How Purim is a Call to Leadership

By Abigail Pogrebin

Purim is a dark story marked by a crazy party. I’m still unsure why a close brush with extermination became, in the Middle Ages, an opportunity for costumes and farce, but there you have it.

It’s the fifth century BCE, about a hundred years after the First Temple’s destruction. The Jews who were exiled to Babylon had 75,000 slain. Nevertheless, some say they took themselves with a preemptive strike. Some say for her to now entreat her husband the king, so for her to now entreat her husband would mean exposing her Judaism—not to mention that in those days it was life threatening to approach the king without having been summoned.

Nevertheless, she plucks up the courage, successfully appeals to her husband and foils the massacre. The king kills Haman and his sons, and then, because the proclamation could not officially be canceled according to Persian law, the Jews can only defend themselves with a preemptive strike. Some say they took self-defense too far, slaughtering 75,000.

Purim’s modern observance, at least in Reform synagogues I’ve visited, does not focus on that brutal coda, highlighting instead the reenactment of cruel Haman and courageous Esther. The ritual is to read aloud the story from a scroll of parchment known as the Megillah, which has the biblical book of Esther inscribed on it.

The narrative is then often theatricalized with wacky costumes in a play called a spiel—pronounced “shpied.” Whenever Haman is mentioned during the satire, people “boo” vigorously or spin noisemakers, called groggers, to drown out his name.

Purim is, hands down, the biggest party of the Jewish year. Simchat Torah pales by comparison, with its sips of single malt. This year’s theme is Elvis. One of Roth’s lyrics riffs on “Blue Suede Shoes,” when the king tells Haman, “Don’t you step on my Suede Shoes,” and we’re supposed to get so trashed that we can’t tell the difference between Mordechai (good guy) and Haman (really bad).

I decide to sample some of the elaborate spiel-prep under way in New York City, so I spend an evening watching rehearsals at the Stephen Wise Synagogue on the Upper West Side of New York City, where congregant Norman Roth, 76, a retired accountant, has been writing and directing the shul’s spiel for the past three decades.

Some of his past triumphs line the stairway in colorful, theatrical show posters with titles like “Michael Jackson’s The Thriller,” “Les Mis — Les Megillah,” and “Oh What a Spiel — The Jersey Boys Megillah.” This year’s theme is Elvis. One of Roth’s lyrics riffs on “Blue Suede Shoes,” when the king tells Haman, “Don’t you step on my Shushan Jews.”

Roth takes great pride in his script. And he points out that in his librettos, Haman never dies.

“We have very few men in the show, so we need Haman for the closing number. We never kill him off,” he says.

I ask Roth if it gives him pause to know he’s leaving out the real bloody end of the story—the 75,000 slain.

(Continued on page 31)
I would like to make a contribution to demonstrate my support of The Charlotte Jewish News.

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This past January, two medical professionals from Charlotte had the unique opportunity to travel to Israel on a customized medical trip as part of our P2G Medical Exchange. Dr. Jim Shearer and Larry Berendt, PA joined seven other medical professionals from our Southeast consortium for a week-long trip showcasing Israeli medical achievements and exposed participants to the many ways Israelis think out of the box to solve complex problems.

American participants were matched with physicians in their field of practice and were able to shadow their counterparts in the Hillel Yaffe Medical Center*. Participants also had the opportunity to tour the Western Galilee Hospital, known for its work treating Syrian refugees and the Hadassah Medical Center in Jerusalem. Interspersed, the group enjoyed guided tours in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, wine tasting at a local vineyard, and sightseeing across the country.

This trip was the second part of a two-way P2G Medical Exchange, which started with three Israeli doctors from the Hillel Yaffe hospital visiting Charlotte in May 2018.

For more information about our P2G programs, contact Tair Giudice, Director of Education and Engagement, tair.giudice@jewishcharlotte.org or 704-944-6759.

What Is PJ Library?

PJ Library is an award-winning program that engages families in their Jewish journey by giving free books and music to children around the world. PJ Library is just one of the amazing programs created by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation (HGF). PJ Library in Charlotte was launched in 2013 and is made possible with generous funding from Liz and Brad Winer and the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte. PJ Library provides families with children ages six months to eight years old with free monthly books and the opportunity to connect Jewishly through weekly and monthly programming.

Interested in learning more, contact Kara Culp, Engagement Associate, at kara.culp@jewishcharlotte.org or 704-944-6858.

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

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On the Same Page: Chapter 2 - Promised Land by Martin Fletcher

We’ll be in for a real treat on Sunday, March 24 when Martin Fletcher joins the Center for Jewish Education to speak about his new book, Promised Land: A Novel of Israel. The accolades go on and on about the author and his new book, the first in a planned historical fiction series. The story begins when fourteen-year-old Peter is sent west to America to escape the growing horror of Nazi Germany. But his younger brother Arie and their entire family are sent east to the death camps. The brothers reunite in the nascent Jewish state, where Arie becomes a businessman and one of the richest men in Israel while Peter becomes a top Mossad agent heading some of Israel’s most vital espionage operations. One brother builds Israel, the other protects it. But they also fall in love with the same woman. Over the next two decades, as their new homeland faces extraordinary obstacles that could destroy it, the brothers’ intrigues and jealousies threaten to tear their new lives apart. Promised Land is at once the gripping tale of a struggling family and an epic about a struggling nation. (Amazon) A Wonderful Opportunity for Your Book Club...

Promised Land offers book clubs the opportunity for lively discussions based on the complex issues raised in the book. Visit www.jewishcharlotte.org/CJE to download the discussion questions to enhance your reading experience.

Mark your calendars today, and come as a group to the March 24 event to be held in the Sam Lerner Center for Cultural Arts at Shalom Park. There is no charge for this event and everyone is welcome to join us.

Additionally, the CJE Book Club will discuss Promised Land at our next meeting on Wednesday, March 20 at 10:30 AM. For more information, contact Sue Littauer@jewishcharlotte.org.

Ben Spiegler, 10, has been chosen by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation (HGF) in partnership with the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, to join the national PJ Our Way Leadership Team.

As part of a Harold Grinspoon Foundation initiative to create kid-driven local programming for tweens, Ben and nine other team members from across America will participate in monthly leadership trainings, explore what interests excite them, and learn how to translate their enthusiasm into action.

The six-month program gives team members opportunities to form friendships with kids from a variety of different Jewish communities. During this time together, they will learn skills such as visioning, goal setting, marketing and program planning. Team Leadership kids will also be paired up with local PJ Library professionals to achieve a goal of creating a program that can be used as a model for tween engagement. "Charlotte is so proud to be selected as one of only ten communities across the USA to be part of the PJ Our Way national leadership team initiative," says Debby Block, program coordinator for the Center for Jewish Education. "A big mazel tov to Ben Spiegler who is our PJ Our Way tween leader representative.

"I am excited to join the team so that I can help bring new PJOW programming to kids my age," says Ben. "I like hearing what other cities are planning and hope that we can plan something fun here in Charlotte." Ben’s mother, Karen Spiegler, adds, "I am excited that Ben wanted to join the PJOW Leadership Team (Continued on page 7)
Emergency Preparedness: Training Synagogue Leaders and Inspiring Security Awareness

Leaders of Temple Beth El and Temple Israel gathered for a joint security and safety training in February. Shalom Park’s Director of Safety and Security, Michael Philbeck, along with Captain Ryan Jackson and Lieutenant J.D. Furr from Mecklenburg Police Department hosted two training sessions for the synagogues’ leaders and staff. Its purpose was to lay the foundation and begin building a prepared security culture.

Philbeck opened the session and introduced the objective – increase preparedness and move to a proactive state of thinking in terms of security and safety. The Pitts-burgh Tree of Life event that occurred last October initiated a change in the culture of security, not only at Shalom Park and Charlotte, but worldwide. That spark of change was echoed throughout the presentation.

The training lasted two hours. Leaders met on Shalom Park for the presentation by Philbeck, Captain Jackson, and Lieutenant Furr. At the end of the presentation the leaders were taken to their respective synagogues and were asked to demonstrate their level of preparedness and understanding. The discussion topics included scenarios such as active shooter, fire, severe weather, and criminal activity. Leaders were presented with a basic foundation so in the event of an emergency they would be able to step in and assist others to safety.

Temple leaders were given the opportunity to ask questions during the presentation and throughout the role play demonstration. The answer to most questions began with a question of its own - What would you do? “It is our objective to give you the tools and basic understanding of emergency response for you to make survival decisions in the moment, with no feedback. The likelihood of me or a CMPD officer being next to you when an emergency occurs is almost nonexistent,” was the powerful message from Philbeck and reinforced by CMPD. “Our purpose isn’t to increase your paranoia, but to increase your preparedness,” stated Captain Jackson.

Where are your exits? What room is safest to barricade? How could you assist vulnerable populations in the synagogue? These and many more questions were posed to the leaders as they began the role play and demonstration. “As leaders, we are not only asking you to begin thinking about these situations for your own survival, but for the survival of those around you,” stated Lieutenant Furr.

Survival. The entirety of the training could be summarized and defined by that one word. It is a difficult subject, but a necessity. Philbeck, Captain Jackson, and Lieutenant Furr spoke regarding the increase in violent events across the nation and lessons learned as a result. From the implementation of fire drills resulting from a school fire in 1819, to the change in law enforcement tactics from events such as Columbine, Sandy Hook, and Virginia Tech, everything teaches us something. The lesson here is simple. We can’t stop tragic events from happening, therefore, we must prepare ourselves for not if, but when they do.

