An Affiliate of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte

Jewish Federation Annual Meeting to Highlight Israeli Wines

The Annual Meeting of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte will take place on Monday, May 14 at 7 PM in the Sam Lerner Center for Cultural Arts at Shalom Park. Please join us to honor Outgoing President, Larry Schwartz, and welcome Incoming President, Alison Lerner.

During the Annual Meeting, the 2018-2019 slate of officers and Board of Trustees will be presented, and an election will be held. Anyone contributing at least $36 to the Annual Campaign is considered a voting member.

Following the meeting, please join us for an opportunity to celebrate Israel’s 70th with a special Israel Wine Tasting experience. Wine in Israel has a rich history, dating back thousands of years, with many biblical references to local vineyards. For years, many Israeli vintners created wines from high yielding vineyards, with results that tasted generic and relatively sweet. But the region’s wine industry has seen a major evolution over the last 30 years; today, high-quality bottlings are becoming more prominent on the market. A Mediterranean climate is experienced throughout much of Israel’s five main areas of production, which includes regions of the Galilee, Judean Hills, Samson, Negev, and Shomron. The soil compositions are quite varied throughout Israel, ranging from limestone and basalt to alluvial and clay loam. The varieties that have yielded the best results from Israel’s terroir include Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Merlot, and Syrah. These wines have a rich bouquet with impressive concentration and lush texture. We hope you will join us for this wine tasting experience.

For more information, please call the Federation office at 704-944-6757.

Slate of Officers & Trustees as Nominated by the Board Development Committee of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte

**OFFICERS FOR 2018-2019**

- President: Alison Lerner*
- Vice-President: Ron Townsend*
- Vice-President: Risa Miller*
- Vice-President: Bill Zimmern*
- Treasurer: Amy Vitner*
- Secretary: Brad Winer*
- Past President: Larry Schwartz

**BOARD MEMBERS — TERM ENDING 2021**

- Gail Bogner*
- Sharyn Hendoisman*

**BOARD MEMBERS — TERM ENDING 2020**

- Michael Baumann*
- Stephanie Gitlin*

**BOARD MEMBERS — TERM ENDING 2019**

- George Cronson
- Lindsay Muns*

*Nominees

**PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTEES**

- Amy Augustine
- Holly Levinson

**CONSTITUENT AGENCY DESIGNEES**

- Levine JCC Representative: Jonathan Kulbersh
- Jewish Family Services Representative: Debbie Porter
- Foundation of Shalom Park Representative: Barry Bobrow

**BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

- Holly Levinson, Chair
- Nancy Kipnis, Sara Kulbersh, Brad Rabinowitz, Andrew Rosen, Jenny Rosenthal and Marisa Zeibert

Enjoy an Israeli Wine Tasting Experience

North Carolina BBYO 1960s and 1970s Reunion

Remember the Four Tops, Temptations, Beatles, and BBYO? If you were in BBG, AZA, Hebrew School, or an Amity Club devotee during these years, this reunion is for you. After many years of talking about how great it was growing up in North Carolina and how wonderful it would be to get together with old friends, we are putting together a plan. We are exploring dates in mid-October 2018 in Charlotte. There will be food, music, and lots of memorabilia to reminisce all the great AZA and BBG highlights of our generation.

How incredible it will be to reconnect with North Carolina friends you may not have seen for many years. If you have interest in attending, being part of the planning or have any suggestions, please let any of us know.

Robert Fligel - rfligel@rf-resources.com
Cathy Slesinger - clsles@verizon.net
Ellen Goldstein - egoldstein@bbyo.org
Donna Cantor - cantordonna@gmail.com
David Rousso - david@davidsld.com

Awaiting a BBYO convention bus at Temple Israel in 1965.
Recently, a friend remarked, “You love every book you read.” I was caught off guard and started thinking about what would have given her that impression. As you know, I do read lots of books and am excited when I find ones that I particularly enjoy. I’m always looking for books that will stimulate, educate, challenge and entertain us readers and book club members. Do I love every book I read? Definitely not – actually, I don’t even finish many of them. Perhaps I should consider a new slant for my column – “books I don’t recommend and why!”

I’d love to hear from you about books you’ve discovered and recommend. As we celebrate the 70th birthday of the State of Israel, I have chosen to highlight the work of two contemporary Israeli authors – Dorit Rabinyan and Ayelet Gundar-Goshen. Both of their books were compelling and are highly recommended.

**All the Rivers**, Dorit Rabinyan

A controversial, award-winning story about the passionate but untenable affair between Liat, an Israeli woman, and Hilmi, a Palestinian man, who meet in New York City. Banned from classrooms by Israel’s Ministry of Education, Dorit Rabinyan’s remarkable novel is a bold portrayal of the strains—and delights—of a forbidden relationship, a love story and a war story, a New York story and a Middle East story, an unflinching foray into the forces that bind us and divide us. Charismatic and handsome Hilmi is a talented young Palestinian artist. Liat is an aspiring translation student who plans to return to Israel the following summer. Despite knowing that their love can be only temporary, that it can exist only away from their conflicted homeland, Liat lets herself become enraptured by Hilmi, and as her love for him deepens, she must decide whether she is willing to risk alienating her family, her community, and her sense of self for the love of one man. “The land is the same land.” Hilmi reminds Liat, “In the end all the rivers flow into the same sea.”

**Waking Lions**, Ayelet Gundar-Goshen

After one night’s deadly mistake, a man will go to any lengths to save his family and his reputation. Neurosurgeon Eitan Green has the perfect life – married to a beautiful police officer and father of two young boys. But speeding along a deserted moonlit road after an exhausting hospital shift, he hits someone. Seeing that the man, an African migrant, is beyond help, he flees the scene. When the victim’s widow knocks at Eitan’s door the next day, holding his wallet and divulging that she knows what happened, Eitan discovers that her price for silence is not money. It is something else entirely, something that can shatter Eitan’s safe existence and force him into a world of secrets and lies he never could have anticipated.

Waking Lions is a gripping, suspenseful, and morally devastating drama of guilt and survival, shame and desire from a remarkable young author on the rise. Both books can be found in the Center for Jewish Education.

Next CJF Book Club Meeting: Don’t Let My Baby Do Rodeo by Boris Fishman – Wednesday, May 16, 10:30 AM-12 noon.
She Fought for Equality: Gertrude Weil (1879-1971), A Book and Author Evening

May is Jewish American Heritage Month which is the annual recognition and celebration of Jewish American achievements and contributions to the United States of America. This year the Charlotte community will commemorate the contributions of a truly remarkable Jewish woman from North Carolina — Gertrude Weil. A native of Goldsboro, NC, she championed progressive and often controversial causes including women’s suffrage, labor reform, and civil rights. As a Zionist, Weil was also the founding member of Goldsboro’s Hadassah chapter.

Please join us for a book and author event featuring Leonard Rogoff, author of Gertrude Weil: Jewish Progressive in the New South. Leonard Rogoff, a research historian of the Jewish Heritage Foundation of North Carolina, has written and lectured extensively on the Jewish South. Rogoff is also the author of the well-known book Down Home: Jewish Life in North Carolina. This book and author event is sponsored and organized by the Center for Jewish Education, the Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, and the Charlotte Chapter of Hadassah.

Date: Thursday, May 24
Time: 7 PM
Location: Shalom Park, 5007 Providence Road
Sam Lerner Center for Cultural Arts

Book sales, signing and refreshments to follow speaker. This event is free and open to all. Registration is requested at www.jewishcharlotte.org/cje.

For more information, please contact Debby Block at Debby.Block@jewishcharlotte.org or 704-944-6780.

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A new home for the trusted service you expect from Greenspon & Associates

Greenspon & Associates is proud to announce its merger with Windermere Insurance Group. Since 1974, we've assisted clients with their group benefits, life & long term care insurance, annuities, business continuation planning, executive benefits, and 401(k) plans.

Our merger with Windermere enhances our ability to deliver an extraordinary level of service and expertise while also expanding our offerings to include property and casualty insurance.

Keith Greenspon
Advisor

704.247.3033
kgreenspon@windingsgroup.com

Save the Date

Super Kids Soaring Into Summer,
Sponsored by PJ Library and LJCC

Sunday, June 10, 4:30-6 PM

Kick-off summer with a Sunday afternoon of fun:
Super Kid Workout in Gym
Marvelous Music with Miss Patty
Fantastic Fables with Miss Debby
Cool Treats

All welcome. Geared for families with Children ages 3-8. This event is free but space is limited. Pre-registration is requested. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

-- Register online at NextGen by June 8. --
For more information: email Debby Block at Debby.Block@jewishcharlotte.org or call 704-944-6780.
You are the fuel that powers the change that betters the world.

Federation powers the Jewish community in ways you might not think of, from sending free PJ Library books to families worldwide to supporting Jewish camps, Birthright trips and more. But it can't happen without you. Donate today, and be the start of something powerful.

**Your Gift Powers Engagement. Donate Today.**

[Website Link]

[Logo]
Graduation at the Jewish Preschool on Sardis is a Time of Great Joy and a Little Sadness

May brings about a bitter-sweetness at the Jewish Preschool on Sardis. It is the time of year we celebrate all the growth, development, and friendships that were cultivated during the school year, and it is also a time when we know we must say goodbye as our children move onto the next chapter in their school career. Sometimes it is moving up to another class and other times it is moving on to another school and another chapter of their educational lives. The Jewish Preschool on Sardis is so grateful for the dedicated, nurturing, and talented staff that help our children achieve these milestones. Big thanks go out to the entire team: Torie Allen, Kate Badger, Elizabeth Boyce, Ellen Clark, Adriane Douthett, Devorah Gorkin, Tanya Hamilton, Vickey Holmes, Jayme Kreitman, Galia Lapidot Boaz, Jane Lee, Jessie Mazur, Katie O’Reilly, Jennifer Orsomarso, Tiara Price, Wanda Vande Linde, and Beverly Wakefield.

We could not do what we do without the support of our volunteers and families. Many thanks for the hours of dedication to making the school year a success and for paving the way for future JPS students to JPS Advisory Board; Rosie David, Sara Kulbersh, Joanna Lindenbaum, Elinor Edvi, Rebecca Dranove, Lauren Sussman, Yael Osovski, and Nancy Delfiner.

JPS congratulates our 2018 graduates. May each and every one go forward with curiosity and eagerness to fulfill their potential and achieve all of their life goals.

Alphabetical listing of JPS graduates: Jacob David, Noah David, Baylee Fox, Jacob Fox, Liviee Kluhr, Jillian Pilch, Kalani Rose, Imri Rotchild, Maxon Schwartz, Jack Siegel, Ridge Smith, Levi Vorst, Taliya Waizman

“I often feel that the children I meet even in the poorest places have a spiritual cleanliness about them that makes them seem life messengers from somewhere else. Even when children are surrounded by enormous suffering and sickness, their capacity to affirm life in the midst of death is a miracle that refreshes the world. Someone, I don’t know who, once said, ‘If you seek God, look for a child.’ I’ve been looking for God in the faces of children for 30 years.”  

--Jonathan Kozol, in New Menorah 44 (Summer 1996)
We all know children need time, space, and nurturing to experience the kind of learning that is organic, rich in experience, fun, and meaningful to them. At CJP we have been working diligently to reflect on, and continuously develop our learning environments. We want to ensure that the CJP children have what they need available to them in order to foster learning experiences that stimulate the whole child.

Intentionally designed outdoor classrooms support our children’s developing minds in so many ways. When you integrate gardens into the curriculum, research suggests that it fosters children’s readiness to learn, and encourages them to become more active in solving problems, while boosting literacy and numeracy skills. Furthermore, it is simply fun, and stimulates a love for learning and translate skills to practical, real-life experiences where they are learning and growing with nature.

The value of these experiences is why we love watching our Growth through Gardening program develop. This spring, children and parents have been exercising their green thumbs by weeding, planting, raking, watering and cleaning up from the winter months. In the next month or so, we will see a new water structure appear that will enable the children to experiment with the properties of water, sinking, and floating, and manipulate water flow. During science class children are experiencing planning, caring for a space, digging, observing bees and other creatures, harvesting plants, and the list goes on. All of these activities are hands-on and inquiry based that promote a deeper connection to nature, themselves, their school, and their community. They are proud of their beautiful space and their own contributions to the garden. Furthermore, it is a perfect growing place where they can simply have fun and enjoy nature and science with their friends. This in turn, we believe we will see more thoughtful, engaged, and mindful citizens.

This spring it will be exciting to watch our students and outdoor garden bloom. As children, teachers, and parents collaboratively partner together to grow this space we continue to encourage the value Tikun Olam and Ba’al Tashcheet throughout our school and eventually throughout the course of their lives.
2018 ISRAEL MISSION
THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME

OCTOBER 24 - 31*, 2018
CHAIRMED BY ALISON LERNER AND STACY & TODD GORELICK

Gather your friends and family and pack your bags for the trip of a lifetime in honor of Israel’s 70th birthday!

Explore the sites, sounds, flavors and spirits of Israel as you experience the country’s rich food, wine and cultural scene.


To learn more, please contact Jason Pressberg, Federation’s Chief Development Officer, at 704.944.6758 or jason.pressberg@jewishcharlotte.org.

