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Indiana Edition

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Bureau of
Jewish Education

Mazel Tov 2013 graduates!



Hasten Hebrew Academy
of Indianapolis



Simcha Announcements

Mazel Tov to...

The Hasten Hebrew Academy of Indianapolis Eighth Grade Graduates of 2013: (See photo on cover) L-R Front Row: Eitan Alkaslassy, Michaela McKasson, Jonah Katz, Tal Rothenberg, Aviv Linkon, and Nicholle Sanders. Middle Row: Rebecca Bruns, Yonaton Rose, Maya Harris, Maya Geller-Montague, Benjamin Glazier, Zea Pakula, and Aryeh Cohen. Back Row: Chava Bunes, Breanna Kelsoe, Aaron Garrett, Sam Schwartz, and Arik Tieke. ✨



L-R: grandmother, Ann Lande, father, Phil Lande, Marty, and mother, Cheryl Lande.

Marty Lande (above) on his May 4 graduation from Indiana University with a degree in Sports Marketing and Management. He started working this month in Chicago for AFN. ✨



Josh Pittleman with son Shlomo Yisrael and new born daughter Emuna.

Mike and Sylvia Blain for their 10th great-grandchild, Emuna (above), born in Jerusalem on May 2.

Emuna (Faith) is the new daughter of Josh and Jenny (Blain) Pittleman. Her

Jewish Studies Program founder awarded IU Bloomington Provost's Medal

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. – April 30 – Indiana University Bloomington Provost and Executive Vice President Lauren Robel has presented the Provost's Medal to Alvin Rosenfeld, a distinguished scholar of literature and Holocaust studies who established the university's Jewish Studies program and led it for decades.

Robel presented the medal at a celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Robert A. and Sandra S. Borns Jewish Studies Program at IU Bloomington. Rosenfeld is the Irving M. Glazer Chair of Jewish Studies and a professor of English and Jewish studies in the College of Arts and Sciences.

He established the Jewish studies program in 1973, making IU one of the first public institutions to offer such a program, and directed the program for much of its existence. Its 40th anniversary celebration on April 21 featured a concert by Menahem Pressler and Friends at IU's Auer Hall.

"Through 30 years of dedicated and visionary leadership, he built an outstanding program, renowned not only for its academic rigor, but also for its supportive and inspiring intellectual environment," Robel said. "Professor Rosenfeld brought to the program an incredible depth of knowledge of Jewish history and literature. Moreover, he brought a sustained and informed understanding of the Jewish experience in America and around the world."

Rosenfeld also established the Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism at Indiana University Bloomington in 2009 and serves as the institute's director.

His scholarly expertise includes Holocaust literature, American Jewish literature and literature of exile. He is the author or editor of nine books, including *The End of the Holocaust*, *The Writer Uprooted: Contemporary Jewish Exile Literatures*, *Imagining Hitler*, *A Double Dying: Reflections on Holocaust Literature*,

maternal grandparents are David and Susan Blain of Cherry Hill, N.J. and her paternal grandparents are Mark and Carin Pittleman of Milwaukee. Her maternal great-grandparents are Mike and Sylvia Blain of Cleveland (formerly Indianapolis). Emuna has a brother Shlomo Yisrael Pittleman. ✨



Indiana University Bloomington Provost and Executive Vice President Lauren Robel presents the Provost's Medal to Alvin Rosenfeld.

and *Confronting the Holocaust: The Impact of Elie Wiesel*. His next book, *Resurgent Antisemitism: Global Perspectives*, will appear in June with IU Press.

He was appointed in 2002 by U.S. President George W. Bush to the governing council of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and presently serves as a member of the museum's Executive Council. He has a Ph.D. from Brown University and an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

The Provost's Medal is cast in silver and depicts the Indiana University Bloomington Student Building, the tree of knowledge, and the Indiana landscape on one side, and the Showalter Fountain on the other. Originally called the Chancellor's Medallion, it was first given in 1997 to James P. Holland, an exemplary teacher and scholar in the Department of Biology. Renamed the Provost's Medal in 2006, it recognizes outstanding service that builds and enhances the impact of Indiana University. ✨

The Jewish Post & Opinion

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Simchas Welcome! Had a recent joyous occasion in your family or Jewish organization? *The Jewish Post & Opinion* – IN Edition welcomes your announcements for placement in our *Simcha* section (see page 2). Submit photos and text to: jpostopinion@gmail.com. **Next Deadline: August 1, 2013.** All decisions on publishing, date of placement, size of photo, and length of announcement are at the sole discretion of the publisher.

Editorial

On May 17 I had the pleasure of attending a special tribute service for Rabbi Sandy Eisenberg Sasso that took place at Congregation Beth-El Zedeck in Indianapolis. Sandy is retiring after 36 years of sharing the pulpit with her husband Rabbi Dennis C. Sasso. Two months prior to that, Dennis received the prestigious annual Rabbi Ira Eisenstein Award for Distinguished Rabbinic Leadership.

