

INSIDE

HANUKKAH TOGETHER 2020
PAGE 2



HATE CRIMES SOAR PAGE 4
ADL

MY INNER JEWISH MOTHER PAGE 2

Humanity is at a Crossroads Warns the UN: Here is How Israel Can Help

By Gilad Katz
Consul General of Israel to the Southwest



Gilad Katz

One million species of animals and plants are currently being threatened by extinction, including 40% of all amphibious animals, 33% of corals, 33% of marine mammals, and around 10% of insects. Three-quarters of the terrestrial environment and two-thirds of the marine environment have been significantly altered by human activity, resulting in vast areas of the world becoming desert and losing their fertility. Forests are continuing to be cut down, fish stocks are dwindling, water, air, and land pollution are increasing at an accelerated rate.

As the damage to biodiversity, flora, and fauna continues to grow with intensity, the UN has warned that humanity is at a crossroads and that the continued destruction of natural ecosystems endangers us. This is a critical

issue that affects us all, seeing as nature provides us with the most essential services that we cannot live without. From clean air, pollination of agricultural crops, food, raw materials, and more.

In view of this alarming data and the dire implications for our future, the biodiversity summit was convened at the end of September to try and coordinate a joint global effort to halt the damage. UN experts say that the damage is still reversible if we decide to take a number of **transformative changes**. Such changes include stopping forest and land destruction and instead rehabilitating these natural systems. Other effective actions could be shifting to sustainable agriculture, efficiently utilizing water, reducing consumption of animal-based foods such as meat and dairy products and switching to a plant-based diet, and working to prevent climate change.

This can be seen as a very challenging task, especially with the world's population expected to grow up to 10 billion people by 2050, something that will continue to increase the pressures on the planet's already depleting resources. As such, we should all ask ourselves how we can do our part to help prevent

this impending disaster. What are some of the changes that we can make at the individual, local, and national levels to help improve nature and biodiversity.

Israel can contribute greatly to addressing this pivotal issue, from sharing experience to technologies that can reduce the extent of damage and even restore biodiversity, as well as address the growing needs of humanity for raw materials, food, water, and energy. For example, 90% of the wastewater in Israel is purified, while 80% of wastewater worldwide is discharged into rivers and oceans, causing heavy environmental pollution that harms the flora and fauna.

It would have been possible to use the wastewater for agriculture, or to revive dried up rivers and streams and to save large-scale pumping of water from nature. Preventing water leakage, water conservation, desalination, and the use of saline water in agriculture are all very advanced techniques in Israel and enable the conservation of wetlands and the increase of agricultural crops.

Another area that Israel can contribute is

CROSSROADS continued on page 2

Standing Together Against Racism: Building on Our Common Heritage

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Dr. Bernice A. King, daughter of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Dr. Susannah Heschel, daughter of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel
Rabbi Capers Funnye Jr., Chief Rabbi of the International
Israelite Board of Rabbis

*will join together for a live, nationally streamed unity event
convened by the
Jewish Federation of New Mexico*

Sunday, January 24, 2021 at 4 pm MST
Free • All are welcome
Register at: TogetherAgainstRacismNM.org



Dr. Bernice A. King



Susannah Heschel



Rabbi Capers Funnye, Jr.

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CROSSROADS continued from page 1

agriculture. Israel's insight, expertise, and innovation could significantly increase agricultural production while enabling the protection of open and natural areas on a large scale in the world. Drip irrigation, precise agriculture, and the use of remote sensing systems are some of the practices used in Israel that can help preserve biodiversity and address the food supply of the world population that is constantly continuing to grow.

Israel is also a pioneer in the groundbreaking production of animal protein substitutes, which can also help reduce the pressure on natural systems being that 70% of the world's total agricultural area is used to raise livestock for human consumption. If animal protein could be replaced by laboratory-grown meat or high-quality plant-based protein, large parts of the world could be rehabilitated, the trend of climate change could be slowed down, and the food security of billions of people could be strengthened. Israel has dozens of startups that specialize in this field, research and development institutes, and significant funds that are raised to implement the research developments necessary to further this industry.

Ongoing research is also being performed by Israel in the field of renewable energies, including the development and application of technologies such as energy efficiency, energy storage, energy control, and more. All are important and necessary for the mitigation of the climate crisis.

Israel, which has been dealing with extreme climatic conditions for 70 years since its establishment, has developed a wide range of technologies, capabilities, and experience that can greatly assist the world in reducing biodiversity loss and moving toward its restoration and renewal. Israel will be happy to share its expertise in these areas, as nature does not recognize human borders and the problem of biodiversity destruction is a universal problem that demands full international cooperation.

Israel is ready to contribute so that we can all continue to smell the scent of wildflowers in open fields, to see birds flying high in the sky, and to live in a better and healthier world.

*Happy
Hanukkah
and Happy
New Year*

*from
Sabra
Minkus
and Family*

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S CORNER

When We Work to Become the Shamash

By Rabbi Dr. Rob Lennick
CEO, Jewish Federation of New Mexico

The great symbol of the Chanukah menorah has many meanings. During Chanukah we light the lights over eight days adding a light every night. This is derived from the legend that tells how the Jerusalem Temple was re-dedicated (*Chanukat beit hamikdash* – thus the name “Chanukah”) upon its recapture by the Maccabees, and the miracle occurred where the re-lit eternal light in the Temple burned for eight days with only one day's worth of sacred oil.

Another interpretation focuses on the ninth candle, the *shamash*, the servant or helper that is used to light the other lights. In Jewish tradition, it is a mitzvah to light the lights, to publicly display the miracle. Chanukah is also a commemoration of the victory in 165 BCE of the few over the many in a fight for religious freedom as the Jews led



Rabbi Dr. Rob Lennick

by the Maccabees fought against the forced assimilation being imposed by the Syrian Greeks. In this sense, Chanukah provides a universal message: Freedom is precious and must be won and especially protected – and never taken for granted.

It is interesting that the *shamash* does not count in fulfillment of the mitzvah to light the lights. If you notice, there are 44 candles in a box of Chanukah candles. Only 36 count in the fulfillment of the mitzvah to light the lights. The eight used for the *shamash* are not included, which is ironic, considering the *shamash* is the servant, the one that helps to give light. One might think the one that gives would get credit toward the fulfillment of the mitzvah. What might this teach us?

There are all kinds of giving. Some giving is out of a sense of holy self-satisfaction. One gives in order to receive, perhaps recognition or some other self-oriented satisfaction. Some giving is out of true empathy, some feel the need to give because personally they have experienced the need themselves.

And some giving is altruistic, it is giving because one recognizes it is the right thing to do, with no expectation of anything but the acceptance of the gift. I happen to believe all giving, no matter the reason is good giving.

The *shamash*, then by these definitions, is the altruistic candle that gives for no other reason than to share the light. No reward. No recognition. No credit toward fulfilling the mitzvah. Its giving is especially noble. It is also the light that reaches out to light the others. We don't set the *shamash* in one spot and grab the other candles and light them one at a time by bringing them to the *shamash*. The opposite is true. The candles for the fulfillment of the mitzvah each night, stand stationary on the chanukiah and the *shamash* goes to each one and shares its flame, igniting the others, each one as an individual. The *shamash* is so powerful and inspiring that its simple effort provides light with humility.

These last many, many months living with Covid-19 have been perhaps the most challenging times many have faced in their lifetimes, and now with winter descending upon us the level of infection

and the death toll may continue to increase, and the impacts may continue to grow.

Therefore, let us resolve together that we shall get through this by learning the lesson of the humble but powerful *shamash*.

Every simple act of giving, whether in the form of a kind word, a reassuring glance over Zoom, staying in touch with someone who is isolated, sending a loving note to friends or family, expressing love even at a distance, contributing to ensure that the basic needs of people in our community are met, for whatever reason and way that you give, you can be a *shamash*, too.

Remember Peter Yarrow's stirring chorus in, *Light One Candle*:

*Don't let the light go out
It's lasted for so many years
Don't let the light go out
Let it shine through our hope and
our tears.*

Loretta and I send our love and light to one and all this Chanukah with a reminder to stay connected, wear masks, be safe and well. And, be the *shamash*. As long as we give light to each other, the light will never go out.

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HANUKKAH TOGETHER 2020

A WEEK OF COMMUNITY CANDLE LIGHTING
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CONGREGATIONS ACROSS OUR REGION

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Thursday, December 10th
at 5:30 pm
Congregation B'nai Israel, ABQ:
Join for community candle lighting with a D'var Torah by Rabbi Dov Gartenberg. There will be a story, a menorah building activity and special music. Don't miss it!

Friday, December 11th
at 4:30 pm
Temple Beth Shalom, Santa Fe:
Rabbi Neil Amswych will be lighting the Hanukkah and explaining why we light the candles the way we do, sing Hanukkah songs, share a story about unity and on light in dark times.

Saturday, December 12th
at 5:30 pm
Congregation Nahalat Shalom, ABQ:
We will begin at 5:30 pm with Cantor Beth Cohen leading Havdalah and the lighting of the Hanukkah candles. From 6:00-7:00 pm Maggidah Batya Podos and Cantor Cohen will present "Stories, Songs, Wonders and Miracles: Carrying the Light," followed at 7:00 pm by a Sing Along led by Dan Matthews.

Sunday, December 13th
at 5:30 pm
HaMakom, Santa Fe:
Candle lighting led by Cantor Cindy Freedman and the HaMakom Santa Fe Community. Followed by the 20th Anniversary HaMakom Hanukkah Party! Festive Songs and Stories.

Monday, December 14th
at 5:30 pm and 6:30 pm
Jewish Federation of New Mexico:
Join the community for candle lighting followed by the JFNM Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony – Followed at 6:30 pm with an all-community night of fun: "LAUGHS AND WOWS: A HANUKKAH NIGHT OF COMEDY, MENTALISM AND MAGIC" featuring international stars: *Avi Liberman and Jason Suran*

Tuesday, December 15th
at 5:30 pm and 7:00 pm
Jewish Community Center, ABQ:
The JCC invites our community to join us for candle lighting. Also, everyone is invited to preview the family-friendly Hanukkah film *Full-Court Miracle*, and then gather to schmooze and chat on Zoom about the film at 7pm. Watch the film on your own during Hanukkah: Free with a Disney Plus subscription or \$3.99 by renting through Amazon Prime Video

Wednesday, December 16th
at 5:30pm
Congregation Albert, ABQ:
Celebrate a cozy and traditional evening of Hanukkah "hosted" by Congregation Albert. Everyone is welcome to Zoom with your Jewish Community as we light candles, tell stories and sing songs about Hanukkah. Have your Hanukkah, candles, and Dreidels ready!

Thursday, December 17th
at 5:30 pm
**Hanukkah Together 2020
Community-Wide Candle Lighting**
Light your menorahs at home in the presence of folks from across the area for our last night of Hanukkah and sharing greetings with each other.

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OP-ED: Conflation of Anti-Zionism and Antisemitism Wrong

By Stanley M. Hordes, Ph.D.
On behalf of Jewish Voice for Peace
—Albuquerque

I must take exception to the Op-Ed piece in the Fall 2020 edition of *The Link*, by Halley S. Faust, “Can You be Jewish and Antisemitic?”

The answer to the question posed in the title, of course, is yes.

But the main part of Faust’s editorial asks an entirely different question: “If You are Anti-Zionist, Must You be Considered to be Antisemitic?” To this question, the answer is certainly not.

