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# JEWISH @ news OF SARASOTA-MANATEE

PUBLISHED BY THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF SARASOTA-MANATEE GREENSPON CAMPUS FOR JEWISH LIFE

OF SARASOTA-MANATEE

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**A8** 2025 Sarasota Teacher of the Year Announced



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**B4** Holocaust Survivor To Share His Story

## Hanukkah Klez Fest Brought the Joy!



Photo by Seth Berman

More than 250 community members danced and sang along with The Yiddish Cowboys and other musical performers at Klez Fest held during Hanukkah at The Ora. The vendor marketplace was a huge success as well. Sales of Judaica and other one of a kind items added to the festivity of the event.

## 2025 Brings Three New Spaces to Energize JFSM's Greenspon Campus

By Shepard Englander, Chief Executive Officer

Responding to a 2019 Brandeis University study revealing Sarasota-Manatee as one of America's fastest-growing Jewish communities, the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee (JFSM) launched years of site planning and fundraising to



Englander

create a unique campus designed to advance the Federation's mission of connecting Jews with each other and our neighbors through creative and stimulating experiences, including: gatherings, educational programs, and family activities.

2024 was the year that the JFSM proudly opened The Ora at the Joel and Gail Morganroth Event Center. The stunning, state-of-the-art, venue received rave reviews across the community and is quickly becoming the region's premier, go-to venue in our region for large events including ga-

las, weddings, bar-mitzvahs, and other life-cycle celebrations. It has also been the perfect home for our Insights and Inspirations programs featuring world-class speakers, authors, artists, and thought leaders.

2025 will be just as exciting a year as we open three new facilities that will enrich our community with a variety of new and diverse activities and programs: the Ritter Wolk Center, the Chaifetz Holocaust Memorial and Education Center, and Camp Yonnie campgrounds.

*Continued on page A2*

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2025 Brings Three New Spaces .... Continued from front page

**Ritter Wolk Center**

This month, we are opening our Ritter Wolk Center. The building features updated spaces for local organizations to host meetings, seminars, and workshops. It will also host trainings by Safe SRQ, Federation's community safety and security initiative, to keep our community safe and better prepared in the face of rising antisemitism and hate crimes.

Under the guidance of our Community Security Director, Tom Baugher, Federation provides ongoing safety and security training for community members, conducts threat assessment analysis for synagogues and other Jewish organizations, and assists organizations in securing vital grants for additional security measures. The Ritter Wolk Center will allow us to extend Safe SRQ's essential training to both community members and local law enforcement officers.

To reserve the Ritter Wolk Center for an organizational meeting, contact Julie Burton, Senior Director of Event Operations, at 941-343-2107 or [JBurton@jfedrsq.org](mailto:JBurton@jfedrsq.org).

**Chaifetz Holocaust Memorial and Education Center**

Federation is already recognized as a trusted resource for Holocaust education and curriculum by the Sarasota and Manatee county school systems. Starting this fall, the Chaifetz Center will provide a unique site for experiential learning focused on the Holocaust and its lessons.

This spring, we will begin the staged opening of the new Chaifetz Holocaust Memorial and Education Center. This unique outdoor facility will intertwine art and education to

provide Holocaust remembrance, reflection, and a museum-quality learning experience for students, teachers, and the wider community.

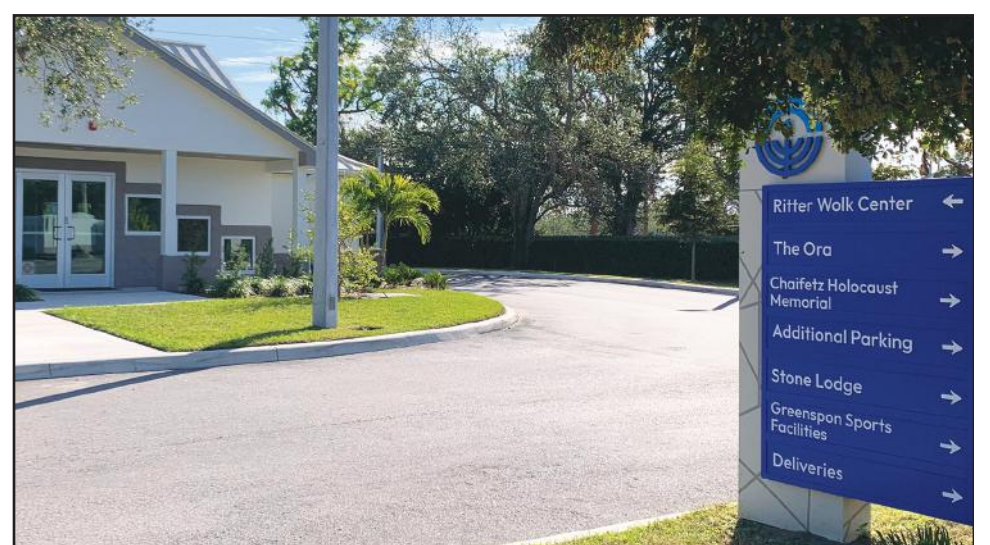
**Camp Yonnie**

Last summer, we launched a successful four-week trial of Camp Yonnie, welcoming children from all backgrounds entering Kindergarten through fifth grade. Campers enjoyed arts, music, sports, and a variety of other activities in an environment that was infused with Jewish values. Favorites included field trips and visits from firefighters and police K-9 dogs. The camp's success was evident as many campers extended their stays.

This summer, Camp Yonnie expands to an 8-week session from June 9 through August 1, 2025, and will include rising sixth graders as well. Returning favorites like water days and Shabbat celebrations will be joined by new field trips and STEM programs. The new playground and playing fields are expected to be ready for new outdoor experiences. Registration for 2025 is open and already exceeding goals. For information and registration, contact Camp Director, Shelly DeCesare, at [info@campyonnie.org](mailto:info@campyonnie.org) or 941-263-8920.

In 2025, the Ritter Wolk Center, Chaifetz Holocaust Memorial and Education Center, and Camp Yonnie campgrounds will join The Ora in hosting diverse programs and activities. These additions mark a milestone in the Federation's ongoing commitment to meeting the needs of one of the fastest-growing Jewish communities in the country. And we aren't done yet. We plan additional campus upgrades to meet the needs of our evolving community. Watch us grow!

*The Chaifetz Center will provide a unique site for experiential learning focused on the Holocaust and its lessons.*



The newly renovated Ritter Wolk Center and our sign post with hints of more to come.

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# Ribbon Cutting at Ritter Wolk Opens Doors for Safety

By **Hermione Gilpin,**  
Chief Development Officer

On Sunday, December 22, 2024, the Federation was thrilled to celebrate the Ritter Wolk Center ribbon cutting. This new center on the Greenspon Campus for Jewish Life will serve as a varied use space for our local community, including gathering place for lectures, community organization meetings, training programs, and a primary place for Safe SRQ community security trainings.

From the beginning, Mike Ritter envisioned this center as an integral resource for the security of this campus and this community. Safe SRQ, our community security initiative since 2019, has provided threat assessment analysis, onsite training and workshops, and trained more than 2,000 community members to date. The Ritter Wolk

Center will enhance the program by providing space for recurring trainings open to our Jewish community as well as specialized trainings for security teams and law enforcement officers.

Originally from Chicago and then Cleveland, Ritter, a CPA, retired full-time to Sarasota in 2014 primarily because of its thriving nonprofit community. From 2018-2019, Ritter chaired the Board of the **Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee (JFSM)** where he partnered with professionals and lay leaders to commission a comprehensive population study and launch the Federation's campus capital campaign.

Nancy Wolk has also lent her skills to JFSM by leading our Lion of Judah engagement efforts through Lions on the Loose, and as a member of our Finance Committee, and on the Federations' National Women's Philanthropy Board.



Photos by Harry Sayer

Top most photo: JFSM CEO, Shepard Englander, Nancy Wolk, Mike Ritter, and Hermione Gilpin. Lower, left: Kale Chen, Larry Greenspon, and Lisa Berger. Lower right: Safe SRQ Community Security Director, Tom Baugher, with Mike Ritter, Nancy Wolk, and Campus Security Manager, John Kost.



Charlayne Hunter Gault.



Matt Wolk with Sienna Ritter.



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# Howard Kilman Joins JFSM Board of Directors

By Kim Adler,  
Chief Operating Officer

In its quest to find new board members with unique skills and talents, I am happy to share that our Governance Committee has chosen Howard Kilman to join our Board of Directors. Howard was formerly the Chief Leadership Officer and later CEO of Avande Federal Services, the world's leading Microsoft experts and global systems integrator. Now retired, he has focused his time on volunteerism, mostly centered in the Jewish community, as well as helping individuals and teams

reach their fullest high-performance potential. The Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee (JFSM) has been a direct recipient of Howard's expertise, as he has been working with our staff on leadership development and team values over the last two years.

Howard served multiple terms as a Board Trustee of Temple Emanu-El in Sarasota and is a Board Director at Lantern, a private help AI-focused technology consulting company.



Kilman

He is also the president of his condominium association at BLVD in downtown Sarasota.

"I am honored, thrilled, and excited to join the Board at the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee. Its mission of enabling and enhancing a vibrant local Jewish community as well as being a strong advocate for Israel are also core tenets of mine. I commit to my continuous learning while bringing my

skills, experience, and competencies to enhance board effectiveness. Together we can continue making a measurable difference in our local Jewish community," said Howard upon being asked to join the Board.


On behalf of our board and staff leadership team, we, too, are thrilled that Howard has agreed to deepen his commitment to JFSM and our local Jewish community.

For a continuously updated community calendar visit [jfedsrq.org/community-cal](http://jfedsrq.org/community-cal)

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## Providing ‘the Oy and the Joy’ in Our Programming

By Dr. Liat Alon, Chief Learning and Engagement Officer

In the months since the beginning of the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee’s (JFSM) “Insights and Inspirations” season, we have hosted several outstanding speakers. They joined us to provide our community with opportunities to talk and think about what has happened since October 7, both in Israel and in the United States in a safe space. They have shared their best strategies on how to cope and act with us.



Alon

The renowned Israeli author, Etgar Keret visited in September and opened a window into his creative process, the reality in Israel post October 7, and the ways by which Israelis are coping with the horrors so recently experienced. In November, we hosted social media influencer, Hen Mazzig, who shared his efforts to fight antisemitism and anti-Zionism online. Later in the same month, we hosted Marcus Sheff, CEO of The Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education (IMPACT-se). Sheff is working

to remove anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist references and tropes from Arabic textbooks distributed to students in Middle Eastern countries. As Israel is grappling with the dilemma of how to ensure Palestinian textbooks cease to foster hate, his work is ever more vital. Both Mazzig and Sheff shared insights based on their extensive experience, and deepened our understanding of the challenges ahead.

In December, we hosted Rachel Fish, the co-founder of Boundless, a think-action tank partnering with community leaders across North America to revitalize Israel education and take bold collective action to combat Jew-hatred. In conversation with Rachel, who defines herself as a scholar-warrior, we pointed to things we all can do, as individuals, families, and as a community, to fight antisemitism and anti-Zionism. After the event, we heard from many that her commitment and knowledge made them better informed, provided them with new tools, and left them feeling stronger and more confident. We hope to continue working closely with Fish in the coming months.

In December, we also hosted Daniel Schulman, author of “The Money Kings.” We learned about the role Jewish individuals and families played building our economy and financial institutions,

*Continued on the next page*

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*Providing ‘the Oy and the Joy’ ... Continued from the previous page*

and explored the impact Jewish heritage had on these unique individuals as they made the decisions that shaped their entrepreneurial, business, and philanthropic legacies. We also discussed some of the most widely spread stereotypes about Jews in the United States – specifically in the world of finance. Schulman offered one of the most succinct and historically anchored explanations tracing the origins of these stereotypes in the U.S. back to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Russian-Japan war of 1904-1905, and to Henry Ford.

Describing our goal for our “Insights and Inspirations” season, Deb Kabinoff, chair of our board, often mentions our effort to balance the “Oy and the Joy.” Looking back on these last months, one might

say we have leaned more toward the Oy than the Joy in our selection. This was not a coincidence, but an intentional decision. At a time in which the Jewish world, in Israel, the U.S., and around the globe, is struggling to recover from the horrors of October 7, and to face the spike in antisemitism that followed, JFSM offered safe spaces to hold courageous conversations. Conversations such as the ones we have been having to share our concerns, and to exchange

ideas and coping strategies are crucial in order to strengthen our resilience, and emerge safer, stronger, and smarter.

The fact that so many hostages are still in Gaza makes joy hard to feel. Our Jewish history, however, teaches us that strength and resilience result from our ability to find hope and rejoice in life even at the hardest of times. The story of Hanukkah teaches us that in one of the darkest moments

on bringing light into the darkness and lit the menorah. Holocaust scholars have been increasingly drawing attention to the many ways in which Jewish men and women in Nazi-Occupied Europe insisted on celebrating life even under the cruellest most unimaginable circumstances. In doing so, our ancestors told their children and the world that “Am Israel Chai,” the people of Israel live, and left us with this echoing message for posterity.

In the coming months we will remain committed to providing safe spaces to hold courageous conversations. The new year will also provide opportunities to bring more light into our lives and find moments of joy to share. Join us as we experience the Oy and the Joy that are part of our current reality, thus fostering our resilience as a community.

***Our Jewish history teaches us that strength and resilience result at least in part from our ability to find hope and rejoice in life even at the hardest of times.***

in Jewish history, standing amidst the ruins of the Temple, our ancestors insisted

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# Honoring 2025 Sarasota Teacher of the Year, Kelly Rozelle

By Bette Zaret,  
Holocaust Education Initiative

A Japanese proverb says “Better than a thousand days of diligent study is one day with a great teacher.”

Kelly Rozelle teaches Advanced Placement U.S. History and Holocaust Education, Honors. She is the current Social Studies Department Chair at Venice High School in Sarasota County. She is also a great teacher!

Rozelle passionately inspires her students to become more knowledgeable, think critically, become confident with good character, and learn about the past, all while understanding how the past can inform the present.

As recognition of her extraordinary contributions in the 12 years since she started teaching history, Rozelle has been named the Sarasota County Teacher of the Year for 2025! Having earned that distinction, Rozelle will represent district educators throughout the 2025 calendar year and will serve as the district’s nominee for state Teacher of the Year.

A continuous learner, Rozelle participates in Federation’s Professional Development scholarly lectures. She received a Federation scholarship to participate in the Classrooms With-



Zaret

out Borders Poland Personally trip in 2023, and she is currently enrolled in the Yeshiva University Fish Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies program, which will earn her an Advanced Teacher’s Certificate in Holocaust Education.

The consummate history and Holocaust educator, Rozelle created and teaches Venice High School’s History of the Holocaust course, the only year-long Holocaust course in Sarasota and Manatee County school districts.

“I am very passionate about teaching students about the Holocaust. The intention of my course is to spread awareness of the atrocities of the Holocaust and to give a voice to those who cannot tell their story themselves. Sadly, there are still ongoing struggles with antisemitism and bigotry throughout the world. As an educator, I have the opportunity to teach my students the importance of tolerance, acceptance, and what it means to be an upstander,” said Rozelle.

Here’s what some of Rozelle’s students have to say about their teacher.

“Ms. Rozelle’s Holocaust Education Honors class is a highly skilled yet important course. She has allowed students to understand the true nature of a subject few students will learn.



Rozelle



Kelly Rozelle, with her Venice High School Holocaust Honors Class. They stand in front of an original boxcar that was used to transport Jewish people to concentration camps during the Holocaust, it is on loan from The Holocaust Museum of Naples, Florida.

Whether group assignments tailored towards an important part of the lesson, or watching films depicting the full extent of the atrocities committed, she always keeps her class engaged in the course material. Other times, Ms. Rozelle will go out of her way to make the subject matter more close-to-home by having local Holocaust survivors visit and speak of their experiences directly with students.

“Since taking this course, I’ve learned more about the Holocaust than I ever knew before joining. History has always been an important part of my life, so to be able to have an amazing teacher like her has been an honor. Her respectful teaching style has allowed my peers to learn in a judgement-free environment. At the time of writing, she is teaching us about Germany in the 1930s, just after ‘Kristallnacht.’ For the occasion, she arranged for an original boxcar that transported Jewish people during the Holocaust, to be

on display at our school. It was surreal seeing such an impactful piece of history up close,” said Ryan Mallonee.

“Ms. Rozelle’s Holocaust class is an amazing class. The class provides an extremely helpful insight to my generation, allowing us to see this much-needed side of history. Holocaust education remains essential to the past and future of human society. We do not solely learn about the events of the Holocaust either. We do focus on the hatred of the Jewish populace, but we also learn about victims of other lesser-known genocides around the world so we can be aware, making sure nothing like this ever happens again,” said Tyler Macri.

Congratulations Kelly Rozelle. You inspire us all.

For more information about the Federation’s Holocaust Education Initiative and how we help support teachers and their students, contact me at [bzaret@jfedsrq.org](mailto:bzaret@jfedsrq.org) or 941-228-3676.

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# Dara Horn to Speak in Sarasota-Manatee This Month

Interview by Kim Adler,  
Chief Operating Officer and  
Lisa Lurie, Guest Writer

The Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee is thrilled to welcome award-winning author Dara Horn on February 27, at 7:00 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Sarasota.

Dara is the author of six books, including the essay collection “People Love Dead Jews” (Norton 2021). Her books have been selected as *New York Times* Notable Books, *Booklist’s* Best 25 Books of the Decade, and *San Francisco Chronicle’s* Best Books of the Year. Her nonfiction work has appeared in the *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post* and *The Jewish Review of Books*, among other publications. She is a

regular columnist for *Tablet*.

Dara’s talk will focus on antisemitism, courage, and meeting the moment as living Jews. We had the opportunity to ask her some questions about her book, her work, and her thoughts on the challenges facing our Jewish community today. Here is an excerpt from our interview.

**Q: We know there are some people who have taken offense with the title of your book, “People Love Dead Jews: Reports from a Haunted Present.” How do you address these complaints?**

If the title makes you uncomfortable, what’s inside the book will



Horn

make you even more uncomfortable. This is intentional on my part. The book is about the role that Jews play in non-Jewish societies, and how often living Jews are required to erase some aspect of themselves to make other people feel comfortable.

**Q: We know you will discuss this topic in greater detail at our upcoming event, but what do you think drives people to revise the history of dead Jews?**

Antisemitism is not merely a social prejudice. At its foundation, antisemitism is a lie. The lie is that Jews are collectively evil and have no right to collectively exist. This means that antisemitism is actually a righteous fight against evil.

This requires explaining away Jews’ existence and experiences by

claiming that what happened to Jews actually happened to other people, or to “everyone.”