*Please note that the ground itinerary begins on October 24 and ends October 31 which requires an October 23 departure from the US and arrival home on November 1.
The fifth grade graduates are about to attend middle schools throughout Charlotte, none of them Jewish, and as small and safe as the day school. Teaching our children to understand their rights, to sharpen their voice, and to advocate for their needs, especially when protected by the constitution, is one of our primary goals. This is even more important in today’s climate when reason and understanding are in short supply.

The opportunity presented itself best when learning about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Mr. Stephen Debresen, the general studies teacher, and Rabbi Avrohom Gordon joined together to invite Dr. Jeff Pelvoorde, Associate Professor of Politics at Converse College in Spartanburg, SC, to discuss the deep implications and protections that the Bill of Rights provides for US citizens.

He proposed four scenarios to the students and asked them to break up into groups to role play the dilemma, take on the different roles, and try out different solutions.

You might want to do the same.

**Situation I:**
Every day in school in your homeroom (your first period) the class recites the Pledge of Allegiance. A different student leads the Pledge every day. But … immediately after, the teacher has the class, led by the same student, say a brief prayer that ends “in Jesus’s name, Amen.” Your turn is coming up. You obviously won’t feel comfortable saying the prayer, so you talk to your teacher about it. She/he is a nice person, but doesn’t see why it should bother you to say this prayer, so you talk about it with your parents. They arrange a meeting with your teacher, your Principal, your Rabbi, and you. Your parents and your Rabbi try to explain that Jews don’t believe in Jesus. Your teacher explains her position. What should the Principal decide?

**Situation II:**
You are a religious/observant Jewish person whose family observes all the major Jewish holidays in the way that they cannot attend school, and your two best friends are a non-religious Jewish person and a non-Jewish person. You are all very good students, tied for the highest grades in your school. The school awards “summa cum laude” (graduating with the highest honors … a very important honor) to only one person, the one with the highest grades and perfect attendance, allowing for one sick day and two religious holidays. All three of you have one sick day. Your non-Jewish friend has no problem since his/her holidays are Christmas and Easter, which don’t affect school attendance. Your Jewish friend who doesn’t observe all of the Jewish holidays as strictly as Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur isn’t affected, since her/his family only takes off Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur. But you also take off Sukkot, Simchat Torah, Pesach, and Shavuot. You speak with your parents, who arrange a meeting with the Principal and your Rabbi, who try to explain the importance of all the holidays. What should the Principal decide?

**Situation III:**
Your school puts up a Christmas tree in the main hall of the school. You and your Jewish friends discuss whether you should ask the school to a) take down the tree or b) allow you to put up a menorah next to the tree. You discuss it with your parents too. What do you and your parents think? What should the Principal decide?

**Situation IV:**
You are a new sixth-grader in a three-year middle school. Two eighth-graders constantly make fun of you and tease you because you are Jewish. You tell your parents and they set up a meeting with the Principal. What does the Principal do?

When they finished it was clear that we have passionate, knowledgeable, confident, and sensitive students about to embark into the diverse, wide world. They were able to see many sides of the conservation and dilemma. They cared about the many people affected, and they realized that answers are not always easy. They also realized that it was possible that everyone might have to be a bit uncomfortable in order for everyone to find a comfort.

Wise words from our fifth graders after the class:

*Judaism is tied to the amendments and constitution. The constitution helps with our Judaism so we can be free to practice our Judaism, free to say what we want about it and free to publicize it if we want.* —Henry Bloomfield

*We are privileged to live in a free country and because we live in a free country all the religions could unite.* —Lael Rivas-Zucker

*All the freedoms of speech and all the basic freedoms make America a special country.* —Yehuda Leib Cohen

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**The Bill of Rights at CJDS**

“The purpose of the laws of the Torah... is to bring mercy, loving kindness, and peace upon the world.”

-Maimonides, Mishneh Torah: Laws of the Sabbath 2:3
Did you know there was an Older Americans Month? For 55 years led by the Administration for Community Living’s Administration on Aging, May is an opportunity to recognize the contributions and value our seniors offer to our community and our lives. If you have a parent or grandparent who is a senior, take some extra time this month to engage with them. Thank them for the foundation they created for you, the values they instilled and the sacrifices they may have made to make your life fuller. Our senior population provides us with a history we will never know. Their stories, jokes and wisdom enrich our lives...make an effort to enrich theirs.

At Shalom Park, our seniors represent all of the opportunities available to us as we age. They are working out at the gym...socializing at an Oasis lunch...playing games...in the Weinberg Center. If you work or socialize at the Park take a moment this month to engage in a conversation with one of our seniors, stop in at an Oasis lunch or just say hello and give a smile as you are walking down main street...you may just make their day.

And for those who have a senior loved one in your life, take a moment to take stock and assess their well-being. For as much as they give, now may be a time in their life where they need support. Are they getting the medical attention they need? Are they socializing, and able to pay their bills? Are they unusually stressed or depressed?

Aging is a difficult process and for many; living on a fixed income, experiencing a decline in their physical abilities, and general health can lead to mental health issues and/or isolation. JFS offers a wide variety of services for seniors. Our friendly home visits, case management and therapy, along with connecting with our partners at Shalom Park can significantly help navigate the future for your senior loved one.

So, take the time this month to pay attention to our Older Americans, celebrate their history, the contributions they’ve made and the future that still remains.

Contact JFS at 704-364-6594 to find out more about resources for seniors in our community.

Get the Facts About Mental Health and Aging:

Fact: Suicide is a risk among older adults - Older adults have the highest suicide rate in the country.
Fact: As many as one in five older adults experience a mental health disorder during any given year.
Fact: Older adults have unique mental health care needs – Changing bodies and chemistry, changes in family and friendships, and changes in living situations all have an effect on mental health.
Fact: Mental health problems are not a normal part of aging.

102-year-old Frieda Rosas-van Hessen with a friend.

1

Elana Congress and Yad Plotkin visit Paul Cohen.

The Providence Meadows “gang.”

Passover Seder at Waltwood.
JFS Monthly Volunteers and Donors
March 2018

Volunteers: Rick Abrams, Diana Ades, Madeline Arons, Linda Babich, Ana Bonheim, James Bryan, Chaim Burke, Asia Butler, Suzy Catenazzo, Dan Coblenz, Jocelle Jakob and Maya Cohn, Andrea Cronson, Sheryl Ef -

ter, Ellen Englehardt, Rob Friedman, Maggie Fogel, Mel


Plotkin, Debbie Porter, Barbara Reit, Harry Rubenstein, Linda Safir, Cindy Siesel, Louis Sinkoe, Mason Sklut, Harry Sparks, Fred Sphorer, Liz Wahlis, Amalia Warszenbrot, Jan Weiner, Dori Whitman, Nancy Wielunsks

Food Pantry Donations: Suzy Catenazzo, Dan Coblenz, Roni Fishkin, Ellen Framm, Cynthia Frank, Eric Lerner, Alison Lerner, Matt Luftglass, Risa Miller, Janice Nalibotsky, Glierbermans Kosher Mart patrons, Charlotte Jewish Day School, Charlotte Jewish Preschool, Temple Beth El and Temple Israel Congregants, Shalom Park Community Gar-

ments.

Food Drives: BBYO North Carolina Council Hadassah Cooks: Thank you for the wonderful Passover meals

Donations to Jewish Family Services in March 2018

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO
David Abrams from Alan and Ruth Goldberg
Jill Newman from Rachel Davis, Stuart and Ellen Fligel, Edward and Arlene Karp, David Kronovet, Leonard and Judy Marco, Elise Menaker, Jack and Vera Mendel, Ruth Nady, Mark and Harriet Perlman, Jackie Pickus, Shawn Pittman, Sam and Ollie Polk, Larry and Dale Polsky, Phyllis Schultz and Matthew Gromet, Marvin and Anita Shapiro, Mattye and Marc Silverman, Gary Silverstein, Eric and Lori Sklut, Steve and Barb Weiner
Betsy Olinger from Susan Meyer
Jackie Pickus from Ruth Nady
Eric Sklut from Robert and Cheryl Comen, Eric and Susan Lerner, Howard and Julie Levine, Peter Sherman, Barbara Sklut, Kevin Levine and Louis Sinkoe

IN MEMORY OF
Varda, mother of Schar Bar-om from Edward and Debora Pizer
Jim Bean to Lynn Bean from Sandra Weinstein
Gerald Greenspan to Mollie Cohen from Lisa Richman
Leonard Rabhan to Congregation B’na’i Mitzvah from Edward and Deborah Pizer
Mya Rabhan from Edward and Debora Pizer
Your mother to James and Sandra Friend from Sharon Katz
Vladimir Bungelkots from Viktor and Julia Glieberman from Paul and Lynn Edelstein
Herbert Jackowitz to Ken and Lori Jackowitz from Harvey Chester, Douglas Harrison, Peter and Cynthia Levinson
Sidney Kaufman to Jon and Jennifer Lahn from Jeffrey and Dana Drieshein, Todd and Stacy Gorelick, Lisa Richman
Dr. Marshall Lindner to Andrew and Gwendolyn Lindner from Jonathan and Stephanie Simon
Doris Scheier Matisoff to Madeline Litman from Vicki Scott

MAZEL TOV ON
Alex and Alana Fabrikant’s B’na’i Mitzvah from Jody Para
The birth of Sophie Beth Cohen to Donald and Susan Jacobs from Susan Meyer
Ethan’s Bar Mitzvah to Mike Schneiderman from Stephen and Nancy Schreier

WISHING A FULL AND SPEEDY RECOVERY TO
Maggie Fogel from Ronald and Janice Weiner
Harriet Perlman from Stuart and Carolyn Hennes, Robert and Linda Isser, Sharon Katz, Michael and Judie Van Glish
Elizabeth Wahls from Ronald and Janice Weiner

Older Americans Month
(Continued from page 9)

Fact: Mental health problems are a risk for older adults, regardless of history. Sometimes mental health deteriorates in response to an illness. Older adults without a history of substance abuse may abuse medications, alcohol, or drugs.
Fact: Our health system is not adequately helping older adults with mental disorders.

Medicare covers 80% of a physical health problem, but only 50% of a mental health problem.
Fact: Primary care physicians fail to diagnose depression 50% of the time and only half of older adults who discuss specific mental health problems with a physician receive any treatment.
Charlotte BBYO teens serve as leaders on BBYO’s North Carolina council

Charlotte BBYO teens have had a busy spring. Charlotte BBYO sent 60 teens to Orlando, FL, in February, to participate in BBYO’s biggest International Convention to date. Some of the best moments of IC included hearing from incredible speakers including Aly Raisman, Josh Peck, Scott Rogowsky, and Abby Wombach, a day of community service all across Orlando, a night out to Universal Islands of Adventure and meaningful Shabbat services with 3,000 Jewish teens.

After a short recovery from an awesome time at International Convention, our teens jumped right back into programming and prepping for our final convention of the year, Spring Cultural. Spring Cultural is North Carolina’s annual spirit convention, where each chapter competes to win the coveted spirit cup, participates in a collection drive for Josh Rubin’s Plumbing, LLC, and Meaningful Shabbat services with a commitment to open Gate their lives and the world-at-large. Hebrew High is a place that encourages acceptance and respect with a commitment to open sharing without judgement. We are the place to be on Wednesday nights and a fun dance, which included a surprise ice cream truck.

Sunday morning, the teens elected the 28th North Carolina Council boards which included many Charlotte leaders. Congratulations to these Charlotte BBYO members that were successful in their elections: Sophie Levy (N’siah/president), Ben Rubenstein (Godol/president), Lauren Mond (S’gan/treasurer of programming), Abby Meyer (Morah/vice president of membership), Eddie Horwitz (Shaliach/vice president of Jewish Education), Eliza Weidner (Markiah/communications), Sam Baumszeit (Gizbor/treasurer), and Abby Adams (Safranit/historian). We are beyond proud of every single Aleph and BBG who took the time and effort to run for council board.

Charlotte BBYO welcomes all Jewish teens from 8th – 12th grade. For more information, please email charlotte@bbyo.org or call 704-944-6834. ©

Graduating seniors write about their years at Hebrew high

Another year of Hebrew High is ending. Each year we send another group of wonderful young adults into the world to navigate their Jewish identities in the next stage of their lives. It is a bitter-sweet time for us, as teachers, to know we will not see their smiling faces and witty personalities at Hebrew High next year. But, we know they are empowered to show the world who they are.

Their years at Hebrew High have taught them to embrace Judaism and Jewish values as they navigate their lives and the world-at-large. Hebrew High is a place that encourages acceptance and respect with a commitment to open sharing without judgement. We are the place to be on Wednesday Nights and look forward to another year of bonding, learning, sharing meals, discussing a wide variety of topics, and embarking on new adventures with our new crop of smiling, witty teens.

Some of our seniors wanted to share their thoughts about Hebrew High with the community. We want to thank them for inspiring us over the last five years. Chay-eem Ta’am.

Cara Dillhyon:
Hebrew High has been a place where I have made some of my closest friends and grown as a person. I look forward to it every week. I’ll be attending Florida State University as part of the Honors Program in the fall.

