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Cover art by Bonnie Gordon-Lucas
(see About the Cover, p.3).

Editorial

For this, our 19th “Focus on Healing” edition, I came across a beautiful message in a sympathy card. It is attributed to a woman who lived most of her life not being able to see or hear. Since she was born having those two senses, along with the others, but lost them after an illness at about 18 months old, coming from her these words are especially poignant.

“What we have once enjoyed we can never lose. All that we deeply love becomes a part of us.” ~ Helen Keller

I emailed this quote to columnist Amy Hirshberg Lederman whose beloved husband Dr. Raymond Karl Lederman succumbed to lung cancer on June 15. He was a psychiatrist who specialized in child and adolescent mental health and had held top leadership positions in his field. The photo on this page is from their last family outing together, celebrating the 30th birthday of their son Josh. Below in italics was Amy’s response from July 17.

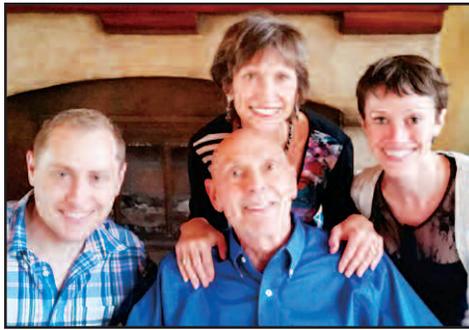
I am feeling very sad, even numb, as we honor shiloshim tomorrow, but I also feel accompanied and comforted by Ray’s spirit and essence. People die, but love does not. He is within me now even though I wish he was by my side.*

I know I have a LOT of writing in me, although I am not ready yet to begin. I would be honored if you used the quote and mentioned Ray in the next issue. His legacy of kindness, compassion and gentle strength surely lives on in our children and those who knew him.

**Shiloshim* takes place 30 days after the burial of a loved one. From Chabad.org: “Traditionally, families gather on the eve of the *Shloshim* to share support, recite prayers and Psalms, and to give charity in the merit of the deceased. Many will also make a *Siyum*, celebrating the completion of the *Mishnayot* studied to merit the soul of the deceased, as well as a meal.” For more on the Jewish mourning rituals see Amy’s column on page 4 in our *Focus on Healing* section of this issue.

On May 26, when I first heard from Amy that Ray was receiving hospice care, she also told me that her son Josh, a reporter for the AP at the White House, was honored with the Merriman Smith Award at the White House Press Correspondence Dinner in April. She mentioned how exciting this was! This reminds me of the sentiments described in the beautiful song “Sunrise, Sunset” from the musical, *Fiddler on the Roof*.

The song is sung by the family to the eldest daughter and her future husband before their wedding. The lyrics of the chorus are: “Sunrise, sunset, swiftly fly the



The Lederman family: (L-R) son, Josh, Ray, Amy (in back), and daughter, Lauren.

years, one season following another, laden with happiness and tears.” It describes to the betrothed how quickly time passes and also explains that their future together will be a mixture of both happiness and sadness.

With the month of *Elul* beginning on August 15 and the High Holidays one month later, all of this reminds me of a *midrash* on the *Akeda* (binding of Isaac) that was included in, “*Shema Koleinu*,” the Jewish healing prayer service compiled by Rabbis Nancy Flam and Yoel Kahn. In the credits it says this story was heard at an Aquarian Minyan High Holiday service in Berkeley, Calif., in 1991.

“According to a *midrash*, the entire *Akeda* (the binding of Isaac on Mount Moriah by his father Abraham) took place as a vision in the mind of Abraham. Abraham had a vision of the future of the Jewish people. He saw a long dark tunnel with Isaac standing at the front and Jacob behind him and Dina and all the tribes behind him, and all the generations until now. All Abraham saw in that tunnel were the pogroms, the oppression, the near genocide of the Jewish people – and he decided in that moment to raise his knife and slay Isaac, to prevent all that suffering from happening.

“But at that very moment, another tunnel appeared before him, and this was a tunnel of light; there he saw Isaac standing at the front and Jacob behind him and Dina and all the tribes behind him, and all the generations of the Jewish people until now. But in this tunnel, all he saw were the beautiful *Shabbatot*, the festive dancing on the holidays and the songs that reached to heaven – and he decided in that moment, as if hearing the voice of God, that he should not slay Isaac. He realized that the suffering and the joy would come together, and that to get rid of one would be to get rid of the other.”

In my brother, Rabbi Benzion Cohen’s columns he writes that eventually we will have only joy, but for now we are thankful for the support we receive from others during our challenges. We are also grateful for the ability to learn and grow from both sorrow and joy.

