



**MERRICK
JEWISH
CENTRE**
CONGREGATION OHR TORAH

The Bulletin

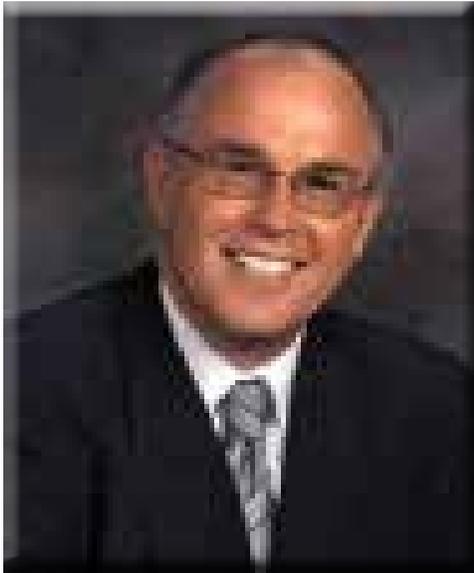


Spring 2021

office@merrickjc.org
www.merrickjc.org

Vol 22, Issue 1

A Message from Rabbi Klein



Dear Friends,

I have spent almost four months studying each day the Talmud tractate of Pesachim which delves deeply into every possible detail and tradition of Passover. So much about the Passover ritual has evolved over the millennia. The Passover offering gave way to brisket, some of the four questions were reformulated and thankfully matzah balls and gefilte fish came to supplement the foods on the Seder plate.

What always remains the same is the ever powerful story of the miraculous liberation of our people from slavery. Both the Torah narrative and the Haggadah are eternal reminders that in every age unforeseen miracles have turned darkness into light. Almost every page of the Haggadah underscores our people's way of looking at life-teaching and telling us that Jews never despair of the possibility of the miraculous.

Last Passover as COVID 19 became the modern-day incarnation of "The Angel of Death," we began to feel ourselves virtually helpless in the face of this virus. But as we prepare for this Passover there are three vaccines available and each day over two million people are receiving the lifesaving vaccinations. That to me is absolutely miraculous. Those shots going into arms is our crossing through the sea-our moment of salvation! Sadly, our joy is diminished knowing that so many never had the opportunity to experience this moment along with us.

Some weeks ago I came across a teaching in Pesachim which ties the miracles of Passover back to the time of creation. They offered a litany of miracles created just before the first Shabbat. Just before the work of creation was complete, God, our rabbis tell us, was busy putting the finishing touches on the cosmos and making certain to include the possibility of the miraculous for every age. The world, they understood, could not endure without faith that a miracle was waiting to happen. How right they were!

Passover awaits and once again we have experienced the absolutely miraculous. Our world is coming back to life- hope is being reborn and slowly but surely, we are coming back together.

So, open the door for Eliyahu, drink the wine of deliverance, sing songs of freedom and be grateful for the miracle of life renewed.

Betty and our family join me in wishing you a Zissen Pesach- a very sweet Passover.

Faithfully yours,

Rabbi Charles A. Klein
Michelle & Michael Schwartz and Family
Senior Rabbinic Chair

The Bulletin

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Merrick Jewish Centre

CONGREGATION OHR TORAH

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A Message from Rabbi Dermer



Dear Friends,

The month of Nissan is upon us, and with it the full blooming of the natural world and the warmth of spring. Our sages long considered this to be a month for appreciating all that is beautiful in G-d's world. Among the special blessings that is associated with the month of Nissan, for instance, is the blessing over the first blossoming of fruit trees, "Blessed are you, G-d, who created this world with nothing lacking, filling it with beautiful creations." This blessing, which I encourage everyone to find an opportunity to say during this month if you are able, captures our anticipation for the spring season ahead, and reminds us that at the core of this month of freedom, is the freedom to appreciate the beauty of the world around us. It is no coincidence that the Hebrew word for art, "omanut" shares the letters of the Hebrew word "emunah," which means faith; that which is beautiful, whether in nature, in our personal creativity, or in our practice of Mitzvot, has the potential to point us back to our faith in the Creator.

It is this theme of beauty and inspiration which has been on my mind as I look toward the Passover preparation and Sedarim to come. On Wednesday, March 24th, from 7-8 pm on the MJC Zoom, I will be holding a creative Seder workshop, where I'll be presenting a range of visual artwork, melodies, poems, and more - all of which I hope you will consider incorporating into your Sedarim this year. Together we will explore historic Haggadot and unique Seder customs through the ages, finding ways to meld the inspiration and creativity of our ancestors with our own family customs, and enrich the experience of those around our Seder tables. If you can't make the seder workshop on Wed. March 24th, a video along with all the resources I share will be posted on the MJC social media pages for you to enjoy.

Golda Meir, when once asked why she considered the Seder to be among the most important moments of her year, responded, "I want everyone around the Seder table to participate in eternity." We can give that same gift to the family and friends who join with us, whether in person or over Zoom, through it requires intentionality, creativity, and thoughtful care. With all that is still less than ordinary about our experience of the Jewish holidays, it is my prayer that each of us will take the extra time this year in particular to prepare Sedarim which are grounded in tradition but take flight in our unique creativity and personal connection to the story of our people. May our tables reflect the beauty of our Jewish heritage, and may G-d's light shine brightly into our homes and into the hearts of all those who join us in celebration through these sacred days of freedom.

With wishes for a safe, meaningful, and beautiful Pesach,

Rabbi Dermer

From the Cantor



Greetings,

Despite the immense political, social, pandemic, and snow accumulation difficulties of the past few months, I feel as if we have flown through the long, dark pandemic winter. I can hardly believe that the daytime is already lengthening, the temperatures are already warming, and spring is starting its bloom as the first buds appear on the barren trees. Now, I am not saying that it was an easy winter, far from it. I'm just expressing the sense that somehow, it seemed to pass faster than I thought it would and without the cataclysmic-style results that I was envisioning back around Thanksgiving.

I, like many of you I imagine, had foreboding thoughts about the possibly disastrous results of everything that was going on. Nothing seemed safe. It felt as though some new calamity could deluge our already Covid-compromised world and leave us teetering on the edge of the proverbial abyss. Where would the new problem come from that might severely alter our lives long into the future?

Would it come from holiday gatherings? Religious services? Public demonstrations or private familial get-togethers? Would it come from potential problems regarding the vaccine rollout? Or from the loss of more people close to me?

Yet, somehow, we managed to live our "covid protocol" lives without the other shoe falling. We managed to hold meaningful and innovative ceremonies for Chanukah, New Year's, Tu B'shvat, and Purim. We managed to honor Shabbat and even celebrate B'nei Mitzvahs. And now it is time for Passover, with its redemptive message of the Exodus story that we need more now than usual. The parallel between the Paschal theme of redemption and our hoped for modern-day Coronavirus redemption is simply too delicious to "Pass-over."

At the Seder, we are commanded to feel as though we experienced the Exodus personally. Having experienced a type of bondage over the past year, as we have all been enslaved to some degree by Covid-19, it will be easier to imagine that feeling of redemption. The Bible in parshat Vaera offers up four expressions of redemption that correspond to the four cups of wine at the seder: V'hitzeiti/I shall remove you, V'hitzalti/I shall save you, V'goalti/I shall redeem you, and V'lokachti/I shall take you to Myself. With the infection rate falling, the restrictions slowly easing, and the vaccine distribution underway we are in the unique position to viscerally experience the allegory of the Exodus story as it manifests itself in the redemption of our world today. So, I offer you my version of the four expressions of redemption found in the Torah but adapted for our current story of redemption in 2021.

V'HITZEITI I shall take you out from under the burdens of Egypt.

For 2021: I shall take you out from under the burdens of Covid-19.

V'HITZALTI I shall save you from their slave labor.

For 2021: I shall save you from the covid labors of social distancing, fear, masks and endless "Zooming."

V'GOALTI I shall redeem you with an outstretched arm.

For 2021: I shall redeem you with your arm stretched out as it receives a vaccination.

V'LOKACHTI I shall take you to Myself as a Nation.

For 2021: I shall take you to Myself as the "New-Normal" Nation and we shall continue to repair the world in new ways that were not imagined before the Pandemic.

So, go forth and prepare for Pesach despite any lingering concerns. Let's reinvigorate our spirituality by experiencing the parallel between the Exodus from Egypt and our own modern-day exodus from Coronavirus in the visceral style that this moment affords us. I feel as if we have turned a corner....I pray that we have turned a corner. Let's continue to take those small steps toward G-d this Pesach, and hopefully, G-d will take the large celestial steps toward us and our desires for a modern day "Covid-demption."

E Kosheren und e freilichen Pesach!

Cantor Warschawski

Our President's Message



Dear Friends:

As an MJC President who has served in this role before, I have the luxury of having an electronic file of past Bulletin articles and other messages to our Congregation. So please forgive me for bringing back the essence of my Passover article from 2014. The wonderful memories I shared then resonate with me even more today, given the sense of separation all of us have experienced during this last year, and the longing we feel to be with large groups of family members and friends.

I am sure most of us have very clear memories of the Passovers of the distant past. For me, the seders of my childhood have now turned into a set of distinct images, like videoclips on an iPhone. My parents, brother and I typically celebrated Pesach at my grandparents' apartment in Flushing, just around the corner from Temple Gates of Prayer. I vividly remember the mirrored wall behind the dining room table, the light brown pile carpeting, the television with a dial to move through Channels 2 to 13, the gigantic yellow rotary phone that hung on the kitchen wall, and the fourth-floor terrace from which we peered every few

minutes waiting for my grandfather to walk home from shul.