...Another example would be the Soviet Union’s lie that the Holocaust was an assault on “Soviet citizens” rather than Jews: the USSR’s memorial to the tens of thousands of Jews murdered at Babyn Yar, for instance, only claimed that “Soviet citizens” were murdered, making it seem like the target was ALL Soviet citizens.

We still see this denial of the facts of Jewish history today from people claiming Israel is a “settler colonialist” country. And of course, we’ve seen similar denial of the realities of the October 7 massacre. These lies are comparable to Holocaust denial, and that isn’t a coincidence, because they serve

*Continued on the next page*

## Shine the Lights!



Hanukkah and Christmas overlapping this past year led to a deeply appreciated presentation of friendship and unity. In partnership with the Sarasota Ministerial Association we invited our friends in the non-Jewish community to participate in the Federation’s “Shine a Light” program, and join us in the ancient tradition of lighting the Hanukkah and placing it in the window in a show of support and solidarity. Thank you all for your caring and love!



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# Together, We Reached Our Goal: Unity Campaign Success

By Beth Nusman,  
Director of Development  
Operations

Every year, the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee relies on you, our community, to support our vital work. But this year was unlike any other, our community experienced heartbreak and tragedy mixed with moments of resilience and strength. To plan for our future, we had to make a bold move to ensure that no matter what, we will emerge from the darkness. Four donor families: Dawn and Mitchell Epstein, Larry Greenspon, Bob and Esther Heller, and Deb Kabinoff issued a challenge. If our

donors stepped forward to join them in making two year commitments by December 31, 2024, they would collectively give \$500,000.

Today, we can share that we raised \$3 million in six weeks with more than 1,000 gifts. The funds raised will support the ongoing annual programs that you have enjoyed, as well as our proactive community initiatives. Initiatives like Safe SRQ, our community security initiative, allow us to rebuild our sense of safety. Safe SRQ protects Jews at home, at local Jewish organizations and Jewish cultural events, and has trained more than 1,500 community members to date. With our newly dedi-

See a full list of our Unity Campaign donors on pages A14-A15

cated Ritter Wolk Center, we will be able to train even more community members in upcoming months. Your generosity also strengthens our investment and commitment to supporting Israel not only now but into its future, with \$1.7 million raised locally for the Israel Emergency Relief Fund. To date, more than \$300,000 has been raised in sponsorships for our new Insights & Inspirations pro-

gram season, allowing us to cultivate Jewish life, arts, and culture in our region and leave you feeling safer, smarter, and more connected.

The Unity Campaign's success is a testament to what can be achieved when a community comes together with a shared purpose. Your investment in our Jewish community will make our future possible. The only way forward is together. Thank you!

Dara Horn to Speak ... Continued from the previous page

the same purpose.

**Q: You argue that it is important for Jews to feel uncomfortable. Why is that?**

I think it is important for everyone to feel uncomfortable, because one thing I've learned in my 25 years as a published author is that the uncomfortable moments are where the story is. My goal is to make you uncomfortable, because the moment you approach an idea that you didn't want to consider is the moment when you're about to learn something you could have gone your whole life not knowing.

**Q: What do you hope your audience will understand or feel empow-**

Read more of Dara's Q&A on our blog at [jfedrsq.org/dara-horn-interview/](http://jfedrsq.org/dara-horn-interview/)

ered to do after your talk?

To understand that you can't fight antisemitism without talking about the realities of Jewish civilization, which happens to be an amazing and inspiring story with great value to anyone interested in opposing tyranny. Ultimately the way to defeat this lie is with the truth of Jewish life.

Don't miss your opportunity to hear from Dara live on February 27. Tickets start at \$36 and are available at [jfedrsq.org/events](http://jfedrsq.org/events).

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**Arts and Culture Prize to be Awarded to Landau**

By **Hermione E. Gilpin**,  
Chief Development Officer

In an upcoming celebration of Israeli arts and culture, the inaugural Richard and Ellen Sandor Israeli Arts and Culture Prize will be presented to acclaimed artist Sigalit Landau. The prestigious award was established by Richard and Ellen Sandor to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to the vibrant cultural landscape of Israel.

Sigalit Landau, a multidisciplinary artist renowned for her profound and evocative works, has been selected because of her exceptional body of work that encompasses sculpture, video, and installation art. Landau's art often delves into themes of identity, memory, and the human condition, resonating deeply with audiences.

Over the past few years, her Dead Sea artworks have received interna-

tional acclaim including a recent solo exhibition at the Israel Museum in 2022. Sigalit has also received numerous awards including receiving an America-Israel Cultural Foundation Scholarship and an Honorary Doctorate from Ben Gurion University.

Building on the Federation's history of connecting our Jewish community with Israeli artists across various disciplines, including dance troupes, theatre, and visual arts, this award extends our commitment to fostering strong Jewish identity through art. Art helps us understand the world around us, and can serve as a healing force as we navigate these unsettling times.

The community is invited to join us at The Ora at the Morganroth Event Center, 578 McIntosh Rd., Sarasota on Wednesday, February 5, at 2:00 p.m. for an award presentation and conversation with Sigalit. RSVP at [jfedsrq.org/events](http://jfedsrq.org/events).



Photo by Yotam From, images published in *Israel21c.org*



Above: Sigalit Landau, from portrait by Eldad Karin. Left: "Strand, 2017," Barbed-wire lampshades coated in salt crystals. ©Sigalit Landau, 2019



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# Federation Welcomes Two New Team Members

By Kim Adler,  
Chief Operating Officer

The Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee (JFSM) is pleased to welcome two new members to our team. As our community and our Federation continue to grow and flourish, it is important that we add individuals with new talents and expertise to add value to our existing team.

Bryon Hepler is our new Marketing Manager. He brings with him over two decades of experience in advertising and marketing. Before joining the Federation team, Bryon worked in the home services field. This is his first foray into working in the non-profit arena. He is focusing on growing our digital marketing offerings, such as our social media presence, online advertising, enhanced email offerings, and additional website tools. You may have already noticed a refreshed look to the home page on our Federation site, jfedsrq.org.



Hepler

Bryon holds a bachelor's degree in marketing from Fairmont State University. In his spare time, he enjoys golf, frisbee, fishing, and other

outdoor activities.

Carly Zenker is our new Development Manager. In her role, she is focused on donor engagement, prospect research, and grant writing. She brings with her a love of Jewish culture, community-building, and connection.



Zenker

Prior to her role here at JFSM, Carly spent six years working on the team at Union for Reform Judaism Camp Newman in Northern California. During her time there she managed an extensive grants portfolio and secured significant new funding, created impactful fundraising and community engagement initiatives, and most notably, provided pivotal support to the ongoing \$140 million Capital Campaign to rebuild and reimagine Camp Newman following a destructive wildfire.

Carly is excited to be back in Sarasota – a special place she loved and called home during part of her childhood – now with her fiancé and their chihuahua.

We are fortunate to have them both on our team and look forward to their many contributions.

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# Community

# Four Technologies to Beat Loneliness This Winter

By Zachy Hennessey,  
Israel21c.org

As the winter months draw in and temperatures dip, feelings of isolation and loneliness can become more pronounced.

While this is particularly true for vulnerable groups like the elderly and those living with mental health challenges, people of every age and inclination are potentially susceptible to feeling socially disconnected.

In the United States alone, around 50 percent of adults (some 140 million people) report experiencing loneliness, according to the U.S. Surgeon General.

The problem extends around the globe; according to a recent survey by Meta-Gallup, approximately 24 percent of people worldwide report feeling very or fairly lonely, translating to over a billion individuals. Behind these numbers are real people struggling with isolation and disconnection.

Technology offers unprecedented opportunities that can connect, support, and uplift individuals.

If you're concerned at the idea of using AI to resolve feelings of loneliness, you're not alone — in fact, according to some research, an overdependence on artificial intelligence-driven solutions could exacerbate loneliness rather than alleviate it.

However, that's not to say that the technology can't be applied in certain scenarios that can help — and while a machine can never replace the warmth



Photo courtesy of Intuition Robotics  
Among ElliQ's other functions, it keeps elders company.

of another human, it may help you feel less lonely until they invent a way to teleport you to your friend's house.

With that in mind, here are four Israeli innovators developing technologies designed to combat loneliness and provide meaningful connections that are changing how we approach social isolation:

## ElliQ: Robotic Companion

When you're looking at Israeli tech solutions to loneliness, there's one fairly clear leader of the pack: ElliQ.

Developed by Intuition Robotics, ElliQ represents an intriguing approach to address loneliness among seniors. It's been designed to help older adults navigate modern technologies, offering support for video chats, online games, and social media interactions.

With the goal of becoming an "active aging companion," the system expresses itself using a combination of speech, sounds, lights, images, and

"body language" (though the device is intentionally built to look more like a lamp than a person).

The potential of this technology has already caught the attention of some governmental agencies such as the New York State Office for the Aging, which distributes ElliQ units to elderly New Yorkers to help combat isolation.

## Wisdo: Connecting Through Shared Experiences

Wisdo is a mobile app that aims to create connections through shared life experiences. The platform offers users the opportunity to explore and connect via more than 100 life challenges and experiences, ranging from mental health concerns to personal growth opportunities.

Users can select specific experiences they're navigating, such as "coping with depression," "loneliness," or "increasing happiness." The platform then allows them to find others at similar stages of their journey, offering both group discussions and one-on-one conversations with individuals who have navigated similar experiences.

## Kai.ai: Mental Health Coaching

Kai.ai is an AI chatbot app that offers emotional support for individuals who may feel that their issues aren't

"serious enough" for therapy with a licensed professional.

The platform provides AI-based mental wellness coaching, which is monitored by humans and tailored to users' needs by Kai's staff.

In addition to its app, Kai has recently expanded its services to support Israeli reservists and war victims, and offers help tailored exclusively to Israelis who have undergone trauma since the onset of the Iron Swords war.


The company also markets its platform to employers seeking to provide their workers with a WhatsApp-based emotional support coach.

## MyndYou: AI-Powered Health Monitoring

MyndYou is developing an AI-driven virtual nurse that can be used by healthcare providers to address social isolation and monitor patients' health.

The AI nurse, named Eleanor, makes automated check-in calls to see how patients are doing, both medically and personally, and at the same time analyzes their voices to detect potential changes in their health.

When the bot detects an at-risk patient who needs follow-up, it sends the conversation transcript and data to the patient's care team, essentially acting as a filter that lets caregivers focus on their clients who need additional assistance.



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5 pm Welcome Reception  
February 7


**Saturdays**  
10:30 am - Shabbat Morning Service  
Feb. 2nd & 16th



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## The Network Behind Anti-Israel Activities at U.S. Colleges



FEBRUARY 20, 2025 @ 7:00 PM

Temple Emanu-El, 151 McIntosh Rd, Sarasota, FL 34232


Dr. Jonathan Schanzer, Senior Vice President for Research at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD) will speak about how Hamas protests on college campuses are not organic or spontaneous. He will also expose the organizations who are funding them and the antisemitic rhetoric and activities. FDD is a non-partisan research institute. *Event is free.*

Registration Required by February 18th


SarasotaTemple.org/Events

Questions?

Contact Nina Levitt: nina.g.levitt@gmail.com



Dr. Schanzer's research and analysis have led to designations of terrorist financiers and helped to uncover massive sanctions evasion schemes. While at Treasury, he was instrumental in freezing funding of Hamas and Al-Qaeda. He has also testified before Congress and is in demand nationally to provide context for on-campus anti-Israel activities.



Sponsored by the Israel Committee, Sisterhood, Brotherhood, & The Diane & Norman Cohen Endowed Israel Fund

# Elderly Isolation – It’s Bad for Mom But Worse for Dad

“We’re so worried about Dad.” That’s how Karen began her email to me. “He’s so lonely and my brother and I don’t know what to do.” Karen’s father, Sid, lived alone in the condo he once shared with his beloved Jennie, who passed away nine years ago. Today he rarely leaves the house. The same is true for Gerry, who has a small apartment in a Jewish retirement community where activities abound, but like Sid, Gerry stays primarily in his apartment and although he takes his meals in the dining room, he often requests a table for one so that he can eat by himself.

Isolation and its effect on elderly men and women is not a new phenomenon, but as the population grows older, researchers are finding that more often it is older men, more so than older women, who suffer from an isolated and lonely life.

According to Jared Wadley, whose University of Michigan study of elderly isolation found that “men were more likely than women to be socially isolated,” Karen’s concerns for her father are well placed. Blogger Sarah Stevenson writing for the senior referral service, “A Place for Mom,” speaks to Gerry’s situation when she found that whether living alone or in a senior living community, a critical factor is NOT how many others are in proximity, but how often seniors engage in social activities.



**Aging Jewishly**  
What Our Traditions Tell Us About Growing Old

**Rabbi Barbara Aiello**

Dozens of studies devoted to the aging process concur that social isolation increases the health risks for seniors, in particular for isolated men. These risks include: long term illness, bouts of depression, diminished cognition, high blood pressure, and an early death.

“So, nu?” What to do? One group that calls themselves the ROMEOs, offers a unique solution. ROMEO stands for Retired Old Men Eating Out, and as their website states, ROMEO is “a simple acronym which helps to tell a very big story.” Thanks to Tom Brokaw, who many say coined the term in his 1998 book, *The Greatest Generation*, the ROMEO phenomenon boasts chapters located in cities all over the country, and gives its male members an opportunity to meet, greet, share a meal, and make a friend. ROMEO founders emphasize the importance of their groups and cite a recent study published by Brigham Young University that states that making and maintaining social relationships (like the

ROMEO groups provide) increases an elderly man’s chances of a longer life by a whopping 50 percent!

When I found a ROMEO club near to Sid’s home, I called his daughter with the good news. Karen was happy to learn that a socialization experience designed specifically for men existed, but she had her misgivings. “So, Rabbi,” Karen said, “The ROMEO club sounds great but how do I get my dad to go?”

Good question and B’Lev Shalem, an Israel based organization that focuses on “personalized support for aging well,” offers several solutions. B’Lev Shalem staff suggest that adult children talk

to their parents about the importance of social interaction for their physical, cognitive, and emotional health, then offer to help them find opportunities that are engaging and stimulating, and encourage them to try it, at first, “just one time.”

Since men can be especially reluctant to break the isolation cycle, B’Lev Shalem suggests that adult children ask a friend or relative to accompany dad on his first visit to a new venue, such as a ROMEO lunch spot, or ask a current ROMEO member to serve as Dad’s

host the first time around.

Writing for the website, My Jewish Learning, Rabbi Bradley Artson reminds us that when “Moses and his brother, Aaron, receive God’s command to appear before Pharaoh to demand freedom for the Jews, in what looks like an unnecessary digression, the Torah records that Moses was 80 years old and big brother Aaron was 83.”

Rabbi Artson cites the Talmud where we learn that a person who reaches 80 has reached the age of strength and explains that “(an adult) of 80 years is finally able to look at the human condition with compassion and some skepticism. At 80

years of age, we need no longer serve either passion or ambition.” Or as a ROMEO member put it, “We can sit back, enjoy life, make new friends, and have a nice lunch!”

For ten years Rabbi Barbara Aiello served the Aviva Campus for Senior Life as resident rabbi. Currently she lives and works in Italy where she serves a “b’nei anusim” community of Italians and Italian-Americans who are reconnecting with their Italian Jewish roots. Contact her at Rabbi@RabbiBarbara.com.

**Making and maintaining social relationships ... increases an elderly man’s chances of a longer life by a whopping 50 percent!**



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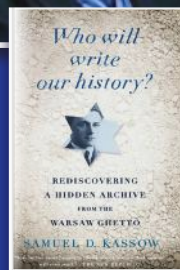
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THE IMPORTANCE OF MEMORY

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DR. ANNA KOHEN

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“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”

— GEORGE SANTAYANA

In 1940, Polish historian Emanuel Ringelblum established a clandestine organization in The Warsaw Ghetto called the Oyneg Shabes to record the experiences of the ghetto’s inhabitants. Guest speaker Dr. Samuel Kassow, author of *Who Will Write Our History?* will share the tragic story of Ringelblum and his heroic determination to use historical scholarship to preserve the memory of a threatened people.

Also featured will be 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Generation Holocaust Survivors Lotem and Ellie Levy who will share the memory of their family’s story of survival, courage, and resilience.

\*This event is free but registration is required.

REGISTER ONLINE [JFEDSRQ.org/events](https://www.jfedsrq.org/events)

On January 28, 2025, the film *Who Will Write Our Story*, based on the Kassow book, will be shown at 10am at The ORA. Dr. Kassow will be available for Q&A. FREE and Open to the Public.

FREE EVENT

QUESTIONS?

Contact Bette Zaret 941.228.3676 or [bzaret@jfedsrq.org](mailto:bzaret@jfedsrq.org)



Holocaust Education Initiative

# Maestro David Cohen: Sarasota's Arts Booster

David Cohen arrived in Sarasota as a winter visitor in the mid-1930s, moving permanently in 1948 with his wife, the former Eleene Levinson, a Sarasota girl.

The couple had been living in Petoskey, Michigan, where a newspaper reported that David was "an official with a cigar company."

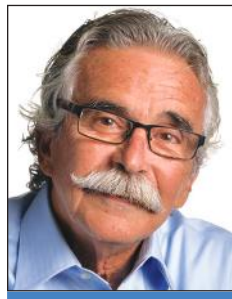
Soon after moving to Sarasota, he bought the Smith Candy Company. Eleene and her brother operated the Levinson family's popular Sport Shop, "for Sports Wear and Everywhere," at Five Points where the First Watch is today.

Both stores were hugely successful; Smith Candy evolved, through "hard work seven days a week for 30 years" into the Smith Specialty Co. When he sold the business in 1978 sales topped \$10 million, employing 80. The Sport Shop continued to be a downtown mainstay.

It was not due to his business savvy that Cohen became dubbed, "Mister Sarasota" a title he shared with pioneer settler A.B. Edwards, the city's first mayor.

Cohen had been a child prodigy violinist who graduated from the prestigious Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. At 15 years of age, he gave his first professional recital.

For her part, Eleene who shared David's love of music, was a first-class pianist, singer, and cellist, who played the cello for the Florida West Coast



**A Look Back**  
Sarasota & Manatee's Jewish History

**Jeff LaHurd**

Symphony Orchestra.

Soon after he came to Sarasota, Cohen combined his musical talent with his business acumen to bolster the community's quest to become known as the Cultural Hub of the Gulf Coast.

Additionally, he became a major civic leader and respected politician, elected to the city commission in 1960 for the first of three terms, and served as mayor twice.

During his tenure, he pushed for the passage of the comprehensive 1964 Bond Resolution. Cohen was quoted as saying that the passage of the 8-point Bond was "critical for the city."