Jennie Cohen, July 29, 2015 ✨

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Chassidic Rabbi

BY RABBI BENZION COHEN

The Final Redemption

What does the *Torah* tell us about the coming of *Moshiach* (our righteous Messiah) who will usher in the complete and final redemption?

We will live forever. Even those who are no longer with us will come back to life. We will all lead good lives. No more evil. No more hatred, no more crime, no more war. If we look carefully, we can see already signs of this. One hundred years ago people lived for an average of 40 years. Now people live for an average of about 80 years. Crime rates are going down. The great majority of the nations of the world are working to bring peace and end war.

The *Torah* tells us that *Hashem* created the first man to live a completely good life and live forever. All of this changed when he sinned and ate from the Tree of good and evil Knowledge. As a result, from then on, until our final redemption, our lives are a mixture of good and evil. Instead of living forever, we grow old and die.

Modern biology is actually backing up what the *Torah* tells us. Science now holds that our bodies are capable of living forever. However, certain genes in each cell cause us to grow old. All of this will soon change with the coming of *Moshiach*. *Hashem* will remove the genes that cause us to age. We will all become young again and live forever.

In many areas we see now more good and less evil. For thousands of years the stronger nations of the world went to war to conquer the weaker nations. Their greed for power and wealth knew no bounds, and caused untold destruction and suffering. The Persian Empire tried to rule the world forever. They were followed by the Greeks, the Romans, and so forth. Seventy-six years ago the Germans and Japanese tried to conquer the world. World War II cost about 50,000,000 lives. I don't know how many were injured, and how much property was destroyed. World War II was followed by the Cold War. For 45 years the communists tried to conquer the world.

The great turning point was 25 years ago. We were witness to many miracles. Communism fell, with almost no bloodshed. Hundreds of millions woke up in the morning as free people, no longer slaves to communism. Today none of the superpower nations of the world want to conquer their neighbors! Even more amazing, the strong countries today are making big efforts to really help the weaker nations!

True, there is still fighting in several

About the Cover

By Bonnie Gordon-Lucas

Brooklyn Bonnie (mybonnie.com) is an illustrator, visual communicator and fabric painter. Whimsy and imagination define Bonnie and help her to paint a colorful reality. Her nights are filled with messages from ancient energies urging Bonnie to touch new generations by drawing with compassion.



Gordon-Lucas

An image from dreams was the inspiration for this 50th Anniversary Jubilee STAR of DAVID for Congregation Beth Shalom in Bloomington, Ind. This painting can also be interpreted as a mosaic.

Mrs. Gordon-Lucas' work has appeared on greeting cards, magazines, rubber stamps, children's books and apparel. Her clients include The American Cancer Society, Lerner (Kar-Ben) Publishing, No Starch Press, several New York City advertising agencies, Mixed Blessing Greeting Cards, Sunrise Publications and Pitspopany Press. Bonnie's personalized, reasonably priced *Ketubot* can be ordered through Judaic Connection. Contact Mrs. Gordon-Lucas via email (bonnie@mybonnie.com) to discuss commissions such as individually hand painted *Tallit*, *Parochet*, *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* invitations, note and greeting cards. ✨



places in the world. But here also we see a big difference. There is now a civil war in Syria. This war was not started by people greedy for wealth and power. It was started by good people willing to sacrifice their lives in order to overthrow a terrible dictator and his regime.

Who gets the credit for all of these amazing positive changes? First and foremost, all of our ancestors who lived a life of *Torah* and *Mitzvahs* for the last 3,800 years. Not only did they lead good lives, but they were a good influence on all of the other nations of the world. Three thousand eight hundred years ago all of the nations worshiped idols. Now most of them believe in *Hashem* (the one G-d) and try to live good lives.

The *Torah* teaches us that good is eternal. All of the good ever done has added up, and brought us very close to the finish line. The world is now ready for the final redemption, and it is already beginning to happen.

We believe that The Lubavitcher Rebbe is our long awaited *Moshiach*. The Rebbe and his followers have helped billions of people all over the world to live better lives, do more good deeds and come closer

Court took giant leap for humanity



BY RABBI SANDY EISENBERG SASSO

Driving to my 50th anniversary high school reunion in Philadelphia, listening to the radio, I learned of the Supreme Court decision to recognize gay marriage. This is a time to celebrate a momentous civil right victory. It is also a time to reflect on the many Supreme Court decisions that had shaped my lifetime.

In 1954, *Brown v. The Board of Education* led to racial integration in public school. In 1962, *Abington School District v. Schempp* ensured religious freedom by eliminating the obligatory recitation of prayer and Bible reading in public schools. In 1967, *Loving v. Virginia* legalized interracial marriage in our nation. In 1973, *Roe v. Wade* extended the rights of reproductive freedom for women.