As the first ever rabbinic couple, they came to Indianapolis in 1977 to become the first to jointly lead a congregation, and Sandy was the first woman to lead a Conservative congregation. Three years prior, this newspaper had a photo of her because she was the first woman rabbinical student to graduate from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Philadelphia. (See news item below.)

To give an idea how our society has changed since then in regard to female congregational leadership, an article in *The Indianapolis Star* on May 19 reports that when Sandy was 23 and in her first year of seminary studies, a woman wrote her a letter saying "the very idea of a female rabbi makes me sick." Today approximately 50% of the Reform rabbinical students are female.

The Sassos are not only known for their informative sermons, wonderful storytelling, and laugh-out-loud funny jokes and puns, but so much more. They both have doctorate degrees and have also received honorary doctorates. In Indianapolis they have been involved in arts, civic and interfaith activities and have taught at local universities and a seminary. They both write columns for *The Indianapolis Star*. This is the tip of iceberg for their numerous accomplishments.

Some of you may know Sandy because of her award winning children's spirituality books. They have been best sellers not only on Jewish books lists but on Catholic and other book lists. Her latest book, *The Shemah in the Mezuzah* won the 2012 National Jewish Book Award for Best Illustrated Children's Book. Her book for adults, *God's Echo: Exploring Scripture with Midrash* was published in 2007.

One of the speakers at the tribute for Sandy was Rabbi Joy Levitt, executive director of the JCC in Manhattan. One of the local speakers, Rev. Tanya Vonnegut Beck, a trailblazer in the Episcopal Church was also in attendance at the Sassos' installation in Dec. 1977. Read more about that on page IN 9.

Even though they are two separate individuals, after so many years of being spouses, co-workers, parents of two and

grandparents of three, they are linked together as one. When I see one of them alone on the pulpit or teaching a class, I feel as if the other is there in spirit. When I read one of their writings or hear one of their High Holiday sermons, I assume the other was consulted before it was submitted or delivered.

Although the speeches at the tribute service were all lovely, what stood out were the tributes Dennis and Sandy spoke to each other. We live in a society where half of the marriages end in divorce, and in Hollywood seven years is considered a long marriage. In this community where the Sassos have each contributed so much, perhaps their greatest gift is their love and devotion to each other.

When two famous celebrities become an item, the press creates one catchy name for the "super couple". Remember "Bennifer" for Ben Affleck and Jennifer Lopez, "TomKat" for Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes and "Brangelina" for Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie? I wonder if either of them would answer to "Dandy" as a one word name for the first ever rabbinic couple.

The following appeared in the National edition of this newspaper on May 3, 1974.

Rabbi Couple Both Get Pulpits

Dennis and Sandy Sasso, of suburban Philadelphia, will become the world's first husband-and-wife rabbinical couple when the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College ordains them May 19. They will then serve separate congregations in the New York area. The Sassos, who are both 27, met in their first year at the college and were married before its end.

They decided to serve separate congregations, at least at the start, to establish independent careers. Sometime in the future, they agreed, they might want to work together.

Sandy will become rabbi of the Reconstructionist Manhattan Havurah in September. Dennis will become a rabbi at the Reconstructionist Synagogue of North Shore in Manhasset, N.Y., at about the same time. The latter is currently served by Rabbi Ira Eisenstein, president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, who recently moved to Philadelphia.

Sandy added that she "definitely will have a family." Dennis said the Reconstructionist movement emphasizes the family aspect of congregation life.

Sandy will be the second female rabbi in the United States. The first, Sally Priesand, was ordained in June 1972 in Cincinnati, (see Editorial, page IN 5)

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Yiddish for Everyday

BY HENYA CHAIET

Meineh Yungeh yorn (My early years)

Yiddisheh kinder hert zach tzu ich vil reddem mit eyech hynt fun meineh yungeh yorn.

(Listen and I will tell you about my early years.)

Ich haub zich gehaudevet in oremkeit, auber ich haub alleh mol geven tzufreden mit vos haut pahsert. Der far vos ich haub gehat mein mutters mishpaucheh zayer naunt.

(I was raised in [financial] poverty. However I was always happy with what was going on. I believe this was because we lived so close to all of my mother's family.)

Meineh chaverim zeinen geven meineh koozeenez. Mir flegen zen dee Baubeh un Zaydeh kimat yeder taug.

(My friends were my cousins. We would see Baubee [our grandmother] and Zydee [our grandfather] almost every day.)

Heint iz ahn andersheh velt. Yeder mensch gait vuh zein parnahseh iz. Mishpauchehs zeinen aus gesprayt iber der ganser velt. Ah sach kinder vaynen veit avek fun zayer bubbeh un zaydeh.

(Today the world is very different. Everyone goes to where their work takes them. Families are spread over all the world. Many children live very far from their grandmother and grandfather.)

