France’s Jewish community threatened —page 6

Community hears Ira Forman on anti-Semitism
Dana Cohen Day at Indian Lakes High School
A Hebrew Academy of Tidewater story
Date with the State Wednesday, Feb. 4

SILENCE WON’T REPAIR THE WORLD 3

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“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

The past few weeks have seen people rise up to protest the killings in France and all that they portend for civilization. There seemingly was no doubt that people understood what occurred was reprehensible and a frighteningly fundamental attack on freedom and on humanity.

There is certainty that as Jewish people we can take comfort in the demonstrations and in the statements of the leaders of France, Germany and England regarding their commitment to fight anti-Semitism in their own countries.

It is clear that for a period of time, as Ira Forman, U.S. State Department Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat anti-Semitism has stated, “Anti-Semitism has now become a human rights issue.”

Still, the question remains for how long and under what circumstances? Will cynicism and history dictate that the outright murder of Jews must coincide with the murder of other citizens of Europe by terrorists in order to sustain sympathy and outrage?

We have no choice. We must fight this front as Jews because we know what it all looks like much sooner than others, and we know what will happen to the others. In the words of Elie Weisel, “Because of indifference one actually dies before one actually dies.”

The pages of this edition of the Jewish News are filled with articles addressing the issue of the recent events in France and what we must do to combat the current anti-Semitic climate.

**SILENCE WON’T REPAIR THE WORLD. TELL US WHAT YOU CAN DO. TELL US WHAT WE CAN DO.**

The UJFT Community Relations Council has dedicated a significant portion of its energy to developing resources and activities that one can research and undertake to combat anti-Semitism in its raw form, as well as in its new format, the destruction of Israel. Please go to http://jewishva.org/anti-semitism to see all that is available.

We want our community to tell us what we can do and want us to do. Each individual has the opportunity to not only be well informed, but to take action. We want you to share your ideas and we want you to talk about this with your friends. No idea or suggestion for action is too small for you to talk about this with your friends. No idea or suggestion for action is too small for you to talk about this with your friends.

We will also publicize them through all of our communication vehicles so that all members of the community can see what they can do.

Please send us an email at SilenceWontRepairTheWorld@ujft.org or post on our Facebook page www.facebook.com/UJFTidewater. Create a post on your own Facebook page or twitter account and use the hashtag, #SilenceWontRepairTheWorld.

Last week was the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. Many events took place to commemorate the milestone. In these uncertain times, I think that we can take heed from the words of the director of the Auschwitz Memorial and Museum, Piotr Cywinski:

“We throw accusations against people who were bystanders, who did nothing at the time, and then how do we look in light of that period?” he asks. “When we look at genocide or tragedy or famine or totalitarian regimes we know how it ends, we know what the outcome is for the victims, because Europe went through that history 70 years ago.”

Send us your ideas, talk with your friends and most of all remain vigilant, informed and take action.

Harry Graber
Executive Vice President
United Jewish Federation of Tidewater

Photograph of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the Grand Synagogue of Paris by Haim Zach / GPO/FLASH90

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THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL LEADS OSCAR NOMINATIONS

The Grand Budapest Hotel, a film inspired by the writing of Austrian-Jewish novelist Stephan Zweig, led the Oscar nominations with nine, including for best picture and best director.

The Academy Awards nominations were announced Thursday, Jan. 15 in Los Angeles by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Other nominees include Ida, a Polish movie about a Catholic nun who learns she is the daughter of Jews killed during the Holocaust, for best foreign-language film. Argentina’s entry in the category is Wild Tales, which was directed by Damian Szifron, who is Jewish, and features a Jewish wedding.

Ida also earned a nomination for best cinematography.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS BANS REFERENCES TO PIGS IN SENSITIVITY EFFORT

Oxford University Press has banned references to pigs and pork in its publications in order to avoid offending Jews and Muslims.

“Many of the educational materials we publish in the UK are sold in more than 150 countries, and as such they need to consider a range of cultural differences and sensitivities,” a spokesman for Oxford, the largest university press in the world, told the British media.

Eating pork is forbidden in Islam and Judaism.

The policy came to light on the show Today on the BBC’s Radio 4 station in the wake of the Islamist extremist attacks on Paris. The show read a letter on the air sent by the Oxford University Press to an author asking her not to mention pigs or pork products in her book.

Representatives of the Jewish and Muslim communities told the British media that the ban was unnecessary. (JTA)

AD CAMPAIGN ON SAN FRANCISCO BUSES LIKENS ISLAM TO NAZISM

The anti-Islam group led by Pamela Geller is running advertisements on San Francisco public buses comparing the religion to Nazism.

The group, sponsored by the American Freedom Defense Initiative, features photos of Adolf Hitler and 20th-century Palestinian Muslim leader Haj Amin al-Husseini, who opposed Zionism, with the caption “Islamic Jew-Hatred: it’s in The Quran.”

The ads appeared this month on the buses following the Jan. 7 attack by Islamic extremists on the Charlie Hebdo satirical magazine in Paris that left 12 dead.

Ibrahim Hooper, a spokesman for the Council on American-Islamic Relations, told Reuters that his group has countered past efforts by Geller to place anti-Islam inflammatory ads sponsored by the American Freedom Defense Initiative in New York and Washington.

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency in a statement cited the First Amendment protection of freedom of speech, “including speech that is considered offensive,” in explaining why it allowed the ads to be placed. It also said it did not want to use taxpayer dollars to defend itself against a lawsuit. (JTA)

AUSTRIA MAY SEIZE HITLER’S CHILDHOOD HOME

The Austrian government is looking into expropriating Adolf Hitler’s childhood home.

Trying to ensure the house is not turned into a neo-Nazi shrine, the Interior Ministry may seize the home if its owner refuses to sell it to the government, The Associated Press reported. The owner, who has not publicly been identified, reportedly has turned down past offers to sell the building.

The ministry has rented the home in the German border town of Braunau for several years and sublet it to charitable organizations. The house, which draws neo-Nazi visitors, has stood empty for the past three years after the owner refused to authorize needed renovations, AP reported.

The building is listed as a historical landmark and cannot be razed. (JTA)

MAJOR INCREASE IN ISLAMIST THREATS AGAINST SWEDISH JEWS

The Swedish Jewish community reported a significant increase in threats following terrorist attacks by Islamists in France.

Lena Posner-Korosi, the president of the Council of Swedish Jewish Communities, estimated that the number of threats have doubled following the murder of four people Jan. 9 at a kosher shop outside Paris.

Posner-Korosi said the community does not have exact figures, but most of the threats have been identified as coming from Islamists.

Sweden’s National Council for Crime Prevention recorded 190 anti-Semitic incidents in 2013, of which 61 were classified as threats or insults.

“We are under threat and we have not seen the end,” Posner-Korosi wrote in an email. “It seems to be the beginning of terror around Europe for the coming months.”

Swedish police have beefed up security around Jewish institutions and other potential targets, Posner-Korosi added.

Some 20,000 Jews live in Sweden.

The Jewish community of neighboring Denmark demanded an increase in security around its institutions. (JTA)

ACTOR MICHAEL DOUGLAS AWARDED $1 MILLION GENESIS PRIZE

Actor and peace activist Michael Douglas is the recipient of the 2015 Genesis Prize.

The decision was announced Wednesday, Jan. 14 by the Genesis Prize Foundation. The $1 million prize will be awarded in Jerusalem by Jewish Agency Chairman Natan Sharansky and the prime minister of Israel on June 18.

Douglas said he plans to use the prize money for promoting activities designed to raise awareness of inclusiveness and diversity in Judaism, according to the prize foundation.

“I share this award with my family, who encouraged me in my exploration of the Jewish faith,” Douglas said. “I hope these teachings and values will be part of the legacy in the world that I leave for my children and those who follow.”

Douglas, 70, was not raised Jewish. His father, the actor Kirk Douglas, is Jewish, but his mother is Anglican.

In recent years, however, Douglas has embraced the Jewish faith and said he considers himself a Reform Jew. Last year he took his son, Dylan, to Jerusalem for his bar mitzvah. Because he never converted, Douglas is not considered Jewish according to Conservative or Orthodox Judaism, where patrilineal descent is insufficient to qualify one as Jewish.

“It is an unconventional choice,” said Stan Polovets, co-founder and chairman of the Genesis Prize Foundation, according to the Los Angeles Times.

Polovets said Douglas was chosen for “his professional achievements and for his passion for his Jewish heritage and the Jewish state.”

He added, “The Douglas family’s experience of connecting with its heritage and embracing it on their own terms embodies an inclusive approach for Jews of diverse backgrounds. This is particularly important today, when the question of what it means to be Jewish has become more pressing than ever.”

The winner of two Academy Awards, four Golden Globe Awards and an Emmy Award, Douglas serves as a United Nations Messenger of Peace, focusing on human rights, gun violence prevention and nuclear anti-proliferation work.

The first Genesis Prize, an annual award, was given to Michael Bloomberg, the billionaire businessman and former mayor of New York. It is meant to recognize an accomplished, internationally renowned professional who is a role model in his or her community and whose actions and achievements express a commitment to Jewish values, the Jewish community and Israel, and who can inspire the younger generation of Jews worldwide.

The foundation was endowed by the Genesis Philanthropy Group, a consortium of wealthy philanthropists and businessmen from the former Soviet Union that includes Mikhail Fridman, Pyotr Aven and German Khan. (JTA)
French Jews, in Biblical perspective

“Now, when Pharaoh let the people go, God did not guide them by the road towards the Philistines, although that was the shortest; for He said, ‘The people may change their minds when they see war before them, and turn back to Egypt.’ So God made them go round by way of the wilderness…” Exodus 13:17-18

This week, we read the saga of the Exodus of our ancestors from Egypt and the beginning of their trek to Israel, the Promised Land.

Also this week, we are reading news reports of the exodus of French Jewry from France. In 2014, 7,000 of our brethren made aliyah. As of now, 10,000 are expected to leave this year, but I would not be surprised if the number grows still higher, because fear has become the dominant reality there. Paris synagogues were half empty on the Shabbat of Jan. 11, right after the attack on the kosher supermarket.

For the first time since World War II, the Great Synagogue of Paris was closed throughout Shabbat. Many kosher delis and restaurants in the city’s Jewish quarter remained closed for days, and those that opened had only a fraction of their normal volume.

The Israelites left Egypt in triumph, “with a high hand,” as the Bible expresses it. But underneath the relief and bravado was a pervasive sense of fear. The national trauma of slavery was formative, not to be erased even by Ten Plagues, divine signs and wonders. God knew that, and hence kept the newborn nation out of harm’s way—until Pharaoh changed his mind and went charging after the former slaves. That triggered renewed fear and despair—“were there not enough graves in Egypt, that you took us out here, to die in the desert?”—until the crowning miracle, the crossing of the Reed Sea, gave the Israelites faith in God and in God’s servant, Moses.

The Jews of France are not overreacting. Their fear is well founded. But there is one crucial difference between their experience and that of our ancestors. For the Jews of today, Israel is already a Jewish state. The latter-day “Philistines” are a thorn in the side of Israel, but Jewish sovereignty is a reality.

Our task is two-fold. In terms of Jewish life in the Diaspora, we must fight the steady erosion of Jewish security. A crisis is upon us. This is not the time to retreat to the “business as usual” mindset that the luxury of American life sometimes affords us. In terms of Israel, we need to recognize that its needs are critical, too. A double myriad of French olim will help sustain the Jewish character of Israel demographically and socio-economically.

Will American Jewry, the largest reservoir of Jewish strength outside of Israel, do its part? Pharaoh’s latest commandos, the newest iteration of those who seek to bathe in Jewish blood, make the question inescapable and urgent.

—Rabbi Michael Panitz, Temple Israel
Mayim Bialik’s reflections on the Paris attacks

by Mayim Bialik

(KVEller/JTA)—I grew up in a public school that had enough Jewish kids that I felt represented. I went to Hebrew school twice a week and had a chavurah, or fellowship, through my Reform synagogue with kids my age. A portion of my family was Orthodox. I was surrounded by Jews. I always felt like there were a lot of Jews in the United States and the world based on my childhood experience. I was wrong. We are less than 2 percent of the U.S. population, and 0.2 percent of the world population.

This month in Paris, 17 individuals were killed, including four Jews who were executed when a Muslim terrorist took them hostage in a kosher supermarket in Porte de Vincennes, a prominent and well-known Jewish neighborhood. This was a calculated attack on Jews and anyone who happened to be there (including workers at the store, not all of whom were Jewish).

We are told the past few years have seen a global rise in anti-Semitism, especially across Europe. While many could argue that the facts are inflated or biased, and that for the most part we Jews have “made it,” it is undeniable that Jews are still the center of political arguments around the world for which we are not responsible in any logical way.

Do I think another Holocaust is coming? “Chas v’chalilah” (heaven forbid), no. Do I think Jews need to live in fear of another Holocaust? No. Why not? Because of the existence of the State of Israel.

Politics and controversy over the establishment of the state aside, Israel is a homeland for Jews. Period. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told the Jews of Israel very clearly this month in a speech to the Knesset that Israel is our home. Until people stop dragging Jews into global terrorism perpetuated by cowards who hide behind the peaceful religion of Islam, I need Israel very much. And so do you.

When I took Jewish Studies 101 (an introduction to Judaism) at UCLA as an undergraduate, our instructor had us read a small book called The Short History of the Jewish People by Raymond Scheindlin. It detailed major historical events for the past thousand years, each century—that’s each 100-year period for thousands of years—featured a segregation-related designation placed on the Jews in the communities we lived in all over the world. We were made to live in separate parts of the city walked off from everyone else and to wear distinguishing hats, marks on our coats, and yes, even before the Holocaust, sometimes forced to wear Jewish stars.

And all we want to be is part of the world. Unique, but also universally accepted and assimilated. Our religion allows for it. Our sages preach it. Our greatest minds thrived on it.