Criticism of Zionism must not be conflated with antisemitism. One can be critical of Israeli policies (including persecution of Palestinians) without being antisemitic. By the same token, one can be strongly pro-Israel and antisemitic. Donald Trump, arguably the strongest US president in support of Israel in its seventy-two-year history, is reputed to have made several disparaging comments about Jews, such as

calling House of Representatives Judiciary Committee Chair Jerome Nadler “that fat little Jew.” Or strong supporter of Israel, Representative Steven King, (R-Iowa), who has been roundly criticized for his advocacy of white supremacy. And consider the case of Rev. John Hagee, Christian Evangelical minister, who preaches that the expansion of Israeli boundaries will hasten the Second Coming of Christ, leaving unconverted Jews to burn in Hell.

Jewish critics of Israel tend to focus on governmental actions toward Palestinians, whose lands were taken away in the Nakba of 1948. Nakba means “catastrophe” in Arabic, and refers to 500 Palestinian villages destroyed and 700,000 Palestinian people banished by the new State of Israel. The Naksa of 1967 means “setback” in Arabic, referring to the beginning of the Occupation. The Israel Defense Force intrudes at will in the Occupied West Bank. Gaza, although nominally not occupied,

is described as the largest open-air prison in the world, because Israel controls how much electricity is provided, how much and what Gazans get to eat, and who gets to enter and leave.

Coming under particular scrutiny is the egregious practice of subjecting Palestinian youth to the military judicial system. Children suspected of crimes, whether major or minor, are routinely arrested in the middle of the night, thrown into military prison, sometimes subjected to torture, interrogated without the presence of either legal counsel or their parents, and coerced into signing confessions in Hebrew, a language not understood by them.

Faust makes the claim that these human rights violations do not constitute formal Israel Defense Force *policy*, but to the children and their families who are subjected to these reprehensible *practices*, this represents a distinction without a difference.

In response to these outrageous practices targeting Palestinian youth, Rep. Betty McCollum introduced in Congress, HR 2407, the Promoting Human Rights for Palestinian Children Living Under Israeli Military Occupation Act. This bill prohibits U.S. aid from being used to violate the human rights of children anywhere. It is anticipated that this bill will not be considered during the present session of Congress, but will be introduced in the next session.

Faust alleges that it is antisemitic to “[apply] double standards by requiring of [Israel] a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.”

The United States provides over \$3,800,000,000 per year in military aid to Israel, an amount far greater than that provided to any other client state. Is it not reasonable to expect better behavior from such a beneficiary of our largesse? By denying Palestinians basic human rights, guaranteed by international law, such

as protection of children from being subject to military law, expelling and transferring civilian populations, seizing land in occupied territory for the construction of “settlements,” and engaging in an occupation for over half a century, Israel is acting counter to principles of common decency.

Antisemitism in the United States poses a real threat, not only to the Jewish community, but to the entire nation. But by conflating anti-Zionism and genuine antisemitism, it makes it more difficult to isolate the Nazi white supremacists, who really do hate Jews and seek to do us harm.

As columnist Michelle Goldberg aptly stated recently in a *New York Times* article, *Anti-Zionism Isn't the Same as Anti-Semitism*, “people with an uncompromising commitment to pluralistic democracy will necessarily be critics of contemporary Israel. That commitment, however, makes them the natural allies of Jews everywhere else.”

As We Kindle Each Wick, Let Us Shed Light on the Hard Reality of Black Lives in This Country

By Tiziana Friedman

As the nights lengthen and the air turns chilly, we approach the winter solstice and prepare to light candles for Chanukah. During the month of Kislev, we set our *chanukiot* in our windows to drive out darkness and be a light unto the world. This desire to drive out darkness, the idea that light is inherently good and dark bad, permeates throughout our culture. This concept exists in our oldest metaphors, and those we hold to be most true. It also perpetuates systemic racism.

The trope of darkness being evil plays out in all forms of entertainment. In children’s cartoons, the villains appear darker than the heroes. We use terms like “going to the dark side,” or “black magic.” It’s impossible to use these terms in popular culture and not have them bleed over to our implicit/unconscious biases about skin color. Is darkness intrinsically bad? Is light inherently good? The Torah says no. So why do we keep saying yes?

The most devastating time of the Jewish year, Tisha b’Av, comes during the heat and brightness of summer. Not during the darkness of winter. Rabbi Arthur Waskow writes about this saddest day, when it was the excess of light and heat that was perilous and frightful.

The most nurturing and protective space for humans is a place of darkness - the womb. The universe arose from and exists within darkness. Life arises from darkness. We could not have one without the oth-

er. We could not see the first three stars in the sky to mark the end of Shabbat. We could not see the light shine through our fingertips during Havdalah.

The Talmud describes the Torah as “black fire on white fire,” with the black fire as the letters themselves and the white fire as the space between them. It is the black lines between the white spaces that forms Torah scrolls. Is that not enough to show we need both? That both are good? That it is the excess of one, the dominance of one, the erasure of one, that is bad?

Appreciation of both darkness and light, alongside the recognition of the effect of our language, plays more crucial a role than ever this year in stamping out stereotyping and acknowledging systemic racism. The month of Kislev presents opportunities to reaffirm our Jewish values, especially *tikkun olam*. Black Jews of Color (JOCs) sorely need our non-Black sisters and brothers to challenge these dominant narratives.

We need to shift our vocabulary in a way that makes space for us to be human. Humans with dreams, with aspirations, and with intrinsic goodness. All that we are exists alongside and intertwined with, not in spite of, our blackness. We can never achieve equity while descriptors for darkness, for dark skin, are tied so deeply with all that humans see as bad and less-than.

So, this Chanukah, will you be lighting the candles to drive away darkness, or to reconcile with its humanity?

Hate Crime Reports Surge 79 Percent in New Mexico in 2019

The number of reported hate crimes in New Mexico surged by 79 percent between 2018 and 2019, according to the FBI’s annual hate crime report released on November 16. The number of reported incidents in 2019 is the highest recorded in 20 years.

In New Mexico, there were 50 reported hate crimes in 2019 compared to 28 reported incidents in 2018. For 2019 in New Mexico, the FBI documented 30 crimes based on race, ethnicity, or ancestry, eight based on religion, eight based on sexual orientation, three based on gender-identity and one based on disability.

ADL Mountain States Regional Director Scott Levin issued the following statement: “It is no longer surprising or shocking to see an increase in the number of reported

hate crimes. At the same time, we cannot let fatigue distract us from the important work of preventing hate crimes. It is intolerable to note a 79 percent increase in total hate crimes in New Mexico, as well as increases for nearly all targeted groups. Hate has no place in our society. ADL will continue to do all it can to defend Jews and all

victims of hate and bigotry.”

Nationally, the FBI’s annual Hate Crime Statistics Act (HCSA) report reveals that 2019 was the deadliest year on record with 51 hate crime murders – a 113-percent increase over the previous record of 24 set in 2018.

REPORTS continued on page 9



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Jews, the Vatican and the Holocaust: When does Silence become Complicity?

By Ron Duncan Hart

Did the Catholic Church and Pius XII aid and abet the Nazis? This year is the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz in 1945, and the Santa Fe Distinguished Lecture Series and the Santa Fe Jewish Film Festival presented a series of programs on the Italian Jews and the Vatican in recognition of that event.

Pope Pius XII, Mussolini, and antisemitism in Italy in World War II created a combustible situation for Italian Jews in the 1940s, which was reinforced by Vatican silence and acceptance, even knowing about Nazi atrocities and death camps.

On November 18, the much sought-after lecturer Jeremy Dauber of Columbia University started the series with a webinar talk on the life and work of Primo Levi, the Italian Jewish writer, who was arrested and deported to Auschwitz in 1944. He survived because he was a healthy man who was able to work, and he went on to describe the dehumanization of that genocide with a depth of philosophical understanding of the human condition unmatched by any other writer of the Holocaust.

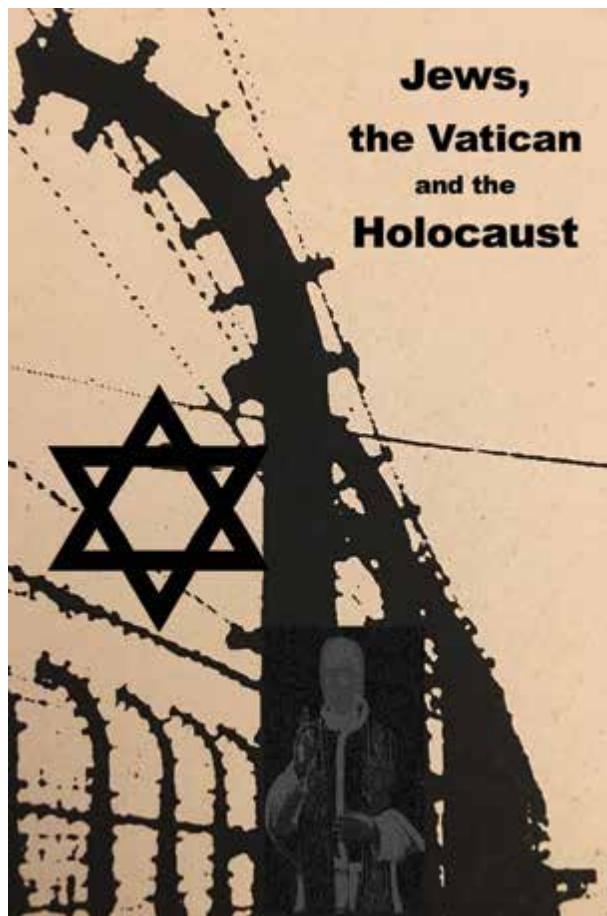
Philip Roth calls Levi's book, *Surviving Auschwitz*, the one book from the twentieth century that everyone should read. Rather than recount the horrors of life in the Nazi death camps, which he notes have been described by others, Levi explains what led to the creation of the death camps.

The "study of certain aspects of the human mind" is Primo Levi's goal. He says that when "every stranger is an enemy" to people or to nations, it is an infection of the soul, deep down, that destroys the system of reason. When that infection becomes an assumed dogma and the basic premise of a syllogism of life, the end point of such thinking is the death camp.

When the conception of the world is that the other, the enemy, is abominable, the logical conclusion is that the other needs to be eliminated. He calls that a "sinister alarm-signal" for humanity. In Levi's Italy, Mussolini and Pope Pius XII were initially silent on the anti-Semitism of their allies the Germans and Austrians, but as Mussolini drew closer to Hitler, he became overtly anti-Semitic. Pope Pius XII remained silent.

Both Pope Pius XI and XII accepted the fascism of Mussolini and Hitler without decrying the anti-Semitism that came with it. The documentary, "Holy Silence," which takes a critical look at the roles of both popes, Mussolini, and Hitler was aired on December 2 through the Santa Fe Jewish Film Festival.

After the Nazis occupied Rome in 1943, they



started arresting Jews and deporting them to the death camps. They rounded up more than 1,200 people from the Jewish Ghetto in Rome within sight of the Vatican and deported them to Auschwitz where they were killed upon arrival. Only sixteen survived to return after the War. Before being sent to Auschwitz Jews were kept in a holding area near the Vatican. Pope Pius XII was informed of the operation, but he remained silent and did not oppose it, ostensibly because he feared the position of the Church in Germany could be compromised.

