

# 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 leaders Rabbi Richard Schachet, of blessed memory, Rabbi Jerry Fisher, of blessed memory and Jack Bielan, Valley Outreach's founding Music Director, 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!**



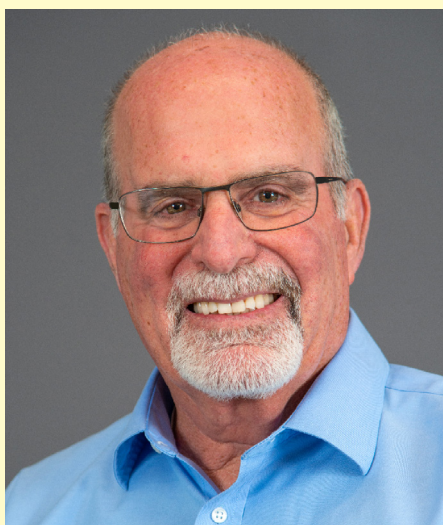
## From Rabbi Li-Paz

There is no doubt that when we arrive at the holiday of Purim this year on the eve of March 23, rabbis will liken the villainous leaders of Hamas to the villain of our Megillah, Haman. They won't be incorrect. The likeness bears noting. Like at Passover when we acknowledge that in every age tyrants have risen against us, Purim tells us that there are those evil ones in the world - individuals and regimes embodying evil but it also goes on to show us that evil can be vanquished. Haman is not the hero of the story. The scroll does not conclude with his ascendance to great power. He and his followers are, in fact, defeated and put to death. The heroes are the courageous Jewish cousins Esther and Mordechai, and an unlikely, but notable, hero is King Achashverosh. Why do I count him among the heroes? He sees light, recognizes truth, rewards goodness and ultimately destroys evil.

Yes, certainly there have been villains out to end our religious practices and even to end our lives but there have always been good people – friends, allies who have risen to our defense, stood with us in solidarity and even put themselves at risk on our behalf.

In today's world, we see parallels in the global struggle against tyranny and oppression. Just as Esther and Mordechai found an unlikely ally in King Achashverosh, we find allies among nations and leaders who, despite their diverse backgrounds and interests, stand with us in our fight for freedom from violence and justice. Take some time to examine Germany's role in support of Israel in the current crisis or look at the votes in our Congress to see what American allyship means. Listen to the speeches of the leaders of Australia and India and most remarkably, the statements delivered by senior leaders of the United Arab Emirates. The international coalitions formed in response to aggression, the global movements for human rights, and the individuals who speak out against injustice, even at great personal risk, are modern-day Esthers and Mordechais. They remind us that courage and solidarity can transcend boundaries and that, together, we can overcome the Hamans of our time.





Bill LaVere,  
VOS President

## VOS President's Message

*There are a lot of special events happening at VOS over the next few months.*

On **March 2 and March 3**, VOS Players will be performing the **VOS USO show**. Tickets are going fast, so please purchase your tickets now. See the flyer on page 10 for more details.

On **March 10**, we will be holding a special **VOS Members Day**. We will have booths set up showcasing many of the activities that make VOS such a vibrant community. This is a perfect opportunity to explore the wide range of activities and offerings lined up for the coming year, including Shabbat dinners, Friendship Connection activities, adult education classes,

volunteering opportunities, special events, and more. I am looking forward to seeing all our members that day. On **April 23**, the second night of Passover, VOS will be holding a **Passover Seder**. Details will be coming soon.

Save the date for **May 4**, our annual **VOS Gala**. The theme this year is Western Nights. Dust off your cowboy hats and boots and join us for this major fundraiser. As always, there will be a delicious dinner, music and auction. Keep an eye out in your mailbox for the invitation. We only have room for 240 guests, so be sure to sign up as soon as you receive your invitation.

Our **Shabbat Services** for March will be held on **March 8 and March 22**.

## MARCH SHABBAT SERVICES

MARCH 8: A VOS CELEBRATION OF JEWISH MUSIC – PART 3  
MARCH 22: SIMPLY SHABBAT



## The Membership Team



Anne Sperling,  
VP Membership

### *A Morning Reflection at our Synagogue and Center for Jewish Life*

It was a serene Tuesday morning as I hurriedly entered our Synagogue and Jewish Life Center foyer for my fifth-year Mussar class. The peaceful atmosphere was palpable, with the soft glow of lights illuminating the Torah in the sanctuary drawing me in. Leaving my books in the conference room, I ventured into the sanctuary where the dim lighting allowed me to focus on the sacred presence

of our Torahs. In that moment, I felt grateful for the tranquility, safety and the dedicated members of our congregation who made such moments possible. As I stood in prayer, my thoughts turned to the Rabbi and his team, diligently working upstairs to nurture our VOS community. I offered thanks for my husband's leadership in guiding our family to be part of this beautiful community. My prayers extended to dear friends and community members facing health challenges and other heartaches.

These fleeting moments in the sanctuary filled me with gratitude. A smile graced my face as memories of the VOS Players' rehearsal

flooded my mind. The camaraderie and friendships formed through this group have been a highlight of my involvement in fundraising activities. I invite you to show your support by purchasing a ticket to the **VOS USO Show**. They all have prepared such entertaining performances for the community. Showtimes are scheduled for **March 2 & 3**.

The vision of All Members Day unfolded before me, transforming the sanctuary into our vibrant town square. I envisioned JEWELS children gleefully bouncing in a house, adults sharing laughter over games, and individuals enriching their lives with calendaring Jewish education classes, volunteer opportunities, and social activities within the VOS Jewish Life Center community. Join us for two hours of exploration during **VOS Members Day** on **Sunday, March 10 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.** Walk through at your own pace and witness firsthand the impact of your support, as your membership contributions nurture and uplift others. Embrace this vision by registering for Members Day and engaging in your membership and friendship within your community.

In appreciation and friendship, cheers to making the most good in each day!



# Our Joy, Love of Learning, Mitzvot & Celebrations Continue

**VOS JEWELS**  
Brilliance in Jewish Education for Children • Teens • Adults



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

## Happy Purim, everyone!

As we step into the month of Adar, let's take a moment to reflect on the happiness, joy, and gratitude in our lives. Adar is a time for rejoicing, laughter, silliness, and introspection as we prepare our hearts and spirits for Purim. This year, being a Jewish leap year, grants us the extra month of Adar on our calendar, providing additional time to appreciate our blessings and anticipate the Mitzvot of Purim.

