When my oldest daughter was about 1½, she was toddling around our home and found a coin on the floor. Noticing this, we were a little alarmed - coins, of course, are choking hazards, and toddlers should stay far away from them. We ran over to take it away from her, but we quickly realized we didn’t have to - because she was carrying the coin over to the tzedakah box - the charity coin box into which we drop coins.

Then we realized: weeks and weeks of giving her coins to put in the tzedakah box as we start shabbat each week, were now paying dividends. Now, when she found some money, her first instinct was to donate it, rather than to spend it.

(Truly, I have no illusions that this act was an act of real insight and generosity. But my wife and I were happy that our first introduction to our child to the world of currency and commerce was in the context of using money to help people.)

Tzedakah boxes are on my mind because of the story we read in the synagogue on Shabbat Shekalim (this year, on Saturday, March 2, 2019). This special shabbat takes place every year about 6 weeks before Passover. The Haftarah, the reading from the Prophets, for this day talks about the creation of the very first tzedakah box.

We might not normally think of a tzedakah box as an object that had a particular history and was invented at a particular moment in time. What is a tzedakah box, after all? It’s a box that makes it easy to put money in, but hard to take money out. Usually it’s a locked box with a slot at the top.

This is the story we read each year on Shabbat Shekalim. The haftarah passage, from the Book of Kings, begins by mentioning that King Jehoash was seven years old when he began to be king of the kingdom of Judah. You can probably guess that when someone becomes a king at age seven, there’s probably a tragic element to the story, and there is in this case: King Jehoash’s father, King Ahaziah, was assassinated, together with his entire family, except that the young boy Yehoash was hidden away, which is how he survived to become king. You can also probably guess that he didn’t fulfill all the affairs of state immediately at age seven. Rather, he had a regent - an adult who supervised him, the High Priest Yehoyada, who was essentially fulfilling most of the functions of the king until Yehoash became old enough to take them on himself.

When Yehoash became older, he became aware of a financial scandal in ancient Israel: the priests in the Temple had been collecting a lot of donations in order to do some necessary repair work on the Temple, but the repair work never seemed to get done, and the Temple was in terrible disrepair. So Yehoash is upset - and he confronts Yehoyada, his former mentor, who is still the High Priest, and says:.GetValue of "Why are you not maintaining the proper condition of the Temple, especially considering how much money you have received in donations to do so?"

Yehoyada and the other priests sheepishly acknowledge that there has been mismanagement of funds - perhaps not intentionally, but funds that were devoted to one purpose, for building repairs, were actually used for different purposes. As a response to the King's critique, Yehoyada takes a box and cuts a small hole in the top. Donations are to be put in the box, and no one can remove anything from the box except in the presence of the High Priest and the royal scribe, so that there is an exact accounting of what donations have come in for the purpose of the repair of the temple. That's the first tzedakah box, invented by the high priest Yehoyada, in response to the critique of young King Yehoash.

Whenever I read this story, I am impressed at the self-confidence of King Yehoash, who is willing to challenge his mentor, the High Priest Yehoyada, when he feels that an ethical breach is being committed. (continued on page 2)
Today, of course, the way we give tzedakah has changed. Coins do add up - but people who are really serious about tzedakah are doing it with bills, and checks, and automatic transfers. (A few years ago, an Israeli TV program that does satire sketch comedy had a parody of the Birthright Israel programs for American Jews to visit Israel, and it included a classic Jewish National Fund “blue box” tzedakah box, but with a credit card reader attached to it.)

And our tzedakah priorities might also have changed - and broadened. Of course the most classic, paradigmatic, type of tzedakah is assistance to needy individuals. We also recognize the need to support institutions that do good work - even to create spaces like the Temple in Jerusalem, or this synagogue, as places for the community to gather to support one another.

For centuries, it was most likely that Jews would give tzedakah to other Jews. How could it be otherwise? with Jews and non-Jews living in non-stop strife in most of the world, was it conceivable that non-Jews would ever give charity to Jews? So Jews funded for themselves. Whereas today, our circumstances are different. Even though hatred of Jews remains a virulent phenomenon in our world, most Jews have a growing acknowledgment that there ought to be a balance in our tzedakah giving. Many are more aware now of the problem of dire global poverty, and dire poverty at home, and that many of us are in a position to do something about it, unlike many of our ancestors who felt that they needed to conserve all their resources for specifically Jewish needs.

