The 2020 Main Event Featuring Mitch Albom, Author, Journalist, Philanthropist

Have a Little Faith: How Trusting Others Can Change The World

Co-chairs Holly and Hal Levinson invite you to join them at the Federation’s 2020 Main Event on Sunday, January 26, 2020 at 7 PM at Temple Israel featuring Mitch Albom. The Main Event is the Jewish Federation’s most widely attended event of the campaign season.

Mitch Albom is an internationally renowned and best-selling author, sportswriter, screenwriter, playwright, radio and television broadcaster, and musician. His books have collectively sold more than 39 million copies worldwide, have been published in forty-nine territories and in forty-five languages around the world, and have been made into Emmy Award-winning and critically-acclaimed television movies.

While nationally recognized for his sports writing, Albom is perhaps best known for the themes of hope and kindness that weave through his books, plays, and films. In his talks and presentations, he brings the same inspiring message of community building, giving, and purpose. Albom shares stories about faith amongst the poor, the well-to-do, the homeless, and those who once felt God did not exist. He addresses questions such as: What do we all have in common in our hearts – no matter what house of worship we attend? How does the belief in something bigger than us give us insight, wisdom, and comfort? How does faith help when bad things happen? And what can we learn from each other’s faith that can make the world, the workplace, our neighborhoods, and our daily lives more harmonious? Expanding on themes already developed in his bestselling books Tuesdays with Morrie and The Five People You Meet in Heaven, Mitch Albom weaves a captivating and uplifting message of hope and inspiration in all of us for a giving, meaningful life.

Main Event tickets are $36 each and are available online at www.jewishcharlotte.org or by phone at 704-944-6757.

Everyday, the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, together with you, our donors and partners, enriches lives, builds community and fosters a thriving Jewish future locally, in Israel and around the world. We are always at work powering the community and your Jewish experience in ways you might not think of, in places you would never expect. Right now, thousands of people need us in a multitude of ways. This is your moment to help. Join us at the Main Event, and be the start of something powerful. You will also have the opportunity to make your pledge to the 2020 Annual Campaign.

Congratulations to Gabe Mathless on Becoming a JCPA Frank Family Fellow

The Frank Family Leadership Institute is a unique mentoring program run by the Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA). The Fellowship program includes educational webinars, a Poland/Israel Mission, and attendance at the JCPA National Conference. As the program selects only 10 emerging Jewish leaders from across the nation, we are thrilled that Gabe Mathless will represent the Charlotte community as part of the 2019-2020 cohort.

Although Gabe and his family moved to the Queen City only a few years ago, he has already established himself as an energetic leader within the Charlotte Jewish community. He is vice-president of Charlotte’s Levine Jewish Community Center, serves on multiple committees, and chairs the LJCC’s governance committee. In recognition of his contributions to the LJCC, Gabe was awarded the LJCC’s President’s Cup and Director’s Award in 2017 and was selected to represent the LJCC at the biennial JCC Association of North America conference through the Esther Leah Ritz Emerging JCC Leaders Institute in 2018.

As part of the Frank Fellowship, Gabe be working with the Jewish Federation’s Director of Community Relations and Israel Affairs, Laurel Grauer, to coordinate Israel advocacy efforts and re-establish Charlotte’s Jewish Community Relations Council.

Gabe Mathless is a corporate restructuring and bankruptcy attorney with the firm Moore and Van Allen PLLC. He received his law degree from the University of Michigan. He lives in Charlotte, with his wonderful wife, Stephanie, and their two beautiful sons.

Thank you to the latest donors to The Charlotte Jewish News

Your generosity helps us fulfill our mission to continue publishing the latest information about our community.

For the list of donors, please turn to page 13.
Sharing Chanukah at School - Chanukah Kits Are Here to Help

If your child attends a secular or public school, chances are that you may be asked to teach a short lesson on Chanukah. Don’t fear. The Center for Jewish Education (CJE) Book Club will meet on Wednesday, December 11 at 10:30 AM in Room D118 at Shalom Park. The book to be discussed is The Girl From Berlin by Ron Balson, which was the winner of the Jewish Book Council’s 2019 Book Club Award. Everyone is welcome. For more information, please contact sueb.littauer@jewishcharlotte.org.

Channukah Kits Are Here to Help

In Naomi Ragen’s new book An Unorthodox Match, we meet Leah whose mother rebelled against her Orthodox Jewish upbringing, and adamently and rigorously discourages her daughter from becoming an observant Jew. If you love reading Naomi Ragen’s books, as I do, you will be thoroughly engrossed in Leah’s life as she searches to fulfill her dream of becoming an observant Jewish wife and mother. As a newly Orthodox woman, the pitfalls placed in her path by the Orthodox community form the crux of this novel.

Both Angela and Leah are strong women struggling to pursue their own paths. One is a true story and the other a novel; however, the women in both books find acceptance and a sense of family that is well worth their difficult searches.

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Jewish Family Services

Growth Drives Future Plans at JFS

JFS has been helping the community for almost 40 years. It has been the primary resource, and place to go for those struggling with mental health, food insecurity, domestic violence, and aging. All of the programs and services are designed to engage, empower, and enrich, with a goal of stabilizing and enhancing the lives of those it serves which is accomplished through four main areas: Domestic Violence Services, Senior Engagement and Holocaust Survivor Programs, Crisis Response and Assistance, and Community Programs and Education.

In order to deliver the most meaningful, relevant programs and services that meet the community’s need, JFS closely monitors a couple of emerging patterns and trends. It’s what guides the agency and helps determine the services.

Over the past two years, there has been a significant rise in the number of inquiries and requests for services. It’s not just in one main focus area, but from several. Increased calls for emergency support ran out of space in our existing office, and new staff has been hired for the increased needs of our clients.

In response to the growing demand, during this year’s strategic planning process, JFS identified priority areas for the organization. “When we looked at the data and trends, it became clear that there was a need for significant, pressing areas of need for our community: older adults and those coping with mental health challenges,” said Olshansky. The older adult population is growing in numbers and in geography. JFS is now responding to the needs of seniors down in Sun City, SC, across Union County, and in Lake Norman. And because people are living longer the issues related to aging are more complex, JFS is creating a Senior Engagement Department and has hired a Senior Engagement Therapist, who specializes in delivering services in a community-based setting, as well as providing traditional therapy services in the office.

At JFS, we are also seeing increasing levels of trauma in individuals, kids, and families. In order to respond swiftly and appropriately, JFS trained and certified its staff in the Triple P Positive Parenting Program, which helps families respond to issues affecting teens and children and issues related to topics such as social media, bullying, depression, and anxiety. Rachel Green, Program Director, indicated “at JFS we are continuously looking at ways to develop and stay on top of best practices to enhance the competencies of our staff. In addition to the parenting training staff has received, training is being planned in areas such as trauma-informed care, diversity and aging and emotional health. We want to ensure that JFS is able to offer a diversity of clinical interventions to meet the diverse needs of our clients.”

Serving the community to the best of our ability means anticipating needs and being prepared. “I’m very proud that we have always been able to serve those in need, especially those in crisis. We have never had to create a waiting list for services,” said Olshansky. “When I started here in 2016 we had nine staff. We now have 14. In fact, just this past month, JFS acquired additional space on Shalom Park because we ran out of space in our existing offices,” he added.

Thanks to the generosity of our community, we have been able to grow our financial resources to support the increased staffing and meet the growing needs.

As the needs continue to grow, as we have seen in 2019, strengthening our infrastructure is also one of our strategic priorities. Ensuring that we are well staffed and have the administrative, financial, and technological tools needed in-house means that our clients will continue to receive the highest quality care and best services possible.

Donations to Jewish Family Services in October 2019

IN MEMORY OF
Iris Comen Kaplan to Robert and Cheryl Comen from Gary Silverstein
Charles E. Markman to Murray and Barbara Ezring from Matthew Luftglass and Meg Goldstein, Paul and Lynn Edelstein, Lynn Edelstein, Paula S. Musler
Henry Hirschmann to Paul and Lynn Edelstein, Paula S. Musler, Sandra Weinstein
Vera Mendel from Paul and Lynn Edelstein, Marty and Elaine Schefflin from Paul and Lynn Edelstein

WISHING A FULL AND SPEEDY RECOVERY to
Nicchi Fisher from Paul and Lynn Edelstein
Carolyn Hennes from Paul and Lynn Edelstein, Paula S. Musler, Sandra Weinstein

THANK YOU FOR HOSTING “BREAK THE FAST” to Pete Slade from Robert Reinhold

HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR TO
Margi Goldstein from Paula S. Musler

IN HONOR OF
Scott and Rebecca Goodman from Barry and Laura Reich
Linda Greenfield and Ira Dunst from Madeline Gallant

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Roslyn Husney from Paul and Lynn Edelstein

JFS Monthly Volunteers and Donors

Month of October 2019


Food Pantry Donations: Caleb Fordham, Bill Schwartz, Charlotte Jewish Community Center Menorah, Charlotte Jewish Day School, Charlotte Jewish Preschool, JCC Soccer Program, Temple Israel and Temple Beth El Congregants, Women of Temple Israel, Shalom Park Community Gardens

Food Drives: Temple Israel High Holiday Food Drive
Mitzvah Basket Donations: In honor of Kyle Katz’s Bar Mitzvah, in honor of Mike Humphrey Bar Mitzvah, in honor of Jacob Schwartz’s Bar Mitzvah

High Holiday Food Drive

THANK YOU FOR HOSTING “BREAK THE FAST” to Pete Slade from Robert Reinhold

Mazel Tov on the birth and bris of Evan Ryan Stern to Jeffrey and Rebecca Stern from Melanie Resnick

Jewish Family Services

The KEYS to a successful real estate transaction...

Buying...Selling...Relocating...

Ann and Andrew are your KEYS to the local Jewish Community.

Serving the Charlotte community for over 30 years.

Windermere Insurance

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

Greenspan & 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.

Windermere Insurance

704.247.3033
kgreenspan@windingsgroup.com

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Shred the potatoes. Pour the oil.
Crispy, crunchy latkes. Almost ready.
Just one more. And more and more.
A taste for Chanukah. Almost gone.
Shred the potatoes. Pour the oil.

Happy Chanukah from
all your friends at Publix.
Increasing the Light with the Stan Greenspon Center

At the end of the secular month of December and the Hebrew month of Kislev, we will brighten the darkest nights of the year by lighting our Chanukah menorah and sharing our light with the world. At the Stan Greenspon Center for Peace and Social Justice at Queens University of Charlotte, we strive to illuminate the darkness of our world all year round.