Mark your calendars for our **BIG Intergenerational Purim Celebration on Friday, March 22**. Our community will come together for a Family Service featuring our talented JEWELS student "actors" leading the Purim Shpiel for everyone. Join us for Purim fun for all ages, including an interactive Game Show, special Tot and Children activities, followed by a joyous Purim dinner and party for all!

Please mark your calendars for **March 27** as we continue the **Purim Mitzvot of Matanot L'evyonim** (gifts to the poor) and **Mishloach Manot** (gifts to friends). Our VOS community will unite to experience PATH (People Assisting the Homeless). **All are welcome to participate**. We will be sending out a Sign-Up Genius for VOS members

to donate hygiene and snack items for the homeless. On **Wednesday, March 27**, we will assemble 250 hygiene and snack kits, delivered by PATH after our program, for the homeless in Los Angeles. We will also assemble Mishloach Manot gifts for our VOS friends.

Our 4th-6th Grade students have been exploring Lifecycle events through an interactive program called "Bear Mitzvah." Students become "parents" of their favorite stuffed animals, beginning with researching their Hebrew names, and celebrating their birth at a special "Bear Naming" ceremony. Led by our Rabbi, the students, teachers, and parents gathered under the Tallit, announcing their Hebrew names and blessing the new additions. Later in the month, we witnessed our "Baby Bear" children growing up, celebrating their "Bear Mitzvah" with Rabbi Li-Paz. During the "Bear Mitzvah" ceremony, the children led the blessings before and after the Torah Reading, passed the Torah, "LBear VaBear" and concluded with blessing the Baby Bears under the Tallit. As their stuffed animals 'age', the journey culminates with a "Bear Wedding." Stay tuned!

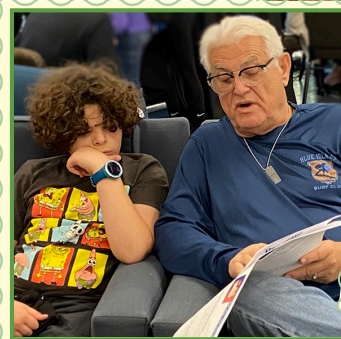
This past Wednesday, we celebrated an Intergenerational program, bringing our littlest VOS members together with parents, grandparents, and community members. Families journeyed through 18 Mitzvah stations/activities, while we interviewed parents and grandparents about their Jewish and Mitzvah experiences, both in their past and as a family reaching the next generation.

We are excited to announce our second **Mitzvah Mensch of the month, Zachary**. Zachary is a leader in his class, consistently displaying kindness and helpfulness to teachers and peers. He exemplifies the Jewish Mitzvot of Chesed (Kindness), Ahava Le'Reacha (love for his peers), Kavod (Respect for others), and Hachnasat Orchim (welcoming new friends). Mazel Tov, Zachary!



4th-6th Grade students participate in "Bear Mitzvah."

## Intergenerational Program



## ***Mitzvah Mench of the Month***

JEWELS proudly presents our second  
"Mitzvah Mensch of the Month"

# **MEET ZACHARY**

## **6th Grade, February 2024**



We are excited to announce our second Mitzvah Mensch of the month, Zachary!

Zachary is a leader in his class, consistently displaying kindness and helpfulness to teachers and peers.

He exemplifies the Jewish Mitzvot of Chesed (Kindness), Ahava L'Reacha (love for his peers), Kavod (Respect for others), and Hachnasat Orchim (welcoming new friends).

Mazel Tov, Zachary!



## Rabbi-in-Residence Lecture Series



Wendy Levenson,  
VP Religious  
Practices

Our Rabbi-In-Residence Lecture Series continues to bring you inspiring and insightful talks from some of America's finest rabbis! This month, on **Thursday, March 21 at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom**, we are privileged to host Dr. Ron Wolfson, soon to be ordained as rabbi, who is the Fingerhut Professor of Education at the American Jewish University and president of the Kripke Institute. He will speak to us about the *Seven Questions You're Asked in Heaven*.

Dr. Wolfson is a much sought-after consultant and lecturer on building sacred communities in synagogues, schools, community centers, and camps around the world. He has had a profound effect on the Jewish community through his books *Relational Judaism: Using the Power of Relationships to Transform the Jewish Community* and *The Relational Judaism Handbook*.

In addition to training clergy and educators, Dr. Wolfson is the author of many books, bringing the values and rituals of Jewish life to a popular audience, including *God's To-Do List*, *The Seven Questions You're Asked in Heaven*, *The Spirituality of Welcoming*, and *Raising A+ Human Beings: Crafting a Jewish School Culture of Academic Excellence and AP Kindness*.

Be sure not to miss this enlightening and thought-provoking talk. Mark your calendars for the third Thursday of each month throughout the year, when we will have different rabbis speak to us to share their wisdom, knowledge and expertise.

For more information or to sponsor a rabbi, please contact **Wendy Levenson** at 310-985-4285 or email her at [wendylev@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wendylev@sbcglobal.net).



## VOS Singles 55+

Our next singles event will be a wonderful trip to the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures. Come enjoy an afternoon together with other singles as we mingle, enjoy lunch, and have fun!

We will take a self-guided tour of the museum on **Sunday, March 17 at 11:00 a.m.** We'll meet in the lobby at the welcome desk at 11:00 a.m. and we'll have lunch together in the museum cafe at 12:30 p.m. Museum admission price is \$19 for seniors.

Parking is available in LACMA's Pritzker Parking Garage at 6006 West 6th Street, Los Angeles, for \$20. We can put you in contact with other people in your neighborhood so that you can arrange for carpools.

The Academy Museum of Motion Pictures is the world's premier institution devoted to exploring the art and science of moviemaking. Visitors to the museum experience the magic of cinema through the lens of those who participate in the creative, collaborative process of filmmaking.

The 300,000 square-foot museum features gallery space dedicated to a highly immersive permanent exhibition and a schedule of diverse temporary exhibitions, two state-of-the-art film and performance theaters, Fanny's, the museum's full-service restaurant, bar, and cafe, and the Academy Museum Store.

We hope that you join us! For questions or more information, please contact **Wendy Levenson** at (310) 985-4285 or [wendylev@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wendylev@sbcglobal.net).

## The Mitzvah Committee



Jay Stein,  
VP Mitzvah

### The Need for Human Contact

I am sure you have noticed how much less human contact we have in our lives. For an example, when was the

last time you called a business and reached a live person? We have become accepting of nonhuman contact. But, is that good for us?

