



# THE CENTRE CALL

GERMANTOWN JEWISH CENTRE

Volume 26, Issue No. 4

Adar 5779 / March 2019



## RESPECT FOR ALL

by Rabbi Adam Zeff and Denise Wolf, GJC President

At its very beginning, the Torah specifies repeatedly that human beings—all human beings—are created in the image of the divine (Genesis 1:26-27). Building on this simple yet profound concept, the ancient rabbis taught that we should treat each and every person with *kavod*, a word indicating both respect

and honor, just as we respect and honor God. Treating each other with *kavod* is key to building community; we might even say that without *kavod*, communal life is impossible to create and to sustain.

Yet unfortunately, both in the wider world and in our community of Germantown Jewish Centre, we find that sometimes some people treat others with disrespect and dishonor, and this can lead to harassment, including sexual harassment, and even abuse. As communal leaders, we want to prevent this from ever happening at Germantown Jewish Centre, and so we have, this year, adopted a newly revised policy on sexual harassment. Three of our members with expertise in this arena—Scott Goldshaw, David Kraut, and Abby Pozefsky—drafted the policy, and we are very grateful for their dedication and hard work. The new policy's preamble is worth highlighting:

*Respect for the dignity and worth of each individual is a basic tenet of Judaism and GJC... sexual harassment is not tolerated by GJC. Sexual harassment in any context is reprehensible; it is a matter of particular concern to our religious community which strives to be in the forefront of the implementation of justice, equality, and respect for others. As an employer and as a religious community, GJC is committed to eradicating sexual harassment.*

As important as this new policy is, we cannot prevent sexual harassment—or the disrespectful treatment of human beings that it represents—simply by passing policies and stating our commitment to them. We must also work to change the culture of how we interact with each other, so that such behavior becomes not only unacceptable but also unthinkable. If we really want to change, that means we must have the sometimes difficult and uncomfortable conversations that illuminate what is going on around us and where change is needed, both at GJC and in the culture that surrounds us.

Many of us were in our formative years when the term “sexual harassment” came to the forefront. In 1991, we watched a brave

Anita Hill testify before the Senate Judiciary Committee, which was considering the nomination of now-Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, about Thomas's vulgar language and conduct. Decades later, in 2017, the #MeToo movement spread like a tidal wave showing the magnitude of unwanted sexual

contact in workplaces and in other contexts. We in the Jewish community have not been immune, as we witnessed powerful and respectable Jewish men—Steven M. Cohen, Al Franken, Michael Steinhardt, Harvey Weinstein, Elie Wiesel, Leon Wieseltier—be credibly accused of improper behavior and face the consequences of their actions.

Sexual harassment is legally defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has an effect on the conditions of one's employment. The victim and perpetrator can be any gender and the perpetrator does not have to be of the opposite sex. But let's not limit ourselves; let's expand beyond the legal definition to the kind of world we want to create, a world in which no one has to face sexual harassment or other types of harassment or abuse.

Let's talk about it at Germantown Jewish Centre. We want to affirm the safety and comfort of every congregant, staff member, and guest who walks through our doors at all times. Every person, regardless of his or her role at GJC, deserves to be treated with *kavod*, with respect and honor, just as we ourselves would want to be treated. Unwanted sexual attention, language, or physical contact is equally inappropriate between congregants as it is between staff members or between a staff member and a congregant.

Often, those who make unwanted comments or physical contact are completely unaware that their behavior is inappropriate or offensive. We may witness such conduct in the actions of people we care about, who may think that they are just being friendly or complimentary to those around them. In order to avoid actions or speech that make others feel uncomfortable or even threatened, we need to think carefully about the context in which we are acting and about how even our well-meant actions might be experienced by those around us. We also need to think about how we can extend respect and friendship to those around us by greeting them and

(Continued on page 3)



# SHABBAT & HOLIDAYS

## March 1 & 2

- Speed Shabbat (Friday night service)
- Kol D'mamah Shabbat Experience with Leah Weisman
- Charry Service: Charry Appreciation Shabbat & 4th grade reads Ashrei

## March 8 & 9

*Mazal tov to Maxine Wray, daughter of Matthew Wray & Jill Gurvey, on becoming Bat Mitzvah*

- Kabbalat Shabbat
- BBMM Shabbat
- Shabbat Sha'baby
- Parashat ha-Shavua B'Ivrit
- Purim Bash

## March 15 & 16

- Kabbalat Shabbat (Friday night service)
- Charry Service: Men's Club Shabbat
- Musical Marching Minyan

## March 22 & 23

- The Brenda Laigaie Memorial Program (after Shabbat morning services)

## March 29 & 30

- Kol Zimrah (Friday night service)
- Charry Service: Women's Shabbat & Afternoon Program
- BBMM Shabbat

## April 5 & 6 (Rosh Hodesh Nisan)

- Kabbalat Shabbat (Friday night service)
- Dorshei Derekh: *Mazal tov to Toby Kessler-Cohen, son of Gwynn Kessler & Rabbi Tamara Cohen, on becoming Bar Mitzvah*
- Shabbat Morning JAM

## April 12 & 13

- Shabbat Warmup Storytime @ Big Blue Marble
- Kabbalat Shabbat
- BBMM Shabbat
- Charry Service: *Mazal tov to Lillian Kunz, daughter of Sarit & Kenneth Kunz, on becoming Bat Mitzvah*
- Shabbat Sha'baby
- Musical Marching Minyan
- Parashat ha-Shavua B'Ivrit

## April 19 (Erev Pesah)

- Siyyum & Breakfast

## April 20 (Pesah I)

- Pesah & Shabbat services

## April 26 (Pesah VII)

- Speed Shabbat (Friday night service)
- Minyan Masorti & Charry Pesah Service
- Dorshei Derekh Pesah Service w/ Yizkor
- Erev Pesah Day 8 & Erev Shabbat Service

## April 27 (Pesah VIII)

- Charry Pesah & Shabbat Service w/ Yizkor
- Dorshei Derekh Shabbat Service
- Minyan Masorti Pesah & Shabbat Service w/ Yizkor



# MAZAL TOV! IN CELEBRATION OF...

**Jimmy and Naomi Rotenberg**, on the birth of their son, Judah Lev

**Kathryn Hellerstein and David Stern**, on the birth of their grandson, Matthew Ari, son of Rebecca and Jesse Wenger

**Linda Cherkas and Chaim Dworkin**, on the birth of their grandson, Lev Benjamin, son of Elisheva and David Kadosh

**Maria Pulzetti**, on becoming Bat Mitzvah

**Rennie Cohen**, on the 65th anniversary of becoming Bat Mitzvah

**Elaine Dushoff**, on the 65th anniversary of becoming Bat Mitzvah

**Henry Charap**, son of Lawrence and Ellyn Charap, on becoming Bar Mitzvah

**Sarit Kunz**, on winning the Faculty/Staff Alumni Award for Campus Impact at Drexel University

## IN MEMORIAM

**Ruth Diamond**, mother of Yona Diamond Dansky, grandmother of Mia & Eli, and great-grandmother of Judah & Zevi

**Hattie Segal**, mother of Stephen Segal, and grandmother of Adina, Noah & Zachary

# ISRAELI DANCING

**Sundays at 10 AM**

**March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 • April 7, 14, 28**

Taught by our wonderful instructor Grant Shulman, GJC's Israeli dance group welcomes dancers of all ages and levels. We begin each session with 45 minutes of beginner dances, followed by instruction, review, open dancing and requests with increasing levels of difficulty. GJC's dance group is proud to be friendly and inclusive.

**For more information,  
please contact Tamar Magdovitz at  
[tamarmagdovitz@gmail.com](mailto:tamarmagdovitz@gmail.com)**

## RESPECT FOR ALL (continued)

inquiring about their health, rather than, for example, touching them or commenting on their bodies or clothing. We also need to make sure that any physical contact is wanted. We should think twice before extending a hug, or greeting with a kiss, or otherwise physically get too close for too long to a congregant or staff member. We cannot assume that someone else desires our physical touch. It never hurts to simply ask first.

Language matters, too. We can extend respect to those around us by using kind words and being gracious to them, rather than using language that could be considered condescending or demeaning. We can describe our professional staff appropriately as competent, innovative, or committed, rather than “adorable” or “sweet.” We

can use appropriate and respectful salutations rather than using diminutives (as in referring to adult women as “girls”). The language that we use helps to create the culture in which we live; the more respectful and appropriate it is, the more that respect will permeate our communal life together.

One of our main goals at Germantown Jewish Centre is to create a community of *kavod*, a community in which we model the respect and honor that all human beings should show each other, each a precious reflection of the divine image. May we—in our communal policies and in our individual actions—do our part to respect each other, improving ourselves, strengthening our community, and creating a sacred space in which we all feel safe and free.