Limor Goldsmith:
Hebrew High has given me many opportunities to learn and grow as a Jewish young adult. I’ve been able to begin learning Hebrew as a second language through the Hebrew for Credit class. I’ve also been able to connect with other teens and create a sense of unity through Judaism. In Spring 2019, I will be going to Tu­lan University. In the semester prior, I plan to take classes at a local community college.

Rachel Musa:
For the last five years, Hebrew High has been a place where I have maintained my strong connection to Judaism while also forming lasting relationships with other Jewish teens. At Hebrew High, I am able to comfortably discuss important societal issues that affect me as a Jewish high school student. I have enjoyed being involved in Hebrew High Student Council and will miss my connections to Judaism while also forming lasting relationships with other Jewish teens. At Hebrew High, I am able to comfortably discuss important societal issues that affect me as a Jewish high school student. I have enjoyed being involved in Hebrew High Student Council and will miss my with their friends from all over North Carolina, celebrated Shabbat, and honored the outgoing presidents at our States Ceremony. Saturday was the big day of competition. Chapters competed in contests such as song and dance, banner, newspaper, basketball, and a swim meet. We ended the evening with a meaningful Hav­dalah service, reminiscing on the year and a fun dance, which included a surprise ice cream truck.

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Hebrew High has given me many opportunities to learn and grow as a Jewish young adult. I’ve been able to begin learning Hebrew as a second language through the Hebrew for Credit class. I’ve also been able to connect with other teens and create a sense of unity through Judaism. In Spring 2019, I will be going to Tu­lan University. In the semester prior, I plan to take classes at a local community college.

Rachel Musa:
For the last five years, Hebrew High has been a place where I have maintained my strong connection to Judaism while also forming lasting relationships with other Jewish teens. At Hebrew High, I am able to comfortably discuss important societal issues that affect me as a Jewish high school student. I have enjoyed being involved in Hebrew High Student Council and will miss my Wednesday nights here. Next year, I will be attending UNC Chapel Hill.

Alex Olinger:
I have been a part of Hebrew High for the past five years and it has helped me to further discover my Jewish identity. I really enjoyed being around other Jewish people every week because normally I would not see very many at my school. It’s the place to be on Wednesday nights. I’ll be at Appalachian State University next year.

Peri Sisskind:
These past five years Hebrew high as been a place that helped me connect to my Judaism through fun ways. I also have made friendships that will last a lifetime. Hebrew high has given me many opportunities that I would not have had otherwise.

(Continued on page 17)
The Charlotte Jewish News - May 2018 - Page 12

Community News

Community Yom HaShoah Event Brings One-Woman Show to Charlotte

“You cannot help us. I shall have to help you, God.” So says Etty Hillesum in her diaries, written from 1941-1943 in Nazi occupied Holland.

Hillesum began her diaries on the instructions of her therapist when she was 27. Her entries are rich with insights into her feelings as well as the current events of the day. She talks about her relationships with family and friends, as well as the dire situation that develops in Holland.

Susan Stein, a New York city based actor, brought Hillesum’s words to the stage at the community’s annual Yom HaShoah commemoration at Temple Beth El on April 11.

The evening began with a candlelighting ceremony, where the candles were lit by Hebrew High students in the names of the survivors who were present. This was followed by Stein’s one-woman show using Hillesum’s words exclusively.

Stein became interested in Hillesum while she was a college student and found an abridged version of her diaries for 50 cents at a garage sale. It took a while for her to warm up to Hillesum, but eventually she saw the value of diary entries. “There’s something about this diary,” Stein says. “Her writing is clunky, spontaneous. She suffers depression.” It’s a wonder to see that under these frightful circumstances that Etty never allows herself to hate; she maintains her own life.

Stein created the stage play in collaboration with actor and director Austin Pendleton (Fiddler on the Roof; Finding Nemo), who directed the production we see now.

The North Carolina Council on the Holocaust brought Stein to North Carolina not only to perform her show for the Charlotte community, but also to present it to schools in North Carolina. “Etty is helping students,” affirms Stein.

Already Stein has brought her show to more than 55,000 people. “I’m on a mission to bring Etty to as many people as possible.”

Some of the Hebrew High students who lit candles honoring the attending survivors.

Samantha Weinstein, Isabelle Holmes, Susan Stein, Charlie Usadi, and Benjamin Guadarrama.

Susan Cernyak-Spatz and daughter Jackie Fishman

Michelle Gurevitch, Frida Schwartz, and Gertrude Gurevitch.
Foundation of Shalom Park Names New Security Director

In this modern and fast-paced world, security is more important than ever. Churches, temples, and Jewish Community Centers should be havens where we learn, work, relax, and practice our faith. We expect these environments to be open and welcoming as a fun place to live, work, relax, and practice our faith. However, security is more important than ever. People are fearful of crimes, and security is a concern.

Paul retired from the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department in 2015 as a Major. But his retirement did not last long. Chief Kerr Mecklenburg Police Department is job one for the community. The foundation did not last long. Chief Kerr Mecklenburg Police Department was hired as a success director.

Paul is the Hebrew Cemetery in Springtime. Winter has been a little reminder that the cold weather is here. The air is crisp and the trees are bare. Autumn has brought the leaves to the ground, and now winter is upon us. The days are shorter, and the nights are longer.

As the cemetery’s director, I am mindful that cemeteries have different meanings to different people. While they can be beautiful places filled with history and serenity, they can also be places of pain; especially for those who have experienced a recent loss. It is important to remember the cemetery’s primary purpose: To honor, celebrate, and embrace the lives of our deceased.

At the same time, I am excited that Shalom Park has a very successful financier. He has a plan to strengthen the platform of security in the areas of physical security, guard staff, and technology. These days, security is not limited to things seen, but the unseen and extremely important electronic and personal data. Cyber security is a necessary fort at Shalom Park.

Paul’s challenge will be to seek ways to tighten security while preserving the vibrant Shalom Park community that remains at the heart of how we have operated for over thirty-five years.

Linda Siegel, President of Foundation of Shalom Park, said, “I am excited that Shalom Park has attracted someone who has impeccable professional experience, a passion for community safety and security, and the sensitivity to serve a high profile Jewish communal environment. It is a testament to the strong investment by the Shalom Park community in the protection of our people and property against a unique and ever growing range of threats.”

Most importantly, the Foundation of Shalom Park wants its visitors to have the peace of mind that comes with knowing that access to the Park and its buildings is controlled and monitored in ways that preserve its rich history and traditions. Stop by the Foundation office, meet Paul, and learn how he plans to strengthen the platform and culture of security at Shalom Park.

The Hebrew Cemetery in Springtime

By Sandra Goldman

Late spring is my favorite time at the Hebrew Cemetery. I love the deep green grass. The trees showing off their foliage and birds chirping on the branches. Over the years, I have become an avid taphophile, an individual who has a true passion for cemeteries. This is the time of year I take most notice of some of our amazing monuments. Winter has been a little reminder that the cold weather is here. The air is crisp and the trees are bare. Autumn has brought the leaves to the ground, and now winter is upon us. The days are shorter, and the nights are longer.

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Problems Affect Everyone: Myth or Fact?

May is Mental Health Month, so we thought you should get the facts.

Myth: Mental health problems don’t affect me.

Fact: Mental health problems are actually very common. About one in four American adults experienced a mental health issue this past year and one in 10 young people experienced a period of major depression.

Myth: Children don’t experience mental health problems.

Fact: Half of all mental health disorders show first signs before a person turns 14 years old, and three quarters of mental health disorders occur before age 24. Unfortunately, less than 20% of children and adolescents with diagnosable mental health problems receive the treatment they need. Early mental health support can help a child before problems interfere with other developmental needs.

Myth: People with mental health problems are violent and unpredictable.

Fact: The vast majority of people with mental health problems are no more likely to be violent than anyone else. Most people with mental illness are not violent and only 3%–5% of violent acts can be attributed to individuals living with a serious mental illness. In fact, people with severe mental illnesses are over 10 times more likely to be victims of violent crime than the general population.

Myth: There is no hope for people with mental health problems.

Fact: Studies show that people with mental health problems get better and many recover completely. Recovery refers to the process in which people are able to live, work, learn, and participate fully in their communities.

Myth: I can’t do anything for a person with a mental health problem.

Fact: Friends and loved ones can make a big difference. Only 44% of adults with diagnosable mental health problems and less than 20% of children and adolescents receive needed treatment. Friends and family can be important influences to help someone get the treatment and services they need.

(Continued on page 17)
Temple Solel Hosts Seder for Local Church

By Shelley Pawlyk

Even living daily in such an expansive world of technology, I don’t ever recall being included on an eight-person group text before, so when I looked down and read the flurry of messages, it certainly was attention grabbing.

The text messages started out with dates and times where this group was preparing to meet, but then began to sound more like most of the Jewish Imas and Bubbes we hold dear and have become, “I have been looking for red horse radish but with no luck we will have to use white.” Another wrote, “I will bring my 50 cooked eggs and kosher salt for salt water.” Then, “Mara is making shank bones.” The texts just kept coming. Next, math-momma (aka Wendy Weinberger) chimed in, “I calculated the amount of radish, but it is only my guess, it is not scientific. We may need to take several people’s guesses and average them. Good luck.” The reply that followed is priceless, “We adore math-momma and her horseradish hypothesis.” Smiley face, smirky face and other cute emojis (or is it emojim?).

All this high-tech texting flurry followed months of Carol Hahn’s meticulous planning which began in July of 2017 working with Director of Faith Formations, Mary Harden, of Saint Philip Neri Catholic Church in Fort Mill, SC. The Youth Seder finally came to fruition and is one of the most exciting community events Temple Solel has led in our local community to share our Jewish customs.

With the assistance of the Jewish Federation Impact and Innovation Fund grant, we were able to provide this community Seder experience for 200 Catholic youth in Philip Neri’s 9th and 10th grade religious school.

In our article last month, we wrote about the value Temple Solel has experienced sharing our religious customs with the South Carolina community, however, Carol Hahn took it a step further in our most recent conversation by saying, “So much conflict in our world comes from fear and the unknown(s) until we get to know each other and share our cultures. Working together and sharing traditions of faith we can more clearly see our similarities and also have courage to embrace our differences. When we are willing to take that chance, that seems to be when the biggest growth takes place and relationships are strengthened. It applies to many subjects, but especially religion.”

The event far exceeded our expectations working with such a large group of attentive teens who wanted to learn about the Jewish religion by experiencing a Seder during Pesach. The teachers from Saint Philip Neri fully partnered with Temple Solel to set up and help oversee the event. It was collaboration we haven’t experienced in such a large venue. Each table was adorned with a beautifully assembled Seder plate containing our traditional ritual items, especially the red horse radish. The evening was beautifully organized and executed with the type of precision one would only expect with a prior rehearsal.

Most impressive was how we never saw these young people looking at each other, talking, or looking down at their smartphones. They were very respectful, inquisitive, and participatory throughout the Haggadah readings led by Temple Solel Lay Leader, Russ Cobe. Cobe prepared a 20-page Haggadah reading that would meet the needs of beginners. He read all the sections, but had quite a few volunteer students who came up and read at the microphone. One young man came up to read the page about “Go Down Moses” and asked if he could sing along with Cobe, “Let my people go.”

Asked several young men who helped carry items to her car if they liked the experience. One answered, “We loved it.” Another said, “It opened my eyes and I hope we can do this again.”

In all there were 13 members from Temple Solel, nearly 20 teachers from Saint Philip Neri Catholic Church and 175 students in the 9th and 10th grades. Even Father John Giuliani made an appearance. He has been one of our traditional ritual items, especially the red horse radish. The evening was beautifully organized and executed with the type of precision one would only expect with a prior rehearsal.

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Cobe recounted that the most meaningful part of the event wasn’t the Seder itself, but both the quality and the quantity of questions the youth asked afterwards. He said, “I wanted to be sure to answer every question as though it was the most important or only one being asked. There weren’t just two or three. If I were to guess, there were almost twenty questions.”

Both Hahn and Cobe went on to describe that one youth asked what word Pesach meant and if it was a Hebrew word. Another asked what the lamb shank bone signified. Several expressed immense interest in attending a regular Shabbat service and how they wanted to see a Torah scroll in person with the Hebrew letters. They asked what a Seder meal was like in someone’s home compared to what they were experiencing.

During the Seder, a youth told Hahn his grandmother was Jewish and he didn’t know much about Judaism until this experience. She

implemented solutions for local Church

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Cantor Roehvarg to Present Jewish Music Exploration Program

Havurat Tikvah will host Cantor Elias Roehvarg in an exploration of Jewish music on May 6, 3 PM, at the Langsam/Fischer residence, 1607 Dilworth Rd. W.

Cantor Roehvarg has served Temple Israel for over two decades and is retiring in early summer. His tenure with the Conservative congregation began in August 1995.

The cantor is a Newark, NJ, native. He earned his Bachelor’s Degree in Education from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and his Master’s Degree in voice from Boston University. He has performed and lectured widely at venues including The Smithsonian Institution.

Cantor Roehvarg will remain in Charlotte, NC after retirement. To attend this event, RSVP to admin@havurattikvah.org by May 4. Seating is limited.