We are an interactive society that thrives on personal contact. Don't we need to speak to one another to hear that human voice? I've heard so many stories about loneliness. Don't we owe it to ourselves and to our community to establish communication with each other? There are so many ways to feel that personal and human connection.

A great way to stay connected is through your synagogue family by attending services, or a class or volunteering on a committee. Our Mitzvah Committee is working on ways to do just that. We are always in need of "worker bees", not only team leaders—every volunteer role is just as important as the other. In the coming weeks, we'll be announcing some upcoming programs in which you can participate and attain that human contact.

If you are looking for a way to connect, please feel free to contact me either by phone at 818-419-0462 or by email at [jaysteineventfilms@gmail.com](mailto:jaysteineventfilms@gmail.com).



## 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!

### MARCH 7

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 **March 7**. Contact **Bob Brandt** for additional details at **818-535-0067**.

### MARCH 31

#### MEN'S CLUB FAMILY 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 is **\$30 per family (up to 5 people)**. We will supply all the food and drink. In addition, this will be a recognition of Al Swedelson.

### JULY 28

#### MEN'S CLUB FAMILY 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 is **\$30 per family (up to 5 people)**. We will supply all the food and drink. In addition, this will be a recognition of Simone Brandt.

### 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. at the Masonic Lodge at 14750 Sherman Way**. The cost is \$40 per person which includes tri-tip or salmon and all side dishes. There will be a live auction. Monies raised from this event will fund synagogue projects. For additional details, contact **Bob Brandt** at **818-535-0067** or **Harvey Rose** at **323-940-8881**.

## The Fundraising Team



Denise Horowitz,  
VP Fundraising

### Western Nights Gala – Come and Celebrate with the Honorees on May 4!

**Susi Weissman** – Woman of the Year

**Ron Lieberman** – Man of the Year

**Anne Sperling** – Light of Israel

**Melissa and Gregg Moscot** – Couple of the Year

A special thanks goes out to the volunteers who helped prepare the letter information packages that you all received regarding the Gala. Every volunteer is valued!

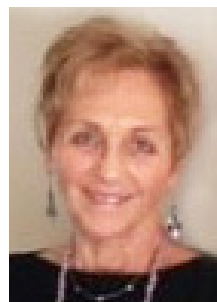
It takes a village to have a successful Gala. This is the most important event for VOS. Come have fun, raise much needed funds and celebrate with all of the honorees. Please consider purchasing a sponsorship and/or tribute ad for the Gala journal. We also need exciting items for the auctions. Consider donating tickets to sporting events, restaurants, a day of golf, gift certificates to your favorite stores, timeshares, etc.

We will have 240 seats available, so send in your commitment to attend as soon as possible. The food will be delicious (prepared by Ruth Hurwitz) and the music will be rip roaring! Dress in comfortable western attire. It will be an evening full of fun and surprises.

*Happiness doesn't result from what we get, but from what we give!*



## VOS Sisterhood



Barbara Barackman,  
Sisterhood  
President

On Thursday, February 1, we had our Zoom meeting with guest speaker Lenny Horowitz who spoke with us about the safety and security program that is now in place at VOS. It was a very informative discussion and appreciated by all of us.

In March, we are planning our first daytime meeting on **Thursday, March 7 at 11:00 a.m.** This will be a meet, greet and schmooze, with us bringing our own lunch, playing a couple of games and having a little dessert together. Please mark your calendars as we look forward to seeing many of you there.

On **Thursday, April 4** we are planning to have a **Dots for Tots** event with the Braille Institute, where we put dots on books for young children to allow them to read in braille. What a Mitzvah that will be! Details are being confirmed, so please mark your calendars.

The Membership Committee needs volunteers for **Members Day on Sunday, March 10 from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. at VOS**. They need volunteers to help things run smoothly, keep lounge area clean, and serve and replenish food. If you would like to volunteer, email me at **bb.elvis68@gmail.com**. You may also reach out to V.P. of Membership **Annie Sperling** at **anniesperling279@gmail.com**.





## VOS Shiva Support Committee



Marlene Frierson,  
Shiva Support  
Committee  
Chairperson

I am so glad that we are finally in March. I can feel the excitement in the air. For one, with the change in time, we will have more daylight in the early evening. This will give us all extra time to spend with family and hopefully, the warmer weather

will allow us to spend more time outdoors.

Also, bring out your costumes and dust them off! Purim is this month and I want to see all the fabulous and funny costumes. Will you be dressed as Esther or the King? I enjoy making hamantaschen with my grandchildren shaped in triangles and filling them with our favorite jellies. The best part is eating them. Look through this month's Outreach listing of all the activities available at our synagogue. I am sure there is something in which you're interested in participating.

I hope to see many of you at the **March 10 Members Day event from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.** Stop by my table, say hello and have a conversation about what our **Shiva Support Committee** does and how we need to be able to continue this special service ongoing. Contact me for any questions at [mmarni@juno.com](mailto:mmarni@juno.com).



**Celebrate Purim**  
**March 23-24**



## Condolences

**George Lauer,**  
*Gayle Stern's life partner  
and Laurie Eisenberg's Stepdad*

**Dr. Jorge Cherbosque,**  
*father of Carina (Jordan)  
and Tiana, friends of VOS*



## 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.



## February Yahrzeit Donations

Andrea Attal  
Jackie Berg  
Robert Bermant  
Suzanne Bermant  
Dorene Blair  
Stan Blander  
Golda Brill  
Judith Brown  
Betty Collins  
Helene Dutra (2 donations)  
Cookie Eichner  
Nora Fels  
Samuel Finkelberg  
Lynda Fox (2 donations)  
Evelyn Frenkel  
Elaine Garfield  
Dr. George  
Carol Gordon  
Zachary Hanan  
Jamie Katz  
Barry Keller  
Harriet Kornfield  
Karen Lavin  
Sol Levine  
Harvey Levy (2 donations)  
Joel Levy  
Bronwen Li-Paz  
Harvey Magidow  
Cantor Michael  
Alan Mittelman  
Geraldine Moscowitz  
Alan Rand  
JoAnn Rand  
James Ratsch  
Beverly Reggie  
Rabbi Ron Li-Paz  
Jacquiline Rondinelli  
Susan Ruttenberg-Kessler  
Gary Schechter  
Betsy Shore  
Sheila Silverman  
Joan Spitz  
Al Swedelson  
Alan Templer  
Ileene Weiss  
Susi Weissman  
Brinden Wohlstattar  
Eleanor Zalin

## Mitzvah Donations and Tributes

A Mitzvah Donation or a Tribute can be made at any time in honor or in memory of someone. Go to the “Giving” menu on [www.vosla.org](http://www.vosla.org) or contact the VOS Office at 818-882-4867 for more information.

