

SAJAC

Reporter

2024



**Community,
Resilience, &
Growth**





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2024 President's Message

By Pamela Nathan

Our theme for this year's Reporter celebrates Community Resilience and Growth.

Being Jewish in America during a time of increased antisemitism and the ongoing conflict in Israel and Gaza is complex and challenging. Community resilience has enabled us to navigate these difficult times. SAJAC has played a significant role in San Diego by reinforcing our identity, facilitating social activities, and providing essential community support.

Today, there is a heightened sense of urgency to engage in advocacy and educate others about antisemitism. Our grassroots initiative, CAN, has provided a local outlet for involvement. Members have dedicated extraordinary time and effort to combat antisemitism on many levels.

Community resilience also encompasses growth. SAJAC needs our younger members to take on leadership roles, bringing fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and renewed energy. This will help revitalize SAJAC, fostering growth and positive change.

We have proven to be a resilient community, maintaining close-knit relationships and a strong sense of togetherness during tough times. I am immensely proud of the contributions SAJAC has made and extend my heartfelt thanks to our loyal, supportive, and generous SAJAC family.

In light of increased antisemitism nationwide, exacerbated by the tragic events of October 7th, 2023, in Israel, the SAJAC board held a special meeting on June 26th and unanimously agreed to revise SAJAC's mission and purpose. Here is our updated Mission Statement:

- To welcome and assist South African Jews in integrating into American culture, customs, and lifestyle.
- To preserve South African ideals, values, and traditions.
- To strengthen Jewish culture and identity and create a positive Jewish presence in the community.
- To support Israel, particularly following the events of October 7, 2023, by combating antisemitism and partnering with American Jewish institutions.
- To aid members in financial need through our Gemilut Chesed Fund or by connecting them with Jewish agencies and other resources.
- To promote entrepreneurial efforts and services among members.
- To foster communication and connection, creating a sense of warmth and belonging.

SAJAC's purpose in these challenging times is to find commonality with our beliefs, our South African heritage, and our day-to-day challenges living in the USA, while elevating the impact that SAJAC can

have in the Jewish community within San Diego and the rest of the USA. As you know, SAJAC stands for "South African Jewish American Community." SAJAC has thrived and will continue to do so, knowing that there is great value in keeping our South African cultural connection within the broader framework of Jewish life in America.

We are ready to adapt to the times. The current times require our aligned efforts and focus on the preservation of Jewish ways, exerting our combined influence within the San Diego Jewish community and beyond, and creating value and impact through our educational and charitable efforts.

SAJAC at a Crossroads

To My Dear Fellow Expats,

As you all know, it has been my absolute pleasure to serve SAJAC ever since its inception 37 years ago, including mainly as president for the last 25 years. SAJAC has grown significantly during this time, serving our community in many ways, yet funnily enough, still embracing all the basic principles that it was founded on.

After many enjoyable and gratifying years serving in this capacity, WE, as a community, need to find someone else to take on the role as president as I dedicate more time to my family and follow Leon Snaid's advice of taking a year-long 'sabbatical' cruise. I am committed to making this transition seamless but need YOUR help finding the best path forward.

There are several options to consider. One SAJAC member or more than one SAJAC member could co-host presidency & take on overseeing SAJAC. Alternatively hiring a professional staff member to assume this role is another.

The basic structure of SAJAC as a non-profit social club is intact. We have a president, a vice president, a secretary, a treasurer and board members. We have committees that cover all our present needs. What I've recently become aware of, is that I am on every committee! This needs to change.

I need your help in making this decision and would greatly appreciate your feedback/suggestions or better yet, someone or more than one someone, to volunteer to take over from me!

With much gratitude,

Pamela



Gemilut Chesed

By Eleanor Lazarow

We continue to be available to Jewish South Africans needing a loan. We provide interest-free loans to be repaid on a regular monthly basis in an amount affordable to the recipient. We have had excellent success in having most of the loans repaid over time.

We are grateful to all SAJAC members who contribute to the Gemilut Chesed fund when they renew their annual SAJAC membership.

“Gemilut Chesed” means “Acts of Loving Kindness” which is in the true spirit of the Jewish community.

Thank you

SAJAC wishes to welcome:

Elizabeth & Dion Stein & family

Ari & Ilan Herrmann

Stephne & Kerrin Behrend & family

David Behrend & family

Maxine & Brandy Segal



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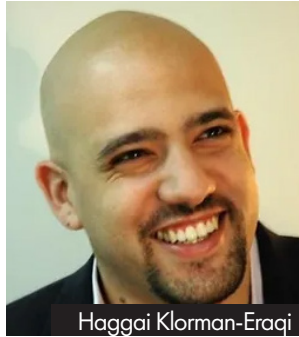
CAN Takes Action 1st Webinar, Feb 29, 2024



By Dr Franklin Gaylis M.D. CAN co-founder



Gary Wexler



Haggai Klorman-Eraqi



Tamar Caspi



Karen Bar Or



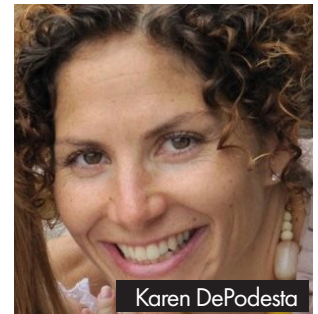
Sara E. Brown



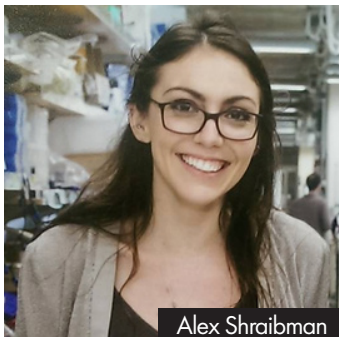
Shani Menna



Brandy Shufutinsky



Karen DePodesta



Alex Shraibman



Lara Woolf Grusd

October 7th dramatically changed Jewish life forever. We continue to witness the exploding vile Jewish hatred and anti-Israel rhetoric that dominates social media and public opinion. Rep. Ritchie Torres (D-N.Y.) in a recent annual Martin Luther King Jr. sermon at Central Synagogue in Manhattan, lashed out at the US indifference in response to the brutal Hamas Oct. 7 terrorist attacks in Israel saying he was profoundly shaken not only by Oct. 7 but by the aftermath. "I found it utterly horrifying to see fellow Americans openly cheering and celebrating the deadliest massacre of Jews since the Holocaust."

Combat Antisemitism Now (CAN), is a grassroots organization we founded pre-October 7th to combat antisemitism and Holocaust denial/distortion, and we continue to play an important role both locally in San Diego and throughout the USA.

We held our first webinar on February 29th 2024 which was extremely well attended. More than 200 people from around the USA registered for the event. We had an outstanding group of courageous speakers who are combating antisemitism in our schools, on our university campuses, in our local city councils, our government and elsewhere:

Sara Brown, PhD, regional director of the American Jewish Committee (AJC) provided a comprehensive overview on antisemitism in San Diego including what has been accomplished combating it.

Gary Wexler, whose career has included being copywriter and creative director for major ad agencies, winning awards for campaigns ranging from Apple to Coca Cola, foundation Steven Spielberg's Foundation and Ford illuminated how organized and well-funded are our adversaries. He emphasized the need to raise billions of dollars to combat antisemitism and the importance of collaboration between the various organizations.

Karen Bar-Or discussed the Israeli American Council's support for grassroots activism across the US and support of CAN initiatives including providing assistance thanks to CAN's support for the successful 5 Minutes Today for Israel legislative and community activism platform. 5 MINUTES is a centralized, single-click, daily action-item bulletin created to advocate for Israel and push back against antisemitism.

Lara Woolf Grusd, the creator of the popular What'sApp, 'AmEchad Alliance of SDJA', and Brandy

Shufutinsky, a researcher and writer at the Jewish Institute for Liberal Values (<https://jilv.org/>), discussed the K-12 public school situation in San Diego and the ongoing battle to reform the Liberated Ethnic Studies Coalition's drive to teach "Palestine" K-12 in our public schools. We are seeing the Marxification of education, oppressor/victim pedagogy, resistance (justified) and the institutionalization of antisemitism.

Of note, 30 Jewish families recently transferred out of the Oakland public school district following Pro- Palestine teachers who suggested students draw the Zionist bully at an anti- Israel teach-in.

California public schools: Tamar Kaspi spoke on behalf of PEER K-12, a grassroots organization that was recently honored to be invited to Washington, D.C., where Tamar Caspi, Nicole Bernstein, and Eveie Schwartz engaged directly with top government officials to tackle antisemitism in K-12. They discussed realities and brainstormed solutions with key players, including the chair and members of the House Education Committee, addressing the biased curriculum stemming from the Ethnic Studies framework. There is an urgent need for better teacher training and accountability measures, and PEER K-12 is ready to do this work with your support.

UC campus situation. We heard from Shani Mena and Alex Schreibman who discussed the UCSD campus situation and what needs to be done to improve the campus climate for Jewish Students. Shani is an undergraduate pre-med student who has been outspoken on campus taking a stand against widespread antisemitism on the UCSD campus. Shani is fearless and shared her thoughts about the situation at UCSD and what should be done to counter antisemitism. Alex, recently completed her PhD in Biosciences at the University of California San Diego. As a Jew-by-choice, Alex takes great pride in raising a Jewish family.

Her commitment to her faith extends beyond her personal life; she is actively engaged in combating antisemitism on the UCSD campus and despite the recent intimidation she felt as a visibly Jewish pregnant woman on campus, she regularly attended classes and became an influential member of Triton for Israel, advocating for the Jewish community which faced persistent harassment. Her advocacy intensified when she addressed an Associated Students meeting to challenge their prejudiced and exclusionary rhetoric, only to be met with threats and intimidation from opposing groups. Alex stands firm in her resolve to foster a campus environment where diversity and respect are paramount. Please watch her address to the Associated Students meeting that is posted on the CANTakesAction.org website.

Social media Israeli entrepreneur, Haggai Klorman-Eraqi spoke about the importance of changing the Jewish narrative on social media, particularly TikTok where 70% of the creators are under the age of 24 and would therefore not have even experienced the horrors of 9/11 and thus easily swayed by Antisemitic and ProHamis rhetoric. He encourages us to inspire all influencers on social media, who are not necessarily Jewish, to tell our story.

CAN has and will continue to support the following organizations and programs:

1. Hillel, who are in need of financial support to safeguard UCSD students (armed guards at the Hillel Center

2. Hillel, in hosting Mosab Hassan Yousef, "Son of Hamas." UCSD Tritons for Israel, through Hillel of San Diego had Mosab recently speak at UCSD. Mosab is the son of Hamas co-founder Sheikh Hassan Yosef and worked as an undercover agent for the Israeli service for 10 years before moving to the United States in 2007. Mosab is a dynamic speaker who advocates for Israel's right to defend itself and speaks up about the horrors of Hamas.

3. American Jewish Medical Association (AJMA) was founded by Dr Yael Halaas, a plastic surgeon from New York. Formed in the wake of October 7, 2023, the AJMA is a non-political, non-profit organization of Jewish healthcare professionals with the mission to help provide a safe, enriching community with a unified voice for all Jewish healthcare workers. AJMA seeks to prevent antisemitism from making medical workplaces unsafe for Jewish doctors or jeopardizing medical care for patients of all faiths. Your support will assist AJMA in advocating for Jewish healthcare workers who are targets of rising antisemitism and anti-Zionism that impact the workplace and patient care.

4. JCC for a workshop 8teen (grades 8-12) where teenagers from the San Diego Jewish Community had an interactive experience to understand growing antisemitism and change the narrative.

5. IAC to incorporate 5 Minutes Today for Israel.

6. AJC Symposium on Anti Semitism.

To those who have already supported CAN, THANK YOU, and please continue to make generous donations. To those considering supporting us, your help will be greatly appreciated as we strive to combat antisemitism on many levels and through grassroots activism.

All donations are tax deductible as CAN is a 501(c)3 restricted fund based at Jewish Community Foundation and can be made on our website, CanTakesAction.org.

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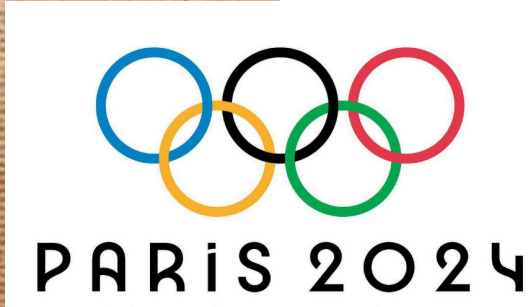
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Against a backdrop of rampant Anti-Semitism globally & in France, it was heartwarming to witness 94 yr old Auschwitz-Birkenau survivor Léon Lewkowicz bearing the Olympic Flame thru the 'Memorial Garden of The Children of Vél d' Hiv', poignantly commemorating the 4115 Jewish Kids deported from Paris & Murdered in the Nazi Death Camps in 1942! Léon was one of 426 orphans who, together with renowned Eli Wiesel, were liberated & cared for by a French Jewish Children

NGO. Léon went on to become a famous French National Weightlifting Champion, vowing to Never Again be persecuted as a Jew! Proudly holding the Olympic Flame aloft, this was a culminating moment fulfilling his Lifetime Dream & a Symbol of Light & Hope for Jews around The World! Léon we Salute your incredible Courage & resilience in the face of Tyranny & Adversity!



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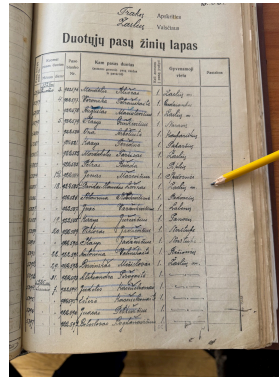
3705 Paseo Place Suite 100, San Diego, CA 92130





Tracing Our Roots in Lithuania

By Julius Levin



In 1924 my father came to South Africa from Keidan, a shtetl of over 6,000 people of which 3,730 were Jews. He was short, skinny, and only spoke Yiddish.

His uncle Barney (Baruch Galper) had made the fateful decision to leave for South Africa bringing out his sister, nine nephews, and one niece. Among them, is my father.

This guaranteed that my sister Sandy Kodesh and I would survive the horrors of WWII.

One hundred years later Sandy and I went back to Lithuania to trace our ancestry and in some way pay homage to the risks and hardships of our parents that culminated in our lives today.

Keidan (Keidainia in Lithuanian) airport is quaint, probably laid out by Soviet planners who included a free physical workout with the tarmac walk from plane to terminal. Distressed old ladies staggering down steep gangplanks with roll-on luggage no doubt blessed the downfall of Communism before it could do further damage.

We drove our rental car to Keidan the first evening and stayed at a hotel that turned out to be 200 yards from 48 Smilgos Street where the Levin family had lived in the 1920s. Alas, those same Soviet planners went and made most of Smilgos into drab cookie-cutter apartments so we never found number 48. However, the river at the bottom of Smilgos that turned the unpaved roads to mud was still there as was the iron bridge Dad said they used to cross. Sandy said she felt spiritual vibrations.

The two synagogues in Market Square where Dad probably had his Bar Mitzvah were two blocks away and, with plaques acknowledging its past, were now a museum and an art school. Besides a lone monument to 125 Jews killed by their friends and neighbors on 23-JUL-1941, we never found any other trace of our family.

Before arriving I had given our wonderful recommended guide and ancestry detective, Regina Kopilevich Dad's original birth Certificate. From there she became a hurricane of research in Vilna and we plunged into a world of archives, shtetls, and cemeteries.

Large books handwritten in ornate Lithuanian cursive combined with digital searches in two separate Archives yielded astonishing facts that Sandy and I could hardly absorb. Regina looked up births, marriages, deaths, and passport applications. We visited Trakai, Maisiagala, and Zasliai - small villages with Jewish graveyards that were ignored and in grave disrepair, and that she discovered our ancestors had lived in or moved to. And then it all came together on our last day and last cemetery.

In Maisiagala we tramped through a forest with no path ducking under

and stepping over branches until we came to a fairly large clearing but with only twenty graves. Each grave was upright, and in good condition and each grave contained a fresh white flower that was about two days old. One grave had a stone on top. Astounding. Someone or some people had been there within the last few days, not Lithuanians speculated Regina, probably Americans, Israelis, or South Africans.

Normally placid, Regina became quite excited as she read all the Hebrew inscriptions.

Finding two relatives out of twenty graves indicated we were blessed, she said.

I did too. Sandy and I said, Kadish.

So! She put all her research together and the resulting facts were astounding indeed.

Our family goes back to 1750 and originally came from Zasliai. And we were originally LEVITZ. I'm still in shock. Looking in the mirror I don't see a Levitz. Not a name I could cling to.

And we go like this

Nison Levitz -(b1750) in Zasliai

Judel Leiba Levitz, son of Nison, (b1786). Left Zasliai in 1845 for Masiagala, probably to avoid conscription into the Tsar's army, and along the way changed his name to LEVIN.

Itzko Levitz (1824 - 1891) in Masiagala. Married Faiga (b1824) in 1846 in Masiagala.

Regina had identified two sons of Itzko - Yerachmiel and David.

Yerachmiel Levitz (1848 - 1893) who died in Masiagala

and my personal favorite, the thrice-married -

David Levin (b1851) now living in Keidan married to:

1. Elka Levinson (1853 - 1894) from Gelvonja.

They had a son, Samuel (Shmuel) Levin, (b 23-MAY-1894). He left for Detroit MI USA in 1920 and changed his name to Samuel Goldman.