The Bond underscored Sarasota's continued efforts toward post-war modernization following the re-routing of U.S. 41 along the Sarasota Bayfront, the new John Ringling Causeway, and the development of Bird Key by the ARVIDA Corporation.

This was a major city-wide initiative that led to the construction of a much-needed city hall building, the updating of the storied Lido Casino

(which did not happen), and the construction of the Newtown Recreation Center for the segregated African American community.

Most importantly for the city's art reputation, a provision of the bond called for the construction of the Eugenia and Lewis Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall, which became an immediate icon, greatly enhancing Sarasota's cultural reputation.

On opening night, Mayor Betz credited David Cohen "as the man who conceived the building."

"This is a great day for Sarasota and citizens of the county and other surrounding areas. This building exemplifies the character of the citizens and of the community perhaps more than any other structure," Betz continued.

Coincidentally for Cohen, previously dubbed "a fiddler at heart," the opening performance at the shell-inspired hall was "Fiddler on the Roof."

On May 14, 1969, Cohen was honored by the city commission when he was appointed as a life member of the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall Committee formed to oversee the hall's operation and activities.

Before the Bond's passage, city hall was still in the Hover Arcade on the municipal pier, well-past its prime, and labeled obsolete. Space was at a premium and commissioners crowded together in one office.

The replacement building, still in use on First Street, is a Sarasota School

of Architecture design by Jack West, with the telling and prophetic, Jack Cartlidge statue, "Nobody's Listening" at the entrance.

The Cohens were fans of Sarasota's Modernist architects like West. Their Siesta Key bayou home was designed by Paul Rudolph, one of the superstars of the Sarasota School of Architecture, and future chair of Yale University's Department of Architecture.

In 1956, the home (and Sarasota) was given national recognition by a full-color pictorial article in the popular *Woman's Home Companion*.

On November 20, 1965, the *Sarasota Herald* announced that Mayor Cohen was awarded by the Florida Association of Architects at their 51st convention as "an outstanding citizen of Florida." He was among several Floridians chosen for "their efforts to lessen the growing tendency toward urban ugliness throughout the United States and for their progressive outlook on community needs."

Tollyn Twitchell, the Sarasota architect who presented the award, said "He is a symbol and a salesman of all the arts in Sarasota. He is a gentleman whose every act symbolizes exactly what we are here for today."

Indeed, Cohen had become the face of Sarasota's arts community, taking the city's reputation to another level. He was a founding member of the Florida West Coast Symphony, today's Sarasota

*Continued on the next page*

Statistics from the ADL survey of Antisemitic Attitudes in America, 2024

## DID YOU KNOW?

**"I WOULD FEEL COMFORTABLE BEING FRIENDS WITH SOMEONE WHO SUPPORTS HAMAS"**

**44.5%** of Millennials strongly or somewhat agree with this statement.

Gen Z who strongly or somewhat agree with this statement: **51.3%**

Anti-Jewish trope beliefs continue to increase, and younger Americans are showing higher rates.

20%	24%
2022	2024

24% of Americans endorse 6 or more anti-Jewish tropes in 2024, an increase of 4% since 2022.

13.7%	29.8%	33.7%	22.8%	43.5% AGREE
STRONGLY AGREE   SOMEWHAT AGREE   SOMEWHAT DISAGREE   STRONGLY DISAGREE				

"Israelis intend to cause as much suffering to Palestinians as possible"

10.5%	31.7%	38.4%	19.4%	42.2% AGREE
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"Israelis are indifferent to Palenstinians' suffering"

Tropes include such concepts as...

- Jews stick together more than other Americans **66.7%** of Americans think this is true.
- Jews in business go out of their way to hire other Jews **53.8%** of Americans think this is true.
- Jews always like to be at the head of things **38.5%** of Americans think this is true.
- Jews have too much power in the United States today **22.5%** of Americans think this is true.

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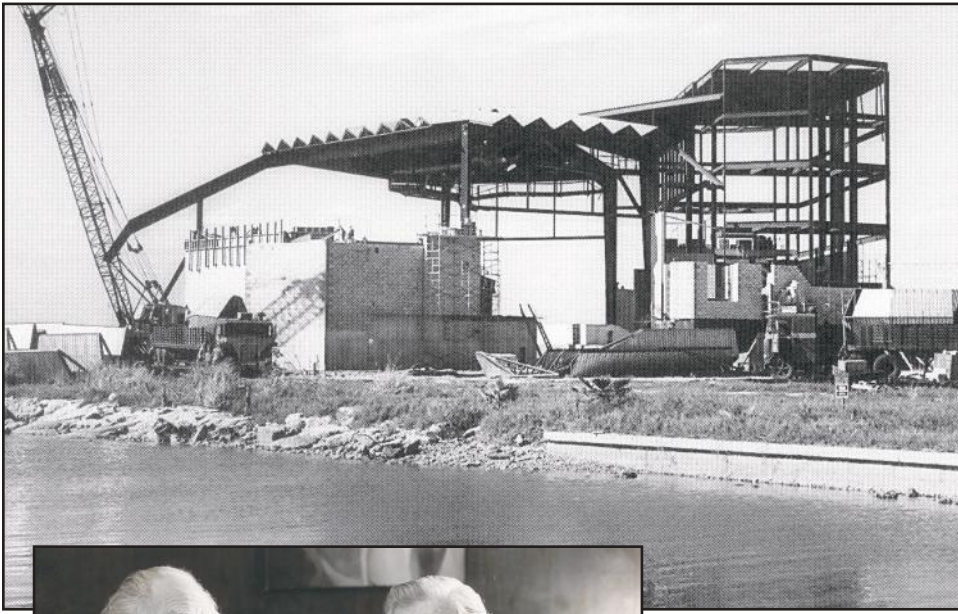
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Above: Construction is underway in 1969 for the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall which would open with *Fiddler on the Roof*. Left: David Cohen, left, and city manager, Ken Thompson, were chiefly responsible for the construction of the much-needed Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall.

*Continued from the previous page*

Symphony Orchestra, he played first violin and initially helped underwrite the organization of talented musicians.

He also founded the Symphony Chamber Music Society.

Cohen broke ground on June 4, 1975, for the Symphony's expansion with the addition of the David Cohen Rehearsal Hall. After pushing the shovel into the ground, he told the three hundred music lovers looking on, "this is where our young people will learn music."

As always, the maestro shared credit for the success of the symphony he once helped found and led as business manager, concertmaster, and assistant conductor. He was embarrassed when he learned the hall would be named in his honor, saying the Florida West Coast Symphony's popularity was "a result of a terrific mix of people who appreciate culture."

On October 26, 1971, Cohen was named Citizen of the Year by Sarasota Bay Post No. 30, singling Cohen out for his many contributions in an im-

pressive, well-attended ceremony at today's Rev. J.D. Hamel Park across from the downtown Bayfront.

After Cohen passed away on October 4, 1999, he was recognized for the tremendous work he had accomplished for his adopted community.

On October 19, 1999, an appreciative city commission issued Resolution 99R-1220, a Sarasota proclamation honoring David Cohen for his untiring work which pushed Sarasota to the forefront of Florida culture.

For Cohen, fine music as part of the arts, would provide Sarasota with drawing power. "Good music, played well, will be enjoyed by everyone."

*Jeff LaHurd grew up in Sarasota and is an award-winning author and lecturer. He has written over a dozen books about Sarasota, and numerous columns in the local publications. Jeff currently serves on the board of the Sarasota Historical Society and is a former board member of the Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation.*

# ANDY COHEN

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"I think continuing to celebrate what we love about being Jewish is actually more of a political statement than people realize." AC

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Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee

# ‘Shil-ton’ Means Authority, Rule, Power, & Government

In the last few weeks, there was a radical power change in the Middle East as the Bashar El Asad regime was toppled by Jihadist militants. This upheaval, where several extreme Muslim factions fight for power, makes one wonder who will eventually win control over the diverse society in Syria and how it will change the political map of the Middle East. The desire to rule over a people is not unique to our era, nor is it new in the Middle East. Throughout history different groups tried to assert control over others by conquering lands, terrorizing the population, and imposing their rule.

The Hebrew noun “shil-ton” and



**K’zohar Ha-Ivrit**  
The Splendor of Hebrew

**Dr. Rachel Zohar Dulin**

the verb “lish-lot” best expresses these dynamics. Shil-ton can mean authority, rule, power, government, or regime. The noun shil-ton is related to the “Aramaic sultana,” meaning pow-

er, or possessor of power. In Biblical Hebrew the verb lish-lot, depending on context, means: to rule, to be a master of, to have dominion. The verb lish-lot appears fifteen times in the Bible in several grammatical forms and refers mostly to Royal power. Interestingly, it appears seven times in Aramaic in the Book of Daniel (3:27; 5:7 et. al), and eight times in Hebrew in late books such as Esther (9:1), Ecclesiastes (8:9), Nehemiah (5:15), and Psalms (119:133). Moreover, the noun shil-ton can be found fourteen times in Aramaic in the Book of Daniel, referring to different controlling powers, such as “God’s dominion” (7:14), “authority of governors” (3:2-3), and even “animal power” (7:6), and twice in reference to “a ruler, a king” (7:27). However, the noun shil-ton appears only twice in the Text and can be found in the Book of Ecclesiastes. Here the wisdom writer warns his audience about the true realities of life. First, in terms of a political agenda one should be aware that “d’var melek shil-ton,” namely, “a king’s command is authoritative,” and no one can question his authority (Ecclesiastes 8:4). Secondly, in a more contemplative and sobering observation, the wise teacher exclaimed that there is time for everything in life, but most importantly

“ain shilton be-yom hamavet,” literally, there is no authority over the day of death (8:8). In short, a person should live life to the fullest, guided by faith, and the desire to do good and refrain from evil (8:9-12).

In modern Hebrew, the noun shil-ton retains its original meaning of to rule or govern, but the verb lish-lot means also to be proficient and to have self-control. So, for example the phrase “lish-lot ba-ma-tzav,” literally means to have a situation under control, whereas “sho-let be-ru-cho” is a person who manages to control one’s temper and whim. In a different context, the verb “sho-let” is used to describe a person who is proficient in many languages and is described as one who “sho-let be-le-sho-not, were lashonot,” in this case means languages. We will end our short search with the saying: “ah-yin hara ei-na sho-letet bo,” namely, the evil eye does not control him.

In short, the verb lish-lot and the noun shil-ton imply power either as a force to control or govern, or a power of self-control and proficiency. As for us, may we all remember the teachings of the Ecclesiastical wisdom and have shil-ton of our deeds and emotions as we strive for the good for all.

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## Temple Beth Sholom Scholar-in-Residence Weekend Friday, March 7 - Sunday, March 9, 2025 with Dr. Jacob Wright



Temple Beth Sholom invites the community to its annual Scholar-in-Residence weekend March 7-9, 2025, featuring internationally renowned Dr. Jacob Wright, Professor of Hebrew Bible at Emory University’s Candler School of Theology.

His areas of expertise include Biblical Archaeology, warfare in the Ancient Near East, and the literary and redaction history of the Hebrew Bible canon.

### *Defeat and Reinvention of the Jewish people*

Friday, March 7 2025 - 6:00 p.m. in TBS Sanctuary and Livestream

### *The Birth of Hope*

Saturday, March 8, 2025 - 9:30 a.m. in TBS Sanctuary and Livestream

### *Dialog with Rabbi Altshuler:*

*Does the Bible matter? Why do Jews and Christians see the Bible so differently?*

Sunday, March 9, 2025 - 10:00 a.m. in TBS Sainer Social Hall

Scan the QR Code to register for our SIR Shabbat Dinner



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# Going & Giving: Tikkun Olam When You Travel

Jewish tradition values “tikkun olam,” repairing the world, as an important mitzvah, and just as we do at home, it’s possible to take actions to repair the world when traveling. Many travelers find it rewarding to support communities and the environment when they travel the world, and it brings them a unique understanding of the destination and its people. When we travel, we often look for ways to positively impact the places we go and the people we meet in either formal, or informal ways.

Jewish organizations: Federations, JNF, Hadassah, synagogues, and others, have been leaders in travel to Israel and Jewish communities around the world with the purpose of tikkun olam. Often, funds are gathered so the communities they visit have flexibility to acquire what they need, but other times, the help is in the form of hands-on volunteerism. Visitors to Israel since the October 7 attack know that picking fruit or packing meals has been a valuable form of tikkun olam.

Before our Jewish Cuba trip a few years ago, we knew our group wanted to support the local community, so our tour operator provided a list of the community’s needs – medicine, insect repellent, educational materials, and more. The poverty is so great that almost anything is welcome; goods can be more valuable than money because there’s so little available to buy!

Many travel and tourism com-



## Jewish Journeys

Roz Bokoff

panies give back to the communities where they operate. Some standout companies like Lindblad Expeditions, Micato Safaris, and GAdventures have tikkun olam built into their DNA. In 2023, for example, Lindblad invested over \$2.2 million to support 26 projects worldwide, including ocean health, marine habitats, and environmental stewardship. Micato pays for an African child’s education for each guest they serve in addition to other important initiatives throughout Africa. GAdventures plants a tree for each of their guests, and they partner with the Planeterra Foundation to collaborate on projects that improve the lives of people in the places they visit.

Purchasing locally made products is a good way to support communities, too. It helps communities when we buy their products: food, handicrafts, and jewelry for example, because we empower the artisans and the sellers who bring the products to market. These communities gain independence and grow their pride when they support



The workshop for the handicapped (mental and physical) is in Tanzania.

themselves through their work. In recent years, women’s cooperatives that give women agency and independence to support their families have become successful. In its efforts to do tikkun olam, Explora Journeys (a new cruise line) has curated its onboard shop with either artisanal products, helping a local artisan and his/her community, or products from a company with a Foundation or charitable giving fund that supports the environment or communities in need. That’s a win: retail therapy and tikkun olam at the same time!

Pack for a Purpose (PackForAPurpose.org) is a go-to website if you want to bring items with you to support a community. Its mission is to “allow travelers to give back and connect locally ... to provide an ex-

tra special meaning and connection to a destination. It broadens horizons, opens minds, connects cultures, and ... brings the world closer together.” Check it out next time you plan to go on vacation!

Wherever you go, our experience is clear. Reaching across cultures to do tikkun olam with funds, supplies, or physical actions is an incredible way to create lasting travel memories and do mitzvot at the same time.

Roz Bokoff and her husband, Marc, are travel advisors based in Lakewood Ranch. Experienced in all types of travel around the world, their Jewish heritage and practice drives them to seek out Jewish culture when they travel. Roz can be reached at Roz.Bokoff@CruisePlanners.com.



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Knish - potato/Large (frozen unbaked)	4 for \$32		
Knish - spinach/Large (frozen unbaked)	4 for \$32		
Kugel	4 for \$24		
Sandwich - corned beef (pickles & chips)	\$16		
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1 From the JCV website – Select February 16 on the CALENDAR (or HAPPENINGS/Upcoming Events) click on MORE INFO; this will take you to a screen that has a link to the online registration/payment form, OR

2 Print and complete this form and send it to the JCV: 600 N. Auburn Rd., Venice, FL 34292 with a check made payable to the Jewish Congregation of Venice marked “FF Specialties” so your account is credited properly. PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY ORDER.

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Feb: Celebrate Federation @ 65 & more! Flip to Page 16-17

**JEWISH news** OF SARASOTA-MANATEE

PUBLISHED BY THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF SARASOTA-MANATEE GREENSPON CAMPUS FOR JEWISH LIFE

February 2024 - Shevat/Adar I 5784 jfedsrq.org Volume 54, Number 2

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**The Ora announces Michael's On East exclusive partnership**

By Federation Staff

The Ora, our premier event venue opening soon on the Federation campus, is proud to announce that Michael's On East is our exclusive food and beverage catering partner. Stars of the Sarasota culinary scene since 1987, partners Michael Klauer and Phil Mancini have built a stellar reputation based on innovative cuisine and impeccable service.

"We are already booking a number of outstanding events for 2024," said Duane McGrath, director of operations for The Ora at the Joel and Gail Megaworth Event Center. "It is exciting that we are best in class."

of events planned for The Ora, along with the excellence of the venue, which will make the guest experience memorable in many ways," says Phil Mancini, co-proprietor of Michael's On East. At 10,000 square feet, The Ora will be among the largest and most elegant event venues in the region. The magnificent boasts 10,000 square feet of soaring ceilings, dramatic lighting configuration possibilities flexible to meet the needs of events from conferences to weddings and celebrations. Branding out the venue bright and spacious lobby, the state-of-the-art Terrace Room with windows facing the outdoor area and the airy Gallery, ideal for intimate gatherings.

If you are interested in learning about The Ora, our exclusive partnership with Michael's On East, please contact Duane McGrath at dmcgrath@jfedsrq.org or call Duane McGrath at 941.552.6307.

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# Oscar Breakthrough? White Lotus 3; Romeo & Juliet Musical, More

## Stars of David

Nate Bloom

*Editor's Note: Persons in bold are deemed by Nate Bloom to be Jewish for the purpose of this column. Persons identified as Jewish have at least one Jewish parent and were not raised in, or identify with, a faith other than Judaism. Converts to Judaism, of course, are also identified as Jewish.*

The 2024 Oscars ceremony will air on ABC on March 2. The nominations for the Oscars were announced on January 17. Unfortunately, I have to submit this February column before that date. However, I think an interesting "thing" is possibly happening for the first time, and I wanted you to look for it.

Virtually all the respected sources which predict who will be nominated, and win (*Variety*, *Hollywood Reporter*, and more) say that **Timothee Chalamet**, 28, is a cinch to be nominated for playing **Bob Dylan** in "A Complete Unknown." "They" say there is a good chance that **Adrien Brody**, 51, will receive a nomination for playing Laslo Toth, a (fictional) Jewish architect who survived the Holocaust, in "The Brutalist."

I checked: two "really" Jewish actors, playing two Jewish characters (real or fictional), have never been nominated, in the same year, for the best actor Oscar. This will happen if Brody and Chalamet are nominated.

In 2002, Brody was just 30 when he won the best actor Oscar for playing **Wladyslaw Szpilman**, a Polish Jewish pianist in "The Pianist." He became the youngest actor to win the best actor Oscar and remains so. If Chalamet wins this year, he will become the youngest actor to win the award.

The third season of "The White Lotus," a black comedy series, will premiere on HBO on February 16. Each 8-episode "Lotus" season has its own actors and plot lines (Season 2 and 3 had one holdover character from a previous season).

Season 3 takes place at the luxurious White Lotus resort. I can't provide, here, the backstory on all 14 main characters. I can tell you that "busy" British Jewish actor **Jason Isaacs**, 61, plays a wealthy businessman who is vacationing with his wife and three children. (**Scott Glenn**, 85, has a recurring role. You'll know his face from many roles. He converted to Judaism in 1968).

