encourage others to do the same. My husband and I were both raised in homes where the giving of Tzedakah and communal volunteerism were of paramount importance. Together, we hope to create that same feeling for our children so that they can in turn be leaders in their communities.

As a young couple, can you comment on how those in your age group can be inspired too?

My husband and I try to lead by doing. We hope by giving of our time, energies and Tzedakah, that other young couples will as well. It's important for young couples to know that any involvement helps - running events, giving what you can and most of all, giving joyously so others around you want to give too!

How has your family done during the pandemic and has it changed the way you give your time to the community?

We've certainly been forced to find some silver linings but attending annual galas in our pajamas is actually kind of fun. We're enjoying the increased time together and have found ways to engage with our community organizations we wouldn't have thought of before. It has even allowed our kids to get more involved. They participated in PJ library videos and felt they were helping other kids just like them!



Adam and Jessica Batkin with their children.

TEEN VOICES

Bar and Bat Mitzvahs During COVID

BY NOA FARBER

Before COVID started, one of my favorite things to do was to go to a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. There would normally be a DJ, dancing, and one time there was even an arcade. But now, since COVID, when you go to a Bar or Bat Mitzvah so much has changed. There are a lot fewer people, and going forward, there probably won't be dancing. In fact, you'll also have to sit six feet apart. This makes it harder to interact with other children and your friends.



Noa Farber

Some Bar and Bat Mitzvahs I have attended have been in person. Others have been over Zoom, which I think is not as nice as in person. It isn't as nice because you just sit there and listen, which is often a big part of Bar and Bat Mitzvah, but the difference is there's no face-to-face interaction.

Going to Bar and Bat Mitzvahs is also about having fun and talking to people. It isn't as fun to sit and stare at a screen for several hours. Another change is the take-home gift. This is not the most important part of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, but it's a lot of fun to receive a take-away at the end of the night. Typically, the gift would be a sweatshirt, socks, or a

blanket. Now it will probably be a mask with a design or logo. In fact, COVID Bar/ Bat Mitzvahs have led to "out of the box thinking" and creative solutions to simple issues like how to serve food. At a Covid outdoor Bat Mitzvah I went to we ate outside and everyone could take their mask off and be socially distanced. At another simcha, it was indoors, so we couldn't eat, which led to getting a lunch box to take home with candy and chips. At the outdoor Bat Mitzvah, the food was packaged individually, with toppings on the side, and was very different to the usual buffet set up.

Another big difference between Pre and Present COVID simchas is family. Of course, family is a big part of a Simcha. On a Zoom Bar or Bat Mitzvah family can "attend" from all over, and they don't need to quarantine, if that's required. For an in-person Bar or Bat Mitzvah some family can't attend because they might be too vulnerable or far away. This includes older relatives, or out of town family who might have to quarantine, which is hard to do.

However, no matter the "format" of the new Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, I like going and seeing my friends, and knowing that Jewish traditions and rituals are still in practice despite COVID restrictions.

Noa Farber is a seventh grader at Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy. She enjoys painting, drawing, and volleyball.



United Jewish Federation

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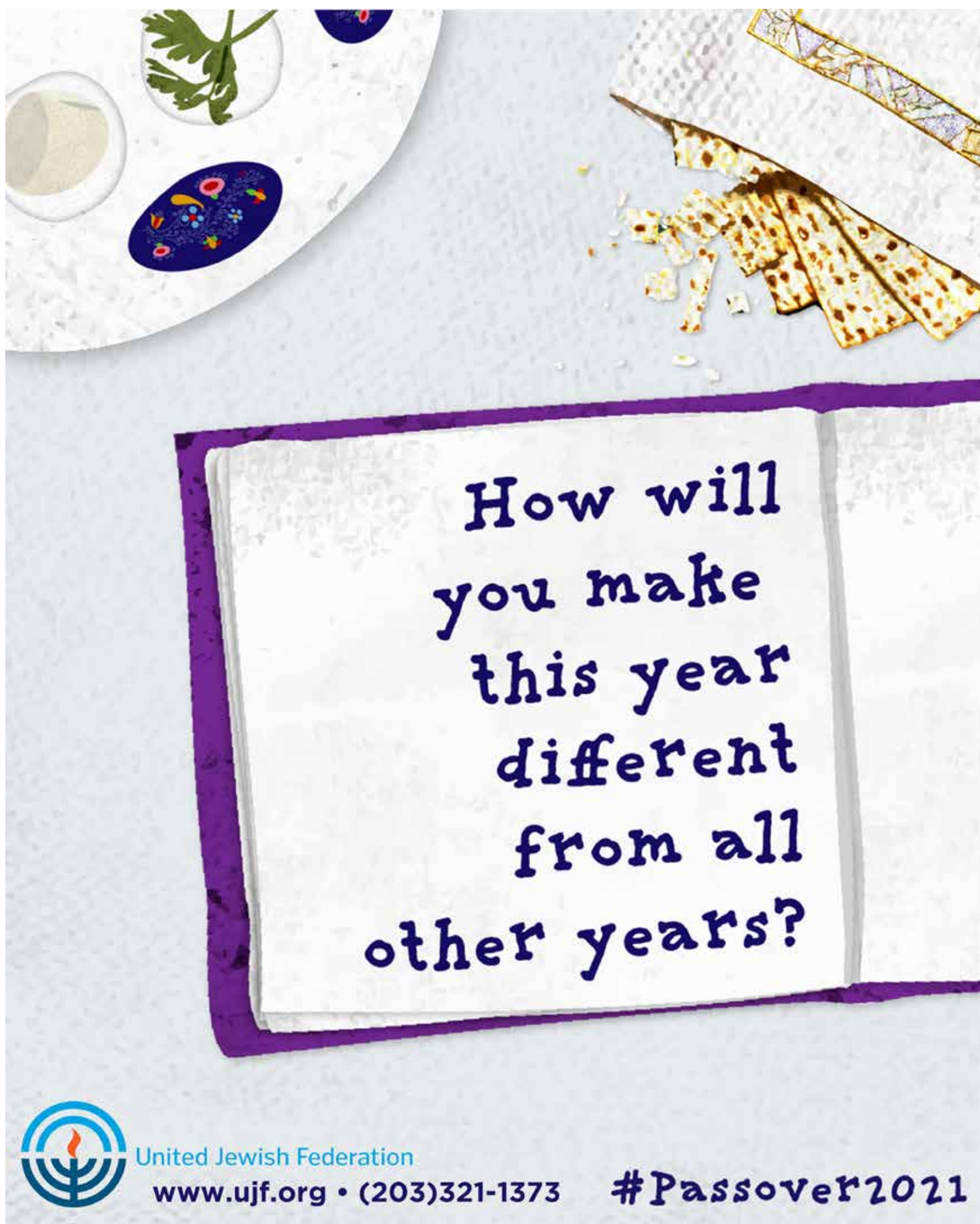
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