2. Gitlya whom he divorced. They had a daughter, Rivka, (b1900).

3. Elka Katz (b1869) from Zaliai whom he married on 2-JAN-1902.

They birthed my grandfather, Jankele Hirsh.

Jankele Hirsh (b 1878) in Masiagala. He married Sora Avrula Galper (1880 - 1952), daughter of Itzko Ilya Galper on 13-JAN-1902 in Zasliai. Sora died in Johannesburg.

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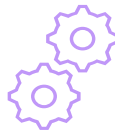
BJA Partners wishes the entire Jewish community a L'Shana Tova.



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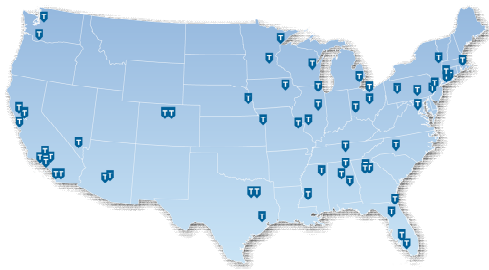


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Government Cracks Down on Antisemitism at Private Schools, Lets Public School Hate Grow

By Sam Litvin

UPenn President Liz Magill lost her job due to remarks advocating for the genocide of Jewish people, sparking a Department of Justice investigation into antisemitism at private institutions like MIT and Harvard. However, public universities face more severe antisemitism.

UCSD sees constant antisemitic protests, leading UCSD Hillel to advise Jewish students to avoid campus, violating Title IX. Faculty and students display hostility toward Jews, regardless of their stance on Israel.

The Associate Body President at UCSB faced antisemitic messages from both students and staff. Jewish students report daily vitriol in dorms, halls, online, and classrooms. Despite the 2015 regulations that address these incidents, state and federal governments largely ignore them.

One reason might be constituents. Confronting antisemitic liberals in private schools' conservative student bodies is easier than addressing the larger anti-Israel, liberal population at public institutions, especially during an election year.

Groups that opposed Trump's Muslim ban now support him against

Biden due to Israel's stance against Hamas. These groups ignore other global atrocities, revealing their inconsistency.

Jews have always been a politically inconvenient group to protect. Today's attack on Jews in America may lead to future attacks on other minorities. Hate against Jews started in universities and then spread to bars and streets. The government's selective enforcement of laws allows hate to grow.

Rational arguments defending Israel don't work against irrational hate. Instead, we should demand consistency. Northwestern University's promise of scholarships and a building for pro-Palestine groups seems unfair. We should demand similar support for other conflict-affected groups. Any Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement should be consistent across all conflicts, targeting countries like Russia, China, and Saudi Arabia.

A fair BDS policy would be costly and unpopular among students due to increased tuition. Most Americans are educated at public universities, where efforts should focus on creating bonds and winning friends with the silent majority. Understanding that the BDS movement is not in their interest can help gain their support.



SAJAC Project on Geni.com Has Officially Launched!

By Pamela Nathan

Exciting News for Our Community!

We are delighted to announce the launch of the South African Jewish Community Genealogy Project on [www.geni.com](https://www.geni.com/projects/South-African-Jewish-American-Community-SAJAC/4500474)! This groundbreaking initiative offers a unique opportunity to delve into our collective heritage, explore our rich family histories, and create a lasting legacy for future generations.

Through this project we are building a vibrant digital "village" that will chronicle the lives, journeys and stories of our members. By contributing biographical details, names and histories of relatives in both the USA and South Africa, as well as our ancestors from Eastern Europe, we are weaving together the intricate tapestry of our shared past.

We encourage you to participate by adding brief biographies for all your family members. Your contributions will not only enrich our community's understanding of our roots but will also play a vital role in an upcoming book about Jewish South Africans in the USA. This project will expand our collective narrative adding depth to the ongoing story of Jewish exodus and resilience.

How to Get Involved:

1. If you're new to Geni:

Simply visit [this link](https://www.geni.com/projects/South-African-Jewish-American-Community-SAJAC/4500474) to create an account. Once registered, you can join the South African Jewish Community (SAJAC) Project and begin contributing.

2. If you already have a Geni account:

Log in and follow the SAJAC project to start exploring and adding your family's history.

3. If you have a family tree in another format:

Your existing tree can easily be converted using GEDCOM software, allowing you to seamlessly integrate it into the project.

We're here to assist you every step of the way! Should you have any questions or require guidance, please don't hesitate to contact us. For any help, reach out to Bev Pamensky at bevampensky@yahoo.com who is ready to support you in making the most of this exciting endeavor.

Together, let's build a lasting tribute to our heritage and ensure that our stories continue to be told for generations to come.



The following West Coast OB/GYN Doctors have received the prestigious 2023 "Top Doc" award (top 10% as voted by their peers).

- Dr. Craig Saffer
- Dr. Kim Goodwin
- Dr. Amy French
- Dr. Daniela Meshkat
- Dr. Kristin Engorn
- Dr. Madison Fish
- Dr. Ariel Shuckett
- Dr. Lisa Underwood
- Dr. Ashlee Schlesier
- Dr. Kimia Menhaji

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to

Dr. Saffer and Dr. French who have both achieved accreditation as a Surgeon of Excellence in Robotic Surgery.



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Amy French, MD



Kim Goodwin, MD



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Mosab Hassan Yousef Visits UCSD

May 14 2024

By Eyal Asher



Peace in Israel Week at UCSD is always important. This year, it felt even more important. While my friends were fighting a war against Hamas terrorists, it felt like we were fighting the spread of hate on our campus.

As Hillel of San Diego's Israel Fellow, my job is to connect students to Israel through people-to-people exchanges of ideas and education. I never imagined when I moved here from Israel this fall what that would mean. To be honest, it was very hard for me to see what was happening on campus. I couldn't understand it. This hate. This antisemitism- was really painful and many times I wanted to go home to Israel. At least there, the enemy is obvious. Here, it looked like regular students and faculty.

The Jewish students at UCSD kept me grounded. They kept me hopeful. You should be so proud and inspired by the next generation of Jewish leaders. They are right here, in our San Diego community, doing really meaningful advocacy work on campus through Hillel. In January, three of our student leaders came to me and said they wanted to bring Mossab Yousef Hassan to campus. One of them shared, "It has always been my dream to bring the author of Son of Hamas to campus. I feel like if people really know what is going on in Gaza, they will wake up." (Caroline, Class of 2025).

At Hillel of San Diego, thanks to the generosity of community members like you and organizations like CAN, we make student dreams a reality. It was one of my proudest moments to share with Caroline and other student leaders that we would bring Mossab Yousef Hassan to speak on campus.

Mosab Yousef Hassan spoke at UCSD's Price Center Theater on May 14th following a powerful community rally led by our fearless Jewish



students. I couldn't believe it. We had over 600 people register for his speech and the theater was sold out. Many students attended and heard his harrowing stories. Mossab spoke about the honor killings he witnessed in Gaza and the West Bank, the cult-like indoctrination of Hamas, and the pain he experienced when he recognized his own father's culpability for so much death and destruction. Many of our students felt validated after months of being gaslit about Hamas and the true existential nature of the war.

But this is only the beginning. Next year we are planning more opportunities for education, more dynamic speakers, and more advocacy on campus. This is only possible with your continued support of Hillel of San Diego. Thank you.

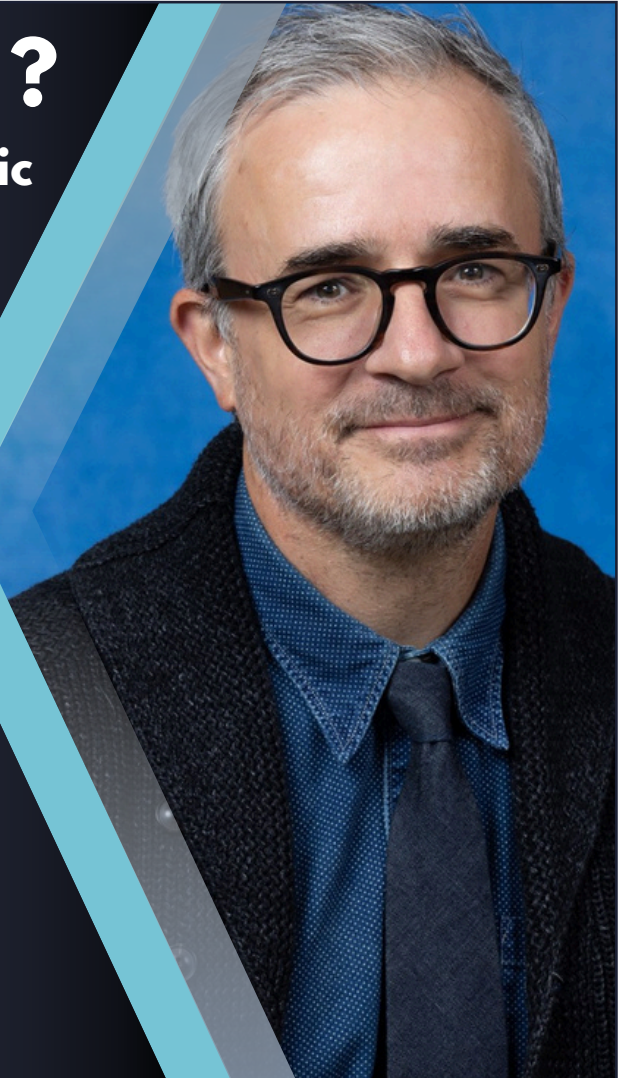
Eyal Asher is Hillel of San Diego's Israel Fellow through the Jewish Agency for Israel. His two-year appointment is funded exclusively through individual donations from community members like you to Hillel of San Diego.

Thank you Bendan Murphy for your Outstanding Presentation.

WHY THE JEWS?


Understanding the Long and Tragic History of Antisemitism

Presented by:
Brendan Murphy




PART 1

 Sunday, September 22 | 10:30 am

 Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center, JACOBS FAMILY CAMPUS

PART 2

 Monday, September 23 | 6:30 pm

 St. Paul's Cathedral, 2728 Sixth Avenue, San Diego, CA 92103

In this lecture, presented in partnership with the Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center, Combat Antisemitism Now and the American Jewish Committee, we will explore the history of Christian anti-Judaism and its impact over the centuries. Attendees will learn about the ideologies behind antisemitism and current efforts to foster genuine fellowship between Jewish and Christian communities, with support from Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant leaders. The series emphasizes education, dialogue, and advocacy in combating antisemitism and promoting tolerance.

About Brendan Murphy: Mr. Murphy, a history teacher at Marist School for 30 years, has received numerous awards, including the Outstanding Educator Award from the Anne Frank Center and the Anti-Defamation League's Abe Goldstein Human Relations Award. He is also a Museum Teacher Fellow at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and a Lerner Fellow at the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous.

For more information:

 lfjcc.org/arts

 Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center
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 **AJC** American Jewish Committee

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Celebrate Israel: Now & Forever



On May 19th, we came together to celebrate Israel's Independence Day at the event **"Celebrate Israel: Now & Forever."** Organized by the Israeli American Council (IAC), the Jewish Federation of San Diego and the Lawrence Family JCC, the event was a heartfelt occasion that blended joy with somber remembrance of the challenges Israel has faced in the past year.

It was incredibly moving to see over 3,500 community members gather to show solidarity with Israel and celebrate the country we all hold dear. More than 50 Jewish organizations participated actively, each contributing in its unique way. The event was divided into zones representing different regions of Israel: Tel Aviv, Haifa, Eilat, Sha'ar HaNegev, and Jerusalem, each offering unique activities related to their respective areas.

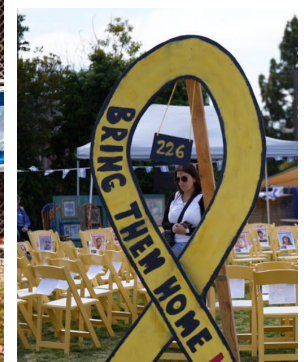
The event also featured a Shuk with dozens of booths from Jewish businesses within our community, a stage with performances from Israel, Mexico, and local talents, and a food area offering a taste of various cuisines. It was a significant achievement for us to see the

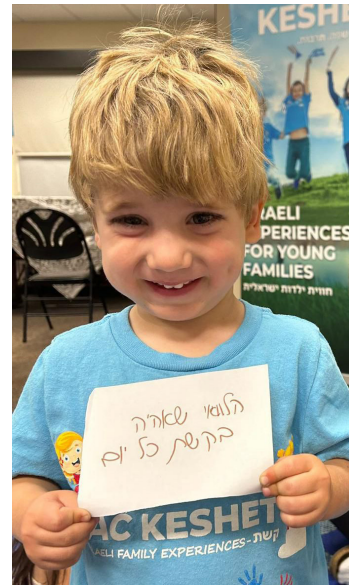
community united and such a diverse range of organizations coming together for such an important cause.

A central part of the event was the "Hope for Hostages Square". In the square, yellow chairs were set up for each of the hostages, displaying their photos and surrounded by art installations created by community members. This poignant display reminded us of our ongoing commitment to supporting Israel and demanding the swift return of all hostages.

The event stirred deep emotions within the community, mixing joy, sorrow, mourning, and a profound sense of hope for a better future. This year, we couldn't have celebrated any other way, and we're grateful to have come together as a community during this challenging time.

We sincerely hope that next year we can celebrate Israel's Independence Day with complete joy, with all the captives reunited with their families. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who participated and showed their love for Israel alongside us.





Celebrating Yom Haatzmaut

By Dr. Ana Barforough

This year at the JCC felt extra special for many reasons. With the current climate of the world, having the chance and the freedom to commemorate Israel's Independence shed a lot of light and gratitude for the ability to gather with our community to openly show our love and support for our homeland.

The day started off with setting up with all the vendors for the big day. From Israeli herbs and spices to local Synagogues and groups, delicious food vendors serving schnitzel, falafel, and pita, local artists and jewelers displaying their admiration for Israeli art and Judaica, and this year, a display to honor the hostages who we have lost, who are still held captive, and to those who have been rescued, may the memories of those lost forever be a blessing, and may we continue to send our love to all the families.

Yom Haatzmaut, as we all felt, had a very different tone this year. Many of us in the Jewish community are actively processing the grief we feel from the war in a number of different ways. This year, Yom Haatzmaut gave us a space to lean on each other for support, gather, and connect, and for many of us to show up to our Judaism in a new way. As a young Jewish woman, I have found that this last year was a year of reconnecting with my Judaism, my traditions, and my community in a profoundly different way.

I was lucky enough to be invited this year by SAJAC to share the art of Chinese Medicine and how we can use acupuncture as a tool to cultivate peace amidst the chaos. It felt appropriate this year to show up for my community in this unique way that brought together two things that are very dear to my heart, Chinese Medicine and Israel. It was a successful event with a wonderful turnout for all the vendors and a fun way to inspire people from all over the community on how they can have more tools in their toolboxes to relax their minds and bodies when the world around us may make it challenging to do so. In the same way, we as Jewish people feel connected to our ancient traditions, I find that I am drawn to the practice of Chinese Medicine for this same reason, it is an ancient medicine that has helped many and I hope that this event gave our community exposure to something they can relate to in that same way.

I had a wonderful time reconnecting with many people at the Yom Haatzmaut event and I look forward to more events in the future, celebrating with the Jewish community.

If you'd like to connect with me or are curious about how acupuncture can best serve you please contact

Dr. Ana Barforough
(858) 776 -0770

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Argus Or Bust

By Joel Ehrlich



In March 2024, I had the incredible opportunity to participate in the Cape Cycle Race (Argus) in Cape Town, South Africa.

For me it was 3-fold as I was also meeting 30 of my classmates for a 40-year reunion of my Matric Class(1984) and my 3 sisters also decided to rendezvous from Perth, Sydney, and Jhb for a sibling reunion. But back to the actual day which was hot with not a cloud in the sky the entire race!

The atmosphere was electric as cyclists from around the world (25,000) gathered to take part in this prestigious event. As we lined up at the starting line, I felt a surge of excitement and anticipation for the challenging race ahead of 68 miles (109km).

The picturesque backdrop of Table Mountain and its surrounds and the waters of the Atlantic Ocean provided a stunning setting for the race. The course was both scenic and challenging, with winding roads, rolling hills, and some strong winds that tested my endurance and strength -Chapman's Peak and Suiker Bossie come to mind...

Despite the physical demands of the race, the support of fellow cyclists and cheering spectators motivated me to keep pushing myself to reach the finish line. The last 10 miles I started to cramp badly, but luckily it was kinda flat, and crossing the finish line was an exhilarating moment, as I felt a sense of accomplishment and pride in completing the race and I finished in 5h27.

Overall, my experience at the Cape Cycle Race was unforgettable and has inspired me to continue participating in cycling events and keep fit and in shape on the roads in San Diego.

Thanks to Ronnie Levy for all our pre-training rides and also at the race and for the support of my family and friends. Would I do it again.....DEFINITELY!

BTW- The reunion went great - It was incredible to see faces and personalities from 40 years ago and my sibling reunion ... Well that's another story but we also had some fun moments...



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Broadway SD

By Shira Ehrlich



The Balboa Theater in Downtown San Diego seats 1,339 people at full capacity. On May 26th, I had the incredible opportunity to perform for a full house at the Balboa as a part of the Broadway San Diego Awards (BSDA).

