

The Outreach

A Monthly Publication of Valley Outreach Synagogue and Center for Jewish Life



Rabbi Ron Li-Paz

Valley Outreach Synagogue (VOS) was founded in 1986, with a specific and unique mission among Los Angeles Jewish institutions. It was to open a wide and welcoming door to Jewish life.

Our founding spiritual leader, Rabbi Richard Schachet, of blessed memory, wanted to create a synagogue that would serve all who wished to participate, regardless of their Jewish knowledge and experience, their sexual orientation or their ability to afford, what he believed, was essential for good living and for a better society.

In 2017 VOS opened a beautiful **Synagogue and Center for Jewish Life** in Calabasas. Our center is home to services, classes, social gatherings, and it can be home to your next celebration or business event. **Welcome in!**



From Rabbi Li-Paz **On the Basic Braid**

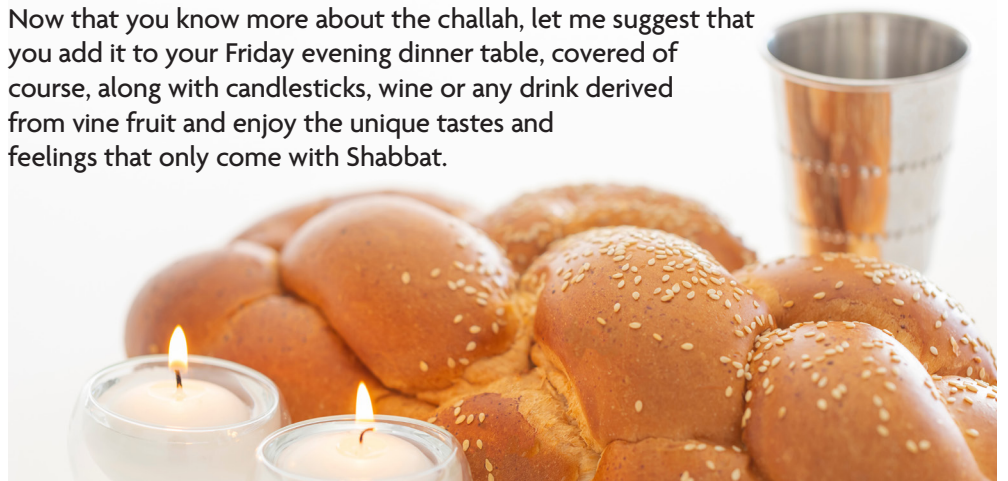
Every Friday evening, I drink a good glass of wine and eat what is surely the most delicious form of bread, challah. I try to resist bread the rest of the week but on Friday evening, my religion demands that I enjoy the best of the best. Ciabatta is good. German dark bread is fine. A fresh slice of wheat toasted is delicious but challah, I think you'll agree, is just divine.

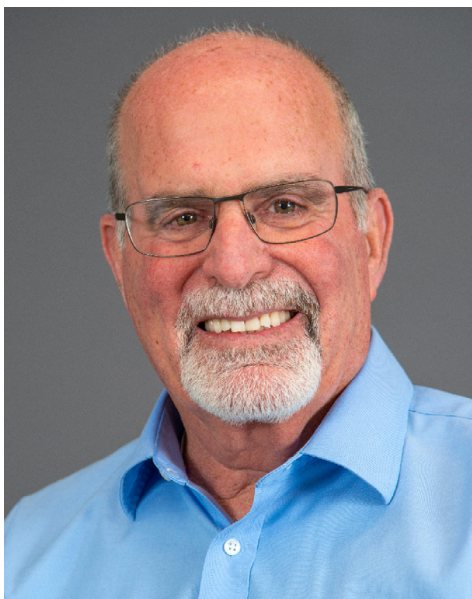
Our beloved Shabbat loaf is originally referenced in the bible as a small portion of dough torn off and set aside as a tithe for the priest. Therefore, even to this day, one important element of challah that makes it kosher is that the maker tears off a small piece, usually wraps it in foil, and burns it in the oven as a small sacrifice. Our Torah study students surely recognize this from our current reading of Leviticus.

But the braids? My research shows that beautification of the loaf has a surprising origin. The practice of braiding the challah loaf is thought to have begun in the 15th century - not in Israel...or even Challarado...but in Austria and Southern Germany. Jewish housewives started braiding their loaves following the local Christian tradition of plaiting loaves baked on Sundays. Who knew? The braids were also thought to symbolize the Sabbath bride's hair. The number of strands in the braid could reflect one's wealth and status; the more strands, the wealthier the family. Some say that the three traditional braids represent truth, peace, and justice. Round challahs, baked for Rosh Hashanah, symbolize continuity. Other shapes, like ladders or hands, have their own unique symbolism associated with different Jewish holidays or concepts.

But did that 15th century challah loaf taste as delicious as the one I ate last Friday evening? Not likely. That sweetness, the eggs, sugar, poppy seeds, raisins and even chocolate chips are all American additions.

Now that you know more about the challah, let me suggest that you add it to your Friday evening dinner table, covered of course, along with candlesticks, wine or any drink derived from vine fruit and enjoy the unique tastes and feelings that only come with Shabbat.





Bill LaVere,
VOS President

VOS President's Message

On **Sunday February 4**, VOS will be holding our **Yom HaShoah** event to commemorate the Holocaust (see flyer on page 10). Our special guest and Holocaust survivor, Celina Karp Biniaz, who was on Schindler's list, will speak to us about her experiences. We are requesting that you pre-register for this event.

Our next **Shabbat Service** will be held on **February 12**. The theme for this Shabbat Service will be "*In Search of Peace & Harmony*". We look forward to seeing everyone.

VOS would not exist without its many volunteers. With that in mind, we are looking for volunteers to serve on our Board of Directors. Becoming a Board member is an excellent way to give back to our VOS community. Board members serve a 2-year term and meet once per month. If you are interested in serving on our Board, please contact me for further details.

SHABBAT SERVICE FEBRUARY 12

In Search of Peace & Harmony



An Unforgettable Small Act of Kindness

By Sheri Albala

Something amazing happened to me today – really amazing!

Sharona Jacobs, Rabbi Li-Paz's Assistant, called me to let me know that she received a call from a former Marine named Daniel, who had received one of the C-Rat boxes (*military term for Type C-Rations*) in 2004 that was sponsored by VOS. Daniel received that box while serving in Iraq and wanted to thank the VOS volunteers who had signed the card that was included in every package.