### MITZVAH DONATIONS

**Laurie Alban**

**Jackie Berg**, *In honor of Baby Lila*

**Amy Berg**, *In honor Jackie Berg, b'nai mitzvah*

**William & Wendy Bernfeld**, *In honor of wedding anniversary recognition at 2/9 services*

**Karen Block & Steve Clayton**, *In honor of all the B'not Mitzvah Ladies*

**Karen Block & Steve Clayton**, *In honor Jackie Berg on her Bat Mitzvah*

**Rod & Nancy Canter**, *In honor of the Birth of baby Lila*

**Cookie Eichner**, *In honor of the birth of Lila*

**Terri Elkins**, *In honor of the Birth of Baby Lila*

**Karen Jacobs**, *On the birth of baby Lila*

**Tina & Mark Kadner**, *In honor of Ethan Kadner Bar Mitzvah*

**Susan Kapitanoff**, *In honor of Jackie Berg B'Not Mitzvah*

**Eddie & Jane Lorin**

**Michael Magasinn**

**Michael & Geri Schwartz**

**Stefanie Silverman**, *In honor of the birth of Lila Li-Paz. Wishing her health and happiness always. Congratulations to the Li-Paz family.*

**Larry & Sheila Zolkewitz**, *In honor of the birth of Baby Lila*

**Jackie Berg**, *Holocaust Fund*

**Mickey Bilsky**, *Holocaust Fund, In memory of all who perished in the holocaust*

**Jason & Laura Blatt**, *Holocaust Fund, In memory of Ike & Mary Nelson*

**Susan Carlisle**, *Donation to VOS Players*

**Ralph Deutsch & Helene Dutra**, *Holocaust Fund*

**Sharon Fine & Bob Stiles**, *Holocaust Fund, In memory of Joseph & Nettie Bloom*

**Neri & Adam Gauthier**, *Holocaust Fund*

**Julie Goren**, *Holocaust Fund*

**Joan Grossman**, *Donation to the Rabbi In Residence, In honor of Wendy Levenson*

**Arnold Kaufman & Suzanne Kassap**, *Holocaust Fund*

**Alan & Diane Kimmel**, *Holocaust Fund*

**Norman Levy & Phyllis Cohen**, *Holocaust Fund, In honor of Celina Biniaz*

**Fern Lippert**, *In honor of Celina Karp Biniaz "Second Chance" from Fern Lippert and Jerry Goldman. What an amazing woman and a fantastic presentation.*

**Anthony & Gayle Peck**, *Holocaust Fund, In memory of Aaron Peck*

**Donna Sheanin & Rudy Galicia**, *Holocaust Fund*

**Fred & Evelyn Ulise**, *Donation for the Holocaust Fund*

**Ricki Averbach**, *In honor of Jackie Berg's Bat Mitzvah*

**Jackie Berg**, *In honor of Mickey & Helene*

**Michael Burns**, *In honor of Mickey Bilsky's Bat Mitzvah*

**Rod & Nancy Canter**, *In honor of Jackie Berg*

**Phillip & Shelley Cataldo**, *In honor of Mickey Bilsky's Bat Mitzvah*

**Terri Elkins**, *In honor of Jackie Berg's Mitzvah*

**Judy Farber**, *In honor of Helene Dutra Bat Mitzvah*

**Jeffrey & Judy Gaffin**, *To the B'Not Mitzvahs Helene, Jackie & Mickey*

**Louis & Michelle Gellman**, *In honor of Mickey Bilsky's Bat Mitzvah*

**Alyda Gillies**, *Congratulations on your Bat Mitzvah!*

**D Gladstone**, *In honor of Mickey Bilsky's Bat Mitzvah*

**Marjorie Gladstone**, *In honor of Mickey Bilsky's Bat Mitzvah*

**Lorie Juliano**, *In honor of Helene Dutra's Bat Mitzvah*

**Barry & Emily Kaplan**, *In honor of Helene Dutra's Bat Mitzvah*

**Norama LaCuesta-Barretto**, *In honor of Mickey Bilsky's Bat Mitzvah*

**Larry & Laurie Rudner**, *In honor of Micki Bilsky's Bat Mitzvah*

**Larry & Laurie Rudner**, *In honor of Jackie Berg's Bat Mitzvah*

**William & Linda LaVere**, *In honor of Jackie Berg's B'not Mitzvah*

**Mitchell & Aleta Leshi**, *In honor of Mickey Bilsky Bat Mitzvah*

**Michael & Monica Li-Paz**, *In honor of Mickey Bilsky's Bat Mitzvah*

**Judy & Rick Packer**, *In honor of Jackie Berg's B'Not Mitzvah*

**Lynne Rich**, *B'not Mitzvah wishes in honor of Mickey Bilsky Congratulations on this momentous occasion! With much love, Lynne and Jerry*

**Helen Rifkind**, *In honor of Mickey Bilsky, Jackie Berg, and Helene Dutra B'not Mitzvah*

**Bruce & Jackie Rosenblum**, *In honor of Jackie Berg*

**Stefanie Schedler**, *Mickey Bilsky, In honor of her Bat Mitzvah*

**Lesley Vann & Steve Gorman**, *In honor of Helen Dutra's Bat Mitzvah*

**Beth Yale**, *In honor of Mickey Bilsky's Bat Mitzvah*

**Larry & Sheila Zolkewitz**, *In honor of Jackie's Bat Mitzvah*

**Men's Club**, *To VOS Players for "VOS USO"*

**Steven & Sherri Raft**

**Helene Dutra & Ralph Deutsch**, *In honor of Jackie Berg's Bat Mitzvah and Mickey Bilsky's Bat Mitzvah*

**Susi & Robert Weissman**, *In honor of the birth of baby Lila, Jackie Berg's Bat Mitzvah, Mickey Bilsky's Bat Mitzvah, Helene Dutra's Bat Mitzvah and in memory of the victims of October 7.*

**Sisterhood**, *Donation to Members Day, VOS Players and the Gala*

### TRIBUTES

**From Eleanor Zalin to the family of Malcolm Feinberg**, *In memory of Malcolm*

**From Wendy Levenson to Rabbi Li-Paz and Bron Li-Paz**, *mazel tov on the birth of Baby Lila*

**From Wendy Levenson to:**

**Mickey Bilsky**, *mazel tov on your Bat Mitzvah*

**Jackie Berg**, *mazel tov on your Bat Mitzvah*

**Helene Gutra**, *mazel tov on your Bat Mitzvah*

**From Wendy Levenson to Randy Rosenberg**, *Get well soon*

**From Wendy Levenson to Barbara Swedelson**, *Get well soon*



# MARCH SIMCHAS

*Your joy is our joy!*

*Mazel Tov!*

Send an email to [info@vosla.org](mailto:info@vosla.org) to share a simcha with our community.