The BSDA is a high school musical theatre competition that brings the best actors and actresses from across San Diego to perform for their spot at the national high school musical theatre awards on Broadway called The Jimmy Awards. Adjudicators from the BSDA team attend shows from high schools across the county and nominate 15 actors and 15 actresses to audition to be part of the awards. This year 32 schools participated, and I was nominated by Westview High School for playing Cady Heron in the musical "Mean Girls" (Lindsay Lohan's character from the movie). I had just finished my last performance and was at peace with the idea that my final high school theatre experience was over when I got the email. I had made the top 30 and was invited to audition for the Broadway San Diego Awards. I was ecstatic and nervous and tried not to get my hopes up too high, but after watching my best friend perform in this competition the year before and seeing what a great experience it was over Instagram I knew that I would do everything I could to be a part of the top 20. A few hours after my audition, after trying to ignore the nagging thoughts of "what if I make it" or "what if I don't", I received the notification at the dinner table...

I was going to perform in the Broadway San Diego Awards! I was over the moon. The news came out on social media and I was overwhelmed with all of the feedback I was getting about this honor and couldn't wait to start. It's all fun and games when you think about it, but the work really began when rehearsals started. For a whole week, we rehearsed from 4:30-10 PM in order to stage full group opening and closing numbers, as well as our "character solos" which were songs we sang from our respective nominated shows. We memorized harmonies and lyrics, learned complicated choreography, and completed char-

acter and song analysis; efficiently staging a show in one week. It was the best and most tiring week of my life, and I wouldn't have gotten through it without the other 9 actress and 10 actor nominees who were extremely talented and kind performers. Leading up to the performance we were assessed privately by the judges on a separate musical theatre piece we each prepared, and the next day we were getting ready in the underground dressing rooms, just feet below the thousand audience members buzzing in the theater above us.

The minute that the first chord was played for the opening number by our live accompanist, the audience went absolutely out of their minds. The screams and cheers of 1339 people echoed throughout the theater, and brought out the last drop of energy in me to finish off the crazy week I had just experienced. After a whirlwind number, I was back in the dressing room to get ready to perform my solo number from Mean Girls, "Stupid with Love".

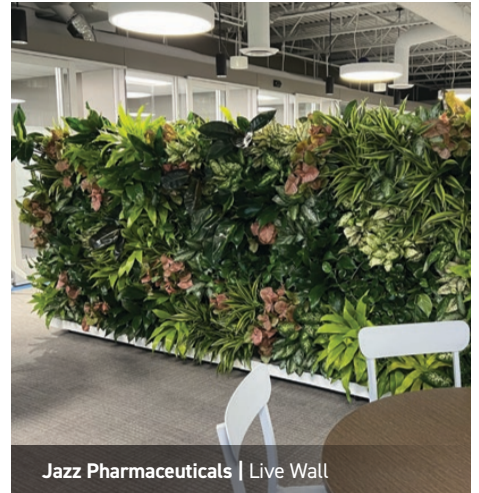
When my name was announced and I presented myself in front of the shining backdrop behind me, the cheers of my friends and family caused a curtain of bliss to fall over me. I wasn't scared like I had been just seconds before, I was thrilled and beyond grateful to be on that stage. At the ending beat of my song, I smiled wide and thanked the audience.

I was so relieved because after all the nerves, the work, and the obstacles I faced through the whole process that year, I really had fun up there. When the closing number came around, I really just let go. I danced and sang my heart out through the Andrew Lloyd Webber medley I had committed to muscle memory, and performed it the best I ever had before. Although I wasn't one of the winners announced at the end of the night to be sent to New York City, I knew that I was proud of all of the effort that I had put in to become a better performer and a more resilient person.

BEST ACTRESS NOMINEES				
 Anessa Ali Carmel Catholic Academy	 Shira Ehrlich Westview HS	 Zara Exconde SD School of Creative & Performing Arts	 Chloe Flores Mt. Carmel HS	 Kathryn Hansen Benito Hernandez HS
 Grace Howard Cathedral Catholic HS	 Corinne Milling Penny HS	 Uma Richard Classical Academy HS	 Mia Rivera SD School of Creative & Performing Arts	 Danica Singer Bella Canyon HS
BEST ACTOR NOMINEES				
 Gavin August SD School of Creative & Performing Arts	 Randy Castillo School of the Arts	 Carlos Gomez Benito Hernandez HS	 Spencer Kearns SD School of Creative & Performing Arts	 Quinlan King School of the Arts
 David Landis Pacific Ridge School	 Justin Lee La Cuesta Canyon HS	 Demian Navien Benito Hernandez HS	 Ethan Roach Classical Academy HS	 Tyler Sandestin Oak Norte HS



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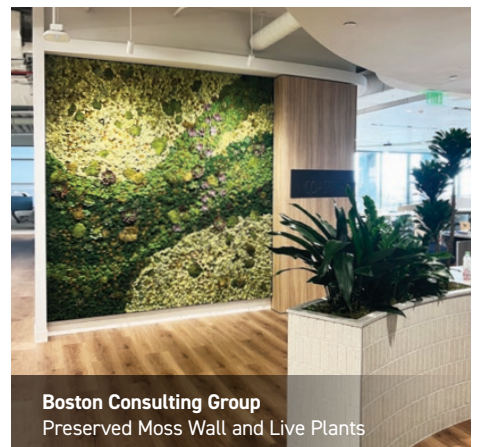
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Hillel Food Train

By Karen Parry



Hillel of San Diego has always been about the future of our Jewish community. It was the priority before October 7th but that horrific day fundamentally changed the way Hillel of San Diego functions—broadening the organization’s size and scope of its vital work.

Hillel’s mission is to enrich the lives of Jewish college students so that they may enrich the Jewish people and the world. We do this by connecting the next generation to Jewish life, learning, community, and Israel. Those last two pieces (community and Israel) were at the forefront of our minds every day, especially this year.

On October 8th, Hillel of San Diego had to add armed guards to both the Melvin Garb Hillel Center and the Beverly and Joseph Glickman Hillel Center. This unbudgeted Jewish tax was made entirely possible because of the community’s support. The incredible community members who recognized the critical need to secure our most cherished sacred Jewish spaces allowed us to spring into action. Support from organizations like SAJAC and CAN is a reminder that every dollar counts. It all makes a difference. A student shared in early November, “I knew I could always go to Hillel because when I am there, I feel safe. I can just be me without worrying about my safety. I see the guard at the front and breathe easier... and you know what,” she says, “My mom breathes easier too when I am at Hillel.” (Hannah, Class of 2024). That added layer of security allowed Jewish life to flourish, despite the rapid rise of antisemitism on campus.

Time and time again, Jewish students stood proudly Jewish in defiance of the hate around them on campus. Shabbats at Hillel were cacophonies of clinking glasses, loud voices, laughing, and pure joy. Organizations like SAJAC that sponsored meals allowed us to continually serve

well over 100 students at Shabbat and gave students a full stomach and full heart. Hillel of San Diego never charges students a fee so we rely on the generosity of people, just like you, who believe in investing in the future of our Jewish community. Through Hillel of San Diego, you ensure Jewish continuity far into the future.

Providing meaningful education about Israel and empowering student leaders to advocate for our Jewish homeland is the Hillel of San Diego way. We saw that in action when we hosted the largest Peace in Israel Week at UCSD this past May. A massive pro-Israel rally, dynamic speakers like Mosab Yousef Hassan, a powerful Women’s demonstration, and the largest shuk ever— were all moments of Jewish pride that centered students and educated the larger campus community. These impactful programs were all powered by you, our Jewish community, because you believe in the value of investing in our Jewish future through Hillel of San Diego.

We know that the upcoming year is not going to be easy. The campus culture has fundamentally changed and being Jewish on campus is harder than ever. Antisemitism permeates through every facet of the college experience from within the classroom to student organizations. But we are stronger. We are resilient. We are the Jewish community. Hillel of San Diego is working toward smart solutions that make the campus climate better and continue to foster Jewish pride and connection to Israel. Thank you for being a part of the solution with us.

We are grateful for partners like SAJAC and CAN who understand that we must work together to make the future better.

Karen Parry is the executive director of Hillel of San Diego. You can learn more about Hillel of San Diego at www.hillelsd.org



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Autumn Ahead: Navigating a New Space with Big Plans

By Jana Mazurkiewicz Meisarosh

We've gone global! The biggest news this year has been our recent move to Punta Banda, Baja California, in Mexico. Although we were sorry to part with our cultural center and gallery in La Jolla, our new location allows us more flexibility and a newfound ability to serve bustling communities on both sides of the border, helping us transform into the truly international organization we are today.

Beginning this fall – we're excited to announce – we will be holding an afterschool bilingual art immersion program for kids in San Diego and Punta Banda, Baja California. We recognize the need for inclusiveness in education on arts and culture and are elated to be able to serve communities on both sides of the border. Art is the lifeblood of culture, and we cherish the ability to help pass that on to the next generation.



Also upcoming are two series of interactive art lectures about Rembrandt and Chagall, presented by art historian Jennifer Stern. Rembrandt was one of the few painters of his time to depict contemporary Jewish communities, and the lecture series will analyze some of his most famous works to discover the reasons for doing so, as well as how his art depicts the history of Amsterdam's Jewish Community. The lecture series on Chagall, delivered mostly in Yiddish, will cover the famed Jewish painter's life and artwork, including Stern's personal connection to Chagall himself! The use of Jewish imagery that characterizes Chagall's work will also be discussed, as Chagall often depicted his hometown of Vibetsk, in what is now Belarus. Audience participation is encouraged in both lectures to help uncover the richness of Jewish culture these painters depicted



In addition, we will be hosting a literary lecture series presented by Dr. Steven Leon, discussing the works created by the Singer family, arguably the most widely known modern writers of Yiddish literature. Composed of three remarkable siblings who each left an indelible mark on the craft, the family's efforts helped bring Yiddish literature to new audiences worldwide. Book lovers especially will enjoy this eye-opening program.

We're proud to offer these events to the general public later this year. Keep an eye on our social media presence as further announcements are made about these inspiring events. Come join us and discover a world rich with cultural experience!

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High-Quality Education and Nurturing Community at San Diego Jewish Community

By Jason Edelestein



San Diego Jewish Academy empowers each student to learn for life, guided by Jewish values and rooted in the strength of community. As a pluralistic community K-12 school with a thriving early childhood center, we inspire and support students with personalized and innovative learning. Educational and community experiences are infused with Jewish values. Our graduates are leaders and positive changemakers in their communities and beyond. SDJA's excellent teachers and state-of-the-art campus enable students to grow and try new activities in a supportive environment.

SDJA's philosophy is to embrace learning experiences that inspire and expand thinking through real-world experience. Students engage in high-quality education—whether in classrooms, gardens, labs, playgrounds, athletic facilities, or art and music studios. Our Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurial Thinking in particular provides unique educational opportunities, with its launch of a High-Altitude weather balloon as a highlight each year. Led by Upper School students, the balloon launch last year engaged students across grades to learn about science, technology, weather, and more—culminating in the weather balloon going over 100,000 feet in the air.

Through different tikkun olam projects throughout the year, SDJA students also live out our Jewish values to help those in need. As just a few examples, last year students donated toys for local animal shelters; participated in blood drives; and visited senior living centers to bring joy to the residents through Jewish programming and delivering "Shabbat in a Box" gifts.

"We love the community, the people, and the education that my daughter is getting," said Lee (Wollach) Weinstein, an alumni of SDJA and now a parent of a current student. "It's the education that I received when I was at SDJA too. I want the next generation to have that. At SDJA, it's not just a school, it's not just a class. You really build a community that becomes a part of your family life."

SDJA's array of extracurricular programs and inclusive curriculum classes in sports, arts, music, and science are integral in developing well-rounded students through various experiences. The Ana "Janche" Galicot Performing Arts Auditorium (PAA) is a 5,000-square-foot facility with three multi-purpose rooms, a theater space, and an auditorium, as well as state-of-the-art audio, visual, lighting, and acoustical design. Our central garden space provides unique opportunities for outdoor learning and community gathering.

As a strong and vibrant community rooted in Jewish values, SDJA's educational approach weaves Jewish and secular learning intentionally and purposefully. We instill a deep understanding and respect for the values and insights of Jewish tradition and a personal connection to Israel. The senior class trip to Israel is always a special experience and a culmination of their time at SDJA. Last year's trip, in the shadow of October 7th, took on even deeper meaning as students reconnected with peers SDJA hosted earlier in the year from Sha'ar HaNegev, and experienced the country and its people at a profound moment in the history of the Jewish people.

The environment we create instills in each student a foundational set of values, skills, knowledge, and experiences so that every SDJA graduate:

- Actively embodies a meaningful, informed, and personal connection to Judaism, Israel, and the Jewish people that infuses and enriches all aspects of their lives and guides their interaction with the world around them.
- Thoughtfully approaches opportunities and challenges in any field, subject, or life circumstance with the curiosity to ask significant questions, the passion to learn, and the confidence to implement solutions.
- Creates and maintains lifelong relationships that add meaning to their lives, enabling them to support each other and connect and engage deeply in community and society.

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OLAM HAEMES SOCIETY

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Dear Friends,

Our community continues to rally around each other to face challenges and to defend our Jewish rights here, in Israel, and around the world. The communal responsibility of Chesed - kindness - is an important facet of our daily Jewish life.

Judaism takes the concept of Chesed - acts of kindness that benefit individuals, families and communities - seriously. The Torah speaks about "Chesed Shel Emet" which means everlasting kindness. The "Neshama" soul is everlasting. We are taught that when our time on earth comes to an end the soul returns to our Creator leaving the limitations of bodily life. It is up to us to properly leave our physical reminder on earth.

The Mitzvah of Kosher Burial includes final arrangements such as Tahara - ritual washing purifications and Tachrichim - traditional burial garments performed by the Chevra Kadisha - The Sacred Burial Society. The Chevra Kadisha upholds these traditions set forth in the spirit of Chesed Shel Emet, an everlasting kindness. The Chevra Kadisha is a continued link of Jewish tradition that has been central to South Africa Jewry and communities around the world. We bring this to your attention in light of some who may lack the awareness of these important Jewish traditions.

Facing the need for Kosher burial, the community, represented by all of the traditional synagogues, gathered to consecrate a new traditional burial grounds - Garden of Eden II. Garden of Eden II is centrally located at El Camino Memorial Park in Sorrento Valley adjacent to the original Garden of Eden section which is sold out.

Making arrangements to purchase pre-need burial plots prevents additional strain to family members, and the ability to create spousal and family plots. Prices of plots have risen significantly. Purchasing ahead of time can save you funds. The Talmud says "One who prepares one's plot in good health is blessed with long life".

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HOUSE OF ISRAEL

By Miriam Gershenson



The House of Israel in Balboa Park has had a remarkable year filled with cultural enrichment, community engagement, and educational initiatives. As a vibrant part of the House of Pacific Relations International Cottages, this cultural hub has continued to foster understanding and appreciation of Israeli culture and heritage within the San Diego community. Here are some of the standout accomplishments from the past year:

1. Cultural Festivals and Events

One of the most notable achievements has been the successful hosting of various cultural festivals and events. The annual lawn program, held in collaboration with local organizations, attracted hundreds of visitors. The festival featured traditional Israeli music, dance performances, culinary delights, and arts and crafts, providing a rich, immersive experience of Israeli culture.

2. Educational Programs

The House of Israel has placed a strong emphasis on education, offering numerous programs designed to inform and engage the public. Hebrew writing of visitor names has been a significant success, with increasing interest and positive feedback from participants. Additionally, partnering with local schools to present on Israeli history and technology has drawn diverse audiences, fostering deeper understanding and dialogue.

3. Community Outreach

In its efforts to build bridges within the community, the House of Israel has

launched several outreach initiatives. The Shinshinim have been particularly impactful, providing international students with opportunities to be involved in and educate visitors about Israel and its culture. Participants have engaged in exchange programs and community service projects, helping to promote cross-cultural understanding and cooperation.

4. Collaborative Projects

Collaboration has been a cornerstone of the House of Israel's success this year. With The Yiddish Arts and Academics Association of North America, the House of Israel has co-sponsored an event featuring a restored 1924 Yiddish film that was accompanied by live music. We also participated in an exhibition at Mingei International Museum called "Cups to Connections: Global Gestures of Hospitality" showcasing Israeli traditions alongside those of other nations. These events have highlighted the spirit of unity and diversity within the park.

Looking Ahead

As the House of Israel looks to the future, it remains dedicated to its mission of cultural exchange and education. Plans for the upcoming year include expanding educational programs, enhancing community partnerships, and continuing to celebrate the rich heritage of Israel. With a foundation of strong achievements, the House of Israel is poised to make an even greater impact in the years to come.

The accomplishments of the House of Israel over the past year reflect a vibrant and dynamic community committed to fostering cultural understanding and appreciation. Through its diverse programs and initiatives, the House of Israel continues to be a beacon of cultural exchange and education in Balboa Park.

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Mother's Fight for Apartheid's Forgotten Children

By Lorna & Morrice Swartz



Educating Tammy shares one woman's pursuit of excellence for children with learning disabilities in apartheid-era South Africa. A fierce beacon of hope amid an oppressive regimen, the late Dr. Lorna Swartz championed for disabled children, including her own daughter, Tammy.