We invite you to join the Greenspon Center as we kindle eight metaphoric candles in the months ahead:

Holocaust and Human Rights Teacher Workshops
We offer teacher workshops for middle and high school educators who teach the Holocaust. In the months ahead, we will host a full day Facing History and Ourselves program, an Echoes and Reflections, and an IWitness program. We also plan on working with individual schools to meet individual community goals. If you know a teacher who would benefit from our support, please make the connection.

Becoming One Human Family Programs in Regional Schools
November is a busy month for our flagship in-school program. Student workshops are scheduled in Lake Norman Charter School, Levine Middle College High School, and Corvian High School. We are collaborating with the Union County AIG Middle School coordinator to develop an ongoing student inquiry project. And, as always, we respond to calls and requests from individual schools and teachers seeking the best resources to engage their students with the lessons of the Holocaust.

Queens University Hillel
We fill the winter months with warm Hillel family-style Shabbat dinners and Sushi Shabbat lunches. We are excited for our monthly Mimi’s matzah ball soup giveaway on campus, sponsored by the Gorelick family in memory of Patty Karro Gorelick. Students walk away with wonderful memories as we create great cultural bridges between the Jewish and non-Jewish campus communities. Our newest “At Our Table: A Shabbat and Holiday Experience” (funded by the Lenora Stein Community Creative Learning Grant) brings community members to the Queens campus for special Shabbat experiences. If you want to be included in our Art Shabbat or Educators’ Shabbat contact dippoldt@queens.edu.

Jewish Studies
In the cold winter nights, consider warming yourself with a glass of tea or wine at Selwyn Pub as we study Mussar, Jewish ethical literature, inspiring us to work on our character traits (from gratitude to humility to silence to trust). Rabbi Judy Schindler invites you to meet new people, explore wellsprings of Jewish wisdom, and have a great time. This casual and relaxing event has a something for everyone. Classes will be held one Wednesday a month from 5-6:30 PM.

First Responders to Hate
We pray that the winter will be positive and peaceful. If it is not, the Greenspon Center team is ready to step in and provide help. We are ready to meet with schools and community members to deepen understanding and expand skills for responding to biased behavior.

Social Justice Advocacy
Times are tough for many of our Charlotte neighbors. Join the Greenspon Center in social justice advocacy and make a meaningful difference.

Will your 2020 New Year’s resolution be …

• To create more affordable housing and sustain diverse communities?
• To improve access to affordable healthcare?
• To create positive outcomes for those interfacing with the criminal justice system?
• To support our immigrant neighbors?
• To advocate for restorative justice?

Join us on January 23, 2020

(Continued on page 9)
Foundation of Shalom Park 2019 Security Campaign Underway

Since the founding of Shalom Park as the center of Jewish life in Charlotte nearly 40 years ago the Foundation of Shalom Park has been the primary agency responsible for the security of the park. Emphasis on Jewish values Get together via video chat Foundation of Shalom Park has Charlotte nearly 40 years ago Foundation of Shalom Park 2019 Security Campaign Underway The Charlotte Jewish News - December 2019 - Page 6

Emphasis on Jewish values

Get together via video chat

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Foundation of Shalom Park
By Amy Lefkof

It may have been November 3, well past the high holidays, but in the David Silverman Social Hall at Temple Beth El, over 130 attendees at the Jewish Community Refugee Initiative’s 2nd Annual Welcoming the Stranger to the Table dessert reception and program, funded by a Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte Impact and Innovation Grant, beat their chests, as Temple Beth El’s Rabbi Asher Knight led them through a modified vidui – a confessional prayer said in the plural – to confront how we as individuals, as a Jewish community, and as a nation, have hardened our hearts to refugees and those seeking asylum in these days of “overwhelming inundation of the unthinkable.” Noting that our hardened hearts are calling to us, Rabbi Knight encouraged attendees to stand up for justice when we see people mistreated.

Rabbi Knight encouraged attendees to contact Governor Cooper and Mayor Lyles and urge them to welcome refugees and let Congress know they should reach the new ceiling of 18,000 and that next year’s ceiling should be set at the historic average of 95,000.

Schoor’s remarks were reinforced by an animated documentary, Office of Missing Children, the true story of one six-year-old boy from Guatemala who was separated from his mother under the Trump Administration’s zero tolerance family separation program.

Schoor explained how the Trump Administration has attacked both refugee resettlement and the asylum system by putting a cap on refugees of 18,000 for fiscal year 2020 (the lowest number in the 40-year history of the Refugee Act of 1980) and by introducing new barriers to asylum every week, e.g., exclusion of victims of gang violence and domestic violence, and deporting children even after a judicial finding that they are in danger and qualify for protection.

The Refugee Act of 1980 set a cap of 20,000 on the number of refugees of 18,000 and the asylum system by putting a cap on refugees of 18,000 for fiscal year 2020 (the lowest number in the 40-year history of the Refugee Act of 1980) and by introducing new barriers to asylum every week, e.g., exclusion of victims of gang violence and domestic violence, and deporting children even after a judicial finding that they are in danger and qualify for protection.

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J Street Annual Conference: The View from a Participant

By David deGroot

The annual conference of the pro-Israel pro-peace organization J Street was held in Washington, DC on the weekend of October 26-28. With over 4,000 attendees, this was the largest J Street conference ever. We welcomed five Presidential candidates, Speaker Pelosi, Senate Democratic Leader Schumer, and 70+ Members of Congress, proving that J Street is a significant political force on Capitol Hill. Of the attendees, 1,200 were members of J Street U, the college campus wing of J Street.

Attending the conference for the fourth consecutive year what distinguished this year’s event for me was the additional emphasis on the values of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. J Street’s core mission is support for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a solution which satisfies Judaism’s goal of a democratic Jewish state living in peace with its neighbors and the Palestinian right to self-determination.

The need to form alliances based on shared progressive values was called out on multiple occasions. These alliances can be between Israeli and Jewish American organizations, between Israeli Jews and Arabs, and between like-minded individuals anywhere. Several speakers quoted Martin Luther King’s words, “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice,” adding that each individual needs to do his or her part in helping it bend.

The theme of the conference was “Rise to the Moment.” J Street does not shy away from discussing difficult and controversial issues; here are some that were discussed at the conference:

* Regarding the US-Israel relationship, all Presidential candidates were asked to give their opinions on whether US military aid should be conditioned on Israeli policies vis-à-vis the Palestinians and entrenching the occupation through settlement expansion. While the responses differed, this topic would have been considered taboo up to the last year or two and still is in many forums.

* Palestinian citizens of Israel and those living in the West Bank were featured prominently. One Arab representative of a grassroots Jewish-Arab partnership organization came despite pressures from some not to attend a pro-Israel event. Knesset Member Ayman Odeh, chairman of the Joint (Arab) List party, challenged Benny Gantz, whose Blue-White party tied with Benjamin Netanyahu’s Likud in the last elections, to invite the Knesset members from the Joint List into the governing coalition.

* Recently, Benjamin Netanyahu called for a boycott of the HBO series “Our Boys.” The series’ creators were interviewed in a plenary session at the conference. “Our Boys” was produced in Israel and follows the investigation of the murder of Mohammed Abu Kheider, who was killed by Jewish terrorists in 2014 in a revenge attack after the kidnapping and murder of three Yeshiva students by Hamas terrorists in the West Bank. The creators explained that one of the reasons for telling this story was to show the public that there is no difference between Palestinian and Jewish families who have lost a loved one to violence.

For me, one of the “dilemmas” of these conferences is deciding which breakout sessions to attend. These smaller and less formal sessions give attendees the opportunity to hear from experts in the field and ask challenging questions. Among those I chose to attend were:

* Interplay Between Israeli Politics and Media, where I was thrilled to have the opportunity to meet one of the creators of the “Our Boys” series and ask a question about the behavior of one of the central characters in the series.

* Censorship and Israeli Cinema, being somewhat of an Israeli film and TV series “buff,” I was recently called out by some Arab citizens of Israel to second-class status, caused an outcry because of the way the Druze minority was impacted but ignored the effect on Israel’s 20% Arab Muslim population.

* Palestinian Economy, whose panelists included a Member of the Palestinian Liberation Organization’s National Council. One of the attendees asked this panelist to explain why one of his colleagues working for a human rights organization had been imprisoned by the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank.

* For more information on J Street and its presence in the Charlotte region, please contact Amos Gil, J Street’s Regional Director for the Capital/South, amosgil@jstreet.org.
The Ruach followed up the well-attended and highly acclaimed High Holy Day Experiences by heading up to Davidson to Temple Kol Tikvah on October 13. Although it rained and the pizza dinner could not be enjoyed in the Sukkah, nothing could dampen the spirits of the congregation just north of Charlotte. A full sanctuary welcomed The Ruach for The Sukkot Experience. Upon drummer Rick Lipson’s count the band opened the set with Dan Nichols’s classic, “B’zlem Elohim” and for the next hour the congregation was treated to modern Jewish music. Though the band included a few songs by other artists, most of the music was written by the band. Nancy Good, The Ruach’s lead singer, explained that all of the music that The Ruach played, even Nick Lowe’s, “What’s So Funny About Peace Love and Understanding” is included in The Ruach’s Shabbat and High Holy Day Experiences.

On November 3, The Ruach performed at the Greensboro Jewish Festival for the second year in a row. This wonderful event draws several thousand people, both Jewish and non-Jewish, who come for the culture, art, food, and entertainment. The Ruach played two sets as the headliner at the festival. The second set opened with Howard Swartz tapping out a beat on his congas which led the band into “Why Can’t We Live Together,” the ‘70s hit by Timmy Thomas that was popularized again in the ‘80s by Sade and covered by many others including Santana, Steve Winwood, and Joan Osborne. Many in the crowd could be seen singing along and was met with a big applause at its conclusion. This song has become a favorite of The Ruach Community is now a staple in The Ruach Experiences coming out of the Amidah.

The Ruach returned to the Levine Center for Wellness and Recreation at Queens University on November 22. The Shabbat Experience was preceded by a chilli preneg provided by Charlotte’s Jewish Smokemaster, Rob “Ernie” Adler and his wife, Amy. Among the 150 or so in attendance, there were several members of Queens University Hillel.

Bringing an amazing year to a close, The Ruach will be at Temple Solel in Fort Mill, SC on December 27 for their Chanukah and Shabbat Experience. There is sure to be plenty of latkas and music of the season. It will be definitely worth the short drive just south of Charlotte to Fort Mill.