I hated this month’s events as a human; to see what humans can do to one another brought me to tears. I hated it as a person of faith who believes in living by a code of decency and goodness that our Creator established for us on this planet. But mostly, I hated it as a Jew.

On the day of the shootings, I posted on social media the following: #JeSuisCharlie. We are all Charlie. Especially the artists and satirists and creative minds who make our living by creating and challenging and questioning with artistic expression. We are those artists. We all are the innocents executed in the name of religion, transformed into representatives of liberty and freedom.

On the day of the attacks on the Jews, Kvellor contributing editor Jordana Horn’s tweet caught my eye: #JeSuisJuif. It hit me right in the gut: I am a Jew. (A recent article in the New Yorker notes that #JeSuisJuif didn’t catch on the way #JeSuisCharlie did and explores why people are still afraid to take the side of Jews.)

The Great Synagogue in Paris closed on Shabbat for the first time since World War II. That is astounding to me. I lit extra candles for the four Jews killed this past Shabbat. I told my sons that someone who hates Jews did a very prickly thing in Paris—my older son knows that means someone was killed—and that we are remembering them this Shabbat. I thought of shielding them entirely from the events, but then I recalled images of children being evacuated from the market and i thought of my friends and family who go into bomb shelters with their children in Israel, and I figured, you know what? I can make this part of their reality. Because it is.

What will future authors write about our century? The 20th wasn’t so good. The 21st has started off rough, but maybe in this century it will all turn around. I don’t know.

Until we find out more, I am planning my next trip to Israel. Because “Je Suis Juif” —I am a Jew—and although I am afraid, I am undeniably resilient. I’ve had to be. For thousands of years this has been our existence and it’s not letting up.

And the P.S. to this story is that the four Jews killed were buried in Israel. Their bodies and souls are now together at home.
The Strelitz Early Childhood Center is an educational partnership of Hebrew Academy of Tidewater and the Simon Family Jewish Community Center.
(JTA)—This month’s deadly hostage siege at a kosher supermarket in Paris has French Jews (and some non-Jews) proclaiming “Je suis juif,” or “I am Jewish,” in solidarity with the four people killed in the attack.

Who are the Jews of France? Here’s a primer.

**How many Jews are there in France?**
About 500,000, the most of any European nation and more than any other country in the world, except for Israel and the United States.

**How does that compare to other faith groups in the country?**
France is home to some 66 million people; about 80 percent of them are Catholic. There are also between 5 million and 6 million Muslims, with many tracing their roots back to the Maghreb, sub-Saharan Africa and Turkey.

**Where do Jews live in France?**
Paris and its suburbs mostly, home to as many as 350,000 Jews.

The Marais, in Paris’ 3rd and 4th districts, is the city’s historic Jewish neighborhood. It remains home to many kosher shops and eateries, synagogues and religious schools. But the trendy quarter—known today for its fashion boutiques, gay culture and pricey real estate—is much less of a Jewish residential neighborhood than it once was.

Jews today live throughout Paris, but particularly in the affluent 17th district, the more working-class 19th and 20th districts, and increasingly the lively 11th and 12th districts. Hyper Cacher, where Friday’s deadly hostage siege took place, is situated in the 12th district, on Paris’ eastern edge. The suburbs of Sarcelles to the north of the city, Saint-Mande to the east, Creteil to the southeast, and Neuilly-sur-Seine, a wealthy residential neighborhood to the west of the city, also have significant Jewish populations.

In addition, there are about 80,000 Jews in the southern French city of Marseilles, and sizable Jewish communities in Lyon, Toulouse, Nice and Strasbourg, according to Toni Kamins, the author of The Complete Jewish Guide to France.

**How did Jews get to France?**
Jews have had a presence in the country at least since the Middle Ages, though it wasn’t until 1791 that French Jews were granted full citizenship. (Rashi, the famed Talmud scholar and commentator, lived in 11th-century France.) France absorbed more than 100,000 Central and Eastern European Jews fleeing persecution in the years leading up to World War II. Today, however, most Jews living in France have roots in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. Some 235,000 Jews arrived from those newly independent countries in the 1950s and 1960s, and this largely Sephardic population is widely credited with reviving religious Judaism in France after the Holocaust.

**What happened to French Jews during the Holocaust?**
The Nazi German military occupied northern France, including Paris, from 1940 to 1944. In the southern “free zone,” the Vichy French state was nominally neutral but actually was a puppet of Nazi Germany. During the war, some 76,000 Jews from France—including about 11,000 children—were sent to Nazi death camps. Most of them died at Auschwitz, but 2,500 survived. By 1945, some 235,000 Jews remained in France.

**What are France’s most influential Jewish institutions today?**
The Consistoire, which dates back to Napoleonic times, oversees a network of some 500 synagogues and religious sites, such as cemeteries and mikvahs. The Consistoire, which has a number of local affiliates, also manages kashrut certifications and elects the country’s chief rabbi. The majority of Jewish congregations in France—and all of those under the auspices of the Consistoire—are Orthodox, though there is also a smaller number of Reform and Masorti (Conservative) synagogues in France.

The CRIF, the Council of Jewish Institutions of France, is a national federation of dozens of Jewish groups, including philanthropies, social services organizations

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**French Jewry 101**
From Rashi to Dreyfus to Hyper Cacher

**As a “pink lady” Ruth Goodman accumulated more hours than any other volunteer at the Norfolk hospital where she greeted visitors.**

Before she died in 1995, Ruth Goodman, a “pink lady,” made more hours than any other volunteer at the Norfolk hospital where she greeted visitors.

This year 17 students are studying to become physicians, pharmacists and other medical professionals thanks to scholarships generated by Ruth’s generosity. Many more Goodman Scholars will follow every year.

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**Ruth’s will said a lot about her.**

**What does your will say about you?**

**Adding Charity to Your Will or IRA**

by Gabrielle Birnner
and professional associations. The organization works to fight anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance, often closely with political leaders. Supporting Israel and promoting a peaceful two-state solution are also among its stated priorities.

The UEJF, France’s Jewish Student Union, represents the interests of some 15,000 Jewish college students. The organization, founded in 1944, is active in social justice issues, Israel advocacy and efforts to promote coexistence, and it offers meet-ups and travel opportunities for Jewish students.

France also has more than 700 Jewish schools.

Remind me, what was the Dreyfus Affair all about?
In 1894, Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish French army captain, was convicted of treason in a case that many considered even at the time to be a miscarriage of justice. The French writer Emile Zola came to the captain’s defense with a famous open letter titled “J’accuse,” in which he accused the French government of targeting Dreyfus because he was Jewish. Publicly stripped of his rank as thousands of Parisians called for his death, Dreyfus was imprisoned for several years on Devil’s Island. In 1899, Dreyfus was pardoned by the French president and released, and in 1906 a military commission officially exonerated him.

How are French Jews responding to the current surge in French anti-Semitism?
Last year, more than 7,000 French Jews left for Israel, which is more than triple the number who made aliyah the previous year. That comes on the heels of a 91 percent year-over-year increase in anti-Semitic incidents and a spike in violent anti-Semitic attacks.

The general increase in anti-Semitic incidents—in addition to several high-profile attacks such as the 2006 kidnapping and murder of Ilan Halimi, the deadly 2012 shooting at a Jewish school in Toulouse, and firebombings of synagogues and Jewish businesses during last summer’s Gaza war—has created a more insular Jewish community, according to Simone Rodan-Benzaquen, the American Jewish Committee’s Paris director.

“I think, to some extent, for a generation of young people, they are less and less comfortable with their general French secular identity, so their Jewish identity is more important,” Rodan-Benzaquen says, noting that Jews are increasingly choosing Jewish schools over public schools for their children.

The majority of French Jews vote for the center-right and center-left parties. However, a small but growing minority of Jews, fearing anti-Semitic violence at the hands of France’s Muslim community, have embraced the far-right National Front. Though its current leader, Marine Le Pen, has put a more moderate face on the National Front, her father—the party’s founder—has been convicted of Holocaust denial and once referred to the gas chambers as a “detail” of history.
PARIS (JTA)—The kosher supermarket was chosen deliberately. Men, women and children were shopping and preparing for Shabbat. Only two days before the attack, terrorists had left 10 of the best-known satirical journalists and cartoonists dead at Charlie Hebdo. Three French police officers were also struck down, one of them a Muslim. Each Islamist terrorist attack targeted a symbol of the French Republic, seeking to bring the country to its knees. The enemy is in our midst. Extremists, faithful to a brand of Islam that celebrates violence and martyrdom, have no respect whatsoever for the core, longstanding French values of democracy, pluralism, freedom of expression—and, indeed, for life itself. Traditional forms of protest are alien to them. Instead, as seen in the carnage wrought by ISIS, al-Qaida and other jihadists in Iraq, Syria and Yemen, pure barbarism is their vehicle to achieve their perverted notion of salvation.

Tragically, these events are not a new phenomenon. The Jewish community, including the American Jewish Committee in Paris, has warned for years about the developing and deepening threat that radical Islam poses to France. In March 2012, a lone, heavily armed Mohammed Merah murdered three French soldiers in cold blood and, a week later, slaughtered a teacher and three children at a Jewish school in Toulouse. The Toulouse attack was a game changer for French Jews. And although French political leaders voiced outrage, as time passed and the numbers and frequency of anti-Semitic incidents rose, the country seemed to get used to them—even anesthetized to this reality—while many Jews felt a sense of loneliness and isolation.

The recent attacks in Paris have shocked the entire nation, indeed the entire world. What is new this time is the depth and breadth of the reactions, crisscrossing French society, the realization that combating the threat of radical Islam must be, and remain, a national priority. But will this be the necessary wake-up call for France as a whole to confront the danger?

The terrorists who struck in Paris—as in Toulouse and at the Jewish Museum in Brussels last May—are not isolated lone wolves. They most likely are the tip of a radical Islamist iceberg, the small visible part. To counter this lethal trend, we must delve deeper and understand the factors that draw certain individuals to radical Islam, and find ways to counter this evil that endangers all of France.

French schools must teach mutual respect and responsibility, a component of the curriculum that today is stunningly missing. Indoctrination in extremist ideologies in prisons demands attention, as does recruitment by radical, violent groups through social media and in mosques. The Toulouse and Paris terrorists spent time not only in prison but also with jihadist groups in Syria and Yemen. Hundreds more are currently in Syria and Iraq, and maybe in other Arab countries. That they could return with French passports to settle back in our communities, or in other European countries, is a nightmare. Their objective is to create fear and division in French society, of which the extreme right and populists may take advantage. So let’s have the courage not to let fear take over.

The French government cannot stop this trend alone; the effort will require the active involvement of political, religious and civil-society leaders. Immediate reactions to the attack on Charlie Hebdo were inspiring, as millions of French citizens gathered in central Paris and throughout France, communicated their outrage on social media and called for action. Unfortunately, the voices of Muslim community leaders—with some notable exceptions—have until now been barely audible. Those leaders, too, must speak loudly and clearly, as Muslims and as French citizens.

Many of us in the Jewish community regretted that no large solidarity movement rose up after the gruesome kidnap-murder of Ilan Halimi nine years ago, or after Toulouse, or during last summer’s transparently anti-Semitic demonstrations. While the government did speak out after attacks on Jews and firmly decries anti-Semitism, many in French society and in the media refused to see that our French values were at stake and that Jews were indeed a target.

Hatred of Jews never ends with Jews. The menace of rising anti-Semitism threatens French society at large. The future of France will be decided in the coming days, weeks and months. The Charlie Hebdo massacre makes clear that the war against France’s democratic values is in high gear.

The mass rally on Sunday, Jan. 11, with more than 3.7 million people across the country in attendance—including, in Paris, French President Francois Hollande, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, British Prime Minister David Cameron, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other political leaders—was a powerful statement of outrage and solidarity against this barbarism in France and in the rest of the world.

But what happens in the weeks ahead will truly test France. Now more than at any other time in its postwar history, the fate of France is entwined with the fate of its Jews. If France loses them, sooner or later it will also be lost. Is this the wake-up call that will help the French people understand the nature of the threat to our country, and will they respond firmly and effectively?

The very soul of France is at stake.

—Simone Rodan-Benzaquen is the director of the American Jewish Committee’s Paris office.
Kosher supermarket gunman may have purchased arms in Belgium

(JTA)—The Islamic extremist who killed four at a Paris kosher supermarket is believed to have bought his weapons in Belgium.

An arms dealer reportedly turned himself in to Belgian police on Tuesday, Jan. 13 saying he negotiated with Amedy Coulibaly over an arms sale and scammed him on the sale of a used car, according to the French news agency AFP.

He reportedly confessed to selling the weapons to Coulibaly, who killed four Jewish men in the Jan. 9 attack on the Hyper Cacher market.

“The man is being held by the judge in Charleroi on suspicion of arms dealing,” a spokesman for Belgium’s federal prosecution said according to reports. “Further investigations will have to show whether there is a link with the events in Paris.”

Coulibaly also purchased a Kalashnikov rifle and rocket launchers for brothers Said and Cherif Kouachi for use in the attack on the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo that killed 12 in Paris, AFP reported.

Man smashes window, makes threat at Jewish bookstore in France

(JTA)—An unidentified man smashed a window at a Jewish bookstore near Marseille and shouted an anti-Semitic threat.

The man took a hammer to a window at the Aleph bookstore in Villeurbanne, near Lyon in eastern France, on Wednesday, Jan. 14, the news website 20minutes.fr reported.

When an attendant rushed to the building’s entrance, the man said, “We’ll get all of you Jews,” before mounting a scooter that was being driven by someone else. The man was wearing a scooter helmet that concealed his face.

Police arrived at the scene approximately four hours after the attack, according to the report.

Meanwhile, in the southern city of Marseille, which is home to France’s second-largest Jewish community, Jewish schools during working hours are under permanent police protection provided by machine-gun toting officers, the Swiss Tribune de Geneve reported.

In both relative and absolute terms, Marseille has seen fewer anti-Semitic incidents than the Paris region since the proliferation of such attacks in the early 2000s.

