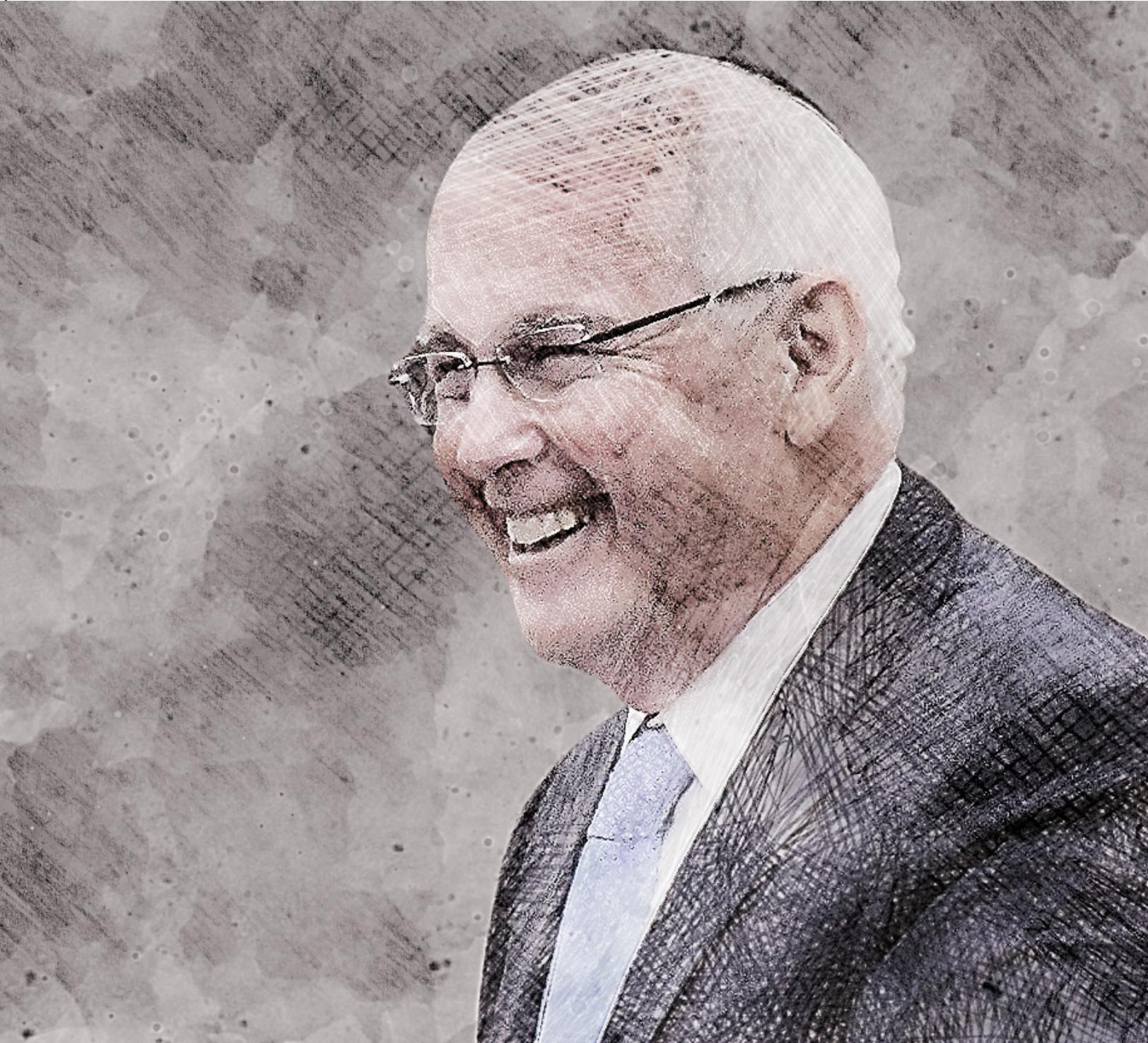




**MERRICK
JEWISH
CENTRE**
CONGREGATION OHR TORAH

The Bulletin



Winter 2021

office@merrickjc.org
www.merrickjc.org

Vol 22, Issue 4

A MESSAGE FROM RABBI SIEGEL



Hanukkah is an eight-day festival beginning this year on Sunday evening, November 28, 2021 and lasting through Monday, December 6, 2021.

Similar to other festivals in the Jewish year, there is a dual origin to Hanukkah - seasonal and historical. The historical story, and its accompanying legends, are well known. The Maccabee family, led by Mattathias and his son Judah, incited a revolt/civil war against the occupying Syrian forces and the assimilated Jewish Temple leadership in Jerusalem in the year 165 BCE. They succeeded in forcing the Syrians to make peace and give them control of Jerusalem and its surrounding environs. The Maccabees celebrated the victory with an 8-day festival of Hanukkah ("dedication"). Each subsequent year, the holiday was celebrated as a tribute to the Maccabean ruler in power. By the 1st century of the Common Era, the rabbis of the Talmud had grown weary of this celebration honoring descendants of the original Maccabees, many of whom were no longer worthy of the tribute. Nonetheless, the holiday had found mass appeal among the people. For this reason, the rabbis introduced the "miracle of the oil"

attempting to divert attention on Hanukkah away from the Maccabees. The ancient rabbis manufactured a tale of re-claiming the Temple and re-kindling the ancient Menorah with a lone vial of oil. The miracle was that only enough oil for one day lasted eight days!

Not only were the rabbis concerned about paying tribute to less-than-worthy descendants, they were also opposed to celebrating a miracle of "a few prevailing against the many" (a small group of Jewish rebels vs. the Syrian army). "Miracles" such as this, encouraged zealotry in the place of reason and sensible decision.

In modern times, we have come to understand the two stories of Hanukkah as one: The Maccabees gloriously re-conquered the Temple and discovered the single vial of oil that burned for eight days.

There is also a seasonal dimension to the holiday. Long before the Maccabees, there was a well-established pagan winter festival during this season. The basis for the festival was the gradual increase in daylight after the ominous, steadily darkening days of late autumn. A number of legends connect Hanukkah with this winter solstice celebration. Another motif had to do with the kindling of fire, reported as an ancient Jewish custom at the dedication of the Temple altar. A third motif related to the festival of Sukkot (an 8-day harvest festival taking place in the early fall). Some historians believe the Maccabees were engaged in warfare during Sukkot, and unable to celebrate it at its proper time. Therefore, when they concluded their victory the first thing they did was celebrate Sukkot for eight days. In subsequent years this winter celebration became Hanukkah.