The Temple leaders were also asked to establish best practices and address building safety and security procedures. Communication is key, not only in emergency response, but in preparedness. Philbeck ended the conversation on that subject. The more eyes evaluating our processes, the better our preparedness will be. This could be as simple as notifying Security of a broken exit sign or a door that is propped open and evaluating our processes, the better our preparedness will be. This could be as simple as notifying Security of a broken exit sign or a door that is propped open and the lesson here is simple. We can’t stop tragic events from happening, therefore, we must prepare ourselves for not if, but when they do.

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For more information contact Michael Philbeck, Director of Safety and Security, at 704-944-6843, or mphilbeck@shalom-charlotte.org. Security can be reached at 704-287-0527.

The following list includes donations to the Foundation of Shalom Security Fund that were received prior to January 15 and were not included in our February Thank You listing. – Jeff Epstein, Kenneth and Tammy Goldner, Jon and Stephanie Simon, and Phil and Beth Warshawer.

The Foundation of Shalom Park is a 501(c)(3) non-profit agency that owns and manages the properties and facilities for most of the organizations that are located on the central campus of Shalom Park, which includes: Temple Israel, Temple Beth El, the Levine Jewish Community Center, Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, Jewish Family Services, Temple Israel Religious School, Temple Beth El Religious School, Consolidated High School of Jewish Studies, Charlotte Jewish Preschool, Charlotte Jewish Day School, Center for Jewish Education, Moishe House, Hebrew Cemetery Association, B’nai Brith Youth Organization, and The Charlotte Jewish News.

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Inspired and guided by our tradition of tzedakah (righteousness/charity) and tikkun olam (repairing the world), the Jewish Federation’s Women’s Philanthropy is dedicated to the continuity, connectivity and thriving future of our Charlotte Jewish community, Israel and the Jewish people.

Women’s Philanthropy is about knowing and understanding deeply the breadth of issues facing our community and rolling up our sleeves to help. It’s about educating, inspiring, and empowering women of all ages in our community. It’s about nurturing leadership and fostering a commitment to philanthropy. It’s about having an impact.

OUR VISION

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

TUESDAY, APRIL 30: 9:00 AM | GORELICK HALL
THE POWER OF WOMEN: Literacy & Tikkun Olam
Co-Chairs: Lisa Strause Levinson and Marisa Zeibert
Please join us for this hands-on social action project where we will read with the children at Huntingtowne Farms and Sterling Elementary Schools. We will collect books prior to this event to donate to the students.

For more information about Women’s Philanthropy, please contact Ilana Toch, Development Associate, at ilana.toch@jewishcharlotte.org or 704.944.6784.

WWW.JEWISHCHARLOTTE.ORG
Growing Relationships Through Education

If you look around the Charlotte Mecklenburg area, it becomes immediately apparent that we are a diverse and growing community. The differences in our languages, music, styles of dress, food, and art make a vibrant and ever-changing landscape of sights and sounds. It is a blessing and a challenge at the same time. The Greenspon Center welcomes the blessings and faces the challenges with outreach and education.

During the past month, we have had the opportunity to bring meaningful Holocaust and human rights education into four different schools for diverse reasons. In two of the schools, educators contacted the Center to bring the “Becoming One Human Family” program to their students. This program begins with the students viewing the film Secret Courage: The Walter Suskind Story as they record their thoughts and questions. After examining the issues presented in the film, students at both schools took on the challenge of developing modern day solutions to complex problems. At the end of the program, the students were ready to stand up against hate in their own communities.

Another school contacted the Greenspon Center asking us to provide their theater students with guidance regarding proper use of Holocaust themes in live productions. We worked with administration and educators as well as the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte and the Butterfly Project to bring the best of what we have to offer to the school. One result is that the Junior/Senior theater class will read a Holocaust survivor’s memoir and develop a short play based on the content. We will remain in partnership with the school throughout the year long process and look forward to the end result.

Finally, we worked with a fourth high school to help plan their annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day “Interfaith Justice” program. We travelled to a local mosque where students explored texts and teachings from Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, and Christianity in order to discover how each religious tradition addresses social injustice. After a short discussion, a panel of representatives from four faiths answered questions and shared how they are working in Charlotte to build a more inclusive and just community.

All of this and we’ve only just begun 2019. The Greenspon Center team is excited to be working with so many different partners in education and advocacy. It is through outreach and open dialogue that we help our youth to become informed and intentional citizens. We thank the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte Impact Fund for supporting our Becoming One Human Family program, and every person and organization that makes our programs possible.

PJ Our Way National Leader Hails from Charlotte

(Continued from page 4) and help bring new programming to 9-11 year old kids in Charlotte. I am very proud that he is participating in this National Leadership opportunity to work with other friends around the country to expand the PJOurWay program beyond the books. It is providing him the chance to brainstorm creative ideas with kids his age while learning many valuable skills such as visioning and program planning.

The PJ Library adventure continues with PJ Our Way where kids ages 9-11 can log in to a child-safe website each month to choose a free Jewish chapter book. PJ Our Way members can write book reviews, read blogs, watch kid created book trailers and author interviews, and access activities just for them.

You can sign-up for PJ Our Way at www.pjourway.org or if you would like more information, please contact Debby Block, CJE Program Coordinator at 704-944-6780 or debby.block@jewish-charlotte.org. 

“….I wanted, on this occasion of my farewell, to leave you, my dear children, instructions and rules for conduct. As all of you, however, are grown up, I cannot advise you as is usual with minors. I shall therefore limit myself to some general though important instructions. Above all I admonish you to cherish virtue and fear God; otherwise you can never achieve true happiness on earth nor find peace and reward in the world to come. Content yourself with your fate and fortune and accommodate your needs to your income, behave peacefully to everybody and among yourselves. Do not allow yourselves to become involved in harmful family conflicts. Live, moreover, in concord and assist each other with advice and deeds …”. 

— from Written Out of History, ed. Sondra Henry and Emily Taitz
Levine JCC 2018 Annual Meeting

The 32nd Annual Meeting of the Sandra and Leon Levine Jewish Community was held December 11. The evening began with a beautiful cocktail celebration honoring Capital Campaign Donors, Legacy Donors, and Distinctive Members. Elise Kosofsky served as the emcee of the event setting the celebratory tone with her welcome.

David Van Glish delivered the D’Var Torah, speaking about the Levine JCC’s role as “the lamp lighter” of the Jewish community, our extended mishpocha. David recounted that “As J members ... whether you are the lighter or the one in need of the light, there is a place for you at your Levine JCC.”

The Outgoing Board Directors, Rick Abrams, Evan Weiss, and David Van Glish were recognized for their service to the LJCC. David Van Glish was recognized and specially honored for 14 years of service on the Board.

Jon Simon, Chair of the Nominating Committee, thanked members Julia Greenfield, Elise Kosofsky, Gabe Mathless, Andrew Rosen, Eric Sklut, and Robert Valenstein for their outstanding job in presenting a strong slate of candidates.

The slate of Officers and Directors were presented to and unanimously approved by the general membership:

Officers - George Cronson (Treasurer), Raizel Kahn (VP), Jonathan Kulfersh (VP), Lisa Levinson (VP)

Directors - Brian Bernhardt, Elise Kosofsky, Michelle Perlmuter, Ed Pizer, Helena Scott*, Brian Sterling*, Rebecca Stern, and Eric Wisotsky* (*new directors) Raizel Kahn was nominated as the President Elect of the Levine JCC for a term to begin in 2021.

Jeff Turk, President, spoke eloquently about the JCC’s robust membership of 12,000 and the importance of each individual in our community. He recounted how from youngest to oldest, each face is a thread in the fabric of the tapestry that makes up the J and what makes our community special.

The Levine JCC continues to flourish and is evidenced by the establishment of the Rock Steady Boxing Program for Parkinson’s, the 10th anniversary of our Butterfly Project, and the continued investment in our Cultural Arts program. Our growth and strength is a result of living our value of hachnasat or-chim (hospitality). The LJCC values our diverse community and looks forward to welcoming more Charlotteans into our community this year.

Peter Blair, CEO, thanked South State Bank for their title sponsorship of the Annual Meeting. Peter spoke about the Misdrash, the 70 faces of the Torah – a teaching about the value of an individual’s perspective within the collective experience of the community. He introduced us to the individual J members who are the faces of the Rock Steady Program, the Butterfly Project, and the UNCC Reading Camp. All of these programs had a deep impact on our community.

The J’s inaugural Yachad Award (together) was presented to UNCC College of Education for their partnership in the UNCC Reading Camp. This partnership impacted nearly 70 children who were one to two years behind in their reading skills.

Jenny Crow with Program Service Award recipient, Lucky Levinson.

(Continued on page 11)
Nutrition, Mental Health, and Mindfulness

By Claire Alessi

“Whatever is for dinner?” Did you know the nutritional quality of the foods you consume can impact your mental health? In fact, there is a known correlation between a person’s diet and the part of the brain responsible for emotion, memory, and motivation.

Those who eat more nutritious foods demonstrate better emotional responses and improved memory, which can also stave off Alzheimer’s Disease and Dementia. And, if you are one of those people who enjoy eating a diet rich in “whole foods” such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, whole grains, legumes, fish, and unsaturated fats, you are up to 35% less likely to develop depression than those who eat less of those foods. Conversely, research also shows that regularly eating processed foods can increase your risk of developing depression as much as 65% and depression has been identified as one of the top five leading causes of disabilities. Nutrients that may play a role in combating depression include:

* Vitamin B-12 and folate. Good sources of B-12 are salmon and trout. Folate is found in dark leafy vegetables, almonds, dairy and fortified whole-grain breakfast cereals.

* Omega-3 fatty acids. The best sources of omega-3 fatty acids are fatty fish like salmon, catfish and trout. Other sources include ground flaxseeds, walnuts and omega-3 fortified eggs.