But more significant than the changes in charitable giving over the centuries, are the continuities between our ancient texts and our contemporary responsibilities. More than 800 years ago, in his famous “Eight Levels of Tzedakah,” Moses Maimonides urged that as much of one’s tzedakah giving as possible be dedicated to addressing root causes of poverty, to help people to extricate themselves from poverty or not fall into poverty, rather than simply providing for their needs when they are impoverished. He also sensibly counseled that charitable funds, when they are run effectively, are usually a better way to give tzedakah than direct payments to individuals, because of the embarrassment that such direct donations can engender.

Today, we might add that many individuals in need of financial assistance today can benefit from being in the orbit of organizations that can help them to address issues of addiction, illness, and other factors that make it difficult for them to thrive.

May the tzedakah box created by the High Priest Yehoyada continue to inspire us to live according to the Jewish values of generosity and accountability that have always been the hallmarks of the authentic practice of tzedakah.

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**We’re Inviting You to Go Back to the 80s**

**Sat. April 6th**

6:30–9:30pm

Elks Lodge, Hoboken

Ticket available online at hobokenshelter.org/80sdance

($50 advance / $60 at door)

Dress and Dance like you did in the ’80s!

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**President’s Message**

David Swirnow

When we talk at board meetings about how to help strengthen our sense of community, one of the things that is often discussed are how to provide opportunities for connections that aren’t based on ritual and that don’t have to do with our children attending classes. Providing everyone with the opportunity to find people with whom they have a connection is a key goal we’ve set for ourselves. I am reminded of this, most strongly, as I think back to the Programming Committee’s inaugural speakeasy event...our Moth-style storytelling. I can say, without exaggeration, it was astounding. I think we’re all used to seeing the social hall as this brightly lit space used for the occasional movie or a kiddush or for services during the Summer. But this was an intimate, candle-lit space, packed with people, listening to an amazingly well delivered set of stories...some funny, some sad, some surprising. This was, more than any event I can think of in recent history, the model for what we’d like to be able to use our space. On behalf of everyone who attended, I have to extend my thanks to the committee for the work they put in to run the event, but also for the amazing idea. It felt like such a departure from our normal use of the space and went off just spectacularly.

I also want to recognize the events put on as part of the Meistrich Culture Series. These events often seem a crossover between the areas of social events, education and ritual programming. I was not able to attend the Simpson’s event last month, but heard that the room was packed. I remember recent presentations that were fascinating and the presenters were engaging and so well received. It feels like, recently, the level of interest in the programs that have been put on, has increased. I hope that you’ll keep a careful watch out for subjects of upcoming Culture series presentations and come out. And as always, we would love to hear from you about what sort of social events you’d like to see. We’ll keep working to come up with ideas that will interest you, but your ideas will help us out.
JOIN THE FUN AT OUR

WELCOME TO Fabulous Hoboken, New Jersey

13TH ANNUAL CASINO NIGHT & 6TH ANNUAL POKER CLASSIC

March 9th, 2019

Doors open at 7:00PM
Gaming starts at 7:30PM
at
The Elks Club
1005 Washington St, Hoboken, NJ 07030

YOUR $85 TICKET INCLUDES
DINNER, OPEN BAR, PRIZES, GREAT GAMING
& YOUR 1ST 50/50 TICKET ON US!

50/50 tickets, 1/$10 and 3/$25,
are available in the USH Office or contact CasinoNight@hobokensynagogue.org

If you are interested in joining our committee, becoming a Casino Night sponsor or making a prize donation, we would be delighted to hear from you.
Please email us ... CasinoNight@hobokensynagogue.org to learn more.
Samantha Glass is Hoboken “B and R,” short for “Born and Raised,” as the editors are often told by her proud parents, Mark and Sheera Glass. Mark and Sheera held Samantha’s baby naming at USH 24 years ago this month. Her earliest memories of USH are joining her learning center classmates in putting the Torah back in the ark during Etz Chayim Hi, and attending Marilyn Freiser’s Hebrew school class in the upstairs back area of the sanctuary, long before the Kaplan building existed.

To Samantha, USH was warm and welcoming, and despite there being few children in the learning center at the time, the adults at USH, many of whom had growing families with infants, always made Samantha feel welcome, creating a warm environment that made coming to Shabbat services and kiddush something she loved, despite a lack of a social center for kids.