"Verona's Romeo & Juliet" is a musical film (opens in theaters on February 14) based on Shakespeare's play, but includes new, modern songs. **Tim Scott Bogart**, 54, wrote the screenplay and he also directed the film. Bogart has produced many films, but this is first outing as a director and screenwriter.

## FEBRUARY RELEASES

- "The White Lotus," HBO 2/16
- "Verona's Romeo & Juliet," theaters 2/14
- "Zero Day," Netflix 2/20
- "Suits L.A.," NBC 2/23

The songs were written by **Evan Bogart**, 46. He is the brother of Tim Scott. Evan Bogart has a well-established career as a songwriter. He's written songs for quite a few top singers and he has been nominated four times for a Grammy, winning once (Beyonce, "Halo," 2008).

The busy Jason Isaacs has a leading role in "Verona." He plays Lord Montague, Romeo's father. Also co-starring are Derek Jacobi and Rebel Wilson. **Dan Folger**, 48, has a pretty big role with a short character name: The Apothecary.

"Verona's" will be judged, I think, against "West Side Story," an incredibly good musical which was a modern version of the Romeo & Juliet story. It's tough to top or equal the West Side songwriters (**Leonard Bernstein** and **Stephen Sondheim**).

Tim and Evan are the sons of **Neil Bogart** (1943-82). He was the founder of the very successful Casablanca Records. His big stars included disco queen Donna Summers and the band, Kiss. He was only 39 when cancer killed him. His Jewish widow, **Joyce**, is the mother of Tim and Evan. A non-profit organization she runs has raised "a lot of gelt" to fight cancer.

"Zero Day" is a Netflix series that will begin streaming on February 20. The show's publicity says the series "is a political thriller centering on a devastating cyberattack." The top two stars in the credits are Robert DeNiro and **Lizzy Caplan**, 42. She received Emmy nominations for "Masters of Sex" and as Lizzy in the 2022 series "Fleishman Is in Trouble." Lizzy was the Jewish ex-wife of the Jewish Dr. Toby Fleishman, the central character (**Jesse Eisenberg**).

"Suits L.A.," is a new NBC legal drama that will premiere on February 23 at 9:00 p.m. It is a spin-off of the "Suits," a successful lawyer series that ran from 2011 to 2019. Both series were created by **Aaron Korsh**, 58. He produced both series and wrote or co-wrote many of the shows' scripts.

"Suits L.A." has four starring roles. One of them is Rick Dodsden and he's played by **Bryan Greenberg**, 48. Greenberg isn't a star, but he has worked steadily in TV shows and films for the last 20 years.

Harvey Spector, an attorney in "Suits," is a recurring character in "L.A. Suits." He is played by **Gabriel Macht**, 52. His father, **Stephen Macht**, 82, was also a successful actor. Stephen became quite religious in the last 20 years and he's now ordained as a Jewish chaplain. (Look him up. If you are 40+ you'll know his face).

# Sarasota-Manatee and Richmond, Virginia

Jews have been part of Richmond's history since the colonial era, and Richmond is home to a strong Jewish community today. Judah Benjamin, the first Jew to hold a Cabinet position in North America, lived in Richmond while serving as Secretary of State for the Confederacy. When the Confederacy collapsed, he fled to the Gamble Mansion in Ellenton, Florida and hid there for about two weeks. There is evidence of Jews residing in Richmond as early as 1769. Richmond established Virginia's first synagogue in 1789. There were no Jews living in Sarasota-Manatee until 1909, and Sarasota-Manatee did not have a synagogue until 1925. Sarasota residents, Dr. Ike Koziol and his wife Judith, lived in Richmond before retiring to Sarasota in 2018. Here, in their words, they compare their Jewish life in Richmond with their Jewish life in Sarasota-Manatee.



## Tales of Two Cities

Kim Sheintal

The main organization of Jewish life in Richmond was the Jewish Community Center (JCC), which shares a building with Federation. Richmond has a strong Jewish history that pre-dates the Revolutionary War and includes the Civil War. Some Jewish soldiers fought for the Confederacy and Judah Benjamin held numerous posts under Confederate President Jefferson Davis. In 1789, Kahal Kadosh Beth Shalome was formed. This congregation had a mix of German and Eastern European Jews. In 1841, the Reform congregation of Beth Ahabah formed as an offshoot of that congregation. This was a classical German Reform congregation, and its first rabbi was called Reverend. The early temple school was so good that many Christian children were enrolled. Unlike our experience at Temple Emanu-El in Sarasota, Beth Ahabah did not serve as our focal point in Jewish community.

With a much smaller Jewish community in Richmond and not as many Jews in their 60s and older, the JCC

played a significant role since it had a pre-school, which was one of the best in the area. The JCC was the hub for culture and athletic events for Jewish youth and our sons participated. Adult culture activities included a Book Fair and plays like the Sarasota Jewish Theater puts on. At the JCC, Judith ran the Book Fair, and we were part of Young Leadership in Federation. As it is in Sarasota, volunteerism was an essential part of Jewish life. The major difference for us was that we were still working so meetings were squeezed in before work, at lunch, or after work. Judith, being more flexible with her work time, participated on the Federation and Jewish Family Services boards. Her major interest, however, was caring for the aging Jewish population. She joined the board of the Beth Shalom Continuing Care community and eventually became president of the board for the entire campus. She also led the campaign to for the expansion of assisted living and memory care. Ike served on the medical committee and was president of the assisted living part of the campus.

There is a wide range of Jewish activities in Richmond. Years ago, the country clubs excluded Jews and Blacks. The Jewish golfers and others formed their own club. This changed and the most restrictive club, The Country Club of Virginia (CCV) began allowing Jews and Blacks to join. We attended one of the first weddings at



Dr. Ike and Judith Koziol

CCV where the band played The Hora. Richmond is home to the Virginia Holocaust Museum which was created by a friend of ours whose family survived the concentration camps. Religious life is like Sarasota with Chabad, large Reform, Conservative congregations, a few Orthodox shuls, and a Reconstructionist group. There is a Jewish Day School that leans Orthodox. So, Judaism is alive and well in Richmond, Virginia. We were sad to leave but, we found a wonderful Jewish life in Sarasota in the very welcoming Temple Emanu-El family. Just like our time in Richmond, we jumped into participating: with Judith as Chair of Adult Education Committee and Ike on the Board of Trustees. We are so happy that Sarasota has such a vibrant and active Jewish life.

*Are you a snowbird or a full-time transplant from another home state? Are you willing to contribute your thoughts to our limited series? If so, please email hlurie@jfedrsrq.org.*

### In the Words of Dr. Ike and Judith Koziol

Richmond, Virginia is where we both attained our professional degrees. It is where our Jewish life began when our children received a basic Jewish education at Congregation Beth Ahabah, one of the oldest Reform congregations in America. We both came from secular upbringings and the Jewish community embraced us and taught us, when we settled there. In short order, the Federation sought us out as possible leaders.

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## Chabad of Venice Hosted Hanukkah Celebration



This program was sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee

Chabad of Venice hosted its annual Hanukkah Festival, drawing over 1,000 attendees to downtown Venice for a record-breaking celebration filled with light and joy. Highlights included: music by the Freylakh Band, a performance by the Hebrew school, the lighting of a giant menorah, and an exciting chocolate gelt drop from 25 feet in the air, courtesy of the Venice Fire Department.

Kim Adler, COO of the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee, lit the shamash. Outgoing Police Chief Charlie Thorpe was honored with a beautiful menorah, and incoming Chief Andrew Leisenring was welcomed.



Above: The Hebrew School preformed. Right: Venice Mayor Pachota, Rabbi Schmerling, outgoing Police Chief Thorpe, and incoming Police Chief Leisenring.



## TEE Welcomes Kaplan Scholar-in-Residence, Rabbi Kanter

Temple Emanu-El (TEE) will be alive with song, music, and learning as the congregation welcomes this year's Kaplan Scholar-in-Residence, Rabbi Kenneth A.



Kanter

Kanter. Rabbi Kanter will speak at Shabbat services on Friday, February 28, at 7:15 p.m. and on Saturday, March 1, at 10:00 a.m.

In addition to his work as Rabbinic Director of Roots of Reform Judaism, an organization encouraging the historical, liturgical, and social justice heritage of Reform Judaism, Rabbi

Kanter is an internationally-known expert on Jews and American popular music from the 1840s to 1940s. The author of "The Jews on Tin Pan Alley," he also contributed to "Jewish-American History and Culture" and "The Encyclopedia of Jewish American Popular Culture."

Rabbi Kanter's presentation on Friday evening, titled "Our Reform Jewish Music of Yesterday and Today," explores the musical history of the Reform movement including: the great composers of Germany and Central Europe, the mid-twentieth century liturgical masters, and the guitar and folk pieces of today.

"When you sing along with the wonderful music of our Shabbat and

High Holy Day worship, you are singing music that is as old as Torah trope and as new as ... the synagogue music we love today," Rabbi Kanter remarked.

On Saturday morning, Rabbi Kanter will join forces with Temple Emanu-El Music Director Scott Sable for a delightful program called "The Jews of Tin Pan Alley." In an engaging sing-along format, participants will trace the history of American popular music, from the beginning of the industry through the "Golden Age," and experience songs that served as musical companions to American history. "You know Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, Rodgers and Hart, Harold Arlen, and George Gershwin," Rabbi Kanter

comments, "but soon you will know the Von Tilzers, Gus Kahn, Billy Rose, and Charles K. Harris!"

Scholar-in-Residence Committee members Cindy and Dan Aminoff, Rita Feder, Rabbi Elaine Rose Glickman, Dr. Janet Hiller, Dr. Ike and Judith Koziol, Philip Meltzer, Esther Rose, Dr. Eleanor Wachs, and Ellen Zipin warmly invite the community to this special weekend. The Kaplan Scholar-in-Residence is generously underwritten by Dee and Army Kaplan.

For more information or to register for Saturday's program, please visit Temple Emanu-El's website at [sarasotatemple.org/event/scholar-in-residence1](http://sarasotatemple.org/event/scholar-in-residence1).

## Original and Oldest Local Jewish Food Festival Returns

Celebrating the delicious diversity of Jewish foods and culture since 1994, the Jewish Congregation of Venice's (JCV) beloved and eagerly awaited Jewish Food Festival takes place on Sunday, February 16. A myriad of volunteers are busy behind the scenes. From daily cooking by talented and dedicated JCV chefs under the leadership of Harriet Davidson and Judy Rapaport, to all the other tasks involved with this massive yearly event, preparations have been underway since November.

At least 200 of the synagogue's 300 members active ensure that the festival goes seamlessly, both before and on the day of the event.

The food festival committee, under the leadership of chair, Marc Antine, has been working tirelessly on procuring and preparing food, publicity, logistics, jewelry sales, equipment, vendor booths, entertainment, signage, etc.

The dedicated JCV community looks forward to sunshine, as opposed to last year's rain, as they work to make this year the most successful in the long history of this community celebration of Jewish food. There will be



Steve Weiss prepares rugelach.

corned beef and pastrami sandwiches, homemade stuffed cabbage, chopped liver, knishes, kugel, matzo ball soup, cabbage soup, Jewish pastries, and homemade baked goods.

For pre-orders visit the JCV website: [congregationofvenice.org](http://congregationofvenice.org). The JCV is located at 600 North Auburn Road (off East Venice Avenue) in Venice. Festival hours are from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

## Temple Sinai Presents 'The Diary of Anne Frank' at Rise Above

Temple Sinai is hosting a beautiful performance of "The Diary of Anne Frank" at Rise Above Performing Arts Center, 3501 S. Tamiami Trail, Suite 1005, Sarasota, on Sunday, March 2, at 7:00 p.m. This powerful and moving evening will present the timeless story of hope, resilience, and the human spirit, the story of Anne Frank's life during the holocaust.

During the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands, Anne Frank began to keep a diary on June 14, 1942, two days after her 13th birthday and twenty-two days before going into hiding with her parents, sister, and three other people. Hiding in the sealed-off upper rooms of the annex of her father's office building in Amsterdam, Anne and the others cope with the day-to-day struggles of life in cramped quarters, as tragedy looms ever-present over their every move.

Viewers will have an opportunity to witness an historical master-

piece. The diary serves as a reminder of the resilience and strength of the Jewish people. Anne's courage and optimism in the face of adversity can inspire others to find hope in their own lives. It serves as a powerful reminder of the consequence of hatred and indifference. "The Diary of Anne Frank" is a vital and cultural resource that promotes awareness, reflection and understanding, making it essential for the Jewish community and society as a whole.

The performance is appropriate for all ages, providing an inspiring and thought-provoking experience. Following the show, there will be a discussion session focusing on the story, its significance, and the enduring legacy of Anne Frank. To make the evening more enjoyable, refreshments and snacks will be served.

To register to attend this performance visit [templesinai-sarasota.org](http://templesinai-sarasota.org).

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# Federation & Locals Support Leket Israel with Harvest Circle

Leaders of the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee and local supporters of American Friends of Leket Israel (AFOLI) gathered for the first-ever Harvest Circle luncheon in Sarasota on Tuesday, December 3. AFOLI supports the critical work of Leket Israel, Israel's National Food Bank and largest food rescue organization; the Harvest Circle is its giving society and has over 400 members in the United States, with a large and growing number of donors in Sarasota and the Gulf Coast region.

Harvest Circle members enjoyed friendly socializing over a delicious meal at Green Zebra Café, as well as a high-level briefing and question-and-answer session with Lauren Yokèd, Executive Director of AFOLI. Yokèd provided updates about the major humanitarian relief programs that Leket Israel has innovated since October 7, including the organization's new emphasis on additional food provision and the development of direct financial

aid, volunteer labor, and other special programs for the devastated farming community. She also shared breaking news about a new law supported by Leket Israel and passed by the Knesset that outlaws food waste by requiring ministries, hospitals, army bases, and other public bodies to arrange for any excess food to be distributed to the needy. This law is the first of its kind in the entire world and a source of great pride and inspiration.

Yokèd also reminded attendees that in normal times, Leket Israel feeds 270,000 Israelis per week, of all backgrounds, with 70 million pounds of fresh, surplus produce and 2.4 million cooked meat meals annually, all of which is rescued from hotels, army bases, corporate cafeterias, and more. Due to the war, Leket Israel is now feeding 330,000 Israelis per week, including families in conflict zones, evacuees, the elderly and homebound, the suddenly unemployed, and more.

"It is very exciting to see the pas-

sion and commitment the Sarasota community has for Israel, and it has been an honor helping connect more and more Sarasotans with food rescue over the past decade," Yokèd stated.

"Leket Israel is grateful to all the attendees, including our friends and longtime partners at The Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee, Federation CEO Shep Englander, Federation President Deb Kabinoff, and Harvest Cir-

cle co-founders and co-chairs Rabbis Brenner and Elaine Rose Glickman," she added. "Rabbi Brenner Glickman also serves on the national board of AFOLI."

For more information about volunteering with or supporting Leket Israel, please email [Lauren@Leket.us](mailto:Lauren@Leket.us) or call 201-331-0070. American Friends of Leket Israel is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.



Above: Harvest Circle co-founder and American Friends of Leket Israel board member Rabbi Brenner Glickman welcomed attendees, including Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee president Deb Kabinoff (front left), to the Harvest Circle luncheon. Left: Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee CEO Shep Englander, American Friends of Leket Israel Executive Director Lauren Yokèd, and Harvest Circle co-chairs Rabbis Elaine and Brenner Glickman.

## A Delegation from Sarasota United with 2,500 Zionists at the Global Conference for Israel



Photo by Jim Woods Photography

Several local community members united with 2,500 Zionists at Jewish National Fund-USA's Global Conference for Israel in Dallas on November 14-17, 2024. Conference attendees included Israelis, pro-Israel community members of all faiths from 10 different countries, and young adults who participated in the conference's High School and College Summits. Front: Joshua Mellits, JNF-USA Western Florida & Orlando Director; Meril Salzborg, member, Sarasota Board of Directors; Esther Rose, Co-President, Sarasota Board of Directors; Toby Halpern, Chairperson, Sarasota Board of Directors; Harvey Siegel, member, Sarasota Board of Directors; Noel Siegel; Avraham Siegel. Middle: Edie Chaifetz, member, Sarasota Board of Directors; David Chaifetz, Sarasota Board of Directors. Back: Melody Kretzmer; Peter Kretzmer, Co-President, Sarasota Board of Directors; Pam Adelstein; Kurt Leunis.

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Can you believe it has been a whole year since our soft opening of The Ora in February 2024? Since then, The Ora has hosted dozens of events both big and small. Here's a look back to see how far we've come.



THEORASRQ.COM

### Temple Sinai Informed with Speaker Series



Laurie Lachowitz, organizer, Ilana Kaufman, speaker, and Chazzan Cliff Abramson at the Temple Sinai Jews of Color Initiative. In this 2-part series, Ilana Kaufman, CEO and Founder of the Jews of Color Initiative, emphasized the power of a diverse Jewish future, Jewish demography, responsibilities, opportunities, and why it matters.

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# Sarasota Jewish Theatre Launches Be a Theatre Maven Program with ‘Visiting Mr. Green’

By Carole Kleinberg, Artistic Director

I have been thinking about the immense cultural and historical significance that a Jewish theater provides. It serves as a powerful medium for preserving and celebrating Jewish heritage, traditions, and stories. Theater fosters a sense of community and identity, offering a space for reflection and dialogue about Jewish experiences and issues. Jewish theater contributes to the broader cultural landscape by enriching the arts with unique perspectives and narratives. It's a vibrant testament to the resilience and creativity of the Jewish people.



Kleinberg

In today's trying times, when the threat of antisemitism is being ratcheted up, it is even more important that we celebrate Judaism and show our pride for being Jewish. I hope you will join us, with simcha in your heart, for our plays this season.

The resolution for all our plays, both comedies and dramas, is centered on family and forgiveness. In each play, the journey is filled with anticipation, insight, and an unexpected turn of events. Come along for the ride and enjoy the powerful surprises at the end.



Depending on when you are reading this, you might still be able to join us for the first session of our exciting new program, Be a Theatre Maven. This in-depth exploration of Jeff Baron's play "Visiting Mr. Green," on Friday, January 31 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., includes a deep dive into the play and the playwright, the reasons for a post-pandemic rewrite, as well as all the technical and artistic elements that bring this play to life.

Be a Theatre Maven programs also take place on Friday, March 21, exploring the timeless Neil Simon classic "Lost in Yonkers"; and on Friday, May 2 for our final play of the season, the comedy "Bad Jews" by Joshua Harmon.