## March Birthdays

3/1 Robin Felton  
3/1 Gary Forster  
3/1 Emily Kaplan  
3/1 Dustin Weissman  
3/2 Todd Schultz  
3/3 Betty Collins  
3/3 Jim Friedman  
3/3 Todd Haines  
3/3 Bunni Hoffman  
3/3 Enola Li-Paz  
3/3 Zachary Wohlwend  
3/4 Aiden Goldey  
3/4 Lindsey Housenick  
3/4 Gil Li-Paz  
3/4 Stella Rogers  
3/5 Barbara Swedelson  
3/7 Dahlia Schneiderman  
3/7 Liv Sebso  
3/8 Randy Gold  
3/8 Alan Mittelman  
3/9 Ethan Guthrie  
3/10 John Giammarrusco  
3/10 Adrian Raphael  
3/10 Reva Rae Sternbach  
3/11 Sherrill Frank  
3/11 Adam Hurwitz  
3/11 Gayle Peck  
3/11 Erica Salisbury  
3/12 Max Bernstein  
3/13 Cher Beck  
3/13 Harvey Magidow  
3/13 Norman Montrose  
3/13 Asher Weiss  
3/13 Danielle Whittington  
3/13 Carole Zwillinger  
3/14 Dara Wahler  
3/15 Olivia Einbund  
3/15 Jagger Gillespie  
3/15 Josh Kelman  
3/15 Stefanie Silverman  
3/16 Samantha Blatt  
3/16 Helen Jacobson

3/17 Mayer Alson  
3/17 Karen Block  
3/17 Lilly Macias  
3/17 Eileen Malis  
3/18 Stephen Strout  
3/18 Jennifer Tabbush  
3/19 Victor Macias  
3/19 Anthony Solis  
3/20 Taylor Epstein  
3/20 Lauren Salisbury  
3/20 Sidney Wilner  
3/21 Steve Fazio  
3/21 Eli Wahler  
3/22 Laurie Menyuk  
3/22 Bob Stiles  
3/23 Jordan Driskill  
3/23 Margie Monroe  
3/23 Jake Rosen  
3/23 Larry Zolkewitz  
3/24 Carol Gold  
3/24 Mary Reisman  
3/24 Sadie Swaigenbaum  
3/25 Arlene Mayo  
3/26 Adam Hoffman  
3/26 Kimberly LaVere  
3/27 Misty "Ellie" Berrick  
3/27 Francisca Pinkus  
3/27 Ricki Revivo  
3/27 Paige Rodnunsky  
3/28 Benny Epstein  
3/28 Michael Magasinn  
3/29 Marcia Eaker  
3/29 Samantha Lavin  
3/19 Eliana Marino  
3/29 Emily Sefton  
3/30 Henry August  
3/30 Hannah Li-Paz  
3/30 Richard Sperber  
3/30 Max Sperling  
3/31 Sterling Allen  
3/31 Carol Kaplan  
3/31 Isabella Solis

## Milestone Birthdays

3/1 Emily Kaplan  
3/8 Randy Gold  
3/11 Adam Hurwitz  
3/12 Max Bernstein  
3/15 Olivia Einbund  
3/18 Stephen Strout  
3/20 Sidney Wilner  
3/21 Eli Wahler  
3/23 Margie Monroe  
3/24 Carol Gold  
3/26 Kimberly LaVere

## Anniversaries

3/2 Jeff & Stacy Edelstein  
3/2 Todd & Liora Raphael  
3/6 Dave & Katie Rand  
3/8 Larry & Hayley Tepper  
3/8 Larry & Sheila Zolkewitz  
3/21 Joel & Judy Adelman  
3/21 Michelle & Mark Dragin  
3/30 Joseph & Shelby Kopecky  
3/27 Jeffrey & Judy Gaffin  
3/28 David & Judy Handelman  
3/28 David Weinberg  
& Linda Kroll-Weinberg  
3/30 Ed & Sharon Kohn  
3/31 William & Catherine Josephson

## Milestone Anniversaries

3/21 Michelle & Mark Dragin  
3/27 Jeffrey & Judy Gaffin  
3/30 Ed & Sharon Kohn

## B'nai Mitzvah

Jayden & Kaylee Shore

## Wedding

Matthew Perlman  
and Stephen Kolka

## Conversion

Stephen Kolka  
Lauren Platner

**VOS PLAYERS**  
Berlinger Performing Arts Program  
*Presents*

Tickets on sale NOW  
at [www.voslatv.com/vosuso](http://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

**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 MARCH IS**  
*Wrong Place Wrong Time*  
by Gillian McAllister

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

**VOS JEWELS**  
Adult Education

**Jewish History With Michael Raileanu**  
Valley Outreach Synagogue & Center for Jewish Life

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

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>

For more information, email [adulteducation@vosla.org](mailto:adulteducation@vosla.org)

## JOIN US ON MARCH 10

# VOS Members Day!

Joy through Engagement

**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](mailto:info@vosla.org)



**Membership Year:** July 1 - June 30



## 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.



### VOS SINGLES EVENT 55+

#### Trip to Academy Museum of Motion Pictures

Sunday, March 17th at 11:00 a.m.

Come enjoy an afternoon together with other singles as we mingle, enjoy lunch, and have fun! We will take a self-guided tour of the museum and we'll meet in the lobby at the welcome desk at 11:00 a.m. We will have lunch together in the museum cafe at 12:30 p.m. Museum admission price is \$19.00 for seniors.

Paid parking is available at LACMA's Pritzker Parking Garage at 6006 West 6th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90036 for \$20. We can put you in contact with other people in your neighborhood so that you can arrange for carpools.