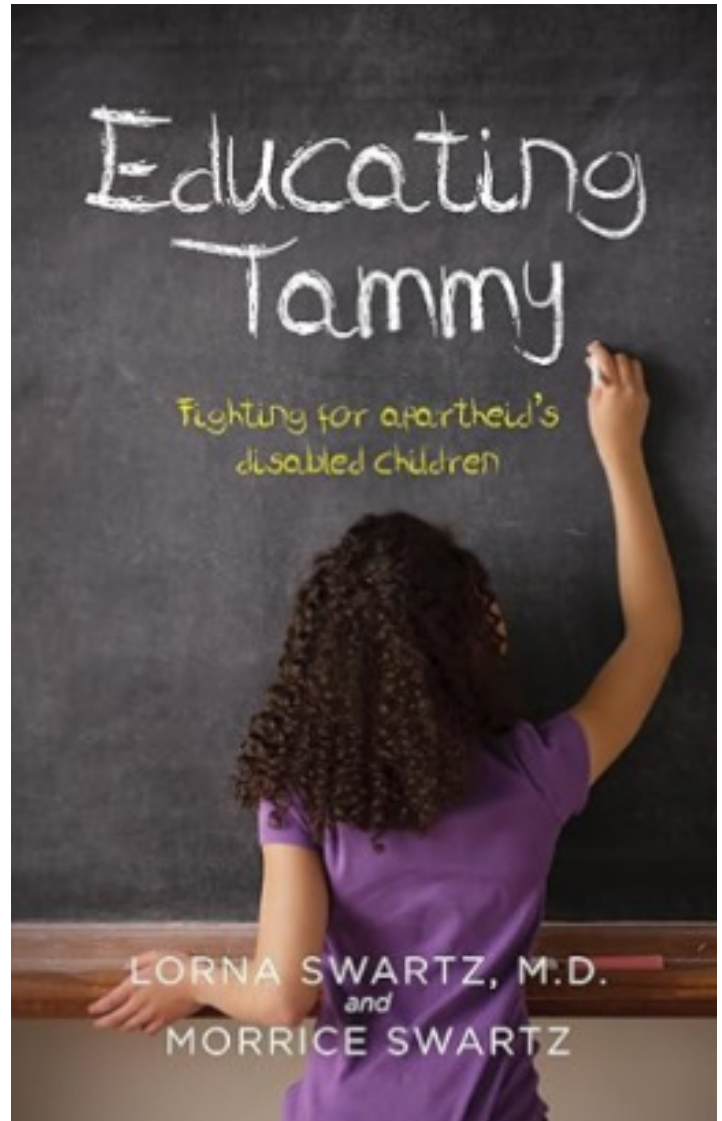
Lorna's early experiences during the chaotic transition to apartheid shaped the trajectory of her life. She embraced her calling in medicine and then accepted the role of wife and mother. Little did she know the challenges that lay in the path before her. Her daughter, Tammy, experienced developmental challenges that the South African medical community could not solve. Seeking assistance, Lorna, her husband Morrice, and Tammy traveled to the renowned child clinic at Purdue University in the United States where Lorna was able to find both answers and her next great calling. Upon returning to South Africa, Lorna pioneered an educational experiment designed to help children with learning disabilities like Tammy. Even as the experiment flourished, it drew criticism and opposition from state officials, leading to conflict and threats against Lorna. This exceptional memoir details Lorna's relentless advocacy during apartheid and ventures beyond her emigration to the United States where she continued to show her steadfast commitment to mental health.

This extraordinary story of motherhood, activism, and enduring hope for a better future will appeal to anyone interested in the history of special education and accommodation for learning disabilities.

Educating Tammy is available for purchase online at Amazon.com and Barnes and Noble.com.

About the Authors: Dr. Lorna Kay Swartz led an extensive career as not only a doctor but a passionate advocate and educator. She was a pioneering force in the realm of education for children with special needs. During her life, she presented international lectures, held workshops, and authored cutting-edge publications. She established the first experimental pilot class for children with learning problems in the public school system of apartheid-era South Africa.

Her Husband, Morrice helped co-author the book and completed it after Lorna z"l passed away.



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AJC UPDATE

By Sara Brown



The community has always been a core tenet of Judaism. Its importance transcends mere tradition and lies at the heart of Jewish values. In the wake of the horrific events of October 7th, our community is being tested in ways both old and new. Hatred and misinformation have isolated Jews from their friends and neighbors. Antisemitic demonstrations abound across college campuses nationwide. American Jews have never felt less safe. In such uncertain times, it is more vital than ever to organize, educate, and mobilize for positive change as a community.

American Jewish Committee (AJC) San Diego, with the support and partnership of the Jewish Federation of San Diego, designed "Standing Together: A Community Response to Antisemitism", a community symposium that brought more than 300 community members together to engage in dialogue and learning and commit to informed action. The very structure of the event embodied community partnership, as various organizations across the city were involved in promoting the event and were represented among the speakers.

The symposium kicked off with an opening plenary led by AJC San Diego's Regional Director Sara E. Brown, Ph.D., and AJC CEO Ted Deutch in conversation with the legendary Abraham Foxman, former ADL National Director and child survivor of the Holocaust. They discussed the unique nature of the current state of antisemitism in the world and how it is so different from that of the past. Despite this, in true Jewish

fashion, they set the tone with a note of Tikva, or hope. Foxman emphasized the importance of hope in these times and always: "We can't go out without hope – but hope itself is not enough. You've got to do something about it to make sure there's reason for hope."

Leaders of the community, including Jewish Federation President and CEO Heidi Gantwerk and San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria also spoke at the event, further highlighting the significance of the community working together to combat antisemitism. Mayor Gloria's affirmation of San Diego's commitment to the Jewish community and support for Israel solidified this sense of solidarity.

After a full day of unity and collaborative learning, activist, and scholar Eric Ward emphasized the importance of diversity and communal allyship. He shared stories of his own past experiences, observations, and his hopes for the future. Dr. Brown concluded the program by asking everyone to turn to their neighbors in the audience and discuss the lessons learned, and how to best take action as a community. The symposium was a timely reminder that in the face of adversity, the San Diego community's strength lies in unity and resilience. AJC San Diego was proud to work together to bridge divides, foster understanding, and elevate diverse voices and perspectives to combat antisemitism. We are stronger together.

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MY JOURNEY IN SHALOM BABY

By Susan Levin



In just a couple of days, my oldest will be turning 19. She finished her first year in college which was a challenging year on many campuses. I know it's said often but....where did the time go?

Being a first-time mom was scary. I was very lucky to have my parents living in Orange County and my mom was able to spend the first couple of weeks with us. One day when I was sitting on the sofa, there was a knock on our door. I answered and a lovely woman with a beautiful accent wished me a Mazel Tov brought me a Shalom Baby basket. I can't remember everything in that basket but there was a small yellow book about Shabbat which I have kept all these years. This visit by an amazing volunteer was just the beginning of what I would call the start of my relationship with Shalom Baby. Shalom Baby also invited me to join a playgroup with other moms who had babies close in age. This playgroup was truly a lifesaver for me. I did not know anyone in my neighborhood who had a baby and I really wanted to meet other Jewish families. I had made a choice not to return to work and I was feeling a bit lost in this new identity as a mom.

Our playgroup met every week. We would sometimes meet at UTC, walk around or grab lunch and other times we would meet at someone's house. I looked forward to seeing this group and the support that they gave me at a time when I needed it most.

Who knew then that some of these same moms would be in my life 19 years later. We've been through good and bad times together. We have watched families grow and have supported one another through loss. Last summer we arranged to get together at the JCC to reenact a group picture first taken as babies. This time the kids wore sweatshirts with their intended university. The JCC and Shalom Baby were where it all began and it was fitting to gather together to mark this new chapter. Shalom Baby gave me friendships, support, advice, community and so much more. To be able to give back just some of what Shalom Baby did for me, I volunteer to be that "knock on the door". I love being able to welcome new moms and dads into our growing Shalom Baby family.

We are immensely grateful to Jean and Franklin Gaylis for their continued support of Shalom Baby. They have been involved and supportive from its inception, and we are the proud recipients of their commitment and belief in our work.

To find out how you, your children, or grandchildren can participate in Shalom Baby/PJ Library classes, events, activities, and special holiday programs or receive a beautiful FREE, high-quality book with Jewish content each month from PJ Library, please contact: Judy Nemzer and Vivien Dean at shalombaby@lfjcc.org.



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High School Friends Reconnect at 100

By Jacqui Herbst

Former Durban man Selwyn Lurie, who lives in San Diego in the US, was able to find his friend, Leonard Baumann, when this newspaper featured Baumann last month.

Baumann, of the Bakers franchise fame, and Lurie had schooled together at Durban High School (DHS). They were both in the same class in 1937. Lurie was born and bred in Durban and went on to serve as a combat fighter pilot in World War II in two campaigns against the Germans and Japanese, as well as building a new town in Israel to welcome the survivors.

Lurie volunteered to join the Allied Forces against Germany and Japan. He was trained in South Africa and served with the Royal Air Force, flying the single-seater British Hurricane in the North African campaign against the Germans in 1939.

He was later transferred to the Burma campaign in which he flew another single-seater, the American P-47, against the Japanese. "An enemy has never shot me down, nevertheless, I have survived an astonishing five crashes caused by adverse weather conditions and mechanical problems.

My last crash, where I successfully belly-landed on a P-47 aircraft at 170 miles an hour without wheels and flaps, earned me an award," said Lurie. After the war, he pursued a career in accounting and in 1955 met his wife, Barbara, who was his PA at the time. They married in Durban and later had three children, Doron, Micheal and Adina. "My last 21 years in the business world were in the textile manufacturing industry in Durban. I became CEO of one of South Africa's leading companies with factories throughout Southern Africa and a workforce of 35 000 employees. "I was also appointed as a chairman of the South African Textile Manufacturers Association and as justice of the peace by the South African government," he said.

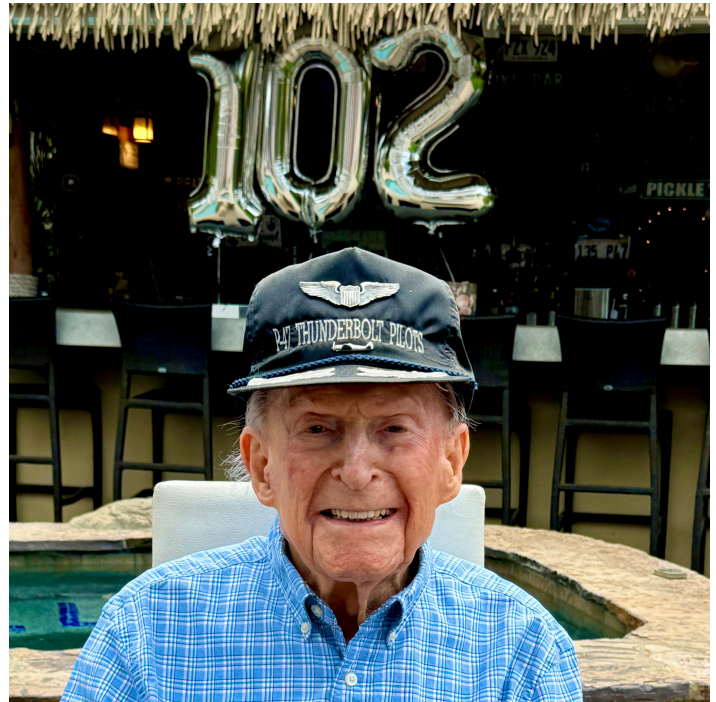
Lurie said he had played a role in South Africa's peaceful transition from apartheid into a democracy, giving FW de Klerk considerable help "during that turbulent time in our country's history". In their retirement, the Luries remained in their community and were among the founding members of the first Jewish Orthodox congregation in Carmel Valley in California.

On their golden wedding anniversary, they donated a new Sefer Torah from Israel. "When I saw the article about Leonard, it brought back old memories dating back to my time in South Africa. I have received a warm and very interesting reply from Len Baumann and thank you so much for making possible contact between us," said Lurie.

Baumann also had fond memories of Lurie. "The two of us were in the same classroom together at Durban High School. Our form master at DHS in 1937 was Charlie Evans. I remember at the close of class, he asked the members of our form to line up and roll up our trousers above our knees.

"He said that he had been asked to provide two heralds to lead a procession at all the schools. "He then asked Selwyn Lurie and me to step forward and chose the two of us, because he said we had nice legs suitable for the stockings worn by heralds at that time.

"The two lads from the other school were from Glenwood. After that incident, we lost touch," said Baumann



Selwyn and Barbara at their wedding in 1955. Model of a P-47 Thunderbolt on top of their wedding cake.



U17 rugby team: Selwyn seated in the front row, second from the right



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Johannesburg, London, Hobart, Melbourne and finally - Jerusalem

By Loren Gaddie

A need to belong is an integral part of the human condition. We all long to feel part of a family, a social group, a team of work colleagues and more. At the tender age of fourteen, I visited Israel for the first time on a three month school trip and fell madly in love with the country, it's people and the Hebrew language. I spent over forty years hankering for the sense of belonging I felt in this crazy country where people live from one day to the next because no one knows what tomorrow will bring. This year, I finally made Aliyah!

I have been asked many times what it is like to be living my lifelong dream? It is everything I had hoped for – and more.

Israel is experiencing one of the most challenging times in its history and so many people are doing it tough. There is a war going on with Hamas in Gaza and another pending in the north with Hizballah. The army is on the alert, and many have spent months and months as soldiers doing reserve duty, often suffering financially as a result. Families struggle to come to terms with the grief they face having lost children, parents and siblings in this horrible conflict and students at both school and university struggle to close the gaps in their education created by the current situation. There is internal political unrest in the country and a deep chasm between many parts of society.

And yet what stands out most amongst those around me here in Jerusalem is a sense of mutual responsibility to take care of one another.

We attended a barbecue on an army base organised by the estate agent through whom we found our apartment. The cost of the food and drink for the soldiers was completely covered by a generous donor. Whilst helping to serve the food, we chatted to the soldiers and their gratitude for our presence was palpable.

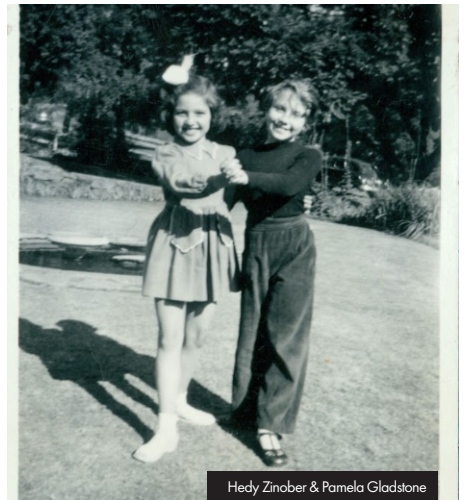
I was recently presented with an opportunity to volunteer in an extremely

meaningful way, teaching a child whose education has been disrupted. Lior (who has just finished Year 5) and his family were evacuated from his moshav near Rafiah on 7 October and I have been working with him online to help improve his English.

I love musical theatre and last week, I saw "The Sound of Music" at the magnificent Jerusalem Theatre – in Hebrew.

How wonderful it was to hear the songs I know and love in the language about which I am so passionate! The audience was so involved in the show and the sense of joy and enjoyment in the auditorium was of epic proportion.

Speaking fluent Hebrew and having secured a job for the coming academic year at an excellent school in Jerusalem teaching English have definitely made it easier for me to become accustomed to life in the Jewish homeland and I am so grateful to be in Israel now. I belong here. I always have and always will



Hedy Zinober & Pamela Gladstone



Hedy Zinober Gaddie



Pamela & Andy Nathan, Carol & Norman Schwab, Hedy & Jules Gaddie

Footnote: Loren Gaddie is the daughter of Pamela Nathan's childhood friend, Hedy Zinober z"l, 1st cousin to our member, Hilton Sachs.

Hedy's mom was Fanny Sachs Zinober who was the eldest sister of Louis Sachs, King David School in Linksfield co-founder.

Fanny's Meringues! Amazing- Her recipe will soon be posted on our facebook SA Cuisine Page.

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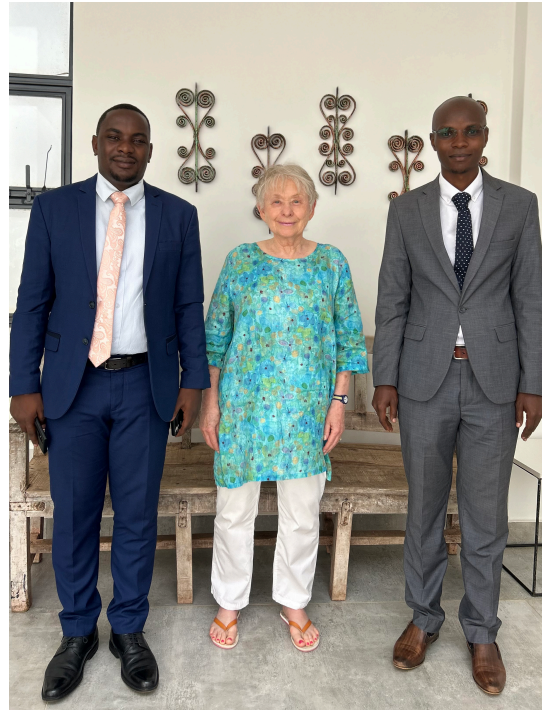
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Keeping Jewish History Alive - Ugandan Trip to Mount Plaques “An Emotional Journey”.