I distinctly remember the very large all-Hebrew red Haggadah published during the late 1800's from which my grandfather conducted the seders, and the absolute seriousness with which he took his leadership role. I also recall the fascinating juxtaposition of his earnestness in telling the story of our people with my grandmother's sheer mischievousness as she tried to make everyone laugh and keep things fun. And I also remember the linen napkins that after the seder ended my great-grandmother would sculpt into animals she was magically able to make dance with a mere flinch of her arm.

I can hear my uncle's pure joy in participating in sections of the Hallel, particularly chanting the phrase *ki l'olam chasdo*, during which he was a proud soloist. And, of course, I still have memories of the extraordinary aroma and taste of my grandmother's brisket and sweet potato pudding which are still the gold standard.

It's now more than 45 years since those days, and so much has changed, particularly within the last year. It may yet be some time before we can all assemble during Pesach in the ways we are used to and which we love. Nevertheless I hope that for you and your family, regardless of what your seders will look like, whether you will be together in a smaller group than you long for, and whether you will put Zoom technology next to your seder plate, that Passover this year offers the opportunity to build everlasting memories.

On behalf of Paula, Brianna and our entire family, I wish you a Chag Sameach and that your Passover experience is a sweet and meaningful one.

Howard Tiegel
President

Hebrew School Happenings



Pesach is a holiday of stories. It is our story, the story of how we became the free and independent Jewish people.

Each of us is supposed to tell the story as if we, ourselves, had come out of Egypt. And so---in our Hebrew School, this Pesach, this very special and unique Pesach--- we are having a holiday of stories!

In each class or grade's virtual seder, many grandparents and some parents are telling stories. One grandmother is telling about how she invited a stranger she met at an Art Museum to her seder, while another about how, as a chaplain in the air force, he made kippot for the soldiers out of parachutes! Two of our parents, who grew up under communism in the Soviet Union, are each telling of their own family's Exodus from a world where they were forbidden to be Jews. Now they are living as free Jews, gathering their families around them and leading their seders.

We hope that years from now, our students will be telling their stories. Maybe it will be about how their grandparent told their story at Hebrew School or maybe it will be about their second Pesach in a pandemic. Whatever the tale, this year has certainly provided us all with stories of resilience and hope. Certainly, in our Hebrew School this entire year, that is the case.

Many have told us that they've loved the intimacy of our smaller classes on Zoom. The relationships between teachers and students that have developed this year through our virtual classes are really special. For others, their children have not loved virtual learning as much, but as determined students and families, they have stayed the course. No matter their preference, we all long to be together, sing together, pray together and join hands as a community.

With this Pesach comes signs of spring and hope for a return to normalcy as soon as we can.

I know that I join with the Hebrew School faculty to wish everyone a very Happy Passover with hopes to see you in person soon!

Men's Club

The Men's Club of Merrick Jewish Centre has maintained an active calendar of virtual events built around the goals of Men's Club: Providing Spiritual, Social and Cultural Bridges for the members of our synagogue community.

Richard Knox and Elliot Hymes have run monthly interesting and informative trivia programs. Thank you, Richard and Elliot. Charlie Skop led two events in conjunction with the important ritual of putting on tefillin. In conjunction with the Hebrew School, Men's Club sponsored our annual Build-A-Pair, the discussion of what tefillin are made of, the rituals surrounding tefillin and actually making a pair of tefillin that each student could have for his or her use. As we do each year, on the morning of Super Bowl Sunday, our MJC Men's Club participated in an event with other Men's Clubs throughout North America, entitled "World Wide Wrap." It really is a special event that includes a tefillin tutorial, spirited singing and explanations of the service. Another special aspect of this program is that it brings our Sunday minyan members and the Wrap participants into one cohesive group celebrating this important and fun program. Thank you, Charlie, for leading both Build-A-Pair and World Wide Wrap. I would be remiss if I did not also express my thanks to Ira Blankstein, who has gone beyond his mastery of the Men's Club finances and also organized many of our virtual programs this year, including the two just described, as well as Steve Davis, for publicizing our events.

Coming up, the Men's Club is excited that we will have a very special guest, Evan Roberts, an afternoon anchor of Sports Radio - WFAN, this year for our virtual Annual Paid Up Membership Program on April 25th at 7:00 pm. Not to mention a free Chinese dinner that you will be able to select from menu choices.

All you have to do is:

1. If you have not done so already for September 2020 - August 2021, join Men's Club by sending a check in the reduced annual dues amount of \$25 made payable to Merrick Jewish Center Men's Club, and mail it to Merrick Jewish Center at 225 Fox Blvd, Merrick, NY 11566 and
2. RSVP no later than 4/4/21 that you plan to attend the dinner to Steve Kussin at SK3015@aol.com with your name, cell phone number and email address.

The Men's Club wishes the MJC community a Happy and Healthy Pesach.

Glenn Friedman
Merrick Jewish Centre
Men's Club President



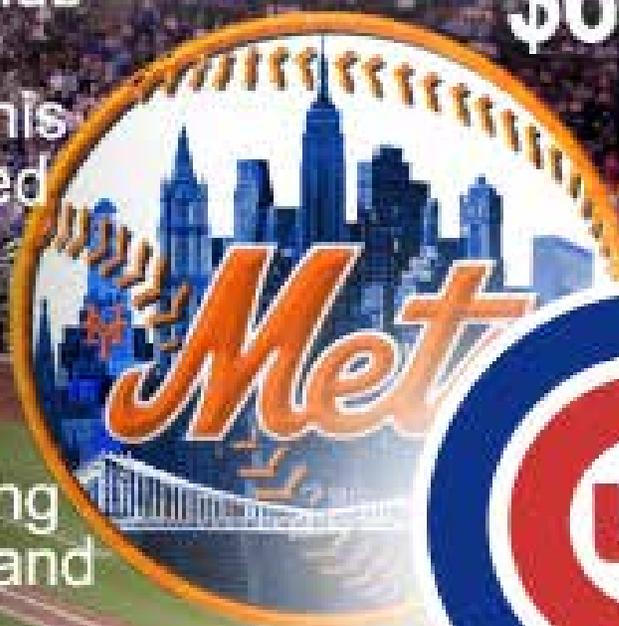
**MERRICK
JEWISH
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CONGREGATION OHR TORAH

Men's Club

June 14

\$60 per ticket

Join with Men's Club
when we honor
Charlie Skop for his
years of dedicated
service to MJC.



Mets vs.
Chicago Cubs
Field Level Seating
behind third base and
visiting dugout.

On the field Spirt
ceremony honoring
Charlie prior to the
game.

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

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

For more information contact menclub@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 (\$60/ ticket) \$ _____ for # _____
tickets. Deadline for ordering is May 1, 2021. Tickets subject to availability

Name _____ phone _____ email _____

Men's Club Paid-Up Membership Dinner

Sunday evening, April 25th, 2021

“A ZOOM NIGHT OF SPORTS TALK WITH GUEST SPEAKER EVAN ROBERTS”

Afternoon sports anchor at WFAN

✓ **FREE** of charge to all Men's Club paid-up members!

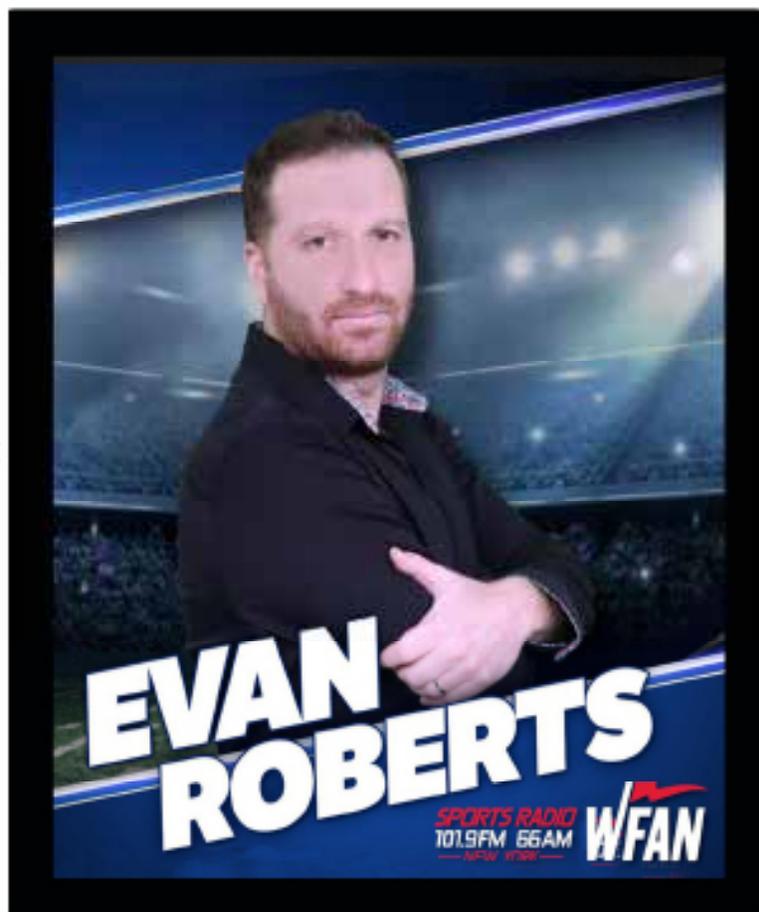
✓ Catered Dinner from Wing Wan (Kosher Chinese)

✓ Dinner pick up 5:30 to 6:00 pm at Merrick Jewish Centre.