2020 is shaping up to be another big year for The Ruach. Here are just a couple of The Experiences happening in the first few months of the year:

* January 17 – The Steely Dan Shabbat Experience at Middle C Jazz Club. The Ruach will lead The Shabbat Experience at 6:30 followed by a performance by the incredible Steely Dan tribute band, Mr. Whatever. Anyone who attends The Shabbat Experience will be able to stay for the Steely Dan set, free of charge.

* March 20 – The Ruach will join recording artist Joe Bu

The Ruach at the Greensboro Jewish Festival. Photo courtesy Robin Swartz.

GreenSpon Center Increases the Light
(Continued from page 5)

at 6:30 PM, as we set our Social Justice Agenda 2020 and lay out a plan to lift up our neighbors. Travel - Cemetery Trip and Interfaith Trip to the Holy Land Join a life-changing experience, the Greenspon Center’s Interfaith Trip to Israel. Led by Rabbi Judy Schindler and Reverend Nancy Effelt-Allison, the group will visit cities such as Tel Aviv, Nazareth, Bethlehem, and Jerusalem. The itinerary also includes stops at significant historic and religious sites such as Mt. Moriah, the Sea of Galilee, and the Western Wall. For more information contact Talia Goldman (goldmant@queens.edu). Reserve your spot soon.

Second and Third Generation Speakers

In memory of Jeffrey Alan Schwartz, his brother Larry Schwartz and family have established the Jeffrey Alan Schwartz Holocaust Speakers Bureau. This newly developed program is now available to bring second and third generation descendants of Holocaust survivors into regional schools and community organizations to keep the history, messages, and lessons of the Holocaust alive. If you’re interested in booking a speaker, please contact Talli Dippold.

The Talmud teaches that one person’s candle is a light for many. Please add your light to ours and help us succeed in brightening our world. To get connected with any of our programs, visit www. Greensponcenter.org.

Holiday Open House

Make plans to attend both of the upcoming Open House events to meet our friendly staff and see firsthand why so many people choose to call Waltonwood home.

Seasonal Culinary Demonstrations | Party Favors

Tours & Holiday Activities

December 4th
3:00 - 5:30 p.m.

at Waltonwood Cotswold

RSVP TODAY
704-495-6031

Assisted Living and Memory Care

5215 Randolph Road, Charlotte

December 10th
1:00 - 3:30 p.m.

at Waltonwood Providence

RSVP TODAY
704-246-3035

Independent Living, Assisted Living and Memory Care

11945 Providence Road, Charlotte

Wishing you peace, love, and joy this Hanukkah.
The Center for Jewish Education is proud to announce our inaugural “LOLA” (Love Our Local Authors) event.

Don’t miss this unique opportunity to hear different authors, speaking on a vast variety of topics and from different genres, all in one sitting. Each of our six featured authors will give a brief talk about their books. Afterward, attendees can visit one, or two, or all six authors. Think of it as speed-dating for book lovers!

Books will be available for purchase and signing. Refreshments will be served. This is event is FREE, however, registration is requested. Please RSVP by Nov. 30 at www.jewishcharlotte.org/cje

Questions:  Debby Block, CJE Program Coordinator
704.944.6780/debby.block@jewishcharlotte.org
Bal Tashchit and Beyond: Going Green in 2019

Shalom Green: The Shalom Park Environmental Initiative is a lay-led social justice committee comprised of Jewish community volunteers dedicated to promoting an understanding of Jewish environmental values. With three areas of focus: creating and maintaining the Shalom Park Community Garden to serve as the educational hub for the initiative; working with Shalom Park facilities to reduce the carbon footprint of building operations; and educating the community about Jewish values related to protecting the earth and sustainable living; Shalom Green is poised to promote environmental stewardship across the community. We made great strides in 2019 and are excited to continue our work in 2020 and beyond.

We’re building awareness and sharing our story through hands-on activities, volunteer opportunities, and educational events. In 2019:

* Shalom Green participated in Temple Israel’s Yom Gemilut Hasadim and Temple Beth El’s Mitzvah Day, hosting hands-on projects that allowed over 100 community members from both Temples the opportunity to give back.
* Shalom Green partnered with LJCC Cares to host a screening of A Plastic Ocean, an award-winning documentary that sheds light on the vast environmental impacts of consumer plastic waste. Over 85 in attendance were given “Pledge Cards” outlining various ways that consumers can pledge to make conscious choices that reduce plastic pollution.
* We launched the Shalom Green Horticultural Education program aimed at teaching horticultural and environmental awareness through volunteer service opportunities for adolescents.
* Over 90% of the produce generated in the Shalom Park Community Garden is donated directly to charitable organizations including the food pantry at Jewish Family Services of Greater Charlotte. Shalom Green donated over 150 lbs of produce in 2019.
* Shalom Green engaged over 1,000 individuals in environmental programming across the Park. Our final event of 2019 will be held on December 4 at 7 PM in the Sam Lerner Center. We are hosting a Sustainable Jewish Communities panel discussion that will highlight current successes of Shalom Park and explore sustainable strategies implemented at Jewish communities nationwide. Our featured panelists are Rabbi Judith Schindler, Jennifer Roberts, and Rabbi Snow. The event is free, please register at www.shalomgreenCLT.org.

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Secure Your Sponsorship Today! Pledge Now, Pay Later
For More information go to JFScharlotte.org or call 704.364.6594

Live Laugh Give COMEDY NIGHT
Sunday, June 7, 2020

Bal Tashchit and Beyond: Going Green in 2019

The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely, or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quite alone with the heavens, nature, and God. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be and that God wishes to see people happy, amidst the simple beauty of nature. As long as this exists, and it certainly always will, I know that there will always be comfort for every sorrow. And I firmly believe that nature brings solace in all troubles.”

– Anne Frank, The Diary of a Young Girl, July 15, 1944
Creating Space for Diverse Opinions on Israel

By Michele Schulman

Have you ever wanted to lead an Israel program, but didn’t feel qualified? That was me. Israel has been a topic I’ve always been interested in, but I’ve always felt like there was someone who was smarter or more knowledgeable about it and therefore I had no business getting involved. So I shied away and would engage only if it was a topic no one could argue with, like falafel. And then I went on the Moishe House and Makom 4HQ Israel Encounters trip this summer and it changed everything.

4HQ, or the 4 Hatikvah Questions, are different entry points into the conversation around Israel:
1) How do we stay safe? (i.e. security)
2) Who is the “we” and how should “we” behave? (i.e. peoplehood)
3) How can we maintain our freedom?
4) How do we relate to our territory? (i.e. the land)

On our trip, these four questions became the lens for how we would interact with the speakers, educators, and discussions to better understand where the people and ideas originated and their intent. We were able realize that at times when people discuss the conflict they are approaching the conversation with a specific perspective, for example, with a focus on security, while others are focusing on the rights of individuals. Both of these viewpoints are completely valid and important, but if a conversation on the same issue coming from different places can lead to misunderstandings and ultimately further conflict.

What I learned on 4HQ is that by using this framework, it’s possible for anyone to lead Israel programming and be comfortable hosting Israel programs that go beyond hummus.

At Moishe House’s North American Training Conference (Natty Con), Gabrielle Adler, Senior Southern Regional Manager, and I led a session during “Plus One” (breakout sessions regarding inclusivity and diversity) using this model. We had forty community builders engage with simple activities that we ourselves did on 4HQ in Israel and in that hour had a few non-combative conversations. Cramming one week into one hour didn’t give us much time to dive deeply, but we enabled participants to explore where they already relate to Israel and get them to think about where they have a painting you hate, you would never take it off the wall and destroy it. You may look at it, decide how you feel, and move on. Then at the end of the night, you can go back to your own home which you’ve styled to your taste. A difficult conversation can operate the same way.

Another concern is often: “What do I talk about?” When creating an Israel-related program, think about what you already love about Israel. What are you challenged by, and what are you still questioning? A good place to start in any kind of program planning is exploring what you’re already thinking about.

You can then figure out where that subject fits into the framework of the 4HQ. When you know where it falls, you can establish the lens you’d like participants to focus on through the dialogue you’re opening. Alternatively, when you know what lens you’re talking through, you can try to make sure that other lenses are opened in the future.

Everyone, much like with their own on Jewish identity, comes to the Israel conversation or program from a different place and experience. Each person has different passions and perspectives which shape how they see the whole situation. Still, 4HQ has taught me that it shouldn’t be the reason to not talk about it.

If you’re between the ages of 22-32 and engaging in Israel is something you want to do, Moishe House wants to support you. For more information about 4HQ Israel Encounters, visit www.4hqisrael.org, or to learn more about the ways Moishe House is empowering young adults to create meaningful Jewish experiences visit www.moishehouse.org.

Michele Schulman is Moishe House’s New York Regional Manager, working directly with Moishe House residents in the Greater New York area.
‘Tis The Season - Not So Joyful for Everyone

It’s December. Chanukah is in full swing, the candles on the menorah are burning brightly each night, and soon kids all over Charlotte will be receiving presents rejoicing in the holiday that is the “miracle of lights.” Offices are being decorated, holiday parties being planned and celebrated and the “‘Tis the Season” music is all over the airwaves. Reservations for New Year’s Eve are top of mind and for some it’s the start of a year-end reflection and contemplating New Year’s resolutions.

Although this time of year is fun and joyful for many, the added stress of a busy schedule, an over stretched budget, and challenging family dynamics can make the season challenging for many of us. Even for those of us who may not experience depression and anxiety during the rest of the year, we may find ourselves feeling a bit more “blue” or worried and on edge during the holiday season. For those who do experience depression and anxiety, this time of year can cause these symptoms to worsen. Even the clocks changing from daylight savings time and the shorter days may affect our mood and cause us to feel more tired and out of sorts.

If you notice that you or a loved one are experiencing winter time blues or loneliness this year, there are some simple and easy changes you can make to help to combat this experience and feel better.

* Create a healthy sleep routine: going to sleep and getting up at the same time (even during school breaks and vacations) is an important part of wellness. Also limit screen time before bed (no phone or other hand held screens for 30 minutes before bed is a good guideline) and try doing a relaxing activity such as taking a warm bath before bed.

* If you feel overwhelmed by the number of activities on the schedule, have a family meeting and narrow down your obligations to the most important functions. Be careful of over scheduling and make sure to schedule some “down time” to relax and unwind, too.

* If you are feeling isolated and lonely, this is very normal. Many people feel more sad and lonely during this time of year and it is ok to feel this way. Reach out to a friend, neighbor, or community support. If you are concerned about a loved one, check in. It is ok to ask them how they are doing, tell them you are here for them and explain that it is common to feel a little down this time of year.

* If your loved one seems lonely or sad, you can ask them to join you for a walk or for a cup of coffee. If they say no, it’s ok, ask again.