And, it is not only beneficial to observe what’s for dinner, but how you eat your dinner. The term mindfulness, “the practice of being aware of your body, mind, and feelings in the present moment, thought to create a feeling of calm”, has been gaining in popularity the last number of years. Having a mindfulness routine has been identified as a key practice to alleviating mental illness symptoms. So what does mindful eating look like? In a very basic sense, mindful eating means eating slowly while noticing all the different sensory aspects of food such as taste, texture and aroma. Practicing mindfulness has proven to decrease stress and increase enjoyment. So it seems eating more nutritionally and mindfully, has its benefits.

Here’s an exercise you can try to eat more mindfully – Eating an Orange Mindfully.

Find a quiet space with limited distractions before beginning this exercise.

1. Hold the orange in your hand and examine it. Look at the orange as if you have never seen it before—engaging the five senses as you eat the orange.
2. Next, put the orange up to your nose and smell the aroma of the orange. Feel the texture of the orange peel.
3. As you begin to peel the orange, notice the sound it makes as you peel it. Observe the aroma and how it continues to grow as you continue to peel it.
4. Look closely at the peeled orange and notice the different colors and textures between the sections of orange and its white fibers.
5. Pull apart the sections and gently place the orange in your mouth, letting it lie on your tongue first without taking a bite. Observe what you taste, feel, and recognize.
6. Bite down on the orange and notice the flavor. Begin chewing and observe how the texture and consistency of the orange changes as you continue to chew.
7. When ready, swallow the orange and be conscious of the act of swallowing. Attempt to observe this action as the orange moves down your throat to your stomach.
8. Take time after this exercise to reflect on your experience and observations.

*Offer applies to breast augmentation only. Valid February 18-May 24, 2019.

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Drop in the Bucket: Tikkun Olam at Moishe House in 2019

By Molly Cram, Senior Mid-Atlantic Regional Manager

When I canvassed in the midterm elections last November with two friends, we knocked on 63 doors in two and a half hours. We only spoke to three people. Of those three, only one was an undecided voter. We spoke to her about the importance of voting and why we hoped she would vote for our candidate. She may have voted. She may have even voted for who we canvassed for. The likelihood of her doing so was greatly increased by our efforts, but it’s hard to see the benefit in a cost analysis: three people canvassed for two and a half hours and might have swayed one voter? Really, a drop in the bucket. But what might have happened if 30 people canvassed, instead of just three? What about 3,000 or even 3 million? If we all canvassed, it might have made an impact. That’s how I feel about Tikkun Olam, or repairing the world, and through my experience working with Moishe House residents and Moishe House Without Walls (MHWOW) hosts, I know it is a feeling many share with me. And a year ago, I asked myself if there might be a way to encourage the entire Moishe House network to pull in the same direction on key issues related to repairing the world. So, over the past year, at the four Moishe House training conferences across the globe, MHWOW hosts, Moishe House residents, and Moishe House staff members voted on four pillars of Tikkun Olam for 2019. These are four themes upon which we can all focus and build meaningful programming for our communities. Our goal is to have every house, 100 MHWOW hosts, and every staff member participate in programming related to at least one pillar at some point in 2019. It is not incumbent upon you to complete the work, but neither are you at liberty to desist from it.” (Pirkei Avot 2:16) We, as individuals, are not obligated to fix Global Climate Change or improve the world’s Health and Wellness or solve Hunger Insecurity or eliminate Prejudice, discrimination, and oppression. But we do have an obligation to do something. For ideas on that “something” check out what others in the Moishe House community are up to at moishehouse.org/tikkun-olam, and be part of the change.

Molly Cram is an Oregon native and holds a degree in international relations from the University of St. Andrews from St. Andrews, Scotland. Before joining the Moishe House team, Molly previously worked for a disability rights organization, spent time traveling in Central America, lived and worked in an Ethiopian community in Israel, and served as the Director of Engagement at American University Hillel. Molly supervises the Moishe House communities in the Baltimore/Washington, D.C. area, Philadelphia, and throughout Ohio. She loves talking about Jewish identity, human rights activism, and British culture.
Bal Tashchit and Beyond: Tips for a Greener Spring Clean

Are you spring-cleaning or Passover cleaning this year? Consider adding a little more green to your routine.

It is said that our heart is our home but all too often we fill our home with cleaning supplies that can be dangerous to our most beloved including children, pets, the elderly and those among us with respiratory issues. Remember that many everyday cleaners contain harsh chemicals that are destructive to the environment and toxic to us.

Below are some basic tips covering a few of the many ways to reduce the environmental impact and negative effects of home cleaning products.

* Read all labels on cleaning supplies and household products before you buy them. Choose products that do not contain or have reduced amounts of VOCs, fragrances, irritants and flammable ingredients. Take careful note of the following items that often contain high levels of VOCs and other toxic substances: aerosol sprays, air fresheners, chlorine bleach, detergent and dishwashing liquid, rug and upholstery cleaners, furniture and floor polish, and oven cleaners.

* Not all product environmental claims and labels are equal, and only some represent true environmental and health benefits. Be aware of “greenwashing” and look for eco-labels including Green Seal, Safer Choice, ECOLOGO, and GREENGUARD.

* Make your own. Using common household ingredients like white vinegar, lemon, baking soda, and toothpaste, you can make a variety of homemade cleaners that actually work. Safety Tip: Never combine ammonia based cleaners with chlorine bleach or products containing bleach, such as powdered dishwasher detergent. The fumes they’ll create are extremely dangerous. Before doing any mixing, read the product labels first.

Here is Shalom Green’s Favorite Recipe for Homemade Scentsed All-Purpose Cleaner:
* One part white vinegar
* One part water
* Citrus rind or a splash of lemon juice
* Rosemary sprigs (need some? Visit the Shalom Park Community Garden and pick your own.)

Combine the above ingredients together in a spray bottle, shake and then let infuse. You can use the solution for just about anything (windows, dishwashers, carpet, even supermarket produce to remove residues from fruits and veggies). Avoid using vinegar based cleaners on natural stone and hardwood.

If you have an idea for an article, please email info@shalomgreenCLT.org

If you are interested in learning more about Shalom Green, visit our website at www.shalomgreenCLT.org. Like us on Facebook. Follow us on Twitter and Instagram @ShalomGreen_CLT.

Levine Jewish Community Center Annual Meeting

(Continued from page 8)

literacy development, helping them to dramatically improve their literacy skills. He presented the Program Service Award to Lucky Levinson for his volunteer efforts in the Rock Steady Boxing program. Judy and Eric Laxter, Volunte- ers of the Year, were recog- nized for their leadership with the Charlotte Jewish Film Festival (CJFF). As Chairs of the Screen- ing Committee, they have been instrumental in ensuring that over 5,000 members annually enjoy the CJFF. Their dedication and efforts are instrumental in ensuring that over 5,000 members annually enjoy the CJFF.

George Cronson, Board Trea- surer, received the President and Executive Director’s Award. George epitomizes tireless ded- ication to the LJCC, having served as Board Treasurer, on the Stewardship Committee, Finance Committee, Executive Commit- tee, Personnel Committee, as the LJCC representative to the Federation Board of Directors, and Chaired the Adult Program Task Force. George has quietly influenced the LJCC’s growth, development, and prosperity by providing financial oversight and guidance through the LJCC’s largest growth years. George serves on the Board because he cares about and wants to invest in our community. Through his volunteer efforts he is ensuring that the LJCC will be as strong and vibrant for his children as it is for him.

Jeff Turk, LJCC president, Judy and Eric Laxter, LJCC volunteers of the year, and Susan Gundersheim, Charlotte Jewish Film Festival director.

Yachad award recipients UNCC College of Education Bill Anderson, Ellen McIntyre, Sil Ganzó, Daniela Mickey, David Flores, with Peter Blair, LJCC CEO.
Make 2019 the Year You Join the Hebrew Cemetery Association

By Brian Yenovitch, Hilbert Fuerstman Historical Chairman

2019 has been another year of activity and outreach at the Charlotte Hebrew Cemetery. We sponsored a double-feature film – “Wendy’s Shabbat” and “Re-storing Tomorrow” at this year’s Charlotte Jewish Film Festival. We were treated to a wonderful discussion afterwards with Director Aaron Wolff. I hope all of you were able to attend. Our friends at UNCC Hillel along with the Eta Xi chapter of UNCC’s ZBT fraternity spent a nice afternoon performing g’milut hasadim (deeds of loving-kindness) at the cemetery. Special thanks to UNCC Hillel director Jamie Keener and Michael Valenstein, ZBT Heritage Chair, for their leadership of this event.

If you are in a Jewish or civic organization and would like to perform g’milut hasadim - please reach out to our Director, Sandra Goldman to see about finding dates for your group to join us at the cemetery. No one is ever solicited for donations on-site. Our cold winter foretells a warm spring – there will be many beautiful days to spend outside with your Temple, youth group, men’s club, garden club, or employee philanthropic team. Our landscaping tasks are simple but immediately noticed and valuable. You will have a great time while performing good deeds.

If you can’t volunteer, you’d still like to have you as a Cemetery Association member. We have a modest annual dues payment of $72. You can begin your membership in a secure manner by visiting www.HebrewCemetery.org. Our cemetery is member based – and we don’t dictate which synagogue or temple the member should belong to. It may be that you have connections to synagogues in other cities. We don’t discriminate in that manner. Nor do we discriminate based on finances. In 2012, with cooperation from Jewish Family Services and the Charlotte area synagogues and clergy, we petitioned the Jewish Federation to create the Jewish Funeral Assistance Fund. Along with our Norman Steinberger Funeral Assistance Fund, we now have a robust support structure that uses the professional services and experiences of Charlotte Jewish Family Services to direct Federation funds designated specifically for financial aid for funerals as well as contributions from area clergy to provide the same standard of dignified care and comfort to families in their time of loss – regardless of their ability to pay “full price” for a funeral. Our “assisted” funerals are indistinguishable from our other funerals. We don’t have a “paupers’ section” as the other cemeteries have. We work with the families and provide support and guidance because our community is blessed to have a Jewish funeral support system that other communities do not.