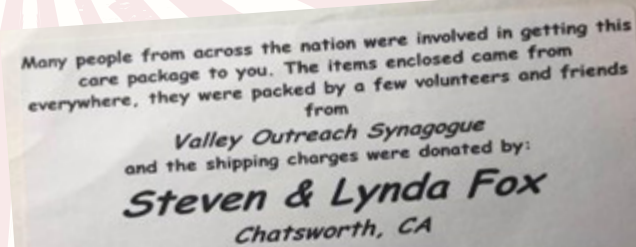
I called Daniel and he told me that while talking to his son about his time in the Marines, he opened a box of mementos from those years. One of the things he found was the card from his C-Rats. He wanted to tell us how much it meant to him to get those small gifts during his deployment.

He told me the story of his determination to join the Marines after 9/11, at just 17 years old. Since he had a childhood bout with asthma, the Marines refused him repeatedly, even after several requests for an exception and being in perfect health. He called his representa-

tive, his senator, and finally he called the Office of the President. That call got him connected to the Pentagon. He explained to the person with whom he was speaking about all the hoops he had jumped through to try to enlist in the Marines. He was then instructed to go back to his recruiter and re-submit his application. That was the "golden ticket" as far as he was concerned. He got his wish to join the Marines, and served our country soon after.

I was so touched by his story and how compelled he felt to track me down after nearly two decades. He wanted to be sure I knew how much he appreciated what VOS and our volunteers had done to make the lives of all the service members a little brighter.

More than 20 years later, the volunteers, local managers and VOS liaison may have changed, but the need of our troops to receive small comforts from home remains the same.





JEWELS Program Thrives with Community Building & Mitzvot Focus



Sharone Weizman, M.Ed., VOS JEWELS
Director of Lifelong Learning

Greetings VOS Community,

After a refreshing winter break, our JEWELS families are back and ready to embrace the second half of the year together. We are thrilled to see the enthusiasm and momentum that our program and community continue to build around our themes of relationship building and doing Mitzvot as a community.

One of the highlights of the past month was our **Tu B'Shvat celebration** – the first-ever Tu B'Shvat Seder for the entire VOS community. It was a delight to witness congregants of all ages coming together to celebrate the birthday of the trees, with music, songs, and a shared sense of joy. We were particularly touched by the intergenerational connections that took place, as our Little JEMS bonded with older kids, parents, and grandparents, fostering a stronger sense of community.

We are also excited to kick off our **"Mitzvah Mensch of the Month"** initiative. Starting this year, we will honor one outstanding student each month who has gone above and beyond in their classroom and with their peers. **For February, we are proud to recognize Sadie**, who exemplifies the values of

Kavod (Respect), Chesed (Kindness), and V'Ahavta Lereacha (Loving Others). Sadie is not only kind, humble, and gracious but also an exceptional helper and leader in her class. Kol Hakavod, Sadie, for being a true Mitzvah Mensch!

In other exciting news, our students will be heading to the **JCA Camp Alonim weekend retreat in Simi Valley from February 9th-11th**. We are thrilled to have 17 kids attending this spectacular event. They will have the opportunity to celebrate a camp-style Shabbat in nature, bonding with new and old friends and participating in various Judaic and musical Shabbat activities. We can't wait to share the wonderful experiences and memories from this weekend with the entire congregation.

Additionally, our community will come together this month for a special **Holocaust Remembrance Day Program**.

Our JEWELS and teen students will actively participate in this powerful and meaningful event, joining the entire VOS community. We are grateful for the opportunity to hear from a Holocaust survivor, recognizing that these opportunities are becoming increasingly rare.

Lastly, we kindly request your support in spreading the word about our exceptional JEWELS program. We are currently offering a **special promotion of half-off tuition and half-off membership for new students** entering our Pre-K to 6th Grade JEMS classes.

FEBRUARY

Mitzvah Mensch of the Month

Sadie

FEBRUARY 4

Holocaust Remembrance Day Program

FEBRUARY 9, 10, 11

JCA Camp Alonim Retreat in Simi Valley

Please refer to the advertisement on page 19 in this month's Outreach for more details.

We appreciate your ongoing support and engagement in our community. Let's continue to build connections, spread kindness, and make the world a better place, one Mitzvah at a time.

*Shalom,
Sharone Weizman*



Photos above: VOS JEWELS first-ever Tu B'Shvat Seder for the VOS community.

Chanukah Angels

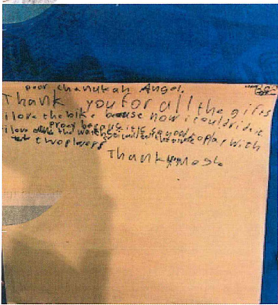
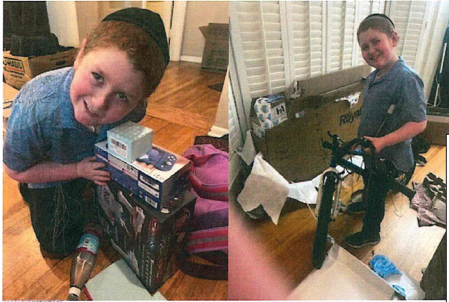
We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our wonderful community for becoming Chanukah Angels. We not only met but exceeded our goal by "adopting" 16 Chai Lifeline children. An astounding 75 members of our VOS community joined in this heartwarming initiative. – Sharone Weizman

Dear Chanukah Angel,

Thank you so much for your thoughtfulness and generosity! Your support to our family means so much, and Moshe is really enjoying the gifts which you have gone above and beyond!!

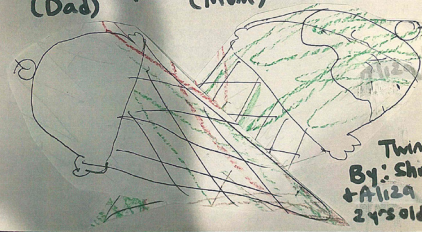
Wishing your family lots of blessing, success, and good health,

Moshe's mom



Thank you for all the amazing toys, kitchen set and food sets you sent for Shikha and Aliza. They have already spent so much time playing with them. It is such a help and brought so much happiness. May Hashem bless you!

With much appreciation,
Binyamin & Hadassah
(Dad) (Mom)



CHAI LIFELINE WEST COAST

Chanukah Angels

January 2024

To Our Dearest Chanukah Angels,

We want to take a moment to express our heartfelt thanks for your incredible kindness this Chanukah holiday. Your generous support and thoughtful selection of gifts brought tremendous Chanukah joy to your Chai Lifeline child!

At a time that can be so isolating and dark, your love and care brought happiness and light to your "adopted" child and let their family know that they are not alone in their journey.

We are so grateful to have your support. Please find attached a note of thanks from your Chai Lifeline child/family.