The Be a Theatre Maven program includes a continental breakfast followed by discussions with the artistic director and the technical and artistic teams. Do you want to Be a Theatre Maven? Tickets are available at theplayers.org or by calling 941-365-2494. Tickets (per program) are \$35 for the general public, and \$25 for SJT season subscribers. Check our website, SarasotaJewishTheatre.org, for information.

Finally, we are thrilled to honor the remarkable Nancy Roucher at our annual luncheon on Tuesday, April 22, at Michael's On East. Visit SarasotaJewishTheatre.org for information and to reserve your spot.

Theater doesn't happen in a vacuum. It needs an audience in order to exist. I would love to hear what aspect of Jewish theater interests you the most. I can be reached at carole@carolekleinberg.com.

See you in the theater!

*Theater fosters a sense of community and identity, offering a space for reflection and dialogue about Jewish experiences and issues.*

The Jewish News is a monthly nonprofit newspaper supported by readers, advertisers, and the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee.

## Fun Under the Big Top at UTC with Six13



Photo by Malcolm Roberts



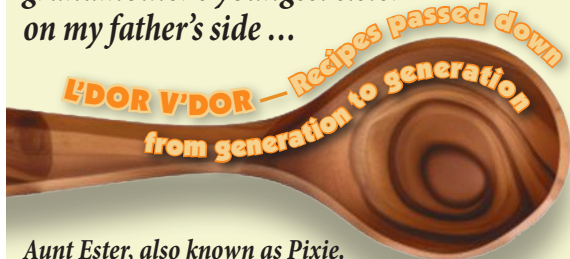
Top: Temple Emanu-El (TEE) Senior Rabbi Brenner Glickman introduced Jewish acappella sensation Six13 as they performed a Hanukkah concert for over 700 guests of all ages on Tuesday evening, December 17. This amazing event was sponsored by University Town Center (UTC) and TEE. Lower photo: Six13 performs.

# What's COOKING?

By Lisa Bean

## UPSIDE DOWN KUGEL

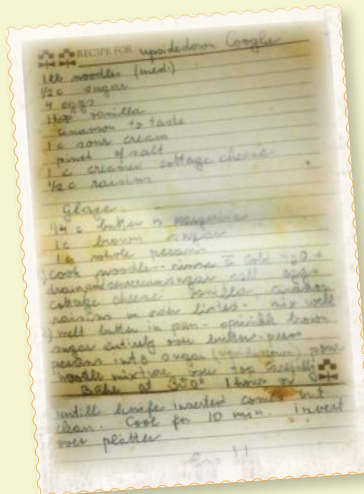
This recipe came from my grandmother's youngest sister on my father's side ...



Aunt Ester, also known as Pixie. She was a tiny lady with a pixie haircut. She was so much fun to be around and when she made anything to eat, it was almost as good as when my Baba cooked. I remember loving this so much, I had it for breakfast, lunch and dinner the first year I lived on my own. Apples, raisins, ricotta and cinnamon...oh my!!!

- INGREDIENTS**
- 1 lb. medium-sized noodles
  - ½ C sugar
  - 4 Eggs
  - 1 C sour cream
  - 1 C creamed cottage cheese (or ricotta)
  - ½ C raisins
  - 1 tsp. Vanilla
  - Cinnamon to taste
  - Pinch of salt

- Glaze for Kugel**
- ¼ C butter or margarine
  - 1 C brown sugar
  - 1 C whole pecans

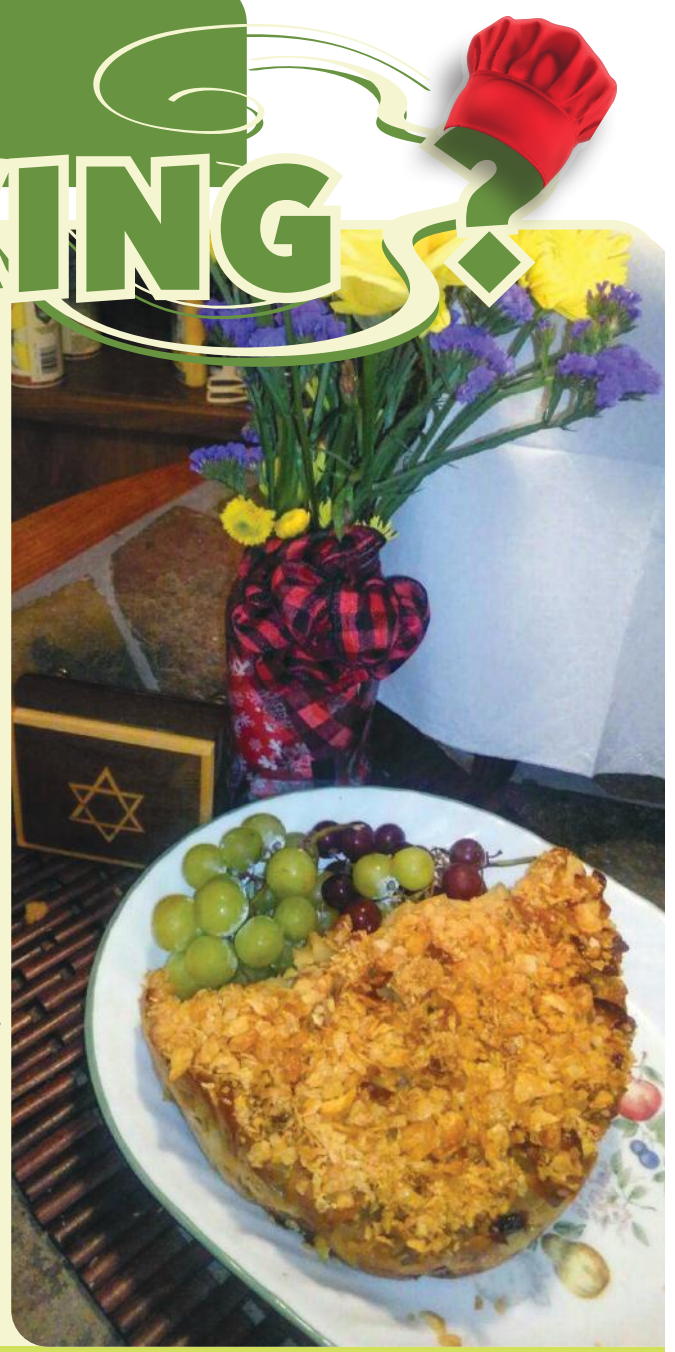


### INSTRUCTIONS

- Cook noodles and drain/rinse with cold water.
- Add, in order listed: sour cream, sugar, salt, eggs, cottage cheese, vanilla, cinnamon and raisins. Mix well.
- Melt butter in baking pan, sprinkle brown sugar entirely over butter. Press whole pecans into sugar and butter mixture.

- Pour noodle mixture carefully on top of butter, brown sugar and pecan layer in pan.
- Bake at 350° for 1 hour or until knife comes out clean when inserted in kugel.
- Cool for 10 minutes, invert onto serving plate and "ESS!!" (Yiddish for EAT)

Lisa is a Second-Generation Holocaust Survivor and a member of the Federation's Generations After group. She is the daughter of our beloved survivor Helga Melmed, who shared this recipe with her.



## Welcome to

our monthly column celebrating the connection of food with Jewish culture and tradition. Reach out if you have a recipe or idea you would like to share: hlurie@jfedsrq.org

16<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

# MORT SKIRBOLL JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL

OF SARASOTA-MANATEE



In December, the first of four feature films kicked off the 16<sup>TH</sup> Annual Mort Skirboll JFF which will conclude with a week-long festival in March.

JFF COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS  
NADIA RITTER & RONNIE RICEBERG

## FEATURE FILMS

### COLLEYVILLE

FEBRUARY 18, 2025

Temple Emanu-El

Light Nosh ☉ 6:30PM ☉ Film 7:00PM

Talkback and Q&A with Dani Menkin  
and Michael Masters

### JANIS IAN: BREAKING SILENCE

MARCH 2, 2025

The Ora ☉ 7:00PM

Talkback and Q&A with Janis Ian



## special guests

### Janis Ian

Photo by Bill Strahan



### Dani Menkin



### Michael Masters



12 FILMS will be screened at the REGAL 11 Sarasota between MARCH 3-6. Each film is \$15 and bundle pricing is available. For a complete list of all films, please visit

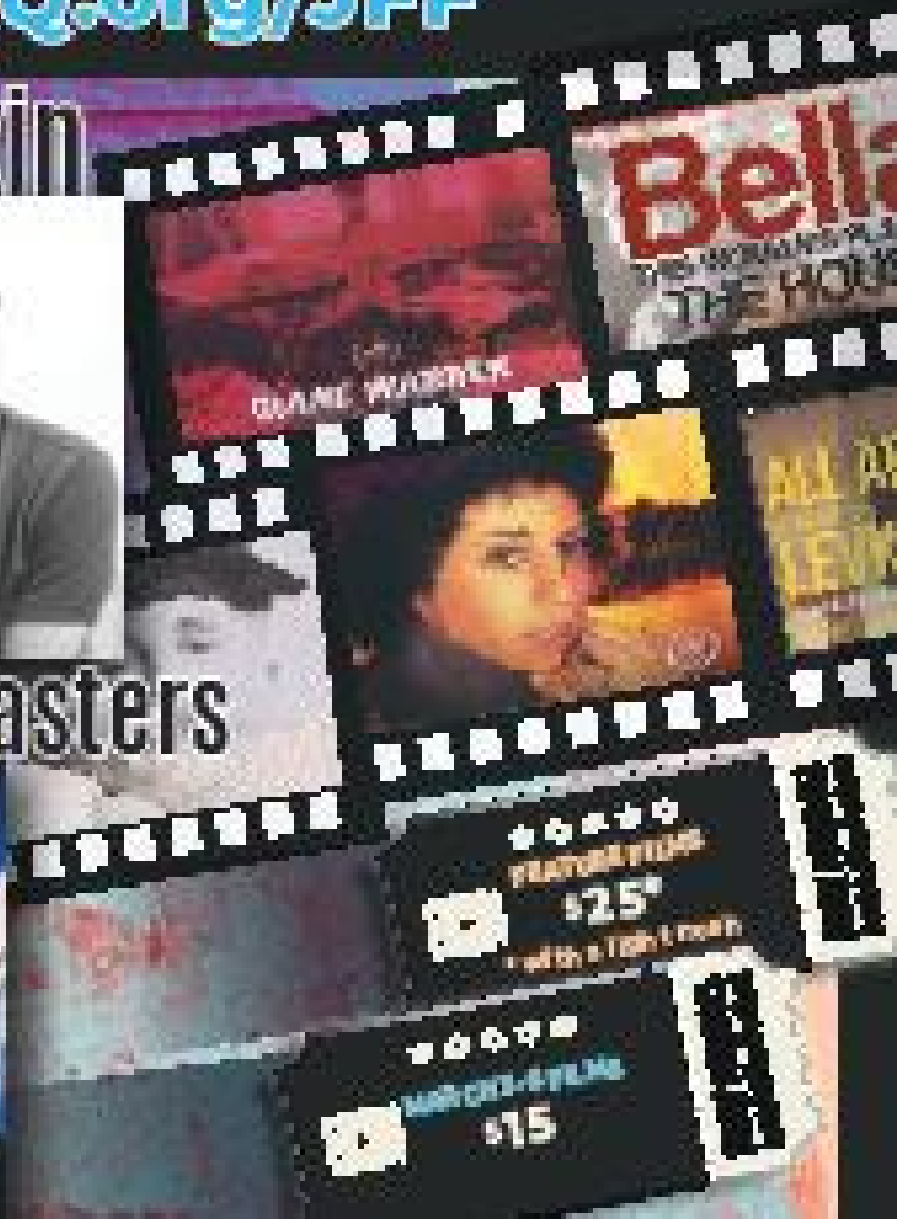
[JFEDSRQ.org/JFF](http://JFEDSRQ.org/JFF)



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## WHAT'S GOING ON IN FEBRUARY

# JEWISH @ TUTU & to do

PUBLISHED BY THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF SARASOTA-MANATEE  
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IN SARASOTA-MANATEE



"Tutu, 2018" sculpture by Sigalit Landau: tutu dress encrusted with salt crystals from the Dead Sea. Join us to hear from this innovative Israeli artist February 5. Photo by Yotam From, ©Sigalit Landau, 2019. See Calendar for details.

All events and program times listed here are Eastern Time Zone unless otherwise indicated.  
For a continuously updated community calendar, visit [jfedsrq.org/community-cal](http://jfedsrq.org/community-cal)

### RECURRING EVENTS

#### Bereavement and Counseling Programs

##### Ongoing

Jewish Connections offers bereavement programs and individual counseling in addition to visiting with loved ones on hospice or at the hospital. We offer financial assistance to those struggling with a rental payment, security deposit, or electric bill. Please reach out to Rabbi Shayndel Kahn 941-366-2224 Ext.-166  
For financial assistance reach out to Rebecca Elton our financial assistant at 941-366-2224 Ext.-11.

##### Shacharit

Sundays, Shacharit 8:30 a.m., at Chabad of Venice, 21560 Angela Lane, Venice  
We gather to start our week off in a meaningful way together. Coffee is served.  
For more information contact Rabbi Sholom Schmerling at 941-493-2770 or [rabbi@chabadofvenice.com](mailto:rabbi@chabadofvenice.com).

##### Women's Book Club

Tuesdays, at 10:00 a.m., at Chabad of Venice, 21560 Angela Lane, Venice  
Insightful teaching and sharing of Jewish perspectives through literature in an inviting, casual setting. Refreshments are served. Led by Chaya Rivka Schmerling.  
RSVP to [rivka@chabadofvenice.com](mailto:rivka@chabadofvenice.com) or call 941-493-2770.

##### Torah & Tea at the Chabad Tent

Tuesdays, February 4, 11, 18, & 25, 11:00 a.m. to noon, at 5712 Lorraine Road and The Virtual Chabad House  
Join Chanie Bukiet either in person outdoors or on Zoom for a weekly dose of To-

rah spiced with lessons on the "The End of Times" and round table discussions.  
Free. Sponsor a class in someone's memory or honor for \$36. For more information, call The Chabad at 941-752-3030 or e-mail [info@chabadofbradenton.com](mailto:info@chabadofbradenton.com).

#### Bagels, Lox, & Shmooze

Tuesdays at Noon at Chabad of Venice, 21560 Angela Lane, Venice  
"Bagels. Lox & Schmooze." A weekly community social gathering to schmooze and enjoy time together. It's an opportunity to make new friends, see familiar faces and be part of the community. Open to the entire community.  
Suggested Donation: \$10. RSVP at [chabadofvenice.com/shmooze](http://chabadofvenice.com/shmooze).

#### Decoding the Talmud: Inside the Story, Substance, and Significance of the Book That Defines Judaism (6 Sessions)

Tuesdays, Beginning February 4, at 12:30 p.m. at the Venice Community Center, 326 Nokomis Ave. S., Venice  
Step into the intricate and captivating world of the Talmud, the monumental text that has shaped Jewish learning, thought, and tradition for centuries. This six-week course, offered by the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute, invites you to uncover the history, authorship, and enduring relevance of the Talmud, and gain the tools to explore it yourself. Led by Rabbi Sholom Schmerling, this course offers a unique opportunity to experience the Talmud's depth and brilliance in a clear and approachable way. No prior knowledge is necessary, just curiosity and a desire to learn. The course is offered in person and via Zoom, making it accessible to everyone.  
For more information, call 941-493-2770 or visit [chabadofvenice.com/JLI](http://chabadofvenice.com/JLI).

#### God's Family – Part 2 with Rabbi Stuart Altshuler and Rev. Kenneth Blyth

Tuesdays in February, 2:00 p.m., at Temple Beth Shalom, 1050 S. Tuttle Ave. Bldg. 2, Sarasota  
Rabbi Altshuler and Rev. Kenneth Blyth return to co-host this unique interfaith program between Lutheran Christians and Judaism. They will bring their discussions on faith and interfaith discourse to the classroom. This special four-part collaboration is the perfect chance for everyone to unite as a community and bridge the "religious gap" that plagues the world.  
Contact [info@tbssrq.org](mailto:info@tbssrq.org) or call 941-955-8121 for more information. No cost, but donations are always welcome; for more information, please visit [templebethsholomfl.org/event](http://templebethsholomfl.org/event).

#### JLI - Decoding the Talmud

Wednesdays, February 5, 12, 19, 26, at 7:30 p.m., at the Chabad House, 5712 Lorraine Road, or on Zoom  
Enter the intricate world of the Talmud: the monumental classic that has defined Jewish learning for centuries. Join this six-week course from the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute (JLI) to discover the Talmud, its history, authors, and significance, and experience it for yourself.  
Fee: \$90 (textbook included). For more information and reservations, contact Chabad at [chabadofbradenton.com](http://chabadofbradenton.com), [info@chabadofbradenton.com](mailto:info@chabadofbradenton.com), or 941-752-3030.

#### New 6-Week Course – Decoding the Talmud at Chabad of Sarasota

Wednesdays beginning February 5, 10:15 a.m. or 7:00 p.m., at Chabad of Sarasota, 7700 Beneva Road, Sarasota  
Decoding the Talmud, is a new six-week course held at Chabad of Sarasota and

*Continued on next page*



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SCAN ME

*Continued from previous page*

delivered by Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz. The course aims to introduce the Talmud, its mysteries, and its treasures to curious students of all backgrounds. The Talmud records the sages' painstaking effort to piece together every aspect of Jewish law, lore, practice, and ethics. Participants will explore the origins of its material and meet the great sages who composed it. The course is offered twice every Wednesday at 10:15 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Choose the time slot that works best for you.

The cost of the course is \$79 per person. For further information or to register, call the Chabad office at 941-925-0770 or online [SarasotaChabad.com/JLI](http://SarasotaChabad.com/JLI).

**Torah Study followed by Shacharit**

Saturdays, at 9:30 a.m., at Chabad of Venice, 21560 Angela Lane, Venice

We'll examine the weekly Torah reading through the lens of contemporary commentary every Shabbat morning, and you'll be amazed at how topical and relevant the Parsha (weekly Torah reading) ideas and concepts really are. Both mystical and pragmatic, these sessions will truly elevate your spirits and refine your view of the world around you. Kiddush luncheon to follow.

For more information contact Rabbi Sholom Schmerling at 941-493-2770 or [rabbi@chabadofvenice.com](mailto:rabbi@chabadofvenice.com).

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2**

**Sarasota 17th Annual Jewish Food Festival at Temple Sinai**

Sunday, February 2, 10:00 a.m., at 4631 S. Lockwood Ridge Road (enter only from Proctor Road), Sarasota

Temple Sinai hosts the 17th Annual Sarasota Jewish Food Festival where thousands enjoy a tantalizing day of traditional, homemade Jewish delicacies. This indoor free event for the community will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Come enjoy: corned beef and pastrami from Carnegie Deli, bagels and cream cheese, kugel, blintzes, matzo ball soup, stuffed cabbage, cakes, pies, pastries, and cookies. Tickets are sold to purchase the food. Craft and jewelry vendors will be featured. Donate blood in the blood mobile outside and receive free tickets for food.