(Continued on next page)
Chabad Will Feature Purim at the Circus

Purim is the most joyous holiday on the Jewish calendar and has been celebrated for over 2,500 years in Jewish communities around the world. Purim commemorates the miraculous change of events in ancient Persia, when the wicked Prime Minister Haman convinced the foolish King Achashverosh to kill all the Jews in his kingdom.

The Persian Empire of the 4th century BCE, extended over 127 lands and all the Jewish people of that time were subjects of the Empire. Haman chose the 13th day of Adar as the day to annihilate and destroy all the Jews in the kingdom. Mordecai the Jew, a minister in the king's cabinet, galvanized all the Jews to respond fast, and pray to God for salvation. Esther the queen, Mordechai's cousin, revealed her Jewish identity to the king. Haman was hanged and Mordechai was appointed Prime Minister.

On the 13th of Adar the Jews mobilized and defended themselves against their enemies. On the 14th day of Adar they celebrated and this day was permanently declared as an eternal, joyous holiday by Esther and Mordechai. In Shushan, capital of Persia, they extended the fighting by one day and they celebrate Purim on the 15th day of Adar.

The holiday of Purim is extreme in its joy and merrymaking. The dress up is rooted in the fact that everything turned on its head. The downtrodden Jews were suddenly propelled to the top and Mordechai and Esther radiated with light and splendor. Esther's request was universally accepted as well as the five special observances of the Purim day. They are: reading of the scroll of Esther; sending at least two ready-to-eat food gifts to a friend; giving gifts to the poor; thanking God for the miracle; and rejoicing with a festive feast.

At Chabad of Charlotte the joy of Purim is serious business. We have a full schedule of events planned. This year’s Purim theme at Chabad is “Purim at the Circus.”

Wednesday, March 20, is the fast of Esther. The Purim festivities begin in the evening with the reading of the Megillah at 8 PM. Circus costumes are the recommended attire for all the Purim festivities at Chabad.

Purim day, Thursday, March 21, morning service is at 6:30 AM with the second Megillah reading at 7 AM. There will be an additional reading at 5:30 PM.

The Purim main event will be held Thursday evening at 6:30 PM with a fantastic Circus themed feast which will include hot dogs, mini burgers and relish, cotton candy, popcorn, and of course gourmet Hamantaschen. Circus entertainment for the children and exciting activities for grownups as well.

Fee is $25 per person and $65 per family. (Early bird special - $20 per person and $54 per family if paid by March 14). For more information, please visit Chabadnc.org or call our office at 704-366-3984.

Celebrating Purim in a Topsy-Turvy World

By Rabbi Asher Knight, Temple Beth El

“Read me another book …..” These are the regular words of the sleepy children in my household who are negotiating bedtime. Stories help to shape our understanding of ourselves and root us in the narrative of the world.

“Sing me another song…..” These are the regular words of the children in my household - tucked into their beds, eyelids fluttering, listening to the melody of the Sh’na. Songs help us to express our values and ideals: joy and gratitude, safety and friendship, sadness and mourning, longing and love.

As a parent and rabbi, I often wonder how to engender and encourage my children to feel knowledgeable enough to ultimately make their own Jewish journey when they become adults.

The challenge, of course, is that Charlotte’s prevailing culture is decidedly not Jewish. Jewish culture, food, songs, stories, lessons, and virtues will not randomly seep into our consciousness without deliberate action. How do we create a strong sense of Jewish identity? Reading certain books and singing certain songs, celebrating certain holidays, and joyously living with the seasons and cycles of Jewish time.

This March brings us to Adar II, which brings us Purim, which brings us Haman. On Purim we are commanded to mirth and merriment. We read the story of Mordechai and Esther in the Megillah. We sing songs. We wear costumes. The Talmud goes so far as to say that we should drink until we can’t tell the difference between the “good guy,” Mordechai - and the “bad guy,” Haman.

Not knowing the difference between Haman and Mordechai is not just about tempering the categories of “good and evil.” It’s a powerful spiritual message. Our people’s journey isn’t over - sometimes it’s hard to tell the difference between safety and security. The tides of trouble are still prevalent in our lives today. And on Purim, we tell the story of a people who dared to hope. We tell how they fought for safety, freedom, and opportunity. We learn that our ancestors could not have done it alone. In this crazy, topsy-turvy world, neither can we.

Come celebrate Purim with Temple Beth El on Sunday, March 17 at 11 AM. Members of our congregation will tell the story of Esther, Mordechai, and Haman to the music of the wildly popular Hamilton. The shpiel is appropriate for community members of all ages. We will conclude shortly after noon so that we can head over to the LJCC Purim Carnival. And as we celebrate - whether you wear a costume or not, whether you raise a toast or not, try to think of one way the songs and the stories of this holiday bring you a sense of Jewish belonging, purpose, connection, and joy. Chag Purim Sameach!

Hebrew Cemetery Association

(Continued from previous page)

our Director Sandra Goldman leads with compassion and yiddishkeit.

Please contact Sandra Goldman at 704-576-1859 for more information about being a member, funeral pre-planning, financial aid for funerals, volunteering at the cemetery, or designing the Hebrew Cemetery as a beneficiary of your will or estate.

Please join us and help us accomplish our mission of providing respectful and dignified Jewish funerals for all Charlotte area Jewish people.
March is shaping up to be a whirlwind of activity at Temple Kol Ami of Fort Mill, SC. We will start the month off with Kabalat Shabbat service on March 1 led by our rabbi, Ana Bonnheim. We have been so blessed in the last two years to have Rabbi Bonnheim to lead us in spiritually meaningful services as well as interesting and insightful discussions of the Torah portion. Rabbi Bonnheim has also been a wonderful addition to our Religious School educational experience, meeting with the kids a few times over the course of the year. Her next visit will be on March 31 when she will help prepare our students for their upcoming Education Shabbat service.

Temple Kol Ami is truly excited to welcome The Ruach back to our bimah on March 15 when they will perform their uplifting Shabbat Experience. The performance takes place in the beautiful sanctuary of Philadelphia United Methodist Church, 1691 Sc-160, Fort Mill, and will start at 7 PM. Pizza pre-neg prior to service at 6:30 PM, delicious oneg to follow. This event is free and open to the public, so please join us for what will definitely be an entertaining as well as invigorating evening.

On March 24, Temple Kol Ami will sponsor our Annual Purim Carnival from 10 AM to noon at Walnut Grove Christian School, 1636 Maxwell Mill Road in Fort Mill. This is always a super-fun event at TKA and this year will be no different. There will be a bounce house, games, face painting, food, and a hamentashen walk (instead of the traditional cake walk). Everyone is encouraged to wear costumes and join us for this free event which is also open to the public. The month of March will come to a close with the b’nai mitzvah of two of our Religious School students, Natalie and Jason Linch, on March 30. No occasion brings us more pride than to see our kids called to the Torah after years of hard study. The Religious School is a labor of love at Temple Kol Ami, run by a completely volunteer staff. It truly takes a village to educate our youth, and at TKA this is one of our main priorities.

As you can see, there is a lot going on at Temple Kol Ami. We are a small but growing congregation serving the York County and South Charlotte community. We would love for you to join us at any of these gatherings. For more information, please check out our website www.templekolamisc.org or follow us on Facebook (Temple Kol Ami). Feel free to attend any of our Shabbat services which are generally on the first and third Fridays of each month. We hope to meet you soon.

Purim Under the Sea

March 21

Join us for a Purim Celebration under the sea. Our annual Purim parties are famous for being fabulous, delicious, and a great time for all ages. Join us for an unforgettable evening of fun, great food, and an experience you don’t want to miss. Listen to the traditional reading of the Megillah scroll of Esther, which depicts the age old story of Purim. Enjoy an entertaining slideshow illustrating the historical events, a bingo game to keep you guessing, and your kids will each receive an activity bag to engage them during the reading. Come dressed for the sea and take part in a delicious buffet dinner and Hamentashen. Don’t forget to enjoy all the activities like crafts, taking awesome pics in the photo booth, and making your own Purim baskets to give to a friend. Adults will enjoy Purim drinks while everyone has a fantastic time. Don’t miss out on this great event and celebrate Purim with friends and family.

Thursday, March 21
5:30 PM—Megillah Reading
6 PM—Dinner and Party
South Charlotte Banquet Center, 9009 Bryant Farms Rd.
BJC Partners-$15 per person/$50 per family
Non-Partners-$20 per person/$60 per family
Children ages 3 and under are welcome free of charge.

For more info or to RSVP contact Rabbi Yisrael and Leah Levin 704-246-8881, info@JewishBallantyne.com or visit our website www.JewishBallantyne.com.

There will also be a megalah reading Wednesday night, March 20, at 7:50 PM at the Ballantyne Jewish Center: 8632 Bryant Farms Rd. Free of charge.

Hamentash Bake – Jewish Women’s Circle

Treat yourself to a ladies night out with hamentash baking and Purim fun. Make your own hamentashen to take home and make some more to share with Jewish Family services. Roll, fill, pinch, and bake - and learn about the woman’s special role in the story of Purim. Enjoy delicious refreshments and Purim themed cocktails while you bake.