* Ask how you can help in the person’s day-to-day life. You might do some housework, lawn care, or errands.

* Get your loved one to talk about happy memories. This may help him or her feel more a part of the celebration.

* Listen when the person wants to talk. Don’t try to talk to him or her out of sad feelings, but acknowledge them.

* Reach out to loved ones living away. Call your family members, especially seniors and let them know you’re thinking of them and that you miss them. Even if you can’t be together it helps them just to know you care.

For additional support call Jewish Family Services at 704-364-6594.

Joining the Hebrew Cemetery Makes Your Pre-Planning Easier

We are creatures of habit. Each day we wake up on the same side of the bed, we eat the same type of breakfast, we sit in the same car and we take the same route to work. As the season is changing once again, we are reminded that the secular year is nearly over and soon we will be entering a new one that is full of opportunities. But life throws curveballs and one that is full of opportunities soon we will be entering a new year, there are some simple and easy changes you can make to help to combat this experience and feel better.

* Create a healthy sleep routine: going to sleep and getting up at the same time (even during school breaks and vacations) is an important part of wellness.

The Hebrew Cemetery cultivates memberships as the cemetery is not attached to any temple but rather is a community cemetery for the Greater Charlotte area. For $72 per year one can become a member of the cemetery. For two cents a day, one becomes eligible for member pricing and is able to save nearly 30% on the price of plots and service fees.

The grave site can be paid in full at the time of purchase or over two years, interest free with a minimum of quarterly payments. The additional perpetual care fee and the actual burial costs may also be pre-paid or taken care of at the time of need.

Now is the perfect time to make your preplanning arrangements. Two years ago we opened parts of our newest sections; a continuous traditional all Jewish section and a community inter-faith section. Choose your preferred location from many different locations. You may select a plot that is closer to shade trees, next to the path leading to the memorial building, near the hillside or toward the back of the property. Act now while premium sites are still available. Keep in mind that the price that you pay now through pre-planning will be guaranteed; no matter what it will cost when you actually will need your final resting place.

Give the final gift and plan ahead so that your family can focus on the one and only thing they should concentrate on when a loved one passes: grieving.

The Hebrew Cemetery will assist you in receiving a budget, selecting a grave-site, or referring you to a funeral home or monument company. We will help you throughout the entire process to personalize the funeral service, whether it is a modest, intimate gravesite gathering, or a service in our memorial building to bring together friends and family.

To schedule an appointment or to receive further information about preplanning, please contact Director, Sandra Goldman at 704-576-1859 or director@hebrewcemetery.org.

Todah Rabah to The Charlotte Jewish News Donors

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December 2019

At the Levine JCC we build

July 2019

JCHILDCARE.

7 weeks – 7 years old
Children will enjoy a nurturing environment to explore and have fun with crafts and activities, while parents workout.

Mon-Fri AM ....................8am-1pm
Mon-Thu PM ..............4pm-7:30pm
Saturday .....................12pm-3pm
Sunday ......................8:30am-2pm
Per Hour: M/$4.50 NM/$ 5.50

Grades K-5th
A great, supervised space for your elementary age child to have fun and hang out with friends, while you workout!

Sundays, 8:30am–1pm
Location: Check with LJCC Customer Service
M/$2/hour
NM/$5.50 per hour
Reservations Required! 704-366-5007, or visit LJCC Customer Service.

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

Wellness & Fitness
Jenny Crow 704-944-6870
jenny.crow@charlottejcc.org

Sports
Stephanie Garner 704-944-6743
stephanie.garner@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

www.charlottejcc.org • 704-366-5007

www.charlottejcc.org/7childcare

DECEMBER HOLIDAY HOURS:

Tuesday, December 24 – Christmas Eve ............................................................... 5:30 AM – 5:00 PM
Wednesday, December 25 – Christmas Day .......................................................... 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Tuesday, December 31 – New Year’s Eve ................................................................. 5:30 AM – 5:00 PM
Wednesday, January 1, 2020 – New Year’s Day ....................................................... 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM

33rd LEVINE JCC ANNUAL MEETING

at the The Sandra and Leon Levine Jewish Community Center

Tuesday, December 10, 2019
7:00pm

Sam Lerner Center for Cultural Arts

All Are Invited to Join Us!

• Election of Officers & Directors
• Awards Recognizing the Contributions of Volunteers

www.charlottejcc.org

www.charlottejcc.org/teamcarolina

TEAM CAROLINA

IS GOING TO SAN DIEGO!

Each year, over 3,000 teens from around the world come together in North America to compete in this Olympic-style sporting event and arts competition. Team Carolina ambassadors will compete in the 2020 Games and ArtsFest in San Diego. Registration for the Games is easy, but being a delegate on Team Carolina takes commitment. Commitment to your JCC, commitment to mitzvah, commitment to family and commitment to the team are required in order to wear your Team Carolina swag.

Maccabi Games® & ArtsFest

August 2-7, 2020 • San Diego, CA

Teamm Carolina Delegation Contact:

Stephanie Garner • 704-944-6743 • stephanie.garner@charlottejcc.org

Sandra and Leon Levine Jewish Community Center
5007 Providence Road • Charlotte, NC 28226
704-366-5007 | charlottejcc.org | facebook.com/levinejcc
community – קהילה – kehilah

Early Childhood
Shababa Shabbat
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Celebrate Shabbat with Ms. Patty in a relaxed and playful, community atmosphere with music, creative prayer, movement, and delicious challah. Experience and connect with Shabbat in a brand new and energetic way guaranteed to nurture family bonds and build connections to Jewish life and values
Fridays, 10:30am
Alvin E. Levine Gym
Free

K-8th Grade
Kids’ Night in @ the J
Parents’ Night Out
7 Weeks – 12 Year Olds Members Only
Drop off your kids for a fun Hanukkah-themed night at the J, while you enjoy your own night out. Younger ones will enjoy a Darby Acres Bunny Farm, pinata’s, Hanukkah crafts, and a pizza dinner. Older kids will enjoy pizza dinner and Chocolate Bar in a Car. Limited space, Reserve today at the LJCC Customer Service Desk 704-366-5007.
Saturday, December 21 • 5:30-8:30pm
$25/child $50/2 siblings $65/3 siblings

Adulst
“Nosh & Know” about Parkinson’s Disease
Join us monthly for a series of topics. We’ll provide refreshments and snacks. December topic: “Ideas for Making your Life Easier and Safer with Parkinson’s Disease” presented by Staci Mond, OT, Advanced Home Care.
Tuesday, December 17 • 11:30am-12:15pm
Weinberg Senior Center • Free
Must RSVP each month, by the Friday before to 704-944-6792 or jill.lipson@charlottejcc.org
This program is offered in collaboration with

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.

Oasis Book Club
November’s Book: Pachinko, by Min Jin Lee
Friday, November 22, 1–2pm
FSP Boardroom • Free; just show up!
704-944-6753 or sharri.benjamin@charlottejcc.org

Tai Chi/Qigong
Adults 50+
Improve your strength, balance and flexibility through this gentle form of fitness.
Tuesdays, 11:45am–12:45pm (all levels)
Swimmer Family Aerobics Studio
Oasis/M/$30 B/$20 NM/$42 per month
Drop-in fee: M/B/$12 p/class NM/$14 p/class

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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.

JTEENNS. CHARLOTTE.

TENNIS & TODDIES FALL SOCIAL
Fall fun tennis event featuring men’s, women’s, & mixed doubles rounds. Players may sign-up as a couple but will most likely be split up. Min 16 players/ Max 60 players • Cancellations: 72 hours advance notice required for refund.
Saturday, December 14
3–5:30pm
Per player: M/$15 NM/$25
Complimentary Refreshments
Beer & Wine
LIMITED SPACE - MUST REGISTER BY: Thursday, 11/28@5pm
Call 704-366-5007 or Visit LJCC Customer Service Desk
Questions? 704-944-6748 • gregory.connor@charlottejcc.org

OASIS
Monthly Field Trips
M/W/F Kosher Lunch

HOURS
Monday–Friday • 9am-5pm
Weinberg Senior Adult Center
Jill Lipson • 704-944-6792

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Temple Israel Presents

ONE NIGHT ONLY

Kavanah:
The Heart & Soul of
Barbra Streisand

FEATURING CANTORS
SHIRA LISSEK & MAGDA FISHMAN

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 5 P.M.

Please join Cantor Shira Lissek for a Winter Concert Fundraiser*, benefiting Temple Israel, as she welcomes her close friend, Cantor Márga Fishman, along with some remarkable musicians. The evening will include performances of Barbra Streisand classics, as well as incredible Jewish music selections. Visit templeisraelnc.org for more information about sponsorships and tickets.

* In recognition of their decades of service and dedication to Temple Israel, Ruth & Alan Goldberg will be presented with the Shofar Award during this event.
Lauren Mond Nominated for Student of the Year: Leukemia and Lymphoma Society

“Since the early 1960s, five-year survival rates for many blood cancer patients have doubled, tripled, and even quadrupled,” quotes Lauren Mond. “We really are changing the face of blood cancer!” Her enthusiasm is well founded. And she is demonstrating her commitment this year as a candidate for Student of the Year with the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS).

“Student of the Year is a philanthropic leadership development program for exemplary high school students,” explains Britt Hykal, the Student of the Year Senior Campaign Manager for the local LLS. “During the campaign, participants foster professional skills such as entrepreneurship, marketing, and project management in order to raise funds for LLS.”

Lauren’s team, Lauren’s Lifesaving Squad, will raise funds in honor of a young patient hero who is currently battling a blood cancer. The campaign is seven weeks long and begins January 26, 2020. At the end of the seven weeks, the candidate team that raises the most money is named Student of the Year.

“Student of the Year is the newest addition to our legacy of innovating in fundraising,” says Hykal. “It’s amazing to watch these young men and women work so hard to fundraise and to help us cure cancer. Their ambition and commitment to this cause is truly inspiring.”

Lauren’s inspiration to raise funds for LLS came from knowing that a close family member lives with a blood cancer. “Our mission is to not only raise the most money, but also to bring attention to blood cancers like leukemia, which is the most common form of cancer in children and teens,” Lauren says. “The donations not only support LLS-funded research but will help provide critical information and support for patients, and support advocacy for laws to ensure patients can access the care and treatments they need.”

Visit https://events.lls.org/sec/CLTSoy20 and look for Lauren’s Lifesaving Squad. Click on Student of the Year to donate to Lauren’s team and see the other inspiring teens vying for the title of Student of the Year.