In whatever way one chooses to understand the holiday, or interpret its history, Hanukkah has become the most celebrated holiday on the Jewish calendar!

Rabbi Howard Siegel

The Bulletin

published quarterly by

Merrick Jewish Centre
CONGREGATION OHR TORAH

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Merrick, NY 11566

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Benjamin Warschawski, Cantor
Dave Siegel, Dir. of Family Engagement
Howard Tiegel, President
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Howard Zryb, Editor

FROM THE CANTOR



Greetings,

Due to the current alignment of the Jewish and Gregorian calendars all of the Jewish holidays of the Tishrei cycle were much earlier in the Gregorian year than usual. But as we all know, this past year or two has created all sorts of unusual "re-alignments" in our lives. Occurring soon will be a relatively unusual circumstance wherein the first night of Chanukah aligns with the Sunday night of Thanksgiving weekend.

I am much more accustomed to having Chanukah coincide more closely with Christmas than with Thanksgiving. Again with the unusual "alignments." However, I do enjoy this holiday pairing as well since I feel that as a holiday, Chanukah is more thematically related to Thanksgiving than to Christmas. (Except, of course, for the presents!) So I thought this would be a terrific moment to give mind to a few of the "re-alignments" since last Fall for which we can all be thankful.

If you are reading these words you were not among those taken during the worst of the pandemic. As I write this, I realize again what a privilege it is just to experience living. I think we can all be thankful for that.

Even though we are not entirely finished with the pandemic, many of the strictures are much lighter making us freer than we were last year. We can all be thankful for fewer travel restrictions, fewer quarantine protocols, and more open businesses to frequent.

Need I say it...the VACCINE! However you may feel personally about the shot, it does seem to have shielded many from the worst Covid outcomes. At the same time it appears to be a significant contributor to easing the burden on our country's hospital capacity. I think we can all be thankful for the increased freedom of movement and personal interaction that has afforded us.

Finally, on a more personal note, I am thankful to count among the rare privileges of my career to have served as Cantor for the final two years of the distinguished rabbinate of Rabbi Charles Klein at the MJC. Standing witness to the outpouring of sentiment from a thankful congregation to its devoted Rabbi and from that grateful Clergyman back to his steadfast flock was both touching and overwhelmingly beautiful.

And so, I would like to close by echoing all the beautiful sentiments previously expressed to the Rabbi and Betty while adding my own well-wishes. On behalf of my entire family, I pray that G-d bestow His continued blessings upon my colleague and friend Rabbi Charles Klein along with his lovely wife Betty that they should long-enjoy e Gezunte, e Freiliche, und e Shleimusdike retirement! Mazal Tov!

E guten Vinter,

Cantor Benjamin Warschawski

FROM THE MJC PRESIDENT



Dear Friends:

As I write this column, I consider that this Chanukah finds its start during Thanksgiving Weekend. And so it occurs to me that it would make perfect sense to express thanks for the “Chanukah gift” that is the Merrick Jewish Centre.

I am so grateful that we have a place to learn, to pray, and to share the most important moments in our lives with one another. I am thankful that we have in the MJC a place to offer our time and creativity and dedication, in an effort to climb the ladder and endeavor to make a better world. I am thankful to have a place to explore our Jewish identities and to see how Judaism touches a changing world. Most importantly I am thankful for all the deep friendships and caring relationships I have found with so many of you over these years. Especially during these last 20 months when our lives have changed so much, it has been a blessing to be able to rely on you, and the MJC, for the strength and stability that has been so necessary during such challenging days.

So please allow me to express my thanks to all of you for making the Merrick Jewish Centre the bayit that it is.

May you and your families have a Chanukah Sameach and let every day bring more light into your lives.

Warm regards,

Howard

Howard Tiegel
President
htiegel@merrickjc.org

HEBREW SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

Kehilatenu - Our Community
Our Religious School's new name!

Our students were so thrilled for Rabbi Klein to have Fox Boulevard renamed in his honor!!



So much wonderful learning is happening in Kehilatenu!

Our students are engaging in dynamic in-person and virtual classes. We continue to build their Jewish identities, engaging them with a strong sense of the beauty of Jewish life and values as found in the Torah and in our traditions. We also focus on using Hebrew conversation to encourage and support our students' ability to read, teaching prayers and song as well.

Torah Godly Play is a very special way of exploring Torah stories and Jewish holidays. Morah Debbie leads this magical way of encouraging the students to wonder and express their spirituality.



HEBREW SCHOOL HAPPENINGS



Mah hash'a'ah? What time is it? Learning the Hebrew language and reading through action. Practicing reading in small groups with Morah Roya and her student helper, Gabe Ades.



We continue to explore 4 key Jewish values, one of which is Kedoshim T'hiyu- You shall be holy. The Dalet students interpreted the meaning of this commandment and challenge the rest of the school to join in their discussion. This is an extension of our vision this year of Raising A+ Human Beings from Dr. Ron Wolfson and Dr. Bruce Powell's book.



Reviewing the Chanukah blessings as a group. Each Gimel student holds up their words as they chant it together.

HEBREW SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

Our Bet students are learning the Aleph-Bet and SO much more!!!!



We are so lucky to have Avraham Yechezkel, our Shinshin from Israel. Thanks to the Blanche Batnick Mitzvah fund, each year we have a Shinshin, an Israeli teen, who has just graduated from High School, before entering the army. The Shinshin come to our school to bring Israeli enrichment. This activity was such a creative way to teach the Israeli Chanukah song about light and darkness!



MEN'S CLUB

Men's Club has been preparing for a long-range commitment to Merrick Jewish Centre. We are developing a sound leadership that will guide the Men's Club for years to come. It is our plan to make Men's Club more accessible, more productive and more responsive to the Men's Club membership and to the entire MJC family. We are making plans to be more efficient with back-up chairpersons for all events and activities as well as day to day leadership. And meetings which take place once a month will be limited and held to 1 hour, maybe 1 hour 5 minutes!

The first order of business was to set up a steering committee made up of officers, leaders and members who want to work with us that will deal with the day-to-day responsibilities of Men's Club.