Heint reddem zay offen Internet. Zeinen zeh tzu freedem? Ich freg eich.

(Today they speak to each other on the Internet. Are they happy? I ask you?)

Henya Chaiet is the Yiddish name for (see Chaiet, page IN 7)

Community Events

Jewish Theatre of Bloomington presents *Old Wicked Songs*

Now playing: *Old Wicked Songs* (see photo page IN 5), written by Jon Marans and directed by Mark Kamie. Evening performances will be at 7:30 p.m. on **Thurs., June 13**; and **Sat., June 15**. All performances are at the Bloomington Playwrights Project, 107 W. 9th Street. General admission tickets are \$18.00 and are available at the Buskirk-Chumley Theatre Box Office or online at www.bctboxoffice.com. For more information about the Jewish Theatre of Bloomington, visit www.jewishtheatrebloomington.org.

Congregation Beth Shalom BBQ

Shabbat BBQ in the Park will take place on **Fri., June 14**, 6:00 p.m. at West Park, Carmel across the street from University High School. Join us, one and all, for a very special *Shabbat!* CBS is holding a pitch-in Shabbat BBQ Dinner. Along with the great food, this will be a double *mitzvah* – a baby naming for the granddaughter of Cindy and Stan Springer and a great welcome for our new clergy, **Rabbi Stanley Halpern**, and **Cantor Deb Winston**. Come and meet them in person! Watch our website for details, and plan now to attend!

Groundbreaking & Family Fun Day

For the Chabad Center for Jewish Life is **Sun., June 16** from 2–4 p.m., 2640 West 96th Street, Carmel, Ind. For dedication opportunities or more information, call 251-5573 or go to lubavitchindiana.com.

Hadassah Book Club

Book Club will be held on **Mon., June 17**. June's book of the month is *The Great Gatsby*. Our regularly scheduled **board meeting** will be held **Wed., June 26** at 7 p.m. in the Arthur M. Glick JCC.

Tzofim Friendship Caravan

Israeli Scouts Music and Dance Performance will be held on **Tues., June 18** at 6:30 p.m. in the Laikin Auditorium of the Arthur M. Glick JCC. This is group of Israeli teenagers who crisscross North America each summer as emissaries, sharing their lives in Israel through song, dance and story in English, Hebrew and Yiddish. Adults \$5, Kids (12 and under) \$3. Maximum \$16 per family. Purchase tickets at www.JFGI.org.

JFGI 108th annual meeting

Meeting will be held on **Wed., June 19** at 7 p.m. in the Laikin Auditorium of the Arthur M. Glick JCC. There will be an election of officers and board members, award presentations, and a dessert reception in honor of the retirement of Michael Papo. RSVP 726-5450. Dietary laws observed.

The Observant Life Book Discussion

Beginning on **Wed., June 19** from 7:15 p.m.–8:30 p.m. Congregation Shaarey Tefilla will offer a one year discussion led by Rabbi Benjamin Sendrow of the The Conservative Movement's outstanding new book, *The Observant Life*. Frequency of meetings and future dates will be decided at this first meeting. Check our website, www.shaareytefilla.org, for this information. There is no fee for the program, but purchase of this book is recommended.

The Observant Life: The Wisdom of Conservative Judaism for Contemporary Jews contains a century of thoughtful inquiry into the most profound of all Jewish questions: how to suffuse life with timeless values, how to remain loyal to the covenant that binds the Jewish people and the God of Israel and how to embrace the law while retaining an abiding sense of fidelity to one's own moral path in life. *The Observant Life* explains the way *halakhah* (Jewish law) impacts on the way Jews actually live in the world and interact with the world. Contact the office at 733-2169 or at office@shaareytefilla.org to express your interest in attending.

Take Me Out to the Ballgame!

Sun., June 23, 1:15 p.m. Calling all dads and their kids! Join the PJ Library for an afternoon of baseball when the Indianapolis Indians take on the Charlotte Knights. Tickets: \$7 (children under 2 are free). Uncles, brothers and grandpas are welcome! Visit www.JFGI.org for more information and to buy tickets.

JCC Annual Meeting

Tues., June 25 in the Laikin auditorium at 7 p.m. Meeting agenda: Introduction to discover CATCH, awards ceremony,

recognition of outgoing board members, board elections, refreshments & dessert.

Indianapolis Kids Triathlon:

Registration is Open Now! **Sun., June 30** for ages 14 and under, all levels of ability. This is a fun, family day at the JCC, so pack up your child's bicycle and helmet, running shoes (or sneakers) and swim suits for all! More information is available at www.jccindy.org.