By Janice Masur



I have recently come back from Uganda, where my family used to live, to the Jewish community that existed from 1949 to 1961. My purpose for traveling to Uganda was to unveil two (2) memorial plaques for my Jewish community, which had been there from 1949 to 1961.

Unfortunately, the community infrastructure is non-existent today and even the cemetery is submerged under real estate. Although still essentially an agricultural economy, Uganda is touted to visitors as the most entrepreneurial country in Africa. Most people have small county-side plots to grow food and sell the surplus but there are also exports of food e.g.: sugar cane and bananas. The Pearl of Africa is rich in mineral deposits and China is beginning to drill for oil on the edge of Murchison Falls National Park.

I could not find my way around Kampala anymore. Currently, it sprawls and spreads in all directions with Ugandan street names I can barely pronounce. My old home now has a high fence and an armed guard at the gate who denied us access. Small five-petaled purple flowers are strewn on the driveway just as they had done in my childhood with a new modern hotel across the road.

We drove up Kibuli Hill to see Kibuli Mosque but, it had changed vastly. It was now “fortress-like” with the words “None shall be worshipped but Allah. Muhammad is his prophet”

We placed a plaque in the Nagoya Village near Mbale, where the Abayudaya, who converted to Judaism in 1921, live. Conservative Rabbi Gershom Sizomu and his wife, Tziporah, and others hosted us with warmth over Shabbat, including food and music with stunning views of Mount Elgon.

On Sunday, the whole community was invited to the unveiling of the

plaque. We ambled down to a lower flat piece of land after morning minyan in the synagogue. There were speeches by Rabbi Sizomu and by Rabbi Netanel Kaszovitz, a young Orthodox rabbi visiting from Nairobi, Africa. The plaque glowed in the dappled sunlight with white lettering.

I experienced all sorts of conflicting emotions, as you might imagine. At long last a plaque to commemorate the help that my Uganda Jewish community had given the Abayudaya last century was installed. Nothing had marked the presence of the once-vibrant, secular, 23-family Jewish community, which functioned without a rabbi, a Torah, or a synagogue. Who would have guessed that, in 2024, a Conservative and three Orthodox Black Jewish communities would exist, interspersed with Muslim villages?

As for the other plaque I hoped to place, it was for the Jews who were buried more than 60 years ago in the Jewish cemetery just off the Kampala-Jinja Expressway, abutting the Christian cemetery. It is not common knowledge that the Jewish cemetery there had been destroyed and apartments built on top. We were not allowed to lay the plaque there.

Perhaps I could mount the plaque at the edge of the Christian cemetery that abutted the Jewish cemetery or near the 1972 Entebbe Raid plaque at the old Entebbe airport? Either location would require a Ugandan minister to see and approve the plaque. This was sadly not to be.

The second plaque lies in storage with Rabbi Sizomu. The Chabad Rabbi in Kampala, Moshe Raskin, said he would try to place it in the new plot of land they will buy for Chabad because Rabbi Moshe says Chabad is in Kampala to stay.

In many parts of the world, history is important, and physical spaces or buildings are repurposed and feature plaques to show that a mikvah is

buried here or a synagogue was once there. Now it is my task to try and get the banner exhibit that I created called "Shalom Uganda", to find a home in this new museum. And the Kampala memorial plaque? To be determined....

Janice's book, *Shalom Uganda: A Jewish Community on the Equator*, tells her story of growing up in the bygone Ashkenazi Jewish community of Kampala from 1949 to 1961.



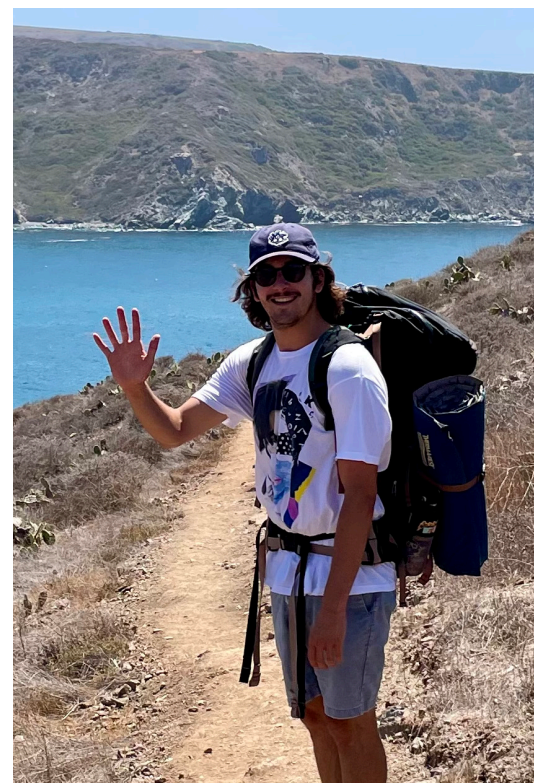
Searching for Diaspora

By Gabriel Bloch

As I pack my bag for a year-long journey across Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia, I ponder the stories of all those who have packed their bags before me. My great-grandfather Willie at the age of thirteen, leaving his Lithuanian shtetl to travel alone to the farthest reaches of the African continent. Everyone he had ever known, everyone he had ever loved, left behind. My father, frantically picking up his life to flee an apartheid regime due to a healthy dose of moral skepticism, finds himself in Canada, the remote jungle towns of mainland Mexico, and eventually San Diego. My Uncle, turning his back on the comfortable lifestyle he had built in London over the last 30 years to make Aliyah to a war-torn Israel. In contrast to our thousands of years packing up and settling down, these stories are but of only one Jewish family spanning the course of a mere 150 years. Kicked out, thrown out, or leaving of our own accord, this all too familiar story is the narrative of the Jewish people.

Snapping out of a diaspora daydream, this Jew is faced with a question. What intentions am I setting for my travels? Well, primarily I am traveling just to have some fun. Who wouldn't want to travel for a year? On a deeper level, travel has shaped the lives and stories of our people - the lives that we leave behind and the lives that we seek to find. The growth and turmoil that has hardened us against the worst of the human condition is in no small part due to our accomplished history of packing up. If it weren't for our exile, would we even still be around today? How many groups of people have survived for as long as the Jews?

I therefore embark with the silent mission of uncovering the unique (but all too familiar) individual Jewish narratives of a diaspora that has shaped a new generation. How have the cultures of our host nations shaped our customs and traditions? What traditions, cultures, and core teachings permeate the Jewish experience regardless of where we have landed since two millennia of exile? "Oh weary traveler, come nourish your soul at our Shabbat table." Shalom!



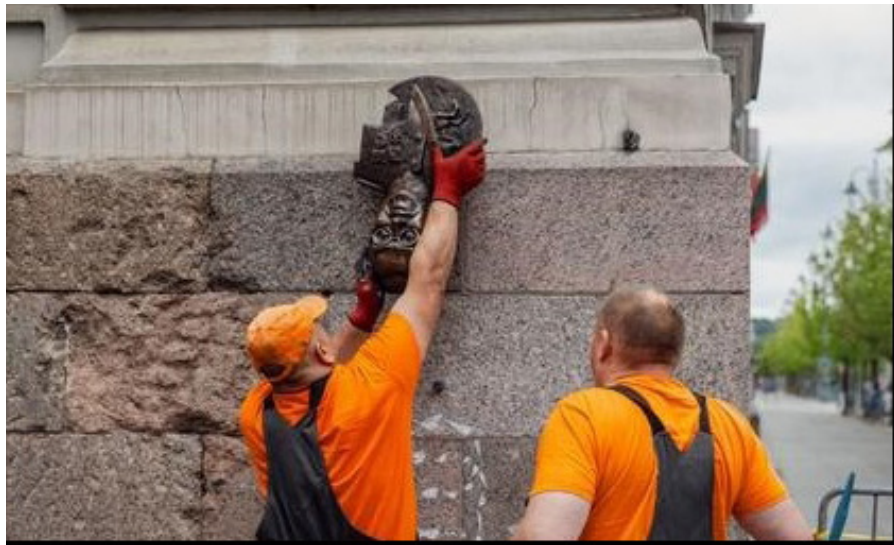


A Miracle In Lithuania

Lithuanians are finally ready tell the truth about the Holocaust – Jews must now support them in their efforts to face their history

Article appeared on timesofisrael.com July 24, 2024

By Michael Kretzmer



Astonishing things are happening in Lithuania. The tide of Holocaust distortion is receding. And genuine efforts are being made towards future Holocaust truth-telling.

It has been a tumultuous few weeks.

First, Lithuania decided NOT to reinstate the bust of mass murderer Jonas Noreika on the walls of the science institute in central Vilnius. It had been removed during renovations of the building and there was speculation that it would be reinstated. But no, it remains hidden away, no explanation given.

Then, a couple of weeks ago, some knuckle-dragging fascists erected a statue to Kazys Skirpa (possibly the most egregious of Lithuania's mass murdering heroes) on the walls of the central library in Vilnius. The authorities hacked it down within two days. In the old days, that would have been unthinkable.

Even more dramatic was last week's announcement that the old Soviet Sports Palace (built on an ancient Jewish cemetery by the Russians on what is probably the most important bit of real estate in Vilnius) would be turned into a huge Jewish memorial.

And on July 18th, in the most important development by far, the effective disbanding and rejection of the Genocide and Resistance Research Centre. Yes that's right: earlier this week the Lithuanian Government announced moves to completely change the remit and function of the nefarious Genocide Centre, the lie factory of Vilnius, which has been the driver of Lithuanian Holocaust distortion.

As someone who campaigned against Lithuanian Holocaust distortion in my 2023 documentary *J'Accuse!*, I can barely believe what's happening. In fact, I don't think anybody with Lithuanian Holocaust experience could, in their wildest dreams, have imagined such an outcome.

We wish them well, of course. But where does this leave us? What should Jews do now?

Of course, we must retain skepticism and vigilance. I have little doubt that the geopolitics of Eastern Europe and NATO, and specifically the cruel Russian invasion of Ukraine, has played a very important role in these decisions. But I don't think it's all realpolitik.

I cannot help feeling that there is something else happening, something noble and uplifting: a sincere desire on the part of many Lithuanians to finally tell the truth and free their country from the shackles of its terrible past. Like Germany.

And if so, it is clear what we Jews have to do. We should seize this opportunity and help Lithuania in any way we can, with all our hearts.

To state the obvious, we do not accept inter-generation guilt, so no Lithuanian is guilty of anything. It is the lies told by antisemites that contaminates the innocent people with guilt. And I remember the many, many wonderful Lithuanian people I have met: the old lady in Birzai, with her granddaughter, who wept as she remembered the murdered community and my own family ("They were always so neat and beautiful," she told me). The young Christian volunteers who cleaned Birzai's cemetery and worked so tirelessly to retain memory of the community; the woman who blew a kiss from the heart as our bus left the murder pits of Plunge; the teacher in Birzai who wept as I explained my fear of this country; the hundreds of people who every year march to the Jewish death pits to show solidarity, sorrow, and love, and many many more. I believe these people would welcome this release.

And now we may be able to join them, hand in hand. The possibility of creating a true, redemptive friendship with Lithuanians, based on truth, may actually, incredibly, be within our grasp.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR Michael was born in Bulawayo, a former travel writer for the *Sunday Times* and director/producer for the BBC and other once important media organisations, a keeper of chickens and grower of fruit and veg, a biker, a student of Torah, a Dad and Grandad... and a man determined to fight for justice in Lithuania.

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Hebrew Free Loans of San Diego

By Mindi Frankel



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HFLSD is funded through donations by generous private individuals and foundations. Donations are recycled as loans are repaid, assisting our community for generations to come. HFLSD's interest-free loans help with living expenses, dental and medical costs, debt consolidation, aging and elderly care, Jewish day school, undergraduate and post-graduate education, and life cycle events. Loans are also made to small busi-

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To learn more about HFLSD, visit our website at <https://www.hflsd.org/>.

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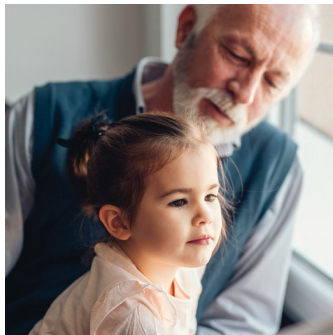
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Sustaining the World through Kindness: The Mission of Kindness Initiative

By Tamar Siegel



“By three things is the world sustained: the Law, the Temple service, and deeds of lovingkindness” –Avot 1:2. This timeless teaching from Jewish tradition beautifully encapsulates the mission of Kindness Initiative and its free gift closet, kindnessG’MACH. As a unique and unduplicated organization based in San Diego, we are dedicated to lifting vulnerable Jewish households out of the shadows, guiding them toward self-sustainability and a brighter future for themselves and their families.

Who We Are

Kindness Initiative and kindnessG’MACH stand as pillars of support for the Jewish community in San Diego. Recognizing a significant need within our community, we have committed ourselves to providing essential services and support to those living on the edge of poverty. According to community studies conducted in 2019 and 2022, approximately 20% of the 56,200 Jewish households in San Diego face financial hardships, living in or near poverty. This statistic underscores the importance of our mission and the urgency of our work.

Why We Exist

Kindness Initiative was founded on compassion and empathy, focusing on assisting struggling Jewish households with dignity and Jewish values. We aim to make a significant impact through holistic services that not only address immediate needs but also promote long-term self-sufficiency and stability.

What We Do

Our core offering is the Member Services program, a comprehensive case management system tailored to each individual’s needs. We provide crisis intervention and develop care plans to help members achieve self-sufficiency. Our support spans housing, employment, health, wellness, nutrition, transportation, government services, legal assistance, and counseling for substance abuse and domestic violence. Over the past three years, our services have

positively impacted over 500 lives, and demand continues to grow.

kindness G’MACH

As the only Jewish gift closet in San Diego County, kindnessG’MACH receives weekly donations ranging from clothes and linens to Judaica items. These donations are carefully sorted by staff and volunteers, ensuring they reach those in need. Each year, over 1,000 people visit the kindnessG’MACH warehouse, where they can access a wide variety of goods in a warm and respectful environment. The shopping experience is designed to be enjoyable and dignified, offering essentials and little extras that can brighten someone’s day, such as baby gear for new parents or business attire for job seekers.

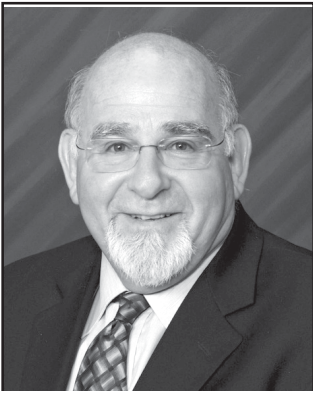
A Synergistic Partnership: Kindness Initiative and KindnessG’MACH

The collaboration between KindnessG’MACH and the Kindness Initiative has proven to be a perfect match. Together, they address both the immediate material needs and the broader emotional and physical well-being of vulnerable members of the San Diego Jewish community.

kindnessG’MACH and Kindness Initiative urgently need community support.

A \$300,000 capital campaign is underway to secure a larger warehouse to accommodate increasing donations and community needs. This new warehouse will be double the size and be better equipped to serve our clients whose growth has been exponential. Donate to support this endeavor!

KindnessG’MACH and the Kindness Initiative are vital lifelines, sustaining the community through acts of loving-kindness. They not only meet immediate needs but also foster long-term stability and self-sufficiency, ensuring that every individual can thrive. For more information on how to support these efforts, visit [kindnessSD.org](https://www.kindnessSD.org).



Seize the Opportunity: Investing in Annuities in a High Interest Rate Environment

By Allan Galgut

Indexed Annuities offer a unique combination of life insurance protection and investment growth potential. They provide the opportunity to earn returns based on the performance of a market index, such as the S&P 500, while also offering downside protection to limit losses in a declining market. With interest rates currently high, investing in an IUL can help you take advantage of potential market gains while providing a level of security for your investment.

Fixed annuities, on the other hand, offer a guaranteed stream of income for a specified period of time. With interest rates on the rise, fixed annuities can offer a higher yield than other fixed-income investments, such as bonds or CDs. They also provide tax-deferred growth, allowing you to grow your savings without a paying taxes on your earnings.

While interest rates are currently high, experts predict that they may soften by the end of the year. This

makes now the ideal time to consider investing in Indexed and fixed annuities to take advantage of the current market conditions. By diversifying your investment portfolio with these secure and reliable products, you can build a strong financial foundation for your future.

Don't miss out on the opportunity to grow your wealth and secure a steady stream of income with Indexed and fixed annuities. Talk to me to learn more about how these products can help you achieve your financial goals in the current market environment. With interest rates expected to soften by the end of the year, now is the perfect time to explore the potential benefits of investing in IULs and fixed annuities.

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Kindness Highlights Robyn Lichter



Robyn Lichter, our dedicated Volunteer Coordinator, has an inspiring journey and a passion for fostering community spirit. Born in South Africa, Robyn emigrated to San Diego with her husband Derek and their two daughters, Megan and Kelly, in 1991. Her professional background is rooted in education, having taught Math and Biology at a Jewish Day School in South Africa.

Robyn's commitment to community service is evident through her extensive volunteer work. She has been actively involved in her daughters' schools and has volunteered for SAJAC (South African Jewish American Community). Additionally, Robyn is a co-founder and co-chair of Shabbat San Diego, further showcasing her dedication to the Jewish community.