## RALPH GRANGER MEMORIAL SHABBAT January 2019

More than 200 people gathered in the Marcus Auditorium to participate in the Ralph Granger Memorial Shabbat program on MLK weekend, January 19, 2019. The topic was *What Does It Mean to Live in the Poorest Big City in America?* After enjoying a delicious catered buffet, we settled in to listen and learn.

The panel of speakers consisted of: **Larry Eichel**, Project Director of the Philadelphia Research Initiative at Pew Charitable Trusts; **Dr. Cheryl Bettigole**, the Director of Get Healthy Philly, the Division of Chronic Disease Prevention of the Philadelphia Department of Public Health; **Rachel Falkove**, the Executive Director of Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network; and **Cassie Haynes**, the Co-Executive Director of Resolve Philadelphia, which is responsible for *Broke in Philly*, a reporting project published in the Philadelphia Inquirer that works on finding solutions to poverty and economic mobility.

The speakers spoke both professionally and personally about their ideas, emphasizing how poverty has not diminished over the past ten years in Philadelphia, that the issues of poverty are complex, and that there is not a single solution or cause for poverty. Larry Eichel painted a portrait of what poverty looks like in Philadelphia, and discussed the very many difficulties associated with it. He provided significant background information based on Federal economic data, such as the poverty rate in Philadelphia is 26%, and hard-core poverty is about 13%. He also explained that the problem of poverty is actually more widespread than we realize, since the funds people need to survive today are much higher than the Federal poverty levels suggest. The website for the Pew report is: <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/projects/philadelphia-research-initiative>.

Cheryl Bettigole stressed the connection between poverty and health, describing how poverty makes it more likely for people to have chronic diseases such as diabetes, asthma, depression, anxiety, high blood pressure, and strokes. Rachel Falkove vividly explained what it was like to have constant housing problems, and emphasized how disruptive frequent moves are for both parents and children. Cassie Haynes spoke about the need for humane, compassionate language in talking about poverty and how poor people have little if any economic mobility, even if they

are employed. As the afternoon progressed, we could see that stable housing, good education, nutritious food, preventive health care, dependable employment with an adequate income, and family or friends that can help in an emergency—all of which most of us at GJC take for granted—are minimal or non-existent for those in poverty.

After the comments by the panel, congregants proceeded to discuss at their tables ideas for a policy or program they would like to see implemented. Below are just a few of the many ideas that people brought forth:

- Work with the Healthy Rowhouse Project to provide affordable housing;
- Advocate for zoning changes that would allow for three or more unrelated individuals to rent homes together (which could also provide other kinds of support);
- Start a loan fund at GJC or connect to the Hebrew Free Loan Society, especially for housing loans;
- Improve police-community relationships;
- Share seniors' privileges of free public transportation, so people could get to work more easily;
- Mentor and train for work after high school and create more support for transitioning to the work force;
- Create employment through programs similar to the Civilian Conservation Corps from FDR, to help maintain Fairmount Park and other city parks;
- Volunteer for adult literacy tutoring, possibly utilizing non-traditional settings.

Most people seemed to agree that it would be helpful to raise the minimum wage as well as redistribute wealth through a fairer, more progressive tax system.

It is our hope that GJC members will continue to think about the issue of poverty and contribute to solutions. Please contact either co-chair of the Tikkun Olam Coordinating Committee (TOCT) if you would like to become involved in an initiative to help alleviate poverty in our city—David Mosenkis ([dmosenkis@gmail.com](mailto:dmosenkis@gmail.com)) or Andi Moselle ([andrea.moselle@gmail.com](mailto:andrea.moselle@gmail.com)).



# GJC THANKS OUR NEDIV LEV AND ROSH PINAH MEMBERS

"A gift from generous hearts" (Exodus 25:2)

Within the GJC community, we are fortunate to have a growing number of members who give above and beyond, year after year. Nediv Lev, our pillar members, provides a backbone to the GJC community, and their commitment enables the shul to provide for the needs of all our members. We especially thank the following members for helping our shul continue to offer the highest possible level of education, religious, and social programming:

**Marcy & Dan Bacine**  
**Jane & Richard Baron**  
**Peninah & Albert Berdugo**  
**Harold Berger**  
**Linda & Jake Kriger**  
**Chris & Steve Levin\***  
**Barbara & Dick Menin**  
**Martha & Chuck Schleifer**

**Allyson & David Schwartz**  
**Denise Scott Brown**  
**Dveera Segal & Brad Bridge**  
**Patty & Steve Segal**  
**Stefanie & Alex Seldin**  
**Elise Singer & Don Perelman\***  
**Joan N. Stern**

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"The humblest of stones has become the chief cornerstone." ['Rosh Pinah'] (Psalm 118:22)

GJC expresses its deep gratitude for the generous support of its congregants who have chosen the Rosh Pinah (Cornerstone) level of membership. Their contribution provides crucial support, enabling us to serve the entire GJC community. We cannot adequately thank the following members for their commitment to Germantown Jewish Centre:

**Marta & Chip Becker**  
**Michael Beer**  
**Sarah Braun & Shai Gluskin**  
**Evelyn Eskin & David Major**  
**Rachel Falkove & Michael Masch**  
**Helen & Michael Feinberg**  
**Dayle Friedman & David Ferleger**  
**The Hahn & Weiss Family**  
**Myra & Gert Jacobsohn**

**Barbara Jaffe & Howard Langer**  
**Hillary & Judd Kruger Levingston**  
**Paul Minkoff**  
**Cyrella Rosen**  
**Jessica & Mathieu Shapiro**  
**Beth Stearman**  
**Betsy & David Teutsch**  
**Denise Wolf & Paul Rudick\***

For information on joining one of these giving circles,  
please contact Nina Peskin at [director@germantownjewishcentre.org](mailto:director@germantownjewishcentre.org).

*\*We sincerely apologize for the omission of these donors in the January issue.*

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GJC thanks all of our generous members who donated to the 5779 High Holiday appeal. We surpassed our goal of \$205,000 by over \$9,000! We received a total of \$214,712 from two-thirds of our members, which will enable us to continue to serve our community of communities. *Todah Rabbah!*

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## ***Spotlight on the Purim Bash***

*Nedivot Lev* or *Nediv Lev* means "giving from the heart" or "generous of the heart." It is as if one's entire heart is generous, giving. It can also be understood as a "willing" heart. Some have asked: do we give with our hearts—or do we give with our wallets? For the Women of GJC, the answer is both.

Nediv Lev is a concept that the Women of GJC have been promoting in their many activities that contribute to the synagogue's operations.

If there were one annual event that encompasses community, generosity and Judaism, it would be the Purim Bash. This event is the largest and most successful annual fundraiser that the Women of GJC undertake.

The Purim Bash is run by WGJC volunteers who spend hours and hours and hours planning the multi-faceted event, making decorations, soliciting items for the auction, preparing a program booklet, providing activities for GJC members of all ages. There is always good food, lots of fun and friendship, and a wonderful time had by all. This is all done with open, giving and generous hearts. Kudos and thanks.

# CELEBRATING YONA DIAMOND DANSKY

## GJC's Torah Fund Honoree

**GJC's annual Torah Fund Brunch** is a fundraiser that supports the five Conservative seminaries around the world, including the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. The leaders trained by JTS—rabbis, cantors, scholars, educators, communal professionals, and lay activists—are prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century. WGJC provide a scrumptious brunch with lots of delicious homemade specialties.

This year's guest speaker will be **Elaine Culbertson**, the chair of the **Pennsylvania Holocaust Education Council**, a statewide organization of teachers, survivors, and liberators who volunteer to keep the lessons of the Holocaust alive in the schools of the state. Over the last 33 years this organization has taken 1,100 US teachers involved in Holocaust education to Poland and Germany. We are looking forward to hearing about this dynamic program.

**Our 2019 brunch will honor Yona Diamond Dansky** for her dedication and commitment to Germantown Jewish Centre. Yona and her husband Howard joined Germantown Jewish

Centre 38 years ago when their oldest child, Mia, was two years old. Yona's involvement at GJC includes serving on the Membership Committee, being unofficial house photographer for several GJC events, and sharing her time and talents with the Women of GJC in too many roles to list in this short article.

Yona is an award-winning educator. She worked with deaf and hearing-impaired students, including leading them on international, environmentally-focused student exchange programs in Lithuania, China, Israel, Jordan, and England.

Yona also created and owned *CaptionLit*, a full-service video captioning company. Her new children's book, *Mooshu Worries*, is being prepared for publication. She is a multi-talented artist, enhancing everyday objects such as quilts, ceramic bowls, and furniture with her creativity and ingenuity.

**Please join us to celebrate this amazing woman and her many achievements!**

### Torah Fund Brunch Facts

**The Torah Fund Campaign** is a national effort by Women's Clubs throughout the country. WGJC provides a world-class brunch with over 100 friends and Centre neighbors enjoying noshing and schmoozing.