Samantha vividly remembers receiving a form in the mail with information for Kadima and USY encampment, a week long retreat for Jewish preteens (Kadima) and teens (USH) in the Conservative movement. Samantha recalls her father’s face lighting up when he saw that she had received the form, as USY was such a meaningful part of his and his siblings childhood in Edison, and helped to forge their strong Jewish identities. Sam attended encampment the following summer, and fell in love with being in an environment where it was cool and social to learn the Hebrew language, prayers, and to play sports and sing songs (or “Ruach,” Hebrew for spirit) with her fellow attendees. In Samantha’s words: “USH gave me an identity, to make Judaism part of my everyday life, and not just out of duty, but because it was fun and meaningful, it truly shaped my worldview.”

Returning from encampment, and following up by attending regional Kadima and USY events, Samantha now had friends from various Jewish communities in New Jersey, which led to many Bar and Bat Mitzvah trips across the Garden State. Still, there was no Kadima or USY Chapter in Hoboken. So, as a seventh grader, or as Samantha will tell you, the year she became a “Jewish Woman as a Bat Mitzvah,” she and fellow Kadima and USH member Genna Harari approached Rabbi Scheinberg and Grace Gurman-Chan with the goal of establishing a USY chapter at USH. The first de facto board meeting of Hoboken USY (“HobUSY” as it is known to this day) was held by Genna and Samantha in Samantha’s childhood bedroom (see second picture from top of page), where they set out to build a list of all of their friends and acquaintances in the USH Learning Center, and reached out to them with the express goal of building a Hoboken chapter. Shortly thereafter, Samantha, her father Mark, Genna, Grace, and Rabbi Scheinberg interviewed and hired a chapter advisor. The first complete executive board of HobUSY convened shortly thereafter, with Samantha and Genna as Co-Presidents, joined by Jake Ohring, Max Ohring, Adam Moskowitz, Shipley Mason, Danny Moallem, Jacob Gottlieb, and Meredith Brooks. Together they organized years of teen programming at USH, planned chapter trips, attended regional events, and represented USH at USY International Convention. Attending High Tech High School in Secaucus, NJ, which had very few Jewish students, HobUSY in its early days provided Samantha with a Jewish teen community where she could celebrate holidays and events while building close bonds and strong friendships.

When Samantha and her friends left college for the summer of 2013, they were nervous to hand over the reins of the chapter they spearheaded. Those fears proved to be unwarranted, as Samantha and the original board watched as the next generation of leaders, led by Adina Scheinberg and Maddy Cohen, built HobUSY to even further heights.

USH remained part of Samantha’s life in college, as she reconnected with many of her regional and national USY friends that she met at encampment and conventions who also attended Rutgers. Graduating from Rutgers in 2018 with both her bachelors and masters in education, Samantha returned to Hoboken, and is now the seventh and eighth grade English teacher at Hoboken Charter. Maybe it was beshert that upon her return to Hoboken, the HobUSY Chapter Advisor position was open, and Samantha was able to return to where it all began, becoming the advisor to the chapter she helped found.

Samantha is so impressed by the current board and membership of Hoboken USY, especially their engagement in Jewish issues, Israel, prayer, customs and other social issues. Samantha would take credit, but to her, HobUSY has and always will be about the kids and teens in our community, and their desire to build a self-driven Jewish and egalitarian community for teens. Never one to take a break, Samantha will be using her 2019 summer off from Hoboken Charter to volunteer in Israel, teaching English language courses to Israeli children in order to build their bilingual skills. Samantha was, is, and will continue to be a shining example of what youth leadership can be at USH, and what a homegrown Jewish leader of USH can do for the greater Jewish world. ☼
TO GENERATION

SHOSHANA SCHEINBERG by Jordan Firestein & Sarah Rosenblum

Ten years into the history of HobUSY, Shoshana Scheinberg and her generation of USH teen leaders have taken the chapter to new heights. Shoshana’s earliest memories of hearing about USY came from her sister Adina Scheinberg, who she recalls as being so excited to attend a USY Shabbatot, a weekend long teen Shabbat retreat at one of the USY Chapters synagogues in the region. Upon entering seventh grade, and becoming a member of Kadima, Adina recalls Samantha Glass informing her of regional events, and soon after attending her first USY encampment in Starlight, Pennsylvania.