✓ **RSVP** to Steve Kussin at (sk3015@aol.com) by April 4. Reservations cannot be accepted after this date. All Zoom info and dinner details via confirming email.

✓ Program will start at 7:00 sharp. “Schmooze with Evan will start at 7:30pm. Please prepare questions for Evan in advance.

Dues for this year 5781 are \$25 per person. Please send checks to the MJC office attn: Men's Club. Make checks payable to MJC Men's Club.



Continuing the traditions of the Merrick Jewish Centre and your Men's Club

Sisterhood

Sisterhood has been continuing activities during the winter.

We had a wonderful #Ritual program about Rosh Chodesh presented by Rabbi Dermer. It was enlightening and inspiring incorporating art and music. Our thanks to Rabbi Dermer for this unique evening.

We also had a successful Mishloach Manot campaign to celebrate Purim. Packing and distribution had to be altered due to the pandemic, but we still fulfilled the mitzvah, enjoyed delicious treats and raised funds. There were gift bags for the entire congregation. Special thanks to Joanne Skop for organizing this enormous project. In addition a very special thank you to all the volunteers who braved the cold to hand out gift bags in a contactless manner in the parking lot.

On March 3rd Robyn Shear facilitated an interesting book study of *What We Will Become: A Mother, A Son and A Journey of Transformation* by Mimi Lema. I think the participants would agree it was very thought provoking. Thanks to Robyn for leading this program.

Did you know that Sisterhood is co-sponsoring Torah Yoga along with Lifelong Learning? There was a Tu B'Shevat session on February 17 and a Pesach session on March 17. Instructor Genia Taub leads the classes and provides timely recipes.

We are also looking forward to playing "Passover Bingo" on Wednesday, March 31st at 7:30, virtually of course. A flyer with details will be available via email shortly.

Please check your emails for future Sisterhood events. We may not be gathering in person but it is still wonderful to stay connected via Zoom.

Wishing you a Zissen Pesach,
Anita Cohen



Lifelong Learning

Lifelong Learning Presents Variety for Many Interests -

The past year has presented many challenges but also opportunities for Lifelong Learning. While we cannot gather for small group learning and discussion, we have been able to take advantage of distant learning opportunities offered by outstanding educators.

An example of this is the forthcoming program "Cancel Culture Through a Jewish Lens" led by noted journalist Bari Weiss that will be held on May 23 at 8:00 pm. Watch for details.

We are also trying some new topics, such as the traditional art form of Papercutting, with a workshop that was held on March 14 in which 26 participants tried their hand at this craft, taught by an excellent Israeli instructor.

Richard Knox continues his popular weekly Sunday morning series on Hollywood Icons. And of course, Sharon Kussin continues to teach both Hebrew and Spanish classes.

Watch for information on an Israeli film to be screened and discussed in mid-April. May will bring the congregation together for an MJC Reads event: How To Make a Life by Florence Kraut. A cousin of congregant Lois Kaufman, Ms. Kraut will join us for an interesting book discussion. Plan to read the book and watch for details of the Zoom discussion.

Lifelong Learning seeks to provide vibrant and engaging Jewish and secular learning opportunities. If you are interested in promoting learning in the broadest sense, please contact one of us.

Steven Greenfield and Joanne Skop, co-chairs

From The Chesed Committee

For nearly 20 years, Chesed has been getting Passover foods to those in need all over Nassau County. Through Send-a-Seder, we collected, packed and delivered foods and supermarket gift cards directly to homes. Although life has been different during this past year, congregants of MJC continue to demonstrate great generosity and caring when it comes to the hungry. Our Covid-style Send-a-Seder may have been different, but it was certainly successful! Your contributions have helped us raise nearly \$5,000 to purchase supermarket gift cards and provide a Happy Passover to so many who would have had difficulties purchasing holiday foods. There will be local families sitting down to a Seder thanks in part to your donations. You are AWESOME!

During this difficult year, MJC congregants have been so generous in providing food at Rosh Hashanah, Holiday Gifts for so many needy children and now - helping so many enjoy a Passover Seder with holiday foods.

Thanks for your incredible generosity; we wish you a Sweet Pesach!

Special Speaker: Bari Weiss

Sunday, May 23rd

7pm CST / 8pm EST



Photography Credit: Sam Bloom

Brought to you through a consortium of the following participating organizations:

- ✧ B'nai Torah of Boca Raton, FL
- ✧ Har Sinai/Oheb Shalom Congregation, Baltimore, MD
- ✧ Hollis Hills Bayside Jewish Center, Queens, NY
- ✧ Jewish Federation of Madison, WI
- ✧ Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks, PA
- ✧ Merrick Jewish Centre, Merrick, NY
- ✧ Temple Dor Dorim, Weston, FL
- ✧ Temple Israel of West Palm Beach, FL
- ✧ West Suburban Temple Har Zion, River Forest, IL
- ✧ Yashar: The Institute for Jewish Activism, Evanston, IL

Join us via Zoom as Bari Weiss discusses “Cancel Culture Through A Jewish Lens”.

Bari Weiss is an award-winning opinion writer, editor, political commentator and the author of *How To Fight Anti-Semitism*.

She has written and edited for *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Vanity Fair*, *Tablet* and other publications. Her columns and discourses are of influential important issues, including #MeToo, freedom of speech and our common culture. Bari is also a regular commentator on television and radio, including *Real Time with Bill Maher*.

**For more information
and Zoom access, contact:**

**Merrick Jewish Centre
(516) 379-8650
admindirector@merrickjc.org**

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

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!

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.

Do you know that the Merrick Jewish Centre now 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.

Virtual Minyan Services

Morning Servies:

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 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

Passover Schedule of Services

Thursday, March 25
Siyyum Bechorim

7-8 am

It is customary for the first-born male to fast on this day preceding Passover, as a commemoration of the first-born Egyptians who died in the tenth plague. In place of the fast, however, tradition developed the practice of concluding a portion of study of a Rabbinic text after which celebration takes place, and the atmosphere of rejoicing overrides the requirement to continue the fast.

Join our Shacharit morning service, which will conclude with part 2 of Rabbi Klein's Siyyum on Tractate Pesachim at 7:40AM

Bedikat Chametz - Searching for Chametz

After 7:40 pm

Since the possession of any amount of chametz at all is considered a violation of the law, great effort must be made to remove all food substances that contain hameitz from the home before Passover. After intense cleaning and the removal of all visible chametz, a search—popularly called b'dikat hameitz—is undertaken the night before Passover after sundown. (This search chametz place on Thursday evening when the first night of Passover falls on Saturday night.) A candle is lit and used to search out the hameitz hidden in even the darkest recesses of the house. The blessing recited before the search can be found at the beginning of the Passover Haggadah.

Friday, March 26
Biur Chametz - Burning of Chametz

Before 11:57am

The next morning we participate in a ceremonial burning of the small amount of chametz that was found during the search the night before. This ceremonial burning is called biur chametz ("destruction of chametz").

Because Erev Pesach coincides with Shabbat, you may leave aside enough bread for two meals on Shabbat. A small area should be set aside in the kitchen, completely separate from the rest, where the chametz food and crockery etc. for Friday lunch, and the challot for Shabbat can be left. Apart from this, all other chametz utensils should be cleaned and stored away, and replaced by Pesach utensils. Matzah should not be eaten until the Seder.

The declaration (Kol chamira) annulling any chametz inadvertently left, is omitted on Friday morning, as a quantity of chametz still has to be used, and some may be left over. It is said instead after breakfast on Shabbat.

Passover Scavenger Hunt and Kids Shabbat Service on Zoom

5:15-6 pm

Join us on Zoom for a fun Pesach themed scavenger hunt, followed by an abbreviated musical Kabbalat Shabbat service and celebration! For children ages 2-7, parents and grandparents welcome!

Kabbalat Shabbat Services on Zoom

6-6:45pm

****Candle Lighting Time for Merrick 6:55PM****

Passover Schedule of Services

Shabbat HaGadol, March 27
*Shabbat Morning Services In Person and Livestream** 8:30AM-10:30 am

*Please note that Shabbat morning services will begin at 8:30, not 9:30, so that we can return home for kiddush, HaMotzi and the Kol Chamirah (annuling any Chametz) declaration by 10:30AM.

Maariv Festival Evening Services 7:30 pm
Light Holiday Candles (from a pre-existing flame) after 7:55 pm

First Day of Pesach, March 28
Yom Tov Morning Services In person & Livestream 9:30-11:30 am
Virtual Community Pre-Seder on Zoom 7-8 pm

From our home to yours, join Rabbi Dermer and Kayley, along with your MJC family, for a festive and meaningful Pre-Seder experience. Together, we will learn, sing, schmooze, and share in the inspiration of the Seder. All are welcome, and if you know someone who doesn't have a Seder to attend - please invite them!