Then on May 20, the congregation will engage in study for the Shavout holiday with Temple Israel’s Assistant Rabbi Tracy Klirs. Details on the location and time are still being finalized as of press time. Visit the website for more information.

Assistant Rabbi Klirs was the first woman rabbi to head a Jewish congregation in Canada. In addition, Rabbi Klirs was the lead author and editor of “The Merit of Our Mothers: A Bilingual Anthology of Jewish Women’s Prayers” and author of numerous articles on Yiddish prayers and literature.

The congregation continues its monthly third Wednesday minyanim on May 16 at 7:30 PM. Check the website for location.

Havurat Tikvah is a warm, supportive and nurturing Jewish Reconstructionist congregation with Shabbat services and a full spectrum of holiday observances, as well as religious educational options for both adults and children. We are a diverse group of families, singles, and Jewish and interfaith couples who participate in projects that promote social justice.

We value and depend upon member participation and leadership for our religious services, spiritual growth, and governance.

Havurat Tikvah is an affiliate of the Reconstructing Judaism movement. This new name was adopted and announced to the worldwide membership during January.

For more information on upcoming services, programs, membership or other queries, call 980-225-5330, write to Havurat Tikvah, P.O. Box 12684, Charlotte, NC 28220, email membership@havurattikvah.org or visit havurattikvah.org.

Celebration

Family Shavuot

Ballantyne Jewish Center invites you and your family to join us to hear the Ten Commandments read from the Torah and enjoy a delicious dairy meal in honor of the holiday of Shavuot. Shavuot is the time when we commemorate God’s giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai and a time to celebrate the true heroes of this holiday which are the children. Before God gave the Torah He demanded guarantors. The Jewish people made a number of suggestions all rejected by God until they declared, “Our children will be our guarantors that we will cherish and observe the Torah.” God immediately accepted them and agreed to give the Torah.

Let us make sure to bring all our “guarantors” along on the first day of Shavuot to be present for the reading of the Ten Commandments. There will be a special program, fun activities and an ice cream party for them to enjoy.

Sunday, May 20
3-6:30 PM
At the South Charlotte Banquet Center 9009 Bryant Farms Rd.
Open to the community free of charge.
RSVP is appreciated - email info@JewishBallantyne.com or call 704-246-8881.
There will be a Minyan and Yizkor service the following morning.

Monday, May 21
At the Ballantyne Jewish Center 8632 Bryant Farms Rd.
10 AM Service Begins
11:30 AM Yizkor
Followed by a Kiddush lunch.
For more information visit us online www.JewishBallantyne.com.

Hebrew School of the Arts

Registration for the 2018-2019 School Year is now open

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www.JewishBallantyne.com/Hebrew-School

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Join Temple Kol Ami for Annual Picnic June 3

The weather is turning warmer, baseball season is in full swing and the grills are firing up. That can only mean one thing - it’s time for Temple Kol Ami’s annual picnic. The community is invited to join Temple Kol Ami for our always fun and family-friendly picnic on June 3 from 12 noon–3 PM at McDowell Pavilion in McDowell Nature Preserve, 15222 York Road, Charlotte, NC. Temple Kol Ami will provide the hot dogs, fixings, and drinks, you are asked to bring a side or dessert to share. There will be a face painter and balloon artist and most likely a water gun fight to cool off the kids (and adults brave enough to participate). If you are new to the York County/South Charlotte Jewish community, or just haven’t had a chance to meet us yet, this is a great opportunity to connect with the TKA community in a relaxed and friendly environment. For more information, please contact us at yorksynagogues@gmail.com or check out our website at www.templekolamisc.org.

Temple Kol Ami is a diverse and welcoming Reform Jewish congregation. We meet in the beautiful sanctuary at Philadelphia United Methodist Church in Fort Mill. We would love to have you visit our congregation and find out about our warm, family-oriented environment.

“Turn It and Turn It, for Everything Is in It.”

By Rabbi Asher Knight, Temple Beth El

It is customary for Jews to study one of the six chapters of Pirke Avot - the Ethics of our Ancestors – on each of the six shabbatot between the holidays of Passover and Shavuot. Found within the Mishnah, Pirke Avot is a collection of rabbinic sayings and ethical teachings. One of my favorite maxims is attributed to Yochanan ben Bag Bag, one of Hillel’s disciples, said to have lived in the first century. We read, “ben Bag Bag used to say ‘Turn it, and turn it, for everything is in it.’” Most commentators explain that “turn it” refers to the Torah. Learning Torah is a lifelong endeavor, to be examined over and over again, discovering new meanings and nuances with every seasonal turn and with each life transition. I would like to suggest a different meaning, however. Perhaps, “it” refers to the community that we create together, “turn it, and turn it, for everything is in it.”

Judaism does not advocate solitude as a way of reaching spiritual or moral attainment. Judaism teaches that it is in relationships with one another where we connect most deeply with God. The potential we have as individuals to grow and transform is strengthened by our sense of being rooted in community. Judaism asks us to learn with each other, pray with each other, celebrate with each other, mourn with each other, walk through life together, and see the Godliness that exists in each other’s souls. Knowing that we need connection in our lives does not always lead us towards developing community. Even when we have the best of intentions, we sometimes need support and a hand reaching out to us, inviting us to come along, prodding us to leave the comforts of home and to put ourselves out there. Authentic and genuine living is about growing and becoming who we are, at every stage of life, in relationship with one another.

A solid community is more than making donations and asking what the rabbi or a congregation or an institution can do for you. We can’t sit back and wait for community to come to us. In order to be transformed by “it,” we have to build “it.” We have to become what is left undone. None of us can create connection, meaning, happiness and belonging in isolation.

On Shavuot, we celebrate the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai. Our tradition tells us that our ancestors stood together, ready to receive the laws, teachings, and the traditions. That sacred moment happened thousands of years ago and continues with us today. You are the “it” that we are waiting for. You are a central element to the living faith that we build, together. Bring your unique and distinct gifts to the community. You have abilities that can add, tremendously, to our Charlotte Jewish community. Together, we will build a relevant and living Judaism, weaving a social fabric of shared belonging shaped by the idea that when we are in relationship and well-connected, we can better care for the well-being of one another. And when we support the spiritual growth and learning of one another we will live better, richer and fuller lives.

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“Education is that which remains when one has forgotten everything he learned in school.”

- Albert Einstein, “Out of My Later Years”
Shavuot Rocks at Ohr HaTorah Where the Children Are Our Stars

Shavuot is the Festival of Weeks and marks the anniversary of the giving of the Torah. This year it falls on Sunday and Monday, May 20 and 21. When God gave the Torah to the Jewish people 3,330 years ago at Mount Sinai, the Jewish children were the guarantors. After rejecting the Patriarchs and leaders of Israel as guarantors for the Torah, God knew that He could count on the Jewish children, boys and girls, to ensure the Jewish people would love the Torah, learn it, and do its holy mitzvahs.

Every year, on the same date of the giving of the Torah, we celebrate this special day by going to the synagogue and hearing the Ten Commandments known in Hebrew as Aseret Hadibrot.

On Sunday, May 20, Ohr HaTorah will begin holiday services at 10 AM and will host a special children’s program beginning at 10:30 AM. The children will join the adults for the Torah reading and will include the children’s program beginning at 10:30 AM. The children will join the adults for the Torah reading service and will make a grand entry into the sanctuary before the 10 Commandments are read in the scroll.

Remember: Our children are the guarantors of the Torah. So make sure to be there with children and grandchildren.

The festival of Shavuot is also recognized for as a day when we consume appetizing dairy foods like blintzes and cheesecake. The reason for this custom is that on Shavuot the People Israel received God’s greatest gift to humanity, the Torah. The Jewish people entered into a covenant with God on this day and it is therefore a parallel to marriage. One of the first commitments the Jews made to God upon entering this special covenant was to observe the kosher laws. They were not yet familiar with Kashrut and only ate dairy until they were more proficient in their new life mode of keeping kosher.

In keeping with this tradition that has been practiced for over 3,000 years, feasting on dairy foods during the festival of Shavuot, Congregation Ohr HaTorah continues to celebrate with a scrumptious dairy Kiddush lunch, after morning services on the first day of Shavuot.

It is obvious that the Festival of Shavuot is centered on the theme of the giving of the Torah by God at Mount Sinai. It is the day that transformed the Children of Israel into a people committed to God and his Torah. The rituals and customs of this holiday are meant to strengthen the recognition of this theme and the Jewish connection to Torah.

An all-night Torahathon will be held at Ohr HaTorah on Saturday night, May 19, starting at midnight. This is a wonderful practice of this holiday, to study the Torah all night on the first evening of Shavuot. According to the Midrash, the Jewish people slept late on the morning of first Shavuot, and we the descendants, correct it by welcoming the morning with Torah study. This practice demonstrates that we are eager to receive the Torah and to learn its precepts. Many have the tradition of reading the Tikkan Lev Shavuot, which contains selections from each book of both the Written and Oral Torah.

This is a candle lighting holiday. In addition to the candles being lit Friday evening (7:53 PM in Charlotte) in honor of Shabbat, we light the candles on Saturday night (after 9:06 PM in Charlotte) and Sunday night (after 9:07 PM) as well. [All Charlotte candle lighting times are on page 2.]

Services for the second day of Shavuot, Monday May 21, begin at 10 AM, and will include the Yizkor service. For more information, please contact our office at 704-366-3984 or go online to www.chabadnc.org.

Our Future is So Bright!

Congratulations Class of 2018

Hebrew High Seniors

(Continued from page 11)

They have had anywhere else. It’s a place where Jewish teens can come and be themselves. Next year, I will be attending East Carolina University.

Tommy Ecker:

The past five years that I have been at Hebrew High has changed my life. The first two years I attended Hebrew High, I took Hebrew for Credit. I was very upset when I had to stop taking it, due to some circumstances, but I still continued to attend Hebrew High; in fact, I am currently involved in Post Confirmation for the second year in a row. Hebrew High has taught me so much about what it means to Jewish, and I have definitely embraced Judaism more than I could have imagined five years ago. I will be attending the University of South Carolina next year, and my goal is to continue embracing Judaism there too.

May is Mental Health Month

(Continued from page 13)

They need by:

* Reaching out and letting them know you are available to help.
* Helping them access mental health services – JFS offers counseling and a host of workshops that can help.
* Learning and sharing the facts about mental health, especially if you hear something that isn’t true.
* Treating them with respect, just as you would anyone else.
* Refusing to define them by their diagnosis or using labels such as “crazy.”

Mental Health Is Real

May 20 and 21 is Shavuot, Congregation Ohr HaTorah. Where the Children Are Our Stars

Congratulations Class of 2018

Now Enrolling Future Graduates!
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The Ruach Brings the Shabbat Experience to Plaza-Midwood

On Friday, March 16, it wasn’t just a good Shabbos… it was great Shabbat! About 125 folks of all ages gathered at The Rabbit Hole on Commonwealth Avenue in Plaza Midwood for The Ruach Shabbat Experience.

At around 6:30 PM, Nancy Good, lead singer of The Ruach, the area’s only indie rock band playing new, Jewish music, grabbed the microphone and welcomed the crowd with an energetic, “Shabbat Shalom!” The crowd enthusiastically responded, “Shabbat Shalom!” And with that, the band launched into a rock version of Mosh Ben Ari’s “Od Yavo Shalom Aleimu” (“Peace will come upon us”).

The Ruach Shabbat Experience is a celebration of Shabbat and the end of the week. Although the experience contains all the elements of halachic Sabbath service, it is much more than that. It is a musical Jewish spiritual and cultural event that encourages folks to sing along with the band and engage with each other… and embrace the joy of Judaism through rock.

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Much of the music that The Ruach plays is original. The songs are meant to convey the meaning and feeling of Shabbat. “Shabbat is a celebration and time for reflection,” said Peter Levinson, lead guitarist and leader of The Ruach. “Our goal is for the music and the Experience to be meaningful and make people feel happy and inspired.”

During the Experience, the crowd was treated to the wisdom of Rabbi Rachel Smookler who returned to speak publically for the first time since suffering a massive stroke on the Sunday before Rosh Hashanah last year. Rabbi Smookler, moved to Charlotte in August of 2017 with her husband, Harrison, an executive with Corning. Before moving she was senior Rabbi at Temple Beth David in Rochester, NY.

The Experience concluded with the Motzi and sharing of challah baked by Good and Lori Jackowitz.

Based upon comments heard at the Experience, as well as posted on Facebook and Instagram, it looks like the band is achieving its goal. Here are just a few of the remarks:

“A fabulous and uplifting experience.” - Racelle Weiman
“… wonderful evening … awesome …! - Mary-Margaret Kantor
“Lots of fun!” - Etti Kraus

The Ruach Shabbat Experience is for everyone, no matter which Jewish movement you identify with, what synagogue you belong to, or even whether or not you belong to a synagogue.

The Ruach has been busy taking the Experience to other venues in the Carolinas. On Friday March 2, the band travelled to Chapel Hill to play for UNC Hillel and in the past several months has played at Temple Kol Ami and Temple Solel, both in Fort Mill. On Sunday, April 15, the band travelled to Asheville to play a noon concert at the JCC.