While Shoshana was a longtime camper of Camp Ramah in the Berkshires, a camp of the conservative movement’s flagship camp network, she opted to also attend USY encampment in Starlight in her first year of eligibility. She loved the experience of meeting fellow USYers from all over New Jersey, learning about their leadership skills and chapter initiatives, as well as participating in the encampment Color War. Upon returning to HobUSY, Shoshana became an integral chapter member, helping to organize events ranging from those centered on tzedakah, to those centering on Israeli culture and the complex political climate in the region.

Over Shoshana’s four plus years in HobUSY and Kadima at USH, she has held an insanely impressive amount of roles: V.P. of Kadima, HobUSY, V.P. of Religion, Chapter Co-President, Regional General Board for Religion and Education, Regional Abraham Joshua Heschel Society Chairperson, Regional V.P. of Religious Education, and USY International General Board V.P. of Religious Education. This plethora of roles gearing towards religious education has allowed Shoshana to create meaningful, innovative, and creative services and experiences for her fellow USYers, both locally at HobUSY, and regionally for Hagall. However, this year’s USY International Convention, located in Orlando, brought a monumental first for Shoshana, and for HobUSY.

USY International Convention is a once a year event hosted by rotating North American cities, and is the largest gathering of Conservative Jewish teens in North America. Each USY chapter receives a certain amount of voting delegates, and an election is held for the continent’s Executive Board, as well as General Board roles. At this year’s elections, Shoshana was elected to the International Executive Board of USY as the International Religion and Education V.P. and is now one of six teens that comprises the International teenage leadership of the Conservative Jewish community in North America for 2019. Shoshana will be spending the next year continuing her modern techniques and innovative programming in religious service and education for International USY. Upon returning to Hoboken, it was exceptionally meaningful to Shoshana that her parents, Rabbi Robert Scheinberg and Rabbi Naomi Kalish, sat her down to tell her how proud they were, that her election and leadership was all of her own doing, and a testament to Shoshana’s individual leadership skills separate and distinct from their own as Rabbis.

When asking Shoshana what is so meaningful about International USY, her response is that it is meaningful that there is a place where each Jewish teen can find a community at regional and international events, where it is so great to meet teens from various communities. Shoshana has participated in USY’s Eastern European/ Israel Pilgrimage, an annual five-week trip where USY teens travel first through the cities and sites of Eastern Europe where Jewish life once thrived, as well as the concentration camps and ghettos of the Shoah where those communities were destroyed. An emotional week of reflection is followed by four weeks in Israel, with immersive experiences throughout the Jewish State.

When asking Shoshana what is so meaningful about HobUSY, her response is that it is wonderful to build friendships with other USH teens, growing up as a tight knit group, all while celebrating their Bar and Bat Mitzvahs together, leading religious services together, and attending encampment each summer, as well as attending other regional and international events as a group. Shoshana is also grateful that everyone in the HobUSY chapter today is committed to its growth and continued success. Israel may be the “Startup Nation,” but HobUSY is the “Startup Chapter,” winning Regional Best Chapter Instagram, and utilizing technology, social media, and crowdsourcing to recruit prospective members, increase engagement, create programming, raise tzedakah for causes, and fundraise for HobUSY. Following her graduation from the Abraham Joshua Heschel School in Manhattan, Shoshana is planning to take a gap year by attending the NATIV program, a year long academic and leadership program in Israel, pairing coursework at Hebrew University with Ulpan language courses and leadership programming, all while spending a year enjoying life in Israel. In the meantime, USH eagerly looks forward to Shoshana representing our community internationally for the upcoming year!!
Did you sign up yet for the USH Mishloach Manot (Purim gift bag) project?

Each year, our community participates in the delicious tradition of Mishloach Manot—sending gifts of food to friends in honor of the holiday of Purim. On Sunday, March 17, members of our community will deliver the gift bags and greetings to those within Hudson County.