Light Holiday Candles (from a pre-existing flame) after 7:56 pm

Second Day of Pesach, March 29
Yom Tov Morning Services In Person & Livestream 9:30-11:30 am
Maariv Evening Services for Conclusion of the Festival 8 pm
Festival Ends 7:57 pm

7th Day of Pesach, April 3
Yom Tov Morning Services In Person and Livestream 9:30-11:30 am
Clergy Discussion - Standing at the Sea: Monumental Choices and New Horizons for Jewish Life in America Approximately 10:45 am

Light Holiday Candles (from a pre-existing flame) after 8:03 pm

8th Day of Pesach, April 4
Yom Tov Morning Services In Person and Livestream 9:30-11:30 am
Yizkor Service and Sermon Approximately: 10:30 am
Maariv Evening Services for Conclusion of the Festival 8 pm
Festival Ends: 8:04 pm



Passover Guide 5781

The body of Jewish law pertaining to the observance of Passover is immense, and this year in particular, there are added considerations in light of the ongoing pandemic and the fact that Passover begins on Erev Shabbat. Below, please find information regarding some of the most pertinent topics within the laws of Pesach, along with additional guidelines for Pesach observance in the midst of a pandemic.

Laws relating to Leavened Bread

The prohibition of eating leavened food during the festival of Passover is found in the Torah. According to the Torah, one is not allowed to consume, to see, or to have any leavened food in one's possession for the entire holiday period. Therefore, before the advent of Passover, all leaven with the exception of that which will be eaten on Shabbat, has to be removed both from one's sight and one's legal possession. Non-Passover dishes, pots, and chametz, whose ownership has been transferred, should be locked up and covered in order to prevent accidental use. Chametz can be sold online. Please consult the MJC office, or contact Rabbi Klein or Dermer to sell your Chametz.

Siyyum Bechorim

Thursday, March 25th
7-8 am on the MJC Zoom

A firstborn (whether of the mother or of the father) should fast on the day before Passover in commemoration of the deliverance from Egypt. It is the custom for synagogues to make a siyyum (a public completion of the study of a tractate of the Talmud) on the morning before Passover. Since a firstborn who is present may eat, and having eaten need not fast that day. This year, the siyyum marking Rabbi Klein's completion of the Talmudic tractate Pesachim, and the seudat mitzvah will be held on Zoom at 7am.

Though we wish we could provide breakfast for everyone in our building as we have in years past, please feel free to remain on Zoom after the conclusion of the Siyyum, so that we can enjoy breakfast together as a community from the safety of our own homes.

Bedekiat Chametz

Thursday, March 25th after 7:40 pm

It is a mitzvah to search for and destroy Hametz. If cleaning is unusually difficult this year due to ongoing conditions of isolation, it is well to remember that at the end of that process we renounce "all chametz whether I am aware of it or not." If cleaning is sufficient to protect against obvious contact with chametz, we can rely on the formula of bittul (renunciation), which is to be said this year on Shabbat morning.

The search is performed by the light of a candle (traditionally) or a flashlight. Before the search begins, most people distribute token bits of bread around the home so that the search is successful. (Some bag the bits of bread to prevent inadvertent spilling of crumbs.) Any chametz found is traditionally brushed into a wooden spoon using a feather. (Alternatively, any bagged chametz is collected.) The associated bracha and nullification formula appear at the beginning of the Haggadah. 1. Recite the bracha 2. Search darkened rooms of the home by the light of a candle or flashlight. 3. Collect all token bits of bread and any chametz not designated for sale or for consumption on Shabbat.

Because Erev Pesach coincides with Shabbat, you may leave aside enough bread for two meals on Shabbat. A small area should be set aside in the kitchen, completely separate from the rest, where the chametz food and crockery etc. for Friday lunch, and the challot for Shabbat can be left. Apart from this, all other chametz utensils should be cleaned and stored away, and replaced by Pesach utensils. Matzah should not be eaten until the Seder.

Please note that Shabbat morning services on Saturday, March 27th, will begin at 8:30am, not 9:30am, so that we can return home for kiddush, HaMotzi and the Kol Chamirah (annulling any Chametz) declaration by 10:30AM.

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Biur Chametz

Friday, March 26th, before 11:57 am

On Friday morning, we participate in a ceremonial burning of the small amount of hameitz that was found during the search the night before. This ceremonial burning is called biur hameitz ("destruction of hameitz"). The declaration (Kol chamira) annulling any chametz inadvertently left, is omitted on Friday morning, as a quantity of chametz still is to be used for Shabbat. It is said instead after breakfast on Shabbat before 10:30am.

Planning and Setting up a Virtual Seder

Due to the ongoing conditions of the pandemic, this year many of us will continue to host Sedarim through the use of Zoom, or other video chat technology.

Below, please find guidelines for accessing a Seder virtually in accordance with the guidance of Jewish law:

Ideally, the video option should be accessed in a way that does not involve direct interaction with an electronic device, either by leaving the conference active for the duration of use, or using the equivalent of a timer to activate the conference in each location. If this is not possible, ways to minimize, but not eliminate, violations of Shabbat and Yom tov include (in order of decreasing preference)

1. Arranging in advance for a non-Jewish person to activate the conference (practical in an institutional setting where there are non-Jewish workers or a household with non-Jewish members already present).
2. Using a virtual assistant, like Siri or Alexa, to activate the stream.
3. Logging in through a simple press of a button on an app, or clicking a link, on a device which is already activated, rather than by typing, and without having to "wake up" or turn on the device.
4. Doing so only after dark of 2nd day Yom Tov, when the first day of Yom Tov has ended

There is more leniency to activate the stream in one of these ways for a person who is known to be ill, or has a heightened risk for harm from infection, or suffers from a disability.

Ideally, there would be a seder plate at each location, but at the very minimum, every participating location should have access to wine or grape juice, three matzahs, carpas (any green vegetable), maror (any bitter vegetable, such as horseradish, endive, other bitter greens), and salt water. If a Haggadah is not physically available, one can follow the seder without one, or a number of haggadot are available that can be downloaded and printed before the start of the holiday.

Kashering For Passover

Please feel free to refer to this video series from the Rabbinical Assembly for additional insights into the process of kashering for Pesach:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAUaYjT-p5xS6-rM0AixKKC6VauyofyjaD>

For homes in which vessels will not be able to be kashered in the normative manner, we recommend designating a few cooking vessels to be used for Passover cooking before and during the holiday, to clean them well, and let them sit for 24 hours. So long as they don't have visible foodstuff caked on, they are acceptable for preparing Passover food. This technique can also be used for cutlery and non-porous dishes as well.

For homes in which Kashering in a normative manner remains a possibility:

The process of kashering utensils depends on how the utensils are used. According to Jewish law leaven can be purged from a utensil by the same process in which it was absorbed in the utensil. Therefore, utensils used in cooking are kashered by boiling, those used in broiling are kashered by fire and heat, and those used only for cold food are kashered by rinsing.

A) PURGING: Most cooking utensils can be made kosher by immersion in boiling water. This includes metal pots, most baking pans and flatware, and most other kitchenware. The procedure follows:

1. The article to be kashered is thoroughly scoured.
2. The article is set aside and not used for 24 hours.
3. The article is completely immersed in a pot of actively boiling water.
4. If a pot is too large to fit into another pot, the pot

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to be kashered is filled to the brim with water, and the water is brought to a boil. While the water is boiling, a hot stone or a piece of metal is dropped into the pot in order that the water is kept at its peak heat and also that the water boils over the side of the pot.

5. The articles are then immediately rinsed under cold water.
6. The pot that the articles were kashered in is then itself kashered--see step 4.

B) OPEN FLAME: Any utensils which come in direct contact with fire, such as a barbecue spit, a broiling pan or rack, kashered by open flame. The procedure follows:

1. The article to be kashered is thoroughly scoured.
2. The article is set aside and not used for 24 hours.
3. The article is then put under an open flame and thoroughly heated until the metal glows red hot, or is so hot that a piece of paper is singed when it is touched to metal.

SPECIAL CASES Knives with wooden handles cannot be kashered, because particles of food which could lodge between the handle and the blade cannot be effectively removed by purging. In regard to glassware, the proper method to kasher glassware is to soak in clear water for seventy-two hours changing the water every 24 hours. Corning Ware is considered glassware. Fine (glazed) china that has not been used for twelve months is considered as new. It may be used for Passover if thoroughly scoured and cleaned in hot water. Earthenware and other unglazed pottery cannot be kashered, since the material they absorb cannot be purged. Plastics with a high heat tolerance can be kashered as if they were metal. Melmac and other plastics that might melt cannot be kashered, since the requisite amount of heat most likely could not be applied. Utensils covered with a non-stick surface, such as Teflon, can be kashered like other utensils, so long as the Teflon coating has not been cracked or broken. Teflon-coated cookware can be kashered for Passover by careful cleansing and by boiling water. Such items should only be kashered after 24 hours of non-use.

SURFACES: All table surfaces, shelves, kitchen and pantry surfaces used during the year should be thoroughly cleaned and scoured before placing Passover utensils, etc., upon them. It is highly preferable that all such surfaces be covered during the entire week of Passover, especially if you place hot utensils, pot or pans upon them. To make your Passover kitchen attractive, but still kosher, you could use a heavy type of shelving paper, heavy foil, or an ornamental new plastic cloth to cover all surfaces. Shelves upon which you place your Passover dishes should always be thoroughly cleaned and relined.

SINKS: A metal sink can be kashered by thorough cleaning and by pouring boiling water over it. A porcelain sink should be cleaned and a sink rack used because porcelain cannot be kashered for Passover.