**Celebrating 18 Years of Congregation Kol HaNeshama!**

Sunday, February 2, noon to 2:30 p.m., at Michael's On East, 1212 S East Ave., Sarasota

**Speakers from Top Luxury Travel Brands Travel Consultants \* Exclusive Promotions**

Join members of Congregation Kol HaNeshama to celebrate 18 years together as a vibrant, loving community. The "chai" festivity will feature hors d'oeuvres, a champagne toast, and a lovely lunch. Speakers will reflect on some of the accomplishments of the first 18 years and discuss exciting future plans.

Information and registration: [khsarasota.org](http://khsarasota.org) or call 941-244-2042.

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3**

**Sarasota Jewish Theatre Screens "The Catskills"**

Monday, February 3, 7:00 p.m., The Players Centre, The Crossings at Siesta Key, 3501 South Tamiami Trail, Suite 1130, Sarasota

"The Catskills – The Rise and Fall of the Borscht Belt" was winner of the 2024 Miami Jewish Film Festival. This documentary is a humorous and nostalgic tribute to the "Borscht Belt" from its beginning as a refuge for working-class Jews, to becoming a lavish summer playground for the affluent, to its eventual decline. "The Catskills" chronicles the cultural, historical, and economic influences that created the Borscht Belt, provided a training ground for the great comedians of the 20th century, and became the inspiration for iconic films like "Dirty Dancing." A discussion follows the screening.

For more information, visit [SarasotaJewishTheatre.org](http://SarasotaJewishTheatre.org). To purchase tickets to the performances at The Players Centre Studio 1130, visit [ThePlayers.org](http://ThePlayers.org) or call 941-365-2494.

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5**

**Temple Sinai's Our Constitution in the News Presented by Judge Judith Barzilay**

Wednesday, February 5, 11:00 a.m., 4631 S. Lockwood Ridge Road (enter only from Proctor Road), Sarasota

Judge Judith Barzilay describes how the Constitution relates to current issues focusing on the First Amendment and the Fourth Amendment. Judge Barzilay was appointed to the federal bench in 1998 and spent 18 years as a judge on the U.S. Court of International Trade in New York. After service on the bench, she was a law school faculty member at William & Mary. She developed and taught courses for adult education programs and her presentations delight audiences. Come learn and enjoy.

The cost for members is \$18 and \$20 for not-yet-members. To register, visit [templesinai-sarasota.org](http://templesinai-sarasota.org).

**Idelson Library Book Review**

Wednesday, February 5, 1:15 p.m., at Temple Beth Sholom (TBS), 1050 S. Tuttle Ave. Bldg. 2, Sarasota

TBS' Idelson Library presents this month's book review of Noa Tishby's "Israel: A Simple Guide to the Most Misunderstood Country on Earth" (2021). Through bite-sized chunks of history and deeply personal stories, Israeli American Tishby chronicles her homeland's evolution, beginning in Biblical times and moving forward to cover everything from WWI to Israel's creation to the disputes dividing the country today. Reviewed by Brenda Johnston. Light refreshments sponsored by the TBS Sisterhood will be available in the chapel foyer after the book review.

No cost, but donations are always welcome; for more information, please visit [templebethsholomfl.org/event](http://templebethsholomfl.org/event). Contact the TBS office at, 941-955-8121, [info@tbssrq.org](mailto:info@tbssrq.org).

**An Afternoon with Sigalit Landau – the Richard & Ellen Sandor Israeli Arts & Culture Prize**



This program is sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee

Wednesday, February 5, 2:00 p.m., at The Ora at the Morganroth Event Center, 578 McIntosh Rd., Sarasota

Sigalit Landau is an interdisciplinary Israeli artist who works with installation, video, photography, and sculpture. Landau's work has been exhibited globally in museums and leading venues and her works are included in major collections at The Brooklyn Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona (MACBA), MoMA, Centre George Pompidou, The Israel Museum, The Tel Aviv Museum of Art, and MoCK (The Museum of Contemporary art Krakow). Over the years, Landau has used the Dead Sea as a laboratory and medium for new art explorations. She transforms everyday items, such as clothing, fishing nets, and a bicycle, into objects of art by submerging them into the Dead Sea and documenting their crystallizing transformation. A few years ago, her work "Tutu, 2018" went viral on social media. Join us to hear from Sigalit about her artistic journey and unique process.

Tickets are \$36. To register, please visit [jfedsrq.org/events](http://jfedsrq.org/events). For more information, contact Alexandria Yaboujian at [alexandria@jfedsrq.org](mailto:alexandria@jfedsrq.org) or 941-552-6306.

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6**

**Travel to the Ohel of the Lubavitcher Rebbe**

**Thursday, February 6**

Join Rabbi Chaim and Sara Steinmetz for a one-day visit to the Rebbe's Ohel, the resting place of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson of righteous memory in New York. Our Sages declare that the Righteous are even greater after their passing than during their lifetime, and the constant stream of visitors to the Rebbe's resting place (the Ohel) from every sector of the Jewish nation testifies to the powerful truth of their words. The Ohel has become a center, the place where thousands come and continue to receive inspiration and blessing from the Rebbe.

**For more information on travel arrangements and to receive the full itinerary and schedule, email [Rabbi@ChabadofSarasota.com](mailto:Rabbi@ChabadofSarasota.com).**

**Rosh Chodesh Society - A Work of Praise**

**Thursday, February 6, noon, at The Chabad House, 5712 Lorraine Road and on Zoom**

This Course flings the cover off the Jewish prayer book, the prayer services, and the synagogue to reveal the beating heart of prayer that breathes beneath it all. It reveals prayer as an art and an opportunity, an enriching exercise, a journey of self-discovery, a transformative tool, a productive part of life, a perspective changer, and a moment of self-empowerment. This is the fourth class of a seven class course and is entitled "A Work of Praise." Lunch will be served.

**Course fee: \$85, JWC Members \$80 textbooks included, or \$25 per class. For more information, contact Rabbi Mendy Bukiet at 941-752-3030 or [rabbi@chabadofbradenton.com](mailto:rabbi@chabadofbradenton.com).**

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7**

**Temple Sinai Rhythm and Jews Erev Shabbat and Member Outreach**

**Friday, February 7, 6:00 p.m., at 4631 S. Lockwood Ridge Road (enter only from Proctor Road), Sarasota**

Temple Sinai's Rhythm & Jews Erev Shabbat service is a special celebration that adds to the joy and beauty of Shabbat. Join Chazzan Cliff Abramson and the Bruno Trio for lively and innovative music and worship during the service, a favorite of congregants and visitors. We encourage everyone to invite a friend. A drawing will be held and the winner will receive a gift certificate to a restaurant and one for the guest. Arrive at 5:00 p.m. for a tasty welcome reception.

**This event is free and open to the community. For information, visit [templesinai-sarasota.org](http://templesinai-sarasota.org).**

**Shabbat Shirah (Sabbath of Song) at Temple Beth El (TBE)**

**Friday, February 7, 7:00 p.m. at 5150 Peridia Blvd. E., Bradenton**

TBE will be celebrating Shabbat Shirah, the Sabbath of Song. This is a very special moment in the Torah and a very musical moment in Jewish biblical history. We will highlight this Shabbat by creating a service brimming with extraordinary music to celebrate Moses and Miriam leading the Israelites across the Sea of Reeds and out of Egypt. Come dance and sing with us.

**For more information, call 941-755-4900 or visit [bethel-fl.org](http://bethel-fl.org).**

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8**

**Shabbat Shirah (Sabbath of Song) at Temple Beth El (TBE)**

**Saturday, February 8, 10:00 a.m. at 5150 Peridia Blvd. E., Bradenton**

TBE will be celebrating Shabbat Shirah, the Sabbath of Song. This is a very special moment in the Torah and a very musical moment in Jewish biblical history. We will highlight this Shabbat by creating a service brimming with extraordinary music to celebrate Moses and Miriam leading the Israelites across the Sea of Reeds and out of Egypt. Come dance and sing with us.

**For more information, call 941.755.4900 or visit [bethel-fl.org](http://bethel-fl.org).**

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9**

**TBS Men's Club Breakfast Program "Tackling Antisemitism" with Lindsey Mintz**

**Sunday, February 9, 9:30 a.m., in TBS' Sainer Social Hall, 1050 S. Tuttle Ave. Bldg. 2, Sarasota**

Lindsey Mintz, Director of Training and Education for the American Jewish Committee, joins the Temple Beth Sholom (TBS) Men's Club for a special presentation

on "Tackling Antisemitism." This is part of the AJC's programs to prevent hatred against Jews and what we can do to stop it. As always, the presentation will be preceded by a delicious breakfast.

**Registrations are requested, \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door; for more information and to register, please visit [tbssrg.org/events](http://tbssrg.org/events). Contact the TBS office at, 941-955-8121, [info@tbssrq.org](mailto:info@tbssrq.org).**

**Kol HaNeshama presents Books and Bagels**

**Sunday, February 9, 10:00 a.m., in person, location provided upon registration**

Lihli Lapid's new novel, "On Her Own," reflects her activism for disability rights and also offers a realistic portrayal of daily personal tensions in Israel. The story deals with painful loss of family and divided loyalties. Lapid is married to Israeli politician Yair Lapid, currently an important opposition leader. Members of Kol HaNeshama's monthly book club, "Books and Bagels," will discuss this work at a congregant's home.

**Information and registration: [khsarasota.org](http://khsarasota.org) or call 941-244-2042.**

**Kosher Food Festival**

**Sunday, February 9, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., at the Chabad House, 5712 Lorraine Road**

Join Chabad of Bradenton & Lakewood Ranch for its Second Annual Kosher Food Festival featuring inflatable fun, kosher crafts, a trackless train, music, snow cones, cotton candy, and more! The Festival will be selling pastrami and corned beef on rye, BBQ hot dogs, BBQ sausages, Falafel with Yoav, stuffed cabbage, potato knishes, chicken matzah ball soup, sourdough Challah, eggplant dip, babka, and rugelach. This year, there will be Super Bowl pre-orders available for your Super Bowl Party! For more details on orders, the menu, and the upcoming festival, please visit online at [chabadofbradenton.com/kosher](http://chabadofbradenton.com/kosher).

**Admission free! Food and concession fees. For more information, contact Rabbi Mendy Bukiet at 941-752-3030 or [rabbi@chabadofbradenton.com](mailto:rabbi@chabadofbradenton.com).**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11**

**Lunch and Get to Know Their Stories (Formerly known as: Who Was That Person Sitting Next to Me in Synagogue?)**

**Tuesday, February 11, noon to 2:00 pm, location provided with registration**  
Whether you are an "old-timer" or a new member, you surely don't know everything about all your fellow congregants. This is an opportunity for those who want to share their stories and those who want to hear them. In a community where we are like family, what a delight to get to know that person sitting next to you at services, and have a nice lunch at a local restaurant.

**Information and registration: [khsarasota.org](http://khsarasota.org) or call 941-244-2042.**

**People of the Book: "The Klansman's Son" with Adrienne Black**



**This program is sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee**

**Tuesday, February 11, 7:00 p.m., at The Ora at the Morganroth Event Center, 578 McIntosh Rd., Sarasota**

Adrienne Black returns to the Sarasota-Manatee area for her only in-person event in Florida to speak about her book, "The Klansman's Son." Growing up in the shadow of David Duke and her father, Don Black, both Ku Klux Klan Grand Wizards, Adrienne was raised to take over the white nationalist movement in the United States. Hear their incredible story of renouncing white nationalism in 2013 after attending New College, coming out as transgender, and facing violent backlash from both family and community. Since publicly renouncing their former beliefs, Black has been profiled in the Washington Post, People, and O! magazine, and has been interviewed for Fresh Air and The Daily Show, and has been recognized by the Anti-Defamation League.

**Tickets are \$18. To register, please visit [jfedrsq.org/events](http://jfedrsq.org/events). For more information, contact Carol Hochman Dierksen at [cdierksen@jfedrsq.org](mailto:cdierksen@jfedrsq.org) or 941-263-4974.**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12**

**Ckids Club Tu B'Shevat Fun!**

**Wednesday, February 12, 5:00 p.m., at Chabad of Sarasota, 7700 Beneva Road, Sarasota**

Children age 4 and up and their families are welcome to join a special afternoon of Tu B'Shevat fun! It will be an adventure as kids learn about strong Jewish roots as they build their very own treehouse, plant seeds, and enjoy tasting fruits (and vegetables). All are welcome!

**This event is offered free of charge. RSVP at [Sara@ChabadofSarasota.com](mailto:Sara@ChabadofSarasota.com).**



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## THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13

### Tu B'Shevat Family Celebration and Open House at Chabad Kaplan Preschool

Thursday, February 13, 8:30 a.m., at Chabad Kaplan Preschool, 7700 Beneva Road, Sarasota

Tu B'Shevat, the Jewish Arbor Day, will be celebrated with parents and children at Chabad's Kaplan Preschool on Thursday morning, February 13, at 8:30 a.m. Parents with children ages 2-5 are welcome to join for a fun-filled morning replete with engaging and interactive crafts and activities, songs, refreshments, and more. This event is free of charge and also serves as an open house opportunity for anyone wishing to learn more about the preschool, meet the teachers and current parents, and see if the preschool would be a good match for your child.

For more information or to RSVP, call or email Sara Steinmetz at 941-925-0770 or [Sara@ChabadofSarasota.com](mailto:Sara@ChabadofSarasota.com).

### A Historic Encounter with Holocaust Survivor Joe Alexander

Thursday, February 13 at 9:30 a.m., at the Venice Community Center, 326 Nokomis Ave. S., Venice

Join us for an extraordinary morning as Joe Alexander, a 102-year-old Holocaust survivor, shares his remarkable journey of survival through 12 concentration camps, including Auschwitz and Dachau. This inspiring program highlights resilience, hope, and the strength of the human spirit in the face of unimaginable adversity. Joe Alexander's firsthand account is not only a testimony to history but also a message of courage and determination that resonates with people of all ages.



Joe Alexander

Tickets are available online at [chabadofvenice.com/tickets](http://chabadofvenice.com/tickets). For more information call 941-493-2770. Seating is limited, reserve your spot today!

### STEP College Prep with My College Resource



This program is sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee

Thursday, February 13, 5:30 p.m., at The Ora at the Morganroth Event Center, 578 McIntosh Rd., Sarasota

STEP (Shapiro Teen Engagement Program) and My College Resource are working together to help get teens and their parents prepared for the college admissions process. Join us this second in a series of three college prep sessions covering different topics critical to the college admissions process. This session will focus on curriculum selection and summer programs - what's available and how to decide.

Free. To register, please visit [jfedsrq.org/events](http://jfedsrq.org/events). For more information, contact Ethan Wolfson at [ewolfson@jfedsrq.org](mailto:ewolfson@jfedsrq.org) or 941-706-0036.

### TBS' Tu B'Shevat in The Park

Thursday, February 13, 6:00 p.m., at Urfer Family Park, Sarasota

Hey young families of Sarasota, join Temple Beth Sholom (TBS) for a special program in the park celebrating Tu B'Shevat. Our very own Kelly Nester, Jordan Wallach, and Cantor Neal Taibel will lead a family friendly program for families of all ages as we celebrate Tu B'Shevat with a scavenger hunt and Tu B'Shevat seder with singing. Registrations are requested, contact Kelly Nester at [kelly@tbssrq.org](mailto:kelly@tbssrq.org) for more information. No cost, but donations are always welcome; for more information, please visit [templebethsholomfl.org/event](http://templebethsholomfl.org/event). Contact the TBS office at, 941-955-8121, [info@tbssrq.org](mailto:info@tbssrq.org).

### Women's Rosh Chodesh Society Class at Chabad of Sarasota

Thursday, February 13, 7:00 p.m., at Chabad of Sarasota, 7700 Beneva Road, Sarasota

You are welcome to join Chabad Women's Circle for a monthly Rosh Chodesh Society (RCS) course entitled "A Work of the Heart," which delves deeply into making the concept of prayer practical and relatable. Following the class, participants will make edible fruit bouquets. We extend our appreciation to Anne Stein for assisting with underwriting the course. The RCS session costs \$20. To sign up for the entire course and receive the textbook, the cost is \$125. The Rebbetzin Circle membership tier for \$180 covers the course and textbook and provides extra support for quality women's programming. Women joining for the first time join free of charge. Refreshments will be served. All are welcome.

For more information about the Chabad Women's Circle, email [Sara@chabadofsarasota.com](mailto:Sara@chabadofsarasota.com) or call the office at 941-925-0770.

Continued on Page B6

# INSIGHTS & INSPIRATIONS

2024  
2025

Be Safer, Smarter, and More Connected

SIGALIT LANDAU FEBRUARY 5

AN AFTERNOON WITH SIGALIT LANDAU  
THE RICHARD & ELLEN SANDOR  
ISRAELI ARTS & CULTURE PRIZE

2 PM | The Ora at the Morganroth Event Center | \$36



Tutu sculpture, 2018  
tutu dress coated in salt crystals;  
65 x 90 x 90 cm

Sigalit Landau is an interdisciplinary Israeli artist who works with installation, video, photography and sculpture. Landau's work has been exhibited globally in museums and leading venues and her works are included in major collections at The Brooklyn Museum, MACBA, MoMA, Centre George Pompidou, The Israel Museum, The Tel Aviv Museum of Art and The Museum of Contemporary art Krakow. Over the years, Landau has used the Dead Sea as a laboratory and medium for new art explorations. She transforms everyday items, such as clothing, fishing nets, and a bicycle, into objects of art by submerging them in the Dead Sea and documenting their crystallizing transformation. A few years ago, her work "Tutu, 2018" went viral on social media.

Join us to hear from Sigalit about her artistic journey and unique process.

DARA HORN FEBRUARY 27

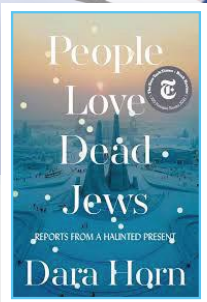
ANTISEMITISM, COURAGE, AND  
MEETING THE MOMENT AS LIVING JEWS

7 PM | Hyatt Regency Sarasota | Start at \$36

American author Dara Horn joins us to discuss this very question addressed in her nonfiction essay collection, *People Love Dead Jews, Reports from a Haunted Present*.

Horn's work was named a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year and a *Wall Street Journal*, Chicago Public Library, *Publishers Weekly*, and *Kirkus Reviews* Best Book of the Year.