With immense gratitude,

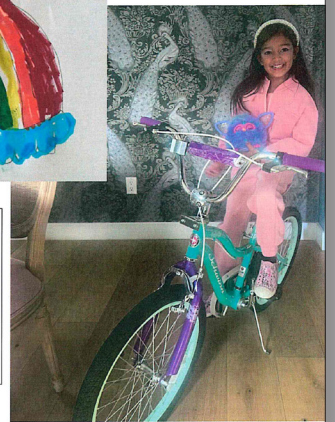
The Chai Lifeline West Coast Staff

Dear Chanukah Angels, thank you for the party and the bike and the rest of my presents. Thank you! Hanukkah Angels Love Lincoln!!

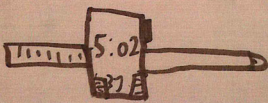
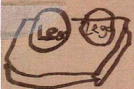


Thank you, Chanukah Angels, for your generosity and kindness. You brought so much joy to Lincoln while simultaneously giving us much needed ease this holiday season.

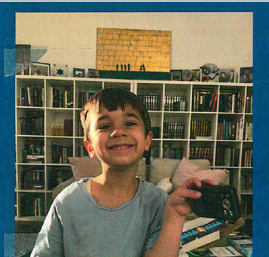
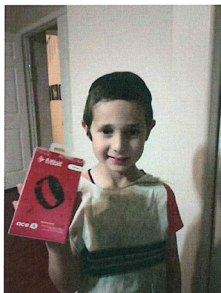
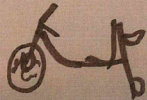
With Love and gratitude,
Lincoln's Mom and Dad



Thank you ANGELS for my gifts.



Sholohn



Thank you so much for being my Chanukah Angels, these presents mean so much!

Eggy

The Fundraising Team



Denise Horowitz,
VP Fundraising

We need your support! Mark your calendars for our upcoming **Western Nights Gala** being held on **Saturday, May 4, 2024 at VOS.**

Included in your ticket is a wonderful dinner catered by Ruth Hurwitz, music by Mike's Country

Dancing, and a silent and live auction. Dress in your best, comfortable western attire and enjoy an evening orchestrated by our terrific Master of Ceremonies, Loren Witkin.



Our honorees for this fun-filled evening are Woman of the Year, Susi Weissman; Man of the Year, Ron Lieberman; Couple of the Year, Melissa and Gregg Moscot; and Light of Israel, Anne Sperling. These honorees are amazing volunteers who have done so much for VOS.

Next month you will receive a letter in the mail that will highlight the Gala. You can help us by donating items for our auctions such as restaurant gift cards, golf items, hotel stays, movie tickets, winery items, artwork, vacation rentals, etc. The letter you receive will also detail other ways you can contribute to the Gala, by sponsoring the event or purchasing an ad in the tribute book. We also need donations of large baskets for the silent auction.

If you want to volunteer and be a part of this fun event, please contact **Denise Horowitz** at 818-497-5060 or by email at denise.horowitz@icloud.com.



Wendy Levenson,
VP Religious Practices

at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom, we will feature Rabbi Marvin Hier, the Founder and Dean Emeritus of the Simon Wiesenthal Center (SWC) and its Museum of Tolerance, who will speak to us on "Hate Has Crossed the Ocean".

Named by *Newsweek* as number 8 among the 50 most influential rabbis in America, Rabbi Hier founded the Museum of Tolerance Jerusalem in 1993—now in its final stages of construction in Jerusalem. In this capacity, Rabbi Hier and his senior team have raised hundreds of millions of dollars for the institutions he has supervised and directed.

Rabbi Hier founded Moriah Films, the SWC's film division, in 1980, has served as Moriah Films' executive producer, and holds the distinction of being the only Rabbi who is a member of the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences, and the recipient of two Academy Awards. His personal relationships with many of Hollywood's industry leaders

Rabbi-in-Residence Lecture Series



Our Rabbi-In-Residence Lecture Series continues this month with a special presentation from one of America's finest rabbis. **On Thursday, February 15**

has resulted in 40 years of National Tribute Dinners, which have raised hundreds of millions of dollars for the SWC.

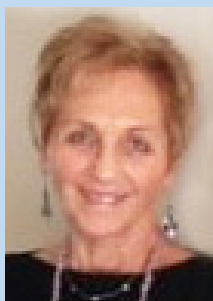
Rabbi Hier was the first Orthodox rabbi in American history to be invited to deliver an invocation of a Presidential inauguration, and the first American to be chosen by the government of Israel to light the Torch of Remembrance on Israel's Independence Day. He is also a recipient of two honorary Ph.D's.

Since its creation in 1977, Rabbi Hier has directed and implemented, together with senior colleagues, all the goals, policies, and programs, including the worldwide social action activities of the SWC. Rabbi Hier was recently invited to join The Genesis Prize Foundation Advisory Board. The Genesis Prize, which is often referred to as the Jewish Nobel, annually awards \$1 million to Jewish people who have attained recognition and excellence in their fields.

Everyone is welcome, so mark your calendar for the third Thursday of the month. We look forward to seeing you on February 15, for this special presentation.

For more information or to sponsor a rabbi, please contact **Wendy Levenson** at 310-985-4285 or email at wendylev@sbcglobal.net.

VOS Sisterhood



Barbara Barackman,
Sisterhood President

We are looking forward to our first meeting of the new year on **Thursday, February 1 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.** Our guest speaker will be our very own Lenny Horowitz who will update and inform us about the Safety and Security Program that is now in place at VOS.

In March, we are planning our first daytime meeting on **Thursday, March 7 at 11:00 a.m.** This will be a **Meet, Greet & Schmooze** with us bringing our own lunch, playing a couple of games and having a little dessert together.

In April, we are hoping to have a **Dots for Tots** event from the Braille Institute where we put dots on books for young children to allow them to read in Braille. What a mitzvot that will be! Details about this special event will follow next month.

Stay well and hope to see many of you at our Zoom meeting on February 1.

The Membership Team



Anne Sperling,
VP Membership

Dear VOS Members,
Shalom! We are excited to announce an exclusive event just for you! Join us on **Sunday, March 10, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.** for **VOS Members Day—Joy Through Engagement!**



Members Day is the perfect opportunity for you to bring your calendars and plan your membership year. We have a wide range of activities and events lined up, including **Shabbat dinners, Friendship Connection activities, classes, volunteering opportunities, special events, and educational programs.** This is your chance to make sure you don't miss out on anything.

But that's not all! There will also be door prizes and activities to help you meet and connect with other members for a fun, constructive afternoon.

We believe that membership takes a village. Join us and learn how your friendship can positively impact the upcoming year by becoming a VOS Member. We need each of you to make this year the best VOS year ever. We can't wait to see you there and celebrate the joy of being part of the VOS community. Joy in membership awaits!