Sunday, March 10, 7:30 PM
Charlotte Jewish Day School Kitchen, 5007 Providen Rd.
$15 per person
RSVP Devorah@jpskids.org or Leah@JewishBallantyne.com

A joint project of Chabad of Charlotte and the Ballantyne Jewish Center

Register for CGI Ballantyne
www.CGIBallantyne.com
Ages 3 - 11
Rabbi Judith Schindler Presents Women’s Roles in the Hebrew Bible

Statesville - “There are women throughout the Bible who speak out, who use their voices – often at great personal peril – to seek a better life for themselves, others around them, and society.” This was one of the many inspirations that Rabbi Judith Schindler shared on February 3, when Congregation Emanuel in Statesville welcomed the community to participate in a discussion entitled “Women’s Role in the Hebrew Bible.”

Sponsored by Jewish Council of Lake Norman, Rabbi Judith Schindler, renowned author and educator, and the Sklut Professor of Jewish Studies and Director of the Stan Greenspon Center for Peace and Social Justice at Queens University of Charlotte, led the interfaith program. Schindler began with a series of thought-provoking questions, including “When you think of women in Judaism/Christianity, what images come to mind?” Answers such as “women seem secondary” and “we don’t know the names of Noah’s/Lot’s wife or Pharaoh’s daughter” framed Rabbi Schindler’s introduction of two concepts: (1) “invisible women” and (2) “women in power.”

As the presentation unfolded, Schindler led the group to understand how two seemingly opposite concepts are connected, and how, in many instances, a woman is simultaneously “invisible” and “in power.”

Referencing Judith Plaskow’s Standing Again at Sinai: Jewish Memory from a Feminist Perspective, Schindler pointed out Plaskow’s assertion that women “were always part of the community as shapers of tradition,” and suggested that our job is to think about how we tell and teach history. In the texts, where women are invisible despite their critical roles, it is important to...

(Continued on page 18)
President’s Message

By Sharon Goretsky, Charlotte Chapter of Hadassah

What do you think of when hear the word Hadassah? I would guess that many people think of a hospital in Israel, but in actuality, Hadassah is so much more.

Hadassah’s mission statement describes our organization as “a volunteer organization that inspires a passion for and commitment to the land, the people, and the future of Israel. Through education, advocacy, and youth development, and its support of medical care and research at Hadassah Medical Organization, Hadassah enhances the health and lives of people in Israel, the United States and worldwide.” Does any of this describe you? If so, Hadassah needs you.

For any organization to run well, it needs all types of people and Hadassah is no exception. We need women to plan events and women to execute those plans. We need women who like to raise money and women who like to handle money. We need women who are motivated by social justice and education, as well as women who just want to have fun with friends. We need all types of women with a variety of interests and talents. I ask you to think about who you are and where you fit into Hadassah.

Not everyone can make it to meetings and events, and to be honest, not everyone wants to. That does not mean you cannot be involved in the work of Hadassah. Take a look at the website (http://www.hadassah.org) and I am sure you will find something that interests you. Do you have an interest in women’s safety and security, gender equity in health research and healthcare, or civil and human rights? Check out the advocacy page on the website (http://www.hadassah.org/advocate/domestic-advocacy.html). There you will find out how Hadassah makes it so easy to reach out to your representatives in Raleigh, Columbia, and DC. Just a few clicks and Hadassah will send the letters for you. On the website, you will also find a wealth of information from Defining Zionism in the 21st Century to tips on how to keep your heart healthy. You can learn all about Young Judea, Youth Aliyah, and Hadassah’s amazing youth villages in Israel (http://www.hadassah.org/connecting-to-israel/). Look for the link to The Branch, Hadassah’s podcast that offers a glimpse into the everyday lives of Jews and Arabs in Israel forging meaningful relationships (http://www.hadassah.org/multi-media/podcasts/the-branch-podcast.html). The podcast episodes are wonderful.

Are you a nurse, physician, or attorney? Hadassah has National Councils for each. In fact, if you are a nurse and a member of Hadassah, please let me know (sharon.goretsky@gmail.com). I’m a nurse practitioner and would love to see Charlotte have our own Nurses’ Council. If you are not a joiner, you can still help. When you are out to lunch with a friend, why not tell her about Hadassah? Tell her about what you learned on the website and suggest that she check it out for herself. If you meet someone new to the community, tell her about Hadassah Charlotte. Suggest that she check out our website to see what we have going on (http://www.hadassah.org/regions/charlotte/). You will also find a wealth of information from Defining Zionism in the 21st Century to tips on how to keep your heart healthy. You can learn all about the amazing youth villages in Israel (http://www.hadassah.org/connecting-to-israel/). Look for the link to The Branch, Hadassah’s podcast that offers a glimpse into the everyday lives of Jews and Arabs in Israel forging meaningful relationships (http://www.hadassah.org/multi-media/podcasts/the-branch-podcast.html). The podcast episodes are wonderful.

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There really is something for everyone in Hadassah. I hope you will check out the website and find your connection. I am sure it is there.
Family Engagement

BE A STAR!
JOIN PJ LIBRARY & TEMPLE BETH EL FOR HOLLYWOOD HAVDALAH*

Lights! Camera! Action!
Join us for an afternoon of interactive family fun where you can shine like the stars!
(*Havdalah is the celebration of the beginning of a new week.)

DATE: Saturday, March 30, 2019
TIME: 4:00 - 5:30 pm
PLACE: Temple Beth El, 5101 Providence Road
WHO: Families of all ages
WHAT: • Karaoke: Be the star of your own song
• Havdalah sing-a-long with Miss Patty
• Star-Studded crafts
• Photo Booth
• Concession Snacks

FREE - Limited Space
Registration Required,
www.nextgencharlotte.org

Questions: Debby Block, CJE Program Coordinator
704.944.6780
debby.block@jewishcharlotte.org

RSVP by March 29 to www.nextgencharlotte.org
Dining Out, Catering & Hospitality

To advertise, contact one of our sales representatives:
Jodi Valenstein, 704-609-0950
Pam Garrison, 704-906-7034

Arboretum Shopping Center
Mike Sadri & Hospitality

Featuring 124 beautifully decorated guest rooms and suites conveniently located in Phillips Place

Complimentary amenities include:
- Hot breakfast, internet access, transportation to Shalom Park
- Hospitality Suite
- Great Room: Special rates available for Friday night dinner

$2 OFF
Any Purchase of $10 or more with this ad

Hampton Inn & Suites by Hilton
SouthPark at Phillips Place
Where Families Come Together

- Featuring 124 beautifully decorated guest rooms and suites conveniently located in Phillips Place
- Complimentary amenities include: Hot breakfast, internet access, transportation to Shalom Park
- Hospitality Suite
- Great Room: Special rates available for Friday night dinner

For more information, contact:
Erin.Dennis@hilton.com

Hampton Inn & Suites SouthPark at Phillips Place,
Charlotte, NC 28210  704-319-5700
www.hamptonssouthpark.com

Hadassah Charlotte 2019-20 Charlotte
Jewish Community Directory

Now is the time for Charlotte Jewish community members to get your personal listings to us, so that we can include you in the 2019-20 Jewish Community Directory put together with love by Hadassah Charlotte. Many thanks to the entire Directory committee: Jena Coen Gartner, Marci Goldberg, Marci Willenzik, Judy Kaufmann, Amy DeLoach, Bonnie Bonomo, Lynda White, Linda Reece, Sharon Goretsky, Dana Kapustin, and Tonya Meltsner for all of your help! There is a lot of work to be done, but we will look to you, the community, to help make sure all of the information is accurate. Go to hadassah.org/Charlotte and input your household and advertising information so that we can include you in the 2019 Jewish Community Directory. If you are interested in advertising your business, this is a wonderful way to reach an audience of over 10,000 people. Please do not assume that we have your correct information. The best way to ensure that you are listed in the directory is to submit your information on our website. Thank you and we look forward to a wonderful new year in Hadassah Charlotte.

Hadassah, the Women’s Zionist Organization of America, Inc. (HWZOA), is the largest Jewish women’s organization in the United States. With 300,000 members, associates and supporters Hadassah brings Jewish women together to effect change and advocate on critical issues such as medical care, research, and women’s empowerment – meeting with elected officials on Capitol Hill and locally through its Day in the District Program. Through the Hadassah Medical Organization’s two hospitals, the world-renowned trauma center and the leading research facility in Jerusalem, Hadassah supports the delivery of exemplary patient care to over a million people every year. HMO serves without regard to race, religion, or nationality and earned a Nobel Peace Prize Nomination in 2005 for building “bridges to peace” through equality in medical treatment. For more information, visit www.hadassah.org.

Rabbi Schindler Visits Statesville to Talk About Women in the Bible

While comparing “women of strength” in today’s world to “courageous” biblical women, the conversation revolved around examples where women leveraged their power and saw positive outcomes. Common threads were how the women elevated those around them, and how the women worked together as a group, combining their collective talents to affect positive change. As Schindler summarized, “These women used their voices, at times risking their lives, to advocate for their own well-being and that of their people. In each of these cases, women managed, in a patriarchal society, to have their voices heard. In each of these cases, kol isha – the woman’s voice – was an agent for change and goodness. In each of these cases, strong and courageous women spoke out in difficult circumstances.”

Schindler concluded: “I believe the rabbis were correct in their assessment that kol isha – the voice of a woman – has power. Just look at the decades of accomplishments of great women in our country and in our world.”


Rabbi Schindler signs books after the event.
Rabbi Schindler speaks from the bimah at Congregation Emanuel.
Why This Room?