As the arrests of Jews continued and spread from Rome to other cities, thousands more were detained and deported, including Primo Levi, a young chemist living in Turin and a member of the resistance. Pope Pius XII had lived in Germany as the Papal envoy before the War. He spoke fluent German, understood

German society, and had met Hitler. He never denounced the German atrocities and the killing of six million Jews (even after the war), and the fact that he did not oppose the Nazis has opened him to the accusation of complicity with genocide and the anti-Jewishness that has become a stain on Papal history.

On December 9, Pulitzer Prize winning author David Kertzer of Brown University spoke on "The Vatican, Forced Baptism, and the Jews", based on his research in the Vatican archives on WW II that were opened in March. His book *The Pope and Mussolini: The Secret History of Pius XI and the Rise of Fascism in Europe*, not only won the Pulitzer Prize, but was also a finalist for the National Book Award.

Prof. Kertzer is the leading authority on Jews and the Vatican in World War II. Based on Vatican and fascist archives, his groundbreaking research details the role of the Papacy in the rise of fascism and anti-Semitism in Italy and Germany.

In March of this year, Vatican archives on the World War II period and Pope Pius XII were opened, offering the release of information about the relationship between Pius XII and the Nazi regime. The Pope's acceptance of fascism led to his silence on the anti-Semitism that was a part of it. Under his leadership the Papacy was silent on anti-Semitism, but some Church entities, including convents and monasteries, did protect Jews

from the Nazis.

However, the actions of the clergy were not consistent, and there were instances of abuse of Church power. Prof. Kertzer writes about one such instance in the August issue of *The Atlantic*, where he chronicles the kidnapping of two Jewish boys, Robert and Gerald Finaly, by Catholic clergy, and the long court battle for their relatives to win their custody. Prof. Kertzer's talk will be the Leonard B. Torobin Distinguished Lecture/webinar.

The Santa Fe Distinguished Lecture Series (www.santafedls.org) brings top scholars from across the United States and internationally to speak on subjects of Jewish life and thought. Some of the scholars have been Deborah Lipstadt of Emory University on anti-Semitism today, Shalom Sabar of Hebrew University on Rembrandt and the Jews, Jeremy Dauber of Columbia University on Sholem Aleichem, Kenneth Seeskin of Northwestern University on Maimonides and many others. Most of the Distinguished Lecture Series talks can be found at www.jewishlearningchannel.org.

The Santa Fe Jewish Film Festival brings to northern New Mexico films that inform and foster an understanding of Jewish culture, religion, history and/or identity. Our selections are an eclectic mix of award-winning documentaries, narrative first-run features, Israeli cinema and more, and represent some of the very best films playing the Jewish film festival circuit. Interviews with the film's producer/director, facilitated discussions, and talks by experts create an added dimension, transforming simply "going to the movies" into a "movie going experience." Our season starts in October and runs through April with films screened once every four to six weeks. More information about the Santa Fe Jewish Film Festival can be found at www.santafejff.org.

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In Defense of Caregivers and Caregiving: Its Revolutionary Power during Covid-19

By Ruth Dennis

Last count, 94,000 elders have died in assisted living and nursing homes of Covid-19. In total, that's 37% of all COVID-related deaths in the US, according to the *New York Times*. I often wonder whether eldercare can positively grow as a result of the trauma of illness our society is facing.

Caregivers of all stripes are left to figure out what kind of care is necessary when there are no rules for what is happening now because many of the systems we have created for care simply have not worked in the face of pandemic.

To say that hands-on caregiving is relentless in "normal" situations is an understatement. It is often the case that facility caregivers live in a small house with anywhere from five (like in our homes) to 15 (regulatory requirement) dementia patients, per caregiver, who need constant unrelenting help.

Elders are fighting a disease that will take their lives, and they often see no difference between the caregiver who is trying to help them and the disease they hate. This is the reality of dementia without lockdowns, constant disinfecting, and social distancing.

Comfort care (end of life care) is equally as relentless. The numbers and hours are the same, but the care includes watching someone you have grown to love deeply, die in small pieces every hour of every day. Caregivers can find themselves drowning in loss on a quiet day. Caregivers can also find hope and joy in the face of all the exhaustion, grief and fear.

In more than 20 years as part of Vista and as a caregiver for my brother Morgan, I have done both kinds of care. So have the caregivers I work with at Vista. All of us have made daily choices about care and about love in the deepest, rawest way possible. Daily, I watch this amazing group of women put aside frustration and fatigue and find the other side of care.

They find the steps to a dance to shift an elder from anger to laughter. They find a deep well of tenderness in loss. A touch when someone is in pain and afraid. A song sung softly as an elder drift in and out of our world. A way to connect an elder to life through anything from sweeping, sharing tastes of fresh-made tortillas, to teaching an elder how to ask for café con leche dulce. Whatever the case may be, they make a celebra-

tion out of daily life.

Our caregivers choose to care. They work harder and longer. They bear the confusion of systems that are fighting to survive. They listen to unhappy people. They try to bring in laughter and hope each day. They also get tired, feel the same sense of fear that everyone else is feeling.

One of our caregivers is in treatment for cancer. She is at risk. She is a mother to an amazing, smart daughter. She is a very happy wife. That caregiver, Claudia, has an amazing laugh and is tough as steel. She also deeply loves what she does and the elders she cares for. Every day she puts on her gloves, mask, and her amazing smile and comes to work. She talks about her decision to keep working as lifegiving. Her bravery, kindness and laughter give us all strength. She is a warrior and she is changing this world.

Now in the face of pandemic numbers that are simply brutal, in the face of fear and anger, caregivers are critical to our world, and good caregiving a revolutionary act. The work they do is hard, that is physically demanding and tiring. Caregiving is a call to be with someone in the darkness and to help them find their way back



to beauty. Caregivers do save the world, every day, one person at a time.

Ruth Dennis is the senior director of social services and education at Vista Care which

has three fully licensed residences in Santa Fe and Las Cruces that specialize in assisted-living and also care for people with Alzheimer's and dementia.

Observations from the Wilderness

By Ruth Dennis



As the winter draws near, it brings a time of questions. How do we keep elders safe? How to help people stay family in the face of this? The storm of Covid-19 is here.

We are all in some way or the other stuck with it. The holidays are here as well. This year the holidays bring something else with them. Grief. Loss. Grief that is both personal and collective. Loss that touches every one of us, some in small ways, others in almost unspeakable ways. We are working our way through a place that can be wild, dark, and scary.

One of my friends, Hope, refers to grief as a wilderness. This makes sense in many ways. Wilderness lands are this combination of isolation, beauty, danger, potential, deep connection, risk, and renewal. Wilderness can be a place of solace. Wilderness is also scary. Covid-19 has brought all of us to this wilderness. There is not one soul whose life has not been touched or altered by this Coronavirus. We have all lost. We all miss someone. We all miss each other. All of us know someone who is vulnerable. Many of us are vulnerable. All of us are tired. All of us are scared. This is an unknown place, a place of wild and weird things, a place of loss, a place of change.

Grief can also be a place of rebirth, a place of deepening. Grief can be a place for love to live. The hard part, the part that

maybe there just are no clear answers to is how do we go through this place? This place has become a part of all of us. The problem is what to do with all of this? How do we support? What do we share? Is there a way to help? Is there a way to make things better for each other? The place we are all in is messy and despite all efforts to control it, often beyond our control. Where does that leave us?

My little piece of the grief wilderness has given me at least two things. The people around me, my friends, and my Vista family are good and kind people. It does not matter that they can all be stubborn or weird at times. They are all special human beings who are doing the best they can every day. It is an honor and a gift to have them in my life. There are things in this world that are still magic, flowers, gardens, cats, an elder drawing on her own for the first time, knowing people who are in love, the sunsets from my back yard and learning to make a really good caldo de res. This is a gift. The holidays this year will be different. We are all spending them in a wilderness. There is danger there. There are also gifts. I for one am thankful for the gifts.

Still, I am reminded of the song by Johnny Cash: "At my door, the leaves are falling, the cold, wild winds will come, I still miss someone... I find a darkened corner because I still miss someone."



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2021 Scholarship Program



Support for Jewish young people in New Mexico:

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4 application deadlines: March 1, June 1, Sept. 1, Dec. 1; awards made 30 days later
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Apply between February 1 – April 1, award made by April 15

Support for young people, Jewish or non-Jewish, in the Albuquerque area:

- \$1,000 scholarship for college tuition – Neil Isbin Scholarship Fund
Apply by May 4, award made June 1

For information on eligibility requirements and applications visit www.jcfnm.org/grants or contact Erika Rimson, erika@jcfnm.org or 505.348.4472.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT



Ruth Shore Mondlick

grew up in a Jewish neighborhood in Providence, Rhode Island. Although her family was not very involved in the temple, they did have a strong connection to the Jewish community. After Mondlick married her late husband, Martin, they became active at their Rhode Island congregation. Since moving to Albuquerque in 1964, Mondlick has been an important member and participant at Congregation Albert and various local Jewish organizations. She was a founding member of Jewish Family Service. She and Martin never deliberated about whether or not to leave a Legacy gift. Continuing Jewish life has always been vitally important to them. Mondlick's Legacy gift is to Congregation Albert and the Jewish Care Program, which took the place of Jewish Family Service.



Ruth Shore Mondlick & Martin Mondlick (z"l)

ment in the Jewish community, leaving an after-lifetime endowment gift through LIFE & LEGACY is an easy way to support and continue Jewish life in New Mexico.

Aviva Maxon, JCF NM summer intern, interviewed Ruth and worked with her to create this donor spotlight.

Contact Erika Rimson, Jewish Community Foundation of NM, to learn more about LIFE & LEGACY: erika@jcfnm.org or 505.348.4472

No matter your involve-

Holocaust Survivors Program Receives Grant from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

By Deborah Fillerup Weagel

In an interdenominational act of generosity, the Jewish Care Program recently received a grant from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to support Holocaust survivors. Along with recipients like the New Mexico Hunger Action Fund, and the Good Shepherd Center, the Jewish Care Program was one of many different projects and organizations to receive monetary funding or goods from the Church. Donations and grants to these partners are paid through the Church Humanitarian Fund.

During this difficult time of the coronavirus pandemic, the Church has extended its assistance throughout New Mexico, the United States, and worldwide. It provides food and other basic necessities locally through its Bishops' Storehouse in Albuquerque. In 2020, about forty percent of the goods from the Bishops' Storehouse assisted non-LDS members.

Storehouse manager Marshall Henrie explained: "A significant amount of humanitarian work is now being done through the Bishops' Storehouses in the Unit-



Holocaust survivor in New Mexico with Social Welfare Manager of the Claims Conference

ed States. We always work with partners who have proven track records of helping the poor and needy. We provide what they often lack in terms of food supplies while relying on them to provide the infrastructure."

The Jewish Care Program of the Jewish Federation of New Mexico assists some of the most vulnerable in the Jewish community. Its services include Holocaust survivor care, senior outreach services, visits to Jewish seniors, holiday outreach baskets, resource and referral assistance, emergency assistance, a community chaplain, and support groups.

GRANT continued on page 8



The Jewish Federation of New Mexico and the Jewish Care Program thank our LIFE & LEGACY donors. With your generous commitments, we will sustain a vibrant Jewish community for generations to come!

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Jewish Care Program,
JCC of Greater Albuquerque,
Jewish Federation of NM, NM Jewish Historical Society and Temple Beth Shalom (Santa Fe).