To register for Members Day call **Annie Sperling** at 805-796-9255 or email at anniesperling279@gmail.com.

*In appreciation,
Your VOS Membership Team*

The Mitzvah Committee



Jay Stein,
VP Mitzvah

Mitzvah Day is Returning!

I hope your 2024 is starting out to be an amazing year. Much of what the year will become is what we make of it. We can certainly make our lives, and the lives of others,

better. Oftentimes I think we make too much of making things better for others. We don't have to buy someone a car to make a difference. The simple act of holding a door open for someone can make a difference in their day.

Many have asked about Mitzvah Day at VOS. I am happy to announce

that with the guidance of the Jewish Federation and congregations across the San Fernando Valley, Mitzvah Day is returning to VOS. We will have an event planning meeting soon. Our JEWELS program will also be involved in this important event. I will soon have more information about how you can participate in the events and projects for Mitzvah Day.

In our lives we look for miracles all the time. But shouldn't we be creating miracles? Like I said earlier, we need to give back, but it doesn't necessarily have to be a grand gesture. We can give food to the hungry or donate blood so others can survive. Perhaps the gesture is a phone call to someone who is alone and could use some kind words. Take a moment in your day to find small ways in which you can make a difference.

VOS Men's Club

The Men's Club of VOS is dedicated to the camaraderie of great men, the support of our synagogue, and the exchange of life experience and (occasionally) good jokes!

FEBRUARY 1

The Men's Club has monthly meetings on the **first Thursday of the month at 5:45 p.m. for free dinner** followed by a **meeting at 6:30 p.m.** The next meeting is **February 1**. Contact **Bob Brandt** for additional details at 818-535-0067.

MARCH 31

MEN'S CLUB PARTY & BBQ

The Men's Club Board will have a **Family BBQ on Sunday, March 31, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. at the Masonic Lodge at 14750 Sherman Way.** The parking lot holds over 160 cars and parking is free. This is a *fun, fun, fun family event*, so the more, the merrier. The cost will be **\$25 per family (up to 5 people)**. We will supply all the food and drink. The March 31 BBQ will honor **Al Swedelson** for his time creating an outstanding Men's Club.



JULY 28

MEN'S CLUB PARTY & BBQ

The Men's Club Board will have another **Family BBQ on Sunday, July 28, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. at the Masonic Lodge at 14750 Sherman Way.** The parking lot holds over 160 cars and parking is free. This is a *fun, fun, fun family event*, so the more, the merrier. The cost will be **\$25 per family (up to 5 people)**. We will supply all the food and drink. In addition, the July 28 BBQ will honor **Simone Brandt** for her outstanding monthly meals and her duties as Treasurer for The Men's Club.

OCTOBER 20

MEN'S CLUB ANNUAL DINNER

The Men's Club Annual Dinner will be held on **October 20, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.** Location TBD. Monies collected will help fund synagogue projects. For information contact **Bob Brandt** at 818-535-0067 or **Harvey D. Rose** at 323-940-8881.



Sunshine Committee

Sue and Harvey Magidow,
Co-Chairs VOS Sunshine Committee

We have all felt alone and often isolated from the world, when we are ill or when suffering a devastating loss in our lives. As a VOS family member, the Sunshine Committee makes a promise to you that you will never be alone or forgotten.

The Sunshine Committee volunteers regularly send "Thinking of You", "Get Well" and "Sympathy" cards to members during difficult times. The committee makes phone calls, a house call, or a visit to a recovery facility to check in and make sure all is well.

At the direction of our clergy, committee volunteers are standing by to ensure that no VOS member is isolated or alone during stressful periods in their lives.

Thank you to our Sunshine Committee volunteers for their tireless efforts to support the good health and well-being of our VOS family.



VOS Shiva Support Committee



Marlene Frierson,
Shiva Support
Committee
Chairperson

The Bereavement committee is changing its name.

Valley Outreach Synagogue listens to our members. The need for a group to be formed for adults who have lost a loved one is now available.

The **VOS Shiva Support Committee** (formerly The Bereavement Committee) will help families who have lost a loved one. We will listen and make suggestions based on their spoken needs and wants, and then help prepare the "shiva house" on the day of the funeral.

I always need assistance. I can't do this alone. It is a true mitzvah to reach out and help when the need arises. I would love to have a discussion with you about what we do. Please email me, **Marlene Frierson** at mmarni@juno.com with your contact information if you are interested in volunteering for this important support committee.

Happy Valentine's Day!



Condolences

Joan Flack

*Aunt of Carla (Dan) Adivi
and sister-in-law of Jerry Primack*

Ricky Fuentes

Great nephew of Jay Stein

Harry Grand

*Father of Alissa (Tom) Nial,
beloved member of our
synagogue community*

Michel Handler

*Father of Denise Marks
(Doug Huberman),
a Holocaust survivor*

Roberta Mahler

Relative of Joni Reiff

Bob Monroe

*Husband of Margie,
beloved member of our
synagogue community*

Tracy Morse

Cousin of Lyle (David) Glazer

George Rosen

Nephew of Jeff (Judy) Gaffin

Stefanie Rosen

*Wife of Sean Kavanagh and
mother of Isabelle, Aidan, and Liam*

Alan Templer

*Husband of Lea Templer
and father of Pam (Mike),
Barbara (Adam),
grandfather of Audrey, Isabelle,
Hannah, Abigail, and Theodore*

Volunteer Today!

Alone we can do so little,
together we can do so much!

Helen Keller

Enrich your life while having fun,
making new friends and supporting
our VOS committees.

We Need You!

For more information on what interests you or how to become involved, contact **Judy Benedict**, our new Volunteer Coordinator, at judybvosla@gmail.com.

Tributes & Mitzvah Donations

A Tribute or Mitzvah Donation can be made at any time in honor or in memory of someone. Go to the "Giving" menu on www.vosla.org or contact the VOS Office at 818-882-4867 for more information.