In her current role with Kindness Initiative (KI), Robyn excels in interviewing, recruiting, and placing volunteers. She ensures that the program aligns with KI's mission and stays current with its development.

Her passion for keeping the Jewish community thriving is a driving force behind her efforts.

Robyn believes in the importance of a cohesive and united Jewish community to maintain culture and heritage. She understands the need to support members of the San Diego Jewish community who are struggling and in need of resources. Robyn is a firm advocate for the idea that even small contributions of time or money can significantly alleviate the challenges faced by many in our community.

Robyn lives by the powerful words of Hillel from Ethics of the Fathers, 1:14: **"If I am not for me, who is for me; and if I am (only) for myself, what am I. And if not now, when?"**

Her dedication and passion are truly inspirational, and we are grateful for her invaluable contributions to our community!

Thank you, Robyn!





Oct.7th and Its Impact In San Diego

By Rabbi Zalman Carlebach



We thought we lived in a modern world. A world where murdering Jews in cold blood, where the mass slaughter of innocent men, women, and children in their homes and on their streets was unthinkable.

Are we wrong? Is the insecurity of Jews the world over inevitable?

Look, Jews are smart and inventive; why shouldn't we have the mightiest military in the Middle East and one of the most sophisticated intelligence apparatuses in the world? And so, slowly but surely, we believe—each of us in our own way—that "[it is] my strength and the might of my hand that has accumulated this wealth for me."

Because Israel is strong, every ensuing military setback in our history was crowned by an eventual victory. Because Israel is not only strong but also moral, it could afford to set out on "brave" quests for peace, offering swaths of strategically vital land in return for pieces of paper. And in recent months, because Israel is strong, the Jewish people felt it could afford to bitterly divide itself over trifling politics.

But we've come to recognize other things, too. We saw how quickly the political differences that had divided the Jewish people fell away, how truly connected the Jewish people are all over the world—one body and one soul.

It is not an accident that the war began on Simchat Torah, the day when we rejoice in G-d's gift of the Torah to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai. It is the Torah that binds us together as one, and the Torah that connects us with G-d. It is also the Torah that grants us a corner of the world called Israel.

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The joy of Simchat Torah is an expression of our faith and trust in G-d. It reminds us that our fate depends not on our own military might, intelligence savvy, or diplomatic know-how, but on G-d Almighty, whose "eyes are upon the Land of Israel from the beginning of the year to the end of the year."

People often ask me, "Do I feel afraid walking down the streets of Downtown San Diego as a proud Jew with my Yarmulkeh and Tzitzit?" My answer is not at all. Firstly my Jewish identity and belief in Hashem is what protects me and secondly, I am often stopped by people who (not only don't despise Jews) but rather say, "We would just like to let you know we are behind you."

We know we cannot keep repeating the mistakes of the past, but neither can we despair. Instead, we must look towards the eternal Torah for guidance. The path to peace is likewise delineated in the Torah, a true peace—one that rests not on hopes and illusions, doing an extra Mitzvah, and of course on security. "The L-rd shall grant strength to His people," King David wrote in Psalms, "the L-rd shall bless His people with peace." The foundation of true and lasting peace is strength. Without one, you cannot have the other. I pray for the Ultimate Peace, Freed, Healthy Hostages, and redemption of Israel and Moshiach.

Shana Tova and much blessing,

CAN Webinar with Israeli President and Viral Video Creator

By Lee Leibenson

On August 25, a highly engaging and impactful webinar took place attracting an impressive 300 registered attendees.

Pamela Nathan, President of SAJAC and co-founder of CAN, hosted the event. She expressed her enthusiasm for representing both organizations.

She emphasized that history will judge our actions today based on our ability to secure a safe Jewish future for the coming generations.

The webinar featured a special address from the President of Israel, Isaac Herzog, who spoke about the pervasive and age-old nature of antisemitism. He stressed the importance of speaking out and taking action, reminding us that our voices matter. President Herzog also introduced the newly launched 'Kol Ha'am' initiative, which aims to address growing tensions between Israel and Diaspora Jewry, as well as to mend internal divisions within Israel. It was an incredible honor when President Herzog paid tribute to SAJAC and CAN.

Allen Chitayat then introduced the keynote speaker, Eitan Chitayat, an Israeli branding, messaging, and advocacy expert. Eitan is the creator of the viral video "I'm That Jew," which has garnered over 14 million views across various platforms.

Nicole Bernstein, co-founder of Peerk-12 (Partners for Equality and Educational Responsibility in Kindergarten through 12th Grade), was the moderator. Nicole has been actively combating the rise of institutionalized antisemitism in the U.S. K-12 education system for the past 13 years.

Eitan Chitayat spoke passionately about digital pro-Jewish and pro-Israel advocacy, challenging us to use our voices to support and uplift the global Jewish community. He emphasized the importance of Jewish pride, urging us to break stereotypes and not allow others to define our identity. Eitan argued that the prevailing negative Palestinian narrative about Israel is based on falsehoods and that the lack of a strong counter-narrative has been catastrophic. He called for investment in shaping a narrative that can change hearts and minds.

Eitan's single passion is for every person to proudly and publicly declare their Jewish identity. He stressed the need for organizations to work together so that we can confidently and proudly say, "I am Jewish." He also encouraged everyone to take action, whether through social media, community conversations or other means to support and uplift the global Jewish community.

Eitan lives in Israel with his family and has devoted his career to advocacy. With no government funding, he and other Jewish advocates rely heavily on donations to continue their important work.

Tamar Caspi, co-founder of Peerk-12 led the Q&A session. Peerk-12 is a San Diego-based grassroots organization of parents, students, teachers, and community members united to fight against the spread of systemic Jew-hatred in K-12 education.

Pamela thanked all the participants who made the webinar such a remarkable and unforgettable experience. And indeed, it was!

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The Transformative Power of Gratitude: Insights from Dr. Martin Seligman's Research

By Debra Jedeikin PsyD

Developing an 'Attitude of Gratitude' is a transformative practice that can profoundly impact various aspects of life, as highlighted by Dr. Martin Seligman, a leading expert in positive psychology and well-being. As a professor at the University of Pennsylvania and director of the Positive Psychology Center, Seligman's research emphasizes that gratitude significantly enhances emotional health, social relationships, physical well-being, resilience, and overall life satisfaction.

Emotional Health: Regular gratitude practices significantly boost mood and emotional well-being. Seligman's research indicates that individuals who engage in gratitude exercises report higher happiness levels and lower depression. Gratitude helps shift focus from life's negatives to positives, fostering a more optimistic outlook.

Social Relationships: Gratitude is vital for improving relationships. Expressing appreciation strengthens existing connections and fosters new ones. Grateful individuals often have more supportive social networks and deeper relationships, as gratitude encourages positive interactions and mutual respect.

Physical Health: The benefits of gratitude extend to physical health. Research shows that grateful people experience lower stress levels, better sleep, and improved overall health. Seligman's findings suggest that gratitude reduces stress by promoting a more relaxed and positive mindset, which enhances immune function and lowers the risk of stress-related illnesses.

Resilience: Gratitude is crucial for building resilience—the ability to recover from challenges. By focusing on what they are thankful for, individuals develop a more hopeful and optimistic perspective. This mindset helps them handle difficulties better and maintain a sense of purpose.

Life Satisfaction: Gratitude enhances overall life satisfaction. Regularly appreciating positive aspects of life helps individuals feel more fulfilled and content. Seligman's research shows that gratitude deepens appreciation for daily experiences, like a good cup of coffee or a beautiful sunset, contributing to a more meaningful and satisfying life.

Practicing Gratitude: Effective gratitude practices involve intentional actions to focus on and appreciate positive aspects of life. Methods include:

1. Gratitude Journaling: Spend a few minutes each day writing down three to five things you are grateful for. Being specific about what you appreciate and why helps reinforce a positive mindset.

2. Gratitude Letters: Write letters to people who have positively impacted your life, expressing your thanks. These letters can be delivered or kept private. Writing helps articulate and deepen your appreciation.

3. Gratitude Meditation: Dedicate a few minutes to meditate on things you are thankful for, either by repeating phrases like "I am grateful for..." or visualizing positive experiences. This practice fosters inner peace.



4. Gratitude Rituals: Integrate gratitude into daily routines, such as reflecting on what you appreciate before meals or reviewing positive events at the end of the day. Consistency helps build a habit of gratitude.

5. Verbal Gratitude: Regularly express thanks to people in your life, either verbally or through small gestures. Being sincere and specific enhances the impact of your gratitude.

6. Gratitude Prompts: Use prompts like "What made me smile today?" or "Who supported me recently?" to guide your practice. These prompts help you reflect on various aspects of your life.

Dr. Seligman's research demonstrates that gratitude is more than just a polite gesture; it is a powerful practice that leads to greater happiness, stronger relationships, and better overall health. By incorporating gratitude into daily life, individuals can achieve a more fulfilling and resilient existence.

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Luxury Auctions may be the Wave of the Future:

By Marc Lotzof



The Compass Auction Option may be an excellent way to buy or sell your next home. There are three general formats in the Luxury Real Estate Auction Space. Each format has its unique benefits and is suitable for different types of properties and market conditions.

A. A Sealed Bid Auction is a structured “highest and best” bidding process that provides superior execution over online and in-person auctions for certain properties/contexts.

This format is ideal for luxury, special, unique, and difficult-to-value property, where value is subjective. For example, a rare mansion or penthouse; a \$10 million home in a \$2 million neighborhood; a home that is or was previously owned by a notable person.

Bidders submit their bids “in the blind” by the bid deadline. A Sealed Bid auction is typically implemented in conjunction with

1. a reserve price that is disclosed to bidders in advance and
2. preferred terms of sale set forth by seller.

Bidders may bid any price and any terms, but the seller is only obligated to accept the highest bid that meets or exceeds the reserve price AND matches the seller’s preferred terms of sale.

The benefits of this format

1. maximizes the sales price for relevant property/listings by removing transparency for bidders
2. encourages bidding from the marketplace by permitting bidders to offer terms of sale that differ from seller’s stated preferred terms of sale, without obligating seller to accept them
3. may facilitate a successful outcome even if there is only one bidder,
4. provides maximum protection for seller.

B. An Online Auction is a competitive, transparent bidding format that provides higher certainty of sale on a defined timeline.

This format is ideal for properties for which there is known or quantifiable demand and when the market value is readily discoverable. For example, a property for which there are many comparable properties sold in a high-demand price range, such as a 1-bedroom condominium in Manhattan worth \$1 million.

Bidders compete back-and-forth online in a transparent bidding process over a defined timeline (e.g. 48 hours or 1 week). The objective is to maximize value by starting the bidding at a below-market price and letting bidders drive up price. Online Auctions are typically implemented in conjunction with

1. either a disclosed or undisclosed reserve price and
2. non-negotiable terms of sale set forth by the seller.

The seller will accept the winning bid price if it meets or exceeds the reserve price and the seller’s contract of sale is signed as-is.

The benefits of this format:

1. provides higher certainty of execution,
2. provides most control over the timeline of sale, and
3. is effective at maximizing sales price in a competitive bidding environment for property/listings that are relevant.

C. An Absolute Auction is an incredible opportunity to take a broader approach to maximize exposure on their property. Amazing properties are put in the real estate spotlight.

The Auction process assigns a sale date that it will sell to the highest bidder. This creates excitement and an urgency that gets buyers sitting on the real estate sidelines to react. These are cash transactions that are “as is/where is”, with no contingencies.

Bidders are typically from all over the country (and internationally) and fly in to view the property. The trophy home and areas desirability ultimately help drive the price. Typically, they sell for fair market value and sometimes the competition in the auction drives the price to an above market sales price.

The ideal candidates and target audience of bidders most often mirror clients selling their home. Target is high net-worth individuals who aren’t typically in the market to buy a property but have the financial capacity to easily do so.

The aggressive marketing catches their attention and piques their interest. Most have thought about someday buying a 2nd, 3rd or 10th property in the area. Put these with local bidders who are looking for a primary residence and it places the seller in a huge position of strength. Bidders are often CEOs of fortune 500 companies, attorneys, athletes, and celebrities. This approach has allowed sales of over 95% of properties for over 40 years.

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Improve Your Annuity Investments by Taking Advantage of Higher Interest Rates

By Allan Galgut

If you currently hold an annuity that was taken out when interest rates were lower, now is the time to consider exploring new product options. With interest rates on the rise, there are many cases where you may be able to increase your benefits by obtaining an illustration for a new product.

As interest rates have increased, newer products may offer higher potential returns and improved benefits compared to your current policy. By getting an illustration for a new product, you can assess how your benefits could be enhanced by taking advantage of the current market conditions.

Index annuities, in particular, offer the opportunity to earn returns based on the performance of a market index, such as the S&P 500. With interest rates on the rise, newer IUL products may provide improved growth potential and enhanced features compared to older policies. By obtaining an illustration for a new IUL product, you can see how your benefits could be increased by transitioning to

a more competitive policy.

Fixed annuities also offer the potential for increased benefits in a rising interest rate environment. Newer fixed annuity products may offer higher yields and improved terms compared to older policies. By getting an illustration for a new fixed annuity product, you can evaluate how your returns and income stream could be enhanced by transitioning to a more favorable policy.

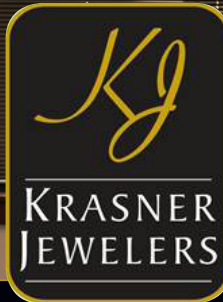
Don't miss out on the opportunity to maximize your benefits with a new IUL or fixed annuity product. Talk to a financial advisor today to learn more about how transitioning to a newer policy can help you enhance your financial security and achieve your long-term goals in a rising interest rate environment.

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5 MINUTES TODAY
FIGHTING ANTISEMITISM
& SUPPORTING ISRAEL

"5 Minutes Today" is a newsletter designed to enable rapid and focused activism to support Israel and against antisemitism. This newsletter began as a grassroots initiative launched by Julie Litman and Karen Deicas DePodesta, members of the San Diego community. Following the deadly Hamas attack on October 7th, they recognized the need for a platform that could quickly mobilize community members and allies to combat rising antisemitism in the U.S. and express strong support for Israel. The initiative mobilized the local San Diego community and quickly traction nationwide. After seven months of significant activity, the founders, with support from Combat Antisemitism Now (CAN), decided to transfer the management of the project to the Israeli American Council's Department of Fighting Antisemitism and Civic Engagement.

The vision of the IAC is to integrate the grassroots project "5 Minutes Today" into the IAC systems, engaging Israeli American and Jewish-American communities to participate and increase involvement in activism efforts offered by the newsletter. Additionally, the platform aims to develop into a learning space providing educational and practical tools. This engaging platform will inform the community of current issues while keeping them up to date on all call-to-action items. Ultimately, this will offer participants an opportunity to learn about IAC nationally, which will enable them to be more active and connected to their local community.

We invite you to join and be part of the "5 Minutes Today" community, and together we can make a positive change!

To subscribe to the "5 Minutes Today" newsletter, use the following link: <http://tinyurl.com/5MinEmail>.

For questions or additional information, contact: 5minutes@israeliamerican.org



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Giving Voice To Unspoken Words

by Laima Ardviciene, Senior English Teacher and Organizer, Kedainiai Atzalynas Gymnasium



A student conference titled “Memory” was held at Kedainiai Atzalynas Gymnasium on April 28, 2023. Kedainiai’s mayor, Valentinas Tamulis, Head of the Kedainiai Regional Museum, Rimantas Zirgulis, and Atzalynas Gymnasium Director, Gintaras Petrusis welcomed participants to the event.

Conference participants from schools in Dotnuva, Kaunas, Kedainiai, Krakes, Seduva, and Seta, shared their collective knowledge about Jews and their fate during the Second World War, and information from their school projects about local Lithuanian Jewish communities in Kedainiai and other districts prior to the Holocaust.

‘Life and Experience of Young Jews in Interwar Lithuania’ was presented by Kedainer descendent and Israeli academic Dr Ben-Tsion Klibansky via video-link, and Audrone Peculyte from Kedainiai Regional Museum spoke about ‘Keidan’s Interwar Jewish Community ¾ What we lost’. Chief curator from the Lost Shtetl Museum in Seduva, Milda Jakulyte-Vasil, also attended.

At the conference conclusion, Kedainiai Atzalynas Gymnasium resolved to join the International Daffodil Project. The following autumn, 500 daffodils were planted to memorialise the 1.5M children killed

during the Holocaust and those suffering today from humanitarian crises. In a video from Dr Andrea Videlefsky, President and Founder of the International Daffodil Project, she mentioned that Kedainiai Atzalynas Gymnasium was the first Lithuanian school to join the project.

An open event about the Daffodil Project titled “But I am that unspoken word and shadow...” integrating arts, history, with Lithuanian and English languages, was held on April 11, 2024, attended students and teachers from schools in Kedainiai. Shared memories of Jewish childhood in Keidan were recounted, with students from Kedainiai Atzalynas Gymnasium staging the stories of Rivka and Rinale, two girls from the Kaunas Ghetto, one of whom was rescued and the other deported to Stutthof where she perished. Students and Kedainer descendents read the names of Keidaner children who were murdered at Dauksiai on 28 August 1941. The Daffodil Project event ended with Atzalynas students performing the songs “A World of Peace” and “Who Am I?” music by Madeline Stone, words by a Holocaust survivor Inge Auerbacher.

With spring bloom, daffodils bring hope, light, beauty, and unity.