Lauren and her family are members of Temple Beth El and Temple Israel, and Lauren was on- firmed through Hebrew High and is a member of Chai Chaverim BBG.

Order Your 2020 Mah Jongg Card Now Through Hadassah

Hadassah is now collecting orders for the 2020 mah jongg card.

1. Write your personal information (name, address, phone number, and email on a piece of paper that is not your check) and you’ll receive an email confirmation of your order by February 1, 2020, directly from the National Mah Jongg League.

2. Make your checkout to Hadassah. We process your order, but your card and newsletter come directly from the National Mah Jongg League. In return for our help, the NMJL makes a donation to Hadassah.

3. Want to do something easy to benefit Hadassah even more? Be a table captain. Collect all the checks and personal info from your games. It’s still one envelope, one stamp, but you can insure that every player you know buys their card through Hadassah. Their ambition and commitment to this cause is truly inspiring. Last year your participation made almost $750 for Hadassah.

4. You can order your card now before the Chanukah and year end rush. No need to wait for the Mah Jongg League paperwork.

5. Two ways to order: Mark your order envelope to Madeline Aron and drop off at the JCC front desk, or mail in to Madeline Aron, 4940 Hardison Road, Charlotte 28226.

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Hadassah Announces New $250,000 Endowment Gift for Groundbreaking Israeli Stem Cell Research

By Diana Warth Bregman and Sharon Goretzky

Hadassah, The Women’s Zionist Organization of America, Inc. is pleased to announce a new $250,000 endowment gift from an anonymous Charlotte donor to support Hadassah Medical Organization’s (HMO) groundbreaking stem cell research.

“Practical Zionism” – putting Jewish values into action – has been a key component of Hadassah’s mission for over a century. As explained by the donors themselves, “We have always valued the concept of tzedakah, believing there is an obligation to provide for our extended family and community we live in. We have always made annual donations to support the values that are important to us. Establishing an endowment fund takes the gift and extends it beyond time. Both Hadassah and Israel have proven resources and commitment for this applied research. With this endowment, we now have our sustaining legacy to support Hadassah and Israel.”

Founded in 1912, Hadassah began with a small mission to provide emergency care to infants and mothers in pre-state Israel. Hadassah has flourished into two world-class medical and research hospitals in Jerusalem, treating over one million patients a year, without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, or nationality. Bringing advanced medical care to all earned Hadassah a nomination for a Nobel Peace Prize in 2005. Hadassah continues to contribute to the betterment of the world through life-saving medical care, research in service to humanity, and other acts of tikkun olam.

Twenty years ago, when stem cell therapy was highly regulated in the United States and other countries, it was well underway in HMO’s labs. Human embryonic stem cells have the potential to turn into any kind of cell in the body – brain, heart, lung, retina, bone marrow – and multiply infinitely. Adult stem cells live all over our bodies; their function is to repair local damage.

In the past five years, researchers at HMO have made tremendous strides in creating stem cell therapies that are on the leading edge of medical science. Using human embryonic stem cells, HMO scientists have halted the deterioration of the retina in laboratory models; using patients’ own stem cells, they have inhibited the progression of ALS in human clinical trials. Treatments or cures for diseases like Age-Related Macular Degeneration, melanoma and other cancers, ALS, Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s, and diabetes could be a reality in the foreseeable future.

The stunning results of HMO pre-clinical studies and clinical trials continue to fascinate the worldwide medical community. Another example is the work of Prof. Tamir Ben-Hur, head of the Division of Clinical Neurosciences at the HMO. Ben-Hur’s research reveals that stem cells which reside in the brain may play an important role in protecting some people from Alzheimer’s disease.

As Prof. Ben-Hur and his colleagues explain in their article in the December 2018 issue of Neurobiology of Aging, specific stem cells called neural precursor cells (NPCs), when transplanted into a mouse’s brain, demonstrate that they “possess powerful immune-modulatory and trophic properties.” In other words, they help the brain function better, and potentially restore nerve cell communication.

With age, however, these NPCs become dysfunctional, losing these important properties. Prof. Ben-Hur and his team note that “this dysfunction is induced by the pathological Alzheimer’s brain environment at a critical time point before neurodegeneration.” They hypothesize that these stem cells’ failure to provide tissue support may be involved in promoting degeneration of the brain’s neurons. Prof. Ben-Hur notes that “the optimistic side of the story is that stem cell dysfunction is not inherent, but rather acquired, and is potentially reversible.”

In 2018, Hadassah embarked on a $91.2 million 360 Degrees of Healing capital campaign to re-imagine the iconic Round Building, the original inpatient center at Hadassah Ein Kerem. Through these much-needed renovations, HMO doctors will be able to further innovative research from “bench to bedside” that will both improve patient care and accelerate the discovery process. As Hadassah’s infrastructure continues to grow, so will Hadassah’s potential to discover, heal, and share knowledge with the world-wide medical community.

The work of HMO medical experts is only made possible through the generosity of individual and institutional donors. As these donors shared, “We hope our gift will inspire others in our community and family to similarly support the ongoing work of Hadassah Medical Organization.”

For more information on how you can make an impact with Hadassah, please contact Diana Warth Bregman, Hadassah’s Director of Development for the South, at 814-673-4303 or dwarth@hadassah.org.
PJ Library & The Jewish Preschool on Sardis present

DONUT MISS THE FUN: HANDS-ON CHANUKAH

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15 | 10:00 AM
EPSTEIN CHABAD CENTER FOR JEWISH LIFE
6619 Sardis Road

Jump into Chanukah with Fabulous Family Activities including:

- Dreidel Bounce House
- Decorating Donuts
- Creating Snowglobes
- Puppet show

Free and Open to All
Register at www.nextgencharlotte.org

Questions: Debby Block, CJE Program Coordinator | 704.944.6780 or debby.block@jewishcharlotte.org
International Speaker, Adrienne Gold Davis, Hosted by W.O.W. (Women of Wisdom)

On Sunday evening, October 27, a crowd of community members turned out to enjoy time with international speaker Adrienne Gold Davis at Queens University’s Ketner Auditorium. The event was hosted by W.O.W. (Women of Wisdom), a local inter-denominational Jewish women’s non-profit organization. W.O.W. is affiliated with the Charlotte Torah Center, but it is unique because it welcomes all Jewish women, regardless of their backgrounds or affiliations.

Adrienne Gold Davis is a sought after presenter who has devoted her life and professional career to Jewish education and motivational speaking. Her experience as a successful Canadian fashion and television personality brings energy and humor to her talks. Adrienne lectures around the world and is a Trip and Education Leader for Momentum, a global movement focused on the Jewish mother.

Some of the local women who traveled to Israel with W.O.W. founder Sara Oppenheim on Momentum trips in 2012, 2013, 2015, 2017, and 2018, had previously experienced Adrienne’s practical Jewish perspectives on life and relationships and were thrilled to be able to welcome her to Charlotte. Many “Israel Trippies” were in attendance on this night and were anxious to reconnect with each other and to experience Adrienne’s wit and wisdom once again in person.

The talk that Adrienne brought to Charlotte was entitled “Up the Down Escalator: Maximizing Greatness.” It touched upon personal growth, faith, and forgiveness. A quote that rang true to many people in attendance was, “The hardest apology you will ever have to accept is the one you will never get.”

W.O.W. was able to bring this internationally known speaker to Charlotte thanks to an Impact and Innovation Grant from the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, and local sponsors: Lebo’s, Chai Expectations, and the Charlotte Torah Center.

W.O.W.’s mission is to empower, connect, and inspire Jewish women of all denominations through engaging social and educational activities. W.O.W. women accept each other wherever they may be in their Jewish journey. There is mutual respect and understanding as they learn about Judaism, greet old friends, and make new ones. Even the W.O.W. board is comprised of women that are affiliated with Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, or no synagogue at all.

Please join W.O.W. for our upcoming Women’s Chanukah Event on Tuesday, December 17. All women, regardless of affiliation, are welcome. Details about W.O.W. and more upcoming events can be found at www.charlottewomenofwisdom.com. If you are interested in an upcoming Momentum trip to Israel, please email wow@charlottetorahcenter.com.

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Hebrew for high school language credit, offered at Hebrew High since 2013, provides our teens with a unique and special opportunity to strengthen their Jewish identity through language, culture, land, and peoplehood. Students learn Hebrew not only to satisfy their high school language requirement, but to further develop their Jewish identities.

We currently have 25 students enrolled in Hebrew for Credit this year, which is the highest we’ve ever had.

Students acquire a basic proficiency in modern Hebrew developing their ability to perform in all four skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The goal of our Hebrew for Credit program is acquiring the ability to communicate in meaningful ways in modern Hebrew. Through active learning we motivate teens and help them develop their interest in the culture and people of Israel, which continues beyond Hebrew High and throughout one’s lifetime.

As we enter our 6th year of offering Hebrew for Credit, we have proudly awarded foreign language credit to 28 students throughout Charlotte Mecklenburg and Union County high schools since its inception. Read what our current Hebrew for Credit students have to say:

**Top 10 Reasons Hebrew High Students Take Hebrew for Credit:**

1. I enjoy Hebrew for Credit because I can still be a part of the Jewish community after my Bar Mitzvah. I also enjoy learning a language I can use in Temple and when I go to Israel.
2. I joined Hebrew for Credit to learn Hebrew, which is something I’ve always dreamt of. I am really enjoying the program so far, and I am happy that I have already made friends.
3. I’ve been to Israel previously twice, and both times we relied on our tour guide to translate, and I thought it would transform the experience if I go on Birthright if I am able to speak Hebrew, even if I am not completely fluent, because I will be able to really speak, understand, read, and write Hebrew.
4. I signed up for Hebrew for Credit because I had always been curious whenever I would hear my sister, friends, or teachers speak about it. Eventually, I got excited about wanting to learn so I signed up. I have so much fun and on top of learning a cool new language, I have made friends as well. I am so glad I signed up because the challenge and learning are my favorite part of my Wednesdays.
5. I’ve made a lot of memories in my Hebrew for Credit class. Some being the yearly “Pizza in the Hut,” drawing pictures in our workbooks on especially long days, and overall just having fun and laughing a lot. So far, I’ve made some amazing friends and grown more confident with my Hebrew. Although I still have a long way to go, I look forward to the journey.
6. I like the class atmosphere and learning conversational Hebrew.
7. The reason I wanted to join Hebrew for Credit is that I was not impressed with the language options at my high school. The second reason is that I am Jewish and want to travel to Israel.
8. I like the way we get to work collaboratively in small groups. This allows us to both work at our own pace individually and to help each other when necessary. It’s cool that the workbooks came from the ministry of education in Jerusalem and were written specifically for teens.
9. 9. I am studying Hebrew because I am doing it for High School credit. Also, I am doing it because I have been learning Hebrew since I was in Kindergarten so I thought it would be nice to continue it.
10. I came to learn Hebrew because it is different than all the languages we can learn in school. Also, it helps us gain a deeper understanding of our faith.