Each of these landmark decisions has granted freedoms and protections in the realms of religion, gender and race. All this, in one lifetime. And yet each of these achievements has been a partial victory that has been challenged in subsequent years. Laws have been changed, yet the hearts and minds of many in society have not.

Recent efforts to close Planned Parenthood clinics and to restrict contraception from medical insurance coverage, the controversy surrounding the flying of the Confederate flag, attempts to reintroduce religious symbols in public places, and attempts to subvert the civil rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the name of religion, all point to

(see S. Sasso, page 4)



to *Hashem*. It is like a chain reaction. One person is influenced to live a better life. When he sees that his life is so much better he will work hard to pass on the good word and help others to lead better lives. Over time he will influence 100 more people to lead better lives. They will in turn influence 10,000 people to live better. These 10,000 will then help 1,000,000 people to live better lives, and so on. Soon another billion people will be leading better lives, doing more good deeds and coming closer to *Hashem*!

It is really happening! Our final redemption is really happening! And all of the *Torah* that we learn and good deeds that we do will make it happen that much faster and sooner. We want *Moshiach* now!

Rabbi Cohen lives in K'far Chabad, Israel. He can be reached by email at bzcohen@orange.net.il. ✨

Boycott won't solve problems in Israel

BY RABBI DENNIS C. SASSO

There are those who believe that BDS (Boycott, Divest and Sanction), the activist movement taking hold in Europe and in some sectors of American society, will bring Israel to its knees and do justice to the Palestinians. My recent experience in Israel with "Interfaith Partners for Peace" showed that this is not the way forward.

I had the privilege of traveling with Episcopal Bishop Catherine Waynick, among 28 paired rabbis and Christian clergy, under the auspices of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs. We visited Tel Aviv, the Galilee, Jerusalem, Ramallah, Nazareth and Bethlehem, meeting with top Israeli and Palestinian leaders, negotiators, educators and clergy as well as with young leaders of grass roots movements working for peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Israeli and Palestinian officials and grassroots leaders agree that the conflict will not be solved by choosing sides and casting blame. Both sides experience fear, insecurity and mistrust.

BDS is borne out of a flawed equation of Israeli society with the former South African Apartheid system. Anyone who visits Israel knows that, despite pressing problems, the nation is a vibrant, diverse and open democracy. Certainly, Israel needs to address and redress issues concerning settlements and treatment of Palestinians in the territories of the West Bank. Israel's occupation is not only a hardship upon Palestinians, but constitutes a heavy economic and emotional burden upon Israelis as well.

There is blame for lost opportunities and missteps on both sides. Netanyahu's rhetoric has created obstacles to a two state solution, and Abbas, too, has failed repeatedly to come to the negotiating table. Israeli check-points and demolitions impair the Palestinian economy and morale, and Fatah's corrupt dictatorship uses international funds to strengthen its rule rather than to benefit the Palestinian economy.

Yossi Klein Halevi, an Israeli journalist and peace advocate, suggests that BDS allows European advocates an outlet to criminalize Israel to ease decades-old Nazi guilt. In the U.S., BDS activism on college campuses threatens academic freedom. It is well funded and feeds on students' idealism and misinformation. BDS and Apartheid charges are smoke screens that distort and complicate rather than clarify and resolve. By creating a villain vs. victim dichotomy, BDS punishes the ones it intends to help and entrenches the extremes. Loud on criticism, BDS is

S. SASSO

(continued from page 3)

the need to be constantly vigilant and proactive in the preservation of hard-won freedoms. What has been proclaimed in the courts needs to be promulgated and lived in the streets.



silent on constructive solutions, short of the demise of Israel. Palestinian activists we met urged us to invest, not disinvest; engage, not punish.

We witnessed meaningful dialogue and activity happening from the ground up that does not make the news: *Shorashim* (Roots) fosters dialogue between settlers and Palestinian farmers and landowners in the West Bank; *Kids 4 Peace* in East Jerusalem brings Israeli and Arab children to play and study together; *Jerusalem Open House* offers counseling for Israeli and Palestinian LGBT persons. These are examples of programs in which we should invest to help advance peace. Bishop Waynick observed, "We encountered a spirit of courage, revealed in grassroots efforts, which provides hope that these people will learn not only to tolerate each other, but to respect and care enough for each other to live in the peace they all desperately want for themselves and their children."



Yossi Klein Halevi, scholar and journalist, with Rabbi Sasso.