Summer Study of our Sacred Texts

Engage in the *mitzvah* of study with area clergy and educators at the Adult Education Summer Series sponsored by the Bureau of Jewish Education, Congregation Beth-El Zedeck, Hasten Hebrew Academy of Indianapolis, Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation, and Congregation Shaarey Tefilla. Each week, engage with a different topic and different teacher as we explore themes of biblical secrets, *kashrut*, Jewish mysticism, and sex. Classes are **July 10, 17, 24, and 31** from 7:00–8:30 p.m. and cost \$10 each or the full series for \$36. Full details are available online at www.bjeindy.org.

JCC Business Network

The next meeting will be on **Wed., July 17** at 6:30 p.m. at the Arthur M Glick JCC, 6701 Hoover Rd. RSVP to Larry Rothenberg lrothenberg@jccindy.org or call 317-715-9233. All are welcome. Free to JCC members and first timers. Others – \$5.

JDRF (formerly Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation) Fundraiser

On **Aug. 8** at 8 p.m., 3 bands comprised of several of Indy's top musicians will come together to play 3 albums in their entirety: Led Zeppelin: Album being covered – IV; Van Halen: Album being covered – I; The Who: Album being covered – Who's Next. Location: Birdy's Bar and Grill (www.birdyslive.com) 2131 E 71st street (71st & Keystone) Cover: \$10 – proceeds go to JDRF.

Congregation Shaarey Tefilla – Torah on the Road – Ongoing

Torah on the Road is open to our entire community. All are invited and are welcome to bring friends. Sessions take place from 12:30–1:30 p.m. on the last Tuesday and Wednesday monthly. Each month will hold a new topic, but one can participate either Tuesday or Wednesday. Please RSVP to Andrea Leopold at 733-2169 or at office@shaareytefilla.org. Tuesday's are in Downtown Indianapolis at the offices of Katz & Korin, 334 North Senate Avenue. Wednesday's are on the Northside at the law office of Bob Schuckit, 4545 Northwestern Drive, Zionsville. ✨



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Missing delicious deli food from Atlas?

Allyson (Davis) Milender and her husband Clay Milender (right) are the owners of Happy Everything, a business specializing in business and event catering. They also have a booth at the Carmel Farmer's Market every Saturday from 8–11:30 a.m. It is located next to the Palladium. Happy Everything Catering won Taste of Carmel for both 2012 and 2013. They are one of the most reviewed caterers on Angie's List as well as Yahoo.

Before it closed in 2002, Allyson had worked her way up to deli chef at Atlas Supermarket at 54th & College in Broad Ripple. Besides being famous for carrying all kinds of specialty items including a large variety of kosher food, David Letterman worked in that store as a teenager. Allyson took those Atlas recipes with her and that is the great taste you get when you eat their scrumptious tuna salad and other dishes.

Allyson is the third of four children of Mike Davis and the late Debbie (Adler) Davis. Remember the woman with the dark hair in the booth upstairs when you walked in the front door of Atlas? That smiling, friendly face greeting you belonged to Debbie Davis. For more than



60 years the store was owned by Debbie's aunt and uncle, Eleanor (Adler) Maurer and Sid Maurer, of blessed memory. Debbie's father was Morrie Adler and her mother was Marilyn (Rabin) Adler. Eleanor was Morrie's younger sister.

Allyson and Clay are preserving a cherished family business. They are the proud parents of three adorable girls. ★



Scene from Bloomington Jewish Theater's production of *Old Wicked Song*: (L) Ray Fellman as music professor Josef Mashkan, and (R) John Stender as Stephen Hoffman, his reluctant student. (see details on IN 4)

EDITORIAL

(continued from IN 3)

and now serves the Stephen Wise Free Synagogue in New York City.

The only other known female rabbi was Regina Jonas, who was ordained by a rabbi in Offenbach, Germany in the 1930's after a Berlin yeshiva refused to do so. She died in a concentration camp during World War II.

Jennie Cohen, June 12, 2013 ★

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How to turn Jewish teens into tomorrow's leaders

"My whole life I've been loud and crazy. And even though I've never had a problem talking, BBYO was one of the first places I feel like I was actually heard," says Daniela Reuter of Louisville's Jay Levine Chapter. "In BBYO, my opinions matter and I have a voice which allows me to stand up for causes I believe in. Thanks to BBYO, I have found my Jewish and personal identity," she continues. "Not only have I learned a lot about myself through BBYO, I've learned a lot about other people too. Everyone in BBYO is in it for a different reason. Mine is to inspire at least one person and to do something amazing!"

Daniela's story is just one of hundreds of others, each unique in their own way, but exactly the same in the passion they all share for BBYO and what it has done to help shape their young lives and inspire them to make a difference in the lives of others!

BBYO is the world's leading pluralistic Jewish youth group and for the past 100 years it has been turning out teens that go on to change the world. BBYO alumni are 250,000 strong and represent a disproportionate number of the Jewish leaders in business, politics, education and the not-for-profit arena. And this recently, a whole new generation of future leaders attended their very first BBYO AIT/MIT New Member Convention in Hamilton, Ohio at Camp Campbell Gard.