**Why Take Hebrew for Credit?**

Hebrew High students take Hebrew for Credit:

- Appreciated stock gifts to maximize deductions and avoid capital gains.
- Income fluctuations from businesses or profits from businesses.
- Illiquid business assets or real estate.
- Donor advised funds and private foundations.
- Maintaining current giving levels when future income may be reduced.
- Introducing your children and grandchildren to philanthropy.

Supported by our colleagues at Foundation For The Carolinas, we’re uniquely positioned to help you develop a plan that meets your needs, accomplishes your goals, and benefits the organizations and causes that are most important to you. We look forward to hearing from you!

**FCJC**

Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community

www.charlottejewishfoundation.org | 704.973.4544

**Dear Friends,**

As we head toward the end of another year, we want to thank you for your support of the Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community. We also want to remind you of the many ways FCJC can help with your year-end charitable planning:

- Appreciated stock gifts to maximize deductions and avoid capital gains.
- Income fluctuations from businesses or profits from businesses.
- Illiquid business assets or real estate.
- Donor advised funds and private foundations.
- Maintaining current giving levels when future income may be reduced.
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Supported by our colleagues at Foundation For The Carolinas, we’re uniquely positioned to help you develop a plan that meets your needs, accomplishes your goals, and benefits the organizations and causes that are most important to you. We look forward to hearing from you!

**Thanks,**

Phyllis Wauson
Nancy Kipris
BIM BAM SHABBAT SERVICE, CRAFT AND "KID"DUSH
Saturday, December 14, 9 a.m.
Join Rabbi Kornsgold and Mr. Caleb on guitar for a great time celebrating Shabbat together! We will follow our Shabbat service with a fun kids craft project and delicious "Kid"dush.

HANUKKAH CELEBRATION, BIM BAM SHABBAT SERVICE, AND ENHANCED HOLIDAY "KID"DUSH
Friday, December 27, 5:45 p.m.
Join Rabbi Kornsgold and Mr. Caleb for a great time celebrating Shabbat and Hanukkah! Our service will conclude with a delicious enhanced Hanukkah-themed "Kid"dush, including latkes and sufganiyot donuts. There will also be dreidels and gelt for every child.

YOU T H E M 6 & 7TH Grade
KADIMA AFTERNOON OUT AT SPORTS CONNECTION
Sunday, December 15, 12:15-3:30 p.m.
Join Kadima for an afternoon out at Sports Connection for bowling, laser tag, and arcade time! Pizza lunch will be provided. Drop-off & Pick-up at TIRS Cost: $20/TI-Y Members; $25/Non-Members. RSVP by 9 p.m. on Wednesday, December 11.

YOUN G PROFESSIONALS
VODKAS & LATKES 2019 WITH MOISHE HOUSE
Saturday, December 14, 8-11 p.m.
Location TBD
Join Torah on Tap and Moishe House Charlotte for another fun-filled Hanukkah celebration! We’re hosting our 6th Annual Vodkas & Latkes Party for Jewish Young Professionals. More details to come.

WOMEN OF TEMPLE ISRAEL (WOTI)
HANUKKAH: MIRACLES IN OUR LIVES
Thursday, December 19, 7 p.m.
Location: TI Boardroom
Have you experienced miracles in your life? Join us for an intimate, self-guided discussion of the miracles in our lives and to explore the nature of miracles.

SOCIAL CLUB
ANNUAL HANUKKAH LUNCHEON
Sunday, December 22, 12:30 p.m.
Location: Leon and Sandra Levine Social Hall
We’ll enjoy a delicious holiday meal, including lots of latkes. After lunch, Cantor Emeritus Elias Roochvarg will lead us in a Hanukkah Song Fest with group singing! The cost for members is $22 and guests $26. Mail payment to Temple Israel, c/o Social Club.

SOCIAL ACTION
MEN’S SHELTER OF CHARLOTTE (STATESVILLE AVE.)
Tuesday, December 24, beginning at noon (Christmas Eve)
Join us as we cook a healthy, delicious, dinner at Temple Israel, and then serve it to 120+ men in need at the Statesville Ave Men’s Shelter. Collecting donations of clothing, toiletries, etc. For details, visit templeisraelnc.org. To volunteer, please contact Jonathan Berger (jbergertisa@gmail.com or 704-995-1732).

LIFELONG LEARNING
LUNCH N’ LEARN WITH RABBI HOWARD SIEGEL
Thursday, December 12 (lunch menu: NY Deli*)
When All You’ve Wanted Isn’t Enough- The Search for A Life That Matters, 11 a.m.
Power up your lunch hour with an appetizing array of food for thought, and join Rabbi Howard Siegel once a month at Temple Israel for an engaging discussion on one of Harold Kushner’s thought-provoking books, followed by a delicious catered lunch (menu: NY Deli – vegetarian option available). Registration required. Cost: $10/TI Congregants; $18/Guests. To register, visit templeisraelnc.org.

Empty Nesters
MARK YOUR CALENDAR
YOM GEMILIUT HASADIM
(A Day Performing Acts of Loving Kindness)
Sunday, January 19

Social Action
MEN’S SHELTER OF CHARLOTTE (STATESVILLE AVE.)
Tuesday, December 24, beginning at noon (Christmas Eve)
Join us as we cook a healthy, delicious, dinner at Temple Israel, and then serve it to 120+ men in need at the Statesville Ave Men’s Shelter. Collecting donations of clothing, toiletries, etc. For details, visit templeisraelnc.org. To volunteer, please contact Jonathan Berger (jbergertisa@gmail.com or 704-995-1732).
CJDS Receives a World Class Net Promoter Score of 91

We are delighted to announce that Charlotte Jewish Day School recently earned a World Class Net Promoter Score (NPS), indicating an extremely high level of parent satisfaction touching all points of the educational experience, including school leadership and faculty, environment, communication, programming, and academic rigor.

A Net Promoter Score is a tool that measures customer satisfaction and is used by organizations across all industries, including many private schools, to gauge customer satisfaction and is derived from the answers to a singular question: “On a scale of 0-10, with 0 being ‘not at all likely’ and 10 being ‘extremely likely,’ how likely are you to recommend the school to a friend or family member for his or her child(ren)?”

ISM (Independent School Management), a premiere management-support firm for private schools in the United States, believes that a Net Promoter Score is a critical metric to be monitored by schools. The standard benchmarks for the Net Promoter Score are: 0-50 (Good), 50-70 (Excellent), and 70-100 (World Class). Charlotte Jewish Day School was given an NPS of 91, a rarely achieved score that implies parents would recommend the school to friends and family without reservation and that they are confident in the educational experience and its delivery.

Charlotte Jewish Day School parents feel such a high level of satisfaction because they believe the school delivers on its mission statement: CJDS sets the standard for elementary education built on Jewish beliefs.

Parents value the fact that Charlotte Jewish Day School uses a gifted curriculum as the standard curriculum and that teachers utilize differentiated learning in the classroom, allowing students who are ready to learn at an accelerated pace to do so while others get the right support, ensuring that all students reach their maximum potential. Year after year, CJDS students’ ERB test scores surpass those of other private schools across the nation. An emphasis on character development, being a contributing, caring member of society, and the beauty of living a Jewish life complement the school’s academic rigor.

This can only happen when the faculty and staff are committed and devoted to the school and their students, and we are forever grateful. We are humbled by the trust and appreciation our parents are expressing, and we continue to seek new opportunities to enhance and enrich what we are doing already.

Want to learn more about CJDS? Call Gale…. to set up a tour.

The Shalom Park Freedom School Needs You (to be Part of the 2019-2020 Committee)

And here is why …

Children growing up in high poverty homes typically enter kindergarten with a 30-milion-word deficit compared to peers from higher income homes. (www.freedschoolpartners.org), starting off their educational career at a disadvantage. The discrepancies seem to grow at an exponential rate as the children from socio-economically challenged backgrounds age. When students are entering third grade, children from lower income homes are often two years behind in reading, with almost three quarters of students who are not on the targeted reading level by third grade, never catching up (https://freedom.edu/freedom-school-partners-Shalom-Park). Starting school, the Freedom School Partners (FSP) was selected by the Children’s Defense Fund (CDF) to serve as a lead partner to facilitate the CDF’s six-week literacy-facilitating summer program called “The Freedom Schools.” The Jewish community showed our neighbors support for this program by opening the Shalom Park Freedom School (SPFS) site in 2010.

Current research suggests meaningful and measurable gains from this program. Without intervention, 75% of students from low income homes are estimated to lose 2-3 months of learning over the summer. Research conducted with Freedom School partners suggests that 90% of scholars gained or maintained their reading ability. Those results help reduce the chances of the students falling and staying behind expected benchmarks in elementary school, providing powerful potential to help change the trajectory of these children’s lives.

The Shalom Park Freedom School (SPFS) is one of 16 Freedom School sites in the Charlotte Metro area, and is the first Jewish-run Freedom School site in the country. The Shalom Park site welcomes 70-80 scholars each summer. Our students come from Huntingtowne Farms and Sterlington Elementary Schools, Title I Schools where 97% of children that participate in SPFS qualify for free and reduced lunch.

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“…and so strong a home….”

“The right home is the most important ingredient of success.”

-Ian McMillan

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“My father, Harry, founded Swimmer Insurance Agency over 60 years ago offering security to the community and helping families through times of trouble. Today, we continue that tradition of service with everything we do. We will be there for every milestone, every hardship and every transition your family or business experiences.”

- DAVID SWIMMER

Swimmer Insurance Agency

Photos (L to R): Harry Swimmer, founder of Swimmer Insurance and Mitty Rider | Swimmer Insurance Today

Insurance for Home, Auto, Business and Life.

725 Providence Rd
Charlotte, NC 28207
704-333-0694
www.swimmerinsurance.com

ANDY GRIESEINGER 443-299-8946
www.SalesMensch.com andy@andyre.com
What Do Parents Say about JPS?

Sharon and Shai Fargian are proud parents of Ellie, Maya, and Pnina. Ellie and Maya attend JPS currently and Pnina will join next year. Here are their feelings about JPS:

“We are thrilled for another school year at JPS. We have been part of the JPS family since 2016 and are grateful for the love and education our daughters receive. Through leadership changes in 2018 our school has sustained excellence in academics and maintained a nurturing familial environment. Perhaps more importantly, we feel increased warmth, approachability, and inclusion, and have seen expanded enrichment activities and outside of the box programming.”