The second order of business was to nominate and elect a Co-President for this year. By a unanimous vote Adam Goldstein was elected to the position. I personally want to take this time to welcome Adam to his new position and thank him for his dedicated work. Adam will assist me and he will be directly responsible for membership. Yes, letters have gone out, phone calls will be made and follow up emails will also be sent. You will be hearing from Adam and his dedicated group (Bob Delitsky, and Arti Sidorsky). All are welcome to give a hand.

This year our programs will include: Trivia Contests for all of MJC to participate in; 55 Alive; Men's Health; CPR training; Lag B'Omer; Chanukah program, World-Wide Wrap with a breakfast to follow; the very important Yom Hashoah candle program that supports our Paul Stone-Men's Club Fund for Youth; a fishing trip for parents and their children; and a fun-filled Game night.

Thanks must be extended to Elliot Hymes, Ira Blankstein and Richard Knox for their development of the Trivia Bowls on Zoom. Programs have been interesting, competitive and fun for all. We all know how difficult it has been planning and completing programs with all of the Covid regulations. We hope that all will be behind us.

Of special note: This year Men's Club will be honoring Charlie Skop for his dedicated service to Merrick Jewish Centre. There will be a ceremony at CitiField on May 31st where Charlie will be honored at home plate starting at 6:45pm. All of the seats for this year's game will be field level on the first base side. Bring a glove because our seats are in foul ball territory!

Finally, we have just adopted a new tag line for Men's Club: "Doing good deeds, Torah, Charity and Food." While Food did not appear in Ethics of Our Fathers, we have added it because the guys can expect good food, drink and, of course, camaraderie. Please think of supporting Men's Club because Men's Club supports all members of MJC!

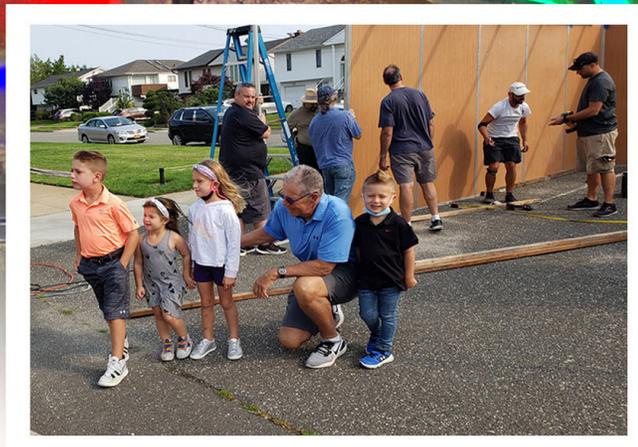
To All MJC Members we wish you a Chag Chanukah Sameach. May the light shine brightly all year long. B'Shalom

Hank Arkin
President
MJC Men's Club

Adam Goldstein
Co-President



Build it and they shall come! Men's Club builds the Big Sukkah





**MERRICK
JEWISH
CENTRE**
CONGREGATION OHR TORAH

Men's Club

May 31st

\$65

per ticket

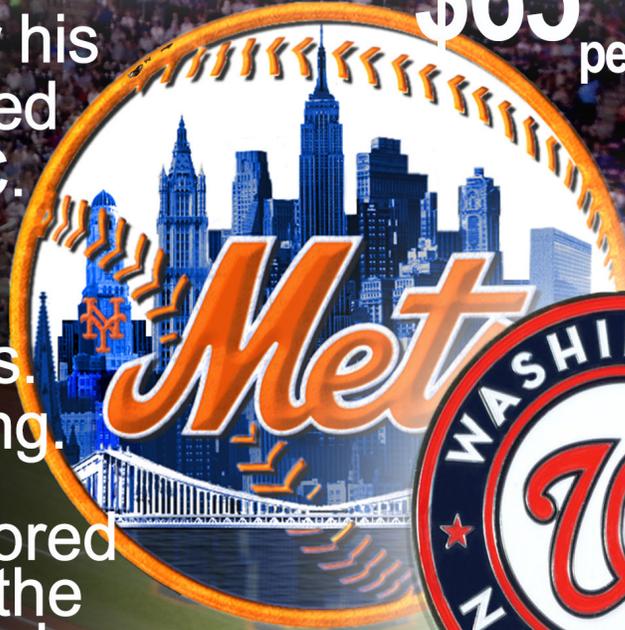
Charlie Skop

will be honored for his years of dedicated service to M.J.C.

Mets vs.

Washington Nats.

Field Level Seating.



Charlie will be honored On the field with the Mets Spirit Award prior to the game.

This event is open to all members of Merrick Jewish Centre & their friends.

All attending wil have a chance to win two Mets tickets

ceremony at 6:45pm
game starts 7:10pm

questions??? mensclub@merrickjc.org or call the MJC office

Clip and return with your payment to the MJC office

Enclosed please find a check in the amount of (\$65 / ticket) \$ _____ for # _____ tickets. Deadline for ordering is April 24, 2022. Tickets are subject to availability

Name _____ phone _____ email _____

We would like to sit near.....

SISTERHOOD

Sisterhood kicked off the first in-person event with a resounding YES, as 40 people joined in our Paid Up Membership Party (PUMP) and it was unanimously judged a success! We had members from all generations join together for a throw-back Thursday event remembering the 1970's.

We dressed reminiscent of the era, played a 70's themed game, and in general, had a lot of laughs. The winners of all the amazing raffles were thrilled, and we enjoyed a tasty meal catered by Chimichurri. Thanks go out to the committee for creativity and superb organizing: Elaina Corwin, Ellen Multer, Mary Greenfield, Wendy Pupa, Robyn Shear and Joanne Skop.

You don't want to miss the next event, scheduled for December 6th. In conjunction with Sharsheret, an organization for Jewish women diagnosed with breast cancer, we welcome a speaker who will discuss health and wellness related to toxins in our environment. Everyone should be well informed on this issue, as it impacts our health on a daily basis. I hope you will join us. This is in-person at the Merrick Jewish Centre, with all CDC protocols in place. Our programmers, Lisa Schutzman and Jenn Gellman can answer any questions.

Put February 5th on your calendar for Sisterhood Shabbat. Everyone is invited to participate in that morning's Shabbat service, as Sisterhood "represents" on the Bima. We want to promote an egalitarian synagogue, so let's take our place in leading the services that day. Contact sisterhood@merrickjc.org or Jill Davis, our organizer of the event, for details.