Charlotte Jewish Preschool Director’s Chat at the Teen Lounge in the JCC

By Brooke Amo

Why would I choose to meet in this room? I asked CJP parents at our very first Director’s chat. What kind of environment is this (the teen lounge at Shalom Park) convey to you? To me, the teen lounge is a cozy, casual, fun place that sends the message of open dialogue, approachability, and comfort. These questions were intended to spark the conversation around the importance that environment plays in the education of our children. As equally important, was the display of our materials, the placement of the seating, the lighting and warmth in the room, and the body language of the facilitator. All of these factors together are what we're doing to create a safe, explorative, learning space where children are encouraged to take risks and use higher level thinking skills; all while developing positive relationships with one another and themselves.

The purpose of the Director’s chat is to inspire a community of learning around pertinent early childhood topics. This is an opportunity for parents to learn, ask questions, and engage in meaningful discussions with school leaders.

February 1st at 9:30am (Teen Lounge)
February 26th at 7pm (Location TBD)
April 5th at 9:30am (Teen Lounge)

Morning sessions include coffee; evening sessions include wine.
Please RSVP to Alyson.Kalif@charlottejewishpreschool.org

The room where it happens.

CJDS Kids Have A Voice

By Mariashi Groner, director, Charlotte Jewish Day School

It is so wonderful when children choose to express their opinion and use their voices. You can imagine that this skill will help them in life, their relationships, their jobs, and in fulfilling their dreams and goals. Elementary school education consists of skills like teaching children to read and write, format friendly and business letters, and manipulate numbers, and manipulate numbers and use their voices. You can see that the teen lounge at Shalom Park can be a cozy, casual, fun place that sends the message of open dialogue, approachability, and comfort. These questions were intended to spark the conversation around the importance that environment plays in the education of our children. As equally important, was the display of our materials, the placement of the seating, the lighting and warmth in the room, and the body language of the facilitator. All of these factors together are what we’re doing to create a safe, explorative, learning space where children are encouraged to take risks and use higher level thinking skills; all while developing positive relationships with one another and themselves.

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The room where it happens.

Do You Need a Roommate or Housemate in Uptown or Dilworth?

Looking for 1 bedroom/1 bath in apt. or condo. I am Jewish, age 30, respectful, social, kind, clean, quiet, and responsible and a professional. Looking for in-unit laundry, secure parking, above ground, no pets. No smoking. No drinking. I am Vegetarian, but okay with having meat in the house if you aren’t.

Please contact opr1970@gmail.com.

Available Subsidies for Jewish Experiences

Jewish experience funding: Promotes Jewish identity building among our Jewish youth through Jewish camping, community building, leadership development, and informal educational opportunities. Need-based subsidies are available for families meeting at least one (1) of the following criteria:

• Household gross income not to exceed $75,000
• Change in household circumstances within the last 6 months (necessitating financial concerns, job loss, change in family status, etc.)
• Multiple children attending camps and/or Jewish programs
• Externating chronic family circumstances

For more information, please contact Jewish Family Services, 704.364.6094.

Gorelick Teens to Israel Fund: Subsidies are available to local Jewish teens ages 13 - 19 traveling to Israel on a Federation approved program.

Gloria & Harry Lerner Family Fund: Subsidies are available to local Jewish young adults between the ages of 21-30 traveling to Israel on a Federation approved program.

For more information, please contact Laurel Grauer, Director of Israel Affairs & Community Relations, 704.944.6751 | laurel.grauer@jewishcharlotte.org

Special thanks to Bill and Patty Z’T Gorelick and Harry and Gloria Lerner for their ongoing support and generosity.

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LJCC Department Directory
Please contact us if you have questions!

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

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

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

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

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

March 2019

Early Childhood

Play Play! Theatre
Shalom
Birth – 3 years
Shalom is the story of the arrival of spring as we plant flowers, bake challah, and light the Shabbat candles. Shalom explores Jewish culture while celebrating new life and new beginnings.
Thursday, March 28 at 10am
Friday, March 29 at 10am
Saturday, March 30 at 4pm
Sunday, March 31 at 10am
Tickets are $10 and available at charlottejcc.org or at LJCC Customer Service 704-366-5007

Teens
Summer Employment Opportunities
• Lifeguards
Competitive pay, flexible schedule, paid lunch, great working environment. The LJCC offers American Red Cross® Lifeguard Training Courses and job placement after completion. 704-944-6746 or joshua.steinberger@charlottejcc.org
• Summer Camp Counselors
Fun filled environment and membership privileges. Preschool through Teen Camp counselor positions available.
Half Day • 8:30am-1:30pm or
Full Day • 8:30am-4:30pm
704-944-6738 or mark.didonato@charlottejcc.org

JForce Youth is a non-sport specific clinic for youth Grades 5-10. The clinic is designed for the athlete or non-athlete, and consists of an overall fitness program designed to improve body strength, endurance, speed, and agility.

Tue/Thu, April 16 – May 30
5:30-6:10pm
JForce Room
8-Week Program:
M/S$30 B/S$15 NM/$160

Levine JCC’s
Butterfly Project Community Workshop
Middle schoolers through adults are invited to experience a Butterfly Project Workshop!
Sunday, March 10
1:30-3:30pm
Sam Lerner Center at Shalom Park
FREE to LJCC Members • Non-members $5
Registration Required! Call 704-366-5007

Questions? Greg O’Connor • 704-944-6748
gregory.oconnor@charlottejcc.org

www.charlottejcc.org • 704-366-5007

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

Hemp, What’s the Hype?
A panel discussion on CBD oil, agricultural hemp in NC, safety, sourcing and more.
Sunday, March 31 at 10am
Sam Lerner Center
Free but please register at LJCC Customer Service
704-366-5007
704-944-6730 or julie.rizzo@charlottejcc.org

Oasis Book Club
March: Small Great Things by Jodi Picoult
Friday, March 29, 1–2pm
FSP Boardroom • Free

Adults Visiting Artist Demo Workshop
Learn the art of pottery from seasoned artist Adrienne Delinger.
Sunday, March 10 • 9am–2pm
M/$30  B/$18  NM/$40 (lunch included)
704-944-6862 or mary.couillard@charlottejcc.org

The Power of Aging
Discover and uncover the basic physical, emotional, cultural, and social needs which the aging experience challenges you with on a daily basis. Life can be exciting, purposeful and meaningful! Meets once per month on Tuesdays. A collaborative program between LJCC’s Senior & Adult Department and First Hand Success’ Lorrie Klemons, RN, MSN.
Tuesday, March 12
Medicare Made Easy with Medicare Specialist Donna Rinderle
9:15–10:15am
FSP Board Room
Free
704-944-6753 or sharri.benjamin@charlottejcc.org

JMemory Café
Caring for a family member with mild to moderate dementia? Come with them to the JMemory Café. Socialize, meet new friends, engage in activities together and just have fun. A light breakfast will be served.
The purpose of the program:
• social engagement &
  discussion
• a safe environment that is
  relaxed and non-judgmental
• enjoy music, art, and more
Meets twice every month:
2nd & 4th Thursdays • 10am–12pm
Weinberg Senior Center
704-944-6792 or jill.lipson@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/$45 per month
Drop-in fee: M/B/$12  p/class  NM/$14  p/class

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Teacher in the Spotlight: A Peek into Ms. Jane’s Class

At JPS we take much pride in our teachers and staff, and we want to give you all a taste of how special our teachers are.

We sat down with Ms. Jane, who has been at JPS for four years, to ask her a couple questions.

JPS: What age do you teach, and how many students do you have?

Ms. Jane: I teach three year-olds, and I have eight students.

JPS: What is your favorite time of the day with your students?

Ms. Jane: Free play/choice time in the mornings is definitely my favorite; that’s when I see the children in their element, and really get to watch how their minds explore and discover new things; I get to observe how they play and interact with each other and see their imagination soar.

JPS: Tell us what makes you most proud of your students.

Ms. Jane: One of the things I really work hard on with my students is to help them make good choices and work their problems out on their own. When I see the children actually putting these life skills to use in their play and interactions that makes me extremely proud. Sometime a child has challenging behaviors, but I can see them turn themselves around because they want to be leaders and make better choices.

JPS: Tell us about a time that you saw one of your students putting the social skills you teach them into action.

Ms. Jane: One day while out on the playground, two friends were playing and a third wanted to join but wasn’t sure how to join the group, so her feelings were hurt. A different friend who was playing near me went over to the sad friend and invited her to play together with her. I was so happy to see her have empathy for a friend and use her words to help.

JPS: What do you love most about JPS?

Ms. Jane: I’ve worked in many different child care corporations and franchises over the year, and what I love about JPS is that it truly is like family. The administration is so understanding of our personal lives outside of school, and willing to support us and cover for us without ever making us feel guilty. It’s comforting to know that if something last minute comes up with my own kids, I can approach them and they’ll understand. I believe that as Jewish school, the culture of family life is so important and that makes it a wonderful place to teach.

CKids Jewish Adventure Travels Through Time

We all know time travel is a myth. But what if we got really close? Every Sunday at Chabad of Charlotte our CKids program experiences Jewish history as if it were happening right in front of them.

On Chanukah, we had an adventure through ancient Judea to get a front row seat of the Macabees. On Tu BiShvat, we celebrated trees by meeting the ancient trees of Israel that gave us the seven unique fruits. We also took a tour and reconstructed the Beit Hamidkash of Jerusalem and learned all about its treasures and secrets.

Every week we experience another unique adventure. Come visit us on any given Sunday and see our Time Travels in action.

CKids is Chabad of Charlotte’s Hebrew School program, although it’s not school, it’s an adventure. To learn more visit www.ChabadNC.org/CKids or call us at 704-366-3984.