#### When?

Sunday, May 5, 2019, at 11:00 AM

#### Where?

The event will be at the beautiful home of  
Elise Singer and Don Perelman

#### Cost?

There is no charge; however, we hope that attendees will donate to Torah Fund in support of JTS

### A note about Torah Fund pins and contributions...



**Each year** a lovely Torah Fund Pin is designed for women who choose to contribute \$180 or more. This year's pin bears the Hebrew word *Atid*, which means 'future.' If you are interested in a pin, contact Judy Schwartz ([Judyschwartz38@gmail.com](mailto:Judyschwartz38@gmail.com)). The donation is not required until May, but you can wear the pin for months in advance to give us publicity.

## THANK YOU

Germantown Jewish Centre extends thanks and gratitude to the  
**Wolfe Family Foundation**  
for generously supporting and making our programming possible.

# TIKKUN OLAM

by Seth Lieberman

## Refugee Immigrant Justice

Following October's Refugee Shabbat, a group of congregants launched a *Tikkun Olam* initiative to ensure that refugees and other immigrants are treated justly and with dignity. Our own families' immigration experiences and the biblical imperative to remember that "we were strangers in the land of Egypt" impel us to speak and act with moral clarity.

Our group's work has three components. First, we identify and publicize **humanitarian actions** to fight family separations and other injustices. Second, we are organizing groups from GJC and other area synagogues to **advocate** on behalf of refugees with our elected officials. Third, we are committed to expanding **direct support** to immigrants in our area. While much of our work lies within each of these focus areas, we come together as a larger group to share ideas, learning and energy.

Want to get involved? This month we are featuring the opportunity to volunteer with HIAS PA to support local refugees.

Volunteer opportunities include—

- Appointment Accompaniment
- Childcare at HIAS PA
- Home Setup
- Delivery Driver
- Meal Preparation and Grocery Shopping
- Middle School Afterschool Programming
- Job Search Mentor
- One-on-one Tutors

You can learn more about volunteer opportunities at <https://hiaspa.org/get-involved/volunteer> (or contact Kerry Coughlin at [kcoughlin@hiaspa.org](mailto:kcoughlin@hiaspa.org)).

To get involved with our GJC initiative, please reach out directly to Seth Lieberman ([s.lieberma@aim.com](mailto:s.lieberma@aim.com)) or Joyce Lieberman ([rejoice34@gmail.com](mailto:rejoice34@gmail.com)).

## NEWS FROM THE MEN'S CLUB

by Dick Menin, President

Shalom Chaverim. Alcohol seems to do it! The wine- and cheese-tasting and learning events a few years ago were very popular. Our "Scotch in the Sukkah" event in September brought out many new faces. The "Jews and Beer" program we co-sponsored with Hazak in December was also well subscribed. Thanks to all who participated.

In December, we hosted Dr. Andrew Newberg's discussion looking at Jewish spirituality and how religious experiences are recorded in the brain. We came away with some new ideas and some questions. Clearly this is a field that will continue to spark interest and research.

In February, we screened *There are Jews Here*, a film looking in depth at four small American Jewish communities dealing with the problems of changing demographics. For anyone interested, who missed the program, the movie is available. Please contact me at [meninr@einstein.edu](mailto:meninr@einstein.edu) if you want to see it.

March 16, 2019, is Men's Club Shabbat. Our speaker after the luncheon will be Dr. Rob Garfield, who will speak on "Men's Relationships." How are these connections different from other interactions? The program is open to all.

On Tuesday evening, March 26, we'll be showing *Rock in the Red Zone*. This looks at Israeli and Palestinian adolescents and how they live and grow in a world where there are real threats to life

and limb, with a background of the changes all teens experience. We've invited our youth community to participate, and the time was chosen to fit their schedule. We hope that you will attend, no matter how distant a memory your high school years seem.

There are films and discussions planned for later.

I hope to see you there.



Dr. Andrew Newberg speaks to Men's Club on *The Rabbi's Brain*.

## PLANNED GIVING & NER TAMID



*Remembering Germantown Jewish Centre in your will, a trust, or retirement asset is a meaningful way to ensure that your commitment to our community continues to help our synagogue thrive for generations to come. For more information on how you can include GJC in your estate plans, please contact Nina Peskin at 215-844-1507 x12.*

## 42nd Annual Women's Shabbat

Join us on **March 30th** for this lovely event.

The women of our congregation will gather in the Charry Sanctuary to celebrate.

The speaker for the day is our good friend  
**Rabbi Annie Lewis.**

Her topic will be  
"Jewish Feminist Theology of Liberation."

All are welcome.  
Please join us.

Services start at **9:30 AM.**

## **BRRR... Although it is cold outside you are always greeted with a warm welcome at THE LITTLE SHOP!**

**We are your one-stop shop** for all your holiday needs as well as gifts for yourself and others. We have beautiful hostess gifts, Judaica, jewelry, books, toys, candles, a great wine selection and so much more. *(Free gift wrapping!)*

**Beautify your Passover table** with a new seder plate, matzah cover and kiddush cup. Don't wait to get the **hagadot** you need to round out your collection and make your seder even more special. **All our wine is kosher l'Pesah** and we also have **Passover candy**.



**Special March and April Discounts:** 10% off AND another 10% off if purchased during Early Bird Special times of Wed-Fri 12-3pm (usual exclusions apply\*).

### **MARCH Specials**

Seder plates, Matzah plates, matzah covers, Elijah & Miriam cups



### **APRIL Special**

Kiddush Cups



### **MIMOSA Sundays**

March 31st & April 14th



**YOU PERFORM A MITZVAH** when buying at The Little Shop; all profits go to support GJC programs.

### **WINTER LITTLE SHOP HOURS**

**Wednesday 12:00-7:30 • Thursday 12:00-5:00 • Friday 12:00-4:00 • Sunday 9:00-12:30**

\*usual discount exclusions are books, wine, mezuzah scrolls and tefillin.



# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Dan and Melissa Livney

by Linda Kriger



Boaz, Melissa, Ezra and Dan Livney

Dan Livney, 47, would have been Dan Fayvusovich, had his family remained at home in Novosibirsk, Siberia. After declaring his desire to leave the Soviet Union, Dan's father, a doctoral student, lost his academic advisor, became a postman, and began the lonely task of negotiating his family's emigration.

In 1972, at age eleven months, Dan left for Israel with his parents, uncle, and maternal grandparents. Dan's paternal grandfather denounced Dan's father in a Russian newspaper. Dan is not clear whether he meant the denunciation or was forced to do it. "There are a lot of gaps in my family history," Dan says, sitting at his dining room table in Lafayette Hill. "Over the years, I've asked my family questions like, why, as Zionists, did you leave Israel? The answers change. I'm not sure my parents entirely understand why." He even got different answers about the origin of his last name. "Livney is a small town in Russia; it means my son in Hebrew, it means soft summer rains in Russian."

Dan's parents met at an underground Zionist Passover party. Their move to Israel was in line with their Zionist fervor, but Israel wasn't everything his parents had hoped for. "We landed in Israel a year and a half before the Yom Kippur War," Dan recalls. "In 1976, my parents moved to London for four years, following my mother's brother." Noting Dan's sister's birth in England, his wife Melissa quipped, "His sister was born two countries later than he."

In 1980, when Dan was almost ten, they moved to Philadelphia, where Dan's father had a friend he had met while emigrating from the Soviet Union. They didn't move to Northeast Philadelphia, where most Russian Jews settled; they moved to Horsham and then Lafayette Hill instead. "My father still lives around the corner, through the woods," Dan says, "and our kids and I just

bushwhack over to them." When Dan was 23, his parents divorced and his mother moved back to Israel, where her parents had stayed. "She went back to take care of her father after an illness, and stayed," he says. "She visits us once a year."

By the time he was nine, Dan was a polyglot. His English, however, was not American style. "You don't call people *chaps* around here," he says smiling, "not if you're nine. I still speak close to fluent Russian. As for Hebrew, my theory is that I went to Jewish day school in England and it conflicted with my organic Hebrew. My Hebrew is just functional."

Dan attended public schools in Horsham and Plymouth Whitmarsh and spent his sophomore year of high school at kibbutz Ein Hashofet, in Israel. He went to the University of Pennsylvania as an English major, then traveled west, living in Flagstaff, AZ, for three years. "I was discovering myself and made just enough money to get by," he says. "When I got tired of that, I came back home." He studied with his father for a couple of months and got a lucrative IT job, a career that lasted for 13 years. "I decided I wanted to go into psychology and got a degree from Chestnut Hill College in a program for working professionals."