Months after the murder of four Jews in Toulouse, Marseille’s main synagogues and other Jewish institutions, including areas running educational programs for children, were mostly unprotected.

Commenting on the change in atmosphere, Michele Teboul, head of the local branch of the CRIF umbrella of French Jewish communities, told the daily Tribune de Geneve, “I feel something has changed. There is distress, discomfort, as though the Jews find themselves outside of this great atmosphere of national cohesion.”
The Rise of Anti-Semitism: Not only a “Jewish Issue”

by Samantha Golden

Overt and violent anti-Semitism, a phenomenon rearing its ugly head in France, has led to sudden attention from global media and reports of mass emigration. Other forms, no less threatening, continue to surface in more subtle or indirect forms around the world. In fact, Forman asserted that no country is without some form and degree of anti-Semitism, including the United States.

In the aftermath of Israel’s conflict with Gaza last summer, the upsurge of acts of hatred appeared to echo the horrors of a different period. Previously thought to have faded away with the end of World War II, rampant anti-Semitism has now led many to question the security of Jews in modern times.

Forman assured the crowd that modern anti-Semitism is not the same as it was in the 1930s. This time, governments and societies are denouncing the perpetrators. Public institutions and the law in many countries today are on the side of the Jews.

Nearly half of the audience members were unaware prior to the presentation that a position dedicated solely to addressing anti-Semitism existed in the U.S. government. The presence of Forman’s role demonstrates a positive shift in governmental involvement against anti-Semitism.

In a particularly inspiring and uplifting piece of his somber presentation, Forman described the work to combat anti-Semitism being done by local in-country non-governmental organizations (NGOs), non-profits and community groups around the globe. While many of these groups are run by Jewish community members, others are comprised of non-Jewish individuals who are highly passionate and committed to religious freedom and tolerance.

Anti-Semitism today is “not only a Jewish issue. It is a human rights issue,” Forman said.

“We can’t stop it,” said Forman. Anti-Semitism has been around for thousands of years, and it will continue to exist throughout our lives and the lives of our grandchildren.

However, Forman added that we can work to alleviate anti-Semitism and “tune it down.” This is done on the ground through numerous global and in-country NGOs, with public diplomacy and through private, bilateral diplomacy between governments.

While anti-Semitism has become a human rights issue, it is justifiably one of particular concern to the global and local Jewish community. This was evident during the question and answer session that followed Forman’s presentation.

Tidewater community members wanted to know about conditions for Jews in specific nations around the world, Israel’s involvement in the fight against anti-Semitism and clarity on the increasingly blurred distinction between what is anti-Israel and what is anti-Semitism.

In response to a question about anti-Israel versus anti-Semitic intent, Forman noted that free speech includes the right to comment on, and be critical of, specific national policies and actions. Israelis themselves may criticize Israel, just as Americans may criticize America’s decisions and politics. However, a point exists when the line between anti-Israel and anti-Semitism is crossed.

Forman enlightened the audience with a description of the “Three ‘D’s” used to define anti-Semitic, rather than purely anti-Israel intent:

• De-legitimization, or questioning Israel’s sovereignty and right to exist, while the existence of other nations are not called into question.
• Defamation, equating the actions of Israel to those of, for example, the Nazis.
• Double standard, holding Israel to a standard different from and above that of other nations.

Forman concluded with a question that many audience members wanted answered:

What can be done?

Forman offered three main recommendations to the Tidewater community:

• Stay educated. Attending events such as this one sponsored by the UJFT is one of many ways to remain informed and stay abreast of the issues.
• Turn to resources like UJFT’s Community Relations Council for additional information about anti-Semitism and how to appropriately respond.
• Research the activity of local, national and international organizations addressing anti-Semitism.

All attendees received a resource guide provided by the UJFT’s Community Relations Council. The resources provide additional reading, up-to-date news sources, and a few of the most prominent organizations working tirelessly to fight anti-Semitism in the U.S. and abroad.

“Now more than ever with anti-Semitic acts on the rise, we must remain vigilant, well-informed and united as a Jewish community,” says Miles Leon, UJFT president.
On Jan. 8, the Maimonides Society and the Business & Legal Society of the United Jewish Federation of Tidewater kicked off the New Year with a special joint reception prior to UJFT’s program, The Rise of Anti-Semitism: A Resurgence of Evil. This invitation-only reception offered Society members the opportunity to network, socialize and personally meet the evening’s keynote speaker, Ira Forman, Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, the U.S. State Department.

The event was well received with an exceptional turn out of more than 70 medical, business and legal professionals from the community. Due to the tremendous positive response, registration was closed early and many Society invitees were added to a waiting list. For those who RSVP’d early and were fortunate enough to attend, it was a superb evening with good company, cocktails and kosher hors d’oeuvres.

Special Envoy Forman spoke to a room filled with captivated Society members. He gave an exclusive insider’s perspective on global anti-Semitism in a brief speech before mingling and answering questions one-on-one.

Dr. Edward Karotkin, a Maimonides Society member, says “The speaker and topic were ‘right on’ given the recent tragic events. The Maimonides Society and the UJFT professionals and lay leaders deserve a lot of credit for the great programming. “I particularly enjoyed connecting with some people from the business community who I had never met prior to the reception,” says Karotkin.

Barbara Rosenblatt, a Business & Legal Society member, says, “The reception was a great opportunity for the Business & Legal Society and the Maimonides Society to meet other professionals in the community.”

Beth Hirsch Berman of the Business & Legal Society says, “I enjoyed the reception which gave me the opportunity to reconnect with people I had not seen in some time. I was, however, surprised that more of my peers were not in attendance. Mr. Forman shared some surprising and timely facts with us, including that the Jews of France feared for their physical safety more so than did Jews in other countries where anti-Semitism was viewed as prevalent. The very next day a French terrorist killed four Jews who were shopping for the Sabbath at a kosher grocery.”

“How appropriate to have Ira Forman here speaking about anti-Semitism and specifically speaking of issues in France just as the horrific massacres occurred at Charlie Hebdo and the kosher mart. It reminded me that even though we continue to feel comfortable, we must always be vigilant and remain educated and informed. Kudos again to the UJFT for bringing in such relevant and powerful speakers,” says Jason Hoffman of the Business & Legal Society.

Maimonides Society member Dr. Alan Wagner says, “It was great to see such a fantastic turn out from the Maimonides Society. Joining with the broadest mix of professionals from the business and legal communities for a joint networking and educational event is a real world step down the path of tikvun olam. This is what our community is all about.”

The Business & Legal Society and the Maimonides Society offer networking, social, and philanthropic opportunities for Jewish business, legal and medical professionals. To get involved, visit JewishVA.org/BusinessAndLegalSociety, JewishVA.org/MaimonidesSociety or contact Alex Pomerantz at apomerantz@ujft.org. Visit and ‘LIKE’ the Business & Legal Society and the Maimonides Society on Facebook.

Resources on anti-Semitism

Organizations

• American Jewish Committee www.ajc.org
• Anti-Defamation League (ADL) www.adl.org
• ADL Global 100 www.global.adl.org
• B’nai Brith International www.bnaibrith.org
• Magenta www.magenta.nl
• Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) — www.memri.org
• National Coalition Supporting Eurasian Jewry — www.ncsej.org
• Simon Wiesenthal Center www.wiesenthal.com
• Southern Poverty Law Center www.splcenter.org
• US State Department Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism — www.state.gov/j/dr/seas
• World Jewish Congress www.worldjewishcongress.org

Reliable Media Sources for up-to-date news

• Tablet Magazine www.tabletmag.com
• The Jerusalem Post www.ipost.com
• The Jewish Daily Forward www.forward.com

Additional Resources

• ADL Global Index of Anti-Semitism www.global100.adl.org
• U.S. State Department www.state.gov/j/dr/seas
• U.S. State Department, The Monitor www.state.gov/j/dr/seas/news/index.htm

Suggested Reading

• Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition by David Nirenberg
• A Lethal Obsession: Anti-Semitism from Antiquity to the Global Jihad by Robert S. Wistrich

For more information and resources, visit www.JewishVA.org/Anti-Semitism.
WASHINGTON (JTA)—These are the lessons of the Paris attacks for American Jews and U.S. law enforcement: Keep calm and cooperate.

Enhanced communication between governments has been a key element of America’s counterterrorism successes since 9/11, experts say, and more is planned in the wake of the attacks in France that left 17 dead.

President Obama announced this month that Washington will host a summit Feb. 18 aimed at improving communications between nations that are would-be targets of terrorists. The U.S. secretary of Homeland Security, Jeh Johnson, also outlined plans for better cooperation across national police forces and among U.S. law enforcement agencies to identify terrorist threats.

“Together with our colleagues in the U.S. law enforcement and intelligence communities, this department will continue its efforts to partner with the governments of France and other key counterterrorism allies to share information about terrorist threats and individuals of suspicion,” Johnson says. “We will recommit to these engagements.”

Information sharing between the U.S. and European governments suffered somewhat after the 2013 revelations by Edward Snowden, the rogue ex-National Security Agency employee who publicized classified information gathering after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

Cherif and Said Kouachi, the two brothers who attacked the satirical weekly Charlie Hebdo, reportedly received weapons training in Yemen, had declared their allegiance to al-Qaida and were on no-fly lists. Amedy Coulibaly, the captor who took hostages and killed four at the kosher supermarket Hyper Cacher, also reportedly was known to U.S. security officials.

French authorities are still seeking six accomplices in the attacks, suggesting that the captors may have belonged to a larger terrorist cell.

One of the threats that most concerns Western security agencies are the Western fighters who go to Middle East battlegrounds for training and experience and then return to their home countries. A study published this month by the Brookings Institution says there are about 4,000 European fighters in Syria. U.S. officials have said 100 U.S. citizens have fought for the Islamic State, the jihadist group also known as ISIS to which Coulibaly pledged allegiance.

Paul Goldenberg, who directs security for the U.S. Jewish community, says that sharing information on returning fighters is frustrated by the fact that Europe represents an array of sovereign nations, each with its own security practices but with open borders.

European Union regulations on data sharing are complex and replete with restrictions arising out of privacy concerns. The 10 pages of regulations governing the sharing of telecommunications data, for instance, allow member countries to retain data obtained from other countries for no more than two years.

Goldenberg says terrorist sleepers often remain inactive for periods longer than two years.

“These terrorist groups are very patient and methodical,” he says.

Potential terrorists can travel easily through Europe’s open borders. Mehdi Nemmouche, the suspect in the killing of four people in an attack on the Brussels Jewish museum in May, was known to French authorities and had been flagged by Germany upon his return from fighting in Syria, but Belgian authorities were unaware of his presence.

Goldenberg, whose Secure Community Network is funded by the Jewish Federations of North America, says the training evident in the Paris attacks portended better planned attacks, even by “lone wolves” who act on their own but have undergone training in the Middle East.

“Everyone is trying to figure out what we do to stop a well-planned terrorist operation against a Jewish center,” says Goldenberg, who was in Paris meeting with Jewish leaders when the kosher supermarket attack took place. “There were armed guards at Charlie who were executed.”

As for the Jewish community, many best practices remain the same even after the Paris attacks, Goldenberg says, including training Jewish community professional and lay leaders in lockdowns and spotting suspicious behavior. Jewish communities need more such people, he says.

Another key element is making sure that faith communities and law enforcement are in close coordination. In the Jewish community, that may mean authorities and community leaders keep in close contact about any suspicious behavior at or around Jewish sites. In Muslim communities, that might mean monitoring fighters returning from the Middle East who embed in those communities.

Such coordination is commonplace in the United States, but has been inhibited in Europe by mistrust among minorities of law enforcement and by a reluctance among some authorities to be seen as profiling religious communities.

The Brookings study emphasizes the importance of engaging Muslim communities and not alienating them.

“The goal should be to move potential terrorists towards non-violence, since many are in that category already, hounding them with the threat of arrest or otherwise creating a sense of alienation can backfire,” it says. “In the past, family and community members have at times been successful in steering returned fighters toward a different path, even getting them to inform on their former comrades.”

Jeremy Shapiro, one of the authors of the Brookings study, says domestic security agencies’ focus on foreign fighters distracts from the overall goal of anticipating mass attacks—many of which have nothing to do with classic terrorism.

“We have had 74 school shootings in the 18 months after Sandy Hook,” he says, referring to the December 2012 massacre of 26 schoolchildren and teachers in Connecticut by a lone gunman. “The foreign fighters thing has nothing to do with that.”

With such attacks notoriously difficult to anticipate because of the challenge of assessing when mentally ill individuals are true threats, U.S. law enforcement has made a priority of tracking individuals known to have terrorist ties.

Last July, the Transport Security Agency enhanced security at U.S. points of entry and overseas points of departure. Now, says Homeland Security’s Johnson, he is considering further enhancements.

U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder told the CBS news program Face the Nation that lone wolf attacks are one of his great sources of concern.

“It’s something that frankly keeps me up at night worrying about the lone wolf, or a group of people, very small group of people who decide to get arms on their own and do what we saw in France,” he said.
Dear Readers,

Mazel Tov! Mazel Tov! Literally translated, these two Hebrew words mean “good luck.” In general conversation, however, the phrase is used to say “Congratulations!”

“Mazel Tov on your engagement!”
“Mazel Tov on your wedding!”
“Mazel Tov on your new baby!”
“Mazel Tov on your B’nai Mitzvah!”
“Mazel Tov on your graduation!”
“Mazel Tov on your new job!”
“Mazel Tov on your election!”
“Mazel Tov on your new home!”

We could fill the newspaper with examples. And, that’s a good thing. It’s a good thing, because even when life presents sorrows and fears, reasons to say “Mazel Tov!” continue to flourish.

In this special Mazel Tov section, we tackle the serious subject of inter-faith dating and how segments of the Conservative Movement are grappling with the issue.