Upcoming dates include a return to The Rabbit Hole, 1801 Commonwealth Avenue, Charlotte on Friday, May 18 (doors open at 6 PM and the Experience will begin at 6:30 PM) and at Temple Kol Tikvah of Lake Norman on Friday, June 8.

If you’d like to hear some of The Ruach’s music it is available for streaming and download at www.theruach.bandcamp.com.

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To get on The Ruach’s Facebook @TheRuachSpirit
Instagram @the.ruach.band
Twitter @TheRuachSpirit
And, to get on The Ruach’s eVite list, send your email address to theruach.band@gmail.com. Be sure to put “eVite List” in the subject line.

If you’d like to hear some of The Ruach’s music it is available for streaming and download at www.theruach.bandcamp.com.

To get on The Ruach’s Facebook @TheRuachSpirit
Instagram @the.ruach.band
Twitter @TheRuachSpirit
And, to get on The Ruach’s eVite list, send your email address to theruach.band@gmail.com. Be sure to put “eVite List” in the subject line.
This Rosh Ha’Shanah, send your New Year Greeting to friends and relatives without even licking a stamp!

If you’re like most of us, you’ll probably wait until the last minute to send your annual Jewish New Year greetings. And, like most of us, you will probably regret having waited so long. This year, let The Charlotte Jewish News take care of your New Year greetings for you.

No Postage - No Problem - No Sweat

Join your friends and neighbors in the special Rosh Ha’Shanah Greetings supplement to be published in the September 2018 Charlotte Jewish News. Simply choose your greeting from the samples on this page, fill out the coupon and mail to The CJN with your payment. If you wish to compose your own greeting, choose “C” or “D” and include your wording in the space provided. limit 25 words, printed or typed, please.

Hurry!
Deadline for Rosh Ha’Shanah 5771 is August 6, 2018

Order your greeting online:
www.jewishcharlotte.org
Link to “CJN New Years Greetings”

Please include me in the Rosh Ha’Shanah Greeting section of the September 2018 Charlotte Jewish News. Enclosed in a check in the amount of $________.

Check the ad you choose to run: A($21)____ B($33)____ C($45)____ D($68)____

Wording (25 words or less) for C or D: .................................................................
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Name (Include names of family members you wish to appear on your greeting):
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Return to: CJN, 5007 Providence Rd., Suite 112, Charlotte, NC 28226 by Aug. 6
May Holiday Hours

May 19 – 27pm

Erev Shavuot

Saturday, May 19

Shavuot

Sunday, May 20

Monday, May 21

Memorial Day

Monday, May 28

7am – 7pm

Summer Programs FOR ALL AGES

Summer Aquatics

Sunday Session

June 10–August 12
(8 classes; no class on 7/1, 7/8)

M_podium
F: 6/25
M: 6/25

Infant/Toddler: 9:30–10am | 10:30–11:30am

Preschool: 10:10–11:10am | 10:50–11:50am

K-5th Grade: 10:50–11:50am

Monday–Thursday

(Daily; 2-week Sessions)

Session 1

June 4–14 (8 Classes)

Preschool & K-5th Only

4:30–5:15pm | 5:30–6:15pm

M: 6/27
F: 6/27

Session 2

June 25–July 3

(6 classes; no class 7/4–7/5)

Preschool & K-5th Only

4:30–5:15pm | 5:30–6:15pm

M: 6/30
F: 6/30

Session 3

July 6–16 (8 Classes)

Preschool & K-5th Only

4:30–5:15pm | 5:30–6:15pm

M: 7/20
F: 7/20

Session 4

August 6–16 (8 Classes)

Preschool & K-5th Only

4:30–5:15pm | 5:30–6:15pm

M: 8/20
F: 8/20

Cardio Tennis 18+

A great way to get the blood pumping!

An aerobics workout on the tennis court, complete with basic tennis skills and medium to high impact cardio training.

Wednesdays – 7pm

Saturdays – 9:30am

June 13–August 17

(9 weeks; no class 7/4 & 7/11)

M: 7/18
F: 7/18

Men’s Drill 18+

(3.0–4.0 USTA rated)

A drill & play session with the Pro. Emphasis on point play, drills, and match strategies.

Wednesdays – 7pm

June 13–August 15

(9 weeks; no class 7/4)

M: 7/18
F: 7/18

Summer Taekwondo

K–6th Grade

Teaches blocks, hand strikes, kicking, forms, self-defense, sparring combos, footwork and board breaking thru fitness drills, fun games and team activities.

Students also practice discipline, focus, goal setting, respect, positive attitude, honesty, teamwork and perseverance. Uniform & belt testing fees are separate.

Wednesdays – 4:15pm

June 19–July 13 (6 weeks)

Upstairs Armbooks Studio

Instructor: Master Algy Watson

M: 6/25
F: 6/25

Summer Ceramics

Adults 16+

SESSION I

June 18–July 25 (6 weeks)

M: 7/4
F: 7/4

All Levels

Monday Nights – 10am-12:30pm

Marla Fey (no class 7/7)

Wednesday – 6:30–9:30pm

Mary Coulard (no class 7/2)

SESSION II

July 30–August 29 (5 weeks)

M: 8/14
F: 8/14

All Levels

Monday – 10am-12:30pm

Marla Fey (no class 7/7)

Tuesday – 6:30–9:30pm

Mary Coulard (no class 7/2)

Wednesday – 10am-12:30pm

Leon Nichols (no class 7/4)

Intermediate

Tuesday – 10am-12:30pm

Colena Barnett (no class 7/3)

Intermediate

Tuesday – 10am-12:30pm

Colena Barnett (no class 7/3)

Register Online: charlottejcc.org or Call: 704-366-5007

Swim: diana@charlottejcc.org

Tennis: gregory@charlottejcc.org

Ceramics: susan.gundersheim@charlottejcc.org

Pricing Codes: M = Member B = Benefactor NM = Non-Member

www.charlottejcc.org 704-366-5007
K-6th/9th Grade

Summer Taekwondo
K-6th grade
Teaches blocks, hand strikes, kicking, forms, self-defense, sparring combos, footwork and board breaking thru fitness drills, fun games and team activities. Students also practice discipline, focus, goal-setting, respect, positive attitude, honesty, teamwork and perseverance. Uniform and belt testing fee are separate. Taught by Master Alyssa Watson.

Tuesdays, 4:15–5pm
June 19 – July 31 (7 weeks)
M/S105 B/S33 NM/S140
704-944-6743 or stephanie.gamer@charlottejcc.org

Beginner Fencing Class
K-9th Grade
Students will learn the skills of attacking and defending with either the foil, epee or saber. Training will start by teaching footwork and basic fencing moments, working up to tactics and strategy for set competitive situations. All equipment will be provided and included in the class fee. Instructor Daniel Makogon.

Wednesdays, 4:15-5:15pm
June 6 – August 22 (11 weeks) No Class 7/4
Swimmer Family Aesthetics Studio
M/S220 B/S132 NM/S275
704-944-6743 or stephanie.gamer@charlottejcc.org

Adults

Adult Fencing Class
Ages 15+
Students will learn the skills of attacking and defending with either the foil, epee or saber. Training will start by teaching footwork and basic fencing moments, working up to tactics and strategy for set competitive situations. All equipment will be provided and included in the class fee. Instructor Daniel Makogon.

Wednesdays, 7–8pm
June 6 – August 22 (11 weeks) No Class 7/4
Camp Mindy Rec Hall
M/S220 B/S132 NM/S275
704-944-6743 or stephanie.gamer@charlottejcc.org

It’s Never Too Late To Transform Yourself: A Presentation of Empowerment
Adults
Featuring author and motivational speaker Johnnie Davis. A collaborative event between LJCC’s Senior Adult Department and Patient Advocate Lorrie Klemons, RN, MSN.

Friday, May 4 • 12–1:30pm
Gorelick Hall at Shalom Park
Free – but limited spaces; register early! Free lunch (Sponsored by Brookdale) is included for the first 100 people who pre-register. Register by Monday, 4/30: 704-944-6753 or sharn.benjamin@charlottejcc.org

Day Trip to Seagrove, NC: Come Explore The Pottery Capital of the World
Adults
Often referred to as the “pottery capital of North Carolina,” or pottery capital of the world, Seagrove includes several communities that are part of the pottery tradition along and near the “North Carolina Pottery Highway” (NC-705). Over 100 potteries are located in Seagrove and the neighboring communities. We will be visiting:
- Seagrove Creations Pottery Gallery and Hearsehead Coffee that sells handmade pottery and crafts from over 65 local potters and craftspeople
- Thomas Gallery for a personal demonstration and studio tour by artists Scott and Bobbie Thomas
- Lunch at Westmore Family Restaurant
- Downtown for more gallery shopping

Thursday, May 10
Van departs LJCC 8:30am
Van returns 6:30pm
Register with payment by Wednesday, 5/2 online at charlottejcc.org or call 704-368-5007 Mts/30 B/S25 NM/$35 (plus lunch is on your own) 704-944-6753 or sharn.benjamin@charlottejcc.org

BOOBER & BREWS

1st Thursday each month
6:15–7pm Boot Camp
7–7:30pm Brews
Brews provided courtesy of New Belgium Brewing

BOOT CAMP not your thing?
Take ANY LJCC Group Ex Class (we offer 50+) & join us for a free Brew!

Sign Up at LJCC Customer Service
704-366-5007
Q? jenny.crow@charlottejcc.org

OSIAS

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M/WF Kosher Lunch
Enrichment Activities
Educational Seminars
Painting Classes
Monthly Field Trips
Exercise Classes
Game Days

Please read our monthly newsletter online or pick up a hard copy in Weinberg Center.

If you have questions, contact:
Jill Lipson • 704-944-6792
jill.lipson@charlottejcc.org

LJCC Department Directory
Please contact us you have questions!

Membership
Susan Lerner 704-944-6741
susan.lerner@charlottejcc.org

Early Childhood
Patty Torcellini 704-944-6891
patty.torcellini@charlottejcc.org

K-5th Grade Programs
Mitch Ormand 704-944-6733
mitch.ormand@charlottejcc.org

Adults & Seniors/Oasis
Jill Lipson 704-944-6792
jill.lipson@charlottejcc.org

Sports
Stephanie Gamer 704-944-6743
stephanie.gamer@charlottejcc.org

Aquatics / Swim Team
Joshua Steinberger 704-944-6746
joshua.steinberger@charlottejcc.org

LJCC Tennis / CRUSH
Greg O’Connor 704-944-6748
gregory.oconnor@charlottejcc.org

Visual/Performing Arts
Susan Gundersheim 704-944-6778
susan.gundersheim@charlottejcc.org

J-Childcare
Amie Gray 704-944-6726
amie.gray@charlottejcc.org

Social Action
Julie Rizzo 704-944-6730
julie.rizzo@charlottejcc.org

SHIIP
Seniors’ Health Insurance Information Program
Free Medicare Counseling Available year round! Please call Senior & Adult Director Jill Lipson at 704-944-6792 for information
Celebrate the TaTas 2018 Event Details

Celebrate the TaTas is an annual Hadassah tradition launched in Charlotte in 2012. Hadassah Charlotte has attained national recognition for this premier program of events that educates, inspires, and encourages women while raising funds for breast cancer research. 100% of event net proceeds are donated to Hadassah Medical Organization’s breast cancer research initiatives.

Celebrate the TaTas 2018 will have 4 events scheduled, with total expected attendance of approximately over 1,000 members of the community:

* Painting Days – September 16 and 17 expected attendance: 100.
100. This 7th annual event is an empowering female celebration in which local artists use the body as their canvas. The Celebrate the TaTas logo captures images from past years’ events.

* Tournament of Champions – October 6 and 7, expected attendance: 750. This 5th annual event is a women’s only competition in collaboration with the North Carolina Adult Soccer Association.

* Big Reveal Event – October 24, expected attendance: 200. This 7th annual “reveal” will be a special night of celebration, which will include live entertainment, and revealing of the collage poster from Painting Days. Attendees will include Hadassah members, their spouses, and friends of the community who are passionate about the eradication of breast cancer.

* Debra Van Glish and Shelly Steiner, event chairs, are excited to announce the details for this year’s Big Reveal. “The venue will be Queen Park Social, allowing us to have a fun, interactive, high energy night,” explains Van Glish. The guest speakers will be Lori Gentile, MD, a Breast Surgical Oncologist specializing in the treatment of breast cancer with Novant Health and Amy Sobel, MD, a Diagnostic Radiologist specializing in Breast Imaging/Mammography with Charlotte Radiology.

“In our last Big Reveal year, 2016, we raised over $100,000 and hope to do so again in 2018,” says Dana Kapustin, chapter President. Charlotte businesses are asked to help fulfill this goal by showing their support and generosity as sponsors. To learn more about the series of events, including sponsorship opportunities, please visit www.celebratetatas.com.

Five Ways to Celebrate Shavuot — Without (Necessarily) Studying Torah

By Ben Sales

New York (JTA) — Shavuot is the “Rody Dangerfield of Jewish holidays,” says Rabbi Shira Stutman, of Sixth and I synagogue.

Meaning: It gets no respect.

Considered by Jewish tradition to be on par with the fall and spring festivals of Sukkot and Passover, Shavuot is sometimes ignored because it is six days shorter, the holiday celebrating the biblical giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai is one day in Israel and two outside of it.