Our talented board is hard at work on all our offerings for the upcoming year, and I look forward to seeing you join us in the fun. Sisterhood is about community, reveling in our relationships with each other in fun activities, all the while raising funds for our own Merrick Jewish Centre. Step into our circle.

Yours in sisterhood,
Cheryl Uram
President 2021-2022



Theatre Group is Back!

Presenting

TICKET TO BROADWAY

STARRING...

The Merrick Jewish Center

AND

Sisterhood Theatre Group

With shows to resume in April, 2022

If you are interested in joining us, please email

Wendy at wgarfi@optonline.net

Thank You

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

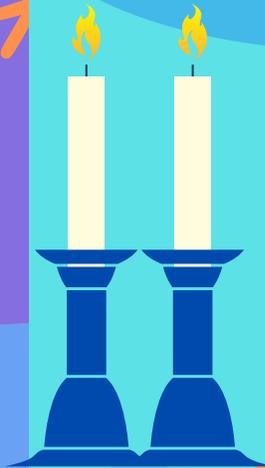
The Membership Committee has been very excited to welcome new members to Merrick Jewish Centre. We have been working with Men's Club and Sisterhood to send Welcome Wagon Baskets to prospective members. We have had many activities and events such as Family Tot Shabbat, Merrick Fall Festival, Mom's Night Out Tie Dye Event, Chanukah Craft with You Name It by Yonit, and Enrichment Classes. We are looking forward to continuing with our weekly Family Tot Shabbat, winter session Enrichment Classes, another Mom's Night Out in January and our Vendor Fair on March 3rd!



*Join us
at the MJC*

FAMILY TOT SHABBAT!

Sing along with Cantor
Warschawski as we welcome in
Shabbat!



FRIDAYS at 5:30-6:00pm
*2022 dates will be forthcoming

All covid protocols will be
followed:
*Masks for ages 2+
*Social distancing
*Ages 12+ will have to show proof
of vaccination upon arrival





MJC *vendor* *fair*

Thursday,
March 3rd,
2022

6:00-9:00pm



MERRICK
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INTERESTED IN BEING A VENDOR?

CONTACT: MJC VENDORSALE2022@GMAIL.COM

FROM THE CHESSED COMMITTEE

It's truly an honor and a privilege to co-chair MJC's Chesed Committee with Vicki Goldman. We traditionally translate chesed as "loving kindness" and I consider that the core of what it means to be a member of a community and a congregation, and to live Jewishly. Despite the overwhelming challenges posed by the pandemic, the committee has remained an indispensable source of comfort and companionship for so many throughout the last 20 months. I'm excited to build upon this meaningful work and find new ways to help those in need.

We want to involve members of all ages in our activities and are constantly thinking of how to do so in a safe and joyful manner. If you have a project you'd like to share or know of an unmet need in the area, we're always listening.

Marissa Bleier, Chesed Co-Chair
marissa.goldfaden@gmail.com

Vicki Goldman, Chesed Co-Chair
vickigoldman@gmail.com



Thank you to all of the congregants and friends of Merrick Jewish Centre for honoring Rabbi Charles and Betty Klein with their donations made to the Legacy Fund. Your financial support will help carry the legacy of Rabbi and Betty into the future. Merrick Jewish Centre will benefit for many years with Educational and Cultural programming that both Rabbi and Betty Klein both hold dear.

(Donations received as of 11/8/21)



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THE "BULLETIN" BOARD



Cemetery Information

The sale of Cemetery Plots at the Merrick Jewish Centre grounds at Wellwood Cemetery is on-going for members in good standing of our congregation.

Please contact the MJC Cemetery Committee for information. We can be reached by email at: cemeterycommittee@merrickjc.org

MJC Helpline

We're here to listen and offer support during this crisis.

Please call 516-379-8650

We have assembled a team of wonderfully capable mental health professionals to offer phone counseling to our members who feel the need to speak with a caring therapist. Your Rabbis are also available. Please leave a message and a team member will return your call.

Virtual Minyan Services

Morning Services:
Monday & Thursday 6:30 am
Friday at 6:45 am Saturday 9:30 am, Sunday at 8:30 am

Evening Services
Sunday through Thursday at 8 pm
Friday Shabbat at 6:15 pm

Zoom meeting ID: 649-098-3015
Password: Mitzvah613

Zoom call in phone number: 1-929-205-6099
ID: 649-098-3015
Password: 6489824613

We want to hear from YOU!

Do you have something to contribute? Is there something you would like to see in future issues of the MJC Bulletin?

Contact Howard Zryb at
hzryb@aol.com
with your ideas and suggestions.

Clothing Donation?

Drop off your bags in the Big Brothers/Big Sisters bin located in the back of our parking lot, and the office will provide you with a tax receipt. Too many bags to carry? Call the office and a volunteer will be happy to schedule a home pickup.

Thank you!

Do you know that the Merrick Jewish Centre has its own YouTube Channel?

You can find sermons, classes, and recordings of special events all on the Merrick Jewish Centre YouTube Channel.

You can go to our website (www.merrickjc.org) and click on the link for the YouTube Channel, and there you will find a long and growing list of videos available.

We invite you to visit the Merrick Jewish Centre website
www.merrickjc.org
Check out our CALENDAR for upcoming events
Visit our PHOTO GALLERY
Check out our BULLETIN BOARD

THE ANGEL OF BUDAPEST

Searching for Jews Saved by the Angel of Budapest

Reprinted from Aish.com

Oct 17, 2021 | by Dr. Yvette Alt Miller

Spanish diplomat Angel Sanz Briz saved 5,000 Jews. Spain now is trying to contact their descendants.

In 1944, with World War II raging throughout Europe, Spain made a staffing change in its embassy in Hungary, elevating an obscure 33-year-old commercial attaché to become head of the delegation. This personnel change had far-reaching effects, eventually resulting in 5,000 Jews being saved from the Holocaust in Hungary.

The young diplomat's name was Angel Sanz Briz, but to many Hungarian Jews he became known as the "Angel of Budapest".

During World War II, Spain was allied with Nazi Germany. Spain erupted into a battleground in 1936, when two military generals, including Gen. Francisco Franco, launched a coup to topple Spain's democratically elected government. A fierce civil war ensued, with both Adolph Hitler of Germany and Benito Mussolini of Italy lending military support to Franco. The fighting raged for three years and attracted fighters from around the world. It's estimated that 200,000 people died during Spain's bloody years of civil war.