Dan worked at an HIV clinic, and then at a long-term psychiatric residential facility. He now has a private practice three minutes from his home. He has taught courses at the Psychoanalytic Institute and does psychiatric evaluations for returning veterans. Dan and Melissa met through J-Date in 2006, when Melissa, now 44, was in graduate school at Rutgers in New Brunswick, NJ. "We met in February and that summer I moved to the Bronx for an internship," she says. "Dan would come to visit me in Riverdale where I was living in subsidized student housing. We would do fun New York City things, and I'd come here to Lafayette Hill and do my laundry and write my dissertation. During that year we got engaged." They married in July of 2008, and have two sons, Boaz, 8, and Ezra, 6.

Melissa's origin story is a lot more predictable than Dan's. She was born Melissa Gartenberg in 1974 in Boston and moved to Albany, NY, at the age of two. When she was ten, her family moved to Teaneck, NJ, where she attended racially and ethnically diverse public schools. "Teaneck was a community with a proud civil rights/race relations history, but that was marred by a police shooting of an African American classmate that many considered racially motivated. Today, the town's Orthodox community has grown, and some say it can feel like being in Jerusalem now, with people with black hats hurrying down the middle of the streets on Shabbos."

Melissa attended the University of Michigan, majoring in psychology and spent her junior year at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. She has gravitated to intergenerational work with the elderly or with children and the elderly. After college, she



## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT (continued)

entered the newly formed AmeriCorps program in Boston, bringing inner city middle school youth to nursing homes. She later helped launch an intergenerational reading program, named Generations Incorporated, with active retired adults.

After moving here to be with Dan, Melissa took a postdoc at Penn and was the therapist in the department of geriatric psychiatry, developing a clinical outpatient service in 2007. "I stayed full time until five years ago when funding streams changed," she says. "I'm still at Penn one day a week doing therapy in an outpatient clinic and have a very rewarding private practice in Rosemont. I always say that I work with older adults and the younger adults in their lives. I have a lot of people coping with dementia, and I work with their family members, now caregivers. I also work with people handling challenges in intergenerational family dynamics, retirement transitions, financial burdens in later life, and issues like depression and anxiety that can present at any time in life."

At GJC, Melissa has been involved in the Family Retreat Committee and was on the Tot JAM committee, organizing events promoting a preschool-aged arts and movement program for kids younger than religious school age. Their sons attend public school in the Colonial School District, religious school at GJC, and in the summers go to Ramah Day Camp. This summer, Boaz is going to overnight camp at Sprout Lake, a Young Judaea camp. Dan serves on the GJC Executive Committee as senior vice president.

They connect deeply to Germantown Jewish Centre. "We feel comfortable about the community," Melissa says. "It feels like these are our people."

## A COMMUNITY OF WELCOME DIVERSITY

by Abe Gafni

I came to Germantown Jewish Centre in 1965, having grown up in Brooklyn and having attended yeshivot until my graduation from college. The community with which I was familiar was orthodox. While there were religious differences among its members, there was little focus on how individuals may have differed in their religious practices.

I was, of course, somewhat familiar with both Conservative and Reform congregations (there was one of each in my Boro Park neighborhood), but they were clearly beyond my general experience. For example, the only presentation I ever heard about how and why women should have greater participatory rights as they related to Jewish practice was presented by a Rabbi Blumenthal (later revealed to me as Eve Pinkenson's father) in 1958, as I was leaving for a year in Israel.

Today, I am routinely asked why I have come to believe that it is important to maintain membership in and participate in synagogue activities. Invariably, I respond with some imprecise language about being part of a "community" that allows us to understand and appreciate our Jewish commonalities, particularly as they relate to religious practices.

Of course, at GJC we also take great pride in our support of different prayer groups, even though their manner of prayer may, on the surface at least, appear to differ significantly. With the passage of time, however, it has become apparent to me that the Jewish "community" often reflects less uniformity and more of individuals' personal predilections.

For example, last year I noted that there were three Orthodox opinions regarding the kashrut of quinoa on Pesach. One declared them kosher; one said they were not; and the third opined that they were only kosher for those who eat *kitniyot* (legumes) on Pesach.

In our own GJC community, we see a wide range of decisions regarding religious practice. Thus, our mourners typically sit *shiva* (the word does mean "seven") for periods of as few as one to as many as seven days. Decisions on *kashrut* also differ significantly in our community. Some keep a strictly kosher kitchen at home, but are prepared to eat out at restaurants, so long as the foods eaten are not themselves prohibited.

Think also of the numerous deviations in religious practice in the synagogue. Women differ in their comfort level in wearing a *tallit* or *tefillin*. Individuals differ on whether they will wear leather shoes on Yom Kippur.

In short, the differing areas of religious practice within our GJC membership reflect a community of widely varying views. After more than fifty years as a member, and having undergone numerous changes in my own manner of observance, I have come to appreciate this GJC diversity as providing the opportunity for each of us to experiment, experience and grow within the framework of a non-threatening, welcoming environment.

# WOMEN OF GJC

by Sandy Meyer & Vilma Lieberman, Co-Presidents

At our January WGJC Board Meeting, **Rabbi Alanna Sklover** updated us on Religious School activities, so we could fully understand how WGJC's contribution of \$18,000 each year supports the program. If you haven't already done so, go to the wonderfully colorful and informative section of the GJC website about the Religious School to learn about the curriculum and goals that are engaging our young people today.

We rented out Old Academy Players in January to see their production of *Calendar Girls*, but a burst water pipe scuttled the performance. We're excited to tell you that we have rented out the theater once more to see ***Ordinary Days***, an off-Broadway musical, on **Sunday, April 28, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.** If interested in joining us, contact Marilyn Silberstein at [mjsilb3@gmail.com](mailto:mjsilb3@gmail.com)

Our annual Women's Clothing Give Away on Sunday, January 27th, brought together many wonderful volunteers who sort, set up, and clean up for this popular event. Shoppers from our local community and beyond take this great opportunity to obtain clothes and accessories for minimal cost. Once again, the Give Away was headed up by **Genie Ravital** and sponsored by WGJC and the Tikkun Olam Coordinating Team, with funds going to support POWER, an interfaith organization committed to building communities of opportunity that work for all.

As we inch our way into Spring, WGJC has two wonderful programs on the calendar:

## Women's Shabbat - Saturday, March 30th

The annual Women's Shabbat sponsored by WGJC will be on March 30th. We are fortunate to have **Rabbi Annie Lewis** as our speaker this year. She will give the D'var Torah during morning services in the Charry Sanctuary. Everyone is invited to a luncheon in the Marcus Auditorium following services, after which Rabbi Lewis will speak. The day will be a great opportunity to catch up with our former assistant rabbi, enjoy a delicious luncheon, and shmooze with friends. Please join us! Services begin at 9:30 AM (note the early start time).

## Torah Fund Brunch - Sunday, May 5th

This year's Torah Fund Brunch will honor Yona Dansky, former WGJC president, who has given her creative and artistic talents to so many of our projects over the years. This is a lovely annual event, and we invite you to join us. Look for details in the article about Torah Fund that appears on page 5 of this issue of the Centre Call.

Remember to check the GJC website for additional Women of GJC programs. We welcome everyone to attend all WGJC events.

## WOMEN'S CLOTHING EXCHANGE

On January 27th, GJC held its 13th annual Women's Clothing Exchange. Under the leadership of Genie Ravital, \$2800 was raised for GJC's participation with POWER! Clothing that was not selected by our "shoppers" went to Whosoever Gospel Mission and Career Wardrobe. A great event.



Lots of good finds;  
fun was had by all.





# GJC's EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM (ECP)

by Michelle Bernstein

**Sunshine.** Everywhere you go in the ECP is sunny... and happy... and respectful... and just simply AMAZING!

We are so very fortunate to have a team that cares and loves and appreciates—not only our beautiful, special, unique and loving children—but *each other*. A few of our teaching staff started a Sunshine Fund to which people can contribute any monetary amount—extra change from lunch, a \$5 bill, whatever and whenever. We have breakfast goodies, pick-me-ups, cookies located by the time clock—you name it! But the bigger thing is that we have each other.

The new staff members who joined us in January have been welcomed and supported with open arms. As someone new-ish myself, I feel it too! There is something magical about GJC and the ECP. We all love to be here. We love what we do. We smile and make sure everyone is smiling. So even on these cold and bitter winter months, it is still warm and sunny in the ECP. Please stop by and grab some sunshine when you can!

## DID YOU KNOW?

ECP is a special place for young children from 6 months of age through 5 years of age and for their families. Through the lens of Jewish culture and tradition, our children learn about themselves and the world around them in a program which emphasizes learning through doing. The Early Childhood Program nurtures and respects individuality, while encouraging the children to develop a sense of community and friendship. The preschool follows the yearly cycle of the Jewish holidays. Jewish culture, traditions, and values are woven into our curriculum. Through Mitzvot (commandments), Tzedakah (charity), and Tikkun Olam (repairing the world), the children learn to respect themselves, others and the world they live in. We are committed to teaching and promoting respect and understanding of all persons. GJC's Early Childhood Program is open to all!