Deadline to sign up is Friday March 8!
To participate, fill out the form at http://www.hobokensynagogue.org (login necessary)

**USH Speakeasy with Jackie West 1/26**

**Beer Mitzvah 1/24**

**Women’s Torah Study Group**
March 19th 7:30 pm at USH
Email kurtr@optonline.net for further details

**Hoboken Hamantaschen Bake**
Join Jewish Federation at Hudson Table for a Hamantaschen baking class!

**Tuesday, March 12**
7:00 pm
**Hudson Table**
1403 Clinton Street, Hoboken
**Ticket: $36**
Light Refreshments & Wine | Space is Limited

**Register Here: www.jfnnj.org/hobokenbake**

For more information, please contact Kim Schwartzman at kimberly@jfnnj.org or 201.820.3836

**USH 2018-2019 FILM SERIES**

**MENASHE**
**THERE’S NOTHING ORTHODOX ABOUT HIM**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 23**
**7:30 PM**
**$10 Admission** (includes refreshments)

This 2017 film explores New York’s Hasidic Jewish community, as Menashe, a good-hearted but somewhat hapless grocery store clerk, struggles to keep custody of his only son after his wife passes away. In Yiddish.

**Purim Eve**
**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20**

**Beginning at 5:00pm:**
Recommended for age 5 and under and their families:
abbreviated Megillah reading, entertainment, & Purim snacks (concluding 6:30pm)

**Beginning at 6:15pm:**
Age 6 and up:
Abbreviated Megillah reading, followed by children’s Purim shpiel, followed by entertainment and Purim snacks

**Beginning at approx. 7:00pm:**
The world-renowned USH adult Purim shpiel, followed by complete Megillah reading, followed by Purim festivities and refreshments...

**and...Thurs March 21**
Morning service & megillah reading, 7am
You must befriend the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

“Something magical happens when children go to the circus, especially if it’s their first time. Especially if they have never even heard of the circus. Magic happened on December 27th, when the USH Refugee Support Committee and Welcome Home Jersey City brought 51 children to the Big Apple Circus. Together with many of their mothers and a host of volunteers, 81 of us boarded buses early in the morning and headed to Lincoln Center. It was an exciting day of clowns, acrobats, horses, popcorn and cotton candy. Thank you to everyone in our community—and beyond—who made this day possible.”

-Razel Solow

Another outing is being planned for Spring Break. If you would like to get involved, let us know. Please contact dina@dinarose.net.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS

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THANK YOU FOR SPONSORING KIDDUSSH:

Feb 2: The parents of the 4th and 5th grade Learning Center students
Feb 9: Jim & Alicia Weinstein
Feb 16: Jordan Firestein & Sarah Rosenblum
Feb 23: Dina Rose & Todd Clear

CONGRATULATIONS TO:
Nina Kanovitch & T.J. Schiffer on their wedding

CONDOLENCES TO:
Lisa Quint on the loss of her mother, Ada Quint.

Kosher Restaurant Tip of the Month

The Kosher restaurant scene has experienced a renaissance in the NYC area over the last few years, with emphasis on Israeli cuisine, as well as foods from diaspora communities. While there are no Kosher restaurants in Hoboken, we would like to begin highlighting great picks that are close to Hoboken via PATH and other forms of mass transit.

This month, we’re suggesting TAIM, an Israeli, Kosher and Vegetarian fast casual chain in the city, owned by Tel Avivian Chef Einat Admony. With multiple styles of falafel, sabich, vegetable shawarma, Israeli salatim, homemade zhug (a hot sauce attributed to Yemenite Jewry) and Amba (a pickled mango sauce originated by Iraqi Jews) as well as various other dishes, it’s a fun and affordable choice for the family. Best part? It has multiple locations within less than a block (23rd St.) or a few blocks (WTC, 9th, 14th St.) of PATH stations.

Have any restaurant tips or favorite family recipes to share? Email us at shofar@hobokensynagogue.org to be featured in the coming months.
TO:

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UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF HOBOKEN
115 PARK AVENUE
presents a special pre-Passover program:

300 Seder! ways to create an unforgettable Seder!

Based on the book: 300 WAYS TO ASK THE FOUR QUESTIONS
Foreword by Theodore Bikel

SUNDAY, MARCH 10 • 10:30 AM

FIND OUT HOW TO ENHANCE YOUR SEDERS!
MEET THE AUTHOR: DR. MURRAY SPIEGEL

With a passion for Judaism, Passover and language, speech researcher Dr. Murray Spiegel has a reputation for innovative seders. Murray’s were filmed by PBS and both were featured in The New York Times. He has led over 35 seders — no two alike. Enjoy his infectious enthusiasm and learn how to make your next seder the most fun and interesting it’s ever been.

More info or RSVP: office@hobokensynagogue.org or 201-659-4000
Admission is FREE, but RSVP required.

Made with alpaca by your new editors, Sarah Rosenblum, Jordan Firestein, and Golda