Crypto-Jews: The Long Journey

An excerpt from a new book by Ron Duncan Hart

What did the medieval Spanish have against the Jews? Religion and Otherness? In that Catholic world Jews were heretics, and they had customs and language that became foreign as Spain redefined itself as Christian only. Jews no longer fit in New Christian Spain, and the Spanish reacted by expelling them. Those who wanted to stay became a pariah class of people who were Spanish in language and culture but tainted by Jewishness. Even converting to Catholicism could not cleanse the mark from them. They were still suspected of being Jews, crypto-Jews.

Why did crypto-Jews defy the Inquisition and the threat of death to continue Jewish lives in Catholic only Spain? Was it the inescapability of being chosen? Was it the bond of spirit that overcame the collective enmity? Why do descendants 500 years later still carry the mark? Is it family, collective mind, DNA, primal gestalt, history, culture? Can we know?

In Spanish the phrase “La Ley de Moises,” the Law of Moses, means the Torah, the five books of Moses. The Inquisition arrested conversos and crypto-Jews for practicing the teachings of “La Ley de Moises” or the Torah.

The crypto-Jewish experience has been shrouded in mystery for a past that might have been and the imagined future that could be. In the American Southwest and in parts of Latin America there is a movement to reclaim Jewish identity, and people are describing remnants of Jewish life in their families even though their ancestors



Ron Duncan Hart

renounced Jewishness long ago. People want to learn about the Sepharad of their ancestors, the Spain of the Jews. Many ask, “What is our place in that heritage?” Others simply say, “Somos Judios.” We are Jews.

Inquisition records are often the only information we have about crypto-Jews. We lack information about what they thought about their religious identity and what their Jewishness meant. Investigating their past is more like archaeology than history because conversos left few traces of their lives as Jews. Invisibility was the shell that protected them. We have cultural fragments in the memories of families and in the residue of practices, bits and pieces here and there. With rare exception the only written records are from the Inquisition, which is a suspect source because of its anti-Jewish bias.

When I read cases of people arrested by the *Santo Oficio de la*

Inquisición (Holy Office of the Inquisition) for Judaizing, I am always struck by the resoluteness of some to not cooperate in the face of torture in contrast to the readiness of others to talk, perhaps because of fear and pain. Scribes recorded the most minute details down to the long strings of “Ay, ay, ay, ay, ay” of the pain of the prisoner as the Inquisitors ordered another turn of the rack to force the accused Judaizer to answer questions. The Inquisitors were trained prosecutors, and they built cases based on testimony from fellow Judaizers and interviews with the accused themselves.

Twenty-five years ago, I sat in the Archivo Histórico Nacional (National History Archives) in Madrid awaiting the first Inquisition trial transcript that I would read. It was of a midwife in her 80s who was arrested because she had been accused of washing the baptismal water off new babies. When they brought the inches thick stack of parchment bound with a ribbon from a case 500 years old, I sat in silence contemplating what was on the table before me, a life in parchment, bound in ribbon. I saw the vulnerability of an eighty-year-old woman whose years had been dedicated to bringing life into this world, and now the power of life or death over her rested in the hands of these Inquisitors, who were the gatekeepers of Catholic conformity in this land.

It was her third arrest for the same offense, and normally, that would have meant a strong sentence and a prohibition against acting as a midwife for life. But, she pleaded

age and infirmity, and after a stern rebuke, her case was left in abeyance, not acquitted, but left open like a wound, a threat, a reminder of the power that could be re-activated at any moment. In the thousands of cases against accused Judaizers in Spain and the Americas over the centuries mothers and fathers were arrested because they did not eat pork or maybe they took baths on Friday. Maybe they did not work on Saturday. It was all to erase the taint of Judaism from Christian lands.

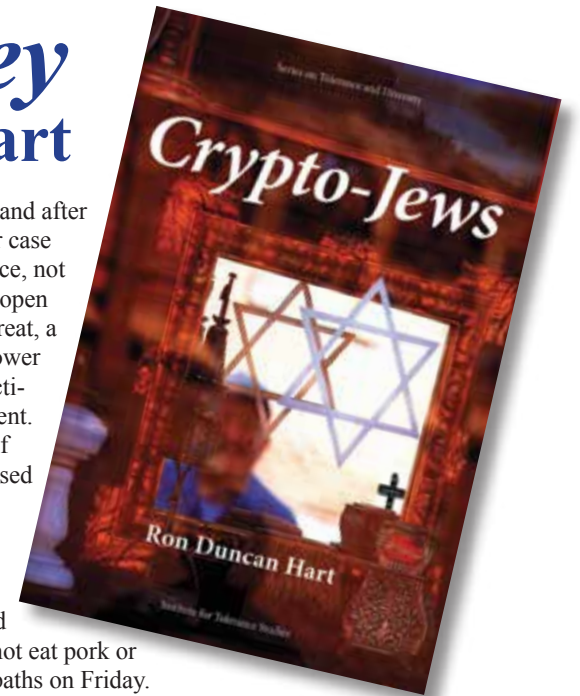
In New Mexico, I have found that local oral traditions about Jewish family identity or reclaimed Jewish identity can be rich, and there are multiple tracks of inherited beliefs in addition to historical documentation. This book, *Crypto-Jews*, is an attempt to provide a historical baseline of information about those times and draw an outline of what the experience of the descendants of hidden Jews might have been.

Out of the social wreckage of the Expulsion of Jews and the fires of the Inquisition, Jews of Spanish descent did survive, sometimes in hiding, clinging to life and legacy. In recent decades, hundreds and thousands of people have begun searching for the Jewish heritage of their families. This wave of Jewish renewal across the Spanish and Portuguese-speaking Americas is largely in places where there had

been Jewish converso populations in the colonial era. Many identify as Jews, and some have returned to Jewish lifestyles, keeping kosher, observing Shabbat, doing Torah study, and living in Jewish communities. This is the Jewish identity movement.

Crypto-Jews: The Long Journey is the companion book to the NMPBS/Cinewest documentary, “A Long Journey: Hidden Jews of the Southwest” that aired in New Mexico in November and is available on NMPBS Passport. It is also airing nationally across the United States and in Mexico. *Crypto-Jews* received the # 1 New Release rating on Amazon.

Ron Duncan Hart, Ph.D. is a cultural anthropologist, author, publisher and filmmaker. He is the director of the Institute for Tolerance Studies in Santa Fe and former president of the Jewish Federation of New Mexico.



In Memoriam: Edwin H. Caplan

By Harold Albert

Our dear friend Edwin (Ed) Caplan passed away on November 23, 2020 at age 94.

Ed was one of the founders of our Jewish Community Center. Arriving in Albuquerque in 1967, he was a member of the accounting faculty at UNM, and served as interim dean for two years at the Anderson School of Management. As early as the 1980's, Ed volunteered his accounting expertise to steer the proposed JCC in the fiscally right direction.

Before we even broke ground, for over three years, Ed assisted Shelly Cherrin in drafting our business plans which guided us through the formative years. During construction, Ed acted as our treasurer to make certain that funds were available and properly used.

As the second president of the JCC, Ed led our opening ceremonies in November 2000. During the first year as a “start-up” organization, Ed was faced with major decisions that would affect our JCC for decades, not the least of which was ensuring sufficient revenues to keep our doors open. Every meeting during his tenure was one of crisis management. Ed's calm and thoughtful judgment succeeded in overcoming chaos, permitting the JCC to remain open and ultimately become the success it is today.

After his term as president, Ed remained on the JCC executive



board of directors as treasurer, and for years he continued to advise on all financial matters, including the preparation and review of all financial statements.

Ed volunteered for numerous other Jewish organizations. He devoted his expertise to the Jewish Federation of New Mexico, Jewish Family Service, Hillel at the University of New Mexico, Solomon Schechter Day School and Congregation Albert where he also served as president.

In 2004, Ed and his wife Ramona were the fifth recipients of the Harold B. Albert Community Service Award. Ramona died in May. They were married for an extraordinary 71 years, and leave children, Gary, Dennis and wife Laura, Jeffrey

and wife Lorencia, and Nancy and husband Dieter; as well as grandchildren, Gavin, Steven and wife Catherine, Jeremy, Max, and Audrey.

Ed was quoted as saying in our tribute book at the JCC dedication, “The JCC campus is a marvel of modern architecture. We are beginning a new venture. We are beginning a tradition of delivering quality and relevant service to our community. Our JCC was built for the entire community and will serve us all for generations to come.”

He was correct. Our JCC serves generations to come -- because of Ed Caplan, may his memory be for a blessing.

GRANT continued from page 7

The Holocaust survivor care program offers a support system, a case worker to assist with a Holocaust survivor's care and needs, an advocate to obtain restitution funds from Germany, and every effort to ensure each individual enjoys a good quality of life. Regular social gatherings are held so that Holocaust survivors can meet and connect with one another.

Erin Tarica, director of the Jewish Care Program, said that “JCP is deeply appreciative of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” She explained that “the Holocaust survivors are aging, and their needs continue to grow. With these funds, JCP is able to increase the amount of direct care provided to the Holocaust survivors in New Mexico. Specifically, JCP will be able to facilitate the coordination of care and tangible needs that can range from caregiving, rental assistance, transportation, clothing, food, medical equipment and hygiene products, life alerts, and burial expenses. The funds are also used to coordinate social gatherings as well as provide caregivers and transportation to the social gatherings.”

“Emma Lazarus: Poet and Activist” with Héctor Contreras Lopez

Nahalat Shalom has been celebrating Shabbat in the Sephardic tradition for over twenty years. Our monthly gatherings welcome all -- Sephardi, Mizrahi, crypto-Jews, Jews of color, and the entire community. Before the pandemic, this intimate and authentic Shabbat included sharing a potluck dinner; we continue meeting on Zoom, where Stephanie Sofie Shefia Cohen leads us in song and prayer, joined by Hershel Weiss, one of our founding organizers.



Emma Lazarus - engraved by T. Johnson and photographed by W. Kurtz

This fall, in an attempt to bring a new depth and connection to our virtual time together, we have included a special project that began three years ago: “Emma Lazarus: Poet and Activist” with Héctor Contreras López.

Most of us know Emma Lazarus as the author of the sonnet inscribed on a plaque on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty. What is less known is that Emma Lazarus was Sephardic and much of her poetry, prose and translations express the Sephardic experience.

Héctor Contreras López is a writer, researcher, teacher and translator who has done extensive research

on Jewish-Mexican literature. He began to translate Emma Lazarus’ poetry into Spanish in order to plunge deeply into its meaning, and to make it available to Spanish speaking Jews in the United States. He has spent years meticulously and lovingly translating these poems, and as far as we know, this is the first time they have been translated into the Spanish language.

At Nahalat Shalom’s Sephardic

Shabbat in September, Héctor presented the poem “In the Jewish Synagogue at Newport” in the first part of this series. This unique poetry and translation project continued during our next Sephardic Shabbat in October when Héctor Contreras López shared his translation from English of her poem “By the Waters of Babylon, Little Poems in Prose” (A fragment). Everyone noted how moved they felt by hearing Emma’s words returned to her ancestral language. “Reading these poems in Spanish brings them back home,” says Héctor, who shared his translation of “The New Colossus” in November in the third part of this series.

The heartfelt response to this initial poetry and translation offering confirms our belief that friendship and human connection are the bedrocks of a strong and diverse Jewish community. Relationships are nurtured when we gather in a context of art, culture, and creativity.