APPLIANCES OVENS: Every part that comes in contact with food must be thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned. The oven should be heated as hot as possible for at least one half hour. Self-cleaning ovens should be scrubbed and cleaned and then put through the self-cleaning cycle. Continuous cleaning ovens must be kashered in the same manner as regular ovens. The shelves, bins and walls are then thoroughly scoured. During Passover all shelves should be covered with shelf paper or foil. A sink is kashered as a large pot. The interior of a dishwasher is



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thoroughly scoured, paying careful attention to the strainer over the drain. The dishwasher is left unused for 24 hours, and then run through a wash cycle without soap. Any metal surface of a small appliance that comes in contact with food should be kashered by purging. Plastic parts are treated as mentioned. An electric frying pan which can be immersed should be purged. Many electrical appliances cannot be immersed and, therefore, cannot be kashered. An electric mixer should have its beater purged (metal) or washed (glass). An electric can opener should have its blade and magnets removed and purged. The rest of the appliance should be cleaned so that no food remains on any surface. A microwave oven can be kashered by cleaning it and then placing a bowl of water in the appliance. The microwave should be kept on as long as it takes for the water to evaporate. Auto-claving renders the microwave kosher. Convection ovens are kashered like regular ovens. Make sure to clean thoroughly around the fan.

GAS STOVES: The stove as well as the burners should be thoroughly scrubbed and cleansed and then turned on until red hot.

Purchasing of Food

Food requiring no Kosher for Passover certification no matter when purchased:

- Baking soda
- Pure bicarbonate of soda, without additives
- Eggs
- Fresh fruits and vegetables (including pre-washed bagged)
- Fresh or frozen kosher meat (other than chopped meat)
- Nestea (regular and decaffeinated)
- Pure black, green, or white tea leaves
- Unflavored tea bags
- Unflavored regular coffee
- Olive oils (and other pure oils)
- Whole or gutted fresh kosher fish
- Whole or half pecans (not pieces)
- Whole (unground) spices and nuts
- OU/Star-K Raisins
- Kosher wine
- Plain butter, either salted or unsalted

The following list of basic foods is ideally for pre-Passover purchasing food, but could extend, if determined necessary based on challenges with shopping due to the pandemic, and their likely production before Passover began, to purchase on Hol-HaMoed as well.

- all pure fruit juices
- Filleted fish
- Frozen fruit (no additives)
- Plain cheeses (without added flavor morsels)
- Non-iodized salt
- Pure white sugar (no additives)
- Quinoa (with nothing mixed in)* GF ideal
- White milk
- Some products sold by Equal Exchange Fair Trade Chocolate
- Frozen Vegetables (needs to be checked for possible chametz before cooking)
- Chopped meat
- Plain, non-flavored almond milk, rice milk, soy milk, cashew milk.
- Non-flavored Cream Cheese with ingredients of milk and cream, salt, stabilizers (xanthan and/or carob bean and/or guar gums)
- Non-flavored Yogurt with milk and bacteria, only (which are *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* and *Streptococcus thermophilus*).
- Canned Tuna with just tuna, water or oil, salt, and pyrophosphates
- 100% maple syrup
- 100% Agave
- Ground Salt and Peppers
- Plain (non-Flavored) Decaf Coffee
- Pure Honey
- Dried fruit, prunes only without potassium sorbet

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Food requiring a Kosher for Passover label at any time:

- All baked goods
- Farfel
- Matzah
- Any product containing matzah
- Matzah flour
- Matzah meal
- Pesach cakes
- All frozen processed foods
- Candy
- Chocolate milk
- Herbal tea
- Ice cream
- Liquor
- Soda
- Vinegar
- Margarine

Kitniyot

Until the fall of 2015, the CJLS position on kitniyot (for Ashkenazim) has followed that of the long-standing Ashkenazi minhag of refraining from eating them. These foods included: beans, corn, millet, peas, rice, soy, and some other plant based foods like mustard, buckwheat and sesame seeds. The one exception was an approved permission of peanuts and peanut oil, provided said items have proper year-round kosher certification and do not contain chametz ingredients.



However, the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards formally permitted Ashkenazim (who choose) to consume kitniyot in 2015.

Fresh kitniyot: Corn on the cob and fresh beans (like lima beans in their pods) may be purchased before and during Passover, that is, treated like any other fresh vegetable.

Dried kitniyot (legumes, rice and corn) can be purchased bagged or in boxes and then sifted or sorted before or on Passover. These should ideally not be purchased in bulk from bins because of the concern that the bin might previously have been used for hameitz, and a few grains of chametz might be mixed in. In any case, one should inspect these to the extent possible before Passover and discard any pieces of chametz. If one could not inspect the rice or dried beans before Passover, one should remove pieces of chametz found in the package on Passover, discarding those, and the kitniyot themselves remain permissible.

Frozen raw kitniyot (corn, edamame [soy beans], etc.): One may purchase bags of frozen non-hekshered kitniyot before or during (if necessary) Passover provided that one can either absolutely determine that no shared equipment was used or one is careful to inspect the contents before Passover) and discard any pieces of chametz). Even if one did not inspect the vegetables before Passover, if one can remove pieces of (chametz) found in the package on Passover, the vegetables themselves are permissible.

Repurchase of Chametz

This year your chametz will be repurchased by Rabbi Klein at 8:30 PM on April 5th. Chametz sold by the Rabbi cannot be eaten prior to that time.

World Wide Wrap



Warsaw Ghetto Tefillin

Feb 6, 2021 | by Adam Ross | Aish.com

Last week in Warsaw, a crate of tefillin, prayer books and weapons were found under a building that was once part of the ghetto.

Rabbi Avraham Krieger, the founder of the Holocaust research institute Shem Olam brought the incredible find to Israel. "Despite the horrors and the cruel reality in which they lived," he told Aish.com, "the Jews in the ghetto continued to observe the customs and tradition they grew up with."

The Nazis created the Ghetto in November 1940, forcing around 400,000 Jews in the city and surrounding areas into a space measuring just 2.5% of the city. From the summer of 1942 deportations began to the death camp of Treblinka where the vast majority of Warsaw's Jews were murdered.

From January 1943, the Jews began organizing themselves into a fighting force that held the German army at bay for a month before most of the ghetto was razed to the ground. In recent years, Polish authorities have begun to demolish buildings inside the Warsaw Ghetto to turn them into residential buildings in a process of urban renewal.

"Following one such demolition, construction workers discovered an entrance to a bunker dug in preparation for the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto uprising. The discovery of 20 phylacteries concentrated in one place testifies to the Jewish lifestyle they maintained in the ghetto," Rabbi Krieger explained. "The large number of phylacteries points to the underground prayers they succeeded in holding inside the bunker, underground and under the Nazis' noses."

The bunkers were found under a building at the edge of the ghetto which had an escape route to the Aryan side of the city. "There were several bunkers that connected to each other," Rabbi Krieger explained. "It is our assumption that this place functioned as a passageway which connected the two worlds. Our historians posit that this is a place that fighters and those in contact with the Aryan side of the city used as some kind of station or meeting point."

"We have people on the ground who are always looking for items like these which can shed light on the Jewish spirit of resistance during the war," Rabbi Krieger explained.

The son of survivors from Poland who endured ghettos and Auschwitz, Rabbi Krieger founded Shem Olam in 1997 to record and educate about the Jewish spirit during the Holocaust.



The tefillin were found at a construction site in the area where the Ghetto once stood

"The way Jews responded to crisis demonstrates their great tremendous might and fortitude; learning about a nation from its most difficult moments, and shines a light on who they are. What was found in this bunker certainly attests to the spirit of the Jews who were using it.

"There were Jews, for whom wearing tefillin was a way of life, as natural and essential as getting dressed, eating, drinking and breathing, and those who perhaps had not been observant in practice, but for whom it was an active form of resistance.

"The Nazis wanted to reduce the Jews in the ghetto to subhuman, in their language untermen. When Jurgen Stroop, the Nazi Officer tasked with destroying the uprising took charge, he commanded to treat the Jews as vermin, so that the only thing they cared about was food. Eventually he assumed they would capitulate."

Rabbi Krieger added, "Putting on tefillin was and still is a reminder of the holiness and spirituality that the Jewish people aspire to; wearing tefillin showed they were the opposite of untermen."

Now in Israel, the tefillin are being housed at Shem Olam's archive near Netanya, but Rabbi Krieger says he wants to harness their inspiration for future generations.

"We have a project called From Childhood to Adulthood, in which we invite young Israeli schoolchildren to learn about the lives of Jews their own age during the Shoah. We would like to give young Israelis a chance to wear these tefillin even just for a few seconds – to connect them to this symbol of powerful inspiration and strength."

Active Resistance

Marcel Marceau Saved Hundreds of Holocaust Orphans

Mar 20, 2016 | by Ronda Robinson

Pantomime artist Marcel Marceau not only entertained with his funny, graceful, exaggerated movements, he saved lives – including hundreds of orphans during the Holocaust.

As a teenager, he put his gift of acting to good use. A member of the resistance movement fighting the Nazi occupation of France, he masqueraded as a Boy Scout director and evacuated a Jewish orphanage. He first convinced the children in eastern France that they were going on a hiking vacation in the Alps. Then he shepherded them to safety in Switzerland. He avoided detection on the perilous journey by charming the children with silent pantomime.

“He was miming for his life,” said documentary filmmaker Phillippe Mora, whose father was Marceau’s partner in the French resistance.

Marceau was born to a Jewish family as Marcel Mangel on March 22, 1923, in Strasbourg on the Rhine. He professionally performed what he called “the art of silence” worldwide for more than 60 years. It all began when he discovered Charlie Chaplin at age 5 and amused friends by imitating the silent-film star. Marcel changed his last name to Marceau at age 16 to avoid being

identified as Jewish. The Nazis had invaded France, and the Jews of Strasbourg, in the Alsace region near the German border, were fleeing to save their lives.