With the outbreak of World War II, Gen. Franco, by then the undisputed fascist leader of Spain, allied himself with Nazi Germany. Only a few thousand Jews had called Spain home in the 1930s – much of Spain's

tiny Jewish community had been made up of German Jews who fled Germany with Hitler's rise to power in 1933 – and nearly all of the Jews living in Spain left during the civil war. Once Franco became leader, he formally shut down all remaining Jewish institutions in Spain.

Yet European Jews continued to try and enter Spain since it was a relatively safe haven during the war. After Germany took over France in 1940, between 20,000 and 30,000 Jews are thought to have fled west into Spain. Many of these Jews had visas to other countries and were able to depart from Spanish ports to new lives outside Europe.

However, Franco was no friend of Jews. He detained visa-less Jews who entered his country at the Miranda de Ebro concentration camp and returned many to Nazi-occupied France. Franco also had local officials create a list of 6,000 Jews living in Spain, and delivered this list to Heinrich Himmler, the leader of the SS and the architect of the Nazi "final solution".

In some cases, Spain did act to protect some Jews. Between 1942 and 1944, over 7,000 Jewish refugees were given temporary permission to reside in Spain. Approximately 4,000 Spanish Jews were trapped in Nazi-occupied countries; Spanish diplomats were instructed to protect and aid them. Yet in January 1943, when Hitler ordered Spain to remove all of its Jewish citizens from Nazi-occupied nations, Franco ensured that bureaucratic delays meant that only 800 Spanish Jewish citizens were successfully repatriated to Spain.

For Angel Sanz Briz, Spain's half-hearted actions on behalf of Spanish Jews weren't enough. After Germany invaded

Hungary in March of 1944, Hungary's sizable Jewish community – nearly three quarters of a million Jews called Hungary home – found itself in immediate danger. Between May 15 and July 9, 1944, Hungarian officials, acting under instructions from the German SS, deported



THE ANGEL OF BUDAPEST

about 440,000 Hungarian Jews. Most were sent to the Auschwitz Birkenau death camp, where they were murdered upon arrival.

The Angel Takes Action

During this time of carnage and horror, Angel Sanz Briz asked the local Hungarian officials for permission to give Spanish passports to 200 local Jews with Spanish origins, thus extending Spain's diplomatic protection to them. Local officials agreed, but instead of stopping there, Sanz Briz continued to give out Spanish passports.

"I managed to get the Hungarian government to authorize the protection by Spain of 200 Sephardic Jews," Sanz Briz wrote in a report to his bosses back in Spain in December, 1944. "Then I turned those 200 units into 200 families; and those 200 families were multiplied indefinitely, through the simple procedure of not expediting any safe conduct to Jews with a number higher than 200." Given passports and official protection by Spain, these many hundreds of local Jews were spared the horrors visited on other Hungarian Jews.

"He added letters to each number, using the whole alphabet," Angel Sanz Briz's son Juan Carlos Sanz Briz, later explained. Each official document that Sanz Briz issued contained numerous sub-headings and protected many Jews. He also issued nearly 2,000 letters of protection promising Spanish diplomatic help to Jews.

Warning Jews about Auschwitz

Sanz Briz also began forwarding intelligence detailing Nazi atrocities back to Spain. One of his most important contributions to spreading awareness of the vast Nazi killing machine was disseminating the Vrba-Wetzler report through official channels.

This report was a chilling document created by two Jewish prisoners from Slovakia, Alfred Wetzler and Walte Rosenberg (who went by the alias Rudolf Vrba). On April 7, 1944, Wetzler and Vrba managed to escape from Auschwitz. They had each spent about two years in that hellhole and they wanted desperately to warn any surviving Jewish communities about what the Nazis were doing. They wrote a detailed plan of Auschwitz, describing its layout and functions and smuggled it to a Jewish group in Slovakia.

The report was translated into many languages and circulated among Hungary's Jewish community. Few

people seemed to pay this crucial report any attention, until Sanz Briz recognized its importance and sent it to the government in Spain. The report eventually was reported on in the Swiss press. It led to a brief cessation of deportations of Hungarian Jews on the orders of Admiral Miklos Horthy, who led Hungary between 1920 and 1944. (Horthy was deposed in a coup on October 15, 1944 by the fascist Arrow Cross Party; deportations of Hungary's Jews resumed soon after the putsch.)

Sheltering Jews

With Hungary's Jews once more in grave danger, Sanz Briz made the decision to shelter Jews in the Spanish embassy in Budapest, paying bribes to Arrow Cross officials to look the other way. Soon, Hungarian officials were forcing Jews to live in ghetto areas and were attacking Jews on the street with impunity. Sanz Briz rented eleven apartment buildings in which he sheltered approximately 5,000 Jews. He also prevailed on the International Red Cross to put up signs in Spanish on hospital buildings and orphanages in Budapest, lending the buildings the aura of being under Spain's official protection. Soon, numerous "Spanish Houses" were offering shelter and relative safety to Budapest's Jews.

One of the Jews living in a "Spanish House" rented by Sanz Briz was Jaime Vador. In 2013, he described what it was like for Spain's RNE public radio. "There were 51 of us living in a flat with two and a half rooms. We were crowded, hungry, and cold, infested with fleas. The hygiene was appalling, obviously, with so many people using one toilet. But the worst thing was the fear, the fear of deportation."

Despite the terrible living conditions, at least while they were inside the Spanish-protected apartment building they were safe from Nazi raids. Since any Jew exiting the buildings faced the threat of being attacked or arrested, Sanz Briz arranged for food and supplies to be brought to the Jews he sheltered.

Angel Sanz Briz wasn't the only foreign diplomat to issue documents in order to protect Hungary's Jews. Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg established hospitals, orphanages and soup kitchens for Hungarian Jews and issued up to 100,000 Swedish documents protecting Hungarian Jews. He also established 30 safe houses for Jews to live in under Swedish protection. Carl Lutz, the Consul General of the Swiss legation in

THE ANGEL OF BUDAPEST



Raoul Wallenberg

Budapest, issued nearly 50,000 certificates of emigration, promising that Jews holding them would emigrate to Palestine, and placing them under Swiss diplomatic protection.