The Convention brought together nearly 150 teens from BBYO's Kentucky, Indiana and Ohio region, known as KIO, which includes teens from Cincinnati, Columbus, Dayton, Indianapolis and Louisville. Because BBYO is a teen led organization which focuses on building Jewish leaders, older more seasoned members were charged with teaching the younger ones some of the organization's important



Nearly 150 Jewish teens attended the 2013 regional BBYO Convention for New Members.

customs and traditions. They also put them through a simulated election process where they learned the ins and outs of voting, and introduced them to the basics of making motions and other procedural processes involved in chapter meetings. The convention also included engaging *Shabbat* and *Havdalah* services, an induction ceremony for new members, and a dance with a DJ and other social activities.

The AIT/MIT convention was planned by a steering committee of dedicated teens, including Eli Profeta from Indianapolis, Phoebe Rose from Dayton, the entire KIO Regional Board and Rebecca Schankerman, Jordan Gerwitz, Daniela Reuter, Jessica Cohen, Melissa Goodman, Rachel Bernstein, Harrison Lippy, Jenna Reis, Zachary Profeta, Matt Gordon, Jon Deutch, Adam Goot, Katie Segal, Ilana Perlstein, Ethan Cohen, Kyle Gordon and Eli Gould.

"It's an amazing thing to watch as these wide-eyed eighth and ninth graders come in as new members and within months transform into confident, community-minded leaders," explains Matt Steinberg, KIO's Regional Director. "It's really exciting to see their self-assurance, creativity, problem solving and leadership skills blossom over the years. I am inspired by these teens every day."

With 500 members, KIO was the first region in the entire BBYO international order to reach its membership goals for 2013! KIO is also in the process of starting a Friends and Alumni Network (FAN) and working to grow its teen delegation at international conventions and leadership conferences.

The AIT/MIT Convention is just one example of the numerous activities and programs that BBYO puts on throughout the year. With more than 30,000 members

across the globe, BBYO gives teens a chance to strengthen their Jewish identity and connections to Jewish life through local, regional, national and international programs, conventions, leadership training, summer camp, travel to other countries and Israel and more. BBYO's broad program menu enables teens to explore areas of leadership, service and civic engagement, Israel education, and Jewish values with the expectation that they will exhibit positive attitudes and behaviors about being Jewish while maintaining the values and relationships that strengthen the Jewish people.

According to a recent BBYO Impact Study, commissioned by the Schusterman Foundation, across several measures, BBYO alumni demonstrate a strong sense of Jewish pride and peoplehood, a willingness to play leadership roles and a connection to the State of Israel. They support Jewish organizations with their checkbooks and volunteer time. Alumni also participate actively in Jewish social networks and exhibit a desire and commitment to raising Jewish families.

"AIT MIT was my first convention. I didn't really know what to expect, but the second I got there, I knew BBYO was where I belonged," explains Sydney Glazier, an 8th grader from Indianapolis' B'Yachad Chapter. "I had heard so much about BBYO traditions and as soon as I experienced them for myself, I immediately felt the BBYO spark! In that moment, I discovered that BBYO is where I can really be myself... a community I can call home!"

To learn more about the upcoming programs and BBYO in general, please contact Mark Moscardino, Columbus' City Director at mmoscardino@columbusjcc.org or (614) 559-6218. BBYO is open to those who are currently in 8th-12th grade. ✨

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Critics Corner

REVIEWED BY CHARLIE EPSTEIN

The Sound of Music perfect production

There is no way Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II could top themselves after creating the musical based on *The Trapp Family Singers*. This musical *The Sound of Music* looms high as the world's most beloved musical.

First of all, it was a delightful surprise to see Suzanne Stark on the Beef & Boards stage again. As the Mother Abbess, she proved she can still belt those songs out the way she used to. She has lost not one iota of talent since playing her majestic title role in *Kiss Me Kate* years ago. It was wonderful hearing her voice again. A talent like hers should not be wasted nor ignored.

Of course the show revolves around Maria, fantastically portrayed by Cara Statham Serber. Nobody could take command of the stage away from her. The stern and whistle-blowing Captain von Trapp was played by David Schmittou who had the difficult task of being charming at the same time. He pulled it off without a hitch.



Photo credits: Julie Curry.

His seven children were delightful on stage. Thomas Whitcomb, Kennedy Martin, Isaac Herzog, Madison Moll, Lucy Neal, Emma Rogers and especially Hillary Smith as Liesl, who had a voice like a breath of springtime, made up this glorious family.

Eddie Curry can add to his enormous resume of outstanding characters the role of Max which he played magnificently. Sarah Hund played the role of Elsa (Maria's rival) with dignity. Adding to the cast were Jeff Stockberger, Nicholas Jones, Paul Nicely, and Ken Klingensmeier.