Save the Date

Shalom Park Freedom School’s Spring Movie Fundraiser

Thursday, May 9, 7-9 PM

Sam Lerner Center for Cultural Arts at Shalom Park

Join us for a movie and refreshments

The SPFS Committee is excited to announce the movie this year is: The Homestretch

The Homestretch follows three homeless teens as they fight to stay in school, graduate, and build a future. Each of these smart, ambitious teenagers - Roque, Kasey, and Anthony - will surprise, inspire, and challenge audiences to rethink stereotypes of homelessness as they work to complete their education while facing the trauma of being alone and abandoned at an early age.

www.homestretchdoc.com
The New World Order: U.S. Foreign Policy in a Dynamic Middle East

FEATURING
THE HONORABLE
JOSEPH LIEBERMAN
FORMER U.S. SENATOR (I-CT)

THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 2019
7:00 p.m. Dessert Reception | 7:30 p.m. Program

Sam Lerner Center for Cultural Arts at Shalom Park
5007 Providence Road • Charlotte

For security purposes, advance registration is required.
To Register, Please Visit:
WWW.AIPAC.ORG/CHARLOTTE
OR
WWW.JEWISHCHARLOTTE.ORG/JCRC

This event is off the record and closed to the press.

The honorable Joseph Lieberman is a Senior Counsel at Kasowitz Benson Torres LLP. In this capacity, Senator Lieberman applies the investigative skills he honed as a United States Senator and Attorney General of the State of Connecticut to represent clients in independent and internal investigations and advise them on a wide range of public policy, strategic, and regulatory issues. As a seasoned leader who is skilled in the art of facilitating mutually beneficial and strategic agreements, Senator Lieberman also assists corporate clients on tax, health care, security, and intellectual property matters.

In addition to practicing law, Senator Lieberman is Co-Chair of the American Enterprise Institute’s American Internationalism Project, which is a cross-party initiative designed to rebuild and reshape a bipartisan consensus around American global leadership and engagement.
Youth Visions

Friendship Circle’s U Matter School Clubs Multiply Thanks to Jewish Federation’s Impact and Innovation Fund

Everyone matters. Duh! We all know it, we all believe it, and we all preach it. However, every so often that message needs to be reaffirmed and shared with an individual when they need to hear it most.

That’s the purpose of Friendship Circle’s U Matter Club—a grassroots initiative which encourages kids and teens to reach out to their peers and let them know that they matter; that everybody matters. Because you were created by God for a unique purpose in this world, you are needed. Nobody is extra. U Matter!

Socrates Middle School launched the first ever U Matter Week in early February. Students gathered on each of the days to share inspirational stories as well as some of the challenges they face. They encouraged each other to look out for one another and help identify fellow students in need of a friend, a listening ear, or a smile.

A U Matter club is also active at Providence Day School. Thanks to a generous grant from the Jewish Federation’s Impact and Innovation Fund, there are plans for expansion to Country Day High School and Ardrey Kell High School with the goal of offering monthly inter-school Teen Talk events starting in the spring.

Save the Date: Join us for the first community-wide U Matter event: “One Thing I Wish You Knew” on May 16.

Friendship Circle and U Matter are beneficiaries of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte. To learn more about U Matter visit www.FriendshipCircleNC.org/UMatter.

Imagine if your friends, relatives, and colleagues always knew how you felt. Imagine always being understood and never feeling judged.

While we can’t snap our fingers and make that happen, we can share a glimpse of our “behind-the-scenes” with those close to us to give them a better understanding of the challenges we face.

On May 16, Friendship Circle and ZABS Place invite you to join us as four members of our community, in different stages of life, come together and share their “one thing I wish you knew” about their personal journeys. Together as a team we can empower our community to open up, recognize we each matter, and be accepting of our peers as we each face our own challenges. Special Feature: Participate in creating a community mural with renowned Chasidic pop-artist Yitzchak Moully.

The event is open to the community and will be held at the Selkin Friendship Circle Center on the Chabad Campus – 6619 Sardis Rd.

To learn more visit www.FriendshipCircleNC.org/onething.

Friendship Circle and ZABS Place are beneficiary agencies of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte.

Questions? Contact Debby Block, 704.944.6780, debby.block@jewishcharlotte.org
Cooking for a Cause at Hebrew High

By Anya Dippold and Lily Shinn

Hebrew High’s cooking class, led by Janice Zacks, is a great experience. Not only do we get to make and eat amazing Jewish food, but we also get to interact with other Jewish teens and develop long-lasting friendships. Each week we work together as a group to accomplish one big goal, making yummy food. We have learned a lot about the delicious foods we eat and the “tricks” behind making everything taste perfect. Cooking in a large group teaches us many lifelong skills such as teamwork and patience. Some of our culinary goods included kugel, mandel bread, challah, and babka.

The cooking class has been a little different this session. The theme of the overall session is “Think Globally, Act Locally” and the cooking class title is “Cooking for a Cause.” Each week, at the end of Hebrew High, we package our backed goods to sell to the other teens, staff, and families in car pool line. The money raised will go to two organizations of our choice. After a long and productive conversation, our class has decided to donate our money to The Friendship Circle and to The Jewish Refugee Initiative.

To date, we have raised over $200 and have one class remaining. The cooking class is a super interactive, educational, and fun class. Just another reason why Hebrew High is the Place to Be on Wednesday Nights.

What families say about JPS

“The Jewish Preschool on Sardis means so much to our family. Not only did I attend JPS as a child, but Sadie has been here since she was a baby and I couldn’t think of a better place for her. Knowing how friendly and warm the teachers are makes us confident that she is in the best of hands, and leaving her there to go to work is easy! As parents, we couldn’t ask for anything more, and I understand why my parents felt the same way when my brothers and I were growing up!”

Tracy Lisk

Join our family

Give us a call (704) 364-8395 or visit japonsards.org
READY for another year of PURIM fun!
SET aside a few canned goods or household items for JFS and receive 1 ticket per item (up to 5 tickets)

GO to the

Community-Wide PURIM CARNIVAL

SUNDAY, MARCH 17

12:00 - 3:00 PM | LEVINE JCC

games ◆ inflatables ◆ food ◆ crafts ◆ prizes ◆ fun for ALL!

11:30 AM: Lollipop Tales Storytime for Preschoolers

Food provided by CJDS Catering/KosherCharlotte
JFS Marks a Year of Enhancing Programing for Holocaust Survivors

As an Executive Director, on any given day you can be in receipt of notification about a grant opportunity. The majority you rule out for some reason. But according to Howard Olshansky, Executive Director of Jewish Family Services, “This one completely grabbed my interest.” It was from the Jewish Federations of North America’s Center for Advancing Holocaust survivor Care and was all about enhancing the quality of life for a community’s Holocaust Survivor population utilizing a trauma-based approach. “I had only been with JFS about a year but one of the things that struck me was the gap in resources available to engage individually with our community’s survivors and enhance their connection to the community and with each other.”

This month will be a year since JFS was awarded a substantial grant from JFNA with three primary focus areas:

* Enhancing the engagement of our community’s Holocaust survivors with the community and increasing socialization opportunities especially with each other.
* Recognizing the trauma that a survivor of the Holocaust has experienced and lived with and creating every opportunity possible for any survivor in our community to leave their legacy by documenting their testimony in a sensitive, supportive environment.
* Providing programming and support that recognize the challenges faced by children and caregivers of Holocaust survivors.

Over the past year, spearheaded by Sheryl Gerrard and Dana Kapustin, who work in JFS’ Department for Senior Engagement services, JFS has been overwhelmed at the level of interest and engagement from our community’s survivors. Through JFS’ outreach efforts, along with support from our community partners, JFS has been able to identify and engage 30 survivors in our community, some of who that didn’t even know were living here, increase the participation of our survivors in community programs and, most significantly, hear and learn about their life experiences before, during, and since the Holocaust.

* Results of the funding from this grant include the highest level of participation from our survivor community ever in our community’s Yom HaShoah and Kristallnacht commemoration programs.
* Our community’s Holocaust survivors have had multiple opportunities over this year to meet and socialize with each other including survivors in our community being introduced to other that were from the same country and even local towns whom they had never met.
* Caregivers of survivors have had an opportunity to connect, commiserate, and learn from each other.
* Seventeen of our community’s survivors were interviewed and had their testimonies video-taped. Some acknowledged this was the first time they had actually told anyone of their survival experiences.
* Caregivers of survivors have had an opportunity to connect, commiserate, and learn from each other.

As this article is being written, JFS was pleased to hear that we have been awarded a 2nd year grant to continue this work. We have been awarded a 2nd year grant to continue this work. We are excited to have the unique opportunity to expand social opportunities, enhance our engagement with our caregivers and continue to provide opportunities for survivors in our community to document their legacies.

Jewish Family Services

Jewish Family Services

Creating Ethical Wills with Rabbi Judy Schindler.

Creating Ethical Wills with Rabbi Judy Schindler.

At the Kristallnacht dinner. Seated: Marina, Joelle, and Maya. Standing: Sheryl Gerrard of JFS, Margi Goldstein, chair of the Kristallnacht program, and Rabbi Murary Ezring of Temple Israel.

The response from our survivor community to the events of the past grant year have been overwhelmingly positive. Comments such as “I appreciate being connected to this community since I’ve been so lonely” and “You’ve done a great job in recognizing us and helping us feel heard,” support the mission of the grant. For example, at the dinner prior to the Kristallnacht program, families were seated by country of origin. At a table for Russian-speaking individuals, one couple who recently moved here from Cleveland, were introduced to Marina, one of our survivors, who also lives here but had lived in Cleveland many years ago. As they explored their histories they realized that Marina was actually good friends with a relative of theirs. Small world! Marina had previously expressed feeling isolated and sad that she did not have many Russian speaking contacts.

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**THE GREATEST SPIEL**

Celebrate Purim at Temple Israel!