Local Jews called these various efforts to save their lives the "International Ghetto." Tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews survived the Holocaust because they were given official documents from these mainly neutral countries protecting them from deportation.

At the end of 1944, with Soviet troops advancing on Budapest, Spain's government ordered Sanz Briz to return home. Spain had helped Nazi troops fight on the eastern front, and they felt that the Soviets would arrest or execute Spanish officials in reprisal. Angel Sanz Briz returned home to Madrid, but that wasn't the end of his work in Budapest.

Sanz Briz was named Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem in 1966 while he was still alive. (He died in 1980 at the age of 70.) But Gen. Franco, still Spain's authoritarian fascist ruler, prohibited him from going to Jerusalem to receive the honor. "I never talked about this subject with him," Juan Carlos Sanz Briz, Angel Sanz Briz's son, explained. "He must have suffered greatly, but he didn't tell us that.... He was a virtuoso in diplomacy; he put human rights before the law of the

land, and was one of the first diplomats to use diplomatic immunity to protect refugees."

Spain Is Now Recognizing His Bravery

Now, after years of silence, Spain is finally ready to acknowledge the bravery of Angel Sanz Briz, and is trying to locate the descendants of the many Jews he saved. The Centro Sefarad-Israel, which is part of Spain's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is using Spanish government archives to trace the Jews their diplomatic mission saved in Budapest.

"For him, the principle of humanity prevailed over the principle of legality," explains Miguel de Lucas, who heads the Centro Sefarad-Israel.

The Centro Sefarad-Israel is releasing names of some of the Jews whom Angel Sanz Briz saved on social media under the hashtag #LaListaSanzBriz. "With this initiative, Centro Sefarad-Israel aims to locate people who may have been saved by Sanz Briz, or their descendants. In this way, their family testimonies can serve to highlight the efforts made by the diplomat and his team, thus completing his legacy," the Center explains.

In the meantime, anyone who was saved by Sanz Briz is being encouraged to email the Centro Sefarad-Israel at lalistasanzbriz@sefarad-israel.es. More information about this crucial project can be found on the Center's website at http://www.sefarad-israel.es/La_lista_de_angel_Sanz_Briz

In our darkest hour, diplomats like Angel Sanz Briz worked to save the lives of our families and fellow Jews. It's up to us now to make sure that their bravery and the stories of the thousands of Jews who were saved are not forgotten.

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PFIZER'S CEO STORY

Family of top pharmaceutical leader Albert Bourla miraculously survived the Holocaust in Salonika, Greece.

By Bob Bahr February 18, 2021

Albert Bourla, who as chairman and CEO of Pfizer pharmaceutical company helped develop the lifesaving COVID vaccine, owes much to the valiant efforts of others to save the lives of Greek Jews during the Holocaust.

Of the more than 50,000 Jews who lived in Salonika, only about 2,000 survived World War II. Speaking to interviewer Robert Krulwich, a former NPR radio journalist, Bourla said that his father and uncle escaped the initial roundup in the Greek city and escaped to Athens.

The police chief in Athens, Angelos Evert, they learned, was clandestinely issuing fake IDs which non-Jewish names to thousands who were desperate to escape the transports to Auschwitz. It was a moral act rooted in the efforts of the Greek Orthodox church leaders to protect the Jews of the country. Not only did the two men get new papers but they got a job and worked for two years in a city that was filled with Nazi soldiers.

"The people that gave them the fake ID," Bourla related, "they also found them a job in the Red Cross warehouse. That was a full-time job. But they were not getting paid. But they had access to food."

The woman who was later to become Bourla's mother was also saved in miraculous circumstances. According to Bourla, she was about to be executed by the Nazis along with a number of other Salonika Jews. She was lined up against a brick wall facing a machine gun just a few feet away when she and another woman were picked up by two Nazi soldiers with an order for her release, and put on a truck.

"And as the truck was leaving the place," Bourla said, "they heard the sound of the machine guns. And it was, for me, unreal. But everybody else was dying and they were sitting there just three minutes ago." Her freedom had been bought by a bribe paid by her wealthy non-Jewish brother-in-law who had personally followed up with Salonika's top Nazi SS officer to make sure she would survive.

Beginning in 1943, most of the community's Jews were transported to the death camps in Poland. Despite the brave efforts by the Greek Orthodox archbishop in Athens to save them, the community that had existed for over 2,000 largely came to an end.

Three of Bourla's brothers miraculously survived, and one-by-one they found each other in the old city. The reunion began with a scribbled note to one of the men, according to Bourla.

"They gave him an address. When he rang the bell, they opened the door and suddenly they see the brother that they thought is dead. And of course, they hug and kiss and he says, 'I'm the only one. Everybody's dead.' And then a third one came back. That gave them hope that maybe others will come back. Unfortunately, they didn't.

According to Bourla, many of those who survived went to Palestine or America or to Athens, Greece, to begin a new life. Bourla's father at one point showed his son a visa that he had received to immigrate to America, but he stayed in Salonika, met and married his mother Sara and raised his family there.

Bourla was educated at the university in Salonika and after graduation, joined Pfizer in Greece to begin his steady



Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla is generally credited with driving the company to develop its COVID vaccine in record time.

climb through the executive ranks of the multinational corporation.

He is generally credited with driving the company to develop the two-shot COVID vaccine in record time. He said he owed his many accomplishments and his recent success to the lesson he learned from his parents. They emphasized the importance of living a positive life even if the past is filled with so much darkness.

"But they never spoke to me about revenge. They never told us that you should hate those that did that to us. The way that their stories were always ended were a celebration of life. 'Look at us. We're alive. We were almost dead and now we are alive. Life is wonderful.'"

Bourla, who could have dwelled only on his Jewish past, said he has always looked to his Jewish future.

"What is important is that we move on. We feel proud for our heritage. We demand the respect of the 'other,' but we are moving on."

CHANUKAH, OH CHANUKAH!

9 Things You Didn't Know About Hanukkah

From My Jewish Learning.com

Chanukah is one of the most widely celebrated Jewish holidays in the United States. But that doesn't mean there is nothing new to learn about this eight-day festival. From the mysterious origins of gelt to an Apocryphal beheading to Marilyn Monroe, we've compiled an item for each candle (don't forget the shamash!) on the Hanukkah menorah.