This peace, says Yossi Klein Halevi, will not be a "peace with justice." It will involve a good deal of injustice for both Palestinians and Israelis because neither side will attain all it wants. But Judaism, Christianity and Islam all teach that peace is a higher good than justice. Reconciliation happens with the mature realization that we cannot live in the past and make it different. Instead, we must envision and shape a new reality so that our children may fully live in a future of peace.

Rabbi Sasso has been senior rabbi at Congregation Beth-El Zedeck in Indianapolis since 1977. Reprinted with permission from the Indianapolis Star June 23, 2015. ✨

Unfortunately, religion has often been used to counter these freedoms. The news abounds with references to religious opposition to many of these court decisions. This has especially been evident in recent weeks with references to religious leaders' opposition to same-sex marriage. And while it is true that no member of the clergy or religious institution would be obligated by law to officiate at a same-sex marriage, it should be noted that many Christian and Jewish leaders and denominations have been in the forefront of advocacy for this right. Those positions, as was advocacy for civil rights for blacks and reproductive freedom for women, are based on deeply held religious convictions and values concerning human dignity and equality.

We are proud to say that the Conservative, Reform and Reconstructionist movements in Judaism, which represent the majority of American Jews, have for decades endorsed the principles of gender equality and have authorized the ordination of gay clergy and officiation at same-sex marriage ceremonies. It is noteworthy that the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia hosted a program to commemorate the first Reminder Demonstration in support of gay rights 50 years ago on Independence Day in Philadelphia.

To affirm in ceremony a committed loving relationship is a religious act. Justice Anthony Kennedy speaking for the court majority wrote, "No union is more profound than marriage for it embodies the highest ideals of love, fidelity, devotion, sacrifice and family. In forming a marital union two people have become something greater than they once were." These words capture beautifully the spiritual and sacred nature of marriage.

Just as there are different political parties and ideologies, so are there varying expressions of religion. To paint all religion with the brush of resistance to change is to misrepresent the nature of religion.

In the summer of 1969, Neil Armstrong, upon setting foot on the moon said, "This is one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind."

This summer, we can rightly say that the Supreme Court has taken "one small step for same-sex couples, one giant leap for humanity."

Rabbi Sasso was senior rabbi of Congregation Beth-El Zedeck in Indianapolis from 1977–2013. She is currently director of the Religion, Spirituality and the Arts Initiative at Butler University. She is the author of several best-selling children's books including the recently published, *Anne Frank and the Remembering Tree*. Reprinted with permission from the Indianapolis Star July 3, 2015. ✨



Wiener's Wisdom

By RABBI IRWIN WIENER, D.D.

The challenges of youth

It is not easy growing up. Most often, however, the tendency is to ignore the difficulties of life and pretend that they are really not happening, just a dream. After all, life is supposed to be great and exciting.

The teenage years seem to be the worst. Changing from childhood to adolescence can be the most difficult stage in development. It feels as though we do not fit anymore in the early years, and we do not understand what is ahead. Now begins the process of independence. We are so smart, needing no one to guide us. Now we are so involved in venturing into the world of the unknown. We are so worldly, needing no control or discipline. However, we are afraid at the same time.

There are difficulties understanding the journey of life that ask different questions, darker ones because the serious side of life's happenings are incomprehensible: Why is my friend going through a serious illness? Why am I becoming involved with someone who is going to die?

And still, there are more daunting questions: Why am I experiencing abuse? Why am I influenced by my friends taking drugs or involved in experimental sex? Why is alcohol necessary to cope?

As teenagers we are confronted with so many whys and not enough answers. We just do not seem to fit. We try to find shelter, but then we grow to the stage of venturing out from the nest. We are confronted with so many different influences. Wanting to be accepted is the worst experiment in independence.

However, we lose sight of one important aspect of development. There can be positive outcomes with the right conditions. Challenges can make us stronger and more resilient. These doubts can become learning experiences that now challenge the mind, not the spirit.

Take for example, the episode in the movie, *Me and Earl, and the Dying Girl*. What a classic example of maturity and understanding, and development. Here a young man is thrust into a situation that even adults might find mind-boggling. Forced to befriend a girl suffering with cancer, the journey begins that will prove to be the most defining moment of life.

The various stages of comprehension are experienced, starting with resentment,



Spoonful of Humor

By TED ROBERTS

The first quarrel – birth is mine, the earth is thine

Slowly, they trudged down the path full of briars and thorn bushes. Behind them Eden, ahead only the unknown. Eve allowed herself one last lingering look back. Behind her she barely saw the flash of the cherubim's waving sword. There was no going back.

Adam stared straight ahead. "I guess we shouldn't have eaten that fruit," he said.