Young Marcel traveled with his older brother to Limoges and joined the underground. Marcel not only mimed to keep orphans quiet as they crossed the border into Switzerland, but he also performed a sleight-of-hand, changing the ages on the identity cards of scores of French youths, both Jews and Gentiles. He wanted to make them seem too young for labor camps or work in German factories for the army.

“I don’t like to speak about myself, because what I did humbly during the war was only a small part of what happened to heroes who died through their deeds in times of danger,” Marceau said at the University of Michigan in 2001 when accepting the Raoul Wallenberg Medal in memory of a righteous Gentile who saved thousands of Jews from death in the Holocaust. “Think about the American G.I.s when they were at Normandy and were killed terribly before they reached France.”

“We shall never destroy evil, unfortunately. But good exists also among the majority. I will speak



The pantomime artist’s greatest performance: risking his life to save others.

Active Resistance

only briefly about my own deeds. It is true that I saved children, bringing them to the border in Switzerland. I forged identity cards with my brother when it was very dangerous because you could be arrested if you were in the underground. I also forged papers, not to save only Jews, and children, but to save Gentiles and Jews, especially Gentiles because there was a law in Vichy-occupied France – to send the young French men, who were 18, 19 years old, to factories in Germany to work for the German Army. And then I had an idea to bribe the officials, and make people look much younger in their photos.”

That night in Michigan Marceau gave the crowd advance warning: “Never get a mime talking, because he won’t stop.”

He talked about the acting skills that enabled him to save lives. The cousin who hid him during the war knew Marceau later would make an important contribution to the theater. He talked about his father, whom he didn’t have a chance to rescue. The elder man, a butcher, died in Auschwitz. “I cried for my father,” said Marceau, “but I also cried for the millions of people who died.”

The great mime hadn’t spoken about his World War II experiences earlier in his life. His silence wasn’t surprising, according to University of Michigan professor emerita Irene Butter, who introduced him as the Wallenberg Medalist. “Many, if not most, survivors of the Holocaust were not able to speak about it for nearly half a century,” explained Butter, herself a Holocaust survivor. “Marcel Marceau is known as the Master of Silence – it may have been particularly difficult for him to break the silence about this tragic period in his life.”

He built a career on that silence.

In 1944, after Paris was liberated, Marceau enlisted in the French Army, serving side by side with American G.I.s. As he recalled, “We were already at peace in December 1945, but we were still mobilized. I went to Frankfurt where there was the Sixth Army of General Patton, and I met Captain Parker. He said to me, ‘Young man, what will you do later?’ I said, ‘Pantomime...you know,

Chaplin, Keaton, I want to make theater without speaking.’”

The captain asked Marceau to demonstrate. He obliged with shticks about walking against the wind, climbing stairs and engaging in a tug of war. Then Parker asked him to entertain the U.S. troops – 3,000 strong.

With white face, arched eyebrows and red lips, Marceau continued to communicate to audiences through movement for decades.

Until his death on Yom Kippur at age 84, Marceau performed 300 times a year and taught at his pantomime school in Paris. He would have been 93 this month. The artist who brought poetry to silence was laid to rest in a Paris cemetery in 2007.



Resistance is a 2020 biographical drama film written and directed by Jonathan Jakubowicz, inspired by the life of Marcel Marceau. It stars Jesse Eisenberg as Marceau, with Clémence Poésy, Matthias Schweighöfer, Alicia von Rittberg, Félix Moati, Géza Röhrig, Karl Markovics, Vica Kerekes, Bella Ramsey, Ed Harris and Édgar Ramírez.

Adar / Nissan Madness?

The Yeshiva University Maccabees are the biggest winners in men's college hoops

By Stefan Bondy | New York Daily News
Mar 06, 2021

Ryan Turell always understood why he didn't get chosen for the pick-up games. Then, soon enough, he would take glee in deflating the stereotype.

"I used to walk in open gyms with a yarmulke on and never get picked up," he said. "And then finally when it's my turn to run the court with my buddies - all with yarmulkes on - everybody watching us was like, 'Who are these guys?'"

Turell and his teammates at D-III Yeshiva University are the hottest squad in men's college basketball, winners of 35 consecutive games and eager for more victories, despite layers of COVID-related obstacles. Across the NCAA's top three divisions, no men's program currently holds a winning streak as long as the Maccabees.

It's an unbeaten stretch now spanning two seasons, yet without the reward of an NCAA tournament, which has been canceled in D-III for a second straight year. The players have endured their own COVID infections, a wildly unpredictable schedule with practice restrictions, and a grueling dual curriculum of religion and academics. They never practice or play games during Sabbath.

There's also an obligation to a global community, which is underscored by the coverage of the team in publications such as the Jerusalem Post and The Times of Israel.

"We know every time we step on that court we're representing the Jewish community, we're representing Jewish people," said Turell, a junior guard and All-American selection. "And we want to lead by example. We want to show the world that Jews can play basketball, too."

The Maccabees haven't lost since November 2019, while posting the third-longest win streak in D-III history. SUNY Potsdam holds the all-time record with 60 straight victories, from 1985 to 1987.

"We weren't thinking about it for a while," coach Elliot Steinmetz said of the streak. "But this streak kind of gives the guys something to keep playing for."



The Maccabees packed the gym, back when such things were possible.

Last season, prior to the COVID shutdowns, the Yeshiva Show packed the small gym on the Washington Heights campus, becoming a party of pride.

Assistant coach Michael Sweetney was impressed by the atmosphere, which is validating praise coming from a man who played college ball at Georgetown and was a Knicks lottery draft pick in 2003.

"It was unbelievable," Sweetney said, of the pre-virus crowd. "You walk in the gym and it's pretty much no breathing room. Standing room only. People were standing the whole games. People from the Jewish community were coming to support, but also people from Washington Heights, which was cool to see."

Sweetney joined the staff last season on the recommendation of Tamir Goodman, who Sports Illustrated labeled in 1999 as "The Jewish Jordan." Injuries sabotaged Goodman's career, but he kept in close contact with Sweetney - a fellow Maryland native - and they linked up at a basketball camp in Israel.

"Obviously in the NBA and Division I, you have a lot of individual motives a lot of the time," Sweetney said. "Not to say it's not team basketball, but there's a lot of stuff that goes with it. Whereas here, it's just a great culture to be around."

When Sweetney arrived in Washington Heights, Steinmetz had already established the program as a Skyline Conference contender on the rise. The team soared to a new level in the 2019-20 season,

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with the Maccabees capturing 29 straight victories heading into the D-III tournament with a 29-1 record.

The streak was facing its most daunting task, a Sweet 16 match-up against No. 3-nationally ranked Randolph-Macon, when the tournament



Sweetney, now a Yeshiva assistant, was a Knick from 2003 to 2005 (Ezra Shaw/Getty Images)

was canceled March 13, two days after Rudy Gobert's seismic positive test. Yeshiva players were on the team bus when the cancellation became official, just 10 minutes away from their destination in Virginia.

"At the time, I thought it stinks but at least there's next year," forward Gabriel Leifer said.

The next season hasn't been as seamless or rewarding as Leifer hoped. COVID-19 again ravaged the country and New York this winter, prompting mass opt-outs from programs. The D-I and D-II NCAA tournaments were scheduled, but D-III championships were eliminated across all winter sports "due to low participation numbers among member schools."

Yeshiva was still determined to hold a season, but COVID cases among players loomed as an impediment. Nearly half the roster caught the virus before Leifer sug-

gested a new strategy: the players would practice in pods and split into two groups: those who already had COVID-19 and those who hadn't. That way, according to Leifer, the inevitable positive test wouldn't force the entire roster quarantine, only one pod.

Scientifically speaking, the antibody pod was relatively safe from re-infection and quarantining, thereby ensuring a roster would always be available to play in games. It helped that four of the five starters already recovered from COVID-19.

"Thankfully nobody got sick after we started the pods," Leifer said. "We did that after realizing it's basically impossible to beat the statistics. We would just test and we would literally just cross our fingers. One guy would test positive and it would knock out the whole team."

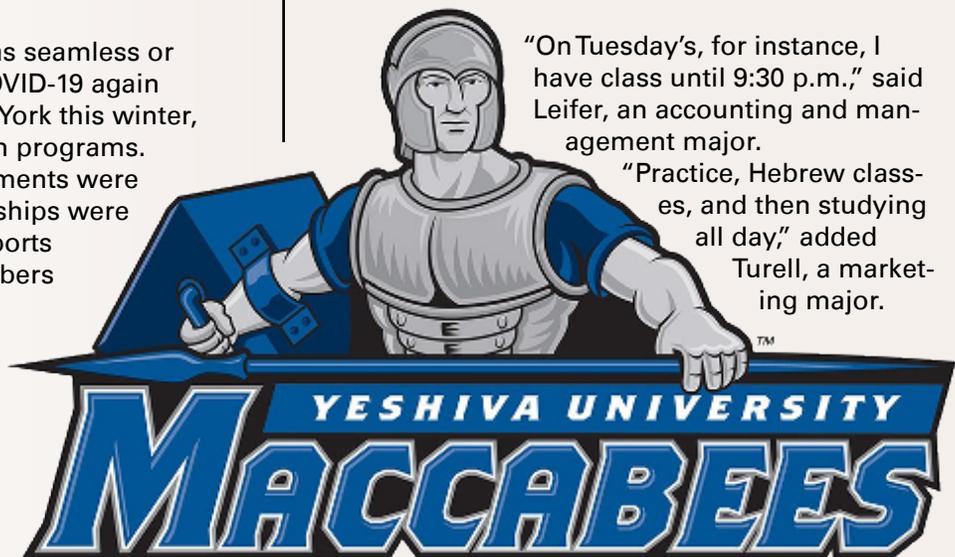
The setup sacrificed team chemistry and 5-on-5 scrimmages for game availability. But there's been another conundrum: finding opponents and games that could fit into the players' intense schedule.