The spirits were kept high by the rousing musical tempos provided by orchestra conductor Kristly Templet. The scenic design by Michael Layton added to the evening's enjoyment, as well as the costumes by Jill Kelly. The person in charge of the casting deserves an A Plus as well as director Elizabeth Stark.

Usually familiarity breeds contempt. In this *The Sound of Music* there is plenty of familiarity and absolutely no contempt. I have seen over 50 productions of *The Sound of Music* and this Beef & Boards production is the best one yet – playing now through June 30.

Epstein, from Indianapolis, has been theater, movie and the performing arts critic for *The Jewish Post & Opinion – Indiana Edition* for more than 35 years. Read more of his work on his blog at: <http://charliethecritic.blogspot.com>. This one was posted on May. 24, 2013. ☆

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CHAIET

(continued from IN 3)

Mrs. A. Helen Feinn. Born in 1924 ten days before Passover, her parents had come to America one year prior. They spoke only Yiddish at home so that is all she spoke until age five when she started kindergarten. She then learned English, but has always loved Yiddish and speaks it whenever possible. Chaiet lived in La Porte and Michigan City, Ind., from 1952 to 1978 and currently resides in Walnut Creek, Calif. Email: afeinn87@gmail.com. ☆

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Phil Lande's Atlas Group



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How to keep your eyes healthy

By DR. JOHN ABRAMS
OF ABRAMS EYECARE ASSOCIATES

Regular eye exams: Babies are checked at birth for congenital abnormalities. Children should have a complete exam prior to starting grade school. Ages 18-50 should get an exam every other year unless they wear contacts or glasses or have any eye diseases. After 50, an annual eye exam is recommended. The main reason to be regularly checked is to detect glaucoma, which initially causes no symptoms before permanent loss of vision.

Sunglasses: Wear sunglasses to protect from harmful UV rays, which have been implicated in cataracts and macular degeneration.

Nutrition: Maintain proper nutrition or take a vitamin supplement.

Dry Eyes: Women and older patients often suffer from dry eyes. Artificial tear supplements, flaxseed oil, and omega fatty acids can help reduce symptoms. Prescription medications are available too.

Lasik: Freedom from glasses and contacts can be achieved through laser vision correction including Lasik.



Memorial Day 2013: Members of Post 14, Jewish War Veterans, were planting American flags at Cleveland's Zion Memorial Park cemetery on the graves of war veterans for Memorial Day. (L to R) Ted Hersh (Commander), Michael Blain, Sylvia Blain, Al Hersh, Tamas Muencz. (not shown, Judy Hersh, photographer). Ted Hersh, Al Hersh and Michael Blain are Korean War Veterans and Holocaust Survivors. This is a Jewish cemetery and the home of a massive Holocaust memorial.

Nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism can be corrected with laser technology.

Intraocular lens implants: Premium lenses implanted during cataract surgery now can eliminate a patient's prescription

needs. Lenses that provide near and far vision, like bifocals, are readily available for most patients.

To read more about Dr. Abrams and his father J. J. (Jerry) go to: <http://jewishpost> (see Abrams, page IN 9)



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Posting the Past

FROM THE INDIANA JEWISH POST & OPINION
APRIL 17, 2002

Sassos have led Beth-El for 25 years

Rabbis Dennis and Sandy Sasso of Congregation Beth-El Zedeck are in the 25th anniversary of their election and installation at the synagogue this year. "Beth-El Zedeck Elects Two Rabbis," the *P-O* headlined in its July 16, 1977 edition. The article noted that son David Sasso was a year old at the time.

A later edition of the paper carried comments from some of the congregants about the novelty of having a woman rabbi. The topic was so sensitive, apparently, that the *P-O* omitted the names of the people quoted. Some congregants had grown up in the Orthodox tradition and were clearly uncomfortable with the idea of a woman in the pulpit.

The Sassos were the world's first rabbinical couple and the first rabbinical couple to jointly hold a congregational pulpit.

The couple both studied at Hebrew University in Jerusalem in 1967, but met first at Philadelphia's Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, where they made history by marrying and becoming the first rabbinical couple. Sandy Eisenberg Sasso was the first woman graduate of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College.

Their installation in December 1977 was an ecumenical event with all branches of Judaism represented along with two women who recently had made history by being ordained as Episcopalian priests, the Rev. Jacqueline Means and the Rev. Tanya Vonnegut.

Rabbi Murray Saltzman of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation (IHC) conducted the installation with Cantor Robert Zalkin of Beth-El Zedeck.

Also present were Orthodox Rabbi Ronald Gray and Cantor Edwin Epstein, both of Congregation B'nai Torah; Rabbi Abraham Moshel of Etz Chaim Sephardic Congregation, Rabbi David Korb of United Orthodox Hebrew Congregation (which much later merged into Congregation Shaarey Tefilla), and Rabbi Jonathan Stein of IHC.

Federation President Walter Wolf and Mayor William Hudnut congratulated the couple at their installation.

Rabbi Bertram Korn of Philadelphia, who had taught them at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, delivered the installation address.