Dating of course can lead to marriage. Our first feature offers tips for choosing a wedding gown for Jewish brides. For after the ceremony and down the road, Amy Lefcoe updates us on a series sponsored by Jewish Family Service, “Taking your marriage to the next level.”

Jewish News asked area temple administrators to tell readers about a memorable celebration that took place at their synagogue. Their responses are fun, heartfelt and reflective of the vibrancy of Tidewater’s Jewish community.

One last note: When planning your next celebration where you’ll hear, “Mazel Tov!” we hope you shop first with our advertisers. They offer places to dine, to hold events, to purchase jewelry and other gifts, to order cakes, and more.

Terri Denison
Editor
With the spring and summer months being the most popular time of year for weddings, many brides are now beginning to search for their ideal gown. “Today’s modern wedding gowns appear to be trending towards more simplistic and classic silhouettes, while elaborate and luxurious fabrics, laces and adornments are becoming more significant in the design,” Sharon Langert—who runs Fashion-Isha.com, a blog dedicated to fashion for Orthodox Jewish women—says.

“One of the most current and popular wedding gown styles is the flattering fit and flare, a style that softly hugs a woman’s curves while gently flaring out at the hips,” she says.

But for Jewish brides, depending on their religious denomination, there are special considerations of modesty to take into account.

“Modesty is not about being oppressed, but just the opposite—an opportunity to fully express the inner light and beauty of the divine and refine woman through fabric, silhouette and texture,” says Langert.

“Trends aside,” she adds, “choosing the perfect wedding gown style is always a very personal and individual decision. There will always be those girls who dream of a tulle-infused Cinderella ball gown, or a simple and modern sheath, and the most important factor in choosing a gown is how it makes the bride look and feel.”

In “Wedding Wednesday: The Real Wedding Dresses of the Frum and Fabulous,” a recent post on Langert’s blog dedicated to the gown search and featuring photos of the author’s favorite bridal styles, she writes that “through necessity, many Jewish brides become their own designers. We are the queens of creativity when it comes to designing and modifying previously non-modest gowns.”

With that principle in mind, Rachel Leonard, fashion director for Brides.com, makes the following suggestions on bridal fashion in 2015—tips that can apply to Jewish brides of all denominations. For those who do not wish to purchase these specific styles of gowns, use them for inspiration.

**General 2015 Trends**

**High-low hemlines**
“There are two variations of this trend,” says Leonard. “It can be a subtle high-low, where the dress hits at the ankle, or more dramatic, in which case it hits at the knee. It’s a great way to show off fabulous shoes.”

**Cutouts**
Reveal a hint of skin with side cutouts. We’re also seeing this trend in deep V necklines and open backs.

**Classic lady**
You can never go wrong with pretty and timeless silhouettes. (Think Grace Kelly style.)

**Slits**
Sexy, glamorous slits are perfect for an evening reception.

### Dresses for Conservative Jewish ceremonies

Allover lace with long sleeves is a great way to look elegant and conservative.

A tulle wrap is a chic way to cover up. The soft pastel color with beaded floral tulle is so gorgeous and ethereal.

**Option for an Orthodox ceremony**

70s-inspired bohemian chic looks are having a huge moment right now.

**Tip**
When you make an appointment at a bridal salon, check to see if they’ll ‘build up’ a dress for an orthodox service. (Most will.)

**Additional Styling Tips**
(from Rachel Leonard)

- Be comfortable in the dress and make sure you can easily move in it.
- Don’t let the dress wear you.
- Don’t over accessorize.
- Keep your hair soft and modern. Get inspired by the red carpet—there are so many great hair and makeup looks out there right now!
I’ve been a member of Ohef Sholom Temple my entire life, so it’s not easy to select just one memorable celebration, especially since I’ve celebrated with my family and my congregation so many times at the temple.

Still, a very unique event occurred on June 3, 2012, just after I became Ohef Sholom’s Temple Administrator. The merger of Temple Sinai with Ohef Sholom culminated in a beautiful, memorable day filled with emotion. After months of planning by members of both congregations, the Torahs of Temple Sinai were ceremoniously police-escorted from Temple Sinai through the Portsmouth-Norfolk tunnel, up the grand steps of Ohef Sholom, through the sanctuary and to their new home in the ark of the newly named Sinai Chapel. The shofar was blown, welcoming the Torahs and joining our congregations together under the chuppah. There was singing, clapping and dancing in the streets, followed by a special service and party for hundreds of revelers.

When I think of how we have become one integrated family and I look at the beautiful stained glass windows that were once in the Temple Sinai sanctuary, but are now perfectly situated in the Sinai Chapel at Ohef Sholom Temple, my heart is full.

Gail W. Bachman
Ohef Sholom Temple Administrator
High Holy Days 2014

As the Temple administrator of Congregation Beth Chaverim, I attended my first High Holy Day Services this past September.

A non-Jew, I had never experienced the love and compassion shown me by our congregants as they welcomed my daughter and I to services and Break-the-Fast, sponsored by our Sisterhood. The Sisterhood did a fabulous job, along with other volunteers, transforming our Social Hall into a welcoming family banquet. “Someone’s” kugel was well worth fighting for—you know who you are! With open arms, the children of “CBC” welcomed Caitlyn into their festivities, while I mingled with congregants I had never met before.

I may be a little biased, but these amazing people of our community are truly one of a kind. It was a beautiful and moving celebration of a New Year. I will always remember it, and I am honored to be a part of Congregation Beth Chaverim.

Michelle R. Anderson
Temple Administrator, Congregation Beth Chaverim-Virginia Beach
Celebrating with song

On Sunday afternoon, Dec. 14, Congregation Beth El presented From Bimah to Broadway—an afternoon of Cantors in Concert. Three nationally renowned cantors, Alisa Pomerantz-Boro, Randy Herman, and Zachary Mondrow, took the stage and performed a wide variety of traditional and contemporary music including a touch of showbiz.

As co-chairman, Alex Pomerantz, said, “The whole room came alive with the melodies of our rich Jewish spirit.” Those in attendance listened, sang along, and clapped their hands.

To quote Rabbi Jeffrey Arnowitz, “It was a fun, energizing and enjoyable day for the whole congregation and community.”

Rabbi Arthur Ruberg, who oversaw the congregation’s packed house with Elie Wiesel in 2000 as Beth El celebrated its 150th anniversary, called the concert “one of the great days in the history of the synagogue.” Immediately following the concert, Beth El hosted a beautiful hors d’oeuvres and dessert reception prepared by our wonderful Sisterhood women.

Pam Gladstone
It was an afternoon of love, laughs and learning as couples from across the community came together for the first of a three-part series on love and marriage. Participants enjoyed an icebreaker of socializing, snacks and drinks (yes—there was even beer and wine on hand for this one) upon arriving. Many were apprehensive, unsure what to expect next.

“Taking your marriage to the next level” is a little out-of-the-box when it comes to the typical items that are included on most community social calendars. All uncertainties dissolved, however, as soon as the speaker, Lori Palatnik of the Jewish Women’s Renaissance Project, began the program.

Palatnik shared stories and insights that were relatable for everyone, especially after years of wedded bliss. Her message included the importance of remembering why participants fell in love in the beginning and keeping those qualities about their spouses in every day consciousness. She also spoke on the importance of giving in a marriage.

“The more we give, the more we love,” said Palatnik, explaining that this is why parents love their children so much. She suggested doing something nice for one’s spouse every day, an obvious concept, which many couples shared that they found to be innovative.

The series continues on Sunday, Feb. 8, and then finally on Sunday, March 22. Each session stands on its own as far as content is concerned, so newcomers are encouraged to join in. Register at www.jfshamptonroads.org/marriage-series or with Amy Cobb of JFS at (757) 321-2235. The price per couple for the rest of the series is $80. It comes with a money-back guarantee that regardless of how great a marriage is, there are ways to make it even better.

Israeli couple welcomes birth of 100th great-grandchild

JERUSALEM (JTA)—An Israeli couple welcomed the birth of their 100th great-grandchild.

Michael Mittwoch, 92, and his wife, Marion, 90, celebrated the bris of Dagan Raz this month, according to Israeli media reports. They called the new baby and their other great-grandchildren “our answer to Hitler,” Ynet reported.

The Mittwochs were born in Germany and each fled to England after the Nazis came to power.

After World War II they made their ways separately to Israel and met on Kibbutz Kvutzat Yavne. They then became two of the founders of Kibbutz Lavi in the Galilee, and they also were the first couple to be married there, according to Ynet.

Their five children live in Israel.

The new baby was named after Maj. Dagan Wertman, 32, a Golani Brigade doctor who was at officers’ school with the baby’s father and was killed during Operation Cast Lead at the end of 2008.
Mazel Tov

Causing stir, prominent Conservative rabbi considers breaking intermarriage ban

by Uriel Heilman

NEW YORK (JTA)—Within days of floating a proposal that would have made Rabbi Wesley Gardenswartz of Temple Emanuel in Newton, Mass., the first prominent Conservative clergyman to break with the movement’s ironclad rule against rabbis performing intermarriages, the spiritual leader of one of the nation’s largest Conservative synagogues decided to reverse course.

In a recent email to congregants, Gardenswartz attached a proposal for a new shul policy that would enable him to officiate at interfaith weddings in cases where the couple commits to a “Covenant to Raise Jewish Children” and asked the congregation consider it.

“Conservative clergy cannot officiate at or attend an interfaith wedding. But we welcome the interfaith family to our shul,” Gardenswartz wrote. “But I am worrying whether that response has grown stale, and whether a new response would better serve the needs of our families and of our congregation.”

Among the high-powered members of Temple Emanuel’s board of trustees are NFL owner Robert Kraft of the New England Patriots, Massachusetts state treasurer Steven Grossman and Michael Bohnen, the president of casino magnate Sheldon Adelson’s family foundation.

The rabbi is also said to have sent his proposal to the Rabbinical Assembly, the rabbinic group that sets Conservative policies and standards.

But just days after Gardenswartz floated the idea, he abruptly backed down from its most controversial element: that he be permitted to perform interfaith weddings.

“The Covenant to Raise Jewish Children will not work,” Gardenswartz said in a subsequent email sent to congregants this week and shared with JTA. “In my initial proposal, I had written that I would perform an intermarriage if the interfaith couple would, by signing a written Covenant, affirm that, if God blessed them with children, they would raise their children exclusively as Jews. This idea received many negative reviews, especially from our interfaith families whom we were trying to reach by it.”

According to Gardenswartz, who has been at Temple Emanuel since 1997, congregants said such a covenant would be “asking too much, too soon.” They also said it did not account for those unable to have children or past child-bearing age, would be unfair to require only of interfaith couples, and would be unenforceable and therefore a mere formality.

“These objections persuaded me that the Covenant is not workable,” Gardenswartz wrote.

In the email, the rabbi also reassured congregants that he would not take renegade actions that would sever the congregation’s affiliation with the Conservative movement.

But Gardenswartz says the congregation would explore ways to be more welcoming to interfaith families both before and after the wedding and treat interfaith couples exactly the same as all-Jewish couples—with the exception of wedding officiation.

“It’s not clear what role fear that he or his congregation would be ousted by the Conservative movement played in Gardenswartz’s change of heart. He declined JTA’s requests for an interview.

“There is a range of opinions within our congregation,” synagogue board member Joanne Linowes Alinsky told JTA. “Some people are thinking this is exciting, groundbreaking stuff, and others are thinking it is too far from tradition.”

Rabbi Julie Schonfeld, executive vice president of the Rabbinical Assembly, declines to discuss any details of her conversations with Gardenswartz. But she confirms that R.A. rules mandate the expulsion of any member who violates the rule against officiating at intermarriages.

“What I see in our members is very consistent reaffirmation of this standard,” Schonfeld says. “It’s not just that we won’t; we can’t. We don’t see the performance of intermarriage as something rabbis can do.”

She also notes that synagogues affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism cannot retain rabbis who perform such weddings.
The angst surrounding intermarriage and the mixed reactions from congregants to Gardenswartz's proposal are a reflection of the struggles of a movement with declining numbers that frowns upon intermarriage but in which nearly four in 10 members marry outside the faith, according to the 2013 Pew Research Center's survey of U.S. Jews.

“The reality of modern-day Judaism is that almost all of us are touched by this,” Lisa Hills, Temple Emanuel’s president, says of intermarriage. “If it’s not in our nuclear family, it’s somewhere in our extended family.”

The response within the movement generally has been to discourage interfaith unions yet welcome such couples once they are married. But many are worried that this approach alienates Conservative Jews and their non-Jewish partners, driving them away from Jewish tradition entirely or into the arms of alternative rabbis and movements that allow intermarriage, prompting them to abandon the Conservative movement.

“I think our movement in terms of colleagues is tremendously divided between doing what we’ve been told—by the R.A. 45 years ago in establishing standards of practice—and serving our members and creating Jewish families,” says Rabbi Charles Simon, who is executive director of the movement’s Federation of Jewish Men’s Clubs and helps Conservative synagogues be more inclusive of non-Jews.

Simon says the move by someone of Gardenswartz’s stature to review policy on interfaith unions could be a game changer for the movement.

“I think this is the beginning of a huge paradigm shift,” Simon says. “By writing a paper and sending it to the R.A., this changes the playing field.

“In terms of congregational rabbis, Wes is unique. I can’t think of anybody else who is out there in the same way. I’m very excited because this can potentially create tremendous opportunities in the movement for growth, for attracting families.”

For now, Gardenswartz’s redrawing of the proposal to his congregation precludes his officiating at interfaith weddings. But he has made clear that he will not frown upon interfaith unions.

“Temple Emanuel will treat an interfaith couple as a Jewish-Jewish couple except that its clergy cannot officiate at the interfaith wedding,” he wrote in his email.

In this regard, Gardenswartz is not alone in his movement. Other Conservative rabbis struggling with the movement’s ban on intermarriage have found their own ways of welcoming interfaith couples – and even blessing their unions.