The Academy Museum of Motion Pictures is the world's premier institution devoted to exploring the art and science of moviemaking. Visitors to the museum experience the magic of cinema through the lens of those who participate in the creative, collaborative process of filmmaking.

For questions or more information, please contact Wendy Levenson at (310) 985-4285 or [wendylev@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wendylev@sbcglobal.net).



## 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, March 21 | 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

### The Seven Questions You'll Be Asked in Heaven

Featuring Dr. Ron Wolfson

Fingerhut Professor of Education, American Jewish University

How do you get to the heart of a life well lived? It's all about the questions. Beloved teacher and soon to be ordained rabbi, Dr. Ron Wolfson, provides an advance copy of the seven questions you'll be asked in heaven. Whether you're a believer or a non-believer, the answers to these surprising questions will help you shape a life of purpose and meaning on earth. Rabbis throughout the centuries have imagined what we'll be asked about how we lived our lives when we get to the Pearly Gates and our speaker will skillfully lead us through a Talmud text and other sources. With funny, insightful and poignant stories, Dr. Wolfson's engaging style of teaching will inspire and entertain you, and most of all, lead you in the Jewish practice of cheshbon ha-nefesh, a spiritual accounting of the soul, a way to reflect on how we live our lives.

For more information or to sponsor a rabbi, contact Wendy Levenson at [wendylev@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wendylev@sbcglobal.net) or 310-985-4285.

To register go to <https://www.vosla.org/form/rabbi-in-residence-7-Questions>  
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](mailto:AdultEducation@vosla.org)  
<https://www.vosla.org/form/rosh-hodesh-2023-2024.html>

2023 Dates  
10/23 11/27

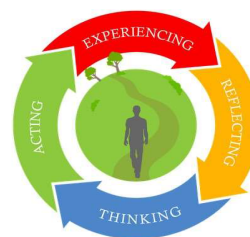
2024 Dates  
1/22 2/26 3/25 4/29 5/20

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

## "Journey Within: Discovering Our Purpose"

ENGAGE WITH THE INSIGHTS OF THE TORAH TO UNRAVEL YOUR DISTINCT MISSION AND PURPOSE

Emotional Intelligence  
Love  
Divine Relationship and Contemplation



### An Experiential Learning Process

You will learn how to apply spirituality in your daily life. You will infuse and vivify your life with positivity, mental well-being, abundance, and joy. During the series, you will create a blueprint and graphic recording of your journey.

### Please bring the following supplies:

Journal, ink pen, pencil, eraser, highlighter, one box of colored pencils, binder

Series 1 of 10, each series is six sessions, one class for six consecutive weeks.

**Choose a day** that is your best CLASS DAY:

**DAY: Thursday 1:00 - 2:30 PM**

Dates: 3/28, 4/4, 4/11, 4/18, 4/25, 5/2

**DAY: Friday 10:00 - 11:30 AM**

Dates: 3/29, 4/5, 4/12, 4/19, 4/26, 5/3

**DAY: Saturday 11:00 - 12:30 PM**

Dates: 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/20, 4/27, 5/4

**Location:** VOS, 26668 Agoura Rd, Calabasas, 91302

**Donation:** A donation of any amount is required for each session.

**Class Instructor:** Anne 'Annie' Sperling

**Please register to reserve your attendance by 3/27:** <https://www.vosla.org/form/Journey-Within>

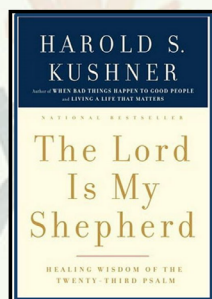
## VOS People of the Book Club

LED BY RABBI LI-PAZ

### THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

HEALING WISDOM OF THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM

by Harold Kushner



Rabbi Harold Kushner has found that the simple, beautiful verses of the 23rd Psalm have an almost magical power to comfort and calm—and to change your life. The psalm does not pretend that life is ever easy, but it offers a masterful guide to living in the world with faith and courage.

Tuesdays, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

April 9, April 30, and May 14

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-Shepherd>

Please come to the first meeting on April 9 having read through page 56, the end of Chapter 5.

For more information, contact Rachel Sylvers at [r.sylvers@gmail.com](mailto:r.sylvers@gmail.com)

## THANK YOU

to everyone who made special donations to VOS this month including Mitzvah Donations, Tributes and Yahrzeit Donations last month.

WE APPRECIATE YOU!





## 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

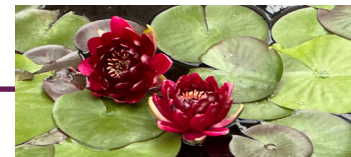
# LITTLE BOY, *I Know Your Name*

A SECOND-GENERATION MEMOIR  
FROM INHERITED HOLOCAUST TRAUMA



To find out more about the author, visit [www.mitchellraff.com](http://www.mitchellraff.com)

# Prayers for Healing



- A. Rachel Aflalo, Mayer Alson, Marsha Wiedder-Alson, Eliahu Assouline
- B. Ross Bauer, Janice Bell, Alison Callan Bellorini, Alanna Berkov, 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
- H. Cami Haemmerle, Emma Hagio, Will Hair, David Handelman, Ron Handelman, Julie Hans, Michael Harris, Pat Hartmann, Noga Hellner, Sharon Helton, Barbara Hersh, Deanna Hill, Jacob Hoag, Yuan-Yang Hu, Cadyn Maci Huff
- I. Tom Iverson
- J. David Jackson, 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 Kritzer, Jules Kurtz, Frances Kuznets
- L. Barry Lampke, David Lampke, Barry Latman, Dara Lavalley, 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
- M. Lisa Magidow, Eileen Malis, Bernice Marks, Beverly Mandelblatt, Sandy Martin, Maia Materman, Scott Matis, Janet McKnight, Brett McLoughlin, Betty Melton, Stacey Meltzer, Eileen Meskin, Marlene Michaels, Norma Miles, Shalom Elite bas Miryam, Iris Simone Mizrahi, Nelson Moreno, Karen Morin, Cynthia Moss, Kelly Mulligan
- N. Ruth Newman, Corry Notkin, Cheryl Novak
- O. Lee Osterloh, Mark Osterloh
- P. Carole Parker, Elyse Parks, Arlene Pater, Claudine Pelc Demonic Perrotta, Sue Potter, Paul Proman, Rita Puritsky
- Q. Helga Quinonez
- R. Johnny Rabinovitz, Shula Rabinovitz, Joe Rabin, Ed Raskin, 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
- S. Alexia Sablow, Dee Saye, Richard Saye, Lori Schulman, Elizabeth Seltzer, Cindy Shapiro, Aida Shrem, Marco Shrem, Arlene Singer, Jack Smith, Marty Smith, Lynne Solursh, Jeannette St. Marie, Jim Stedt, Lorrie Stelzer, Makay Stenberg, Stevie Stock
- T. Escher Tallman, Shirley Taub, Stacey Taub, Stan Taub, Suzi Taub, Alvin Tenenbaum, Gloria Thall, Mark Thall, Daryl Thompson, Cynthia Ilber, Cole Ittus, Patrick Toomey, Evelyn Tom
- V. Elizabeth Vona, Lesley Vann
- W. Suzanne Wachman, Elizabeth Anne Warren, Jake Daniel Webb, Diane (LaFluer) Weidman, Allan Weiss, John Weiss, Shirley Wenner, Fred Wickman, Sid Wilner, Craig Winton
- Y. Hannah Yarnold, Michael Yoffe, Eileen West Youngerman
- Z. Larry Zolkewitz, Sheila Zolkewitz, Bob Zonshine