Yeshiva's basketball practice starts at about 6:15 a.m. Prayer follows, not long after the shower, and then the students begin the Judaic program, studying the Talmud, the laws of Judaism. After a lunch break, academic classes fill the schedule until about 5:30 p.m.

Those are the easy days.

"On Tuesday's, for instance, I have class until 9:30 p.m.," said Leifer, an accounting and management major.

"Practice, Hebrew classes, and then studying all day," added Turell, a marketing major.



Adar / Nissan Madness?

The game schedule isn't conducive to planning because it doesn't really exist. With no conference play and a limited number of D-III teams, Steinmetz said he's making daily phone calls to find opponents.

The Maccabees only started playing Feb. 13 and managed six games heading into their Monday matchup against Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken.

"We literally could wake up one day and get a text we have a game today or we have a game tomorrow," Leifer said.

The wildest commute so far has been to Rochester, when the Yeshiva players woke up at 5:30 a.m. for a COVID test, drove five hours, won by seven points, and got home early the next morning at 2:30 a.m. More recently, they swept Jim Calhoun's team, St. Joseph of Connecticut, in a home-away series.

Turell is the star, the First Team All-American and fastest player in school history to reach 1,000

points. He was recruited from California and hopes to play professionally in Israel after graduation.

"He's probably, in my biased opinion, the best player in Division III basketball," Steinmetz said.

Leifer, a senior forward, is the local product from Long Island who led the country in triple-doubles as a Fourth Team All-American last season. The Maccabees (6-0) are ranked fourth in the country and hoping against probability that all this winning results in a title of some sort.

"It's highly unlikely, but possible, somebody puts together a four-team tournament," Leifer said. "We want to set ourselves up for any possible opportunity."

In the meantime, all they can do is win. And that's all they've been doing for the last 15 months.

Stefan Bondy is the NBA beat writer for the Daily News. He's worked here since 2010 while covering both the Knicks and Nets.



In The Temple Family

BAR/BAT MITZVHAS

Zoe Friedman daughter of Jocelyn & Glenn Friedman
Halston Solomon son of Ellen & Darren
Robert Krayevsky son of Yanina & Ilya
Adeena Goldberg daughter of Kate & Charles
Lucas Rich son of April & Daniel
Jake Epstein son of Randee & Brian
Whitni Pastor daughter of Judy & Ira
Avery Danseyar daughter of Beryl & Eric

BIRTHS

Meme & Jay Wanderman on the birth of their granddaughter, Shayna Eva, born on July 24, 2020.
She is the daughter of Natana & Daniel Wanderman.
Joanne & Charlie Skop on the birth of their grandson Seth Noah Lehrer.

CONDOLENCES

Erika Witover on the loss of her dear Charlotte Schwimmer
Polina Shats on the loss of her dear mother Yevgeniya Shats
The family of Nancy Kemper
Betsey Swersky on the loss of her dear mother Nancy Schattner
David Wechsler on the loss of his dear mother Shirley Wechsler
Debbie Levine on the loss of her dear brother Barry Kancigor
Dr. Bernard Pollock on the loss of his dear son Geoffrey
Glenn Friedman on the loss of his dear father Dr. Burton Friedman
Evan Homburger on the loss of his dear father Leonard Homburger
Cathy Simon on the loss of her dear father Melvin Tannenbaum
Beth Posner & Kenneth Ageloff on the loss of their dear father Dr. Andy Ageloff
Gail Bensol on the loss of her dear husband David Bensol
Linda Azmon on the loss of her dear mother Vera Boehm

MARRIAGE

Brandon Cohen to Jaclyn Barth, daughter of Eric & Marlene Barth

Donations

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Joan Land's 70th birthday from Lisa and Ivan Menschel

In memory of
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David Bensol from Michelle & Glenn Reisender & Family

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the Chesed Committee from Sheila Weintraub

In honor of
The Chesed Committee helping others from Sarah Wexler
the Bar Mitzvah of Eidan Wexler, son of Eric & Lauren Wexler from Sarita Mlawer
the Bat Mitzvah of Samantha Eagerman, granddaughter of Iris & Alan Greenberg. from Sarita Mlawer

In memory of
Dr. Andy Ageloff from Alan & Ellen Sussman
Charlotte Schwimmer, mother of Erika Witover from Alan & Ellen Sussman
David Bensol from Alan & Ellen Sussman
Harry Abrahams husband of Linda Abrahams from Arnold & Barbara Ruderman
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David Bensol from Eileen and Irwin Silversmith
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Nancy Schattner from Eleanor & David Leiner & family
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Dr. Andy Ageloff from Joel & Gail Antin
Andy Ageloff from Len Kaufman and Lois Kaufman
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Andy Ageloff from Richard & Dana Knox
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Edythe Schweitzer mother of Arthur Schweitzer from Robert & Carol Bruckner
David Bensol from Roger & Karen Blane
Albert Cohen, brother-in-law of Sam Rappaport from Ronald & Linda Rosen
Andy Ageloff from Shirley Bender
David Bensol from Steven & Sandra Tannenbaum
brother of Sheila Temchin from Susan Blumberg
David Bensol from Shelley Cohen

DANIEL FRIEDMAN FUND *In memory of*
Daniel Friedman from Dr. Larry & Tova Friedman
Daniel Friedman from Laura Seiden

Donations

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Lucas Rich for the accomplishment of his Bar Mitzvah from Daniel & April Rich

In memory of

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Charlotte Schwimmer mother of Erika Witover from Lewis & Linda Altman
Dr. Burton Friedman father of Glenn Friedman from Lewis & Linda Altman
Dr. Burton Friedman from Paula and Howard Tiegel
Shirley Wechsler mother of David Wechsler from Paula and Howard Tiegel
Charlotte Schwimmer from Paula and Howard Tiegel
Nancy Schattner mother of Betsy Swersky from Phyllis Goldberg
William Brief father of Marjorie Toback from Sandra Wegman
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Rose Greenfield from Steven and Mary Greenfield

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In honor of

Wedding of Mariya to Naphtali from Harriet and Barry Lasky

In memory of

Dr Ageloff from Andrea Gottschall
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Joan and Blaine Land's 50th Anniversary from Rena and Steven Kozin

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Melvin Tannenbaum from Rena and Steven Kozin and Family

Dr. Burton Friedman from Rena and Steven Kozin

Nancy Schattner from Rena and Steven Kozin

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my husband Greg from Karen Nelson

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Dr Daniel Warren Berkowitz from Joe Berkowitz

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Dr. Burton Friedman from Merrick Jewish Centre Men's Club

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Helen Drogin's 95th birthday from the Chesed Committee

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Nathan Goodman from Edward & Mindy Goldstein

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Dr. Andy Ageloff from Monica & Mike Lightman

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Edythe Schweitzer from Cindee Cohen

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Dr. Andrew Ageloff from Jane and Keith Levinson

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Miriam & Alfred Driesman from Mitch Driesman

Zachary Babitz on his upcoming Bar Mitzvah and his continuing good deeds from Eve Perlmutter

the marriage of Brandon Cohen to Jaclyn Barth daughter of Eric & Marlene Barth from Lewis & Linda Altman

In memory of

Dr. Andy Ageloff from Barry & Susan Vogel

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Barry Kancigor brother of Deborah Levine from Douglas & Marcia Melzer

Michael Klar from Fred & Leslie Giffords

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David Bensol from Leigh Bonner

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Dr. Andrew Ageloff from Nancy and Jonathan Rosenthal

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Yahrzeits

husband Jay Ofsink from Abby Ofsink
Bernice Auerbach from Louella Silberberg
Sheila Moskowitz from Alan & Ellen Sussman
Ruth Moskowitz mother of Ellen Sussman from Alan & Ellen Sussman
mother Fay Weissman from Alan & Rhonda Weissman
Yetta Stam from Albert & Ruth Stam
father Charles Bader from Allan & Fran Bader
brother Bradley Janowitz from Andy & Brittany Janowitz
father Philip Blachman from Anita Weiss
mother Sadie Goodson from Arleen Orbuch
mother Sarah Orbuch from Arleen Orbuch
father Herb Zelony from Arnold & Andrea Messinger
father Louis Weinstein from Arthur & Isabel Sidorsky
mother Pauline Sidorsky from Arthur & Isabel Sidorsky
sister Karen Magidson from Barbara Kushnick
father Charles Scharf from Barry & Harriet Lasky
father Abraham Berman from Barry & Linda Berman
Janet Kirsh from Barry & Lynne Schosid
mother Lina Renka from Barry & Ruth Silverman
Irwin Weiss from Barry Klein
mother Syd Klein from Barry Klein
father Meyer Lasky from Bea Goldberg
mother Rose Grossman from Bennett & Wendy Grossman
father Edward Waldman from Bennett & Wendy Grossman
Silvia Waldman from Bennett & Wendy Grossman
Harry Koonin from Bernice Mausner
Benjamin Koonin from Bernice Mausner
mother Pearl Miller from Bruce Miller
wife Shirley Gottlieb from Carl Gottlieb
Ann Bursky from Carl Gottlieb
father Norman Skop from Charles & Joanne Skop
mother Lillian Schechter from Clifford & Roberta Keller
grandmother Celia Gladstone from Craig & Marcia Maltz
Rose Geier from Dan & Brenda Geier
William Geier from Dan & Brenda Geier
Doris Bloom from David & Meris First
Ephraim Konigsberg from David & Meris First
Hyman Eisenberg from Deborah Gindi
brother Bernard Brenner from Donald Brenner
mother Cynthia Brenner from Donald Brenner
husband Solomon Rosenberg from Doris Rosenberg
husband Gerald Bugoff from Dorit Bugoff
father Rubin Melzer from Douglas & Marcia Melzer