To build on the success of this project, Nahalat Shalom is planning “Festival Sefardi 2021” which will include an art show of a member of

our local community (virtual and in person) and a bilingual reading of the works of Sephardic poets set to live music and performed by actors (when it is safe and possible to gather in person). We plan to hold all events outside, appropriately distanced, but gathered together, old and new faces, once again.

In an attempt to share these artistic creations and collaborations, we will make some of the festival available through recordings and bilingual printed versions of the poetry.

The poetry and translation series continues! Other writers whose

poems will be read during Sephardic Shabbats over the next several months include Ruth Behar, Myriam Moscona, Clarisse Nicoidski, Juan Gelman and Denise León.

Sephardic Shabbat at Nahalat Shalom takes place the second Friday of every month and all are welcome to attend.

Please contact office@nahalatshalom.org if you want copies of the original English versions and Héctor’s translations of Emma Lazarus’s poems. For more information on the translation project, contact Héctor Contreras López at pacheco1415@gmail.com.

REPORTS continued from page 4

Total hate crime incidents rose to 7,314 nationwide. Race-based hate crimes remained the most common type of hate crime (54%), as has been the case every year since the FBI began reporting hate crime data.

After declining in 2018, religion-based hate crimes increased by seven percent, with 63 percent of the total number of reported religion-based hate crimes directed at Jews and Jewish institutions. Anti-Hispanic hate crimes rose nearly nine percent, the fourth straight year of escalating numbers. Hate crimes targeting individuals based on gender identity rose another 18 percent in 2019 after a 41 percent increase in 2018.

The increase in hate crimes emphasizes the need for action. ADL implores Congress to immediately pass the Khalid Jabara and Heather Heyer National Opposition to Hate, Assault, and Threats to Equality (NO HATE) Act. By improving hate crime training, prevention, best practices, and data collection, we can stem hate crimes nationwide. Additional federal funding is needed to improve record-keeping on hate crimes and expand anti-hate education and victims’ services programming. ADL

also calls for legislative measures that make it mandatory for state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies that receive federal funding to participate in the FBI’s hate crimes statistics program in order to obtain a more holistic understanding of the severity of hate crimes.

ADL has updated its interactive hate crime map to reflect the most recent FBI data. The map includes links to every hate crime law on the books in the U.S. and FBI hate crime data from 2004-2019 for all 50 states and for cities with more than 100,000 residents. The map gives users the ability to explore hate crime laws, as well as hate crime data, broken down by targeted, protected characteristics at the national, statewide, and city level. Go to www.adl.org/adl-hate-crime-map for more information.

ADL is the world’s leading anti-hate organization. Founded in 1913 in response to an escalating climate of anti-Semitism and bigotry, its timeless mission is to protect the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment for all. Today, ADL continues to fight all forms of hate with the same vigor and passion. A global leader in exposing extremism, delivering anti-bias

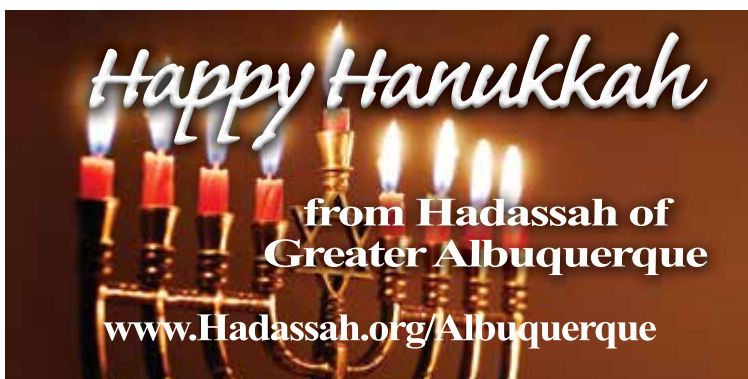
education, and fighting hate online, ADL is the first call when acts of anti-Semitism occur. ADL’s ultimate goal is a world in which no group or individual suffers from bias, discrimination or hate. ADL’s Mountain States Region covers Colorado, New Mexico and Wyoming.



*Nahalat Shalom
Wishes Everyone a
Healthy,
Hopeful and
Joyous Hanukkah 2021*

**Join us for our Virtual
Hanukkah Celebrations
Saturday, December 12
5:30 pm
Havdalah and Community
Candle Lighting
with Cantor Beth Cohen**

**6:00 – 7:30 pm
Celebration with Cantor Beth Cohen
Maggidah Batya Podos
Sing Along
with Dan Matthews**



Presidents Day
Weekend!
February 12-14
19th Annual

KLEZMERQUERQUE 2021

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Celebrate three days of Klezmer and Jewish traditional music, dance, concerts, Yiddish language, Shabbat services, storytelling and workshops with local and internationally recognized klezmer artists.



A Program of Nahalat Shalom
For more details visit:

www.nahalatshalom.org
KlezmerQuerque on Facebook
cohenedmunds@netzero.net



Windshield Cracks, How the Light Gets In

By Diane Joy Schmidt

I recently tuned in to “Native America Calling.” What I heard, it was like a light came on, it broke open my heart. I found a new spiritual insight listening to that radio show. And I was having a very dark day.

The guest was musician Keith Secola (Ojibwa), from Minnesota, best known for his song NDN Kars. The recorded program can be found online at <https://soundcloud.com/native-america-calling>, 10-28-2020, “A Conversation with Keith Secola.”

Radio host Tara Gatewood (Isleta) asked Secola to talk about NDN Kars. He said, “The song originally started as a graffiti on a bathroom wall in Winton, MN, they carved it a little derogatory. I wanted to turn it around, the spelling, back in the early 80’s when I wrote this song, N-D-N, with the spelling phonetically, changed it to something that would give you strength or power, that richness of something that you couldn’t see, that belongs to all of us. People would say, ‘Did you write that song about my uncle’s car, or my sister’s car, or my dad’s car?’ In many ways, the song becomes metaphysical...”

The song has become a national anthem



Keith Secola



Leonard Cohen

for Native peoples, the most requested song on Native radio in the U.S. and Canada for almost three decades.

Secola explained what he was doing, saying, “There’s a lot of irony we’re using in oppressor’s language to un-oppress ourselves, to give humanity back to ourselves. I think humor is a portal, is a key, to pass through, because you have to reach a higher level of understanding. This is our special humor, like (callers) said, it belongs to us.

“When I wrote ‘Put an Indian Power sticker on his bumper, that’s what holds the car together,’ something that’s as metaphoric as that, something that we understand, a code, but it’s something that just doesn’t belong to any person or anybody, so it’s a beautiful thing—when I hear non-Native bands cover that song too, it’s really quite

beautiful.”

As Secola talked friends started to call in, from Minnesota to Gallup to South Dakota to Shiprock. One caller told him how she was driving along looking at the cracks in her windshield when the song came on the radio, and hearing the song made her proud.

An Indian car comes to be, when there is no money to fix it up. Later, it ends up in the yard getting cannibalized for parts, and enjoys a second life as a vehicle of the imagination. That’s a strong image, and it’s something no way a white person is going to be able culturally appropriate, this image of a broken down Indian car—something so beloved, loved, in and for its humanity.

Still, when this woman called in and talked about her cracked windshield, this white listener made a connection, with something in my own experience, and I think that’s important when two peoples might see something, hear each other. I was suddenly reminded of the song “Anthem,” by Leonard Cohen. It has a similar irony and strength in brokenness. Cohen sang:

*Ring the bells that still can ring
Forget your perfect offering
There is a crack in everything
That’s how the light gets in.*

It’s not exactly the same thing they’re talking about, but in a way it is. Secola sings:

*My car is dented
The radiator steams
One headlight don’t work
The radio can scream
I got a sticker
It says “Indian Power”
I stuck it on my bumper
That’s what holds my car together
We’re on the circuit of an Indian dream
We don’t get old
We just get younger
When we’re flying down the highway
Riding in our Indian Cars.*

Secola’s words speak with a soaring poetic genius and wit, when he sings, ‘Indian Power—that’s what holds my car together.’ Next to that, Cohen almost sounds prosaic, “that’s how the light gets in.” Both address spirituality, with Cohen’s words drawn from the Kabbalah. Both Secola and Cohen wrote their songs in the early ’80’s, neither song was produced until 1992, and both are anthems, one for Natives, the other for many Jewish people in North America.

Why I’m thinking that connecting these two poets is so important is because they both achieve a breakthrough—they break through the oppressive thinking of what has over centuries come to be some kind of religious fanaticism that has taken hold of our world, in the Abrahamic religions, because, if you look back, it really wasn’t there in the original—it got layered on.

And then, it happened, on that radio show, Keith shared a few bars of a new song he just wrote: “Everybody’s moving. Everybody’s moving to a different situation.”

That week’s Torah portion, Lech L’cha, Genesis 12:1–17:27, is about the same thing. In the Jewish tradition, each week a portion of the Five Books of Moses is studied in synagogues over the course of a year. God tells Abram, “Go forth from your land and from your birthplace and from your father’s house, to the land that I will show you.”

These texts have different commentaries going back centuries. “Go forth,” speaks to the divine calling us. Rabbi Menachem Feldman writes that the Kabbalah teaches, “that the soul reaches greater heights than it would if it had never embarked on the journey.” God doesn’t tell Abram where he’s going, just, to a new situation.

There are still ways for us all to get humble. Maybe, we could find peace while driving with a cracked windshield listening to NDN Kars on the radio.



By Rafa Ferro, submitted for UN Global Call Out to Creatives, help stop the spread of Covid-19



Sharing Sephardic Heritage Globally: Centro Sefarad New Mexico

By Schelly Talalay Dardashti

Although the pandemic has forced cancellation of all in-person conferences and meetings around the globe, Centro Sefarad NM's leaders are just as busy virtually. The Sephardic heritage program of the Jewish Federation of New Mexico, is quickly becoming a resource for information, reaching thousands around the world.

Centro's weekly Thursday Facebook Live! sessions have been viewed thousands of times by people in many countries, through live participation or watching the recorded programs.

The program has just added once-monthly bilingual Spanish/English programs, led by Rabbi Gendra and focused on Sephardic customs and traditions, with holiday themes, Torah readings, and guest speakers. Future dates include December 18 (Chanukah), January 29 (Tu Bishvat), February 26 (Purim), and March 26 (Passover).

In addition, Schelly Talalay Dardashti and Maria Apodaca have presented team programs online for the Memphis Jewish Historical Society, the Jewish Genealogical Society (JGS) of Greater Boston and Temple Emanuel, JGS of San Diego, JGS of Broward County (Florida), and more.

Maria shares her "It Only Took 500 Years" personal journey, while Schelly presents "Jewish Ethnicity: Migra-

tion, History and DNA" and "Sephardic Resources." In the next few months, Schelly and Maria will also be presenting online programs for the JGS of Santa Cruz (California), for the Albuquerque Chavurat ha-Midbar, and more. Maria, of course, presents her personal journey as a featured speaker for now-virtual Roads Scholar program.

Last March, Rabbi Gendra, Maria and Schelly attended the huge RootsTech conference in Salt Lake City, where Schelly spoke on Sephardic resources. Centro Sefarad NM is delighted to announce that both Schelly and Rabbi Gendra's program proposals have been accepted and the 2021 RootsTech conference – 100% virtual and completely free to all registrants – will feature their presentations in several languages.