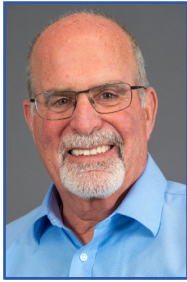
## VOS Board of Directors Contact Information

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Director of Fundraising .....	Cheryl Cohen.....	818-399-2418.....	cheryl@cohentnc.com
VOS JEWELS Director of Lifelong Learning ....	Sharone Weizman .....	818-882-4867 .....	sharonew@vosla.org
Recording Secretary.....	Randie Rosenberg.....	818-667-4201 .....	poochluvrr@aol.com

## VOS Clergy & Staff Contact Information

Spiritual Leader, Rabbi Ron Li-Paz .....	Rabbili-paz@vosla.org.....	818-879-8087 or 818-882-4867
<i>Rabbis Emeriti, Jerry Fisher (z"l) and Richard Schachet (z"l)</i>		
Cantor, Michael Li-Paz.....	mmlipez@gmail.com .....	818-882-4867
Clergy Assistant, Sharona Jacobs.....	rabbisassistant@vosla.org.....	818-882-4867
Office Administrator, Arlene Mayo .....	officeadmin@vosla.org.....	818-882-4VOS (4867)
Finance Administrator, Karen Lavin.....	KarenL@vosla.org .....	818-882-4867
Music Director, Gerald (Jerry) Sternbach.....	musicdirector@vosla.org.....	818-882-4867
<b>VOS JEWELS</b>		
Director of Life Long Learning, Sharone Weizman .....	Sharonew@vosla.org.....	818-882-4867
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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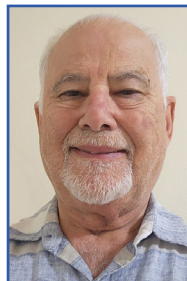
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**Director  
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Ed Kohn



**Vice President  
Religious Practices**  
Wendy Levenson



**Director  
Religious Practices**  
Betsy Shore



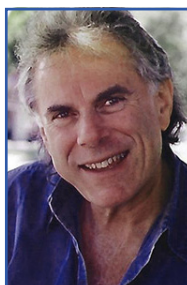
**Director  
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Karen Jacobs



**Treasurer**  
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**Vice President  
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**Director  
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Ron Lieberman



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Randie Rosenberg



**JEWELS Director of  
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Sharone Weizman



## Committee Chair Contact Information

Butterfly Project.....	Julie Goren.....	818-489-6686
By-Laws.....	Mickey Bilsky.....	818-384-1107
Chairman of Ushers.....	Lenny Horowitz.....	213-200-1324
Chavurot.....	Anne Sperling.....	805-796-9255
Crafters' Club.....	Jean Cord.....	818-340-3394
Education.....	Sharone Weizman.....	818-870-0459
Event Guards.....	Jackie Berg.....	818-383-0494
Events Sales Coordinator.....	Claudine Pelc.....	818-635-7917
High Holy Days.....	Stan Taub.....	818-998-7224
High Holy Days.....	Stewart Epstein.....	818-886-2380
Holocaust Remembrance.....	Judy Benedict.....	Judymasonnp@yahoo.com
Men's Club.....	Bob Brandt.....	818-535-0067
Mt. Sinai.....	Josh Ryan.....	818-458-0932
Oneg.....	Wendy Levenson.....	310-985-4285
Oneg.....	Simone Brandt.....	818-891-6476
Oneg.....	Debbie Du Val.....	818-384-5125
Outreach Newsletter.....	Arlene Mayo.....	818-882-4867
Shiva Support Committee.....	Marlene Frierson.....	818-718-9428
Singles.....	Wendy Levenson.....	310-985-4285
Sisterhood.....	Barbara Barackman, bb.elvis68@gmail.com.....	818-497-4969
Sunshine.....	Harvey and Sue Magidow.....	805-750-0345
Tribute Cards.....	Beverly Nisenson.....	818-360-2597
Tot Shabbat.....	Judy Gaffin.....	Judy@vosla.org
Volunteer Coordinator.....	Judy Benedict.....	Judymasonnp@yahoo.com
Yahrzeit Board.....	Karen Lavin.....	818-882-4867

### We Need You! VOLUNTEER TODAY!

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

For more information how to become involved, contact **Judy Benedict**, our Volunteer Coordinator, at [Judybvosla@gmail.com](mailto:Judybvosla@gmail.com).



Valley Outreach Synagogue  
& CENTER FOR JEWISH LIFE

26668 Agoura Road  
Calabasas, CA 91302  
818.882.4VOS(4867)  
[www.vosla.org](http://www.vosla.org)

## Did You Know...?

This March brings us the joy of Purim celebrations with hamantaschen to eat, groggers to twirl, costumes to don and the Megillah to read, reminding us of the bravery of Esther and Mordechai. Before that celebration commences, you also may run in to shamrocks, leprechauns, and all manner of green food and drink as those of Irish decent (and retailers) celebrate St. Patrick's Day. The recorded story of St. Patrick's life is one with many variations. Interestingly, the one fact that seems to be agreed upon by historians and scholars alike, is that **St. Patrick was not Irish**. It is theorized that Patrick could have been Welsh, Scottish, Roman, Italian, French, and yes, even Jewish.