At Congregation Kneses Tifereth Israel in Port Chester, N.Y., for example, Rabbi Jaymee Alpert offers a public blessing to interfaith couples right before their wedding in an adaptation of the traditional pre-wedding Shabbat “aufruf” celebration. Alpert also presents interfaith couples with the same synagogue gift bestowed upon Jewish couples.

At Temple Aliyah in Los Angeles, Rabbi Stewart Vogel celebrates interfaith couples, acknowledging them on “anniversary Shabbats” along with the Jewish couples.

And Conservative synagogues all over the country are adapting rituals, loosening restrictions that had kept non-Jews from being full-fledged members and trying new outreach approaches in an effort to make non-Jewish family members feel part of the synagogue community.

Hills says crossing the Rubicon by sanctioning intermarriages feels like the next logical step for the Conservative movement.

“We welcome interfaith families as members in our Conservative synagogues,” she says. “We should be welcoming at the point of weddings as well.”

For now, however, that’s off the table for Gardenswartz. But it remains a subject of deep debate within Temple Emanuel, where many members are seeing their children pair off with non-Jewish spouses and leave the fold.

“It’s huge in our community as our children are getting married,” board member Alinsky says.

“Do you welcome an interfaith couple before the wedding or wait until they are married by somebody else and then say now that you are married we want you to come into our faith and our synagogue? The question is: Do you dilute what’s important about Conservative Judaism or do you move with the trends? There’s no easy answer to that.”
USY reverses interfaith dating ban

by Uriel Heilman

NEW YORK (JTA)—United Synagogue Youth voted to relax its rules barring its teenage board members from dating non-Jews.

The amendment was adopted last month in Atlanta at the annual international convention of the Conservative movement’s youth group. The change affects the 100 or so teen officers who serve on USY’s national board and 17 regional boards. The thousands of teens who participate in USY programs have not been subject to any such bans.

After some debate at the convention, the USY board also elected not to adopt a controversial proposal to alter requirements that teen board members be Sabbath and holiday observant when it comes to travel, public functions and taking school exams.

While dropping the prohibition against dating non-Jews, board members should “model healthy Jewish dating choices,” the newly adopted amendment to USY’s constitution says. “These include recognizing the importance of dating within the Jewish community and treating each person with the recognition that they were created Betzelem Elohim (in the image of God).”

The change on dating policy reflects where most young Conservative Jews are when it comes to dating outside the faith. Some four in 10 Conservative Jews who have married since 2000 have married non-Jews, according to the 2013 Pew Research Center survey of U.S. Jewry.

Jordan Dinkin, a USY member from Reisterstown, Md., says she considered running for her region’s board when she was finishing up her junior year of high school until she learned that USY rules precluded board members from dating outside the faith. Dinkin, 17, has a non-Jewish boyfriend.

“It disappointed me a lot that I had to give up that opportunity because of my secular life,” she says. “Obviously people who are active in USY are people who are passionate about their Judaism. I believe that as a progressive youth movement, if we choose in our secular life to date someone who is not of the Jewish religion, I don’t see why there should be limitations within USY.”

The constitution that sets standards for USY was written several years ago by the 15- to 18-year-olds who lead the movement, and it always has been their prerogative to change them, according to Rabbi David Levy, the professional director of USY and director of teen learning at the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

The vote tally on the new amendment was kept secret, but the teens who supported the change wanted to ensure that the movement does not come across as judgmental of families who should be welcomed into the movement, Levy says.

“While we maintain the value that dating within the faith is key to a sustainable Jewish future, we want to be positive and welcoming to USYers, many of whom are from interfaith families,” he says.

The movement’s educational programs will continue to promote the importance of dating within the faith and committing to creating Jewish families, Levy says.

The USY vote comes weeks after Wesley Gardenswartz, the rabbi at one of the nation’s largest Conservative synagogues, Temple Emanuel in Newton, Mass., floated a plan to his congregation that would allow him to officiate at interfaith weddings in cases where the couple committed to raising Jewish children. He later dropped that controversial element of the proposal.

The Conservative movement officially frowns on intermarriage, forbidding its rabbis from officiating or even attending interfaith weddings. In practice, however, synagogues generally are welcoming of interfaith couples, with some granting membership to non-Jews, and some Conservative rabbis attending interfaith weddings.

Rabbi Steven Wernick, CEO of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, says the policy change does not reflect a change in USY’s values. 

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stopped by early that cold Saturday morning to make sure the new boiler was working. There was a large Bat Mitzvah starting in a couple of hours. Not only was the boiler not working, the entire building was dark and freezing cold. An overnight car accident nearby had knocked out the power to the entire building.

The power company got service restored just before the congregation started to arrive, but our sanctuary takes hours to heat. It seemed that the spirit of the event was warm enough to compensate, though. The Bat Mitzvah did a lovely job while wearing her winter coat. People sat closer together. Brody Auditorium was even more welcoming than usual for the kiddush luncheon because it heated faster than the sanctuary, giving it the impression of a snug paradise.

There were no complaints that day. A random accident helped all of us remain focused on the spirituality and fellowship of the day.

Leslie N. Bradner
Administrator
Temple Israel

continued from page 24

“IT continues to recognize what we know to be true: encouraging Jews to marry other Jews is the most successful path toward creating committed Jewish homes,” Wernick says. “At the same time, we can’t put our heads in the sand about the fact that we live in an incredibly free society, where even committed Jews will marry outside the faith. If they do, we must welcome them wholeheartedly and encourage them to embrace Judaism.”

Some 750 teens went to Atlanta for this year’s USY international convention.
Mazel Tov

Beth Sholom’s calendar has gone to the dogs

“Awww” is what people most often say when first looking at *The Dogs Of Beth Sholom Village Calendar*. It seems appropriate, because looking into the eyes of Truffles on the cover, with her cute nose and pink bow, everyone’s heart seems to melt.

The Calendar reflects the love the dogs that work at Beth Sholom Village receive, as well as of those who visit with family members. If even for a moment when a resident holds or pets one of the friendly canines, they are relieved from aches, pains and memory loss.

Every month of the year highlights a dog with a different resident enjoying the moment.

John Toomey, a friend of Beth Sholom Village, a professor of Jazz at ODU and a talented photographer, took the calendar’s photographs.

Calendars cost $20. The proceeds go directly to Beth Sholom Village.

Everything works out in the end

Over the years, we, here at B’nai Israel, have had many simchas in our halls (both Richels Hall and the Bornstein Atrium).

Thank G-d that no major nightmares come to mind—everything works out in the end.

Recently, we had a bris for a military (Navy) couple—with twin boys. Even though the couple doesn’t belong to our shul, and it was short notice, a beautiful spread was put out.

It doesn’t matter whether we have two months or two days notice—the simcha is always a beautiful event.

*Michele Aronoff*
Executive Director
B’nai Israel Congregation
We’re going to Argentina! Want to come? Say si!

by Amy Zelenka
UJFT Missions Director

The United Jewish Federation of Tidewater will lead a mission to the Jewish community of Argentina in the fall. Beginning in Buenos Aires on Thursday, Oct. 15, the mission will include visits with Jewish community leaders and opportunities to see Federation’s Campaign dollars at work on the ground. The group will experience some of the services provided to the community by UJFT overseas partners: Jewish Agency for Israel (JFAI), American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) and ORT.

But as with all Federation missions... it’s not going to be “just business!” The group will visit a variety of cultural and historic centers as it learns the unique history of Argentina, as well as of the Argentinean Jewish community. They’ll learn about the Jewish community’s relationship with various governments and with the world-famous Argentine Gauchos. Participants will stroll along the avenues and plazas of the country’s capitol, visiting history and art museums, and maybe even take a Tango lesson or two. But in the end, it will be the time spent with members of the Jewish community that sets this trip apart from any ordinary vacation or sight-seeing tour.

The mission will learn about the tragedies and triumphs this community has experienced during the past 20 years from community leaders at Club Hebraica; visit the JDC-run Baby Help Program, which provides special assistance to babies and mothers living below the poverty line; and enjoy a guided tour of the Jewish Museum at Libertad Synagogue. They’ll share a Kabbalat Shabbat and Shabbat dinner with members of the community at the Grand Synagogue of Buenos Aires. Visits are planned to the AMIA building (site of the 1994 terrorist bombings); JAFI-founded BAMA education center; and the country’s largest Jewish school, run by ORT. It promises to be an intense and exciting few days.

The mission will close with a short flight to the magnificent Iguazu Falls, which divide Argentina from its neighbor Brazil. On return from the Falls, the group will come together for a farewell dinner, as the mission draws to an end.

The mission is priced at $3780 per person. This price does NOT include airfare from the U.S. to Argentina. Participants are required to make their own air travel arrangements. The mission price does include all land transportation (including the short flight to and from Iguazu), guides, all hotel accommodations, meals and admissions. Extensions are available at additional fees.

Because it is a Federation-sponsored mission, participants will also be asked for a gift to next year's Annual Campaign.

Yale’s ‘Jewish Lives’ series wins National Jewish Book Award

(JTA)—The “Jewish Lives” series, a set of short biographies, was named the Jewish Book of the Year by the Jewish Book Council.

The series, which has been issued for the past four years by Yale University Press, was among the 2014 National Jewish Book Awards winners announced Jan. 14.

It marked the first time that the Book of the Year award went to a series.

Among the other winners:
• The Betrayers,
  by David Bezmozgis,
  the JJ Greengberg Memorial Award for fiction.
• The Mathematician’s Shiva,
  by Stuart Rojstaczer,
  Outstanding Debut Fiction.
• Spinoza: The Outcast Thinker,
  by Devra Lehmann,
  for Children’s and Young Adult Literature.
• The Patchwork Torah,
  written by Allison Ofansky and illustrated by Elsa Oriol,
  for Illustrated Children’s Book.
• The Golden Age Shtetl,
  by Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern,
  in the History category.
• The Koren Ani Tefillah Siddur,
  by Jay Goldmintz and Jonathan Sacks,
  for Modern Jewish Thought and Experience.
• A Question of Tradition: Women Poets in Yiddish, 1586-1987,
  by Kathryn Hellerstein,
  for Women’s Studies.
• Outside the Bible, 3-Volume Set: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture,
  edited by Louis H. Feldman, James L. Kugel and Lawrence H. Schiffman,
  for Scholarship.

The awards will be presented March 11 in New York. A complete list of the winners can be seen on the Jewish Book Council’s website.

The council has given out the annual awards recognizing outstanding books of Jewish interest since 1948. (JTA)
Indian River High School honors Dana Cohen

Article by Elka Mednick
Photos by Laine M. Rutherford

Dana Cohen does not seem to like to be the center of attention, though that was the case on Friday, Jan. 9, as it was “Dana Cohen Day” at Indian River High School in Chesapeake. Master teacher Craig Blackman, the Holocaust Commission’s Esther Goldman Education award-winning teacher for whom Cohen has been a longtime guest speaker, came up with the idea and worked with his students to plan a full day of programming in her honor.

Walking into the school, no one could miss the banner proclaiming Indian River’s Holocaust Memorial day. Though the school’s marquee outside welcomed her by name, Cohen arrived at Indian River expecting to take part in the Commission’s What We Carry program, which tells her survival story. Cohen has been coming with this program for Blackman’s students for the last three years. When Blackman and his students approached her in the hallway with a single rose and a round of applause, she didn’t quite know what to make of all the attention.

After the surprise settled in, Cohen, surrounded by many of her friends from the Holocaust Commission, was ushered to the orchestra room, where she enjoyed a piece the school orchestra had learned just for her. Next, in front of an exhibition of six remarkable portraits and paintings, student artists explained to Cohen how they created their artwork representing her and her journey from the Holocaust to today. One student presented Cohen with a beautiful pencil sketch of two foxes, based on their ability to escape, and on Cohen’s love of animals. She wanted to give Cohen something to keep to remember the day.

In the auditorium, students dedicated additional performances, including piano, ballet and poetry, to her. Between each portion of the program, Cohen and Commission members were invited to enjoy cookies and brownies and other treats baked by students, adding another level of sweetness to the heartfelt effort made to honor Cohen and all those affected by the Holocaust. (Blackman had hoped that Kitty Saks, another What We Carry survivor could have been there, and so he also welcomed her on the signs. Unfortunately, she was unable to attend.)

Back in the classroom, with the principal and several other administrators in the standing room only crowd, the What We Carry presentation allowed students to better understand Cohen’s journey during the Holocaust, making them appreciate and respect her and other survivors even more. Cohen answered questions from the students and adults before two more student performances, one vocal and one on violin, closed the presentation.

The day concluded with the dedication of a pink crepe myrtle sapling planted at the school in Cohen’s honor. This is not the first tree Blackman has planted, however. Several years ago he planted a Bradford Pear tree in honor of David Katz, of blessed memory, to thank him for his long service to Indian River’s students. As with that tree, a plaque mounted on a nearby school wall, will remind current students of the wonderful day they spent with Dana Cohen, and encourage future students to learn the lessons of the Holocaust.

For all involved, spending “Dana Cohen Day” at Indian River High School with such a thoughtful group of students was truly a privilege. 
**Book Reviews**

**Delicious and beautiful**

**Gluten Free Around the World**  
Aviva Kanoff, 2014  
237 pp, $29.99

Gluten Free is big business these days. I have eaten some really nasty food, the only merit of which was that it was gluten free. In some measure, it is a matter of expectation. If you eat a corn tortilla, made of corn meal, it tastes like every corn tortilla you have ever eaten. Ditto quinoa; ditto rice noodles. But when your taste buds are expecting a chocolate chip cookie that bears a resemblance to a Toll House Cookie and you get a gluten free or sugar free look alike, your taste buds cringe with disappointment.  

Regardless, sufferers from Celiac disease have no choice, and those with lesser forms of wheat and/or gluten intolerance or the multitude of digestive issues that have been shown to benefit from less dependence on gluten, have spurred a remarkable demand for Gluten Free. That there are faddists who adopt any new diet be it Pritikin, Atkins, South Beach, Raw Foods, Oldways or Paleo is a given, and there are faddists who have latched on to Gluten Free as the answer to all their gustatory needs, required or not.  