Shavuot, which this year starts on the evening of May 19, also lacks the religious centrality of festivals like Hanukkah, Rosh Hashanah, and Passover.

One of its only unique traditions is to stay up until dawn studying Torah on the first night, there’s an option to study Torah on the holiday’s second night, there’s an option to study Torah on the evening of May 19, also lacks the religious centrality of festivals like Hanukkah, Rosh Hashanah, and Passover.

But in recent years, synagogues have been experimenting with new ways of engaging members, from the “Rodney Dangerfield of Jewish holidays,” says Rabbi Shira Stutman, of Sixth and I synagogue.

“The Biblical Shavuot is also a group that will embark on a pilgrimage up to the Temple in Jerusalem when farmers would command to give their first fruits as a tribute. At the retreat center, a herd of goats will be decorated with ribbons and shirts. Marchers, singing and dancing to a drumbeat, carry two large baskets – one to represent wheat, and another with seasonal fruits.

“It’s exciting because we’ve received positive Deuteronomy says,” said one of the parade’s facilitators, Sarah Antepli. “We’re going by the Kohenet Shmara. ‘We’re going to do what the Torah says, doing to bring the first fruits, and we’re going to make an offering.’

The Mountain Shavuot

The Living Tree Alliance, a Jewish agricultural community that lives together on a 93-acre property in Vermont, will celebrate the lead-up to Shavuot by preparing for it like the Israelites did in the Torah.

The group will hike on Mount Mansfield, the state’s highest mountain, stopping along the way for seven readings of poetry and other texts to reflect the seven divine attributes referenced in Jewish mysticism. Halfway up, they’ll stop for a Torah service at an interfaith chapel. Ambitious hikers will spend the afternoon scaling the mountain’s peak, 4,300 feet high, to engage in a worship service.

“Mountains climbed Mount Sinai, so we wanted to get to a high mountain peak in Vermont,” said Living Tree program coordinator Stacey Oshkello. “Visitors like hiking and connecting to nature, so it seemed like a great way to make the holiday accessible.

The Jewish-Muslim Shavuot

If some people are taking Shavuot back to their neighborhoods, others want to make it relevant to the present, politically fraught moment.

Sixth and I, a historic synagogue that has become a center for progressive Jewish activism, will be doing its Shavuot night learning program a week early — and it will be focused on Jews and Muslims in America.

The program will bring together Jeffrey Goldberg, the Jewish editor-in-chief of The Atlantic, and Duke University’s Imam Abdullah Antepli to discuss similarities and tensions between American Jews and Muslims.

Antepli is also part of the Muslim Leadership Initiative, a Shalom Hartman Institute program that brings together young Muslim leaders to learn about Judaism and Islam.

The program will start with a buffet featuring Palestinian, Tunisian, Ashkenazi and Mizrahi - or Middle Eastern Jewish - cuisines. It will also include Muslim and Jewish evening prayer services, back to back, and a joint text study of Jewish and Muslim perspectives on revelation.

“If one of the things Shavuot is about is learning sacred texts together, struggling with difficult ideas together, sitting together for long periods of time — not just 140 characters of Twitter periods of time — we are taking all of that to this conversation,” Rabbi Stutman says.

“There’s a lot of political urgency around how we decide to live our lives, and I think patriarchy has really kept us down in terms of that and has gotten us into a really bad habit,” Cohen said. “Being an intersectional feminist has shown me the way to heal out of that.”

The New York City Shavuot

What do you do if you have a lot of Jews living in the same neighborhood? In The Big Apple, two groups are doing big Shavuot evenings all-nighters, with a range of Torah classes and plenty more.

The ICC Manhattan, which has had an all-night program each Shavuot since 2004, has a schedule so full it’s dizzying. Offerings include text study, dance workshops, yoga, film screening and meditation. On the roof, an installation by artist Tobi Kahn will reinterpret the mikvah, or Jewish ritual bath. And owing to the tradition of eating dairy on Shavuot, cheesecake and cookies will be offered.

“A deep value of our community is understanding and celebrating its diversity,” said Rabbi Joy Levitt, ICC Manhattan’s executive director. “We wanted to make sure that we were able to attract the widest number of people with a very expansive view of Torah.”

A similar program will happen across the East River, where Shavuot Across Brooklyn will bring together participants from the borough’s range of synagogues and independent prayer groups.

Similar to the ICC array, sessions span from a “Free Minds Prison Poetry Workshop” to one on Hebrew slang.

The top-billed event is a book reading and discussion by the author couple Michael Chabon and Ayelet Waldman focused on their thoughts on a recent trip to Israel and the West Bank. The event is sponsored by Breaking the Silence, an Israeli veterans’ group that opposes Israel’s occupation.

“It’s a reflection of the reality of people’s interests,” said Matt Green, a rabbinic intern at Congregation Beth Elohim, the Reform synagogue in the Park Slope neighborhood that is hosting the program. “Many of the participants are familiar and conversant in Jewish texts, but a much greater number of people are not.”

Joshua Molina signs his name on the wall of Sixth and I, a historic Washington, D.C., synagogue, at a Shavuot event last year. The synagogue’s Shavuot event this year features Jeffrey Goldberg, editor of the Atlantic, and Imam Abdullah Antepli. (Courtesy of Sixth and I)
Always a warm welcome.
An inclusive and dynamic Reform Jewish congregation • 1,100 families strong

WORSHIP

Celebrate Shabbat
First Friday in May:
5:30 pm SongFest
6:00 pm Family Shabbat Service
8:00 pm Community Shabbat Service

All other Fridays:
6:00 pm Community Shabbat Service
Join us Friday, May 11 as we honor our 2018 Confirmation Class.

Saturdays:
11:00 am Shabbat Morning Service
Join us Saturday, May 12 for a Congregational Shabbat Service.
Please check [www.templebethel.org](http://www.templebethel.org) for weekly service times and details.

Celebrate Shavuot
Saturday, May 19
7:30 pm The Sinai Scoop (Ice Cream & Study)
Celebrate an evening of spiritual audacity, song, learning and prayer with Rabbi Asher Knight and Cantor Mary Rebecca Thomas.

Sunday, May 20
9:30 am Tot Shavuot
11:00 am Shavuot Morning Service with Yizkor
Please check [www.templebethel.org](http://www.templebethel.org) for service times and details.

COMMUNITY

Mitzvah Day 2018
Sunday, May 6
Every May, hundreds of congregants from Temple Beth El give countless hours of time to community organizations who do so much good for so many. Some of our benefiting partners this year include the Hebrew Cemetery, Jewish Family Services, Hemby and Levine Children’s Hospitals, Salvation Army Center of Hope, Sterling Elementary School, Shalom Park Freedom School and the Jewish Community Refugee Initiative. On Mitzvah Day, we make a difference locally and globally as we repair the world, one mitzvah at a time.

Stay up to date with everything at Temple Beth El – follow us on Facebook and visit our website.
5101 Providence Road | Charlotte, NC 28226 | 704.366.1948 | templebethel.org
Shavuot Is About Breaking the Tablets, and Putting Them Back Together

By Adina Lewittes

(JTA) - The festival of Shavuot, which begins at sundown May 19, focuses on Moses receiving the tablets of the law, and the story of the Tablets of the Law. It’s a more fascinating part of the story is when he shatters them. In an astounding Midrash, or rabbinic commentary, Moses’ act is portrayed as the epitome of loyalty to the Torah and his fellow people, but also teaches them about community and continuity.

Descending Mount Sinai, Moses sees the golden calf that the Israelites made while he was gone, a mortal sin according to the Torah. When teaching this Midrash to rabbis in NJ, Rabbi Donniel Hartman challenged us by saying that every generation must ask what part of the Torah they are willing to “break” to stand beside their people.

The tablets of our time are straining in a world where identity and affiliation are voluntary expressions shaped by choice rather than heritage. Communal boundaries are increasingly porous in our Flat, networked society demanding Midrash, or rabbinic explanations that address contemporary issues.

“Moses started to turn back, but the Elders saw him and ran after him. Moses held on to one side of the tablets, they held on to the other, but Moses was stronger. . . . He looked at the tablets and noticed that the writing had disappeared from them. ‘How can I give the Israelites blank tablets?’ he thought, and decided it would be better to break them instead.”

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As economist and social theorist Jeremy Rifkin suggests, along with our potential to deepen spiritual and moral consciousness in a world of increasing connectivity, comes the possibility of extending our empathic embrace to all forms of life and to the planet itself. If Judaism fails to reimagine itself, as Jeremy Rifkin suggests, along with our potential to deepen spiritual and moral consciousness in a world of increasing connectivity, comes the possibility of extending our empathic embrace to all forms of life and to the planet itself.

The Midrash explains: “Moses started to turn back, but the Elders saw him and ran after him. Moses held on to one side of the tablets, they held on to the other, but Moses was stronger. . . . He looked at the tablets and noticed that the writing had disappeared from them. ‘How can I give the Israelites blank tablets?’ he thought, and decided it would be better to break them instead.”

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Help Us Kvell!

Do you know a Jewish teen who has shown Jewish pride through his or her actions? Share your story with us!

The Zachary Shporer Jewish Pride Award was created in the Spring of 2012 to honor the memory of our beloved alum, Zachary Shporer, who attended the Charlotte Jewish Day School from kindergarten through eighth grade. While Zachary possessed many amazing attributes, the one that sticks out most in many of our minds is his Jewish pride.

Zachary incorporated Jewish values into every aspect of his life. He did not necessarily choose easy mitzvot or popular mitzvot. He didn’t call attention to himself. But he carried the Torah in his heart and acted according to its teachings.

At CIDS, we want to continue Zachary’s legacy by celebrating and recognizing Jewish students through high school, who, like Zachary, demonstrate their Jewish pride in their everyday lives.

Share your nominations with us! We will be accepting nominations for the award from now until Passover. From all the nominations, a recipient will be selected by our Nominations Committee and will be recognized at the CIDS Graduation Ceremony.

Every day a Jewish teen does something extraordinary to demonstrate their Jewish pride. But we need your help to know the full story! A $250 grant will be awarded towards any enrichment of the recipient’s Jewish life (e.g., camp, Hebrew school, Jewish books).

Illustration by Lior Zaltzman.

The disassembling and reassembling of Torah in every generation is part of the sacred narrative and destiny of the Jewish people. It’s the source of our continuity, not our dissolution. Will our tablets survive their collision with today’s culture and emerge recast into an authentic Torah for the future? Will the pieces from our dismantling take their place in the ark as part of the ongoing, sacred narrative of the Jewish people?

What’s at stake is more than our own Jewish fate. Judaism, like humanity itself, is at a crossroads. As economist and social theorist Jeremy Rifkin suggests, along with our potential to deepen spiritual and moral consciousness in a world of increasing connectivity comes the possibility of extending our empathic embrace to all forms of life and to the planet itself. If Judaism fails to reimagine itself, the consequences will be devastating; to some they already are. The consequences of humanity’s unwillingness to do the same could be more catastrophic.

Creating a sustainable, open-sourced, non-hierarchical, collaborative Judaism is part of today’s global urgency to create a similar sustainable planet.

This powerful narrative is awaiting inscription upon our generation’s tablets. It comes with considerable risk, some loss and the potential for great reward. Like the midrashic tug of war between the Elders and Moses over the ancient tablets, our Torah is wrenched between the weight of the past and the call of the future. Which will ensure its salvation and that of the people to whom it’s continually given: a tighter grip or a more encompassing embrace?

Zachary Shporer Jewish Pride Award Nomination Form (please print clearly)

*All Charlotte, NC area Jewish teens are eligible. Nominee does not need to be a CIDS student or alum to participate.

Nominee/Name of Jewish teen being nominated

Nominee’s Contact Phone

Nominee’s Email

Nominee’s Mailing Address

Person submitting the Nomination

Nominator’s Contact Phone

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*Rabbi Adina Lewittes is the founder of Sha’ar Communities, a network that promotes an innovative, pluralistic approach to building Jewish identity by creating multiple portals into Jewish life and community.)
If You Marry a Jew, You’re One of Us

(Editors’ Note: Since during the holiday of Shavuot, we commemorate the acceptance of Ruth into our community, we thought this reprinting of this article from 2013 would be timely and appropriate.)

By Steven M. Cohen and Joy Levitt

New York (JTA) - Millennia ago, before rabbis existed or conversion was invented, thousands who were not born Jewish became part of the Jewish community through a very simple act: They married a Jew. Sarah was the first, followed in turn by Rebecca, Leah and Rachel. Thousands more followed - both biblical characters and many more whose lives as Jews were never explicitly recorded in the Bible. In effect, our ancestors said to them, “If you marry us, you’re one of us.”

Centuries later, at a time when the number of American Jews marrying non-Jews has reached an all-time high – 80% of Reform-raised Jews who married in 2000-2013 married non-Jews - thousands are again choosing to join the Jewish people, but nowhere near as many as we would like. Unbeknownst to even keen observers of Jewish life, about half of those who identify as Jews but were not born Jewish never underwent formal rabbinic conversion. The 2013 Pew survey of American Jews found 79,000 adult Jewish converts, but another 83,000 who identify as Jews even though they reported no Jewish parents and had not undergone conversion.