RECIPES

Jodi Abel is a professional chef, author & team building expert and founder of Lajollacooks4u. Lajollacooks4u was the culmination of Jodi's passion for people, gourmet food and teaching. Lajollacooks4u was conceived after Jodi experienced her first cooking class in the home of another self-taught chef in Umbria, Italy – a surprise birthday celebration from her husband, Glenn.

In the two short days Jodi spent there, she was completely transfixed by the warmth and comfort of this intimate Umbrian home. Learning the chef's family recipes in such a natural hands-on environment heightened Jodi's passion for food and cooking.

Lajollacooks4u opened its doors in 2008 offering hands on culinary experiences and unique team building cooking programs. For over 16 years Lajollacooks4u achieved hundreds of 5 star ratings and was the top team building experience and activity for hundreds of local and international companies.

In 2023, a new adventure began as Cooks4U hit the road with a travel and culinary blog. At the moment chef Jodi is happily back in San Diego spreading her love through Cooking.



Cilantro Lime Cole Slaw, Grilled Salmon with Fresh Herbs, Grilled Stone Fruit Recipe, Strawberry Shortcake

by Jodi Abel



Cilantro Lime Cole Slaw

I love cole slaw, especially in summer with grilled anything.

The flavors in this recipe are so clean and yummy....

4 – 6 cups shredded green cabbage (I buy a whole head of cabbage and slice it thinly by hand, it's so easy and fresh)

1 cup shredded purple cabbage

1 cup grated carrots

6 thinly sliced green onions

1 cup almond silvers

2 Tablespoons toasted sesame seeds

¼ cup fresh chopped cilantro

Dressing

1/4 cup vegetable oil

¼ cup white wine vinegar or rice vinegar

¼ cup fresh squeezed lime juice

1 tablespoon honey

1 teaspoon ground ginger

Sea salt and fresh ground pepper to taste

In a small mixing bowl, whisk together, oil, vinegar, lime juice, honey, and ginger to make dressing. Add salt and pepper to taste and set aside.

In a large bowl, mix green cabbage, purple cabbage, carrots, and green onions. Toss ingredients with dressing, add almonds, sesame seeds, and cilantro, and toss until well blended.

Refrigerate for a few hours and serve cold.



Grilled Salmon with Fresh Herbs

The beauty of this recipe is you can use any combination of your favorite herbs, this marinade also goes well on chicken!

1 cup of equally combined fresh minced oregano, flat-leaf parsley, basil, and rosemary (or thyme if you like)

3 - 4 lemon, freshly squeezed

¾ cup olive oil
 1 Tablespoon Dijon - optional
 6 cloves minced garlic
 Salt and pepper to taste
 3 - 2 pound fillets of salmon (you can use any fish of your choice, halibut, swordfish, etc)
 Chop fresh herbs and finely chop garlic.
 Juice lemon and strain.

In a mixing bowl, whisk together lemon juice and olive oil (at this point you can add Dijon if you like), add garlic, chopped herbs, and salt and pepper. Stir until well blended. Generously spread mixture over fish.

Can grill on a cedar plank or wire mesh or baking sheet. Heat the grill on medium heat. With the grill lid down grill for about 20 minutes until the center of the fillet is soft pink. Serves 14 - 16

Grilled Stone Fruit

This is a delicious summer dish that is extremely popular in our team-building events!

What You'll Need:

6 Stone Fruits (Peaches, Nectarine and/or Plums)
 2 tablespoons of balsamic vinegar
 1-2 tablespoons of brown sugar
 ½ cup of marzipan cheese or vanilla gelato (optional)

What to Do:

Cut fruit in half and take out the pits. Sprinkle brown sugar over the fruit.
 Grill on medium heat for approximately 4-5 minutes on each side until the fruit is soft.
 Place on a platter, drizzle with balsamic vinegar and serve with marzipan cheese or vanilla gelato.

Or slice fruit, drizzle with balsamic vinegar, and serve on a salad.

Serving for 6

For more information on how you can incorporate other stone fruits into your diet, contact www.lajollacooks4u.com.

Strawberry Shortcake

If this isn't your go-to summer dessert, we don't know what is! Light and fresh – simply delicious!

What You'll Need:

Shortcakes:
 2 hard-boiled egg yolks, cooled
 1 1/3 cups all-purpose flour
 3 Tablespoons semolina flour or fine-grind cornmeal
 1 Tablespoon baking powder
 ¼ teaspoon baking powder
 ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
 3 Tablespoons granulated sugar
 6 Tablespoons chilled unsalted butter, cut into pieces



2/3 cup, plus 2 Tablespoons heavy cream
 Sanding or granulated sugar (for sprinkling)
 Strawberries
 1 ½ pounds strawberries (about 1 quart), hulled, halved, quartered, if large
 ¼ cup granulated sugar
 1 cup heavy cream
 2 Tablespoons powdered sugar
 ½ vanilla bean halved lengthwise
 1 Tablespoon Grand Marnier for whipping cream, optional

What to Do:

Pulse egg yolks, both flour, baking powder, salt, and granulated sugar in a food processor to combine. Add butter and pulse until only pea-size pieces remain. Drizzle in 2/3 cup cream, then pulse 2-3 times to barely incorporate. Transfer dough to a work surface and gently fold several times just to bring it together and work in any dry spots.

Using a 2 oz. ice cream scoop, make 11-12 balls, and place on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Do not flatten. (Or measure out mounded scoops with a ¼-cup measuring cup). Cover and chill until cold, 20-25 minutes.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Brush the tops of the shortcakes with the remaining 2 Tablespoons cream and sprinkle with coarse sugar. Bake until golden and sides are firm to the touch, 28-32 minutes. Let cool.

Do Ahead: Shortcakes can be baked 1 day ahead. Store airtight at room temperature. Reheat before serving.

Assembly:

In a medium bowl, toss strawberries with granulated sugar to combine. Set aside or refrigerate until ready to use.

Combine heavy cream, powdered sugar, and Grand Marnier in a medium bowl. Scrape in seeds from vanilla bean; reserve pod for another use. Beat cream until soft peaks form. Split shortcakes and add strawberries and whipped cream among the bottoms. Close with shortcake tops.

SAJAC Cuisine from South Africa

Join us on our private Facebook

To Join: Scan this QR code using your phone camera.

We are calling all SAJAC cooks and non-cooks to share your favorite recipes - especially your favorite South African recipes.



Quick Reminder: SAJAC - Cuisine from South Africa, our private Facebook group is the space for us to share and celebrate our culinary heritage. Please join and contribute.

We want to include recipes from our moms and grandmoms, as well as your own favorite dishes. Join us and share these delicious traditions by visiting our group.

If your recipe has a special story, we'd love for you to share it in the description. Feel free to use photos, videos, or even handwritten recipes.

We look forward to seeing your culinary creations and stories!

FACEBOOK LINK: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/818959738139446>

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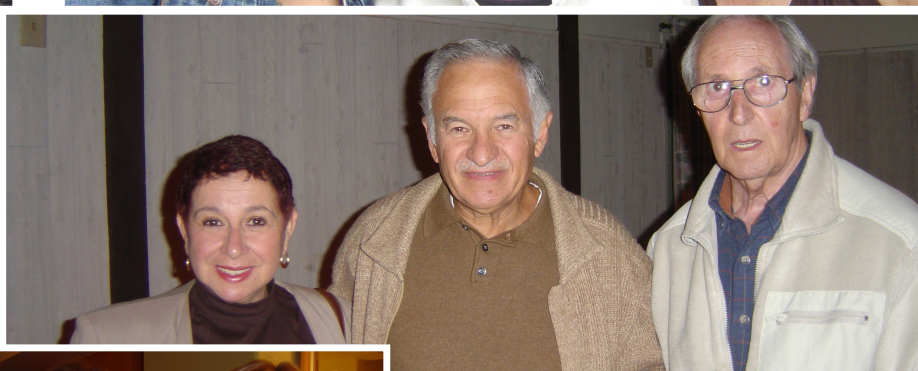
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The Good Old Days





CHOL – Community History On-Line

A forum for those involved in preserving the footprint of Southern African Jewish community life in digital form

An amazing thing has happened. Historically, we were known as the 'Wandering Jews'. A new phenomenon has occurred and we can now be known as the 'Interconnected Jews' through the internet.

Welcome to **CHOL, the Community History Online**. It is a new organization set up under the auspices of the Kaplan Centre at UCT and the South African Jewish Museum (SAJM) to record the history of South African Jewish Communities. It established itself as a welcome 'retreat' for South Africans all over the world to visit regularly. The site is the 'baby' of Geraldine Kaplan who lives in London.

Gail Loon Lustig, who was born in Cape Town, made aliya to Israel in 1976 and has recently retired after working as a General Practitioner as well as other roles in the Health System for decades! Her role in this special project has been to set up the part of the site for all of those who enjoy **writing and sharing stories**.

So far, they have stories written by South Africans everywhere, from Australia to Canada. Most of them are creative non-fiction, but also fiction and even some poems! They are really not only a wonderful reflection of our connection to our roots and experiences of that period in our lives, but also gives tremendous pleasure to many.

CHOL has developed a number of unique resources that might stimulate SAJAC members to write their own biographical sketches and original stories. By reading about the

- **50 South African communities** <https://chol.website/communities.htm> and the

- **51 Memoirs** <https://chol.website/memoirs.htm> surely some memories will be elicited.

- Please also look at the journal articles and resource databases CHOL has selected.

- A special attraction to SAJAC may be the section on CHOL of '**Share Your Stories**' created by co-Gail Lustig in Tel Aviv. In a short time, she has accumulated 142 original stories. Every couple of months the story-writers get together on Zoom and read their stories to each other. There are several story writers amongst our members reflecting their South African life – and at last there is a place for you to 'publish' such material. <https://chol.website/stories.htm>.

- Also, on the www.chol.website are resources and journal articles and all the previous CHOL newsletters that may stimulate SAJAC members to write their memoirs or biographical sketches.

Please contact Gail at gail@chol.website to submit your stories.

FYI – The majority of our old Reporter Magazines are now available online and have been shared with CHOL. You may see them when you go to our ABOUT US page on sajac.com and click on the blue rectangle that says **Reporter Archives**.

Poems from CHOL website:

The Butterfly within me by Fonda Dubb

A long time ago at the tender age of six or seven
I fluttered and waved my arms as a butterfly would
It was my dance to my mother's music that gave me the spontaneity to dance, run and skip around the room as a butterfly would.
I used to imagine that I had wings of gold and many other colours.
Blue, pink and white were favourites too.
I danced as I twirled to the music, making my special wings go up and down While my feet moved to the rhythm of the music.
The ending of my dance would always be
Going to sleep with wings spread and closed above my head
Eyes shut tight, under the round table in the living room.
Rounds of applause from visitors filled my ears with vibrant noise
Perchance to dream as dreamers do
How I wish that I could still be that little butterfly that lies dormant within me

The Tree

With bending bough, the branches sway to the rhythm of the wind While falling leaves fall to its music
How green and restful it is to sit under the shade of the tree
While distant memories from yore come back to me
Some to bring love and joy, while others stir up unkind emotions.
The tree evokes a spell on me.
What is it, I wonder, that makes my tree so special to me?
The peace of sitting under its shady branches
The leaves swirling on the grass
Or perhaps it's just me feeling the healing of the tree.
No matter what it instils in me
I love to sit, smile or weep under my tree
To unburden thoughts so dear to me.
A place where time stands still, the body quiet and at ease
I love to sit under my tree
To lift my head up to the sun invigorating my soul.
I think
How precious is my tree to me
I say a prayer while head up high

To thank the creator of my tree
Which brings me warmth and love
While I sit here under my tree where time flies by as if it was yesterday
Where time waits patiently for me
I place my outstretched arms across my chest
To feel the beating of my heart and realize the miracles of thee and me I
walk away with lightness and love from what my
little tree has so generously given to me

The Wall

The Wall divides us
That's no doubt
And takes away the pleasures of those behind the wall
Who cannot swim in the sea
Which God created for us all
The simple pleasures for all to see
Who are denied the outside world
To breath the same air that we too breathe.
To enjoy the simple pleasures of a celebration of a dear one
Or to grieve for a dear one
Just like the Berlin wall
We too have our wall
Which separates us all
Where people are denied the simple things that Gd created for us to love
and cherish
Who can go
Who has to stay
Behind the Wall
What right do we have to deny the simple pleasures that people are
denied behind the wall. Who cannot go outside the wall.
If only we could find another way
To leave together beyond the wall
I couldn't leave behind the wall
Denied the very rights of freedom
Which belong to us all.
The right to move beyond the wall
I pray to God that someday the Wall will fall
And let in light and hope for us all.
Where we will all live without a conscious
And be free of the wall which like an open prison
Denies the right of movement behind the wall.
That we should all join hands together
And sing
Beyond the wall.



Join Meal Train & Make A Difference

By Tanya Freedman

The purpose of SAJAC, over the years, has been to welcome and assist all South African Jews to integrate into life in the USA. One of the most important objectives of our organization has been to strengthen the bonds and connections within the community, and a vital means of accomplishing this goal is to provide meals for members of the community when needed. These meals might be provided as a one-off dinner or a series of meals (meal train) over a required period and it might be in times of illness, bereavement / shiva meals, birth of a baby, financial distress and so on.

If you are interested in helping make and deliver meals for members of the community, please reach out to Tanya Freedman – tanyafreedman@icloud.com.

The process is as follows:

- Tanya will add your name and email to her list of volunteers who wish to participate in this mitzvah going forward.
- Once she receives a request for a family in the community, she will send out an email with a meal train invite, and volunteers can decide if and when they can provide a meal.
- Details of the requirements will be included, for example, if the meal needs to be kosher or not, how many people, location for delivery, special dietary requirements etc.
- You will then subscribe to a date for a meal and will receive automated reminders.
- If you are able to make but not deliver a meal, you can contact Tanya and she will arrange transportation for the food.
- In addition, there is the option of providing an ubereats or door dash card if you want to contribute but aren't able to cook for any meal train.

We would like to thank the MANY volunteers who have so generously helped so many families over the years. This mitzvah and act of kindness fosters a sense of warmth and strengthens our community. In these difficult times, it is especially important that we stand together and support each other, not just in Israel but here in America too.

Please consider participating in this mitzvah, simply email Tanya Freedman – tanyafreedman@icloud.com

She will keep you updated on how you can make a difference in the lives of others in the community.



In Loving Memory of...



Jodi Levinson By Ashley Levinson.

Growing up I always thought I had a normal mom, like most kids I just assumed her whole life revolved around me, Aimee, and our Dad. As I got older I realized she was anything but a typical mom. I noticed how many people said they have a special connection to my mom and how many people relied on her.

My mom was an incredibly strong woman. No matter what it took, she always showed up and cared for everyone around her. She taught us what it meant to be resilient and to be there for one another. For my mom it didn't matter if she wasn't feeling well or coming from a doctor's appointment - she always showed up for her friends and family. Whether it was to help set up a bridal shower for a cousin, organize a birthday party for a friend, or host a graduation for myself or Aimee - she

always went the extra mile to make each of us feel special. It went beyond these large events as well, my mom was notorious for doing the little things. When I'd come home from LA or Berkeley, she would put fresh towels, a few sweets, and a full water bottle in my room. If Cameron, my fiance, was in town, she would go out to the store to stock up on his favorite iced tea and breakfast burritos. She loved doing Friday night Shabbat with our family, even if it was just her, my Dad, Aimee and Rod. She would bake a fresh challah from scratch just for the 4 of them (or I guess 3 since Aimee's gluten free).

Beyond her family, Jodi loved her friends as if they were family. I don't know many people who have such strong and long lasting friendships like my mom. She loved leading

her friends on their long weekly walks that always ended at the Coffee Bean, playing competitive games of pickleball, and "mah-jing" with the Tuesday Mahjong girls. She really loved spending time with her friends and I feel so grateful to feel the love you all have for my mom. I just want to say thank you to each of her friends for being there for not only my mom, but the rest of my family during this difficult time. I know it hasn't been easy for you all either. Anyone who knows my mom knows how beautiful, strong, and caring she was. I feel blessed to be raised by such an amazing woman and hope that I can be just as graceful and strong as she has been.

I am going to miss her everyday but I know I'll always have her in my heart and can think to myself what would Jodi do?

In Loving Memory of...



Fanny Krasner Lebovits

Fanny Krasner Lebovits, a remarkable woman who defied unimaginable odds, passed away just one month shy of her 101st birthday. Her life was a testament to courage, compassion, and resilience.

Born in Libau, Latvia, on October 27, 1922, Fanny was the oldest of three girls. Her father, a shoe designer, owned a shoe store and factory, providing the family with a comfortable life. But their world shattered when the Nazis invaded.

From 1941 to 1945, Fanny endured unimaginable horrors. She was sent to four Nazi concentration camps—five times in total. Out of the 6 million Jews killed by the Nazis, 79 were her own family members. Only she and her sister survived. Fanny's memoir, "Memories, Miracles, and Meaning: Insights of a Holocaust Survivor,"

chronicles her harrowing experiences.

Liberated but weighing only 59 pounds, Fanny rebuilt her life. She moved to Sweden and worked for the World Jewish Congress before settling in South Africa in 1948 where she married her late husband Louis Krasner, who had left the same hometown Libau, Liepaja as Fanny. Together they were actively engaged in business for 31 years. They raised 3 children Harold, Shirley and Milton and were deeply involved in the Jewish community of Johannesburg.

In 1979, she made San Diego her home.