## LOTS FOR TOTS at GJC

SING • DANCE • LAUGH • LEARN • Explore and connect with other families

Shabbat Sha'baby

Sunday, March 9 (10:00 AM)

Musical Marching Minyan

Saturday, March 16 (11:00 AM)

GJC Celebrates! Purim & the Purim Carnival

Sunday, March 17 (11:00 AM)

Kids Stuff Exchange

Sunday, March 31 (11:00 AM)

## SHABBAT MORNING JAM with Rabbi Alanna

Saturday, April 6 at 11:00 AM

Start off spring with a lovely children's service. The JAM series brings families and friends with young children together for creative and engaging experiences, offering opportunities to explore Judaism together in a kinetic, whole-body way, singing, moving, dancing, creating, listening, thinking and connecting. Shabbat Morning JAM is a special service for children up to age 5, although older siblings can enjoy it, too. Stay after the service for Shabbat-friendly games, and a wonderfully enticing kid-friendly lunch that offers the opportunity to connect with other families. There is no cost, and all are welcome. RSVPs are appreciated so we know how many are coming.

[www.germantownjewishcentre.org/Shabbat-Morning-JAM](http://www.germantownjewishcentre.org/Shabbat-Morning-JAM)

*Germantown Jewish Centre extends thanks and gratitude to the Harold & Renee Berger Family Engagement Endowment Fund for generously sponsoring this program, and to the Wolfe Family Foundation for their support in all GJC programming.*

Shabbat WarmUp Storytime @Big Blue Marble

Friday, April 12 (10:30 AM)

Shabbat Sha'baby

Saturday, April 13 (10:00 AM)

Musical Marching Minyan

Saturday, April 13 (11:00 AM)





Germantown Jewish Centre

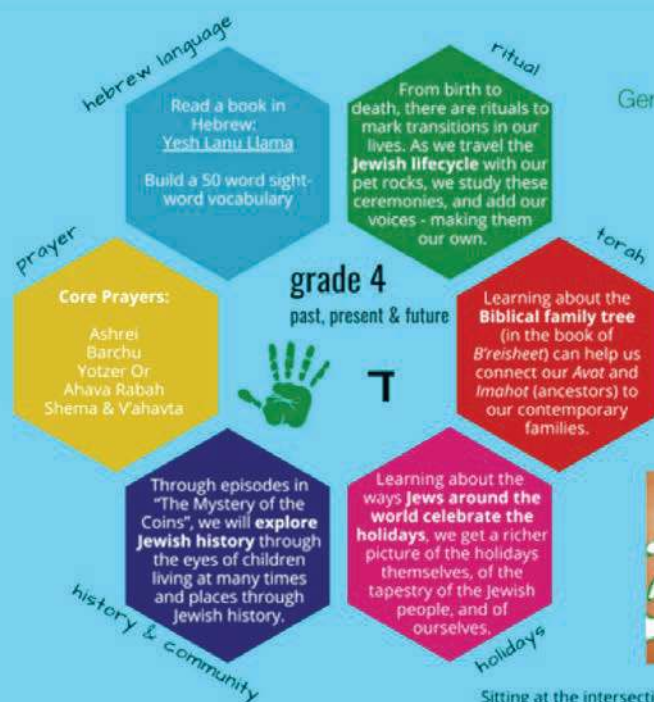


Sitting at the intersection of **tradition, innovation, and community**, the Religious School at GJC is committed to educating a new generation of kids for our evolving Jewish world. Our program urges students to **get curious about their Judaism** and integrates cutting edge teaching methods like Hebrew Through Movement. As they learn and explore, students build **confidence** in their knowledge and connection to our tradition, **competency** in prayer and ritual skills, and a strong sense of **Jewish identity** and connection.

# GJC Religious School

get curious!

215-844-1507 x24 • [www.germantownjewishcentre.org](http://www.germantownjewishcentre.org)



Germantown Jewish Centre



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# PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

**Tuesdays at 7:15 PM  
in the Quitman Library**

*People of the Book reads fiction and nonfiction books of Jewish interest mostly written by Jewish writers and chosen by the group. Volunteers lead the monthly discussion. Join in!*

**For more info, contact Nan Myers  
at [nanbmyers2@gmail.com](mailto:nanbmyers2@gmail.com).**

**March 12**  
*The Frozen Rabbi*  
by Steve Stern

**April 9**  
*Miss Burma*  
by Charmaine Craig

**May 7**  
*The German Girl*  
by Armando Lucas Correa

**June 11**  
*The Weight of Ink*  
by Rachel Kadish



## SECURITY FUNDRAISER THANK YOU

Thank you to the following GJC members who have generously given to our matching gift campaign to bolster our security needs for Shabbat services:

Dan & Marcy Bacine	Barbara Lissy
Richard & Eileen Bazelon	Dick & Barb Menin
Michael Beer	Men's Club of GJC
David & Edna Berg	Jim & Sandy Meyer
Lizanne Berger	Judy Miller
Elizabeth Bloch-Smith & Mark Smith	Paul Minkoff
Josh Bolton & Natalie Lyalin	Jeff & Linda Needleman
Chana Bonn	Josh & Nina Peskin
Lawrence & Ellyn Charap	Yael & Eve Pinkenson
Heshie & Rabbi Fredi Cooper	Curt & Leslie Pontz
Richard & Linda Feder	Yoni & Aviva Reinfeld
Maurice & Maxine Feldman	Hersh & Betsy Richman
Walt & Rochelle Fellman	Jack & Susan Rome
David Ferleger & Rabbi Dayle Friedman	Paul Rudick & Denise Wolf
Abe & Sandra Gafni	Steve & Patty Segal
Rabbi Shai Gluskin & Sarah Braun	Alex & Stefanie Seldin
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Peter & Peshe Kuriloff	Joey Weisenberg & Molly Weingrod
Jerry Kutnick & Wendy Weingarten	Kenneth & Susan Weiss
Ed & Dena Lake	Women of GJC
Howard Langer & Barbara Jaffe	Rabbi Adam Zeff & Cheryl Bettigole
Vilma Lieberman	Bob Zimring

Thank you also to our donors who wish to remain anonymous.



# NEWS FROM HAZAK (55+ programming)

by Helen Feinberg, Co-Chair

It's always a challenge to plan events for February. The weather is iffy; people would rather stay indoors. This year, for those of us who are "shomer Eagles," there was very little to keep us glued to our TV sets as post-season football becomes a fleeting memory; the Super Bowl did not call to us in the same way as last year.

For all these reasons, the HAZAK/WGJC screening of *Being There* was a big hit. The film, starring the late Peter Sellers, is based upon the Jerzy Kosinski novella of the same name. Produced in 1979, it is almost prescient in its depiction of how a clueless electorate can select clueless people to represent their interests. The film provoked a wonderful discussion among the participants.

Future HAZAK events include a program on March 17 on "Sex and Consent," which will be co-sponsored with Women of GJC and will be presented by Dr. Ken Weiss and Rabbi Dayle Friedman. On Sunday, March 31, Rina Rosenberg will offer an "Introduction to Wise Aging," a program for which she has been trained to help us think about our lives as we go forward. (More information to follow.) We have a few more films this year, to be announced in future *Centre Calls*, and in early May, HAZAK will be educated by our own Elise Bromberg, who will take us on a tour of Old City historical sites particularly related to the life and work of William Penn.

Our monthly book group soldiers on. We meet the second Wednesday morning of each month, from 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM, at

GJC. For February 13, we read Paul Beatty's *The Sellout*, and for March 13, *The Last Watchman of Old Cairo* by Michael David Lukas. Discussion is always lively, and this is a great place to learn of new things to read.

Hope you can join us for some of these events.

*We express our condolences to the family of Samuel Feinberg, with deep appreciation for his leadership, and for his many contributions to Germantown Jewish Centre, particularly to the HAZAK program.*

## DID YOU KNOW?

HAZAK programs are planned for those age 55+, and are geared to reflect both common interests and get us to "stretch" to try new activities as well. Our well-attended book group meets monthly all year long. HAZAK also sponsors book talks by local authors, as well as speakers on topics of particular importance to our interests, and several times a year we show great films. We also take day trips to cultural and natural sites in the area, often to places members have never been. HAZAK is for all of us to stay connected to GJC and to each other: to venture out and experience parts of our city we haven't seen before, to read, learn and talk together, to keep us strong. We hope you will join us. Membership is \$10/year.