How did they become Jewish? Many married Jews. Others have Jewish grandparents or more distant Jewish ancestry and are reclaiming their roots. Some do call themselves fully Jewish, but many say they are “partially Jewish,” a newly burgeoning group first documented in the Jewish Community Study of New York: 2011. To take a real example: One of us is good friends with a well-known scholar in Jewish life. She (a born-Jew) and her husband, born Protestant, raised their children as Jews. He never converted, but he did learn to read Hebrew, say Kiddush on Friday nights, and fully participate in all the Jewish holiday preparations and ceremonies. According to his wife, if asked if he is Jewish, partially Jewish or non-Jewish, he’d answer, “Jewish!”

This seemingly novel phenomenon of joining the Jewish people without rabbinic formalities should not be surprising. In today’s America, more and more social identities are personally chosen and socially constructed. Religious identities have become among the most fluid, with more intermarriage and more people changing their religious identities than ever before. Here’s an added appeal to new-comers: Jews have become the most admired religious group in America, a Pew center study reported last year, having risen from the least socially desirable ethnic group in the early 1960s, according to a study at the time.

Even more significant may be those who marry Jews who think of themselves not as Jewish but as “fellow travelers,” like the biblical category of “ger toshav,” or “resident supporter.” Some become part of our community because they sense an opportunity to felt part of something important and meaningful. And they often do this despite the fact that we don’t exactly put out the welcome mat for them.

We know that where both partners identify as Jews, nearly all their children identify as Jews as well. And when only one parent sees himself/herself as Jewish, only a minority of their children grow up as Jews. Aside from raising the intermarriage rate, how can we create more households where both partners see themselves as part of the Jewish people?

One answer is for all of us to change the way we think of, and treat, those who love and marry our children, family members, and friends. Basically we should agree and fully internalize the idea: If you marry a Jew, you’re fully part of our community until proven otherwise. The default option is that you’re in. If you don’t want to be seen as part of the community, you need to opt out, or “unsubscribe.” (And if you do, unlike those pesky email lists, we’ll respect your choice.)

In other words, born Jews would undergo a subtle but critical shift in the way they relate to family members and friends not born Jewish. It would mean fully including them in holiday practices, lifecycle ceremonies, and Jewishly centered social action and political activities. It would mean concretizing (if not promoting) the social reality that rabbinic conversion is not the only way to join the Jewish people or function Jewishly in a Jewish family. It would also mean that more intermarried couples would come to see themselves — and be seen by others — as married.

The widespread presumption of Jewish-by-marriage will set many couples on upward Jewish journeys. Most critically, their children will see themselves far more often as Jewish, if for no other reason than both their parents see themselves as members of the Jewish people. This is going to take some work. We have overdeveloped muscles of defense when it comes to who’s in and who’s out. These muscles have been strengthened by anti-Semitism, to be sure. For much of the 20th century, as the Jewish community in America both acculturated and tried to maintain deep connections to Jewish tradition and culture, there was an ongoing struggle about how and if it was possible to engage fully in American life and still preserve high intermarriage rates.

Jews today are facing an unprecedented opportunity to share our rich tradition with thousands who are searching for meaning and looking to raise healthy and happy children with a deep connection to community. Certainly, some who marry us will decide to officially “join” the Jewish people through rabbinic conversion. Our arms should be wide open and encouraging to those on this path. Conversion classes and experiences need to be excellent, accessible and, frankly, more affordable in order to attract larger numbers. Our community needs to set this as a priority.

But for those who choose to be part of our community without formal conversion - who come to the Passover Seder and drive their children to Hebrew school, who sit shiva with us, or who bring their sons into the community at a brit milah, who shep naches at their daughter’s bat mitzvah and who go to Israel on vacation - we say welcome. It’s a pleasure to know you. Come learn. You’re one of us if you want to be.

(Steven M. Cohen is a research professor at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and director of the Berman Jewish Policy Archive. Rabbi Joy Levitt is the executive director of the JCC, Manhattan.)
Shavuot History

Shavuot combines two major religious observances. First is the grain harvest of the early summer. Second is the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai seven weeks after the exodus from Egypt. The first determines the ritual for the holiday, which was one of the three pilgrimage festivals of ancient Israel, when Israelite males were commanded to appear before God in Jerusalem, bringing offerings of the first fruits of their harvest. The second determines the significance of the holiday for Judaism, tying in with the seminal event of Jewish religious memory, namely the entering into a covenant between God and Israel, exemplified by Israel’s assumption of Divine law.

Shavuot at Home

Since Shavuot is an ancient pilgrimage holiday, it is not surprising that its ritual focuses on the community. Nonetheless, there are a number of customs associated with personal practice. Chief among them is the eating of dairy products on Shavuot. Although

The following individuals/families are in the Book of Life Society and have granted us permission to share with you that Jewish Family Services has been included as a beneficiary of their legacy gift.

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Susan and Benjamin Aizenman
Gail and John Baron
Michael and Meredith Bauman
Sanford and Lois Benjamin
Raymond Monty Bernstein
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Shavuot Classes in Israeli Homes

Meaned to Bring Religious, Secular Neighbors Together

Jerusalem (JTA) — An Israeli rabbinical group that works to bridge the religious-secular divide will hold Shavuot holiday learning programs in homes throughout the country. The Tzohar Rabbinical Organization, which previously only held programs in community centers and public buildings to encourage the participation of the secular public, have opened a “Homework” program, in which dozens of Tzohar rabbis and community volunteers will open their homes and invite their neighbors to learn together, with individual families choosing the subject to be discussed.

One such high profile home is that of Brig. Gen. Eli Ben-Meir, Chief Intelligence Officer and Head of the IDF, who has invited his neighbors in Modi’in to hold a discussion with Maj. Gen. Gadi Shammi about Israel’s policy regarding the civil war in Syria, including such topics as should we intervene, and does Israel behave ethically?

Rabbi David Stav, Tzohar chairman, will also open his home in Shoham to the community, where they will talk about Judaism and Israeli society.

Tzohar has been coordinating community holiday programming for over 10 years, with the goal of making Jewish holiday traditions accessible to all Jews in Israel in a non-sectarian atmosphere. Events for Yom Kippur, Purim, and Shavuot are hosted in kibbutzim, moshavim, and cultural centers across Israel.
FRIDAY, MAY 11
Torah Tots Israel Shabbat
6:30 p.m. – Dinner
6:15 p.m. – Service
Join Rabbi Kless for a special kid-friendly dinner and service as we celebrate Israel. Location: Leon & Sandra Levine Social Hall/Mindy Ellen Levine Chapel. Visit templesraelnc.org for details and to register for the dinner.

SPECIAL PROGRAM, SATURDAY, MAY 20
TOT SHAVUOT with Temple Israel and Temple Beth El
Sunday, May 20, 9:30 a.m.
Location: Temple Beth El
Come sing, dance, and pray with Ms. Patty and clergy from Temple Beth El and Temple Israel as we celebrate Shavuot. Our energetic service will be followed by a special holiday Kiddush snack and lots of time to create, play, and schmooze. We will enjoy the outdoor space behind Temple Beth El, weather permitting.

YOUTH
END-OF-YEAR YOUTH BANQUET & FESTIVITIES!
(All Youth Groups)
Sunday, May 6, 4 p.m. @ Temple Israel
Come and join your friends for a special year-end celebration! All members of TI Youth Groups (MAHAR, BONIM & GESHER) are invited to join us for an End-Of-Year formal Banquet & Festivities. We will be recognizing graduating seniors and thanking those who have made our youth groups amazing this year. Dinner will be served, and there will be fun, games and prizes for ALL! Cost: $5 per person. RSVP by Tuesday, May 1 to meljio@templesraelnc.org.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS
5TH ANNUAL LAG B’OMER COOKOUT
Saturday, May 12, 7:30 p.m.
Join Torah on Tap as we celebrate Lag B’Omer with great friends, music and food. Catering by Inside Chef. Please RSVP to torahontapcht@gmail.com and register online, on the calendar, at templesraelnc.org. Cost: $18 per person.

SOCIAL CLUB
SAVE THE DATE:
MATTHEWS PLAYHOUSE OF PERFORMING ARTS PRESENTS “SOUTH PACIFIC”
Sunday, June 10, 2 p.m.
Tickets $17.16 per person. More information to come.

ALTERNATIVE SERVICE
JAVA ‘N JEANS
Saturday, May 5, 10 a.m.
Do you have questions about Jewish prayer? Are you seeking a deeper meaning behind the prayers? Join Rabbi Kless for Java ‘N Jeans in May (meets the first Shabbat morning of every other month, when we will delve into and discuss the true meaning and purpose of prayer in an informal setting. Coffee is provided, and we welcome everyone, regardless of background. Feel free to wear your favorite pair of jeans or whatever you like! After a robust, interactive study session, everyone is encouraged to join the congregation for the remainder of the service in the main sanctuary and stay for the Kiddush luncheon afterwards.

EVENTS
PLEASE JOIN US FOR SHAVUOT SERVICES AND PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES
EREV SHAVUOT
Saturday, May 19
6:15 p.m. Shavuot/Confirmation Service
7:15 p.m. Dairy Shavuot/Confirmation Dinner
8:15 p.m. Tikku Leil Shavuot (Superwomen of the Tanakh – Ruth, Naomi, Deborah, Yael, Esther, Michal and Bat-Sheva)
9:15 p.m. Dairy Dessert Delights

MENU
Blintz Soufflé
Quiche
Tossed Salad
Fresh Fruits
Drinks
Cost: $12/Adult; $8/Child; $5 (age 6-12); Little One (age 1-5)
RSVP/Register for dinner online at templesraelnc.org by Monday, May 14.

SHAVUOT – DAY 1
Sunday, May 20
9:30 a.m. Yom Tov Morning Service
9:30 a.m. Preschool Shavuot Program
12 p.m. Kiddush Luncheon
5:30 p.m. Yom Tov Mincha service

SHAVUOT – DAY 2
Monday, May 21
9:30 a.m. Yom Tov Morning Service, including Yizkor
12 p.m. Kiddush Luncheon
7:30 p.m. Weekday Evening Minyan

TEMPLE ISRAEL BOOK CLUB
Wednesday, May 23, 7:30 p.m.
All are welcome to join us (even if you haven’t read the book) to discuss “An Officer and a Spy” by Robert Harris. The story is of the infamous Dreyfus affair told as a chillingly dark, hard-edged novel of conspiracy and espionage. Copies of “An Officer and A Spy” are available at the Levine-Skilut and Public Libraries, and may also be ordered online for under $15. For additional information contact Linda Levy at (704) 366-6362 or levyljolr@att.net.

SAVE THE DATE
TEMPLE ISRAEL ANNUAL MEETING
Sunday, June 3, 10:45 a.m.
All are welcome to celebrate a year in the life of our Temple and our community’s accomplishments over the past year.

JOIN US
When you join the Temple Israel family, you become linked to a community and traditions that are more than 120 years old and you also become part of the story of a strong and vibrant congregation that will be a pillar of the Charlotte Jewish community for generations to come. Temple Israel is on the cutting edge of Conservative Judaism, balancing both traditional and innovative expressions of Judaism in a progressive, inclusive community.

Cantor Rozhnhvzvlar Celebration Weekend
JUNE 15-17
Help us celebrate Cantor Elias Rozhnhvzvlar and thank him for his 23 years of service to our community the weekend of June 15-17! Events will include a special Friday evening service followed by a cocktail reception and delicious Shabbat dinner (reservations required), a Shabbat morning service to honor the Cantor followed by a bountiful Kiddush luncheon, and a Sunday afternoon concert and dessert reception. Visit templesraelnc.org for details.
On Shavuot, Who (or What) Will Get the First Fruits?

By Edmon J. Rodman
Los Angeles (JTA) — As we approach Shavuot, there’s a battle going on in our garden over who — or what — will get our first fruits.

In ancient days in Israel, beginning at Shavuot — the holiday that marked the wheat harvest as well as the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai — people brought to the Temple in Jerusalem an offering from their first harvest. The practice is reflected in one of the holiday’s alternate names, Yom Hāṭikūrūm, the Day of the First Fruits.

In Deuteronomy, there is an entire ceremony for offering these first fruits. Farmers are required to say a prayer as a reminder that God “brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.” Though intended for an ancient audience in Israel, this idea of gratitude still resonates today.

Though synagogues today more commonly celebrate Shavuot with confirmations, all-night study sessions, and services that deliver a box of organic vegetables twice a month, there is a huge supermarket five minutes away from my home. We also subscribe to a farm service that delivers fresh food — and so many others that can’t compete with the garden overnight might scare the raccoon? First, we tried protecting many of the plants in tomato cages, only to see them pushed aside the next morning. Then, looking for advice on the Humane Society’s website — a few inhumane solutions had crossed my mind as well — I read that turning on a transistor radio in the garden overnight might scare them off.

As for the radio in the garden, it worked for a week. Then one morning, my wife found an eggplant uprooted. But I am not deterred. On the night of Shavuot, when the heavens are said to open, I will change channels and try an all-night religion show, hoping the raccoon will get the message — or, at least, show some gratitude.