Steve Block,
In memory of Michel Handler

Susan Carlisle,
Donation to VOS Players

Terri Elkins,
Thank you for being a Mussar Teacher Extraordinaire

Donald & Alice Goldsobel,
In honor of Mickey Bilsky B'nai Mitzvah

Susan Jaeger,
In memory of Rosalee Jaeger

Doreen Kates,
In honor of Mickey Bilsky B'nai Mitzvah

Doreen Kates,
In honor of Eleanor Mizrahi, Happy Birthday

Richard & Karen Lieberman,
In memory of Charles L. Peven

Jack & Beth Lin,
Donation for the new Membership Directory

Michael Magasinn

Michael Magasinn,
Donation for Rabbi's Speaker Series Lecture Series

Bev & Stan Nisenson,
In honor of Art Grossman, Happy Birthday

Michael & Geri Schwartz

Dianna Rice,
To Margie Monroe, In memory of Bob

Jan Roth,
In memory of Alan Templer

Sorella Tasem Family Foundation,
Donation to VOS

Susi & Robert Weissman,
In memory of Harry Grand

January Yahrzeit Donations



Anne Altman (2 donations)

Barbara Barackman

Cathy (Adam) Belsky

Carol Bloom

Don (Phyllis) Bright

Toba Burg

Roberta (Brian) Caplin

Ralph (Helene Dutra) Deutsch

Ethel Edell

Stewart (Susie) Epstein

Susie (Stewart) Epstein

Steve (Nicole) Fazio

Nora (Alan) Fels

Aimee Flubacher

William Frankenstein

Karen (Larry) Fussell

Jeffrey (Judy) Gaffin

Alice (Donald) Goldsobel

Jerry (Diane) Goldstein

Alan Gurewitz

Carol Hananel

Judy (David) Handelman

Stacy Honowitz (2 donations)

Denise (Leonard) Horowitz

Karen Jacobs (2 donations)

Ethel Kaplan

Doreen Kates

Joseph (Susan) Kessler

Hallie Kraft

Linda (David) Kroll-Weinberg

Barbara Kuklin

Karen Lavin

Richard (Debra) Lebby

Janice Levine

Marilyn (Sol) Levine (2 donations)

Harvey Levy

Linda (Ernest) Lister

Michael Magasinn

Eileen (Peter) Malis

Peter (Eileen) Malis

Beverly (Stan) Nisenson

Jerry Primack

Alan (JoAnn) Rand

Dianna Rice (4 donations)

Randie Rosenberg

Marilyn Ross (2 donations)

Warren (Lois) Sefton (2 donations)

Donna (Rudy Galicia) Sheanin

Barbara (Arthur) Sherman

Betsy (Sam Finkelberg) Shore

Donald Sloan

Mariana Stark

Stanley (Suzi) Taub

Suzi (Stanley) Taub

Lea (Alan) Templer

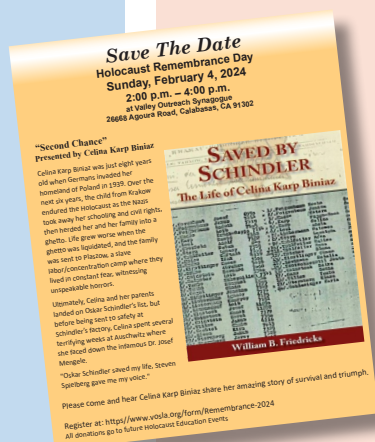
Barbara (Lee) Van Sluyters

Fred (Ileene) Weiss

Ileene (Fred) Weiss (2 donations)

Fred (Rivka) Weitzberg

Robert (Betty) Zonshine (2 donations)



Yom HaShoah

On Sunday February 4, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. VOS will be holding our Yom HaShoah event to commemorate the Holocaust.

Our special guest and Holocaust survivor, Celina Karp Biniaz, who was on Schindler's list, will speak to us about her experiences.

Please pre-register for this event at www.vosla.org/form/Remembrance-2024

FEBRUARY SIMCHAS

Mazel Tov!

Your joy is our joy!

Send an email to info@vosla.org to share a simcha with our community.

February Birthdays

2/1 Matthew Hoffman	2/18 Jeremy Bernfeld
2/2 Karen Bradford	2/18 Alan Fels
2/3 Lawrence Braun	2/18 Julia Kreinces
2/3 Rosalie Brown	2/18 George Lauer
2/4 Noah August	2/19 Melanie Nadene Haines
2/4 Emma Collosi	2/20 Shelly Allen
2/4 Jackie Jacobson	2/20 Hannah August
2/4 Marc Thall	2/20 Anne Bloxberg
2/4 Alex Simon	2/20 Seana Pathman
2/5 Stewart Epstein	2/20 Andrea Yahudian
2/6 Ben Gold	2/21 Sandra Steinberg
2/6 Adam Sussman	2/21 Carol Smith
2/7 Zac Fischman	2/22 Dina Gonor
2/7 Allen Zatkan	2/22 Gregory Kelman
2/8 Lori Schulman	2/22 Matthew Mike
2/9 Ari Gootnick	2/22 Donald Sloan
2/9 Adam Gootnick	2/24 Joseph Gelardi
2/10 Jerry Jacobson	2/24 Jeffrey Kramer
2/12 Ross Gelick	2/25 Albert Levine
2/12 Melissa Moscot	2/25 Dove Metz
2/13 Danny Srole	2/25 Cecilia Pinkus
2/14 Marsha Berch Gruen	2/25 Miri Vernia
2/14 Denise Marks	2/26 Zachary Wahler
2/14 Judy Palnick	2/27 Margie Schechter
2/16 Mitchell (Mitchy) Cohen	2/28 Simone Brandt
2/15 Julie Cohn	2/28 Eileen Franco
2/15 Jonah Felton	2/28 Robert Gelick
2/15 Kyle Lesh	2/28 Tina Kadner
2/15 Maxwell Menyuk	2/28 Susan Ruttenberg-Kessler
2/16 Jonathan Fazio	2/28 Steven Silver
2/16 Michael Keller	2/28 Brinden Wohlstattar

Milestone Birthdays

2/4 Noah August	2/19 Melanie Nadene Haines
2/8 Lori Schulman	2/20 Andrea Yahudian
2/9 Ari Gootnick	2/25 Albert Levine
2/9 Adam Gootnick	2/28 Tina Kadner
2/12 Melissa Moscot	2/28 Susan Ruttenberg-Kessler
2/15 Maxwell Menyuk	

Anniversaries

2/1 Norman & JoAnn Montrose
2/4 William & Wendy Bernfeld
2/6 Francoise Cherry-Cohen & Jeff Cohen
2/8 Philip & Sandra Firestone
2/13 Donald & Alice Goldsobel
2/14 Neil & Judy Einbund
2/17 Mayer Alson & Marsha Wiedder-Alson
2/18 Brenda & Heywood Friedman
2/19 Howard & Myra Walkes
2/19 Alan & Diane Kimmel
2/21 Alan & Carole Zwilling
2/23 Ron & Corinne Lieberman

Milestone Anniversaries

2/1 Norman and JoAnn Montrose
2/4 William and Wendy Bernfeld
2/8 Philip and Sandra Firestone
2/19 Howard and Myra Walkes

Save The Date

Holocaust Remembrance Day

Sunday, February 4, 2024
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
at Valley Outreach Synagogue
26668 Agoura Road, Calabasas, CA 91302

"Second Chance"

Presented by Celina Karp Biniatz

Celina Karp Biniatz was just eight years old when Germans invaded her homeland of Poland in 1939. Over the next six years, the child from Krakow endured the Holocaust as the Nazis took away her schooling and civil rights, then herded her and her family into a ghetto. Life grew worse when the ghetto was liquidated, and the family was sent to Plaszow, a slave labor/concentration camp where they lived in constant fear, witnessing unspeakable horrors.