1. Gelt as we know it is a relatively new tradition – and no one knows who invented it.

While coins – “gelt” is Yiddish for coins, or money – have been part of Chanukah observance for centuries, chocolate gelt is considerably younger. In her book *On the Chocolate Trail*, Rabbi Deborah Prinz writes that “opinions differ” concerning the origins of chocolate gelt: Some credit America's Loft candy company with creating it in the 1920s, while others suggest there were European versions earlier that inspired Israel's Elite candy company. Prinz notes, as well, that chocolate gelt resembles a European Christmas tradition of exchanging gold-covered chocolate coins “commemorating the miracles of St. Nicholas.”

2. The first Hanukkah celebration was actually a delayed Sukkot observance.

The second book of Maccabees quotes from a letter sent circa 125 BCE from the Hasmoneans (the Maccabees' descendants) to the leaders of Egyptian Jewry, describing the holiday as “the festival of Sukkot celebrated in the month of Kislev rather than Tishrei.” Since the Jews were still in caves fighting as

guerrillas on Tishrei, 164 BCE, they had been unable to honor the eight-day holiday of Sukkot, which required visiting the Jerusalem Temple; hence it was postponed until after the recapture of Jerusalem and the rededication of the Temple. Many scholars believe it is this connection to Sukkot – and not the Talmudic account of the cruse of oil that lasted eight days – that explains why Hanukkah is eight days long.

3. The books of Maccabees, which tell the story of Hanukkah, weren't included in the Hebrew Bible – but they are in the Catholic Bible.

There are different theories explaining why the first-century rabbis who canonized the scriptures omitted the Maccabees, ranging from the text's relative newness at the time to fears of alienating the Roman leadership in control of Jerusalem at the time.

4. Marilyn Monroe owned a music-playing Chanukah menorah (the Marilyn Monrorah?).

When the Hollywood star converted to Judaism before marrying Jewish playwright Arthur Miller, her future mother-in-law gave her a menorah as a conversion gift. The Chanukah lamp, which the menorah's current owner says Mrs. Miller brought back from Jerusalem, has a wind-up music box in its base that plays Hatikvah, Israel's national anthem. It's featured in the Jewish Museum in New York City's exhibit “Becoming Jewish: Warhol's Liz and Marilyn,” but sadly you can't wind it up.



CHANUKAH, OH CHANUKAH!

5. *The game of dreidel was inspired by a German game played at Christmastime, which is itself an imitation of an English and Irish one.*

Our Eastern European game of dreidel (including the letters nun, gimmel, hey, shin) is directly based on the German equivalent of the British totum game: N = Nichts = nothing; G = Ganz = all; H = Halb = half; and S = Stell ein = put in. In German, the spinning top was called a "torrel" or "trundl."

6. *Oily food (think latkes and sufganiyot) isn't Chanukah's only culinary tradition.*

Traditionally, Hanukkah has included foods with cheese in recognition of Judith, whose liberal use of the salty treat facilitated a victory for the Maccabees.

7. *On Hanukkah, we celebrate a grisly murder.*

The aforementioned Judith had an ulterior motive for plying Assyrian general Holofernes with salty cheese: making him thirsty so he would drink lots of wine and pass out, enabling her to chop off his head and bring it home with her. The beheading – particularly the fact that a woman carried it out – was said to have frightened Holofernes' troops into fleeing the Maccabees.

8. *The next "Thanksgivukkah" (sort of), is only 51 years away.*

In 2013, the convergence of Thanksgiving and Hanukkah on Nov. 28 inspired everything from turkey-shaped menorahs to a giant dreidel float in the Macy's Thanksgiving Parade. While experts say a full day of Hanukkah won't coincide with the fourth Thursday in November for thousands of years, the first night of Hanukkah will fall in time for Thanksgiving dinner (assuming you have the meal at dinnertime rather than in the afternoon) on Nov. 27, 2070. So, hang on to your recipe for sweet potato latkes with toasted marshmallows!

9. *The largest menorah in the world, according to the Guinness Book of World Records is 32 feet high and weighs 4,000 pounds.*

The Shulchan Aruch stipulates that a menorah should be no taller than about 31 feet. Incidentally, Guinness lists at least three other Hanukkah-related records: most dreidels spinning simultaneously for at least 10 seconds (820), most valuable dreidel (\$14,000) most people simultaneously lighting menorahs (834) and largest display of lit menorahs (1,000). We'd like to know the most latkes ever eaten in one sitting.



IN THE SYNAGOGUE FAMILY

BAR/BAT MITZVAHS

Tali Eisner daughter of Ruth & William Eisner
Julia Isaac daughter of Dana & Jeffrey Isaac
Avery Charney daughter of Rachel & Brian Charney
Mark Kadin son of Ilona & Cary Kadin
Aiden Weissman son of Melanie & Jason Weissman
Eva Cohen daughter of Polina & Eli Cohen
Hailey Weiss daughter of Beth & Mark Weiss
Kate Seidler daughter of Julie & Brian Seidler
Jacob Graber son of Audrey & Michael Graber
Sadie Laby daughter of Carol & Darrin Laby
Daniel Sandberg son of Darah & Joshua Sandberg

BIRTHS

Mindy & Ed Goldstein on the birth of their granddaughter, Emerson Reese, daughter of Gary & Arielle Goldstein
Amy & Steve Uffner on the birth of their granddaughter, Sophie Reese
Ilene Lambert on the birth of her granddaughter, Gemma Mikayla
Casey & Shaun Rosenfeld on the birth of their son, Andrew Blake
Michael & Michelle Schwartz on the birth of their grandson, Andrew Blake

CONDOLENCES

Anna Kugal on the loss of her father Jacob Prednetsky
The Stein family on the loss of Hy Stein
Mark Butler on the loss of his father Ron Butler
The Pollack family on the loss of Dr. Bernard Pollack
Ann Wieder on the loss of her husband, Norman Wieder
Jamie Drucker on the loss of her father Harvey Hecker
Bob Kroll on the loss of his beloved wife, our Past President Irene Kroll
Mark & Beth Weiss on the loss of their son, Andrew Weiss
Andrew Weiss, son of Dr. Mark Weiss and Sharon Weiss, stepson of Beth Weiss

We mourn the loss of our dear member and Past-President
Irene Kroll
and extend sincere condolences to her husband
Bob and the entire Kroll family