For all of the above, then, Gluten Free Around the World offers proven recipes (beautifully illustrated)—although your reviewer confesses he was somewhat confused by the many delicious looking recipes with no gluten containing ingredients in the first place, thus requiring no substitution. Examples would be “4 bean and kale stew” (ah kale—the new staff of life), “moroccan mint beet salad,” “bocaditos de papa,” and “maple ginger roasted sweet potatoes.”

There are recipes with a lengthy list of ingredients where the only accommodation might be the substitution of gluten free for regular soy sauce. Clearly, recipes from India, Thailand, Africa and the Middle East, where meat is sparingly used, offer a lot for the Gluten Free cook, depending greatly on rice and non-wheat grains.

Kanoff has put together a collection of recipes that offer the gluten free kitchen a special ingredient, hope. It offers a measure of hope that gluten-free need not be bland, boring or burdensome to prepare.

**A personal story**

**The Secrets They Kept**  
**The True Story of a Mercy Killing that Shocked a Town and Shamed a Family**  
Suzanne Handler  
iLane Press, 2013  
140 pages, $14.95

Following her retirement from a professional career as a mental health educator, Susan Handler changed her focus to more personal issues. The Secrets They Kept documents the shocking mercy killing of the author’s Aunt Sally, then a teenager, by the girl’s own father, who then attempted, unsuccessfully, to end his own life.

On the morning of August 16, 1937 Sam Levin, an immigrant from the Pale of Settlement, a naturalized citizen of the United States, and a modestly successful businessman in Cheyenne, Wyoming, granted his beloved Schizophrenic child’s plea, that he end her life and thus keep her from being institutionalized as an insane person. His granddaughter, author Handler, let into the family secret decades later, is able to reconstruct the killing itself, not with any real assistance from her family, but principally from contemporary sources.

The circumstances themselves belit the recent vogue for non-fiction murder mysteries such as Erik Larson’s Thunderstruck and Paul French’s Murder in Peking. Here, however, the reader will come to understand the Levin tragedy in the contexts of mental health conditions then and now and from the standpoint of the corrosive effects of family shame and denial.

Handler’s grandfather, convicted of manslaughter and surprisingly placed on probation rather than facing incarceration, abruptly sold his business and moved the family to California. There was no way they could bear the shame and continue to face their neighbors. The surviving children of Sam Levin evidently created an unwritten pact never to mention Sally to their own children in an effort to erase their sister’s existence from their family’s history. The entire family, formerly observant Jews, apparently turned away from their faith, as if they no longer felt themselves worthy to bow their heads before God. It is not clear whether Handler’s grandmother’s distant and distracted behavior was the result of her own mental illness or her anguish at losing a child in such a bizarre manner, but Sally’s siblings henceforth lacked a certain happiness and did not experience any joy in familial interaction.

The story of Sally Levin’s murder, somewhat steeped in mystery, is illustrative of the fact that deeply buried family secrets can have family consequences for generations.

—Hal Sacks is a retired Jewish communal worker who has reviewed books for Jewish News for more than 30 years.

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5000 Corporate Woods Drive
Virginia Beach, 23462
**JCC Seniors Club and beyond**

by Sherry Lieberman

The JCC Seniors Club moved to the Sandler Family Campus in 2004. Since the move, the club has continued to gather, as well as grow and progress.

In 1977, a small group of men who met regularly at the Jewish Community Center’s swimming pool decided to form a club to be affiliated with the JCC. The club was originally named the YES Club, for “Young Energetic Seniors.” When the YES Club was formed, there was also a club for senior adults at the JCC called the Golden Age Club. The YES Club was established because the founding fathers wanted a club that would provide friendship, as well as service to the Jewish Community Center and to the entire Jewish community.

In January 2000, the YES Club merged with the Young at Heart Club (previously the Golden Age Club) to become the JCC Seniors Club.

While the current JCC Seniors Club boasts a strong membership, it is always ready to accept new members and make new friendships. Members of the JCC Seniors Club must be 55 plus years old and be or become a member of the Simon Family JCC in any of the membership categories.

Dues for the JCC Seniors Club (for JCC members only) are $15 per year. The Club meets on the third Wednesday of each month at the JCC at 12 pm with a lunch option of $5 per person. After lunch, a brief meeting takes place followed by entertainment or a terrific speaker.

The Club also plans several social activities throughout the year such as attending local shows followed by lunch or dinner, day tours, casino trips and other fun adventures. The Club is always open to new ideas or suggestions.

The Club begins 2015 with new and eager officers: President, Patsi Walton; Vice President/Publicity, Berniece Greenberg; Treasurer, Hank Redman; Financial Secretary/Membership, Chester Witham; Recording Secretary, Ann Kolantis; Corresponding Secretary, Pat Sheets.

The next meeting is Wednesday, Feb. 18 at 12 pm at the JCC.

If interested in joining The JCC Seniors Club, or for additional information, call Chester Witham, 965-4450.

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**JCC Book Club**

On the third Monday of each month at 1:30 pm, the JCC Book Club meets in the Klezmer Room at the Simon Family JCC.

Now in its eighth year, the Book Club has read and discussed 82 books and three short stories. The discussions are lively, informative and thought-provoking. Anyone interested in reading and discussing the group’s chosen books, is welcome to join.

The books for February through July, are:

- **February,** *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr
- **March,** *Peony: A Novel of China* by Pearl Buck
- **April,** *The Boston Girl* by Anita Diamant
- **May,** *Henna House: A Novel* by Nomi Eve
- **June,** *Pictures of the Past* by Deby Eisenberg
- **July,** *Big Little Lies* by Liane Moriarty

Books for August through December will be chosen in March. The next Book Club meeting is Monday, Feb. 16.

The club continues to facilitate a satellite Book Club at Beth Sholom Terrace. The book discussions follow the list from JCC Book Club. Harriett Eluto has lead many of these discussions.

For more information, contact Sherry Lieberman, 321-2309 or slieberman@simonfamilyjcc.org.
First Person

One more year (a.k.a. Our Hebrew Academy story)
by Bernita Watts

Having grown up in North London, I was not a great supporter of non-secular schools. I believed that in order to fit in and succeed in the “real world” you should be exposed to a diverse environment like the one in which I was educated—one where I grew up (quietly) as one in the minority. Oh, how wrong I was! I didn’t realize until I had my son, that the foundations that are laid in the early years are what give you the confidence and identity to succeed wherever life takes you.

Enter marriage and parenthood.

Once my son, Danial, was ready to start preschool, my neighbor suggested we consider the Streitzz Early Childhood Center. Little did I know how that conversation would completely change my life. A few weeks later, we toured the preschool. As we drove away, totally in awe of the wonderful facility, my husband said to me, “You know, we won’t ever want to take him away from here.” Never a truer word spoken!

We blinked and Danial’s preschool years flew by. It came time to think about kindergarten and the same friend asked me whether we were going to keep Danial at Hebrew Academy of Tidewater. I told her we decided to stay for kindergarten, but that would be it for us.

“Think about staying for first grade, too,” she encouraged, sharing with me her own daughters’ experiences there. Honestly, I didn’t think this was for us, but I didn’t dismiss the idea completely.

One more year.

Kindergarten flew by and re-enrollment time arrived. Decision time. Moment of truth. How could I deny my son the time arrived. Decision time. Moment of Kindergarten flew by and re-enrollment I didn’t think this was for us, but I didn’t own daughters’ experiences there. Honestly, “you know my feelings,” he told me. “I don’t want to take him out.” He was brought up Catholic and attended Catholic schools until he was 14, so he understood the importance and true benefits of a religious education. Nonetheless, I was still amazed at this support, and that was enough for me to realize that we needed to allow our son to experience more of what HAT could offer.

One more year.

Words do not adequately express what young students get out of their HAT education, even at first grade. You have to experience it for yourself to understand. At six years old, Danial was learning basic Hebrew vocabulary, speaking fluent Hebrew and, at the same time, getting the best education and excelling in all the core subjects. Meanwhile, the foundation our son was receiving at HAT extended to our entire family, bringing us even closer, as we celebrated all the holidays together.

Last year our son graduated from Hebrew Academy. Yes, we stayed until the end! Truth be told, a few months into first grade, we knew we were there to stay.

So, was our son prepared for the “real world?” Well, he was offered places at more than one private school and also a place in the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program at Plaza Middle School, which is the one he accepted. Does he fit in? Absolutely! In fact, he thrives with so much more confidence that I ever did because we gave him the opportunity to discover where he came from, who he is and where he is going. In an environment where he is even more of a minority than I was, he is so proud and sure of himself… that is because we followed our hearts and stayed for “one more year.”

Local JNF Fellow preparing for Spring Break in Israel
by Julia Laibstain

Jewish National Fund’s mission statement declares that JNF is the caretaker of the land of Israel, on behalf of its owners—Jewish people everywhere. Well known for its blue tzedakah boxes, more than a century ago, JNF began fundraising for the development and creation of the Jewish land. It has planted more than 250 million trees in Israel, in addition to many other contributions.

I serve as the Indiana University Bloomington JNF Campus Fellow. JNF designed the fellow program to bring JNF initiatives to college campuses. Currently, 18 universities have JNF Campus Fellows.

The three concrete requirements that each Campus Fellow must complete are:

- Plan an Israel positivity program that sheds a positive light on the incredible innovations Israel contributes to the world,
- Plan a Tu B’Shevat program—the holiday which celebrates trees, and
- Recruit and fundraise for JNF’s 2015 Alternative Spring Break Trip to Israel.

Jewish National Fund’s Alternative Spring Break Trip to Israel is unique. A completely free trip for college students—there is even a trip for young professionals—all that is required is to meet a fundraising goal for JNF. The money goes directly to the students’ chosen projects.

Many people donate to JNF each year. As a participant of JNF’s Spring Break Trip, it will be my honor and privilege, along with many other college students, to be two of the hands that put that money into action. JNF has many incredible organizations that they work with in different regions of Israel to keep the land thriving and growing. I will be working in southern Israel with all of my raised funds going to Blueprint Negev, JNF’s major initiative to revitalize Israel’s southern region through environmental sustainability, agricultural development, education and so much more. Blueprint Negev’s most up and coming project is the Be’er Sheva River Park, where JNF is putting efforts toward creating a city center for Be’er Sheva, “Capital of the Negev,” to attract more residents and rebirth the city as a desirable place to live.

I am overwhelmed with excitement about experiencing Israel in a new light and to have this opportunity to make a difference, thanks to JNF. If interested, use the link below to donate to Blueprint Negev.

I look forward to keeping the community updated about the exciting work I will undertake in March.

To learn more, go to http://support.jnf.org/site/TR/Events/securePages?px=4414508&pg=personal&fr_id=1920.

Let’s Try Again

What a great response to our Monday, Jan. 19 film, An American Tail. However, the Simon Family JCC apologizes for the poor accommodations and technical issues that took place that morning.

As our way of saying “We Are Sorry,” we have created a make-up day free to the community:

Monday, February 16
President’s Day Family Fun Day
9–10 am—Family Swim and Pool Games
9 am–10 am—PJ Library Activity
10:30 am—Family Movie: The Prince of Egypt with snacks in the Fleder Multipurpose Room at the Simon Family JCC
12:15–2 pm—Jump Castle in the Gym
Family Friendly Lunch Specials at the Cardo Café.
Two area dance companies to perform at JCC

*Sunday, Feb. 22, 2:30 pm*

“We are very excited about performing for children at the Simon Family JCC,” says Erin Geary of Todd Rosenlieb Dance.

Several dancers from the Virginia Ballet Theatre and Todd Rosenlieb Dance will perform at the JCC as part of the JCC’s Children’s Cultural Arts series.

The performance will begin with a classical ballet demonstration explaining the history of ballet technique and how ballet is used to tell a story with movement and music. Children and their families will understand the story being told by expression, movement, body language and musical phrasing. Modern dance will also be highlighted. After the performance, the children will have an opportunity to get up and move with the dancers.

Tickets cost: Children (ages 10 and under) $6 or $4 for JCC members; Adults $8 or $6 for JCC members; Family (2 adults, plus children) $27 or $22 for JCC members.

Call 321-2338 to purchase tickets and for more information.

Date With the State—Virginia Jewish Advocacy Day

*Wednesday, Jan. 28, 6:30 pm—Briefing session
   Wednesday, Feb. 4, 8:45 am–6 pm—trip to Richmond*

Join UJFT’s Community Relations Council for their annual Date with the State.

The Tidewater delegation will travel together via bus to and from Richmond, leaving from the Simon Family JCC.

At the State Capitol, lunch will take place with other Virginia Jewish communal lobbyists. The Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Attorney General have been invited, and they usually attend and address the issues important to this community. Following lunch, the delegation will divide up to visit Tidewaters’ State Senators and Delegates.

The cost is $36, which includes a kosher lunch and helps defray the cost of transportation. Checks made out to the United Jewish Federation of Tidewater will reserve a space (mail to UJFT 5000 Corporate Woods Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23462, ATT: CRC DWTS).

For more information, e-mail Robin Mancoll, CRC director, at rmancoll@ujft.org or call 965-6120. To RSVP (required) by Jan. 28, visit www.jewishva.org/CRCDateWithTheState.

B’nai Israel’s Scholar-in-Residence: Rabbi Hanoch Teller

*Friday, Feb. 13–Saturday, Feb. 14*

Internationally-acclaimed as one of today’s most original and inspiring motivational speakers, Rabbi Hanoch Teller will be B’nai Israel Congregation’s Scholar-in-Residence next month.

A storyteller-extraordinaire, Rabbi Teller has been dubbed “a globe-trotting modern-day maggid.” He has enthralled audiences on five continents, in more than 40 U.S. states and 24 countries, delivering messages imbued with joy and drama, laughter and pathos.

His electrifying presentations on a vast range of topics—sometimes hilarious, always stirring, meaningful and pragmatic—are underwritten by scholarship and more than three decades as a hands-on educator. U.S. Senator Arlen Spector, proclaimed him “probably the most sophisticated storyteller of our time.”