Yours Truly

Needlepoint and Knitting

Join Us - Knit, Crochet, Needlepoint

* Handpainted needlepoint canvases
* Huge selection of yarns
* Unique gift ideas
* Expert finishing
* Complimentary lessons

THANKS TO THE AMAZING WORK OF VOLUNTEERS

12,000 blankets have been donated to the Levine Children’s Hospital
10,000 chemo hats have been donated to facilities for cancer patients around Charlotte

WEDNESDAYS 8-11AM at the Levine Jewish Community Center
THURSDAYS 9 AM - 5 PM at 3802 Columbine Circle

All proceeds go to local charities

704-366-6765

CGI Ballantyne Winter Camp

After our sixth incredible and successful summer with more than 120 campers, CGI Ballantyne is back and offering an amazing Winter Camp experience for your children. With activities, games, exciting Jewish themes, daily trips, crafts, and much more, your children will have a blast every single day. Our handpicked staff are experienced, energetic, and fun-loving camp counselors, who love working with children. A special thank you to the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte for their support.

Monday-Friday, December 30–January 3
9 AM-3:30 PM
Extended care available upon request.
For children ages 3-11.
Children will be split by age: Preschool, K-3rd, 4th-6th.
Pricing per child:
Early Bird Price: $55 per day or $225 for the week.
After December 1: $65 per day or $275 for the week.
Cost includes daily snacks and a hot kosher lunch.

To register, or for more information, contact Leah Levin at Leah@JewishBallantyne.com or 704-246-8881 or visit our website www.CGIBallantyne.com.

Waxhaw Menorah Lighting

Join us for our fifth annual Menorah Lighting in Waxhaw.
Thursday, December 26, 5:30 PM, Downtown Waxhaw
E North Main St. at the Overhead Bridge.
This event is open to the community free of charge.
Havurat Tikvah will hold its annual Chanukah Party on either December 22 or 29, 4 PM, at Avondale Presbyterian Church, MacLean Fellowship Hall, at 2821 Park Rd.

Enjoy the glow of the Festival of Lights along with latkes, sufganiyot, fellowship, and song. Participants are asked to bring their candles and chanukiyot to light.

To join in RSVP to admin@havurattikvah.org.

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 Reconstructing Judaism.

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. Havurat Tikvah is also on Facebook at facebook.com/groups/havurattikvah/.

Havurat Tikvah Prepares to Celebrate Chanukah

~ SAVE THE DATE ~
Kids Mega Challah Bake
Monday, January 20

Hear Better, FEEL Better

"Second Look" FREE programming adjustment on your current hearing aids. ($65 value)

Across from the Arboretum
3121 Springbank Ln. Ste G
Charlotte, NC 28226
704-540-3081

PERFORMANCES:
Saturday, December 7 2pm & 7pm
Sunday, December 8 2pm & 5:30pm
Saturday, December 14 2pm* & 7pm *2pm Performance is Sensory Friendly/ASL Interpreted
Sunday, December 15 2pm & 5:30pm

LOCATION:
Gorelick Hall
Shalom Park
5007 Providence Rd, Charlotte

TICKETS: $15

Hearing Instrument Specialist
Madison Levine
Board Certified Hearing Instrument Specialist

JSTAGE PRESENTS
Annie
Book by THOMAS MEEHAN
Music by CHARLES STROUSE
Lyrics by MARTIN CHARNIN

Purchase tickets at charlottejcc.org/culturalarts

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Pre - Hanukkah Events

DEC. 14 Torah on Tap and Moishe House Annual Vodka Latke Party | 8:00 pm | Location TBD - For more information, visit templeisraelnc.org
DEC. 15 PJ Library and the Jewish Preschool on Sardis Donut Miss The Fun: Hands on Hanukkah | 10:00 am | For more information, visit www.nextgencharlotte.org
DEC. 15 Judaic Fair and Hanukkah Bazaar | 11:00 am | Temple Kol Tikvah of Lake Norman - For more information, contact principal@templekoltikvah.org
DEC. 16 Jewish Council of Lake Norman Community Hanukkah Party | 1:00 - 3:00 pm | Mount Zion United Methodist Church - For more information, visit www.jclkn.org
DEC. 17 W.O.W. Women of Wisdom Hanukkah Party | 7:00 - 9:00 pm - For more information - visit www.charlottewomenofwisdom.com
DEC. 17 Temple Israel Empty Nesters: Making Hanukkah Meaningful | 7:00 pm - For more information, visit templeisraelnc.org
DEC. 18 Temple Beth EL SPICE Hanukkah Program | 11:00 am - 1:00 pm | Temple Beth EL - For more information or to RSVP, visit www.templebethel.org
DEC. 18 Women of Temple Israel: Miracles in Our Lives | 7:00 pm | Temple Israel - For more information, visit templeisraelnc.org
DEC. 18 Temple Beth El | 1:00 - 3:00 pm | Temple Beth El - For more information or to RSVP, visit www.templebethel.org
DEC. 18 Temple Beth El | 5:00 - 6:30 pm | Temple Beth El - For more information, visit www.templebethel.org
DEC. 18 Temple Beth El | 6:45 pm | Temple Kol Tikvah

Hanukkah 2019 begins at sunset on Sunday, December 22, and ends at sundown on Monday, December 30.
Navigating the December Dilemma

Nothing stirs up feelings quite like the winter holiday season. Celebrations that should be joyful can become a source of conflict. Someone recently reflected to me, “I get anxious just thinking about it. The Christmas tree in the living room was a source of tension instead of joy. We were both angry.” She asked, “Rabbi, what should we do?”

This question is not new. A significant number of people in our community grew up religiously or culturally in another faith and married Jews. Thank God for our community’s non-Jewish parents, who proudly make costumes for Purim, cook for and participate in the Passover Seder, brail challah and make Shabbat, shape matzah balls, worship and pray, light the candles and make latkes for Chanukah, and so much more.

Yet, December can be a tough month for Jewish families in a world flooded with Christmas decorations and advertisements. This will be especially true this year, as Chanukah and Christmas overlap. Holidays evoke memories. Deciding how to celebrate and communicate during this season is essential. Here are some tips for this season.

- Detoxify the issue and focus on feelings. Approach the conversation with inquiry and humor. Laughing about something does not diminish the importance. Try looking at your partner’s side for a new perspective. Try statements like, “I’m worried that my parents won’t come to visit if they know there’s a Christmas tree here.” or “I feel like I can’t be part of something that was very precious to me.”

- Acknowledge feelings of loss. If the feelings of loss remain off limits, tensions can mount to anger, disappointment, jealousy, and sadness. Even when we make conscious, rational choices about holiday celebrations, there may be sad feelings related to compromise. Often the acknowledgement of these emotions will shift the focus from loss to hope and partnership.

- Childhood memories are a part of us. Our past remains with us, no matter what religious choices we may make as adults. The holiday season is a time when we are often drawn back to our families, and it may be especially important to help one another find ways to share the current season with relatives and friends.

- Be courageous to make adult decisions. Celebrating two sets of holidays in one house may seem like the best compromise, but it may also confuse children and compromise their sense of identity. Leaving the choice of religious up to children when they are old enough can translate to them feeling that they are choosing one parent over the other. That’s an unfair choice for any child to make. This does not mean that your family cannot join in the joyous celebrations of extended family.

- Consider an “Anthropological Christmas.” Many families have successfully managed the December Dilemma by observing Jewish holidays in their own home while sharing Christmas at the home of a family member. Children will not be confused if they understand that they live in a Jewish home and are helping their family celebrate holidays in their home.

- Build Jewish identity throughout the year. Coping with Christmas is easiest when there is a firm Jewish identity supported by a significant number of people in our community.

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Thank You

Our gratitude and thanks to our precious Legacy Donors who have made a commitment to ensure the continued and expanded growth of our educational and enriching programs which are vital to the quality of Jewish life in the greater Charlotte region. The donors listed below have given permission to publicize their names with the hope of encouraging you to join them. We invite you to be part of this great heritage legacy. Please contact Rabbi Shlomo Cohen at 704-366-3984.

With thanks and appreciation,
Lubavitch of North Carolina and Congregation Ohr HaTorah

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To learn how you can create your own Jewish legacy, contact Phil Warshauer (704) 973-4544 or Nancy Kipnis (704) 973-4554.

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Build and Light a 9-Foot LEGO Menorah at StoneCrest

Join us for an unbelievable experience and help us light a giant 9-foot LEGO Menorah at StoneCrest. Bring your family and friends for an amazing Chanukah night including games, activities, crafts, hot drinks, donuts, and latkes.

Monday, December 23, 5:30 PM.
The Fountain Plaza at StoneCrest Shopping Center. Children’s activities will begin at 5 PM.

This event is free of charge.

Temple Solel Keep Our Friends Closer

On forbes.com there is a quote: “It’s not too often that Sun Tzu, the brilliant Chinese military strategist and Al Pacino of The Godfather give the same wise business advice: Keep your friends close and your enemies closer.”

While this statement may present a manner of truth in business, it certainly doesn’t apply to friendship when you know the people who are among you. One friend of Temple Solel was deeply grieving the loss of her beloved husband of 35 years. Lillie expressed the comfort she felt growing up in a Jewish neighborhood and how the synagogue served as a refuge for whenever she suffered a personal crisis in Westchester County, NY. A fellow church parochioner from St. Philip Neri Church suggested she visit Temple Solel and insisted, “They are such lovely people. They will help you get over your husband’s loss and I know the ladies would love to see your Bar/Bat Mitzvah sign-in scroll.”

Within a couple of hours of sending an inquiry email, she received a reply, “Of course. We’d love for you to visit us anytime.”

Reflecting upon her early years, she said, “The Lord kindly sent me Jewish mothers, Sadie and Ruth, to rescue this 13 year old chubby Catholic Italian girl. It was through these wise ladies I learned about Jewish traditions. But most of all they taught me about love of family and friends.”

Before the Kaddish prayer was said at the end of the service, the Lay Leader, Russ Cobe, asked the congregation, “Would anyone like to remember a lost loved one?” Without hesitation our friend lifted her hand and mentioned her beloved husband’s name with the words spilling forth and tears flowing down her cheeks. The Ima (Jewish mother) beside her stroked her hand, “It’s okay. It’s okay.” While explaining the experience our friend said, “I needed to hear these comforting words from a Jewish person. I have found a new place of peace and know I will be back.”

