



ANNUAL GALA

To Build
and to be
Built

לִבְנוֹת
וּלְבִנּוּת

June 2, 2024

It was 1950. A handful of Jewish families moved an old schoolhouse to a site on Sepulveda Boulevard in Encino. They cleaned and painted it, set up folding chairs, and established a synagogue. They took turns serving as rabbi and cantor, taught their own children for Bar and Bat Mitzvah, and conducted their own services. A few years later, they moved around the corner to an old motel. The building was too hot in summer, too cold in winter, the seats were uncomfortable, and the prayer books ragged. There was nothing professional or organized in the way things ran. But it was a community of love, devotion, and dreams. And it grew. Today we are the fulfillment of those dreams. Our founding families handed us the gifts of their devotion. What a wonderful gift. What a wonderful life. We owe them our gratitude. And we have a promise to fulfill—to care for the community, to preserve a dream, and to keep it vital for another generation.

לבנות
ולא להבנות

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Gala Honorees

Reesa and Jerry Niznick have been members of VBS for 53 years. The Niznicks dedicated the VBS Niznick Sanctuary in the late 1980's, gave the initial gift for the architectural fees to kick off our synagogue renovation project, and gave one of the lead gifts for the sanctuary's renovation. Reesa and Jerry are actively involved in many philanthropic endeavors in Los Angeles, Canada and Israel. In 2018, the University of Manitoba Dental School was renamed the Dr. Gerald Niznick College of Dentistry. Jerry received Honorary Doctorate degrees from the University of Manitoba and Tel Aviv University and an Honorary Fellowship from Hebrew University.



**Reesa and Gerald
Niznick**



Jack [z" data-bbox="87 655 308 694"/>A professional studio portrait of a man and a woman. The man, on the right, is wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a blue and white striped tie. The woman, on the left, is wearing a dark jacket and a pearl necklace. They are both smiling at the camera.

Jack (z"l) and Rita Sinder have been members of VBS for 63 years. Jack chaired numerous VBS construction projects, including eight years hands-on to build our classrooms, Sher Lopaty Hall, the synagogue entry, other major portions of the synagogue, and the Sinder Parking lot. Rita was president of numerous Jewish organizations. The Sindere ended the VBS Midrasha high school program and are long-time supporters of AIPAC, AJU, the Wiesenthal Center, the Jewish Federation, and Israel Bonds. Jack and Rita were primary donors to the VBS Building Campaign, generously funding the renovation of our front entrance, atrium and main corridor, and the Feinstein Outdoor Chapel.

Irene and Howard Levine have always been deeply committed to Jewish education and to our Jewish future, strengthening VBS for over 57 years. They made the initial transformative gift to the VBS Building Campaign that funded the construction of the VBS Levine Community Center, used by our children now and for decades to come. Howard served as the first president of the VBS Day School as well as president of Camp Ramah. Irene and Howard have been generous donors to Camp Ramah, the American Jewish University, and to UCLA.

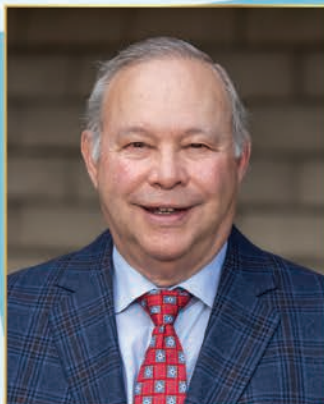


**Irene and Howard
Levine**

With Special Appreciation to
Building Campaign Co-Chairs



**Nancy
Sher Cohen**



**Jeff
Levine**

Building Campaign Co-Chairs Nancy Sher Cohen and Jeff Levine, both Past Presidents of VBS, were instrumental in spearheading our multi-phase Capital Campaign. Over the last 15+ years, Nancy and Jeff have mobilized the leadership, sold the vision, raised the funds, and remained strategic partners in our efforts to plan for our future. Together they've helped build beautiful sacred spaces that transformed VBS and its campus. We owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude for their years of hard work, dedication and inspired leadership. We are delighted to recognize them this year.





PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR

ANNUAL GALA

AT VALLEY BETH SHALOM

SUNDAY
JUNE
2

5:00 PM
Cocktails

6:00 PM
Program &
Dinner

15739 VENTURA BOULEVARD
ENCINO, CALIFORNIA

RSVP by May 13, 2024

vbs.org/gala | 818.530.4006

Cocktail Attire

VBS LEADERSHIP

Rabbi Nolan Lebovitz

Rabbi Ed Feinstein

Rabbi Nina Feinstein

Cantor Jacqueline Rafii

Cantor Phil Baron

Cantor Herschel Fox

Yossi Dresner

Ritual Director

Matthew Weintraub

Executive Director

Ilene Berman

President

Judy Feldman

Director of Development

Nancy Beiser

Vice President of Development



VALLEY BETH SHALOM