Rabbis Sandy & Dennis Sasso. c.1977.

The Sassos have distinguished themselves in civic activities, teaching and in letters—both in liturgy and in more popular writings, including op-ed page writings in *The Indianapolis Star* and Rabbi Sandy's eight books that introduce

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(continued from IN 8)

opinion.com/pdf/IN_1-12-2011.pdf or go to Abrams EyeCare Associates: www.abrams-eyecare.com. ★

children to Torah concepts – although the books are not exclusively for Jews. Both Sassos lecture widely.

Rabbi Dennis has been especially involved in interfaith relations and race relations. A native of Panama who still speaks Spanish, he is active at the Hispanic Center.

Daughter Debbie is graduate student in psychology at Emory University in Atlanta and son David is a composer and medical student and a soon-to-be bridegroom. ★



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Obituaries

Esther Grabush Richman, 93, of Indianapolis died peacefully May 1, 2013. She is survived by her devoted daughter Joyce Kleinman, son Al Danenberg of South Carolina; grandchildren Jenni Berebitsky, Rob Kleinman, Jodi Mohrmann and Michael Danenberg.

Services were May 8 at Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation. Memorial contributions may be made to IHC. Arrangements by **Aaron-Ruben-Nelson Mortuary**.

Melvin "Bernie" Herman, 77, of Indianapolis, died May 17, 2013. He was born to Sidney and Rose Herman on February 15, 1936. From the late 1950's he was in the Real Estate and Construction business with his grandfather. He was self-employed buying and selling businesses and owned a bar, The White Front on West 16th Street. For several years he was an exclusive representative for Ford Motor Sports until he retired. He was a member of Masonic Lodge and a former member of IHC and Broadmoor Country Club.

He is survived by his brother; Stanley (Phyllis) Herman, brothers-in-law Aaron

Cohen and Buddy Schaffer, and many beloved nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews. Bernie is preceded in death by his parents, sisters; Carolyn Cohen and Jeannie Schaffer.

A funeral service was held at **Aaron-Ruben-Nelson Mortuary** on May 22 with burial at IHC North Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation or the American Cancer Society in honor of his sisters who passed due to cancer.

Sherry Levy-Reiner, of Washington, D.C., died peacefully on May 17, 2013. Beloved wife of Rabbi Fred Reiner. Devoted mother of Rabbi David Levy Reiner (Ashley Heller). Dear sister of Neal (Kathie) Levy.

A Graveside service was held on May 20 at Zion Gardens in Chicago. A Washington memorial service was held on May 21 at Temple Sinai.

Sherry graduated from Broad Ripple High School in 1964. In Washington, she served as Director of Public Information and Publications at the Association of American Colleges; Coordinator of the Decade of the Brain Project at the Library of Congress; Special Consultant, Office of the Director, National Institute of

Mental Health; and Director of Development at the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Forum for Dialogue Among the Nations, <http://www.dialog.org>, or to Israel Religious Action Center (through New Israel Fund), <http://www.nif.org>. Arrangements by Chicago Jewish Funerals – Buffalo Grove Chapel, 847-229-8822, <http://www.cjfinfo.com>.

Ben H. Deremiah, 58, of Carmel died May 19, 2013. He was born in Bedford, Ind., son of the late Robert and Gloria Deremiah, French Lick, Ind. He graduated from Springs Valley High School in 1972 and went on to graduate from Purdue University School of Engineering in 1976. He was an owner of Vector Consulting LLC., and well known in the HVAC design industry throughout the Midwest. Ben was an avid golfer and enjoyed his friendships at Broadmoor Country Club.

Ben is survived by his wife, Lisa; his daughters, Emily and Stephanie. He is also survived by his brothers, Richard Deremiah, Dayton, Ohio, and Kim Deremiah, Zionsville Ind.; sister, Roberta Hale, Haysville Ind.; parents-in-law, Dick and Judy Perk, and Steve Jacobs; as well as aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews.

Services were held May 23 at the Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the American Heart Association. Arrangements entrusted to **Aaron-Ruben-Nelson Mortuary**.

Carolyn Mae Calderon, 78, died May 23, 2013. She was born to Dallas and Katherine Critchlow on June 13, 1934 in Indianapolis. Carolyn was a graduate of Southport High School and worked as a telephone operator for Indiana Bell. Later, she worked with her husband at their shoe store. Carolyn was a member of Etz Chaim Sephardic Congregation.

She is survived by her daughters, Janice and Cynthia; grandchildren, Katherine and Elizabeth; and great-grandchild, Naomi. Carolyn was preceded in death by her husband, Max; and sister, Maryanne Cox.