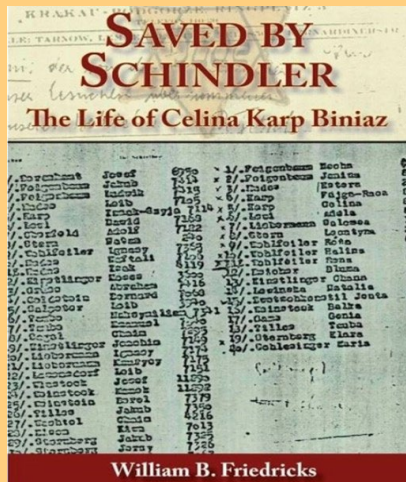
Ultimately, Celina and her parents landed on Oskar Schindler's list, but before being sent to safety at Schindler's factory, Celina spent several terrifying weeks at Auschwitz where she faced down the infamous Dr. Josef Mengele.

"Oskar Schindler saved my life, Steven Spielberg gave me my voice."

Please come and hear Celina Karp Biniatz share her amazing story of survival and triumph.

Register at: <https://www.vosla.org/form/Remembrance-2024>

All donations go to future Holocaust Education Events



Jewish history is more than a list of names and dates. The history of our people is the central story for Western Civilization, Academia, and Sociology. Join Michael Raileanu every other week as we move through the scope and sequence of who the Jewish people are and what we have gone through over the last 5,000+ years. The selected textbook, *A Historical Atlas of the Jewish People* by Elie Barnavi is a compelling and thorough treatment of the whole drama and will become a leading character as we learn about growth, development, and change of the Jewish people.

Fall Semester: 10 Sessions

VOS Members: \$180

Non-members: \$230

10 Students per class required

For more information, email adulthoodeducation@vosla.org

PM Class: 2nd & 4th Thursdays at VOS

7:30 - 9:00 p.m. begins 10/28

Register here

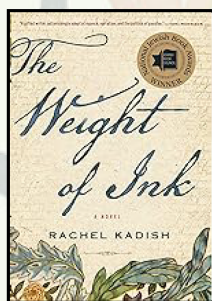
<https://www.vosla.org/form/Jewish-History>

VOS People of the Book Club

A PARTICIPANT-LED GROUP

THE WEIGHT OF INK

by Rachel Kadish



Set in the 1660s and the early twenty-first century, *The Weight of Ink* interweaves the tales of two remarkably intelligent women: Ester, a scribe for a blind rabbi and Helen, a historian who loves Jewish history. When Helen is summoned to view newly discovered seventeenth century Jewish documents, she embarks on a project to determine the identity of the documents' scribe, the elusive "Aleph". Thrilling and ambitious, *The Weight of Ink* is about women separated by centuries and the choices and sacrifices they make in order to reconcile the life of the heart and of the mind.

Tuesdays, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

February 6, February 20, March 5 and March 19

VOS members Free | Non-members \$25

The Book Club will meet on Zoom.

Register below for details and to receive the Zoom link.
<https://www.vosla.org/form/people-of-the-book-club-weight>

Please come to the first meeting on February 6 having read to the end of Part 2 (through page 135).

For more information, contact Rachel Sylvers at r.sylvers@gmail.com

Torah Inspired Learning

with Rabbi Li-Paz



Join Rabbi Li-Paz and your friends to read *The Contemporary Torah*, A Gender-Sensitive Adaptation of the JPS Translation, to explore its beauty and relevance to your life.

No prior knowledge of Hebrew or Torah is necessary.

Thursday – 10/12, 10/26*, 11/9, 12/14, 1/11*, 1/25, 2/8, 2/22, 3/14, 3/28, 4/11, 4/25, 5/9 & 5/23

*Substitute

VOS Lobby

9:30 a.m. – Check-in & informal schmooze

10:00 – 11:00 a.m. – Class session

\$5 donation

Bring an item for our potluck breakfast.



BAGELS & Banter



Join Rabbi Ron Li-Paz for a monthly discussion and a nosh.

Wednesday, December 6 | January 17 | February 14 |
March 20 | April 17 | May 15 |

9:30 a.m. – Schmooze
10:00 – 11:00 a.m. – Discussion

\$5 donation

Bagels & Banter is a joint group with both men and women.



VOS RABBI-IN-RESIDENCE LECTURE SERIES

Some of America's Finest Rabbis are Coming to Vos!



Thursday, February 15 | 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

HATE HAS CROSSED THE OCEAN

Featuring Rabbi Marvin Hier

Founder and Dean Emeritus of the Simon Wiesenthal Center and Museum of Tolerance

The world has changed dramatically. As Rabbi Marvin Hier states, "I will never forget the conversation I had with Simon Wiesenthal a few months before he passed away when he told me that because of dramatic changes in our world, he would cross the ocean from Vienna to live in New York or Los Angeles. I wondered why and he told me."

Come hear about this intriguing conversation between Nazi hunter, Simon Wiesenthal and Rabbi Marvin Hier. Find out how the Wiesenthal Center is confronting hate and antisemitism in this compelling talk from its founder, Rabbi Hier. Under his leadership, the center has become one of the leading Jewish human rights agencies in the world. He founded the Museum of Tolerance Jerusalem in 1993, and it is now in its final stages of construction in Jerusalem.

Rabbi Hier was named the most influential rabbi in America by Newsweek in 2007 and 2008. He is the recipient of two Academy Awards. Rabbi Hier founded Moriah Films, the Wiesenthal Center's film division, and he has served as Moriah Films' executive producer, holding the distinction of being the only rabbi who is a member of the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences. Rabbi Hier speaks all over the globe and we are honored to have him at our lecture series. Please join us for this meaningful and inspiring presentation from one of the world's foremost rabbis.

For more information or to sponsor a rabbi, contact Wendy Levenson at wendylev@sbcglobal.net or 310-985-4285.

To register go to <https://www.vosla.org/form/rabbi-in-residence-hate>
The lectures are on Zoom. You will receive the Zoom link upon registration.

Women's Rosh Hodesh Group

Celebrating the New Moon Each Month

7:00–8:30 p.m. at VOS



Rosh Hodesh, the holiday given to women as a reward for not participating in the incident of the Golden Calf, provides a unique space for women to claim Jewish ritual as their own.