Historians tell us that Patrick was born Maewyn Succat, but that name along with his birthplace is still disputed. Some say he was born in the Northern Kingdom of Strathclyde and his descendants were Roman-British. Others claim that he was born south of Wales, or in the city of St. Davids. In his own writing, Patrick describes himself as a Britton—a name once used by Celtic inhabitants in Britain and southern Scotland. It is generally agreed that he was born in the late 4th century and his father was a deacon.

Patrick's story begins at age 16, when he was captured and taken to Ireland by Irish pirates, and sold in to slavery. Held captive and forced to work as a shepherd, he eventually escaped around age twenty-two, to return home. He had a renewed faith in G-d after that experience, became a missionary, and decided to return to Ireland to bring Christianity to the then Pagan Irish. Legend says he is *the one* who brought Christianity to Ireland. In an article on history.com, February 22, 2023, author Jennie Cohen writes that Patrick likely wasn't the only missionary, noting that:

*"In 431, before Patrick began preaching in Ireland, Pope Celestine reportedly sent a bishop known as Palladius 'to the Irish believing in Christ'—an indication that some residents of the Emerald Isle had already converted by then. One theory holds that the St. Patrick of lore is actually an amalgam of two men: Palladius and the deacon's son who first visited Ireland as an enslaved man."*

Scholar Robert Heider goes so far as to make a connection that St. Patrick

was a Jew. His source is *The Book of Leinster* (1160), a mid evil Irish book of history and language, written in the 12th century and kept at Trinity College in Dublin. A quote from the translated book says:

*"Patrick may have been descended from the Sons of Israel. When the Sons of Israel were banished by Titus and Vespasian into slavery to the four corners of the world in revenge for the blood of Christ, his ancestors came to Britain."*

*The Book of Lismore* from the late 15th century has a similar passage noted by Heider. Many books have been written about St. Patrick. *The Story of Saint Patrick* (1895) by Joseph Sanderson, tells yet another version of Patrick's life and lineage. With all these varied accounts, the lines become blurred between fact and fiction, and between what is a story and what is historical.

This brings us to March 17, widely agreed upon as the day Patrick died. His official sainthood is questionable, as he was not canonized (given sainthood), at the time of his death because in the 5th century the church had no formal process to do that. Patrick was likely given the status of patron saint of Ireland out of popularity through the stories shared about the myths and miracles that surrounded him. Who can't get behind a heroic story of Patrick having the power to drive out all the snakes from Ireland? Perhaps this story is more symbolic of Patrick driving out Paganism that existed in ancient Irish practices. In actuality, due to climate and location, snakes were never native to Ireland.

On the botanical side of Patrick's story is the "shamrock", a term that comes from the Gaelic word seamrog, meaning "little clover." However, the plant we know as the "shamrock" is *Oxalis* (wood sorrel), which has a similar three-leaf structure to the clover, but is not a clover at all. It is said that Patrick used the three leaf "shamrock" to explain the holy trinity. That is another disputed claim, but people liked the allegory. The shamrock went on to become a symbol of pride in Ireland, representing the land that was taken from the Irish.

First recognized in 1631, St. Patrick's Day in Ireland was a religious holy day. It was in 1737 that the first St. Patrick's Day celebration was recorded in the America,

in Boston, with a gathering of the Members of the Charitable Irish Society, set up to help Irish immigrants.

As Irish and Jewish immigrant populations settled near each other in American cities, both groups shared a common history—they endured oppression in their native land and faced discrimination in America. Due to the expense of beef in Ireland, most Irish ate pork, not beef. Once in America, corned beef, sold by Jewish butchers, was cheaper (as was cabbage) and the Irish adopted it as a staple on their tables. Jewish and Irish immigrants also collaborated with each other as musicians, joined by their mutual love of singing and dancing, on Tin Pan Alley and in vaudeville shows. For example, in 1912 Jean Schwartz composed the music for the song "*If It Wasn't for the Irish and the Jews*," and William Jerome (who changed his name from Flannery to fit in with Jewish performers) wrote the song's lyrics.

*"Talk about a combination, heed my words and make a note  
On St. Patrick's Day Rosinsky pins a shamrock on his coat  
There's a sympathetic feeling between the Blooms and McAdoo's  
Why Tammany would surely fall, there'd really be no Hall at all  
If it wasn't for the Irish and the Jews"*

— From Jean Schwartz & William Jerome's 1912 song "*If It Wasn't for the Irish and the Jews*"

What about St. Patrick being from Jewish descendants? That is an interesting theory depending on your sources. There is however, a clear connection between Jews and Irish when it comes to food. A March 17, 2016 on line *Jewish Federation* article "*Do Jews 'Erin Go Bragh?'*" notes that:

*"In the early 1960s, Irish Jews in New York formed the Loyal League of the Yiddish Sons of Erin, a group that met monthly. Their biggest event each year was their Erev St. Patrick's Day Banquet, in which attendees ate, among other things, corned beef, green matzo balls and green bagels!"*

The history of St. Patrick's Day is yet another reminder of our commonality across cultures, and how legends, myths, and stories bring us together. So grab your friends, family, and bagels O'Schmear, and ask Alexa to play "*If It Wasn't for the Irish and the Jews*."





## SHABBAT SERVICES

MARCH 8: A VOS CELEBRATION OF JEWISH MUSIC: PART 3  
MARCH 22: SIMPLY SHABBAT



## CLUB MEETINGS

MARCH 7: SISTERHOOD MEETING, 11:00 AM  
MARCH 7: MEN'S CLUB FREE DINNER MEETING, 5:45 PM



## EVENTS AT VOS & BEYOND

MARCH 2,3: VOS USO PERFORMANCE  
MARCH 10: VOS MEMBERS DAY  
MARCH 17: SINGLES 55+ ACADEMY MUSEUM TRIP  
MARCH 22: JEWELS INTERGENERATIONAL PURIM CELEBRATION  
MARCH 27: JEWELS ASSEMBLE HYGIENE BAGS FOR PATH  
MARCH 31: MEN'S CLUB FAMILY BBQ



## CLASSES AT VOS

**SEE FLYERS ON PAGES 10, 11 & 12 AND JOIN US!**  
JEWISH HISTORY • BAGELS & BANTER  
TORAH INSPIRED LEARNING • VOS BOOK CLUB  
ROSH HODESH • PEOPLE OF THE BOOK CLUB  
JOURNEY WITHIN: DISCOVERING OUR PURPOSE



## Acknowledgments

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