## THE KING'S ALL SHOOK UP IN SHUSAN!

*GJC's 3rd Annual Joint Purim Celebration*

**Wednesday, March 20, at 7 PM in the Marcus Auditorium**

Put your blue suede shoes on and come get "All Shook Up" with the Kings of Rock & Roll: Jake **"Shake, Rattle & Roll"** Kriger, Rabbi Adam **"Johnny B. Good"** Zeff, and the GJC **"Thank you, thank you very much"** Choir, along with the ginchiest G'vanim groovers and a host of all your friends for a **WILD** Purim like no other! Prayers will be said. The Megillah will be read. Songs will be sung. Bells will be rung. There will be laughter and tears and a whole lotta shakin' going on with the King, Esther, Vashti and everyone's favorite villain...

*Nosh, desserts, and beverages (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) will be provided!*





# GJC ALUMNI

by Heidi Silberstein Limareff

*Heidi Silberstein Limareff joined GJC with her mom Marilyn and sister Adina in 1984. After graduate school, she worked and then emigrated to Australia. We are delighted to have Heidi as our GJC Alumna this issue.*

Germantown Jewish Centre became a part of my life in 1984. At that time I lived in Overbrook Park with my mom, Marilyn Silberstein, and sister, Adina. I recall my mother, recently divorced, looking for a suitable synagogue for us to join as a new family unit. Unfortunately, she had a few places accuse her of shopping around for a bat mitzvah location rather than a new Jewish home. However, this was **not** the reception we received at GJC. Despite the 25-minute commute from West Philly, we joined GJC, and subsequently moved to Mt Airy five years later.

I graduated from Solomon Schechter Day School in 1985, and commenced Bat Mitzvah lessons with Hazzan Jack Kessler. I switched to the Julia R. Masterman School for 7th grade, and Hebrew School at GJC. I made some great friends there and started a lifelong friendship with Andy Millison, as we attended GJC and Masterman together. In 1986 I celebrated my bat mitzvah with Rabbi Hahn.

Throughout high school, my family attended GJC regularly. I have wonderful memories of both Shabbat and holiday services there with my mom and sister. I also recall coming home on weekends and holidays from my time at University of Pittsburgh, looking forward to attending services and catching up with friends.

In 1999, I graduated from San Diego State University with a Master's Degree in Audiology, and shortly thereafter returned home to Philly. Having all my networks on the west coast, my professional options were limited—until I came across an ad in an audiology journal, seeking audiologists to work in Australia.

Australia was, and is still, known for being a leader in the field of audiology, and I was excited by the prospect of undertaking work at the National Acoustic Laboratory. Always one up for adventure, I was open to accepting the two-year visa the Australian government was offering. The catch was that in order to obtain an Aussie visa, a 'skilled migrant' was not permitted to live in a major regional center. This meant I had no chance of being placed in Melbourne or Sydney. Knowing it was unlikely I would meet Jewish people outside of these cities, I requested to be in the 'largest possible place.' Adelaide, South Australia was chosen for me, and I landed in Adelaide on a 100+ degree day during the first week of January 2000.

I met Andrew, who is now my husband, about 3 weeks after landing. We have been married 15 years and have two beautiful children: Elia, age 12, and Beckett, age 9. I converted my working visa into permanent residency and then citizenship in 2008, making me a dual national. I am currently the CEO of a small company providing disability services that focus on supporting deaf and blind people.



Andrew, sister Adina Silberstein, Elia, Heidi & Beckett Limareff

Jewish life in Adelaide is interesting. Despite Australia publicly identifying as a "Christian country" (which seems to translate into public school putting on Christmas carols and plays every year, and not much else), in the last national census, over 60% of Aussies identified as non-religious (and in my experience it would be closer to 80%). Telling people we are Jewish in Adelaide immediately leads them to picture either orthodox people in big hats and *peyos* (sidelocks), such as they see in Melbourne, or it leads to a conversation about bacon.

Australia has two Jewish denominations: Orthodox and Progressive. I joined a progressive *shul* (Beit Shalom) in 2005, where a typical Saturday service has about 20 people in attendance, but most holidays and events garner over 100 attendees. Amazingly, Adelaide also used to have a private Jewish day school attached to the orthodox *shul*, but that school closed about 11 years ago.

*(Continued on page 16)*

## GJC ALUMNI (continued)

Australia has no Rabbinic colleges, and therefore nearly all rabbis here are imports. The Rabbi at our *shul* for the last nearly 12 years is Shoshana Kaminsky, who attended the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College! My daughter has only ever attended *shul* and Hebrew school with Shoshana as her rabbi, and actually asked me once, "Mum, did you know that there are men Rabbis, too?!"

One of the first Shabbat services I attended here was a Bat Mitzvah and the *shul* was packed. I sat behind a Jewish woman from Pikesville, MD. I told her we were going to be friends. She and her husband subsequently performed the naming ceremony for our daughter. We created a *havurah* (fellowship group) that includes four east coast American Jewish women who married Adelaide non-Jewish men (one converted), one Israeli man who married a South Australian non-Jewish woman, and one local Adelaide Jewish woman who married her non-Jewish high school sweetheart. Our combined 11 children, ages 5-13, are all being raised Jewish and we make up one-half of the current *heder* (Hebrew school) attendees.

Being a Jew in Adelaide has taught me a lot about myself, my heritage, and making my way in a secular world. We tried two public schools before admitting that our children would benefit from a private education, and now they are the only two Jewish children in a Lutheran School. They have Christian Studies every day; we then actively de-program them at home (Andrew grew

up in a Baptist home, but does not practice any religion and in fact often assists our *shul* with its IT needs and other things). Both children have strong Jewish identities. This comes from our home, our *shul*, as well as other Jewish youth activities run by Netzer and Habomin Dror Zionist programs. At age eight, we flew Elia to Melbourne on her own to attend a week-long Netzer camp, and now both kids attend every January.

In attending this camp, our children meet other Jewish children from across Australia. This camp experience often culminates with Australian Jewish children taking a gap year after 12th grade to live in Israel. Elia already wears a t-shirt proclaiming "Shnat 2025" (2025 being her year to go to Israel for the Shnat Netzer gap-year program).

We are currently preparing for Elia's bat mitzvah, which will be on July 6, 2019. We are expecting between five and ten family members from the USA to come for the event, despite leaving the warmth of summer for the cold Aussie winter (it really is!)

A few years ago, we hosted Marcy and Dan Bacine when they were visiting. It's always wonderful to get a taste of GJC here in Adelaide. We are always open for US visitors. (South Australia is known as the wine country of Australia and is a great place for kangaroo and koala spotting!)

## WOMEN OF GJC'S SHABBAT SHALOM PROJECT

This past fall, Susan Weiss and Peninah Berdugo initiated a Women of GJC program called the **Shabbat Shalom Project**. The program is designed to connect volunteers with those Centre members who, for a variety of reasons, can benefit from some special outreach. The Shabbat Shalom Project's goal is to strengthen our community support.

Currently we have 24 Shabbat Shalom volunteer-callers and 24 Shabbat Shalom recipients, with more recipients waiting for a volunteer-caller match. Call recipients are identified by Rabbi Zeff and GJC administrative staff. These are members they feel would appreciate a Shabbat Shalom telephone call. Volunteer-callers are expected to make a call a minimum of twice per month to the same recipient.

***One of our members expressed some of her feelings about the experience:***

**"Establishing a connection with a GJC member whom I may never meet, and hearing the story of her life, has made me feel connected in a fundamental way with a member of my community. Calling her on Friday is now a regular part of my week and helps me feel the peace and**

**joy of Shabbat. It has definitely enriched my life and has helped me feel connected to GJC in a very different way than anything I have ever done."**

We are looking for more women in the GJC community to become volunteer-callers. Susan and Peninah will match volunteer-callers and recipients, and will provide some basic guidelines to volunteer-callers. A simple Shabbat Shalom greeting and maybe a short chat is all that is required. Volunteer-callers will not be asked to provide any service beyond the calls that help to connect our community further.

This is a great opportunity for GJC women who have teenagers in their home, to model for them how a synagogue creates and sustains a sense of community and connectivity. It is also a way for GJC women to participate in a Women of GJC activity from their own homes.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact:  
Susan Weiss 610-909-8127 or email [slw6809@comcast.net](mailto:slw6809@comcast.net) or  
Peninah Berdugo 215-917-5840 or  
email [peninahberdugo@gmail.com](mailto:peninahberdugo@gmail.com)

## MEMBER MEMORIES

### *I Used to Sit at the Kids' Table*

by Susan Weiss

I used to sit at the kids' table at Passover—a card table at the end of the dining room table, beyond the good tablecloth and china. We had a cloth that was okay to stain with grape juice. We shared a piano bench or hassock, with phone books for booster seats. Amid my cousins, siblings and children of family friends, I celebrated the Passover seder—giggling and at times oblivious to the ceremony at the adults' table.

At the kids' table, the focus was not on the seder, but on daring one another to eat horseradish or stealing the afikomen. We would laugh and nudge one another as we *fumfered* through reading the ancient Rabbis' names. We read *Who Knows One?* in one breath and ate gobs of Passover candy. My siblings and I asked the four questions. Our "carrying on" brought "behave yourselves" looks. The only permitted interruptions were phone calls from kids' table alumni who were away at college. Passing the phone around the table was a Seder ritual.