Yahrzeits

father Norman Unger from Alex & Meredith Carrasquillo
father Irwin Mohr from Allan & Debra Mohr
mother Maxine Mohr from Allan & Debra Mohr
wife Miriam Ageloff from Andrew Ageloff
father-in-law Peter Seligman from Andrew Ageloff
mother Essie Issacs from Arthur & Sheila Sekuler
mother Muriel Ozner from Barry & Geri Silverman
father Harold Swersky from Charles & Betsy Swersky
aunt Betty Friedman from David & Andrea Friedman
father Hyman Hametz from Irwin & Eileen Silversmith
brother Stanley Hametz from Irwin & Eileen Silversmith
father Irwin Hammel from Jay & Marian Hammel
mother Dorothy Feinberg from Jeffrey & Dr. Felise Fox
father Benjamin Fox from Jeffrey & Dr. Felise Fox
son Daniel Friedman from Larry & Tova Friedman
father Alvin Horowitz from Mark & Robin Knoll
Morris Goodman uncle of Mindy Goldstein from Edward & Mindy Goldstein
Gertie Zwitman aunt of Mindy Goldstein from Edward & Mindy Goldstein
mother Rose Goldstein from Edward & Mindy Goldstein
Julius Goodman brother of Mindy Goldstein from Edward & Mindy Goldstein
Anna Goodman aunt of Mindy Goldstein from Edward & Mindy Goldstein
wife Frances Cushman from Edward Cushman
husband William Greenspan from Eileen Greenspan
husband Edward Vogel from Elaine Vogel
grandfather Barnett Russell from Elaine Vogel
father Jack Russell from Elaine Vogel
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father-in-law Harry Goldberg from Esther Goldberg
father Shmaruagy Shargel from Eugene & Rosa Tsesis
father Samuel Distenfeld from Evelyn Zisner
mother Bertha Zisner from Evelyn Zisner
sister Miriam Schanzer from Everett & Myrna Schuval
mother Ilene Markus from Fran Markus
grandfather A.Samuel Markus from Fran Markus
grandfather Allen Charleston from Fran Markus

Yahrzeits

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Daniel H. Feldman from Freddy & Lori Desideri
Jack Alhadeff from Gail Meyrowitz
Abraham Weil from Gary & Jerilyn Weil
Sylvia Weil from Gary & Jerilyn Weil
mother Marcia Blatt from Gary & Jerilyn Weil
father Hugo Carano from Gary & Marion Blane
mother Sarah Carano from Gary & Marion Blane
Inge Blane from Gary & Marion Blane
mother Gladys Kupfer from Gladys Ward
Isidore Greenbaum from Gloria Greenbaum
Bernard Greenbaum from Gloria Greenbaum
Sarah Schwartz from Hannah Beer
Meyer and Florence Martin from Harriet R. Feldman
Moshe Leibusor from Harry & Niza Leibusor
parents Barnett Rubin & Jean Rubin from Howard & Melinda Rubin

IN MEMORY OF

Anita Hochhauser mother of Ilene Lambert from Ilene Lambert
Ruth Blankstein from Ira & Tina Blankstein
father Leon Melamed from Irene Levinbook
grandson Zachary Ruben Portnoy from Irene Levinbook
Hyman Levinbook from Irene Levinbook
mother Beatrice Menschel from Ivan Menschel
Edith Rubin from James & Andrea Gelb
Arthur Gelb from James I Gelb
David Grossman from Jan & Bonni Axelrod
mother Barbara Salwen from Jan & Ethel Liebeskind
sister Nina Aronovitz from Jan & Ethel Liebeskind
mother Ruth Roth from Jan & Ethel Liebeskind
sister Selma Glickman from Jeanne Lipsky
sister Helen Lijston from Jeanne Lipsky
father Leonard Schwartz from Jeffrey & Elizabeth Schwartz
mother Rose Schwartz from Jeffrey & Elizabeth Schwartz
mother Dorothy Kravitz from Jeffrey Kravitz
grandmother Bertha Wiener from Jill Lenney
grandfather Louis Wiener from Jill Lenney
Leo Feldman from Joan Feldman
brother Kenneth Stuart Stoller from Joel & Rita Stoller
Sidney Roth from Joel & Roslyn Gorinsky
mother Jean Feldman from Jon & Michelle Goldenberg
father Philip Beck from Joseph & Barbara Sternberg
mother Ruth Beck from Joseph & Barbara Sternberg
Adolf Klein from Joseph & Diana Hoffman

Jahrezeits

mother Kitty Sternbach from Laraine Sweberg
Melvin Shilling from Larry & Wendy Shilling
husband Edward Friedman from Lenore Friedman
mother-in-law Gussie Friedman from Lenore Friedman
Betty Altman mother of Lewis Altman from Lewis & Linda Altman
Charles Katz from Lorraine Ullian
Lillian Press from Louella Silberberg
Stanley Leivent from Mitchell & Beth Wolk
father Joel Hamroff from Marc & Joanne Hamroff
mother Miriam Goldstein from Mark & Abby Goldberg
husband Paul Edelstein from Marlene Edelstein
father Irving Zeizel from Martin & Cheryl Shaiman
mother Sonia Kreutzberger from Marvin & Alice Kreutzberger
father Charles Feller from Marvin Feller
wife Marcia Feller from Marvin Feller
mother Syde Hauben from Mel & Marcia Friedman
Sylvia Friedman mother from Mel Friedman
father in law Alexander Silverman from Melvin Parker
wife Nannette Parker from Melvin Parker
mother Joan Goldstein from Michael & Deborah Goldstein
Jacob Toback from Michael & Marjorie Toback
Jerome Levy from Michael Schuster & Elaine Levy
Sylvia Levy from Michael Schuster & Elaine Levy
mother Mildred Bleistern from Mitchel & Karen Bleistern
father-in-law Donald Pitkoff from Mitchell & Brenda Pitkoff
Thelma Lubow from Mitchell & Robin Lubow
mother Betty Yenis from Murray & Phyllis Yenis
father Isaac Yenis from Murray & Phyllis Yenis
husband Max Levine from Myra Levine
Henia Rum from Nathan & Paula Rum
Helen Friedman from Nathan & Paula Rum
father Dr. Harry D. Berlin from Norman & Michelle Whitman
mother Ann Diamond from Paul & Barbara Schwartz
father Irwin Schwartz from Paul & Barbara Schwartz
father Melvin Wolf from Peter & Melanie Wolf
Burt Lipman father of Elaina Corwin from Philip & Elaina Corwin
sister Arlene Mintzer from Phyllis Chaskes
father-in-law Samuel Chaskes from Phyllis Chaskes
daughter Sandra Feldman from Rhoda Feldman
father Morris Waxman from Rhoda Feldman
father Michael Toporek from Richard & Carol Toporek
father Murray Feldman from Richard & Dana Knox
mother Marilyn Tillis from Richard & Janice Tillis

Yahrzeits

father Edwin Tillis from Richard & Janice Tillis
Rebecca Stern from Richard & Shari Stern
mother Vivian Schwartz from Richard & Sherry Schwartz
father Irving Washor from Richard & Sherry Schwartz
mother Claire Washor from Richard & Sherry Schwartz
father Edwin Shelansky from Robert & Carol Bruckner
father Richard Saunders from Robert & Hanna Saunders
father Theodore S. Bye from Robert & Helen Wagner
Joyce Gorin from Robert & Janet Bertner
Sara Birnbaum from Robert & Lenore Birnbaum
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Ruth Kaufman from Robert & Lenore Birnbaum
husband Sanford Cogen from Roberta Cogen
Miriam Levine from Ronald & Deborah Levine
mother Edith Kancigor from Ronald & Deborah Levine
father Morris Kaplan from Ronald & Rochelle Peretz
Anne Peretz from Ronald & Rochelle Peretz
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Stanley Leivent from Ruby Leivent
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father Bernard Seidenfeld from Ruth Katz
mother Pauline Levy from Sandra Pinkus
Lily Wexler from Sarah Wexler
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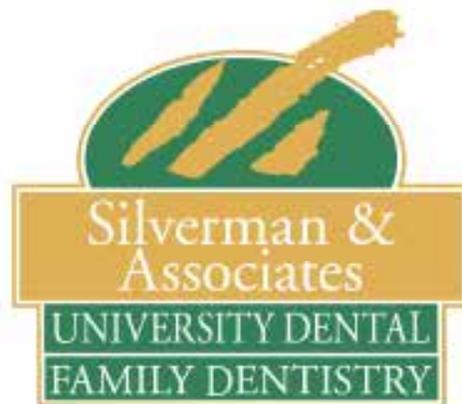
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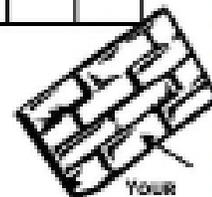
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