Horn's remarks will include how people often prefer to talk about historical antisemitism over contemporary antisemitism.



FEBRUARY 11

People of the Book Series  
ADRIANNE BLACK  
The Klansman's Son

7 PM | The Ora at the  
Morganroth Event Center | \$18

Adrianne Black returns to the Sarasota-Manatee area for her **only in-person event** in Florida to speak about her book, *The Klansman's Son*, and her life as R. Derek, successor of the white nationalist movement in the US.

Their story has been featured in numerous interviews and publications since the book debuted in May 2024. Black's efforts have also been recognized by the Anti-Defamation League.

From being "The Klansman's Son" to an openly transgender antiracism advocate, Black's journey is both enlightening and inspiring.

Tickets are on sale now.



MARCH 10

SARAH WEISS MA'UDI  
ADVOCATING FOR JUSTICE:  
OCTOBER 7 CRIMES & THEIR  
GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS

7 PM | The Ora | \$36

Sarah Weiss Ma'udi is an Israeli lawyer specializing in international law, diplomacy, education, and advocacy. She was the legal advisor to Israel's Permanent Mission to the United Nations and is currently taking a leading role internationally in shaping Israel's current legal approach to the crimes executed on October 7.

Join us to hear from her about the important work she is doing.



For more information about this season's events check out [JFEDSRQ.org/events](https://JFEDSRQ.org/events).



Continued from Page B4

**Jewish Women’s Circle (JWC) Tu B’Shevat Seder**

Thursday, February 13, 7:30 p.m., at the Chabad House, 5712 Lorraine Road  
Create fruit and flowered themed glass magnets and pendants with Tami Wankoff and enjoy a Tu B’Shevat Seder featuring delectable foods from the seven fruits of Israel.

Cost: \$36 / JWC Membership \$31 / Sponsor \$180. For more information, contact Rabbi Mendy Bukiet at 941-752-3030 or [rabbi@chabadofbradenton.com](mailto:rabbi@chabadofbradenton.com).

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14**

**Tu B’Shevat Shabbat Open House at Congregation Kol HaNeshama**

Friday, February 14, 6:00 p.m., at the Hershorin Schiff Community Day School, 4335 Wilkinson Rd., Sarasota

An event celebrating trees, nature, the environment, Shabbat, and love. Come celebrate Jewish Arbor Day (Tu B’Shevat) with a fruit, wine, and cheese reception, followed by a spirited Kabbalat Shabbat. Chocolate will be served to honor the sweetness and spirit of love. All are welcome at our Open House! Please invite your friends too and come to this fun evening. No registration necessary.

Information: [khsarasota.org](http://khsarasota.org) or call 941-244-2042.

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15**

**Shabbat Meditation in the Park**

Saturday, February 15, 10:00 a.m. to noon, at The Gazebo at Phillipi Estate Park, 5500 S Tamiami Trail, Sarasota

A Shabbat morning in nature with a little Torah, easy-going movement, and guided meditation with Rabbi Sigal. No prior experience is necessary. Bring your lunch and stay to enjoy the park and socialize. Please bring a chair. There are metal picnic benches and tables in the Gazebo. Rain or Shine.

No registration necessary. Information: [khsarasota.org](http://khsarasota.org) or call 941-244-2042.

Read the current and previous editions of the Jewish News online at [jfedsrq.org](http://jfedsrq.org)

**941.366.9000**  
 FLORIDASTUDIOTHEATRE.ORG  
 1241 NORTH PALM AVENUE

**Tu B’Shevat Service and Seder at Temple Beth El**

Saturday, February 15, 10:00 a.m. at 5150 Peridia Blvd E. in Bradenton

Immediately following the Shabbat morning service, stay and celebrate with us as we take a mystical journey through the beautiful holiday of Tu B’Shevat! Learn, be inspired, eat a kiddush lite bite, then sit for the beautiful Seder complete with fruits and nuts and drink four cups of wine as we celebrate the holiday of the trees. Join us for Morning Shabbat Services at 10:00 a.m., hear Rabbi Schreiber, “Reb Tuviah”, as he leads us in music, song and prayer, then stay to learn all about the holiday.

For more information about Temple Beth El, go to [bethel-fl.org](http://bethel-fl.org).

**“Ahavah” Tot Shabbat at Temple Emanu-El**

Saturday, February 15, 4:00 p.m., at Temple Emanu-El, 151 McIntosh Road, Sarasota

Celebrate Shabbat and “Ahavah,” love, with at Temple Emanu-El’s signature Tot Shabbat program! This special event is a Saturday evening love-and-friendship-themed gathering for little ones and the ones they love best. Enjoy a love-themed craft, treats, fun surprises, and a beautiful musical havdalah service as we lovingly say goodbye to Shabbat and hello to the week ahead. There will also be age-appropriate songs, prayers, movement, birthday blessings, and a story in honor of love, friendship, and family. Tot Shabbat is designed for Jewish and interfaith families with children up to age 6, but all are welcome.

Free. Please visit [sarasotatemples.org](http://sarasotatemples.org) to register.

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16**

**Davening Boot Camp with Cantor Neal Taibel**

Sunday, February 16, 9:30 a.m., in Temple Beth Sholom’s (TBS) Sainer Social Hall, 1050 S. Tuttle Ave. Bldg. 2, Sarasota

Join Cantor Neal Taibel for a session on davening and tefilah, where we will learn the basic modes of “nusach,” the traditional order and wording of prayers, as well as the musical style used to recite them, necessary to lead weekday and shabbat services, and the origins and purpose of nusach. Cantor Taibel’s program promises to be very music heavy. Services begin at 8:00 a.m., led entirely by Cantor Taibel, followed by breakfast and the Boot Camp. Reservations are requested for this unique program.

Contact Kelly Nester at [kelly@tbssrq.org](mailto:kelly@tbssrq.org) for more information. No cost, but donations are always welcome. Please visit [templebethsholomfl.org/event](http://templebethsholomfl.org/event). Contact the TBS office at, 941-955-8121, [info@tbssrq.org](mailto:info@tbssrq.org).

**Jewish Food Festival at JCV**

Sunday, February 16, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at The Jewish Congregation of Venice (JCV), 600 North Auburn Road (off East Venice Avenue), Venice

The eagerly awaited Jewish Food Festival features homemade and delicious tastes of traditional foods including: corned beef and pastrami sandwiches, stuffed cabbage, chopped liver, knishes, kugel, matzo ball and cabbage soups, and a variety of pastries. Free admission, free parking on-site or off-site with convenient free shuttle bus from Achieva Credit Union at 1485 East Venice Avenue. Other attractions include continuous entertainment, a raffle, vendor booths and an annual jewelry sale.

For more information contact Cynthia Greene at [cyn1greene@yahoo.com](mailto:cyn1greene@yahoo.com) or 941-218-6915.

**Artificial Intelligence for Genealogy**

Sunday, February 16, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Aviva, 1951 N. Honore Avenue, Sarasota

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Southwest Florida presents Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Genealogy by Peggy Jude at Aviva. AI can play a role in your genealogical research. Learn how to use Artificial Intelligence in your genealogy efforts.

Free. To make a reservation or for information, contact Kim Sheintal at 941-302-1433 or [klapshein@aol.com](mailto:klapshein@aol.com).

**CTeen IFLY**

Sunday, February 16, 6:00 p.m., Meet at the Chabad House

Next level fun for everyone! Experience the freedom of flight - a memory that lasts a lifetime!

\$65 or CTeen members free / CTeen annual membership \$200. For more information, contact Rabbi Mendy Bukiet at 941-752-3030 or [rabbi@chabadofbradenton.com](mailto:rabbi@chabadofbradenton.com).

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17**

**Temple Emanu-El Presents “Lies My Father Told Me”**

Monday, February 17, 1:00 p.m., at Temple Emanu-El, 151 McIntosh Road, Sarasota

Continued on next page

*Continued from previous page*

Temple Emanu-El's "Monday Matinee" series screens "Lies My Father Told Me," the classic 1975 film that dramatizes screenwriter Ted Allan's memories of his 1920s Jewish boyhood as he grew up in Montreal's Mile End neighborhood – also known as the local Jewish ghetto. This nostalgic, tender, and moving film follows young David, whose father is a self-consuming inventor yearning for assimilation and acceptance, and whose beloved grandfather preaches Judaism to his grandson as they collect scrap metal. Eventually, David realizes that he must reach his own conclusions on his Jewish identity. All are welcome!

**The price is \$5 for Temple Emanu-El members, \$10 for guests. Please register at [sarasotatemple.org](http://sarasotatemple.org).**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18**

**Sarasota Jewish Singles**

**Tuesday, February 18, 5:30 p.m., at Isan Thai Restaurant, 5758 S. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota**

The Sarasota Jewish Singles is an outreach program at Beth Israel of Longboat Key That gives Jewish Singles in the Sarasota Manatee area the opportunity to meet other men and women who are single. The group meets once a month, for laughter, and a time to turn acquaintances into lifelong friends.

**To make a reservation or for more information, call or text Rosalyn Fleischer at 941-915-6631 or email [rozfleischer@gmail.com](mailto:rozfleischer@gmail.com).**

**Mort Skirboll Jewish Film Festival –  
Feature Film "Colleyville"**



**This program is sponsored by  
the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee**

**Tuesday, February 18, 6:30 p.m., at Temple Emanu-El, 151 McIntosh Rd., Sarasota**

On January 15, 2022, in the safe haven of Colleyville, Texas, Rabbi Charlie Cytron-Walker and three other congregants find themselves taken hostage. A stranger looking for a place to warm up from the winter cold, disrupts a typical Saturday morning at Congregation Beth Israel Synagogue with an antisemitic hostage attack. This film showcases the compelling story through real life drama over an 11-hour standoff, the first-hand experiences of those who lived through the events including real time security camera footage. Hear how Rab-

bi Cytron-Walker credits his recent training from Secure Community Network (SCN) as a reason they were able to survive the unimaginable nightmare. SCN CEO, Michael Masters, and Writer-Director Dani Menkin will both be in attendance to share insight and answer questions. Enjoy light nosh at 6:30 p.m. and the film to follow at 7:00 p.m.

**Tickets are \$25. To register, visit [jfedsrq.org/events](http://jfedsrq.org/events). For more information, contact Carol Hochman Dierksen at [cdierksen@jfedsrq.org](mailto:cdierksen@jfedsrq.org) or 941-263-4974.**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20**

**Keep Your Brain Healthy All Your Life**

**Thursday, February 20, 1:00 p.m., in TBS' Sainer Social Hall, 1050 S Tuttle Ave. Bldg. 2, Sarasota**

Staying smart and functional for your entire life is possible. It just takes some doing ... Dr. Carol Roberts will share the how-to of this critical function based on her decades of clinical experience, first as an ENT surgeon and now as a functional/holistic doctor. She has worked with thousands of patients in every stage of chronic illness, most notably neuropsychiatric conditions. She will share what YOU can do for yourself, and what is available in the prevention world to maintain (and improve) brain function as the years flip by. Discussion begins at 1:30 p.m.

**No cost, but donations are always welcome; for more information, please visit [templebethsholomfl.org/event](http://templebethsholomfl.org/event). Contact the TBS office at, 941-955-8121, [info@tbssrq.org](mailto:info@tbssrq.org).**

**"The Network Behind Anti-Israel Activities  
at U.S. Colleges"**

**Thursday, February 20, 7:00 p.m., at Temple Emanu-El (TEE), 151 McIntosh Road, Sarasota**

The anti-Israel protests that have sprung up on American colleges are guided and funded by organizations that endeavor to destroy the Jewish state. Dr. Jonathan Schanzer, Senior Vice-President for Research at the nonpartisan Foundation for Defense of Democracies, is an expert researcher whose work has led to designations of terrorist financiers and been instrumental in the freezing of funds for Hamas and al-Qaeda. Sponsored by TEE Israel Committee, Brotherhood, Sisterhood, and The Diane & Norman Cohen Endowed Israel Fund.

**Free. Please register at [sarasotatemple.org](http://sarasotatemple.org).**

**Be Empowered.  
Be Prepared.**



**Community  
Security Trainings**

**The Ora at the Morganroth Event Center  
578 McIntosh Rd., Sarasota**

**Join Community Security Director  
Tom Baugher in our free Safe SRQ  
Community Security Trainings.**

**Get hands-on training and professional  
instruction and gain the confidence  
and skills you need to defend yourself  
and respond to life-threatening  
medical situations.**

**FREE**




These sessions are free, but you must register by visiting **[JFEDSRQ.org/events](http://JFEDSRQ.org/events)**



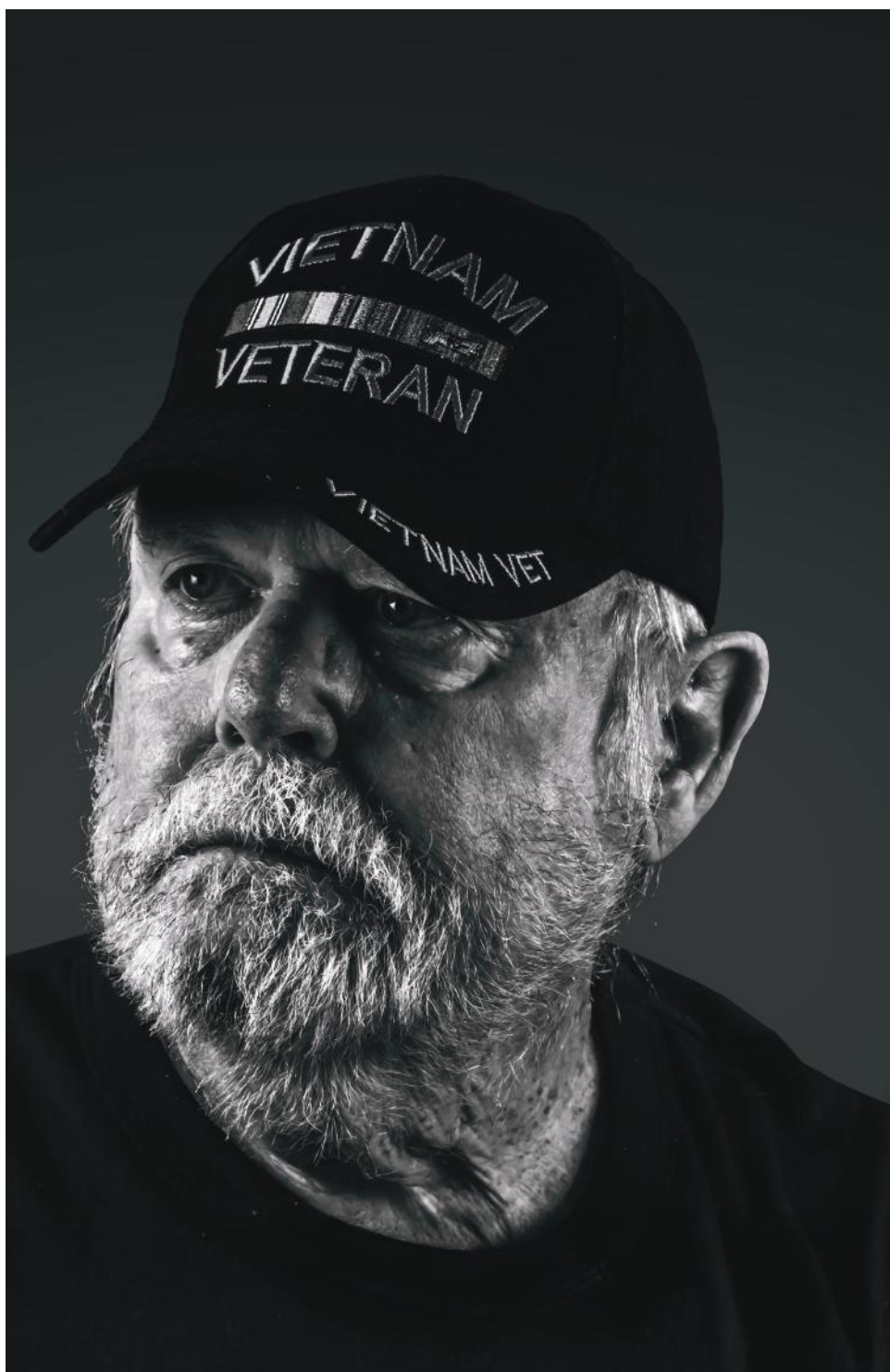
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## Sometimes hunger is just a house over.

Jim lives in Sarasota. Each year, he and nearly 200,000 people in our communities need food.

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**ENDING HUNGER**  
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941.379.6333 [allfaithsfoodbank.org](http://allfaithsfoodbank.org)

### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21

#### Temple Beth Israel to Hold Repro Shabbat Service

Friday, February 21, 5:30 p.m., at Temple Beth Israel, 567 Bay Isles Road, Longboat Key

The community is invited to a special Repro Shabbat service. Rabbi Stephen Sniderman's sermon will focus on "Parshat Mishpatim," rules. These verses from the Torah are the basis of the Reform Movement's belief in reproductive health, rights, and justice. Members of the Social Action Committee will take part in the service and all attendees are invited to a special Oneg Shabbat. Repro Shabbat is done in cooperation with the National Council of Jewish Women.

#### Shabbat Alive! at Temple Emanu-El

Friday, February 21, 7:15 p.m., at Temple Emanu-El, 151 McIntosh Road, Sarasota

Shabbat Alive! is back! Temple Emanu-El members and community guests fill the pews for this quarterly all-musical Shabbat celebration. We hope you will be among them. With upbeat, contemporary, and inspiring arrangements of the traditional prayers, led by Rabbi Brenner Glickman, Rabbi Michael Shefrin, and professional and volunteer musicians, Shabbat Alive! is stirring and altogether unique. Please join us for a very special and spiritual Shabbat experience.

Free. Please visit [sarasotatemple.org](http://sarasotatemple.org) for more information.

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23

#### Waterside Place Farmers' Market



This program is sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee

Sunday, February 23, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., at Waterside Place Farmer's Market, 1561 Lakefront Dr., Sarasota

Stop by the Farmers' Market to meet with Federation staff and volunteers to learn about upcoming programs and events, including our Insights & Inspirations program series, Camp Yonnie, and more!

#### "An Evening of Laughter and Music" featuring Rabbi Brenner Glickman

Sunday, February 23, 7:00 p.m., at TEE, 151 McIntosh Road, Sarasota

Temple Emanu-El (TEE) Sisterhood invites the community to "An Evening of Laughter and Music" – an annual fundraising event celebrating Jewish humor and music! Rabbi Brenner Glickman will perform a stand-up comedy routine comprising classic Jewish jokes; comedy is one of his hidden talents, and he performs rarely. Cantor Murray Simon, accompanied by his wife Toby Simon on piano, will also provide a delightful selection of Jewish and popular song. In the words of event organizers: "Laughter + Song = A Wonderful Evening!" To top it off, an extravaganza of delicious homemade desserts will follow the performances.