(Edmon J. Rodman is a JTA columnist who writes on Jewish life from Los Angeles. Contact him at edmojace@gmail.com.)
I want to talk about these sheets, why they may be uniquely Jewish, and why they may be the most important and ubiquitous example of Jewish educational technology that you probably take for granted—or never heard of.

The packets are known as source sheets, and they’ve been with us since ... well, at least since the widespread use of the mimeograph machine in the 1950s. Before that, rabbis or teachers might quote from a pile of Jewish books they kept in front of them, and perhaps refer students to a similar pile on their desk. But once teachers could cheaply copy fragments of Jewish text, and cut and paste them in any order they wished, the source sheet became a tool for flexibility, convenience and ingenuity in the Jewish classroom. And their current dominance is an example of how technology transformed tradition—and continues to do so in the digital age.

“When you are weaving together different threads from different texts composed during vastly different times and places, the best way is to pull excerpts from different texts,” said Sara Webber, director of education at Sefaria.org. “There is an art form to it. The way you pull and combine helps express the story you want to tell in the class you are teaching.”

Sefaria, a nimble online database of Jewish texts in both their original language and in translation, is rapidly becoming the red-hot center of the source sheet universe, which I assure you is a thing. Since Sefaria was founded in 2013, over 12,000 people have made some 74,000 source sheets using the site’s handy source sheet builder. Of those, 7,200 of their creations are available online. (Disclosure: Daniel Septimus, Sefaria’s executive director, sits on the board of 70 Faces Media, JTA’s parent company.)

And the range of subjects is testament not only to the depth of the Jewish canon but to the breadth of Jewish obsessions. There are sheets for lessons on sex, death, love, money, family strife and sibling rivalry, Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton. For Shavuot, which begins this year on the evening of May 19, there’s a sheet on Judaism and immigration justice. There’s even a sheet about whether or not Jews should take part in Halloween.

Other sites share their source sheets online. The Shamayim V’Aretz Institute posts sheets on animal welfare. American Jewish World Service offers material on social action. The Orthodox NCSY youth group has sheets on a range of topics.

Rabbi Dan Epstein, the senior Jewish educator at the George Washington University Hillel, also refers to creating a source sheet as an art form. Epstein should know: He’s shared nearly 100 source sheets on Sefaria, and they’ve been viewed collectively over 72,000 times.

To teach a lesson on Jewish views on the afterlife, for example, he might include verses from the Bible; Talmudic passages known as Mishna or Gemara; perspectives from the medieval sages Maimonides and Saadia Gaon about the soul and reincarnation; and a teshuvah, or rabbinical ruling, from the 20th-century Modern Orthodox authority Rabbi Moshe Feinstein. These would form the basis for a guided classroom discussion, perhaps after the students had a chance to review the material and a few key questions in chavura—that is, in small or small groups, a staple of yeshiva education going back centuries.

Epstein might not get to every text in a lesson, but that’s OK.

“The lesson is like a concert and the source sheet is more like a set list,” he explained. “You’ll get to it, but maybe you’ll cancel some songs or just play a few of the longer songs.”

The key, he said, is knowing your audience—the languages they understand, their level of knowledge and their interests.

“You need to make the student feel connected and touch the heart and the heart and the hand,” Epstein said. “And not just teach them new info, but teach them to do something. That’s what I based my lessons around.”

Rabbis and teachers had always done this kind of layered Jewish teaching, building an argument or lesson out of centuries of Jewish writing on a topic. But a geologist describes a mountain by pointing to the layers of rock beneath the surface. But the source sheet revolutionized Jewish learning by making sure every student was literally on the same page.

Many educators credit Nechama Leibowitz, a legendary Israeli teacher, with popularizing and democratizing Torah study in Israel with the distribution of her mimeographed work sheets, or gi’yonot. Sent to subscribers by mail between 1941 and 1971 (and later collected between hard covers), Leibowitz’s work sheets offered Torah verses and rabbinic commentary, and questions quizzing students on the connections between them.

Leibowitz, who was teaching nearly up to the moment she died in 1997 at age 92, would comment on the students’ answers and mail them back.

Barry Holtz, the Theodore and Florence Baumritter Professor of Jewish Education at The Jewish Theological Seminary, remembers learning Torah from original texts and all-Hebrew textbooks in the 1950s at Congregation Kehillath Israel in Brookline, Massachusetts. But the assistant rabbi there, Joseph Lukinsky, introduced new ways to teach his Hebrew school classes.

“He was an incredibly creative young rabbi, maybe ahead of the curve,” Holtz recalled. “He must have been one of the first people to introduce a tikkan leyel Shavuot—that is, an all-night study session on the spring holiday of Shavuot—outside of the Orthodox world, in 1962, just for the teenagers.

“It’s weird that I can remember this, but he had created a packet I suspect is somewhere in a closet in my house, with texts that I studied all night long, and the title was ‘Gods Jews have known, and Jews God has known.’ It was so
Shavuot, When We Became Who We Are

By David Wolpe

Los Angeles (JTA) — Rabbinic tradition teaches that when God spoke at Sinai, the world was silenced — birds did not sing, breezes did not rustle leaves in the trees. Out of that profound silence came the word, and were the world silent again, for even an instant, we could hear the everlasting echo of God’s voice.

In one way that is a beautiful metaphor for the holiday of Shavuot. Among the holidays, it is “silent” in that no custom imposes itself on our imagination. There is no sukkah, no Seder. It slips by, for many Jews, almost unnoticed. Yet the echoing voice makes it the central moment in our history.

On Shavuot, we celebrate the giving of the Torah, the establishment of the Jewish covenant. The rabbinic tradition advises us to read the Torah as a love letter. One who receives a letter from a beloved reviews it again and again, searching each word and clause for significance, noting what is said and what remains unsaid. We read the Torah with the lens of the lover, dwelling over each word, unwilling to set it aside, certain that to study it once more will help us understand.

The Book of Ruth is read on this holiday because Ruth took upon herself the Jewish tradition in full. She accepted, as a true convert must, both the people and Judaism is — “Judaism is a religion not a race” — and gently explained why this is hardly relevant.

J.K. Rowling is Giving a Master Class in Identifying Anti-Semitism and It’s Magical

By Ron Kampeas

(JTA) — There’s an unsettling debate underway in Britain about whether the right or the left is more anti-Semitic, and videos of Jewish members of Parliament reading out some of the anti-Semitic invective they’ve suffered have gone viral.

J.K. Rowling, the non-Jewish author of the Harry Potter series, decided to weigh in on Wednesday, defining anti-Semitism for her 14.4 million Twitter followers.

She posted a screen grab of a tweet from Rabbi Sari Laufer, director of congregational engagement at the Stephen Wise Temple in Los Angeles. “People aren’t as familiar [with Talmud or rabbinic text] so feel that it’s not ours in some way,” she said. “I am very committed to using and unlocking a woolly corpus of Jewish text to male, they can’t just dismiss it as a woman with masculine traits at all times, or a wife can’t have kids because she is a man; they can’t just dismiss it as BS.”

Sefaria is trying to chart a future for a study tool that is itself the product of a mid-20th century information revolution. Its library of online source sheets is interactive — that is, every source on a sheet links to the database of myriad Jewish texts.

“When you put a bunch of sources on paper, the audience can only see what’s on the sheet,” Wolkenfeld said.

Using the database, however, “you are in control of the story. You can open up a chapter and see the larger context,” she said. “From three commentaries I can navigate to 10 others.”

And if students have tablets or laptops, they can do all that exploring during the lesson itself.

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“The Charlotte Jewish News ­ May 2018 ­ Page 30
Washington, D.C. — The Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law (LDB) today applauded the South Carolina General Assembly for being the first state to pass legislation that will help tackle the rising anti-Semitism plaguing U.S. college campuses.

The legislation, which was included as part of a larger state spending package, was approved late yesterday in the Senate by a vote of 37-4, and the House of Representatives passed it by a vote of 116-2 in March. South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster has already endorsed the anti-Semitism measure, and has committed to sign it into law.

“There has been an alarming increase in anti-Semitism nationwide, and particularly on our nation’s college campuses,” stated LDB’s Director of Legal Initiatives Aviva Vogelstein. “This bill gives South Carolina the tools to protect Jewish students’ and all South Carolina students’ right to a learning environment free of unlawful discrimination. Just as two dozen states followed South Carolina’s lead on legislation condemning the movement to boycott certain countries, we are hoping this momentous step will result in another national wave to, once and for all, begin defeating rising anti-Semitism.” LDB representatives testified at multiple South Carolina hearings on the bill and have been working closely with state legislators to ensure passage. Joseph Sabag of the Israel Allies Foundation added, “This bill gives educators a uniform tool for ascertaining intent, similar to the use of confessions in criminal proceedings. It will ensure authorities consider the federal government’s definition of anti-Semitism in instances when it is necessary to determine the intent of constitutionally unprotected activities, including assault, battery, harassment, intimidation, and vandalism. And it will protect against unlawful suppression of speech to ensure that all views can be fully expressed.”

South Carolina was the first state to pass legislation prohibiting state governments from contracting with entities that support the discriminating practice of boycotts on the basis of national origin. Since South Carolina passed its bill, H. 3583, 24 states have passed similar laws.

According to the FBI’s Hate Crime Report, Jewish hate crime victims outnumber victims of all other religious groups combined. And the problem is most serious on college campuses. A Brandeis Center/Trinity College study found that 54% of Jewish students reported experiencing or witnessing anti-Semitism in 2014. A Brandeis University study found that by 2015, the number of Jewish students experiencing anti-Semitism spiked to nearly 75%. According to the Anti-Defamation League’s latest report, anti-Semitic incidents on U.S. college campuses increased 89% in 2017.

The South Carolina legislation will help break down the barriers in the fight against anti-Semitism by providing educators and administrators with a clear and uniform definition to recognize anti-Jewish bigotry.

The definition included in the bill is the global “gold standard” used to define anti-Semitism, and is used by the U.S. federal government to assess incidents that occur abroad. It is substantially similar to the definition that has been supported by the 31 governments that are members of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance; all 50 countries, except for Russia, that make up the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; and the governments of the United Kingdom, Romania, Austria, Germany, and Bulgaria. It has also been adopted by the United Kingdom to use in colleges and universities.

“Anti-Semitism, and the forces that have led to its resurgence, are not representative of the values of South Carolina,” stated Representative Alan Clemmons (107th District) who authored the legislation.

Yesterday, Holocaust Memorial Day, is the culmination of a two-year legislative effort to respond to the FBI’s findings that Jewish students are the mostly likely of all minority groups to suffer hate crimes on campus. Thanks to Sen. Larry Grooms’ leadership in the Senate, South Carolina has taken the ultimate legislative step in codifying a uniform definition of anti-Semitism for state supported institutions of higher education that must be applied to illegal acts and breaches of university policy to determine anti-Semitic intent.

This measure is an important step forward in protecting the civil rights of Jewish students. As we remember the millions of Jewish lives taken in the Holocaust and the dramatic increase in anti-Semitic incidents we see happening in the U.S. and around the world, I’m hopeful that South Carolina will be the first of many states to take such action to discourage anti-Semitism on campus and to appropriately discipline those who engage in such hateful activity.”

Senator Larry Grooms (37th District), who fought hard for the bill in the Senate, stated, “South Carolina legislators are incredibly disturbed by the increase of anti-Semitism around our nation and particularly the threats our young people face daily on campus. We all agree this must stop. All students deserve the same protections of their rights, and our colleges must address all discriminatory conduct, including anti-Semitism, with equal rigor and condemnation. My colleague Alan Clemmons introduced a bill to provide our state’s colleges with the crucial tools to fight discrimination of Jewish students, and I am pleased my Senate colleagues approved it with overwhelming bipartisan support.”

“We applaud the South Carolina legislators, particularly Representative Alan Clemmons, who authored and shepherded this critical legislation from its inception and through every hearing and every vote, and Senator Larry Grooms who championed this legislation and brought us victory in the Senate, as well as Representative Beth Bernstein, Joseph Sabag and our colleagues at the Israel Allies Foundation, Columbia Jewish Federation, Charleston Jewish Federation, and the scores of South Carolina students, parents, educators and religious leaders for their tireless efforts to fight hate and discrimination,” added Vogelstein.

The South Carolina bill is careful to protect students’ First Amendment rights. The bill states, “Nothing in this provision may be construed to diminish or infringe upon any right protected under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States or section 2, Article 1 of the South Carolina Constitution, 1895.”

South Carolina Becomes 1st State to Pass Landmark Bill to Confront Campus Anti-Semitism

Advocates Hoping This Momentous Step Will Launch National Wave

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Tuesday, May 22
New Location: The Golf Club at Ballantyne Resort

12:00pm Lunch
1:00pm Shot Gun Start
• Shamble Format
• Dinner & Awards After Play
• 50-50 Raffle
• Hole-in-One

To register or learn more about sponsorships, visit charlottejcc.org/golf

For information, contact Geneva Boxer
704-944-6724 • geneva.boxer@charlottejcc.org

12th Annual
The Sam Strause LJCC Invitational Golf Tournament

This event benefits the Levine JCC Oasis Senior Enrichment Program

Committee: Arthur Lavitt (Co-Chair) and Mike Van Glish (Co-Chair)

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