More than 140,000 people around the globe have already registered for the free event. Schelly will be speaking at the Southern California Genealogy Association's virtual Jamboree 2021 on Sephardic resources and research.

Centro Sefarad NM just completed its successful 2020 ¡Resiliencia! Festival, in conjunction with the Instituto Cervantes Albuquerque, in November. It included film, virtual travel, genealogy, history, music, poetry, and more.

For more information and to join the mailing list, email CentroSefaradNM@gmail.com, and see CentroSefaradNM on Facebook.



A hand-made, public chanukiyah set up between two trees in the town of Belmonte, Portugal, January 2020. Photo by Sara Koplik

¡Resiliencia! Lives up to its Name: Online for 2020

The virtual 2020 ¡Resiliencia! Festival, organized by Centro Sefarad NM, in conjunction with the Instituto Cervantes Albuquerque, was held in November 7-11, 2020. It certainly lived up to its name and demonstrated that the ancient value of resilience also resonates during a pandemic, as the festival pivoted to an online platform.

The ten programs covered travel, music, film, poetry, art, genealogy, history, calligraphy, and more.

Attendees received viewing access to producer Joseph Lovett's acclaimed "Children of the Inquisition" film, followed by an interview of Joe by Schelly Talalay Dardashti, which included reactions to the film in Mexico; discrimination against conversos by normative Jewish communities, especially by non-US communities, and how Joe first became interested in this project, and much more.

Dani Rotstein, an American who lives in Palma de Mallorca, presented a virtual tour of Jewish sites, the Xueta community, and the involvement of a fascinating

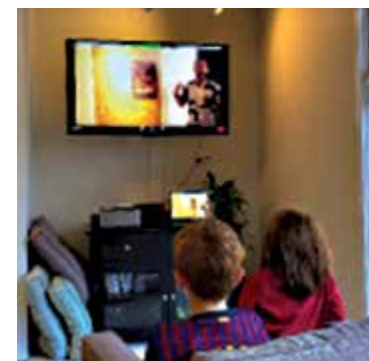
Jewish community there. Attendees were also treated to a Hebrew calligraphy session by Rabbi Jordi Gendra Molina, who is also a calligrapher and bookbinder.

Centro Sefarad NM's Schelly Talalay Dardashti presented a program on the preservation of Jewish customs and traditions still found in families of converso ancestry. Many families observe one or more of these traditions, although many do not know why.

The festival was also sponsored by the Ayuntamiento de Malaga's cultural department, and featured Jose Manuel Cabra de Luna on the Hebrew poetry of Ibn Gabirol. Christopher Gibson, also a Roads Scholar featured speaker, offered a journey through New Mexican ethnic heritage via the fresco imagery of Federico Vigil.

New Mexico State Historian Rob Martinez spoke on researching crypto-Jews in New Mexico, Mexico and Cuba, in municipal, academic, Inquisition, and church archives, and his long academic association with Dr. Stanley Hordes.

Finally, Hazan Neil Manel Frau-



Children watching Dani Rotstein's virtual tour of the Jewish quarter of La Palma, Majorca

Cortes, who is a descendant of the Xueta community in Mallorca, offered a musical look at Jewish songs and melodies that have been adapted over the centuries by various cultures.

All programs were recorded and are available to those interested in the work of Centro Sefarad NM. Email CentroSefaradNM@gmail.com to be placed on the mailing list for program announcements, availability of programs, and future activities.

Degel Menashe Helps the Vulnerable in India and Israel

By Sabra Minkus
President, Jewish Federation of New Mexico

Over a year ago, the Jewish Federation of New Mexico decided to partner with the B'nei Menashe a group living in both India and Israel. During this time, a number of exciting events took place that benefit thousands of members of this group who believe that their ancestor is Manassa, son of Joseph, whose tribe was expelled from Israel in 721 BCE.

The organization of Degel Menashe was formed in 2019. Its mission is to assist the B'nei Menashe community. In Israel, the organization encourages integration in Israel society, advancing it educationally and vocationally, helping to develop its younger, Israeli-born generation and working to preserve its cultural heritage. In India, Degel Menashe strengthens Jewish institutions and furthers immigration to Israel by all possible means. The organization will receive its official Israeli equivalent to our 501(c)3 on the 1st of January 2021!

Over the past year Degel Menashe, in spite of the global

DEGEL MENASHE continued on page 14

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Innovation, Compassion and Resilience in Jewish Complementary Education

By Sarah Rachel Egelman
School Director at the Academy of Jewish Learning at Congregation B'nai Israel

When schools across the country, both secular and religious, began closing their doors last spring due to Covid-19, it seemed to be a short-term stop gap measure. However, by late summer it was clear that this school year was going to be unlike any other. There were families who wanted their children to return to a pre-Covid school model and other who could not imagine feeling ready to send children back at any point soon. Schools, and the educators and administrators that guide them, were caught between these perspectives while also concerned about their own health and safety and the needs of the students they are charged with teaching.

Yet, in this space of tension, of worry, and uncertainty, Jewish educators found that creativity, compassion, and community are not only necessary tools but habits of the mind and heart that will ensure that young Jews will continue to find the connections that are key to Jewish identity and practice.

Digital pedagogy practices and philosophies give us a basic framework but the needs of our religious or Hebrew school students are unique. They meet with us above and beyond their regular school hours when they are already burned out from online learning. They are working on language acquisition with limited time each week and are distant from their teachers. They

may be approaching b'nai mitzvah, a time of increased pressure and expectations but concerned about zooming a service or postponing the event altogether. Students who thrive in our small group settings with lots of active learning may be struggling in front of the computer screen. Our teachers are working harder than ever to present thoughtful Jewish content in the face of these challenges.

Patience, as they say, is a virtue. But so, it turns out, is a willingness to experiment with lesson plans and find opportunities for learning that may not have otherwise been possible. My school is taking advantage of technology, using computer games, custom making Hebrew flash cards and slides and presentations on a variety of subjects. Some students draw pictures of the weekly parsha to share while others roll out clay in the shape of Hebrew letters. There are mini dance parties to Israeli music, crazy hair days, and alef bet yoga. We practice putting on tallitot with whatever we have on hand including towels and scarves.

From our homes here in Albuquerque, students at the Jewish Academy of Learning have zoomed with a Hebrew school in Georgia and guest teachers on life in Israel and Yiddish folk tales. They have toured the Tenement Museum in New York City and learned to blow the shofar. They have collected close to 100 pounds of food and over 70 pairs of socks for mitzvah projects and posed with umbrellas to celebrate the Ethiopian Jewish holiday of Sigd. Still, we acknowledge that

there are difficult days and we meet them with compassion and kindness. We acknowledge that in the midst of difficult days, we sometimes attend virtual Hebrew school in our pajamas.

In my conversations with Jewish educators around the country, there is a spirit of sharing and support. There is so much brainstorming, online chatting, amazing webinars and impromptu tech lessons, and so many shared lesson plans. Best practices are shared, and frustrating challenges tackled together so that the students benefit from collective wisdom, experience and care. This behind the scenes network reminds me daily of the importance and power of Jewish community and how one of my primary jobs is to impart this to my students.

In Pirkei Avot 1:2 we find Shimon haTzaddik's famous statement that "the world rests upon three things: Torah, service to God, and showing chesed (loving-kindness)." We are finding that each of these is taking on new importance in this moment and it is through a lens of chesed, of loving-kindness, that we can continue to bring our students and our families together in study and in service.

Moving into our second semester, we will continue to teach resilience along with the alef bet, compassion along with liturgy. We will continue to be innovative in our explorations of Jewish history and ethics, and show that in the tough times as in the times of joy and ease, togetherness, be it in person or online, is a Jewish ideal worth preserving.

Encouraging Intergenerational Connection at B'nai Israel

The Academy of Jewish Learning at Congregation B'nai Israel in Albuquerque has been selected to participate in the Legacy Heritage Better Together in a Box program. The Legacy Heritage Better Together in a Box program, which is modeled after Legacy Heritage's four-year Better Together program, is designed to encourage meaningful interaction between young and old. The confirmation class, under the direction of Sarah Egelman and with assistance from Dawn Thompson, will be participating in the program with senior congregants of CBI. The Academy is grateful for being chosen to participate in the Legacy Heritage Better Together in a Box program and looks forward to sharing with our community how this program positively influences our students.



I Want to See my Grandson Open his Chanukah Presents

By Norma Libman

My family has plowed through more than eight months of visiting each other with masks and sharing virtual hugs and eating only pre-wrapped snacks. We've had lots of fun turning the swing set into a water slide, and playing board games with gloves on. We've been super careful and I'm happy to say we have all stayed well so far, and I hope that we and all our friends and families – our entire community – will also continue to be well.

I know how lucky we are. But there is just one more thing I want. I want to see my grandson open his Chanukah presents.

As the weather gets colder and Chanukah gets close. I wonder how this will all work out since we won't have a party and we won't meet inside. We are in New Mexico and the weather may cooperate. But if not, what are the options?

Maybe we can open the garage, bring in a couple heaters and light the candles while there is still some sun. Or we can have our celebrations outside in jackets and hats and even wearing boots if that becomes necessary. (It snowed on Thanksgiving last year, if you remember, and we've already had a substantial snow in some parts of town this fall.)

Also, I suppose, we do have eight days to choose from so we might be able to find one with warm enough weather to enjoy

being outside. And Chanukah is early this year – that's in our favor.

We could do the whole thing over Facetime or Zoom. That's what I'll be doing with my other grandchildren who live in other parts of the country. But this little guy – seven years old – lives right here. Close enough to touch. Almost. It feels like we have to find a way.

It should not be lost on us, in the middle of this pandemic, what Chanukah is all about: Being strong. Fighting a powerful adversary. Working together to triumph over that adversary. Celebrating our freedom. Keeping the fires burning, the lights on, the lamps lit. We remember our heroes at this time and how our people triumphed over adversity.

How poignant it will be for us to triumph over adversity ourselves. To add a new chapter to the story, perhaps. A chapter that tells how we are able to light the candles at a time of particular darkness in our own lives and persevere against that darkness. And triumph.


Our weapons are different. We are not exactly Maccabees. We wear our masks, wash our hands, and social distance. No, it's not the making of a great party. Many of us will soldier through this holiday alone in our own homes. But we must enjoy what we can, keep ourselves and each other safe, and keep the candles burning so we can all celebrate together next year. And see our grandchildren open their presents.

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The author's grandson, Miles Cohen, December 2019

How the Covid-19 Pandemic Inspired my Inner Jewish Mother

By Zoe N. Gastelum

The Covid-19 pandemic is one of the scenarios – though not so precisely imagined – that inspired my move back to New Mexico. My husband and I met in Albuquerque 20 years ago through Hillel at the University of New Mexico. Since then, I have moved seven times between three states, three countries, two universities, and four jobs and still managed to get married and have two children.

But with two sets of grandparents in Albuquerque eager to help

raise our young family I knew that we would eventually return. After an illness while living in Washington state when my daughter was an infant, I realized I yearned for the stability of a strong social network to help raise our family. Now my children, ages 3 and 6, have myriad opportunities to interact with both sets of their grandparents.

Then the pandemic struck. When Albuquerque Public Schools announced on March 12 that students would not be returning immediately from spring break, I suspected more closures would follow. My

employer swiftly sent me home to work remotely and my three-year-old's preschool at the Jewish Community Center (JCC) announced its closure the following week. With my husband already working remotely, suddenly we went from being in four different places for most of the day to being home together fulltime.