We mourn the loss of our dear member
Dr. Bernard Pollock
and extend sincere condolences to his son, Matthew

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Ellen Deutsch to Andy Harrison
Eleanor & David Leiner on the marriage of Josh to Chelsey
Anita & David Zucker on the marriage of Justin to Lisa Bernstein

ADULT EDUCATION

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ALAN KORNBLUTH

In honor of the baby naming of Jordyn Fox, daughter of Matt & Gabrielle Fox, granddaughter of Felise & Jeff Fox.
from The Kornbluth & Friends Family

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the birth of Gemma Mikayla, granddaughter of Ilene Lambert from Alan & Ellen Sussman
Ed & Mindy Goldstein's Granddaughter Vivien Bat Mitzvah from Alan & Leslie Chibnik
the Chesed Committee, for all that they have done and will do from Dr. Steven & Roberta Scoll
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the birth of Jake, grandson of Jan & Bonni Axelrod from Felise & Jeffrey
Mindy & Ed Goldstein on the Bat Mitzvah of their granddaughter from Ilene Lambert
the marriage of Lisa Bernstein to David Zucker, son of Anita & David Zucker from Ilene Lambert
Sharyn & Steve Kussin's 50th wedding anniversary. With love, Leslie & Alan from Leslie & Alan
Mindy & Ed Goldstein on the birth of their granddaughter Emerson Reese,
daughter of Gary & Arielle Goldstein from Lewis & Linda Altman
Bat Mitzvah of Lois & Jay Stein's granddaughter Arielle from Linda & Howard Zryb
Mazel Tov on the birth of Mindy & Ed Goldstein's granddaughter from Linda & Howard Zryb
the Bat Mitzvah of Vivien, granddaughter of Mindy & Ed Goldstein from Ronald & Linda Rosen
the birth of Emerson, granddaughter of Mindy & Ed Goldstein from Ronald & Linda Rosen
Josh Diamond on being our Chattan Beresheit on Simchat Torah. Mazel Tov to you and your family from Ronald & Linda Rosen
Rabbi Klein and his great service on Rosh Hashanah from Sarah Wexler
Josh Diamond Congratulations on a great job! from Sarah Wexler
Mindy & Ed Goldstein on their 50th Anniversary from Sarah Wexler
Mindy & Ed Goldstein on the birth of their granddaughter Emerson Reese & the Bat Mitzvah
of their granddaughter Vivien Neve from Sarah Wexler
Mindy and Ed Goldstein on the birth of their granddaughter Emerson Reese and Bat Mitzvah
of their granddaughter Vivien Neve from Shelley Rosenblum
Rachel and Brian as their daughter Avery becomes a Bat Mitzvah from Shelley Rosenblum
Ilene Lambert, on the birth of her granddaughter from Shelley Rosenblum

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Josh Diamond for his honor of Chattan Beresheit from Shelley Rosenblum
The Zucker Family on the wedding of Justin and Lisa from Shelley Rosenblum
In honor of Sharyn and Steve Kussin's 50th wedding anniversary. With love, Linda and Ron Rosen"

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Dr. Bernard Pollack from Barbara and Joseph Sternberg
Ron Butler from Dr. Scott & Amy Leist
Ida Podolsky from Louella Silberberg
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the birth of Emerson Reese Goldstein & IHO of Bat Mitzvah of Vivien Neve Kokalas, granddaughters of Mindy & Ed Goldstein
from Phyllis Chaskes
Rabbi Siegel from Phyllis Chaskes
Eleanor & David Leiner on the marriage of Josh from Stanley Becker
Felise & Jeffrey Fox on the naming of their granddaughter from Stanley Becker

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Sharyn and Steve's 50th Anniversary! from Rena, Steven, Eli & Alix Kozin

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Your beloved aunt Blossom Steingraph from Rena and Steven Kozin and Family

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the birth of Emerson Reese, granddaughter of Mindy & Ed Goldstein from Phyllis Goldberg
Cantor Warschawski and the beautiful job he did for the High Holidays from Raymond & Rose Cohen
the baby naming of Emerson Reese, granddaughter of Mindy & Ed Goldstein from Raymond & Rose Cohen

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Rabbi Klein, a pillar of the Jewish community from Jamey Kohn
the clergy and all the congregants who gave so much of their time to make the High Holidays feel very special, as always, and
very safe for these unusual times from Ronald & Linda Rosen

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Esther from Roslyn Goldsmith
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YARHZEITS

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In memory of
our beloved parents from Lewis Joel Altman



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The Rudman Family Food Pantry at the Mid-Island Y JCC

and The Food Pantry at the Suffolk Y JCC

focus on homebound seniors and low-income families throughout Long Island.

DO YOU NEED HELP?

We are here for you! Please contact: ThePantry@miyjcc.org. All requests are confidential.

SUPPORT

Monetary donations go a long way in supporting Food Pantry efforts during this critical time.

Your support will help feed thousands of Long Islanders suffering from food insecurity.

Nassau County donations: <https://bit.ly/MiYJCCcontribute> | Suffolk County donations: <http://bit.ly/syjccpantry>

DONATE

Donate non-perishable food items, household cleaning supplies and personal care items.

For a list of current pantry needs, please check our website: <http://bit.ly/miyjccpantry>

VOLUNTEER

During these unprecedented times, your help is vital to our community.

Volunteer opportunities including grocery shopping and contactless home deliveries are available.

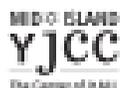
*Feeding more than 500 households weekly.

For more information,

please email: ThePantry@miyjcc.org.

or call Nassau County: 516.822.3535

or Suffolk County: 631.462.9800





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OR TO MEMORIALIZE A LOVED ONE.

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Brick Two

Brick Three

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ADDRESS _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

E-MAIL: _____

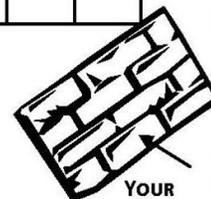
SIGNATURE _____

_____/WE ENCLOSE OUR CHECK FOR \$_____.

(PLEASE MAIL YOUR CHECK & COMPLETED, SIGNED FORM TO THE MJC OFFICE).

ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT:

LINDA ALTMAN AT: leba328@optonline.net



**YOUR
FAMILY'S
NAME
CAN BE PLACED
ON OUR BRICKS**