Alternately referred to as “Shakespeare of the Yeshiva world” and “King of the Storytellers,” Teller has fostered the emergence of inspirational short story as a genre for the Jewish-religious audience.

The critically acclaimed, prize-winning author of 28 titles, several of which are ongoing best sellers published in multiple languages, including *Courtrooms of the Mind, Hey, Taxi, A Midrash and a Maaseh, Too Beautiful, etc.*, Teller has had a major influence on the contemporary-Jewish world. Because of the enduring and universal appeal of his heartwarming stories, historical narratives and absorbing biographies, none of Teller’s books have gone out of print.

Rabbi Joseph Telushkin says, “Rabbi Hanoch Teller has an extraordinary ability to both teach and touch, to convey in an accessible manner deep teachings of the Torah and Talmud, and to open up hearts and listeners to bringing these teachings into their lives. Teller’s remarkable writing can bring a person to tears and, more importantly, to action.”

B’nai Israel invites the community to hear Rabbi Teller on Friday night at the Oneg Shabbos, Saturday morning during morning services, and Saturday night at a gala reception. Call B’nai Israel at 627-7358 for reservations or more information.

Bakers and Crafters Needed for Community Operation

Operation Hamantaschen

*Sunday, Feb. 15
   Two free-flowing shifts: 9 am–Noon or Noon–3 pm*

Medical degrees and uniforms aren’t required to perform this operation – just a willingness to help bake and pack holiday cookies for Jewish U.S. troops and members of the Tidewater community.

Hamantaschen—the traditional triangular-shaped sweets eaten during the holiday of Purim—will be sent to troops identified by families, friends and military staff, and will also be shared with Jewish Family Service of Tidewater for the JFS kosher food pantry, Meals on Wheels recipients and clients.

In addition to the cookies, Operation Hamantaschen participants can create thank you cards to send to U.S. military and Israeli troops. The troops say these cards cheer and encourage them and are greatly appreciated.

All materials will be provided and quality control assistants (tasters) are welcome!

*Operation Hamantaschen is presented by the Young Adult Division of the United Jewish Federation of Tidewater and the Simon Family JCC Department of Children and Families.*

Free and open to the community, Operation Hamantaschen takes place at the Simon Family JCC. All ages are welcome to participate and babysitting will be available.

To sign up for a shift, or for more information, visit JewishVA.org/operation, email byaffe@ujft.org, or call 757-965-6138.

WHAT’S HAPPENING
The JCC Yiddish Club
Thursday, Jan. 29, 12:30 pm, Simon Family JCC

The JCC Yiddish Club’s next program will be discussions on The Jewish Daily Forward, as well as on Yiddish literature.

Future meetings will consist of speakers, learning and remembering. It is not necessary to speak or understand Yiddish to attend. Almost everyone will discover that they know more than they think and will leave knowing even more. This is a fun, fun group and everyone is welcome to attend. “Kvetch”—complain, “Nosh”—eat a bit, “oy veh”—oh my gosh.

For more information, contact Sherry Lieberman, 321-2309 or slieberman@simonfamilyjcc.org.

The Passion in a Jewish Key?
The ethics of care from Bach to David Lang concert and discussion

Sunday, Feb. 8, 2:30
3:30 pm—discussion at Ohef Sholom Temple
4 pm—Virginia Chorale concert at Sacred Heart Catholic Church

Prior to the Virginia Chorale’s performance of David Lang’s Pulitzer Prize winning composition, The Little Match Girl Passion, Jim Weaver, early music specialist, will discuss the musical journey from J.S. Bach’s masterwork The St. Matthew Passion to Lang’s The Little Match Girl Passion. The discussion will take place at Ohef Sholom Temple and is presented by the temple’s Adult Education committee and Mavens & Mensches.

A Los Angeles native, Lang, 58, has lived in New York for more than 30 years.

Lang’s mother, who is from Germany, lost everything in the Holocaust, including many relatives. His father was a Lithuanian immigrant who grew up in poverty. In an interview for the Jewish Journal in 2011, Lang said, “I wouldn’t go so far as to say these are Jewish values that I’m espousing, but because I am Jewish and because of the experience of Jews in the 20th century, the peculiar history that brought my parents together had a huge effect on how I view the world and what I want my music to accomplish.”

A co-founder and former director of the College of William & Mary’s Early Music Ensemble, Weaver has conducted vocal and instrumental ensemble performances featured at the Longy International Baroque Institute, the Early Music Athenaeum at Rutgers University, the San Francisco Early Music Society Summer Workshops, as well as at numerous choral workshops and master classes around the country. He is currently on the faculty of the University of Richmond and Christopher Newport University, and music director of Williamsburg Presbyterian Church, where he has served for 26 years.

A group ticket price for the concert is $10 for discussion participants through Sunday, Feb. 1. After Feb. 1, the cost is $25.

RSVP by Sunday, Feb. 1, to Linda Peck, linda@ohefsholom.org or 757-625-4295. For more information on the concert, go to www.vachorale.org/the-little-match-girl-passion.html.

RENÉE FLEMING, soprano
OLGA KERN, piano

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For more information, contact:  
Erika Eskenazi, Children, Family and Camp Assistant Director (757) 321-2342  
Taffy Hunter, Human Resource Director (757) 965-6117

Submit completed application to:  
Simon Family JCC  
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**Campus Calendar**

**FEBRUARY 1, SUNDAY**

Brith Sholom’s Annual Super Bowl Party at Beth Sholom Village. The menu includes beef barbecue and buns, chicken wings, coleslaw, chips, chocolate chip cookies, sugar free brownies and drinks. 5:30 pm. The cost is $7.50 for members and $15 for guests. Call Gall for reservations at 461-1150. Must be received by Jan. 27.

**FEBRUARY 4, WEDNESDAY**

Community Relations Council of the United Jewish Federation of Tidewater travels to Richmond for the annual Jewish Advocacy Day. 8:45 am–6 pm; leaving from the Sandler Family Campus. $36 includes kosher lunch and helps defray transportation. For more information about how to join this year’s Date with the State delegation, or to RSVP (required) by Wednesday, Jan. 28 visit www.JewishVa.org/CRCDateWithTheState. An Insiders’ Briefing, providing all attendees with detailed talking points on the issues and lobbying tips, takes place on Wednesday, Jan. 28 at 6:30 pm at the Sandler Family Campus. See page 32.

**FEBRUARY 13, FRIDAY—FEBRUARY 14 SATURDAY**

B’nai Israel Congregation’s Scholar-in-Residence and HaKaras HaTov weekend with Rabbi Hanoch Teller. The Saturday evening Malava Malka Gala Reception will honor members that have serviced the shul for over 25 years. Contact B’nai Israel at 627-7358. See page 32.

**FEBRUARY 15, SUNDAY**

Operation Hamantashen. Two shifts: 9 am–noon or noon–3 pm. Free and open to the community. At the Simon Family JCC. Do a mitzvah—or a baker’s dozen! Bakers of all ages are needed to help make cookies to send to Jewish U.S. troops for Purim, and to donate to Jewish Family Service of Tidewater. Volunteers are also needed to decorate and pack boxes. More of an artist than a baker? Create handmade notes of thanks that will be sent to support U.S. and IDF troops. All materials provided. Babysitting available. Sign up: www.JewishVA.org/OperationH or call 757-965-6138.

**FEBRUARY 21, SATURDAY**

Hoedown Havdallah at the Simon Family JCC. Celebrate the end of Shabbat with friends and family. Visit with animals, pet and play with creatures great and small, learn some square dancing moves and have dinner and Havdallah. 6-7:30 pm $10 adults; $6 children. Call 321-2338.

**FEBRUARY 22, SUNDAY**

The Jewish Museum and Cultural Center will present the film, *Me and the Colonel*, starring Danny Kaye. The movie is a departure from Kaye’s usual comedic slapstick. His skill, however, gives it gentle humor and moving sympathy. A discussion will follow the movie with Rabbi Arthur Steinberg and Prof. Andrew Quicke. Popcorn and water will be served. 2 pm. A $5 donation is recommended. 607 Effingham St. in Portsmouth. 391-9266 or www.jewishmuseumportsmouth.org.

**FEBRUARY 26, THURSDAY**

Celebrate Israel series. Simon Family JCC welcomes Gidi Grinstein, president and founder of Israel’s Reut Institute. Grinstein will discuss his groundbreaking book, *Flexigidity*. In his talk, he will explore how the Jews have utilized Flexigidity to adapt and stay relevant. He will also assess the future in light of trends that are pulling Jewish communities apart. Free and open to the community. 7 pm. Simon Family JCC. 757-321-2338.

**MARCH 7, SATURDAY**

Purimpalooza. 8 pm, ages 21 and up. $20 early bird tickets; $25 at the door, at the Sandler Family Campus. Join hundreds of young Jewish adults and friends for the Young Adult Division of the UJFT’s 2015 Purim costume carnival—a party like no other. Live music, costume contest, open bar, desserts and many, many photo ops. Get tickets at visit www.JewishVA.org/Purimpalooza or call 757-965-6138. More information at www.fb.com/YAD.UJFT.

**MARCH 13, SUNDAY**

The Community Relations Council and area synagogues, Jewish agencies, organizations and partners conclude the 4th annual Israel Today forum with Lt. Col. Dr. Ofir Merin, Chief, IDF Field Hospitals, in charge of setting up the hospitals in instances of natural disaster. His reserve force unit was part of the Israeli delegation that gave aid to the victims of the earthquake in Haiti, arriving first on the scene. Merin was also first on the scene in Japan after the tsunami that followed the massive earthquake on March 11, 2011, and in the Philippines after the Typhoon in 2013. 7:30pm at the Sandler Family Campus. RSVP by March 12 to jewisha. org/CRCIsraelToday#Merin, CRC@ujft.org, or 965-6107.

Send submissions for calendar to news@ujft.org. Be sure to note “calendar” in the subject. Include date, event name, sponsor, address, time, cost and phone.
Sundance’s Jewish fare: a preview

by Anthony Weiss

LOS ANGELES (JTA)—Although it’s now well entrenched in the Hollywood ecosystem, the Sundance Film Festival remains a venue for some of the film industry’s more offbeat voices and still largely unknown talent—and a place for boldfaced names to redefine themselves.

Jewish subjects and artists again will figure prominently in this year’s festival, which runs through Feb. 1 in Park City, Utah. Here are the films to look for:

Censored Voices

Just after the Six-Day War in 1967, Amos Oz and fellow kibbutzniks recorded interviews with returning soldiers about their experiences during the fighting. The interviews were largely censored by the Israeli military. In the nearly half-century since, Oz became one of the Jewish state’s most renowned authors of fiction and nonfiction, as well as a prominent opponent of Israel’s presence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In Censored Voices, Israeli director Mor Loushy revisits the now declassified recordings and the lingering after effects of war.

City of Gold

Pulitzer Prize-winning food critic Jonathan Gold is an icon in Los Angeles: His recommendations are treated with reverence by foodies, and his reviews can change an obscure noodle shop or greasy spoon into a culinary hotspot. City of Gold, directed by Laura Gabbert, follows Gold’s perambulations through the city’s large and diverse food scene, devoting equal care to rickety food trucks and pricey haute cuisine. As befits a man who by his own account received much of his Jewish and culinary training at the city’s delis, Gold is asheimische as his palate is ruthlessly discerning.

Partisan

Australian Jewish filmmaker Ariel Kleiman, 29, presents his debut feature in his return to Sundance, where his 2011 short Deeper Than Yesterday won a Jury Prize and his script for “Partisan” won the festival’s Mahindra Global Filmmaking Award in 2012. Partisan stars Vincent Cassel as the leader of a cultish commune who is seeking to protect and isolate his charges from a hostile world. Kleiman co-wrote the movie with Sarah Cyngler, the costume and production designer from Deeper Than Yesterday.

I Smile Back

Sarah Silverman is a goddess in the world of standup comedy, but she’s never really found her footing in the movies. That may change with her lead role in I Smile Back, a domestic drama about a self-destructive suburban housewife who goes off her meds and is sucked into a destructive downward spiral of drinking and drugs. Silverman has publicly spoken about her own struggles with depression, and it will be interesting to see if she can channel her personal history into a potentially career-changing performance. The movie is adapted from the novel by Amy Koppelman, who co-wrote the screenplay, and is directed by Adam Salky.

Princess

The first full-length feature by Israeli filmmaker Tali Shalom Ezer, Princess presents its own vision of domestic strife. The drama delves into a dark subject matter: the abusive relationship between a 12-year-old girl and her stepfather. Shalom Ezer, 36, previously ventured into unsetting territory with the short film Surrogate, about a survivor of child abuse who sought sex therapy with a professional sex partner, and the 2005 documentary Life at Abarbanel, about life in a mental hospital.

Larry Kramer In Love and Anger

Less than a year after the Emmy Award-winning HBO movie adaptation of Larry Kramer’s The Normal Heart thrust the 79-year-old playwright and activist back into the spotlight, the new documentary Larry Kramer In Love and Anger chronicles the life and career of this controversial and unbending figure. Kramer was one of the loudest and most uncompromising of the gay activists to emerge in the 1980s to publicize and combat the AIDS crisis, which he has often referred to as “a holocaust.” His dogged advocacy helped force the issue onto the national agenda and keep it there.

How To Dance in Ohio

Alexandra Shiva examines a standard American coming-of-age ritual, the junior prom, through the unexpected lens of autism in How To Dance in Ohio. Shiva’s documentary follows a psychologist and a group of autistic teens as they discuss and learn the basics of social interaction in preparation for the social gauntlet that is a high school dance. Shiva previously directed the documentaries Bombay Eunuch (2001) and Stagedoor (2006). Her maternal grandfather, Jules Stein, founded the entertainment behemoth MCA.