She continued telling her story, “My rabbi in Connecticut addressed the issue of bias between religions and peoples. ‘We just can’t make it without each other,’ he repeated every so often. To preserve the strength of this wonderful country and its precious freedoms we must extend our minds and hearts to one another. Most of our bias is simply based on listening to the wrong people.” She also quoted Pope Francis’ reflections on Vatican II. “Our future consists of living together. It is a call that challenges us, a path to be taken together, for the good of all and with hope. May the religions be wombs of life bearing the merciful love of God to a wounded and needy humanity. May the doors of hope penetrate the walls created by pride and fear.” Then she said, “Thank you Temple Solel. Our reply back with a hug, “We thank you too Lillie, and are so glad you come see us often now that we are friends.”

Temple Solel is a URJ Affiliated Reform congregation and welcomes interfaith families where in many cases, both spouses become members. Couples attend services on Friday evening and then also go together to their spouse’s church on Sunday. We choose to keep our friends closer using Jewish tradition and spirituality as a foundation where sharing, inclusivity, and positive relationships are valued.

On December 9, at 7 PM, Temple Solel SC is excited to host Rabbi Steve Burnstein from Kibbutz Gezer-Birkat Shalom in Israel to update us on progressive Judaism and keeping us connected over the miles.

On Tuesday, December 10 at 7 PM, as a Beneficiary Agency of the Charlotte Federation of Greater Charlotte, Temple Solel is sponsoring guest speaker, Mark Halpern. Mark is a member of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors of Jewish Records Indexing – Poland. The newly formed chapter of the Jewish Genealogical Society is led by Elissa Boyet. Please RSVP to her at niftee@msn.com or 203-731-1882.

All are invited to join us at our annual Chanukah Celebration featuring The Ruach on Friday, December 27 at 7 PM. Bring your chanukiyah and some friends.

For more information see templesolelSC.org, write us at info@templesolelSC.org or call 803-610-1707. Temple Solel holds regular Shabbat services at 7 PM on the second and fourth Fridays of each month at Belair UMC Family Life Center, 8095 Shelley Mullis Rd., Fort Mill, SC 29707.
Giant Double Menorah Lighting at SouthPark Mall

This Chanukah, Chabad of Charlotte invites the entire Jewish community to usher in the Chanukah holiday with a spectacular Menorah lighting celebration at SouthPark Mall. This exciting event will take place on Sunday, December 22, which is the first night of Chanukah. This year, we will light not one, but two giant Menorahs at Southpark.

The Chanukah celebration will appeal to many age groups. The program will start at 4:15 PM inside the mall at Circle Court. There will be a Chanukah Sing-Along with the children from The Jewish Preschool on Sardis, an opportunity to do arts and crafts for the children, and decorate a giant Candy Menorah, which will be entirely covered with Laffy Taffy. Outside, between the Container Store and Dick’s Sporting Goods, there will be a giant Graffiti Art Menorah for the teens to decorate from 4:30-5:30.

The grand Candy Menorah lighting will be inside at Circle Court at 5:15 PM. Once the Candy Menorah has been lit, every one will be invited outside to join the teens and light up the night with a giant Graffiti Art Menorah at 5:45 PM. The SouthPark Chanukah Celebration will include traditional doughnuts and chocolate gelt that will be served free of charge, along with lively Jewish music, including glow in the dark Chanukah knickknacks, T-Shirts, and more.

This celebration is the perfect event to open the Jewish holiday season, as it allows the Jewish community to express pride and joy in our faith in a public venue, during a time when many in our country are celebrating their holidays.

The public venue for the Menorah lighting is considered an important aspect of Chanukah. One of the primary reasons for lighting the menorah is to publicize the miracle of Chanukah - the miracle of the limited supply of olive oil which lasted for eight days in the Holy Temple and the miracle of the great victory of the Maccabees over their oppressors. Chanukah Menorahs and candles will be available for purchase at the event. For more information, please contact Chabad of Charlotte at 704-364-8395, visit chabadnc.org, or e-mail: info@chabadnc.org. Be sure to check out all of Chabad’s Chanukah Events – in Ballantyne, Uptown, Matthews, Waxhaw, Sun City, and Lake Norman. For more information, contact your local Chabad Center.

Temple Kol Ami Is Like a Family

During Yom Kippur services this year, Temple Kol Ami president, Andrew Lyons, delivered a beautiful speech about exactly what TKA considers itself to be: a family. Just like a family we have good times (celebrating Chanukah and Purim), break bread together (Friendsgiving Shabbat and Pizza in the Sukkah), go on vacations together (camping trip), educate our youth (Religious School and Holocaust Memorial Lecture), and kvell with pride at their achievements (B’nei Mitzvah).

Sometimes we grieve together as members of our family have sadly passed away. At other times we might even argue (what, a Jewish family that disagrees? Never heard of it!). But always, the TKA mishpachah is there for each other and responds when there is a need.

So many family members who have been there on our journey for the last decade … Jonathan Shaw saw a need for a synagogue in York County, SC, 10 years ago. He, along with others, took the first few baby steps that have led to the thriving Jewish family that is TKA today. Michelle Silva saw a need for religious education and started Temple Kol Ami Religious School in her kitchen with our first seven students. Today, TKA Religious School has grown to over 40 students who meet in a beautiful educational facility in age-appropriate classes taught by a staff of volunteers who are there for their Jewish family. Erin Roseman saw a need for our kids to socialize together and strengthen their Jewish identities, so she started our youth group. So many examples of family that is ready to respond to the needs of their loved ones.

Just like a family, we have watched with awe and amazement as our baby, our synagogue, has grown and changed and adapted over the last ten years. It definitely takes a village to raise a child, and our Jewish village, our TKA family, has been there to nourish and support along the way. Why? Because it’s just what family does for each other.

As 2019 comes to a close, we can look back with pride at all that we have achieved as a family. We would like to invite you to join our mishpachah in the coming year. Temple Kol Ami has services the first and third Fridays of the month (occasionally there may be an alteration to our schedule, such as the Saturday morning service that is scheduled for December 7 in lieu of Friday night Kabbalat Shabbat service, so please check our calendar at www.tempelkolamisc.org) at 6601 SC-160, Fort Mill. If you live in York County or the Ballantyne area, Temple Kol Ami might be the family for you. We are a warm and inclusive Reform congregation comprised of Jews from diverse backgrounds. We hope to see you soon!

Wishing you a Happy and Healthy (secular) New Year.
By Rabbi Chanoch Oppenheim

[This article is being written from Jerusalem due to a long story that began a few years ago. Thank you, JCC and Federation, for creating a portal that made this story possible.]

A young woman from Panama with a passion — and gift — for baking, decided to leave the comforts of home and enroll at Johnson and Wales. It was Rosh HaShanah and she had classes; the school wouldn’t give her off because it was a mandatory lab. She was planning on going to the lab but then had a Sandy Koufax moment. Would she completely negate a holiday that was one of the few times she found herself in synagogue? Then she started thinking about her family and how they used to go together. She really missed them. She started to reconsider her choice to come to study in America, maybe it was too many changes, too fast, at the same time. She spoke with her dean about going home and pursuing options there. The dean knew of a Jewish faculty member in the English department and suggested they speak. The professor was also relatively new to Charlotte and had no connection to the Jewish community here. She had to be creative; she discovered that there was a kosher restaurant (i.e., there used to be) in town and that there was a kosher restaurant in Panama City, which has a Jewish population the size of Charlotte). In Latin America, all members of the Jewish community belong to the Jewish club, which is a unifying component for all Jews, regardless of observance or affiliation. As such, the logical next step was to go to the JCC. The two women introduced themselves, and the professor explained that a student far away from home needed to find a place that would make her feel at home. The woman who greeted them had recently come back from a dynamic women’s trip to Israel led by Sara, which was part of the international women’s Jewish group called Momentum. She suggested that they get in contact with Sara. Rosh HaShanah that year was the first time we met Leoni.

We opened our home and community to her and invited her back whenever she wanted and asked her if she would like to check in every so often to make sure she was settling in and acclimating herself to a new culture, language, and school. She really appreciated the gesture and a few weeks later when Sara called, Leoni said things were going fine but she still felt far away from home. Sara invited her to come over Friday night to meet the eclectic group that finds their way to us. She had a great time; we invited her back and she accepted. After that she started inviting herself and ultimately came to us every week. She seamlessly fit in and was a good sport about people joking about her strong accent (something like Ricky Ricardo’s) and jumped into the banter by giving great comeback lines.

Eventually, her parents visited and we all became like one big family; they even insisted on bringing us to Panama for Leoni’s brother’s wedding. But it didn’t end there. Eventually, I called the professor to thank her for connecting us to Leoni and also to thank her for taking the time to care for a Panamanian homesick Jewish student. Leoni had told her about coming to our home Friday nights and she asked if she could join us one week to see what Leoni was talking about. We now have a new friend. Then, she found another Jewish professor who had also relocated to Charlotte and had not participated in anything Jewish for a long time. She convinced her to come over one Friday night, and now we have another friend. Since then, I have given a few classes at Johnson and Wales and, due to our friends there, the university has graciously allowed us to use their kitchen for Sara’s annual Challah bake sale before Rosh HaShanah.

Leoni eventually graduated and decided to study in Israel. One year led to another, and that led to her meeting Jacob, who also happened to be in Israel. Although they will be living in America, they wanted to get married in Israel, and that’s why we’re here. Leoni’s parents once again insisted on bringing us to the wedding of what they call the girl with four parents.

It’s time to go; the wedding is tonight but we’re leaving soon with the family to take pictures at the Western Wall. Mazel tov.

The wedding at the Kotel.

Join educators, pediatricians, administrators, and other concerned citizens invested in improving education for all Charlotte students, to learn about the emerging science of adversity and childhood stress. Temple Beth El’s Equity in Education issue team presents Resilience, a documentary that reveals the ways in which toxic stress wreak havoc on the brains and bodies of children, but also chronicles a movement that is determined to fight back. This film will begin a conversation that empowers our community to take action that will enable children in every school throughout Charlotte to build resilience and have a more successful educational experience.

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Greetings from . . .

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Making a better world takes the right ingredients.

This Hanukkah, while you’re frying up the latkes, serve something that will make it an even happier holiday for the whole family — especially your global family. Everything you need is within reach. And the recipe is simple.

Pour in a heaping mixture of nurturing and strengthening Jewish life. Add helping the vulnerable. Inspiring the young. And safeguarding our people. All these ingredients are automatically folded in together through your gift to the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte.

Your generosity, volunteerism and passion empower Federation to improve thousands of lives locally and across the globe.

Thank you! Our warmest wishes for a happy, healthy and meaningful Hanukkah.

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