Graduating from the children's table, my role and perspective changed. As a young adult, I sat in the middle of the table, and was expected to participate. From the middle we followed the service my father led, and I loved being with family, the special Passover food and traditions. But I was stuck in the middle, too big for the kids' table and too young and religiously naïve to contribute.

I continued to move up the table. When my daughter was born, I made a brief return to the kids' table until she was able to sit on her own. When she began bat mitzvah preparation, I also took on Jewish study, and I found I was no longer satisfied with the old Maxwell House Haggadah. Its antiquated language, lack of modern interpretations, masculine pronouns, and absence of women from the narrative were no longer acceptable. I wanted a Seder that was inclusive and relevant while capturing the family's traditions. There was more that wanted for myself and to pass on to my children.

With trepidation, I put together a haggadah and songbook. I searched through a number of haggadot and alternative readings to organize a service that spoke to a family's desire to tell a story and reflect our shared historical, mythical, cultural and spiritual unity. I included traditional songs and parodies of familiar show tunes and TV theme songs, while conveying information that had been lost in Hebrew.

I invited my parents to join us for this seder, and around the table sat my parents, family and friends. My grandchildren



and their parents sat at the children's table. I took my seat at the head of the table, and at that moment appreciated the responsibility and position I had undertaken. Would the service be meaningful and inclusive? Is this the right thing to do? Will this continue into the next generations?

My husband welcomed the family with a rendition of "Hello, Family," sung to the tune of "Hello, Dolly." We sang about notable women of the Passover story. I added a Miriam's Cup and honored Serah, daughter of Asher. A fourth matzah on the Seder plate triggered discussion of current enslavement fueled by poverty, government, racism or other oppressive influences.

My parents actively participated and enjoyed the service. Dad approved; Mom liked the food, but reminded me she does not put turnip in her matzah ball soup. Some things are harder to change.

Not all of our friends and relatives are still with us, but I create a space in the seder to remember all those no longer seated with us. Current political issues keep our discussions relevant and timely. New songs and Passover games keep everyone involved. Parents help their children follow the service and recite the four questions. As all move up and around the table, I know someone will take my place. With welcomed excitement, I wait to see what they will bring to this seat. For now, I sit at the head of our seder table, satisfied that it is a temporary position. There are others circling the table.



# THE BRENDA LAIGAIE MEMORIAL PROGRAM

Saturday, March 23 following services

At GJC we strive to build a community that is inviting and welcoming to all who come through our doors and that continually expands our capacity to learn together about the vast world of Jewish life and thought. In her years of dedication to our congregation, in her capacity as a chair of the membership committee as well as through her presence, Brenda embodied these values in her warm engagement with everyone she met and in her continued interest in learning herself and in facilitating the learning of others. Through the generosity of Brenda's family, Germantown Jewish Centre is honored to present the first annual program in Brenda's memory.



## Outsider-Insiders: Female Voices of Resistance and Cultural Critique in Rabbinic Tradition with Rabbi Tracy Nathan



Rabbi Tracy Nathan will explore stories from the Talmud in which women express a powerful voice of critique and resistance to power and authority. Rabbi Nathan is the Senior Educator at the Center for Jewish Learning (CJL) of the Jewish Federation of St. Louis and Director of the Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning of St. Louis. She develops and consults on adult learning courses, workshops, and programs and teaches throughout the greater St. Louis Jewish community.

Details regarding the program and registration for the *tish* (study session) can be found at [www.germantownjewishcentre.org/laigaie-memorial-tish](http://www.germantownjewishcentre.org/laigaie-memorial-tish).

## MORE MEMBER MEMORIES

by Eve Pinkenson

I've written before about the Seders my father used to hold in our home in Mt. Vernon, NY. Pesah Seders are among the nicest memories I have of my childhood. They were big, noisy, filled with lots of talking, laughter, good food, and little secrets.

My father's mother lived in Montreal and came to spend all of Pesah with us. She was a sweet old lady (as a child, I thought she was ancient! Now that I've reached her age, I laugh at that) and I always had to give up my room for her. We called her Grandma Blumenthal. I don't know that she favored any of the grandchildren, and she couldn't bear it if we were disappointed when not getting something we wanted. That's what this story is all about.

When the Blumenthal side of the family was at Seder, there were six grandchildren at the table. Grandma B. sat at Dad's right hand. My father would wrap the *Afikomen* and eventually hide it somewhere in the dining room or living room. When it came time to redeem and eat the *Afikomen*, surprise, surprise,

there was more than one! The youngest grandchildren were not disappointed.

So Dad started making a big deal of how he wrapped the cloth napkin around the *Afikomen*, so that we wouldn't be able to imitate it. Grandma watched very closely. Surprise, surprise, when it came time to eat the *Afikomen*, there was more than one!

So my father doubled down on his complicated napkin wrapping, and then added a drop of wine in a specific spot on the napkin (my mother loved that...). That would allow him to identify "his" *Afikomen*, as compared with others. Grandma watched very carefully. You can guess how this ended. Grandma couldn't stand to have any of us smaller ones disappointed at not coming up with the *Afikomen*.

I never really knew whether Dad and Grandma were in cahoots or not, but this remains a sweet memory for me.

## GJC FAMILY RETREAT



Photo from last year's Family Retreat

Each year for the past nine years, many families of GJC have gathered for a weekend of camaraderie, friendship, Shabbat relaxation, and family-friendly activities. This year's GJC Family Retreat is returning to its traditional weekend of May 10-12 at the Malvern Retreat Center. Springtime and the Retreat will bring lots of bike riding, nature walks, discussion, art activities, outdoor games, Shabbat services, spiritual reconnections and both new and rekindled friendships.

The Retreat is the perfect time to meet other GJC families with children.

Registration will open in early March; look in the GJC Weekly for an e-registration.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Maria Pulzetti ([maria.pulzetti@gmail.com](mailto:maria.pulzetti@gmail.com)) or Molly Weingrod ([madam.molly@gmail.com](mailto:madam.molly@gmail.com)).

Maria Pulzetti and Molly Weingrod (Co-Chairs)  
Anna Goldberg, Michael Gross, Toby Kessler, Maani Waldor, Naomi Walinsky-King

## ONE MORE MEMBER MEMORY

by Marilyn Silberstein

One of my favorite memories from my childhood was the week of preparation for Pesah. I enjoyed the excitement, the busy atmosphere, and the smells...especially the smells. In fact, I even remember writing an essay in my rather *goyishe* class at school about the smells in my house as we prepared for the feast!

Part of the preparation was my mother's making of *gefillte* fish. No, we didn't have a "carp in the bathtub" (thank G-d!), but

she seemingly labored for hours cleaning pounds of fish, cooking, seasoning, and tasting. It was **the** biggest job in the preparation. One year, as we started the meal following the Seder service, the fish was served, and my father declared (loudly in front of all the guests), I think I like the stuff in the jar better! He did survive the meal, and, unfortunately, I never again had my mother's *gefillte* fish.

# TODAH RABBAH!

## CONTRIBUTIONS from DECEMBER 2018-JANUARY 2019

Sincere thanks and appreciation to those who remember to honor their friends and loved ones through their generous contributions.

FUND	BY	OCCASION
Adult Education Fund	Elise Bromberg	in memory of Fortunee Bromberg, mother
	Linda Dzuba	in memory of Samuel Pinkenson, father
	Michael Dzuba	in memory of Albert Dzuba, father
		in memory of Selma Dzuba, mother
	Shellie & Jeremy Holl	in honor of Linda Cherkas & Chaim Dworkin, on their newest grandchildren
Beck Scholar-in-Residence Fund		in memory of Ruth Diamond, mother of Yona Diamond Dansky
	GJC's Israeli Dancers	in memory of Hattie Segal, mother of Stephen Segal
	David Picker	in memory of Doris Picker, mother
	Elizabeth Beck	in memory of William Beck, father
	Peter Kuriloff	in memory of Nancy Kuriloff, sister
Bess Schick Fund		in memory of Hattie Segal, mother of Stephen Segal
	Ed & Dena Lake	in memory of Ruth Diamond, mother of Yona Diamond Dansky
		in honor of Richard Mandel, on his special birthday
	Maria Pulzetti	in honor of GJC staff, for their help & support for her Bat Mitzvah
Camp Scholarships Fund	Michael Sivitz	in memory of Sidney Sivitz, father
Chesed Fund	GJC's Israeli Dancers	in memory of Ruth Diamond, mother of Yona Diamond Dansky
	Beth Stearman	in memory of Lillian Stearman, grandmother
	Ed & Dena Lake	in honor of Maria Pulzetti, on becoming a Bat Mitzvah
	Marjorie Richman	in memory of Ida Levy, mother
	Rebecca Ladenheim	in memory of Freda Ladenheim, mother
Dorshei Derekh Fund	Dan & Marcy Bacine	in memory of Hattie Segal, mother of Stephen Segal
	Yona Diamond Dansky	in honor of Ari Witkin, for leading shiva services for her mother
	Vincent DiLorenzo	in memory of Gabriel DiLorenzo, father
	Rachel Falkove	in memory of Albert Falkove, uncle
	Helene Feinberg	in memory of Anne Rosenberg, mother
Early Childhood Program Fund	Marvin & Marilyn Goldman	in honor of Denis & Annalena Lattanzi
	Stewart Golen	in memory of Lillian Golen, mother
	Nina Gordon & Lou Walinsky	in honor of the wonderful, hard-working staff of GJC
	Linda Hahn	in memory of Rabbi Sanford Hahn, husband
	Edith Klausner	in memory of Belle & Sidney Quitman, parents
Floral Fund	Hillary & Judd	in honor of Mikael Elsil & Dina Pinsky, on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Sol
	Levingston Kruger	in honor of Paul Rudick & Denise Wolf, on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Levi Rudick
General Fund	Jim & Sandy Meyer	in memory of Ruth Diamond, mother of Yona Diamond Dansky