Wednesday, March 20

5:50 p.m. – Torah Tots program
5:30-6:15 p.m. – Pizza Dinner*
6:15-7:15 p.m. – Megillah Reading and “The Greatest Shpiel “
7:15-7:30 p.m. – Ma’ariv
7:30 p.m. – Adult Dessert/Beverage Reception

*To register for the pizza dinner ($5/person), please visit templeisraelnc.org by Monday, March 18 @ 5 p.m.

Please join us at Temple Israel for a special Purim celebration!

**EMPTY NESTERS SHABBAT SHMOOZE**

Empty Nesters prior to Shabbat services. Wine, beer, cheese, crackers and fruit will be served.

Stop by any time between 5:15-6:15 p.m. and enjoy some socializing with fellow Empty Nesters.

**TEMPLE ISRAEL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL**

TIRS ALL-SCHOOL SHABBAT SERVICE

Friday, March 8 (6:15 p.m.)

Please join us as Kitah Gan (Kindergarten) & Kitah Aleph (1st grade) help lead services in the Morris & Sylvia Speizman Sanctuary. Afterwards, all are welcome to stay for an oneg.

**TEMPLE ISRAEL YOUTH PROGRAMS**

**MARCH MITZVAH MADNESS BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT BENEFITTING JFS**

Sunday, March 3 (10 a.m.)

We are hosting our 2nd annual March Mitzvah Madness Basketball Tournament to benefit Jewish Family Services (JFS)! This 3 vs. 3, double-elimination tournament will be open to the first 16 teams to register. For details, visit the calendar event at templeisraelnc.org.

**BOOK-A-PALOOZA @ HUNTINGTOWNE FARMS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Thursday, March 14

Help the kids at our partner school, HFES, grow their love of reading and their home libraries! Visit this link to volunteer:  http://bit.ly/FUN2READ2019

**WOMEN OF TEMPLE ISRAEL**

NOSH, COOK & KIBBITZ: A TWIST ON PURIM!

Thursday, March 7 (7-9 p.m.)

The final Nosh, Cook & Kibbitz event of the season celebrates Purim - with a twist! Enjoy cocktails and appetizers, bake hamantaschen for JFS clients, and hear insights on the holiday from Rabbi Helene Kornsgold.

**Temple Israel Youth Programs, Social Action Initiatives:**

**THE ROSE ROOM – WOMEN OF TEMPLE ISRAEL GIFT SHOP**

**GIFT SHOP HOURS**

Sunday: 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Tuesday – Thursday: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Friday - 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

**The Rose Room**

Stop by and see our expanded product selection and let us help you find that perfect gift for simchas, holidays & more! Proceeds support Temple Israel, the Women of Temple Israel, Temple Israel Youth Programs, and Social Action Initiatives.

**THE ROSE ROOM – WOMEN OF TEMPLE ISRAEL GIFT SHOP**

**SAVING THE DATE:**

RABBI EZRING RETIREMENT CELEBRATION

May 31 – June 1

Ayn k’mo babayit – there’s no place like home.

The Hebrew word for home, bayit, transcends the brick and mortar structure, as it also describes a state of mind. Temple Israel is not only a gathering place, but it is a place to engage with Judaism and to transform your life through Torah, worship and acts of loving kindness.

Our egalitarian kehillah kedosha was founded in 1895 by visionaries and is continued today by visionary lay leaders, clergy, and professional staff who want to help you find a sacred and safe place to connect to each other and to Judaism. Won’t you join us on this journey? Temple Israel….our house, your home.

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Month of January 2019


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Food Drives: Lauren Mond and the Providence High School Key Club, JCC Youth Basketball League.

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Youth, parents call them, one that their fellows call them. The one they acquire for themselves is better than all the others."

Midrash: Tashuma, Va-yak'hel
Guava and Cheese Hamantaschen Recipe

By Sandy Leibowitz

Guava and cheese hamantaschen are perfect for Purim celebrations! Guavas, also known as guayaba in Spanish, are native to tropical areas such as Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. These small, round fruits have a soft, sweet flavor and are often used in Latin American cuisine. They are known for their natural sweetness and are a popular ingredient in many dishes.

Guava and cheese hamantaschen are a delightful combination of the tropical fruit and the rich flavor of cheese. These cookies are a great way to celebrate Purim and add a touch of the tropics to your celebration.

**Ingredients:**
- 1 can (15 oz) guava paste
- 1/2 cup cheese, such as queso fresco
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup butter, softened

**Instructions:**
1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. In a large bowl, beat the cheese and eggs until smooth. Add the guava paste and beat until combined.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together the powdered sugar, flour, and salt. Add to the cheese mixture and mix until well combined.
4. Roll the dough into small balls and place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
5. Bake for 15-20 minutes, or until golden brown.
6. Remove from the oven and cool on a wire rack.

These guava and cheese hamantaschen are a delicious addition to your Purim celebration. Enjoy them with a cup of coffee or tea for a sweet and creamy treat.

**Variation:**
For a, try to find queso fresco, because it provides the sweet and salty element that is so irresistible. If you cannot find queso fresco in your area, you can also use a mild feta (try soaking it in water to remove some of the saltiness). Another option is ricotta cheese supplemented with a nice pinch of salt.

Enjoy these hamantaschen as a fun and festive addition to your Purim celebration!

(Continued on next page)
Guava and Cheese Hamentashen
(Continued from previous page)

Directions
Preheat your oven to 350 F. In a saucepan over low heat, mix the guava paste and 1/2 c. water with a whisk till the mixture is smooth. Set aside and allow to cool. When working with the phyllo dough, it’s very important to gently roll it out flat and immediately cover it with a damp towel. This ensures that it doesn’t dry out while you are working with it. Take approximately 3-4 sheets at a time and use a cookie cutter or a cup with a diameter of approximately 2-1/2”, and make circles as close together as you can (to maximize the amount you can make on one stack of sheets).

I recommend scoring the dough around the cutter or cup with the tip of a sharp paring knife. Work quickly to fold up the edges of the circles and pinch on 3 corners to create a triangle. Brush them with a generous amount of melted butter to hold the edges together. After you have made all your triangles, fill each one with a little bit of crumbled queso fresco and top with approximately 1-2 t. of the guava paste. Take care not to fill too much or the guava will melt a bit and ooze out of the triangle. Bake on a sheet pan lined with parchment paper about 15-20 min., till golden brown. When the hamentashen are done, allow them to cool on a rack a few minutes before eating them. Note: They are best enjoyed soon after they come out of the oven, but you can also reheat them in a 350 F. oven for a few minutes until warm and enjoy the joy the next day. Makes 2 dozen hamentashen.

(Sandy Leibowitz is a trained chef, recipe developer and food blogger. Find more of her recipes at www.thekoshertomato.com and follow her on Instagram @thekoshertomato.)

The Nosher food blog offers a dazzling array of new and classic Jewish recipes and food news, from Europe to Yemen, from challah to shabbatukh. Check it out at www.TheNosher.com.

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Purim Is a Call to Leadership
(Continued from page 1)

“I don’t think God really let that happen,” he says. “That’s human beings writing that story, not God.”

But it’s in the megillah, I point out.

“It’s not in my megillah,” Roth counters.

But my amusement is tempered when I remember I have to fast before this holiday. It must be embroidered on a sampler somewhere: “Before Jews party, they should suffer.”

The day before Purim is Taanit Esther, the Fast of Esther. This will be my fourth fast of the year, with two more to go.

Taanit Esther is not in the Bible, but was created by the rabbis in the eighth century. The fast means to be thrust forward when those years ago because so much happened. A few come to mind, both large and quotidian: causes I didn’t fight for (gun control), people I haven’t aided (domestic-abuse victims and Rwandan refugees), articles I didn’t pitch (a long list), physical feats I avoided (parasailing).

But this holiday forces me to reflect on leadership — what it means to be thrust forward when that wasn’t your plan. Seven months earlier, I was asked by the current president of New York’s Central Synagogue if I would be interested in being considered to succeed him.

The very request left me chocked up. The job is not only a tremendous honor, it’s also daunting and important. I love Central in a way I never expected to love an institution. I’ve seen how clergy can deepen daily life, how a synagogue community can anchor a family. But if you had asked me back in college, when I was focused on being an actor or writer, if I thought I’d end up as a shul president, I’d have said, “In what universe?”

Now this invitation feels like a blessing and a test: Can you do your part to guide a place that has challenged and changed you? Obviously, being a board president isn’t comparable to Esther’s assignment. But Judaism is always asking us to apply epic stories to everyday decisions.

I say yes to Central’s president and yes to Esther’s fast, even though it’s another holiday that few around me observe.

“The joy of victory in her story is so much more colorful, rich and deep when you participate in the suffering,” Brown says. “The joy that I experience every Purim is heightened by the fact that I’ve fasted and I’ve tried to put myself in that moment of risk — leadership risk — that Esther took all those years ago because so much pivoted on that one individual.”

I love Brown’s term “leadership risk” because as I get older, I’ve come to see how those words are conjoined. Trying to lead is risky, but then so is not trying. Despite my mother’s feminist inclination, I often worry that people will see audacity in my saying I’m up to the task.” Esther reminds me to stop apologizing for myself and get on with it.

Then again, she was saving her strength for our part to guide a place that has challenged and changed you? Obviously, being a board president isn’t comparable to Esther’s assignment. But Judaism is always asking us to apply epic stories to everyday decisions.

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Then again, she was saving lives, which is a little more pressing. 6

(Adapted from Abigail Pogrebin’s “My Jewish Year: 18 Holidays, One Wondering Jew” [Fig Tree Books], in which journalist Pogrebin documents an immersive, highly personal exploration of the Jewish calendar.)

Monday, April 15
The Golf Club at Ballantyne Resort

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

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

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Guava and Cheese Hamentashen
(Continued from previous page)

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