Our group will bond with one another through the ancient tradition of celebrating the New Moon, through ritual and in the context of the Jewish calendar. Each month we will explore a variety of topics including biblical characters, blessings, rituals, holidays, artistic expression, meditation, and food.

For more information contact Susi Weissman at 818-429-1220 or AdultEducation@vosla.org
<https://www.vosla.org/form/rosh-hodesh-2023-2024.html>

2023 Dates
10/23 11/27

2024 Dates
1/22 2/26 3/25 4/29 5/20

\$80 for members
\$100 for non-members

NEW! VOS BOOK CLUB

Looking for some new books to read?

Join the VOS Book Club for reading suggestions and thought provoking discussions.

Meetings are held the first Thursday of the month at 11:00 a.m. either on Zoom or in a member's home.

OUR SELECTION FOR FEBRUARY IS
Demon Copperhead
by Barbara Kingsolver

For more information contact
Barbara Van Sluyters at 818-522-1577

OUR SELECTION FOR MARCH IS
Wrong Place Wrong Time
by Gillian McAllister



LITTLE BOY, I KNOW YOUR NAME

During my adult life on countless occasions, a friend, acquaintance or stranger would ask about my life. When speaking of my childhood, I learned to be careful in how I answered this question knowing that often it would lead to more uncomfortable questions. Nonetheless, I would respond. Eventually and without fail, my friend or acquaintance would say, "You have a very interesting life story. You should write a book." So I did.

- Mitchell Raff

LITTLE BOY, *I Know Your Name*

A SECOND-GENERATION MEMOIR
FROM INHERITED HOLOCAUST TRAUMA



To find out more about the author, visit www.mitchellraff.com

VOS PLAYERS
Berlinger Performing Arts Program
Presents

Tickets on sale NOW
at www.voslatv.com/vosuso OR
Scan the code here to purchase:



VOS USO

March 2, 7:00 p.m.
March 3, 12:00 noon & 4:00 p.m.

Limited VIP Seating: \$54 Adult | Limited Premier Seating: \$36
General Seating \$20 (Adult) | \$18 Children (12 and under)



DIRECTED BY:
BRONWEN LI-PAZ,
HANNAH LI-PAZ & DAVID WAY

CHOREOGRAPHED BY:
BRONWEN & HANNAH LI-PAZ

WRITTEN BY:
ERIC MENYUK

MUSICAL DIRECTOR:
GERALD STERNBACH

**VALLEY OUTREACH SYNAGOGUE
& CENTER FOR JEWISH LIFE**
26668 AGOURA ROAD, CALABASAS

Prayers for Healing



- A. Rachel Aflalo, Mayer Alson, Marsha Wiedder-Alson, Eliahu Assouline
- B. Ross Bauer, Janice Bell, Alison Callan Bellorini, Alex Berson, Randy J. Bertisch, Robyn Besem, Jack Bielan, Linda Blovett, Michael Bloxberg, Joel Brooks, Michael Burns
- C. Marcelo Cabrera, Jacqueline Callan, Virginia Cantor, Jackie Carnell, Dottie Carson, Erica Casas, Shelley Cataldo, Dojie Cayse, Ethan Childs, Napali Cohen, Betty Collins, Alfred Cutuli
- D. Jerry Davis, Claudia DeVere, Sevag Donoyan, Stacey Dorenfeld, Ken Downey, Larry Dubin, Jill Due, Warren Due
- E. Jessica Engel, Joan Etzenhouser
- F. Marsha Feldman, Erica Blaire Feldscher, Brian Fenit, Laura Finkelstein, Tobie Finkelstein, Ricki Fisher, Eileen Franco, Evelyn Frenkel, Clifford Fried, Sheila Fried
- G. Sherman Gamson, Sherrie Garelick, Cecily Garnhardt, Cameron Gary, Eileen Geisser, Steve Gilbert, Jeri Glassman, Mitch Gold, Lynn Goldberg, Matthew Goldman, Lynne Wachspress Goldsmith, Alice Goldsobel, Barbara Guerin, D.J. Gruman, Mandy Guntman, Marcia Guntman
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- I. Tom Iverson
- J. Karen Jacobs, Janna Jayson, Charlotte Johnson, Elizabeth Johnson, Rebecca Joseph
- K. Nina Kaminkow, Mina Kanick, Emily Kaplan, Ethel Kaplan, Hope Ellen Kaplan, Karen Kaplan, Rachel Kaplan, Nancy Karlin, Sharon Karp, Mike Katz, Bob Kay, Joan Kay, Joan Klein, Lisa Klein, Eli Kogan, Harriet Kornfield, Hallie Kraft, Roslyn Kramer, Jackie Kreitzman, Edward Kritzler, Jules Kurtz, Frances Kuznets
- L. Barry Lampke, David Lampke, Barry Latman, Dara Lavalle, Bill Lees, Maxine Lehman, Eddie Levin, Louise Levine, Seymour Levine, Steve Levine, Lynda Levy, Richard Leyner, Shannon Loan, Toni Loan, Stacy Long, Brooke Galimidi Lopez, Mary Lyle, Tayler Lyle, Richard Liang
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- Q. Helga Quinonez
- R. Johnny Rabinovitz, Shula Rabinovitz, Joe Rabin, Sandra Regan, Donald Reggie, Ariella Reisner, Fern Reisner, Michael Reisner, Dorothy Reiter, Renee Resnick, Yvonne Napier Ricketts, Lisa Rodnunsky, Stella Rogers, Barbara Rollins, Mickey Rosen, Randie Rosenberg, Eric Rosenfeld, Ryan Rosenfeld, Betsy Ross, Joshua Ross, Keri L. Ross, Lore Ross, Marilyn Ross, Stacey Ross, Joe Roth, Michael Rothman, Carl Rothschild, Cynthia Rothschild, Robert Rubin, Chip Rudolph
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- Y. Hannah Yarnold, Michael Yoffe, Eileen West Youngerman
- Z. Larry Zolkewitz, Sheila Zolkewitz, Bob Zonshine

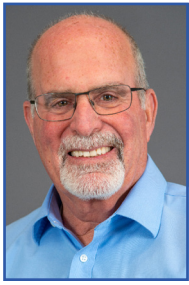
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Recording Secretary.....	Randie Rosenberg.....	818-667-4201	poochluvrr@aol.com

VOS Clergy & Staff Contact Information

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Founding Music Director, Jack Bielan	felixxsong@yahoo.com	818-456-4298
The Outreach Coordinator, Arlene Mayo.....	info@vosla.org.....	818-882-4867