# Contributions *continued*

FUND	BY	OCCASION
General Fund (continued)	Rita Rosen Poley	in honor of Maria Pulzetti, on becoming a Bat Mitzvah
	Maria Pulzetti & Abby Horn	in honor of David Kanthor & Burgandy Holiday, on the baby naming of their daughter, Zoraya Raquel
		in honor of Mikael Elsila & Dina Pinsky, on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Sol
	Alex Seldin	in memory of Rabbi Max Routtenberg, grandfather
		in memory of Milton Seldin, father
	Joan Silver	in memory of Ruth Diamond, mother of Yona Diamond Dansky
	Mark Silver	in memory of Evelyn Winderman Silver, mother
		in memory of Frances Winderman, aunt
	Beth Stearman	in memory of Samuel Needleman, grandfather of Mitchell Berk
	Gail Tunick & Family	in memory of Edward Seltzer, father
Hazak Fund	Arthur Weinrach	in memory of Mildred Berkowitz, mother
		in memory of Benjamin Weinrach, father
		in memory of Stephen Weinrach, brother
	Nancie Wolfe	in honor of Barry & Ruth Farber, on their 50th anniversary
	Elayne Blender	in honor of Coleman Poses, on his special birthday
	Helen & Michael Feinberg	in memory of Hattie Segal, mother of Stephen Segal
		in honor of Sol Pinsky Elsila, son of Mikael Elsila & Dina Pinsky, on becoming a Bar Mitzvah
		in honor of Levi Rudick, son of Paul Rudick & Denise Wolf, on becoming a Bar Mitzvah
	Cherie Goren	in memory of Joseph Goren, husband
	Louie Asher	in honor of Peninah & Albert Berdugo, on the birth of their new grandson
Interfaith Hospitality Network		in honor of Marti Reinfeld & Ildefonso Burgos, on the birth of their new daughter
	Dayle Friedman	in memory of Jill Fixler, sister
	Bev Somerson	in honor of Carol Kaplan, on her special birthday
	William Kavesh	in honor of Itzchak Kornfeld
	Marjorie Richman	in memory of Seymour Richman, husband
	Beth Stearman	in memory of Freda Denniberg, grandmother
	Bonnie Buyum	in memory of Barbara Buyum, aunt
	Richard Menin	in memory of Benjamin Menin, uncle
	Carol Robinson	in memory of Barbara McCracken, mother
	Michael Robinson	in memory of Elaine Robinson, mother
Israel Affairs Fund		in memory of Julius Robinson, father
	Marilyn Silberstein	in memory of Seymour Meyers, partner
	Joan W. Stern	in memory of David Winderman, father
		in memory of Lillian Winderman, aunt
		in memory of Sarah Winderman, grandmother
Israel Garden Fund		
Kiddush Fund		

# Contributions *continued*

FUND	BY	OCCASION
<b>Minyan Masorti</b>	Avi Decter	in memory of Naomi Decter, wife
<b>Memorial Shabbat Fund</b>	Marvin & Marilyn Goldman	in honor of Denis & Annalena Lattanzi
	Bernard Simon	with thanks to Minyan Masorti, for making him feel comfortable when he was visiting cousins November 17
	Wendy Weingarten	in memory of Nancy Traub, mother
		in memory of Ernest Weingarten, father-in-law
<b>Music Fund</b>	Lizanne Berger	in memory of Scott Marcus, uncle
	David Birnbaum	in memory of Sandy Birnbaum, wife
	Elayne Blender	in honor of Betty Ann Fellner, on her special birthday
	Bonnie Buyum	in memory of Eda Kaufman, grandmother
	Charles Schleifer	in memory of Erik Cameron, MD, nephew
	Joyce Videlock	in memory of Matthew Wainer, father
	Deborah White	in memory of Milton White, father
<b>Playground Fund</b>	GJC's Israeli Dancers	in honor of Jimmy & Naomi Rotenberg, on the birth of their son, Judah Lev
<b>Program Fund</b>	Molly Weingrod	in memory of Steven Weingrod, father
<b>Rabbi Zeff's Discretionary Fund</b>	Louie Asher	in memory of Sylvia Elfant, mother
	Richard Bazelon	in memory of David Bazelon, father
	Marim Charry	in memory of Dana Charry, brother
		in memory of Marim Charry, grandfather
		in memory of Ruth Charry, mother
		in memory of Rabbi Elias Charry, father
		in memory of Jordan Moshe Charry, son
		in memory of Lawrence Charry, uncle
	Rennie Cohen	in honor of Elaine Dushoff, on the 65th anniversary of her Bat Mitzvah
	Nan Daniels	in memory of Tim Daniels, husband
		in memory of Ruth Diamond, mother of Yona Diamond Dansky
	Elaine Dushoff	in honor of Rennie Cohen, on the 65th anniversary of her Bat Mitzvah
	Evelyn Eskin & David Major	in memory of Hattie Segal, mother of Stephen Segal
	Grace Flisser	in memory of Marvin Flisser, father
	Mindelle Goldstein	in memory of Ruth Meilachowitz, mother
		in memory of Milton Goldstein, husband
	Harriet Joseph	in memory of Alfred & Irene Bickelman, parents
	Carol Kaplan	in memory of Samuel Pinn, father
		in memory of Bette Sinett, sister
	Ellen & Richard Lederman	in honor of Eve Pinkenson
	Maria Pulzetti	in memory of Sylvia Pulzetti, grandmother
	Hershel & Betsy Richman	in honor of Richard Mandel, on his special birthday
	Beth Rosenbaum	in memory of Richard Rosenbaum, father
		in memory of Newlin Booth, step-father
	Gloria Salmansohn	in memory of Eva Smilowitz, mother
	Bev Somerson	in memory of Ruth Diamond, mother of Yona Diamond Dansky

# Contributions *continued*

FUND	BY	OCCASION
Rabbi Zeff's Discretionary Fund (continued)	Michael Steinlauf	in memory of William Wolf Steinlauf, father
	Ken & Susan Weiss	in memory of Hattie Segal, mother of Stephen Segal
	Susan Weiss	in memory of Milton Sanders, father
Religious School Fund	Yona Diamond Dansky	in honor of Rabbi Alanna Sklover, for leading the memorial service for her mother
Special Education Fund	Marvin & Marilyn Goldman	in honor of Denis & Annalena Lattanzi
	Jeffrey Needleman	in memory of Beatrice Needleman, mother in memory of Alan Needleman, brother
Tikkun Olam Fund	Rebecca Zaslow	in memory of Anne Zaslow, mother
	Elayne Blender	in honor of Milt Cohen, on his special birthday
	Elizabeth Bloch-Smith	in memory of Theodore Bloch, father
	Daniel Piser	in memory of Leonore Piser, mother
	George Stern	in memory of Edwin Stern, father
Torah Restoration Fund	Geanne Zelkowitz	in memory of Norma Kulberg, mother
	Chana Bonn	in memory of David Simcha Greenwald, father
	Eve Pinkenson	in memory of Ignaz Spitzer, grandfather
Young Families Retreat Fund	Matthew Closter & Julie Berger	in honor of Maria Pulzetti, on becoming a Bat Mitzvah
Youth Activities Fund	Curtis & Leslie Pontz	in memory of Hattie Segal, mother of Stephen Segal
		in memory of Ruth Diamond, mother of Yona Diamond Dansky



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If you are interested in writing for The Centre Call, we would love to hear your ideas! Please contact Kate Lawn at [program@germantownjewishcentre.org](mailto:program@germantownjewishcentre.org). The deadline for every issue is the 1st of the previous month.



### Germantown Jewish Centre

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