Me and Earl and the Dying Girl

Written by Jesse Andrews, based on his 2013 novel of the same title, the film’s storyline is about a teenage filmmaker who befriends a classmate with cancer. Andrews is the nephew of Tidewater’s Drs. Alice and Eric Werner.

Achievement

Norman David Soroko, who was honored by the American Cancer Society for being listed in the top five Individual Fund Raisers for the State of Virginia for raising money for the cure.

Norman has raised a total of $165,000 towards research for the cure for cancer in the past nine years. He has participated in Relay for Life for 17 years. This month, he will begin his 18th year walking for the cure.

Norman is the son of Hymie and Freda Soroko, of blessed memory.

Mazel tov submissions should be emailed to news@ujft.org with Mazel Tov in the subject line. Achievements, Bar and Bat Mitzvot, births, engagements and weddings are appropriate simchas to announce. Photos must be at least 300k. Include a daytime phone for questions. There is no fee.

ROSE MARY FROST BROWN

VIRGINIA BEACH—Rose Mary Frost Brown, 81, a native of Charleston, S.C., passed away on Sunday, Jan. 4, 2015.

She was born Sunday, May 14, 1933, in Norfolk, Va., the seventh and youngest child of Mary Becker Frost and Isadore Frost.

Rose was a lifelong volunteer, with innovative, creative and entertaining fundraising ideas. While she had a strong belief in personal and political responsibility, she had a gracious spirit in bringing help to those in need. She was very active in the Republican Women’s Club, the National Council of Jewish Women, the King’s Daughters Children’s Hospital Charity, the Amity Club and in numerous political campaigns. Rose had a passion for decorating and a strong love of art.

Her family remembers her as a loving wife, mother, grandma and a special friend to many. Along with her parents, Rose was preceded in death by her four brothers and two sisters.

She is survived by her loving husband of 61 years, Sam C. Brown, Jr. of Charleston; son, Samuel C. (Shelly) Brown III, of Cordova, Tenn.; daughter, Lisa (Vernon) Whitaker, of Charlotte, N.C.; and five grandchildren.

A graveside service was held at Huguenin Ave. Cemetery, Charleston, S.C. with Rabbi Terkel officiating.

LENA FROST

VIRGINIA BEACH—Lena Frost passed away peacefully on Sunday, Jan. 18, 2015.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Robert Frost, and her parents, Sarah and Abraham Prude, her stepfather, Lewis Frank, and her sister, Jeanette Marlis.

She is survived by two sons, Allan Frost and his wife Helene of Virginia Beach, Va., and Stephen Frost of Petersburg, Va.

Lena was beloved by her two grandchildren, Lee Belote and her husband Jimmy, and Scott Frost and his wife Nadine. Her pride and joy were her four great grandchildren, Justin, Garrett, and Ally Belote, and Ruby Luna Date.

Lena, a strong and independent woman, worked until she was 80 years old as a bookkeeper for Jacobson and Sons. She enjoyed hot coffee, playing Majong and Penny Ante poker, and was the designated driver for friends who could no longer drive. Lena was a generous and loving woman who will be missed by all, especially those who know her by that famous “paisley” smile.

Graveside services were held at Woodlawn Memorial Garden with Rabbi Rosalyn Mandelberg officiating. Memorial donations may be made to the Rose and Irwin Berger Fund for Cancer Research through the Tidewater Jewish Foundation.

H. D. Oliver Funeral Appts.

LESLIE GREEN LEGUM

NORFOLK—Leslie Green Legum, 70, passed away in Norfolk on Sunday, Jan. 18, 2015 after a brief illness.

Leslie was a native of New York City and a graduate of Boston University. She made her home in Norfolk for 43 years, where she enjoyed a long career in broadcast production and then in community relations for Beth Sholom Village while raising her family. She was an active member of Ohef Sholom Temple, serving the community as a board member and co-president of the Temple Sisterhood, among other activities.

Leslie was a warm-hearted soul, beloved by all who knew her. She will be remembered for her strength, her kindness, her generosity of spirit, her inability to work any technology more complicated than winding a watch, and her peerless and legendary desserts.

Leslie is survived by her husband, Jay W. Legum of Norfolk; her son Gary Legum of Los Angeles; her son and daughter-in-law Kenneth Legum and Laura Kabel of Bridgeport, Conn.; her brother and sister-in-law, James S. and Susan Green of Rockville, Md.; her sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Sally and Chuck Essreg of Shaker Heights, Ohio; several nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews; and her grandsons Benjamin, Jacob and Noah, whom she doted on and loved more than life itself.

A graveside service was held in Forest Lawn Cemetery, followed by a memorial service at Ohef Sholom Temple. Rabbi Rosalin Mandelberg and Cantor Wally Schachet-Briskin officiated.

Donations to Ohef Sholom Temple, the American Cancer Society, or the charity of the donor’s choice.

H. D. Oliver Funeral Appts., Norfolk Chapel. Online condolences may be sent to the family at hdloliver.com.

BETTE LOMBART

NORFOLK—Bette Lombart passed away peacefully Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015 surrounded by her beloved family.

Bette was born in New York on Jan. 25, 1923 to Nat and Cis Newman.

Raised in Brooklyn and then in New York City, Bette and her brother Jerry were very close. Jerry was a pioneer of bebop and jazz music and the two of them went to Harlem where Jerry recorded many famous jazz musicians and big bands such as Benny Goodman.

Music and dancing were two of Bette’s favorite things throughout her lifetime. However, family became her most treasured possession. She met her late husband Adolph on a blind date and after six dates they kissed and got engaged. They were married for 67 years and had three wonderful children and many close friends.

Bette and Adolph loved to fish, travel, and have lavish parties with their friends and family. Even after living in Norfolk for 68 years, she still considered New York her home and was a diehard Mets fan. One of her best memories was being at Shea Stadium with Adolph when the Amazing Mets won the World Series in 1969.

Bette was very generous. She always fought for the underdog and was active and supportive in many causes. She was a talented knitter, needlepointer, beader, and did the NY Times crossword puzzle in ink under an hour.

Her most prized accomplishments were her children, Kenneth, Kathy and Rick, who were her life. She was an exceptional mother, wife, grandmother and great grandmother. She was able to live almost 92 good years in large part due to her respect for her. She was a wonderful teacher and storyteller and loved a good joke. Whether she was playing games with her grandchildren and great grandchildren, watching classic movies with them, or teaching them to appreciate Ella Fitzgerald and her all-time favorite, Frank Sinatra, she was always positive, upbeat and fun to be around.

Bette recently moved to The Terrace at Beth Sholom, where the staff is beyond compare. She was treated like a queen and her family is grateful to her friends Lolita Felton, Jessie Gouch, Valerie Franks and Jimmy Rockett, as well as her Bingo crew.

Bette is survived by her children, Kenneth and Barbara, Kathy and Jerry Kantor and Rick and Karen. She is especially proud of her grandchildren, Jill and Brian Wainger, Ross and Robin Kantor, Eric, Scott and Lauren Lombart and her great grandchildren, Julia, Erin and Caroline Wainger and Joey Kantor. She will be missed by many, but remembered by all.

Her funeral took place at the Norfolk Chapel of H.D. Oliver Funeral Apartments, with burial at Forest Lawn.

Kerry lays wreath at Paris kosher market

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry laid a wreath at a kosher supermarket near Paris where four people were killed on Jan. 9.

Kerry, in France to express solidarity with the republic following the murder of 17 people in terrorist attacks in the Paris area, also reportedly “apologized” to his French counterpart, Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, for not attending a march protesting the attacks.

In addition to meetings with French leaders, Kerry laid a wreath of red roses, carnations and white lilies at the Hyper Cacher Jewish supermarket. He also shared a brief word with Joel Mergui, the head of France’s Rabbinical Council.

Kerry’s visit followed intense criticism of the United States for failing to send a high-level representative to the Jan. 11 march, which drew more than 1 million people and dozens of world leaders into the streets, including Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

The following day, the White House acknowledged that it had erred in sending

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“We know you know that we share the pain and the horror of everything that you went through,” Kerry said in a meeting with French President Francois Hollande. “Our hearts are with you.”

In an unusual move, Hollande trotted down the steps of the Elysee Palace to greet Kerry, who hugged the French president in front of photographers.

Kerry told Fabius that he was unable to come earlier because he was traveling in India and Bulgaria.

Hollande said the French people “were victims of an exceptional terrorist attack,” likening the events to the 9/11 attacks on the United States that resulted in the deaths of nearly 3,000 people.

“We must therefore together find the necessary response. And that is the [reason] for [our] meeting today, beyond friendship,” Hollande said. (JTA)

Jack Polak, survivor who founded Anne Frank Center USA
NEW YORK (JTA)—Jack Polak, a Holocaust survivor who helped found the Anne Frank Center USA in New York, has died at 102.

Polak, who toured the country to talk about his experiences in the Holocaust, died Jan. 9.

The Anne Frank Center USA, which formed as a consolidation of the Anne Frank Foundation, was founded in 1977. Polak served as the center’s president and chairman for many years. In 1992 he was knighted by Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands for his work.

Polak was born in Amsterdam to an Orthodox Jewish family. In 1943, in his early 30s, he was deported to the Westerbork concentration camp before being sent to the Bergen-Belsen camp in northern Germany. He was freed after 14 months by the Russian army and returned to Amsterdam.

Polak and the woman who would become his second wife, Ina, released a book based on their correspondence while in Westerbork and Bergen-Belsen. Steal a Pencil for Me was later the subject of a documentary film and an opera.

In 1951, he and Ina moved to the United States, settling in the New York suburb of Eastchester. Polak worked as a tax consultant in addition to speaking on his Holocaust experiences.

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Jewish Family Service’s Chanukah Gift Program 2014

by Debbie Mayer, LCSW, JFS

Jewish Family Service’s 22nd Annual Chanukah Gift and Financial Assistance Program was very successful this year.

JFS reaches out each year to local Jewish families in financial need with gifts and gift cards for their children and teens and money for those without children. JFS received many donations from individuals, families, groups, companies, organizations, congregations and schools. Boxes overflowing with new clothing, winter coats, sleeping bags, books, games, toys, bicycles, school supplies and Judaic items filled many of the JFS offices.

This annual JFS program provides direct help to local Jewish families who are struggling financially. Many who seek help are active members of the local community who attend schools and temple with everyone else.

Although collected during the Chanukah season, many gifts are put to use all year by these families. Maryann Kettle, JFS special needs case manager, says, “We ask for clothes because children and teens need pants, shirts, dresses, coats, boots, shoes and socks all year long. We ask for toys and books because they use these items every day, as well. We are very grateful to have the support of so many wonderful and generous donors for this program.”

One of the largest annual donor groups is the students, parents and teachers from Strelitz Early Childhood Center and Hebrew Academy of Tidewater. This year, they donated several hundred gifts of toys and clothing. In fact, the third grade class took the tzedakah money they collected weekly since September 2014 and went to Target on a field trip with their teachers and parents to select the gift items for two small children from a young family.

JFS also received gifts and/or cash donations from many of the area religious schools, temples and congregations.

This year, a total of 121 different families, consisting of 280 people, benefited at Chanukah due to the kindness of local community donors. Specific “wish list” gifts and gift cards were provided to 41 local Jewish families with children/teens, consisting of 77 different children and teens. Throughout 2015, these same families will continue to benefit from the donations given at Chanukah time as JFS provides gift cards towards medication, food, gas, clothing and school supplies.

There are some of the thank-you notes that JFS received:

“Thank you for giving my children a wonderful Chanukah holiday. They loved everything they received. Thank you to the generous donors. This would not be possible without all of you.”

“Thank you to Jewish Family Service and their donors for making this year’s Chanukah another wonderful celebration of wonder and excitement for my boys… Thanks to everyone’s generosity and hard work in providing gifts…this has been a much needed source of support for myself and my family for the past several years… we celebrated this year with latkes, candles, jelly donuts, dreidel—and gifts of course! Thanks again for your generosity.”

“I just wanted to personally thank you for the time and effort you spent in assuring me a wonderful Hanukkah! I was so touched and surprised by your generosity and how much consideration you had by personally shopping from my two favorite stores. Everything fit and I loved it! It was such a thrill to see so many gifts when I thought there’d be so few this year… Sincerely, a grateful teen.”

For those who missed helping families in need at Chanukah time and would like to assist JFS help local Jewish families in need year-round, consider:

• Donating food, gas and grocery store gift cards, or cash
• Supporting the JFS Special Needs Group activities
• Donating items needed by JFS to help struggling Jewish families: grocery bags; toiletries, cosmetics, bath and body products; Judaic/Jewish items; school supplies; baby supplies; paper goods, and cleaning/household supplies
• Purchasing Baskets of Hope centerpieces
• Volunteering

All donations to JFS are tax deductible. For more information about any of these programs, contact Maryann Kettle, special needs case manager, Jewish Family Service of Tidewater at 757-459-4640 or MKettle@jfshamptonroads.org.

The following made donations of clothing, toys, games, gift certificates, food and/or funds during the Chanukah 2014 holiday

Individual and Family Donors


Organization Donors

Beth El Religious School (Mrs. Groves’ 1st Grade Class), Beth El Religious School (Mrs. Leiderman’s 7th Grade Class), Beth Emet Synagogue, Congregation Emet V’or, Hebrew Academy (K-5th Grade Classes), Hebrew Ladies Charity Society, JCC Seniors Club, JFS Knitting for Others Group, Kempsville Conservative Synagogue (KBS), Pincus Paul Charitable Trust, Strelitz Early Childhood Center (2 year old, 3 year old, & 4 year old Classes), Temple Beth El (Williamsburg Religious School), Temple Emanuel Congregation & Religious School, Temple Israel Religious School, and United Hebrew School.

If we inadvertently left anyone off this list, Jewish Family Service thanks you and apologize in advance. Donations noted as of December 31, 2014.
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757.422.LUXE

Mizuno Japanese Restaurant
Sushi And More
757.422.1200

Ocean Palm
Lilly Pulitzer
757.437.7256

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