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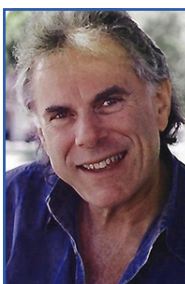
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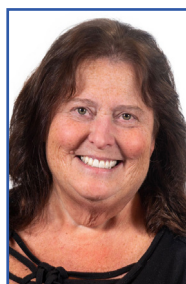
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High Holy Days.....	Stewart Epstein.....	818-886-2380
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Oneg.....	Debbie Du Val.....	818-384-5125
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Tot Shabbat.....	Judy Gaffin.....	Judy@vosla.org
Volunteer Coordinator.....	Judy Benedict.....	Judymasonnp@yahoo.com
Yahrzeit Board.....	Karen Lavin.....	818-882-4867

FEBRUARY HAPPENINGS

FEBRUARY 1
Men's Club Meeting

FEBRUARY 1
Sisterhood Meeting

FEBRUARY 1st & 4th Thursdays
Jewish History
with Michael Raileanu

FEBRUARY 1st Thursday
VOS Book Club

FEBRUARY 4
Holocaust Remembrance
Program at VOS
with Celina Karp Biniaz

FEBRUARY 6, 20
People of the Book Club

FEBRUARY 8, 22
Torah Inspired Learning
with Rabbi Li-Paz

FEBRUARY 12
Shabbat Service

FEBRUARY 14
Bagels & Banter
with Rabbi Li-Paz

FEBRUARY 15
Rabbi-in-Residence
Lecture Series
Rabbi Marvin Hier

FEBRUARY 26
Women's Rosh Hodesh
Group



Valley Outreach Synagogue
& CENTER FOR JEWISH LIFE

26668 Agoura Road
Calabasas, CA 91302
818.882.4VOS(4867)
www.vosla.org

Did You Know...?

In modern times, February 14, Valentine's Day, is celebrated in many countries as a way to express love to one another. In ancient Rome, the festival called Lupercalia was celebrated in February at the start of spring, and was believed to bring fertility to people.

The origin of Saint Valentine's Day is one of several different legends. One legend suggests that Christians created Saint Valentine's Day in February to counteract Lupercalia, and commemorate a man named Valentine, who, according to legend, was jailed in a Roman prison for attempting to help Christians escape prison. Before he was put to death, he wrote a letter to a young woman, with whom he had fallen in love, and signed it "from your Valentine." Additionally, in the Middle Ages, February 14 was celebrated as the start of the mating season for birds.

All of those legends aside, did you know that February 14, 2006 is a significant date in Jewish American History?

Between 1981 and 1990 each year, Congress passed public laws designating a week in either April or May as Jewish Heritage Week. On April 24, 1980, President Carter issued the first proclamation for Jewish Heritage Week. Every President since then followed with similar proclamations.

Then on **February 14, 2006**, Congress issued H.R. Con. Res. 315 which stated:

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress urges the President to issue each year a proclamation calling on State and local governments and the people of the United States to observe an American Jewish History Month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

Agreed to February 14, 2006.



The first proclamation designating May as **Jewish American Heritage Month** was issued by President Bush on April 20, 2006. Presidents George W. Bush, Obama, Trump, and Biden have all issued proclamations since then for Jewish American Heritage Month. In his first proclamation on April 24, 1980, President Carter wrote:

"Ever since the first Dutch Jew set foot in New Amsterdam in 1654, Jews have been contributing bountifully to the culture and history of our country. Indeed, the history of the Jewish people in America goes all the way back to the Jewish scientists and mariners who helped Columbus reach the New World. Later, Jews took an active part in the War of Independence, in the settlement of the West, and in the dynamic expansion of American technology. In medicine, education, trade, the law, politics, the labor movement, religion, motion pictures, athletics, literature, and more, the Jewish people have richly endowed America and the American way of life. American Jews have made their heritage—a heritage of struggle for freedom, knowledge, and human dignity—part of the inheritance of all Americans."

February 14 may generally be celebrated as Valentine's Day, but now you know that date's importance in Jewish American history and heritage.

Rosh Chodesh, or Rosh Hodesh, on the Hebrew Calendar Year 5784 begins at sundown on February 8 and ends at nightfall on February 10.

Rosh Hodesh is a minor holiday occurring at the beginning of each month on the Hebrew calendar.

It is marked by the birth of a new moon.



VOS-USO WANTS YOU!

THE VOS PLAYERS
urgently need volunteers
for our VOS-USO
shows in March and our
rehearsals in February.

Help is needed at
our Sunday rehearsals,
setting up and striking
props from the set in the
morning and afternoons.

Please help us to make
this show a success!

Contact David Glazer
(818) 521-8037
glazer555@gmail.com

January is a great time to start your child's Jewish learning journey with:

**1/2 off tuition and
1/2 off membership**

Please contact
Sharone Weizman, Director of Lifelong Learning
Valley Outreach Synagogue
Sharonew@vosla.org
for more information!



Valley Outreach Synagogue JEWELS

Jewish Education, Wisdom, Ethics, Literacy, Service
offers an innovative approach to Jewish education,
combining the arts and out-of-the-box experiences for
children and their families.

We pride ourselves in preparing your children for
B'nai Mitzvah and character-driven Jewish adulthood.

VOS JEWELS
Eleanor & Herbert Kraft School for Jewish Education



Acknowledgments

Valley Outreach Synagogue would like to thank Fazio Cleaners, Brent's Delicatessen & Restaurant, and Doris the Florist of Oaks Florist for their continuing generosity.

Please mention VOS when you visit and order from these wonderful businesses in our community.



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www.faziocleaners.com

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The Promenade at Westlake Village
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805-370-0088



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805-557-1882

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818-886-5679



OAKS FLORIST
oaksflorist@yahoo.com

Westlake Village
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COMING IN MARCH!

VOS Members Day!

Joy through
Engagement



Membership Year: July 1 - June 30

Join: Any day throughout the year; you can become a member, volunteer, and get involved with the Friendship Connection.

Plan Your Membership Year: Make decisions regarding how you want to engage with the VOS community and its Jewish Life Groups.

BRING YOUR CALENDAR

Sunday, March 10, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
26668 Agoura Road, Calabasas

We have a wide range of activities and events lined up for you, including Shabbat dinners, Friendship Connection Activities, classes, volunteering opportunities, special events, and educational programs. Members Day is your chance to ensure you know everything offered at VOS!

But that's not all - there will also be door Prizes & Fun activities to help you meet other members!

PLEASE REGISTER
<https://www.vosla.org/form/members-day>

We can't wait to see you there and celebrate the joy of being part of the VOS community. info@vosla.org