Not only enjoying life with her entire family, she was very involved in several communal activities particularly Hadassah, where she served as President of both the local Hadassah chapter

and the Southwest Region and became a Founder and Keeper of the Gate. She was honored as Hadassah woman of distinction and as Jewish Community foundation Woman of Valor.

Fanny is survived by her four children Harold Krasner, Shirley First, Milton Krasner and Marc Lebovits, nine grandchildren, and 16 great-grandchildren. Her victory over evil lies not only in her generation, but also in her enduring message: "You must realize hate is the worst thing in the whole world, and love is the best thing. Love takes you a long way, where hate destroys you."

Fanny Krasner Lebovits' courage and compassion will forever inspire us. May her memory be a blessing.

In Loving Memory of...



Barbara Lurie

Barbara died peacefully in her sleep at home in the early hours of Shabbat on February 17, 2024 at the age of 93. The funeral a few days later was in Ra'anana, Israel where she was buried next to her son, Alon. She is survived by her husband, Selwyn, her loving soul-mate for over 75 years, and her children, Doron, Michael and Dina, eight grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Barbara was born and raised in Durban and after graduating at Business College, joined Selwyn's accountancy practice. They were married in Durban on June 5, 1955.

The newly-weds moved to Israel to design and build out the town of Ashkelon. Alon, their eldest son, was born in Israel, and Barbara focused on raising him and running the home. Barbara always remembered having breakfast at the Dagon Hotel where they resided, and Prime Minister David Ben Gurion sitting down for breakfast at the table right next to her!

For family reasons, they then moved to Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) where Doron, Michael and Dina were born, and they tragically lost Alon whose remains were later transferred

back to Israel, Barbara became accountant of a heavy engineering company to keep her mind occupied after their great loss. An event she remembered fondly was joining Sir Humphrey (Governor of Rhodesia) and Lady Gibbs on stage at the inauguration of the newly built local hall.

They then relocated back to Durban for 21 years where their three children grew up and Barbara participated in several Jewish communal organizations, becoming Co-Chair of the orthodox Synagogue Women's Guild in Durban.

After her husband's retirement, they returned to Israel, living in Ra'anana for 11 years with a close circle of friends and family. They enjoyed lawn bowls at the Ra'anana City Bowls Club, and traveled the country they loved extensively. In memory of their son, they donated to the Ra'anana Municipality a park 'Gan Alon' opposite where they lived.

Barbara and Selwyn moved to San Diego in 2001 to be with their grandchildren during their formative years. Barbara was one of the five founders of the first modern orthodox shul in Carmel Valley, helped cater for kiddushim,

organize Mishloach Manot, and provide administrative support from their home. They donated a new Sefer Torah from Israel in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary.

Barbara was Matriarch of the Lurie family and was known for her unconditional love, unwavering spirit, compassion and commitment to helping others. Family, friends and community meant everything to her.

She embraced the core values of Judaism, including setting the spiritual tone for the family, and leading by example through keeping a kosher home; observing the customs and traditions, and helping all around her by active community involvement. She lived a full and vibrant life and leaves behind a legacy of love and inspiration that will continue to live on in the hearts of those who knew her.

Barbara is greatly missed by her family and all her knew and loved her. She was a magnificent wife, mother, grandmother and great grandmother and will always be remembered as an incredibly special, gentle, kind, generous, spiritual, beautiful and loving person.

In Loving Memory of...

Freda Sasto By Linda Anne Kahn



Freda Sasto (Gita Fryda bat Naftali Herz Ha-Kohen) beloved mother of Linda Anne and David Kahn, grandmother to Robyn Firtel-Park and Paul Kahn and great grandmother to Jacy Firtel, Mother to Helen Rosenbaum (Los Angeles) and Stephen Sasto,(London), passed away peacefully age 99 years old, in her home in Los Angeles on February 22nd 2024, surrounded by her beloved and devoted family. She has been described as "A true lady with a golden heart"

My Mom was the matriarch of the family. She was an example of grace and strength and was a loving role model for all her family, through all

the stages of our lives. She was a special, wonderful, dignified, caring and stately person.

She was always unconditional in her love, considerate and caring with deep relationships with all her family across the globe, as well as her friends from all walks of life. She was full of integrity and wisdom, laced with her real love for each one of her family and friends, as well as the Jewish community.

She was a true "Eshet Chayil"

What a blessing and an honor it was to have been her daughter.

Douglas Behr By Carol Behr



Douglas Behr, beloved son of the late Stanley Behr and Margo Lewis, was born on February 21, 1956, in Cape Town, South Africa, and passed away on October 24, 2023 (9 Chesvan, 5784), before his time. He was loved and is survived by his mother, sister, brother, nieces and nephew, great nephews and nieces, cousins, their families, brother and sister in-laws, and friends around the world. Doug or Dougie, is what his family and friends called him, is deeply missed and remembered by all, for his love and commitment to family and friends, his love of his dogs, unbelievable humor and opinions, and his true savant-ability to remember facts and details about family history, friends, cars and events, and detailed stories.

Dougie grew up in South Africa. His early life was enriched by his loving uncles, cousins, grandparents, and friends. He attended Camps Bay primary school, boarding school in Somerset West; the same school his father and uncle attended, and served in the South African army; a testament to his strength and endurance. He emigrated to the United States with his family in 1979 and made his home in Los Angeles. He was married for 20 years and ultimately divorced. He built a life rich in friendship, family, music, and hobbies.

Dougie had a deep love for cars, reading, and a dedication to his Jewish faith and traditions. He collected and preserved memories and stories of those he loved, ensuring that they were never forgotten.

Doug was very sociable, and loved the company of friends and family, both old and new. He had a unique ability to connect with people and to create lasting bonds and memories. His friendships spanned the globe, and each one held a special place in his heart.

Family was central in Dougie's life. His mother, a significant figure in his world, was cherished and loved, and his brother, sister and cousins viewed him as a patriarch figure of the family. Dougie's other brother Jeff, sadly passed away shortly before him. He deeply valued their time together, and Jeff and his family enriched Dougie's life.

Doug will be deeply missed by his family, friends, and all who loved him. His memory will live in our hearts and all those who knew and loved him. His memory will remind us of the importance of showing love, devotion to family, and living life to the fullest. We mourn Dougie's passing and celebrate his life.



In Loving Memory of...

Bernice Borok By Zea Borok



Bernice Borok (nee Freedman) Mom, beloved wife of Dov, mother of Zea (Anthony Sank z"l), Jonny and Gil (Aileen), and Bobba of Jenna (Josh), Glenn, Jack and Estee passed away on January 17th, 2024 in Los Angeles, CA. She was buried in San Diego which was the place she always wanted to come back to as her final resting place.

Mom was born in Wynberg, a suburb of Cape Town, South Africa where she was raised within a strong Jewish community. Mom met Dad in her late teens in Muizenberg and shared with us that she knew right away she was going to marry him. Mom and Dad moved to Highlands Estate to be closer to Herzlia School from 1968 to 1986, when they immigrated to Pittsburgh, PA. In October 1990, they moved to San Diego where they spent 28 happy years until moving to Los Angeles in October 2018 to be closer to their medical providers at USC. In January 2020 before Dad passed away in July of that difficult year, they had been married for 66 years and always found a way to make things work even during tough times, primarily because mom was the rock and foundation of the family.

Mom faced many medical challenges during

the last few years of her life including the isolation of the COVID-19 years yet she remained mentally astute and fully engaged with her family until the end. She always found joy in a visit from one of the grandkids or family get-togethers including her granddaughter Jenna's wedding to Josh, in February 2023, and her 92nd birthday in October 2023, which we celebrated just a few short months before her passing. Mom died on her own terms in a mini-ICU at home because she was adamant that she did not want to go to the hospital and we were fortunate to have some very good times with her over the weeks before her passing, experiencing her sharp wit and sense of humor. Throughout she remained strong and determined and very clear about what she did and did not want.

Mom was an early adopter of the professional working mother. Although she wanted to be in the drama world, her mother thought it was not a suitable career path for a Jewish woman, so she went into teaching and became a dedicated educator, going back to earn her Master in Education once her kids were older. She taught in the Cape Town Jewish pre-schools for many years, primarily working with kids who needed some remedial and additional help. She was also the principal of a colored (mixed race) college, breaking the color barrier in many ways, ahead of her time. In San Diego, mom got the job of assistant director at the JCC pre-school, where she taught for a number of years and had a positive impact on many children throughout the San Diego Jewish community – including Jenna who was very proud to have her Bobba as a teacher at her own school. Her time at the JCC helped my parents integrate well into the San Diego Jewish community. Thereafter Mom taught kids privately; her essence was how to help kids improve their reading & learning skills and she had success where others had failed, teaching until well into her 80s.

Mom could be tough and direct and did not shy away from speaking her mind, but she was a fierce advocate for those closest to her, always wanting the best for her children and grandchildren. For her it was always family first - Bobba lived for her kids & grandkids – Jenna, Glenn, Jack & Estee, and now son-in-law Josh too, as

well as her extended family in Tanya, our cousin, and her kids Adam, Jonathan & Rebecca. She took great pride in her children and grandchildren, but always emphasized humility and modesty. Her toughness was the result of losing her father at the age of 9, which very much shaped who she was. Her direct approach also meant that you always knew where you stood with her – if she liked you, you were golden, if not, beware! It was her strength, resilience, and perseverance that enabled our parents to immigrate to the US even though dad was sick at the time, for her to get a visa through the Jewish Federation in Pittsburgh required a combination of Hebrew and special needs experience, to teach special needs children until well into her 80s, to move Zea's husband Anthony to San Diego where they could help with his care, and for her to make it through the last three years of her life to get to celebrate Jenna's wedding and her own 92nd birthday. She intensely disliked being dependent, being on oxygen, and needing so much help. So, in some ways, we know that her passing was a relief to her.

We were fortunate that Mom had an amazing team of caregivers who treated her with kindness and love. Led by Fada, Jackie, Pola, and Mylene provided 24-hour care to Mom for the last several months of her life. Despite her many medical challenges, she developed a routine that she was content with – including Rummikub, computer time to read the news (Jerusalem Post), or basking in the sun outside her assisted living facility. We used to joke that she wasn't going to die on a day when she won at Rummikub and she played until the day before she died!

We will remember our mom as someone who was family-focused, Jewish to the core; at heart, a teacher of kids, especially Jewish kids, a teacher of character and values, and most all a very special mother to us kids and grandkids. As we bid farewell to a woman of such indomitable spirit and loving heart, let us not forget the lessons she taught us through her actions and her life. Let us carry her legacy forward - a legacy of love, resilience, and the courage to face life head-on. We miss you. May you rest in peace.

In Loving Memory of...



Joan Cynthia Lotzof

Born in Vryburg South Africa on January 19, 1938. Passed away January 17, 2024 (85 years old)

The parents were Jack and Esther Silbert. Mom was the youngest of three.

She spent her early years in the Cape and went to school at Cape of Good Hope. Her family moved to Benoni and then Johannesburg where she obtained her Art Degree and met her husband.

Joan met Sikki (the love of her life) on a blind date in Johannesburg. It wasn't long before they were married and moved to Springs to start their life raising 4 children and where Sikki started his furniture business. Joan was an amazing and gifted artist, she continued on with her love of art holding art shows. She enjoyed teaching art lessons to many children in their family home. They had four children Marc, Lawrence, Mandy, and

Craig, and blessed with six grandchildren Shannon, Leah, Tal, Dani, Max, and Aaron

In 1978, Joan, her husband, and four children moved to Houston, Texas starting a new chapter in the US.

Joan worked in commercial art for a brief period of time and eventually got her real estate license. She began her career at Century 21, then moved to Coldwell Banker, John Daugherty Realtors, and ended up at Greenwood King where she eventually retired in 2019. Joan was well respected by her peers and won many top-selling agent awards often featured in the Houston Chronicle. She was known for her dedication, honesty, and professionalism. Joan was well known and respected in the real estate community as well as by her clients.

Our Mom was devoted to family and had a clear vision for leaving South Africa. She deeply cared

for the well-being of her children and devoted her life to her children. She and our Dad devoted everything to their children and were great role models for everyone who knew them. We are all so grateful for the sacrifices both she and my Dad made for our family. She was soft-spoken, led by example, and had an inner drive and an unparalleled work ethic like no other. There is a great void in our lives and hearts, our love for her will always be cherished. She was a classy and elegant woman who loved and cherished her family above all.

After losing her home in Houston to Hurricane Harvey, along with the passing of her husband Sikki, Joan moved to San Diego where she lived until she passed away this year on January 17, 2024.

She was buried on what would have been her 86th birthday.

In Loving Memory of...

Marlene Hyde



Marlene (Aires) Hyde a“h was both vivacious and calm, sensible and wise. When people met her they were drawn to her, shared personal stories and valued her counsel.

Born in South Africa to immigrant Lithuanian parents, she studied social work, then psychology,

while raising three young children.

Marlene’s private practice was in constant demand and she consulted to a well-known family therapy service organization.

While she loved her Johannesburg home and garden, she left for California in the mid-nineties. The beach was a favorite spot, where she collected seashells and stones. Some of these precious finds were placed on her grave in Israel.

Once again Marlene had a private practice and a new avocation, lecturer to university psychology students. She shared stories with us of her interactions and feedback from students, who loved her classes.

Twenty years ago, Marlene married fellow South African Barry Berelowitz, who’d emigrated before her. They discovered that they had taken their kids to the same park and lived near each other in Johannesburg, but only met in America.

Marlene was a proud mother and grandmother, always seeing ahead to her family’s needs.

When she brought Barry to meet each of her

three children, in three countries, both Barry and they said “It was love at first sight!”.

Marlene and Barry spent long periods visiting Israel, where her children and grandchildren live.

Their marriage was a perfect vehicle for supporting worthy causes, not only financially, but in strategic and collaborative roles.

Their deep connection to the Jewish South African community was reflected in their commitment with Israeli schools on the socio-economic periphery. They toured the schools and selected meaningful projects from the heart.

Barry passed away in December 2022. Marlene was already ill, and, in her stoic manner, went through treatment. Her children were with her in rotation through that difficult year. She passed away in February 2024.

Thankfully we could bring her to Israel for burial in our beloved land, to be with us until the end of days.

We’ve kept her lovingly collected stones to place on her grave.



Joan Behrend

Joan’s family was her pride and joy, and she is survived by Kerrin (and Stephne), Linda (and Fane) Robinson of San Diego, Deborah (and Paul) Shtein of San Diego, and David Behrend of Los Angeles. Also her grandchildren Michelle and Neal Behrend, Garron and Jaydon Robinson, Talia and Joshua Shtein, and Hugh, Bianca and Lunden Behrend. And six great-grandchildren with a couple more on the way.

Joan was born in 1926 in the village of Colen-

so in South Africa and grew up in the farming town of Kinross, where her father owned the only hotel. She went to university in Johannesburg qualifying as a teacher and librarian. After marrying the love of life Hugo z”l, she pursued a career in high school education. In 1994 they emigrated to the USA moving to San Diego to be closer to family.

In early years she was an avid tennis player. Later her passion was bridge which she played a number of times a week almost un-

til the end. She was also a voracious reader, loved to travel, and was happy to join her children on any adventure. Through her example her family learnt about Jewish community involvement and values.

She enjoyed 97 wonderful years sustained by her spirituality, her interest in everything around her, her ability to connect deeply with people, and her absolute love and caring for her family and lifetime friends.

In Loving Memory of...



Barry Schechter

Following a lengthy illness, Barry Schechter passed on March 3rd, 2024, at the age of 70.

Born in Pietersburg in 1953, after completing high school and national service, Barry moved to Johannesburg in 1971. He studied at Wits where he met Suzanne Elkon whom he married in 1976. After graduating with a Bachelor of Commerce, served his Articles with Stride Nolan and qualified as a Chartered Accountant.

Always a strong defender of Israel, he volunteered to work on a kibbutz in 1973 during the Yom Kippur war, and remained a lifelong supporter of Jewish charities, the IDF and Israel.

Barry had a storied business career with many achievements in both South Africa and America. As one of the first business executives to

focus on technology in South Africa in the late 1970s, he founded Punchline in 1980 and was one of the youngest Chief Executives of a public company when he listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange in 1986. After moving to San Diego in 1989, Barry was instrumental in providing opportunities for family, friends and colleagues to join him. In 1990, Barry founded SVI Holdings (later RetailPro) which listed as a public company in 1994 and went on to trade on the American Stock Exchange.

While he is remembered widely for his business achievements, to those who know him, he is remembered most for his humor, generosity and love of family and friends. We will never know all the people he quietly assisted with advice, employment or financial assistance.

Barry was immensely proud of his daughter

Ashleigh and son, Daniel and was happiest when surrounded by family and friends. Known as Totti to his grandson Sam and granddaughter Lilly, nothing would light up his face more than the sound of his grandkid's laughter.

Barry had many challenges after his kidney transplant in 2020, which he weathered with his trademark optimism and good humor. After many hospitalizations, his heart finally gave out on March 3rd, 2024.

Barry was survived by his Wife (Suzanne), Daughter (Ashleigh Feniger), Son (Daniel), Grandchildren (Sam and Lilly), Mother (Mary), Sisters (Beverly, Tia and Mandy) and Brother (Russell).



David Diamond

It is with deep sorrow that we inform you of the passing of our dear member David Diamond, husband of Jackie, & father of Danny and Lee.

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