But in this time of chaos, with no childcare and two working parents, families were encouraged to distance from more vulnerable grandparents. The network for which I had moved to New Mexico was off limits.

And soon it was Passover. Our Passover tradition has varied between a Seder hosted by my parents, where the extent of my responsibility was bringing the kosher wine, or the community Seder at the JCC where all I had to do was buy the tickets on time. But the pandemic precluded both of my options: the JCC was closed and my parents were high risk. I resorted to hosting a virtual Seder, Skyping in my parents. I had to call my mom for the matzah ball soup recipe; I had never had to do this on my own before!

The next five months held a lot of lessons – lessons about patience, resilience, forgiveness, and getting along in close spaces. While my inbox was inundated with online resources for Jewish education for kids, virtual schooling tips, news updates, relaxation techniques, travel safety updates, and more, I frequently filed them all away and instead read the *New York Times* cooking page – my version of electronic therapy.

As the pandemic dragged on, my

hopes for a summer lull, sending kids back to school in fall, resuming the international travel that is an essential aspect of my career, or even just getting to the gym, faded. As I came to understand that this pandemic was an ultra-marathon not a sprint, I had no choice but to acclimate.

I began to realize that the Jewish memories my children will have from this year cannot be so easily outsourced to my parents, the JCC, Jewish friends, or the synagogue, as has been the case for most of their lives. This time – at home, when I have most strongly felt the need for others in my Jewish network – I had to reach inwards.

By the time High Holidays came in September, I was slightly more prepared. I led the kids through remote family crafts, virtually threw away regrets with family and synagogue friends by the acequia that runs along our neighborhood, and Skype-shared apples and honey, challah, and chicken soup with my parents.

My daughter was asked as part of her religious school class to describe a new food that she ate for High Holidays. We made a rare trip inside a grocery store to find a pomegranate for the occasion, but at the same time I felt as if it was all new. This year's challah wasn't Grandpa's challah, this year's Rosh Hashana dinner wasn't Grandma's feast; though my parents did venture out to share some non-virtual revitalizing yeast bread.

This pandemic has taught me that I am enough. I am strong enough, smart enough, Jewish enough. I cannot wait for the day when I can embrace my parents

again, travel the world again for work and for fun, ride my bike to the synagogue for time with family, friends, and neighbors. But until then, this brutal, devastating global pandemic has taught me that I have everything I need to be the Jewish mother I want to be for my two children and husband.

This is not my story of becoming the perfect Jewish mother. As a counter-narrative, one would find me on Erev Rosh Hashana near-tears running to the store for the egg noodles for the kugel I felt compelled to make even though no one in my house especially wanted kugel.

Rather, it's the story of a journey. At my Bat Mitzvah I became an adult to the Jewish community, but this pandemic is what pushed me into the role for the first time and made me think about what kind of Jewish life I want for my family.

One day when my parents are no longer with us, what is my nuclear family's own Jewish tradition? What parts of my Jewish upbringing will I pass on to my children? And what new traditions will I add that are our very own? With High Holidays over, and a rest from holiday preparations for a while, I have time to reflect upon not just the next holiday, the next phase of the pandemic, or the next recipe from NYT Cooking.

But where will I be when we all finally emerge from this period of struggle? I don't know when that will be, or how I will feel. But I think I will be stronger, hope I will be more confident, and know I will be in a new place in my Jewish life.

I love the playground and I love my friends: Reflections from the Children of Congregation Albert's Preschool

By Dale Cooperman

I begin this article with a sweet and uplifting poem that is a gentle reminder of how fortunate we are, even as we navigate running a safe and successful early childhood program amid the constraints and safety regulations that Covid-19 has imposed on us.

The poem is from a book by Lin-Manuel Miranda and Jonny Sun, called *Gmorning, Gnight: Little Pep Talks for You and Me*. Read these words of sweetness and encouragement for when you wake up and when you go to bed:

*“Good morning.
Lead with gratitude.
The air in your lungs, the sky
above you.
Proceed from there.
Good night.
Curl up with gratitude.
For the ground beneath you,
your beating heart.
Proceed from there.”*

As I write, I continue to be filled with gratitude with the blessing of spending my days with the children at the Congregation Albert Early Childhood Center. Being with them helps me stay grateful for our gifts. Being with them opens my eyes to gratitude, and how simple it all is, just to be with friends and to be able to play together. I'd like to share what the children told me about school; why they are happy here and what makes our school so special.

“Playing outside is my favorite time. Superheroes is the best with my friend Qiaorong.”

“It's my classroom office with the computer and the phone. I like calling my mom. And the blocks – well, they help my imagination come true.”

“I like the ‘coda-pillar.’ (This is a toy that teaches basic coding for children). “I watched a video – the bad news is that it didn't

work, but the good news is that the coda-pillar is cute.”

“We have blocks and lots of toys I like to play with.” When pressed, this child couldn't single out specific toys... as he laughingly said, “this whole room is FILLED with toys and they are all my favorite!”

“Oh, the playground. And my friends. We like to go on the slide, and I like that I can bring my mimi” (a favorite blanket). “And you know those pattern blocks? We can build stuff with the colors and shapes together.” “What's my favorite? That I can play in the house and play with my friends. I like the playground – my favorite thing is to climb on the slide, up and down. Free choice is the best time.”

“That we go outside and have fun in the playground together. And we have this house in the classroom. I have a lot of stuff in there today. It's a restaurant today, and I have apples and gourds. Do you want to buy some?” (Of course, I did!)

“I just like playing with my friends. That's it. My friends. My favorite game is hide and seek, and Kit is my favorite friend.”

My favorite, in a frank and honest response: “You know, sometimes I just like to be at home with my mom. And then when I am at school, I love the playground and I love my friends. They are the best part.”

I'm sensing a pattern in their responses. Friends are key, as is the ability to be outside. Children need to be together, and our ECC is fortunate to be able to provide that safe space where they can be.

And, what about the faculty and me? We are happy to be around the children. We are grateful to be here. And we are grateful to our families, who support us every day in sustaining this sweet, safe and joyful space for our young learners.



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Let's Make Sufganiyot

By Sybil Kaplan

From Israel have come two popular foods for Chanukah - *sufganiyot* or jelly doughnuts and *ponchikot*, which are ball-shaped or resemble a doughnut hole.

Gil Marks, in *The World of Jewish Desserts*, writes that doughnuts fried in oil, *ponchikot*, were adopted by Polish Jews for Chanukah. The name is taken from the Polish word, *paćzki* [poochkey] which led to the nickname, *ponchiks*, the Polish name for jelly doughnuts.

Paćzki are similar to jelly doughnuts only larger and more rich tasting and are traditionally served on Shrove Tuesday, the day before Lent. They were made to use up shortening and eggs which were prohibited during Lent. *Sufganiyot* have a more interesting history. In the *Jewish Holiday Kitchen*, Joan Nathan, an acquaintance of mine from our Jerusalem days and noted cookbook author and maven of American Jewish cooking, said she learned the origins of *sufganiyot* from Dov Noy, dean of Israel folklorists.

Noy relates a Bukharian fable, which says the first *sufganiya* was a sweet given to Adam and Eve as compensation after their expulsion from the Garden of Eden. He says the word *sufganiya* comes from the Hebrew word, *sof* (meaning end), *gan* (meaning garden) and *Ya* (meaning G-d). Thus, the word means, the end of G-d's garden.

According to Noy, this fable was created at the beginning of the 20th century, since *sufganiya* is a new Hebrew word coined by pioneers.

Some say *sufganiyot*, which means sponge like, are reminiscent of the sweet, spongy cookie popular along the Mediterranean since the time of the Maccabees. Hebrew dictionaries say the word actually comes from the Greek word, *sufgan*, meaning puffed and fried.

Try these for Chanukah this year.

Classic Sufganiyot

3 ½ cups flour
2 eggs
4 3/8 t. baking powder
3/8 t. salt
2 cups vanilla yogurt
2 t. sugar
½ t. vanilla
oil

confectioner's sugar or cinnamon sugar

1. Mix flour, eggs, baking powder, salt, yogurt, sugar and

vanilla in a mixing bowl until well blended.

2. Heat oil in a soup pot. Drop tablespoon of batter around the pot, fry until brown on both sides, drain on paper towels.

Roll in cinnamon sugar or confectioner's sugar.

Oven Fried Sufganiyot

1 cup skim milk
2 T. unsalted butter
¼ cup sugar
1 t. salt
1 egg
3 ½ cups flour
2 T. instant yeast
Syrup
2 cups sugar
3/4 cup water
Sugar coating and filling
¼ cup sugar
jam

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Grease mini muffin cups.

2. Heat milk and butter in a saucepan. Stir in sugar and salt. Let cool.

3. In one mixing bowl, combine egg and milk mixture. In a second bowl, combine 3 cups of flour with yeast then add to egg-milk mixture and beat for 2 minutes with mixer or hand mixer.

4. Stir in ½ cup flour to make soft batter. Cover and let rise until double in volume.

5. Turn dough onto a floured workspace. Roll dough into a log. Cut off pieces and form into balls. Place each ball in a muffin cup. Cover pans and let rise for 30 minutes.

6. Place in oven and bake 12-15- minutes until lightly browned.

7. Meantime, combine sugar and water in a saucepan. Heat, then boil until thick. Reduce heat and keep warm.

8. Remove doughnuts to a cooling rack then toss in sugar syrup and remove with a slotted spoon. Roll in sugar. To inject, poke a hole in the side of each doughnut, inject jelly.

If not serving immediately, wait to dip in sugar syrup and rolling in sugar. These can be made 3 months ahead and frozen after cooled. To use, defrost, cover with foil, reheat in 350-degree oven 15 minutes, dip in sugar syrup and either roll in sugar or inject with jelly.

A Tangy Tasty (and New) Chanukah Tradition



The Pickle Fest Booth at SDSU in 1998, courtesy of Sean Forman

By Sean Forman

While most Jewish traditions go back centuries and started in places like Israel or Egypt, you may not be familiar with a Chanukah tradition that began in 1998 in the mythical and historic city of San Diego. And it started by a misunderstanding.

The students and staff of Hillel at San Diego State University (SDSU) organized a kosher pickle taste test on a cool (for San Diego) December day. Hundreds of members of the SDSU community tasted a variety of pickles and rated their favorites. SDSU's student newspaper, the *Daily Aztec*, featured a medley of pictures of the event on its front page the next day with the caption, "Students, faculty, alumni, and pickle men took part in the Chanukah tradition of pickle tasting yesterday on the north steps of the Free Speech Area." Naturally, when you think of free speech, you think of pickles! Based on the proximity of the event to Chanukah, at least one person at the *Daily Aztec* thought that pickles were an essential part of the holiday, ranking up there with lighting the menorah and spinning the dreidel.

Now, 22 years later, this humorous error actually has become a tradition for some of the people involved in the taste test. And those people spread the tradition to their family and friends. So this Chanukah, please keep this new tradition alive by eating pickles along with latkes and donuts (though probably not all at the exact same time). Dill, sweet, bread and butter, sour, half sour, or even gherkins. Any pickle will do. You can even try multiple types of pickles for your own pickle taste test this Chanukah!

DEGEL ENASHE continued from page 11

pandemic, has accomplished a great deal.