A graveside service was held May 28 at the Etz Chaim Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to the American Diabetes Foundation. Arrangements entrusted to **Aaron-Ruben-Nelson Mortuary**. ✨

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Visit to an Open Mic Night

By LAURA NEIDIG

Some of my favorite people in the world are the people who have made a positive impact on my children. Many of these people I'll never meet – they are people who have casually slipped in and out of my kids' lives, such as the friendly janitor at the middle school or the helpful chaperone on a scouting trip.

It is always a pleasant surprise when I do cross paths with one of these people, as it was on a very cold day in January. I recently joined a running group, and a few of us were trudging along in the 20 degree weather casually chatting. I learned my new running colleague was Blair Karsch, a local substitute teacher. I instantly smiled.

When my daughter was going through a particularly awkward time in middle school, he was a very bright light. She loved him as a sub, and even more so as a mentor for an after-school poetry club he facilitated. I wasn't even sure why she loved him, but that was irrelevant. He was a reason for her to be excited about school.

Fast forward about five years. Known as Mr. Blair to area students, Karsch was hosting an Open Mic night and invited my daughter and me to attend. I asked Danielle if she remembered him. Her reply? "Best teacher ever!"

Mr. Blair's Open Mic event was held on the northwest side of Indianapolis, at the Pike Branch of the Indianapolis Marion County Public Library. For over 20 years, he's hosted such events, (in area Starbucks, the Children's Museum of Indianapolis, at the Arts Council of Indianapolis Art & Soul Celebration, the Peace Learning Center, Martin Luther King Day celebrations, and more.) His craft is finely honed. He rented the room, promoted the event through a passionate



Host Blair Karsch (L) introduces the next performer.

network of followers, and began to work his magic.

The room filled with about 60 students from all over Indianapolis. They rapped, did stand-up comedy, performed on various instruments and sang. Many did poetry, clearly inspired by Karsch's own love for the genre. The entire 2-hour event flowed incredibly smoothly, unencumbered by disruptive kids, cell phones, or judgment.

I just sat back and soaked in what was happening. As each student took the mic, I could see a transformation. These kids, who all seemed to hold Karsch in such high regard, were there to be encouraged. He introduced each performer, listened intently, and praised them afterward. He gave them a gift of expression.

Shalonda Zachery and her four children attended. "His poetry and excitement to cure the stress of the youth is how he connects with them so easily," says Shalonda. "His ability to connect with all ethnic backgrounds speaks volumes."

What was interesting to me as I watched the event unfold was how Karsch gets it – much more so than many school administrators. He was hosting this event in a township that doesn't even let its elementary school students talk at lunchtime. (Little flags are attached to the end of the lunch tables, and if the students

have done well – meaning ate their lunches in silence – the flag would be put up for the last 10 minutes so they could talk. I do understand the need for order, but this always baffled me.)

Kids need a connection. Connections start with a good conversation and Karsch spoke with these kids on their level, in their language. He would interject each performance with his own improvisational poetry which simply put, was amazing. He'd ask the audience – comprised of not only students but some parents as well – to throw out a word or phrase. Some that night were "society," "quietness," and "pie." Random, yes. However, without a moment's hesitation he'd craft a poem and perform it. It was so quick, so spontaneous, so genuine.

I had rarely seen a teacher connect the way he had. I think what he gave those kids was proof – proof that he listened. So much of education today is telling kids what to do. Today's public education system, from my perspective of three children going through it, has too much standardized everything (curriculum, testing, and apparently even the way kids socialize at lunch.) This has squelched their natural creativity. Combine that with the new emphasis on science and

(see Neidig, page IN 12)

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(continued from IN 11)

technology, with arts programs few and far between – and the kids are hungry. Hungry for the outlet that Karsch provides them.

Karsch founded On Your Level Youth Project, a non-profit dedicated to the art of conversation. Its mission – to enhance the lives of young people and encourage their active exchange of ideas, attitudes, and feelings – was on display this evening. His experience not only in our area schools, but as an author, poet, teacher, TV host and producer – always has the kids’ best interest at heart. When asked what his motivation is, Karsch responded: “I feel there is a scarcity of anyone doing anything to help kids find their voice. My work for the last 25 years has proven that my poetry and encouragement really starts to get our young people trusting themselves.”

His passion, action and vision are all there. What is needed is community support. His unconventional nature is a double-edge sword: the exact reason his attitude and demeanor connect with kids is oftentimes the reason adults misunderstand his appeal. My advice to potential collaborators? Dig deeper.

I’m thankful he took the time to give a damn about my own child, but he’s had an impact on thousands during his 25 years of pushing this message – that conversation matters.

“The bottom line,” says Karsch, “is that I’m a seeker. Where do kids go to seek? And to be heard? Most people, including our children, are incrementally defined by their roles. My Open Mic events are

usually first time experiences for certain kids to feel that they have something in common.”

It’s been said that the secret to success has been to find a need and fill it. Karsch is doing precisely that. More pictures from May 7, 2013 event: <http://on.fb.me/18IPWod>.

Neidig is Marketing Director of the Indianapolis Children’s Choir. ✨

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