\$75, with proceeds benefitting educational and scholarship programs at Temple Emanu-El Religious School. Please register at [sarasotatemple.org](http://sarasotatemple.org).



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Penny NMLS# 365464  
Paul NMLS# 1041466

All loans are subject to credit approval. 

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24**

**Temple Emanu-El Israeli Cooking Class**

**Monday, February 24, 11:00 a.m., at Temple Emanu-El, 151 McIntosh Road, Sarasota**

Temple Emanu-El's popular Israeli cooking classes are back! Sponsored by the Israel Committee, these workshops offer a wonderful hands-on experience and expertise in preparing signature and delicious Israeli dishes with old and new friends. At this first installment, join talented cooking instructor Jodi O'Neill to learn how to prepare Middle Eastern favorites such as: crispy baked falafel, Israeli tahini sauce, hummus and pita bread, pickled onions, shatta spicy condiment, and home-made halvah for dessert! Space is limited.

**Fee: \$18. Please visit [sarasotatemple.org](http://sarasotatemple.org) to register by February 19.**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25**

**Just Schmoozing**



**This program is sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee**

**Tuesday, February 25, 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Ed's Tavern, 10719 Rodeo Drive, Lakewood Ranch**

Join us for a free happy hour event, we provide the nosh, you pay for your drinks. Have fun socializing with fellow tribe members. Come meet old friends and make new ones!

**Questions, contact Lauren at [LCohen@Jfedsrq.org](mailto:LCohen@Jfedsrq.org). To register go to [jfedsrq.org/events](http://jfedsrq.org/events).**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27**

**Ima and Me Morning Meet Up**

**Thursday, February 27, 9:30 a.m. at Chabad of Sarasota, 7700 Beneva Road, Sarasota**

Calling All Moms! Join other moms at Chabad of Sarasota for a fantastic opportunity to get out with your little one and connect with other new mothers in a warm

and welcoming Jewish atmosphere. Ima and Me, led by Sara Steinmetz, meet at 9:30 a.m. at Chabad of Sarasota. This enriching and supportive group is the perfect place to socialize, share the joys and challenges of motherhood, and build lasting friendships. Best of all, it's completely free!

**For information email [Sara@ChabadofSarasota.com](mailto:Sara@ChabadofSarasota.com) or call 941-925-0770.**

**Meeting the Moment as Living Jews with Dara Horn**



**This program is sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee**

**Thursday, February 27, 7:00 p.m., at the Hyatt Regency Sarasota, 1000 Blvd. of the Arts, Sarasota**

Dara Horn is an American novelist and author of the nonfiction essay collection "People Love Dead Jews, Reports from a Haunted Present," a startling exploration of how Jewish history is exploited to flatter the living. Named a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year and a *Wall Street Journal*, Chicago Public Library, *Publishers Weekly*, and Kirkus Reviews Best Book of the Year, Horn's writing challenges us to confront the reasons why there might be so much fascination with Jewish deaths and so little respect for Jewish lives.

**Tickets start at \$36. To register, visit [jfedsrq.org/events](http://jfedsrq.org/events). For information, contact Alexandria Yaboujian at [alexandria@jfedsrq.org](mailto:alexandria@jfedsrq.org) or 941-552-6306.**

*Regular Service Times*

**ORTHODOX SERVICES**

**Chabad of Downtown SRQ, 332 Coconut Ave. #103, Sarasota**

Shabbat Morning Services - 10:00 a.m.

**Chabad of LWR/Bradenton, 5712 Lorraine Road, Bradenton**

Friday Night Services - 6:30 p.m.

Shabbat Morning Services - 9:30 a.m.

Weekday Morning Services - Mondays & Thursdays 7:30 a.m.

**Chabad of Sarasota & Manatee Counties, 7700 Beneva Road, Sarasota**

Friday Evening Services - 7:00 p.m.

Shabbat Morning Services - 10:00 a.m.

Weekday Morning Services - Sunday-Friday: 8:00 a.m.

**Chabad of Venice & Northport, 21560 Angela Lane, Venice**

Friday Night Services - 7:30 p.m.

Saturday Morning Services - 10:30 a.m.

Weekday Morning Services - Sunday-Friday: 8:00 a.m.

**CONSERVATIVE SERVICES**

**Temple Beth Sholom, 1050 S. Tuttle Ave. Bldg. 2, Sarasota**

Friday Night Services - 6:30 p.m.

Saturday Morning Services - 9:30 a.m.

**REFORM SERVICES**

**Temple Beth El, 5150 Peridia Blvd., East Bradenton**

Friday Night Service - 7:00 p.m.

Saturday Morning Services - 10:00 a.m.

**Temple Beth Israel, 567 Bay Isles Road, Longboat Key**

Friday Evening Services - 5:30 p.m.

Saturday Morning Services - 10:00 a.m.

**Temple Emanu-El, 151 McIntosh Road, Sarasota**

Friday Night Services - 7:15 p.m.

Saturday virtual Torah study - 11:00 a.m.

**Temple Sinai, 4631 S. Lockwood Ridge Road, Sarasota**

Friday Night Services - 6:00 p.m.

Saturday Morning Services - 10:30 a.m. (certain days, check website)

**INDEPENDENT CONGREGATIONS**

**Jewish Congregation of Venice, 600 North Auburn Road, Venice**

Friday Night Service - 7:30 p.m.

**Kol HaNeshama, meeting at Hershorin Schiff Community Day School, 4335 Wilkinson Rd., Sarasota**

Saturday Morning Service & Torah Study - 10:00 a.m. (Feb. 8 & 22)

Kabbalat Shabbat Services, Friday - 6:00 p.m. (Feb. 14 & 28)

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# The Gan Led the Gulf Gate Library Hanukkah Celebration!

By Gail Glickman

The annual celebration of the festival of Hanukkah at Gulf Gate Library on December 18 was a huge success. Eighty adults and children attended this most enjoyable event. Coordinated by Laura Freedman, Director of Early Childhood Education at The Gan at Temple Sinai, the special Hanukkah program helped

bring to life the meaning and story of the miracle of Hanukkah. Even though there was only enough untainted oil to keep the eternal light burning for a single day, the flame continued flickering for eight nights, leaving time to find a fresh supply. This miracle inspired the Jewish sages to proclaim a yearly eight-day festival. Hanukkah means “dedication.” Often called “The Festival of Lights,” Geveret Laura shared the holiday’s meaning, history, and the significance of the symbols.

The preschoolers, kindergartners, and early elementary-aged kids greatly enjoyed the celebration full of stories, crafts, games, and treats. It was the perfect opportunity to share the joy of Hanukkah. When Laura read aloud a fun Hanukkah tale, the children laughed and squealed with delight. In addition, there were crafts to create, and deli-

cious catered food. The children enjoyed spinning and playing the dreidel game with the reward of chocolate gelt (money).

Laura emphasized the importance of the lessons learned. She stated, “The activities demonstrated the significance and joy of the holiday of Hanukkah. This event was perfect for the large crowd of children and their families celebrating together! A fun time was had by all.”

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Above: The Khoury and Colkitt kids enjoying the celebration.



Top Right: Katie Silverstein and Eva Colkitt showing their Hanukkah sign.



Bottom Right: The Margulies family decked out in matching outfits.

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# TEERS Brings Hanukkah Light to The Community

The first night of Hanukkah this year was on December 24, late compared to previous years. For Temple Emanu-El Religious School (TEERS) students, Hanukkah excitement had already sparked at the beginning of December!

The preparation for the holiday started with a collaboration with Temple Emanu-El's College Committee, as students created Hanukkah cards that were sent to TEERS alumni along with treats and gifts. More cards were sent to Jewish soldiers around the country, thanking them for their service and wishing them Happy Hanukkah.

Shopping for Hanukkah is also a big deal at TEERS! Every year, students enjoy a shopping spree at the Temple Sisterhood Gift Shop. Guid-

ed by the wonderful Sisterhood volunteers, students from kindergarten through seventh grade choose little Hanukkah gifts for their siblings, friends, and other family members. This year's favorite gift was the Hanukkah sing-along microphone!

A Jewish holiday without a nosh doesn't really count, so TEERS made sure to have some Hanukkah traditional food on the table. Sixth graders even learned to fry latkes prepared with different ingredients like zucchini, sweet potatoes, and onions. TEERS mom and volunteer, Inbal August, made delicious sufganiyot, Israeli jelly doughnuts, for everyone to enjoy!

On Sunday, December 15 the whole school went to Aviva Senior

Living to celebrate the upcoming holiday. TEERS students created Hanukkah crafts, played dreidel, watched a Hanukkah play performed by seventh-grade students, lit a hanukkiah, and sang Hanukkah songs all done

together with Aviva's residents, who were delighted by the joy that the students brought.

We pray that the lights of Hanukkah shined upon everyone and will bring peace and nachas to all!



Top Left: Temple Emanu-El Religious School sixth graders enjoyed the latkes they had learned to make.

Top Right: Temple Emanu-El Religious School student Blake Levine enjoyed Hanukkah shopping at Temple Emanu-El's Sisterhood Gift Shop.

Left: Temple Emanu-El Religious School student Abner Beck made a friend while making Hanukkah decorations at Aviva Senior Living.

## Chabad of Sarasota Students Celebrate with Art



At Chabad Kaplan Preschool, River, Goldie, and Rosie enjoy wax resist art in connection with the Hanukkah holiday.

Stay informed throughout the month. Sign up for our community Enewsletter at [jfedsrq.org](http://jfedsrq.org).

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**Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee**

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# February Brings the Holiday of Tu B'Shevat

Tu B'Shevat is a beautiful and inspiring opportunity for early childhood educators in a Jewish setting to bring nature, growth, and Jewish values into the classroom. Often referred to as the "Birthday of the Trees," this holiday invites us to engage young learners in meaningful experiences that deepen their connection to the natural world, while fostering a sense of responsibility, curiosity, and wonder.

Imagine the excitement as we take our classrooms outdoors, where the children can physically feel the connection between the holiday and the world around them. At Temple Sinai's Gan, educators kick off the celebration

## Education



Corner

**Laura Freedman,**  
Temple Sinai

with a joyful sing-along and dance in the outdoor classroom, allowing the children to experience the beauty of

nature firsthand. This moment of connection provides the perfect foundation for a day of learning, that goes beyond the walls of the classroom and taps into the children's senses and emotions. It's something they will carry with them far beyond the holiday.

Story time with a tree puppet can bring the holiday's lessons to life in a way that is engaging and accessible. Through lively discussions, educators can introduce the many ways trees support our world: by providing oxygen, shelter, and even food, and connect this to Jewish values of caring for our planet. These discussions not

only enrich the children's vocabulary but also nurture their understanding of the important role they can play in protecting the earth, all while connecting to the timeless Jewish teaching of "Tikkun Olam," repairing the world.

Exploring the life cycle of plants provides another wonderful opportunity to help children grasp the concept of growth and change. When children plant seeds and nurture them, they don't just learn about nature, they learn about patience, responsibility, and the satisfaction that comes from taking care of

something. Planting in the teaching garden allows children to take ownership of their learning, witness the magic of growth, and apply their understanding of Jewish values in a tangible way.

The day's celebration culminates in moments of togetherness, like singing "Happy Birthday" in Hebrew, where children feel connected to each other and the greater Jewish community. A simple treat, such as mini cupcakes in honor of the trees, adds an extra touch of joy to the occasion, reinforcing the theme of celebration and community.

As educators, Tu B'Shevat gives us an incredible opportunity to inspire our students to be mindful of the world around them, embrace the beauty of nature, and take responsibility for its care. By weaving together stories, songs, gardening, and thoughtful discussion, we offer children an invitation to not only understand Jewish traditions but also experience them through hands-on learning. Let's use this holiday to nurture their sense of wonder, responsibility, and connection to the earth, helping them grow into stewards of the world and active participants in the Jewish values that guide us all.

*Through lively discussions, educators can introduce the many ways trees support our world: by providing oxygen, shelter, and even food, and connect this to Jewish values of caring for our planet.*

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# Tu B'Shevat: A Holiday for Trees (and for Us)

Here in Sarasota-Manatee, we don't experience the grandeur of the seasons changing like in some other places. The changing color of leaves and delicate snowfall have been exchanged for the glorious weather of our "season."

The Jewish calendar helps us keep this in perspective. The holiday of Tu B'Shevat, which occurs on the 15th of the Hebrew month of Shevat, may be the best example of this. A special and important day, Tu B'Shevat is also called "Rosh Hashana L'Ilanot," the New Year for the trees. This year, the holiday falls for us on Thursday, February 13.

Where does this holiday come from? It is rooted in our Torah.

The book of Leviticus contains laws regarding how old a tree should be before it is harvested, tithed, or until its fruit can be eaten. The Talmud



From the Bimah

**Rabbi Michael Shefrin,**  
Temple Emanu-El

established Tu B'Shevat for us to keep track of the correct dates so we could perform these mitzvot. It's also around this time when the majority of rainfall has already descended upon the land of Israel each year, and when fruit trees begin to open up and blossom after winter dormancy. Maimonides, one of the most prolific and influential Torah scholars of the Middle Ages, calls it the beginning

of the agricultural fiscal year.

Tu B'Shevat is a festive holiday. It is often marked by planting a tree and eating fruits and nuts found in Israel such as almonds, olives, figs, and dates. There is even a special holiday seder involving four glasses of wine or grape juice. Both red and white are used, mixed, and consumed in this mystical experience. One of my favorite customs of the day is to eat something not yet eaten that year, allowing us to recite our prayer of gratitude, "Shehekiyanu."

Tu B'Shevat is more than Jewish Arbor Day. It calls to us for increased mindfulness of our relationship with nature. It is a time to appreciate our dependence on the natural world and to acknowledge where we find God in the rhythm of the seasons. It is a day to recommit to "Bal Tashchit," the biblical

prohibition against waste and destruction, and take action towards caring for our environment.

At this season, let us reconnect with roots and leaves, fruits and nuts, and the joy and renewal of spring. Let us make time to look for blossoming buds and greenery becoming more green. Let us feel a connection to the land of Israel as well as the earth found below our feet. Let us pause to thank God and all the living things that give us clean air, shelter, and resources to live.

As Rabbi Nachman of Breslov encourages: "Let us make it our custom to go outdoors among the trees and grass, among all growing things, not only at this holiday, but from the start of the year to its end, so that our lives, like the trees, will be renewed and filled with goodness, blessings, and peace." Amen.

# We Can Learn So Much by Studying the Bible

It is a sad reality that many Jews know little of the foundational text of our people – the Bible. The Bible is the foundation pillar of western civilization, and the most widely read book in the history of western civilization. Its diverse literary forms, stories, sacred history, narrative of our people's beginnings, songs, poetry, proverbs, laws, and prophecies have revolutionized the world. Yet, few of us are familiar with the ancient Near East from which the Bible originated, or the values that turned an ancient world upside down and provided the framework in which our nation and western world has shaped its ideals, morality, and laws.

The word "bible" derives from the Latin "biblios" which means "library," an accurate way to describe the varied books of the Bible, because it embraces many parts of our oldest literature. It includes the beautiful poetry of the "Tehillim," Psalms; the powerful re-



From the Bimah

**Rabbi Stuart Altshuler,**  
Temple Beth Shalom

minders of our prophets to create societies of justice and care for the most disenfranchised among us; and the skeptical Greek philosophy of "Kohelet," the book of Ecclesiastes.

The preferred word we Jews use today for the Bible, is "Tanach," which comprises three Hebrew letters: tav, nun, and kaf, that are headings for the three-fold division of the Bible: Tav (Torah), the Five Books of Moses; Nun (Nevi'im), the Prophets; and Kaf (Ketuvim), the Writings.

There is one description of our Bible, or Mikre, or Tanach, or simply Hebrew Scripture, that we do not choose to use, and that is the most pejorative term: "Old Testament." Christians referred to the Tanach as Old Testament to underscore the Christian belief that God's Covenant to Abraham and Israel was replaced by a "new" revelation.

If not for the Tanach, there would be a long list of matters that would simply have not become the foundation stones of our society:

**1. The sanctity of life** as we are told in the opening chapter of Genesis that human beings are made in the image of God, every one of us.

**2. Shabbat:** The Tanach (Torah) taught the world that the purpose of life is the sanctity of time and space, and that all people, and even nature and animal life, required a remembrance that all is created by God.

**3. God:** Without God, the Bible teaches us, there is no credible value system, that which determines right from wrong, good from evil.

**4. Law:** The Torah establishes that

the foundation of freedom is the law that guides every class and social designation.

**5. Morality:** The Bible taught humanity that doing good, in our every action and thought as human beings, is the core to our journey as human beings. Without the notion of striving for goodness, our society falls.

**6. Idealism and Dreams:** the Bible gave the world the concept of "messianism," the idea that we are spinning in circles in an endless (cyclical) life, but that life is leading (linear) to a goal, a fruition of our service to God, a world better than the one we live in today.

**7. Israel:** the Bible certainly teaches us about the miracle of the existence of the people of Israel and the timeless eternity of "Eretz Yisrael," the Land of Israel. It is a phenomenal story and the glue that allows us to know that God began something miraculous almost 4000 years ago, with Abraham and Sarah.

Our Bible: enjoy it, read it, study it, and be inspired by the words of our ancestors who changed the world we live in today.

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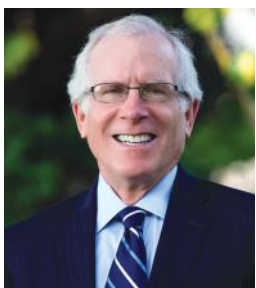
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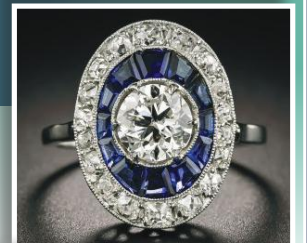
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Theo Levey-Baker, son of Rachel and Cooper Levey-Baker, February 14-15  
Temple Emanu-El

*In Memoriam*

Marvin Cohen, 94, of Sarasota, formerly of Toledo, OH, November 20

Barbara Feinberg, 74, of Sarasota, formerly of Elmira, NY, November 27

Gisela Huberman, 82, of Sarasota, December 10

Roger "Doc" Kaufman, 89, of Bradenton and Syracuse, NY, December 17

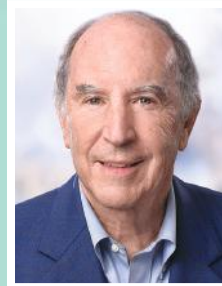
David Wilcox, 75, of Bradenton, December 7

Sara Winokur, 98, of Sarasota, Formerly of Pittsburgh, PA, November 27

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