Covid-19 relief to India: Degel Menashe has provided in excess of 60 tons of rice, sugar and oil to members in small communities in northeast India that saved hundreds of lives. This effort was aided by the Jewish Federation of New Mexico, Scattered Among the Nations, and the Jewish Community of Long Beach.

Scholarships: Through a generous donor the second year of scholarships have been awarded. This year more than twice as many applied and 14 were awarded scholarships in special education at Herzog College and David Yellin College, graphic design at Sapir Technological College, nursing at Ariel University, social work at Hadassah Academic College, education at Hebrew University and pre-med at Hebrew University just to name a few.

Social Services: A B'nei Menashe young woman is reaching out to the community in Israel to help many families. She acts as a translator in the hospital, and helps with housing, job searches and many other aspects of transitioning into Israeli society.

Due to Covid-19, many of the initiatives that had been started have been put on hold but planning and developing future resources and contacts continues.

For further information, please see more information at www.Degel-Menashe.org and the Degel Menashe face book page.



By Rohan Dahotre - unitednations.talenthouse.com/artworks/2294988

Remembering a Chanukah Party and its Recipes

By Eli Follick

As an adult with two young boys, we made Chanukah one long eight-day party. Sometimes the boys invited friends, school mates and neighbors and we all enjoyed laughter throughout the evening. Fried latkes and fried doughnuts (sufganiot) were the prime foods but were always accompanied by a generous portion of foil-wrapped chocolate coins.

Then the boys grew up. Looking back, it all seemed to happen too fast. And then they were gone, married with families of their own, living in far-away cities. My wife and I still celebrated Chanukah but it was very different. We both had wonderful childhood memories and the boys growing-up years, but now we were alone. We had friends and workplace buddies but, somehow, it was hard to recapture days gone by.

We were having a leisurely breakfast one Sunday morning about a month before the next Chanukah and we were lightly chatting about one thing or another. "I'd like to plan something for Chanukah," she said. "Plan something - what?" I said. "An adult get-together of some friends who were enduring an empty nest," she answered.

And that's how an experience now long remembered was begun. We both knew how to celebrate Chanukah but had never done it as an adult party. That morning we started to put some plans together. She wanted to create a special invite card to send to about a dozen friends. She wanted decorations - some handmade, some bought.

After making a list and discussing ideas, we began to put the party together. The invite list began to grow and included some friends from synagogue, a few neighbors, associates from our jobs, and school mates who were about our age and who were suffering from the same empty-nest syndrome.

There was a lot to do and a month

to do it in. We divided up the jobs - she got the menu and I got the decorations. We would share cleaning - she the kitchen, me the rest of the house including the bathrooms. It all seemed fair and we did help each other.

The menu was a tough nut to crack. A few of the invitees were vegetarians, there was a Syrian couple with many different ideas about food, and some seniors with medical conditions restricting free choice. We decided to make two main dishes - one meat and one vegetarian and ask individuals or couples to bring a dish to share.

The essence of Chanukah food is something fried in oil to commemorate the miracle of the rededicated Temple light lasting eight days on one-day's flask of oil. New oil was then ready to kindle the eternal light. So whatever we made had to use oil and either be or imitate being fried.

Eli's Vegetarian Pot Luck Dish

3 ripe (but not over ripe) eggplants
3 cups of whole-wheat bread crumbs
3 egg-whites (if vegan-use water)
2 tsp salt
1 tsp turmeric
1 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp onion powder
3 tsp olive oil (or use olive oil spray)

Peel eggplants and slice into ½ inch thick slabs - top to bottom, not crossways. Microwave for about ten minutes.

Mix the bread crumbs, turmeric, garlic powder, onion powder and set in a flat plate. Whip egg whites till they are smooth. Dip each slab into egg whites and then into bread crumbs to coat.

Prepare a cookie sheet or two with some of the olive oil and place eggplant on the sheet till full. You will probably need the second sheet.

Bake in a preheated 350 degree oven, turning every ten minutes, until nicely browned.

They should look like you fried them. Keep warm in oven till served.

Two slices is a big portion but still

ultra-low in calories and nutritionally dense. Most folks will want additional slices. If there are leftovers (unlikely) give any who want a slice or two to take home.

Ellen's Chicken Cacciatore

1 can (7.5 ozs, ~1 cup) tomatoes
½ cup sliced mushrooms
½ cup chopped onion
½ cup chopped green pepper
6 tbs dry red wine
2 minced garlic cloves
1 tsp salt
1 tsp dried oregano
Dash pepper
4 8-ounce whole chicken breasts, skinned, split, boned
Paprika
4 tsp corn starch
4 Tbs cold water

In skillet cut up undrained tomatoes. Add sliced mushrooms, chopped onion, chopped green pepper, red wine, garlic, salt, oregano, and pepper. Place cut up chicken pieces atop mixture and bring to boil. Simmer, covered, for about 25-30 minutes.

Remove chicken to serving dish, sprinkle with paprika, keep warm. Combine cornstarch and cold water and stir into skillet mixture. Cook and stir until thickened and bubbly and cook one minute longer. Spoon sauce over chicken. Garnish with a sprig of parsley. This makes about 8 servings as a full dinner and about 16 servings as an additional dish to other selections.

It turned out that both the meatless dish and meat dish went over great! Guests brought a variety of dishes and that resulted in three different salads, two desserts, and a meatball in cranberry sauce dish that disappeared very quickly. Everybody talked about what it was like when the kids were home and one guest brought pictures to show what it was like in days gone by.

Even without the little ones around, we all had a wonderful time and agreed to have a summer picnic and all get together again.

Altering the Altar Stones - A Chanukah Wonder

By Rabbi Paul J. Citrin

Two centuries after the victory of the Maccabees, the rabbis asked, "What is Chanukah?" They answered their own question by creating the story of the oil for the menorah sufficient for only one day miraculously lasting eight days. The tale reflects the rabbis' yearning for a spiritual, divine presence to the Maccabean victory.

I think there is a more fascinating and instructive wonder (not a miracle) reported in the book of First Maccabees 4:41-47. These verses recount the cleansing and dedication of the Temple following the defeat of the Greeks. The text tells us that the Greeks had defiled the altar with their pagan offerings upon it of pigs to Zeus. The Maccabees were perplexed about how to sufficiently clean and restore the desecrated altar stones.

They decided to demolish the altar and to place its stones in "an unclean place" until a prophet at a future time would instruct them what to do. In the indeterminate interim, the priests built a new altar of unhewn stones. In celebration of the re-dedicated Temple, sacrifices were offered on the newly constructed altar.

Animal sacrifice and the altars on which the victims were slaughtered and offered is far from the ken of modern religious spirituality and aesthetics. Yet, the report about the old and new altars in the book of Maccabees raises pertinent questions worth considering in our own day. Here are a few of those questions which I dare to answer from my understanding of Jewish history and values:

Since the stones of the original altar were defiled beyond use, why did the Maccabees save them? I suggest that though the altar stones were defiled by the fat and blood of pigs and were beyond use, that altar had been in use from the time the second Temple was dedicated in 516 BCE. During the three hundred fifty years from that date to the Maccabean victory, the altar had been the focal point of Jewish worship and community. Memory of what was and hope for a restored future were symbolized by the ancient altar stones and by the people's hope for later cleansing and restoration. Memory and hope then and now have sustained our people through the millennia.

Why did the Maccabees build the new altar "on the model of the previous one?" The new altar served as the bridge from the familiar past to the unknown future by providing tradition and a renewed conduit for drawing close to God. (Note that the word for sacrifice, *korban*, means drawing near).

Was the new altar really an exact replica of the previous altar? From a literal standpoint, that is what the text reports. From a symbolic view, I would suggest that the altar stones were elements of a Judaism evolving to new ethical and spiritual heights. By virtue of the teachings and leadership of the rabbinic sages of the first three centuries of the Common Era, the new altar stones metamorphosed into Torah study, *tsedakah*, *chesed*, and community. Those four values became the altar of Jewish ethics and spirit. They enable us to draw near to what is holy.

Our Jewish communal institutions nowadays have shown themselves to be metaphoric altars for drawing near to our people and its traditions. During this time of Covid-19 and of economic and social challenges, we need to make extra sacrifice to maintain our community and its institutions -- our synagogues, the Federation, the JCC, Hadassah, the NM Jewish Historical Society, UNM Hillel.

At this season of Chanukah, of Dedication, may we renew our commitment to the altar stones which protect and preserve us. Thus, shall we fulfill the vision of Zechariah which we read on Shabbat Chanukah: "Not by might nor by power, but by My spirit says Adonai." (Zech 4:6)

Happy Chanukah

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Family



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ADL Mountain States and New Mexico Holocaust Museum Announce New Partnership

Current research shows that understanding and knowledge about the Holocaust continues to fall while antisemitic and hate incidents continue to rise. In response, the ADL mountain states region and the New Mexico Holocaust Museum are excited to announce a new partnership intended to broaden the educational reach of both institutions to students and families in New Mexico.

The New Mexico Holocaust Museum and Gellert Center for Education uses Holocaust education as the foundation for building

understanding about human rights and social justice issues and creating empathy for those impacted by these issues. The museum's in-person and virtual programming provide education resources, curriculum, lesson plans, and arts integrated programs for student participation on topics including the Holocaust, and the experiences of African Americans, Native Americans and more.

The goals and values of the museum dovetail with those of ADL, whose century-old mission to stop antisemitism and secure

justice and fair treatment for all underpins its antisemitism, anti-bias and Holocaust education programming. ADL's educational initiatives available throughout the mountain states region include: Words to Action, empowering students with tools to respond to antisemitism, anti-Israel bias and hate; No Place for Hate program and A World of Difference Institute, ADL's flagship anti-bias and anti-bullying suite of initiatives that just welcomed its first Albuquerque school this year; and our governor's Holocaust remembrance program, all of which are being delivered online during the 2020-2021 program year.

The partnership between ADL and the museum is in development, with plans to offer professional education opportunities for teachers and facilitators, programming for students, webinars and more.

"This exciting opportunity will deepen the partnership between ADL and the New Mexico community," said Sue Parker Gerson, senior Associate director for the ADL mountain states region. "We're thrilled to be working with such a wonderful organization as the New Mexico Holocaust Museum to support teachers, students and community members with timely, accessible and engaging content."

"The New Mexico Holocaust Museum and Gellert Center for Education is honored to be collaborating with ADL," said Leon Natker, the museum's executive director. "Our arts-integrated education programs are unique among Holocaust museums, giving the students a chance to interpret their feelings about acts of hate and intolerance. Collaborating with ADL will add a new level of depth to the content we are able to share with students throughout New Mexico."

To learn more about the partner organizations for this new initiative, please visit their websites at nmholocaustmuseum.org and mountainstates.adl.org.



HANUKKAH TOGETHER 2020

The Jewish Federation of New Mexico Presents

"Smiling Towards the Future:
An Evening of Gratitude, Celebration and Fun"

Monday, December 14th
at 5:30 pm and 6:30 pm

Join Together for Hanukkah Candle Lighting
and the JFNM Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony

Followed at 6:30 pm with a Free All-Community Event:

**LAUGHS AND WOWS:
HANUKKAH COMEDY, MENTALISM AND MAGIC**

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During this Season of Light, we thank you for your support and for joining us in our ongoing fight against antisemitism and hate.

May the Festival of Lights bring hope and joy to you, your loved ones and the world.

With best wishes,

ADL Mountain States Region,
serving New Mexico, Colorado and Wyoming