Eve turned to reply, "Remember, Adam, it was our choice and I really thought he'd pardon our one and only sin. After all, we are creatures of freewill, unlike the other creatures."

As John Milton, the famous English poet said, "The world was all before them – their place of rest. They, hand in hand with wandering steps and slow, through Eden took their solitary way".

Adam grunted and reminded Eve that the brave, new world they were bound for had a 100 percent unemployment rate. Eve, in her turn, reflected babies were going to be painful and anesthesia was many years in the future. She'd be hurting



to eventual compassion. Going through the various episodes in this dreaded disease is a sobering example of the difficulties we face in our yearning for longevity.

We finally realize that adversity will, most assuredly, strike everyone. It comes in many forms and in many ways. One thing it does to all is cause hurt, sometimes more, sometimes less. If it is not managed in a meaningful way, it can lead to an outcome that will have a negative impact on us lasting a lifetime. Most of all, it can lead to growth. The understanding of the difficulties people face results in a strength we never knew we possessed.

Certainly, it is tough growing up as a teenager in an adult world. I would suggest that what this movie does is help us grasp these realities. I would also suggest that the greatest gift given to us by this film is gaining faith in the ability to value life.

Rabbi Wiener is spiritual leader of the Sun Lakes Jewish Congregation near Phoenix, Ariz. He welcomes comments at rvoyitz@cox.net. His new book *Living with Faith* can be obtained on Amazon.com. ★

while her partner would be rummaging in the wood for wild blackberries.

"Are you sure He said the new creature would come out of me?" she asked.

"Yeah, yeah I'm positive. But remember he condemned me to something called work. It has an unpleasant sound to it. And that business about dust thou art and to dust returneth – I don't like the sound of that either."

"But what gets me," interrupted Eve, "is that the slimy snake that tricked our new, naïve personalities got off so light. Crawl on your belly? That's a punishment? Or you may accidentally step upon him with your heel? I, myself, will add a punishment of my own. He shall be a repulsive creature to all humanity and even to his fellow creatures. And the next one I see we shall boil in soup. (Eve, who was already learning to think creatively, thought; maybe better baked on a hot, flat rock.)" And remember He is not yet forbidden to us since *Torah* with its 613 rules is not yet given to us or our many generations of offspring.

Eve, ever looking ahead, grimaced at the thought of so many generations – so much pain. And had she any knowledge of curses, she would have spewed them upon that deceptive reptile – the root of all their troubles. But as usual, endowed by her Creator with practical foresight, she worried not so much of generations to come, but of supper. Here, outside the garden, fruit and berries were not so plentiful. "Adam, my love," she cooed, "He who created us has given me the role of propagating the earth with our kind. But that thing called work – which I think includes supper – is all yours. And my stomach, which one day will carry our heirs, is as empty as the cloudless skies above Eden. You might search out this wilderness for something edible."

Adam, sensing that a precedent was in the making, suggested an alternative. He would nap under the Sycamore tree and Eve would search the woods. The exploration of the brave, new world would be healthy for the precious package in her stomach. Eve, understanding the importance of this groundbreaking division of labor – lopsided in her eyes – rebelled. "Birth is mine alone," she said, "just as the earth is yours alone."

It was the honeymooners' first quarrel. And due to the absence of lawyers, it was settled in five minutes. The precedent continues to prevail.

The humor of Ted, The Scribbler on the Roof, appears in newspapers around the US, on National Public Radio, and numerous web sites. Check out his Web site: www.wonderwordworks.com. Blogsite: www.scribblerontheroof.typepad.com. His collected works *The Scribbler on The Roof* can be bought at Amazon.com or lulu.com/content/127641. ★



Israeli Educator

BY ARYEH BEN DAVID

On the subway in NYC

I am taking the Broadway #1 train from Penn Station to Van Cortlandt Park in the late afternoon. Van Cortlandt Park is the last stop on the line.

About 3 stops from the end, everyone in my car exits. I'm left alone.

The door opens from another car. Enters a 30-something year old guy, big, and obviously drunk. I'm at the other end of the car.

He calls out, "Hey, you got a match?" I answer, "I don't smoke."

He says, "I guess then you wouldn't have any matches."

He stumbles over to me. I'm getting a bit nervous. He's bigger than me, and I'm a worrying kind of guy.

He leans over close to me, about 5 inches from my ear, and whispers: "Tzedaka. You know what tzedaka is?"

Surprised and amused, I answer "yes."

He waits. I pause. Then I take a dollar out of my pocket and give it to him.

He begins to stumble away.

I don't know what happened to me, but I call after him, "Hey. I gave you something. Now you give me something."

He looks back at me, not understanding. I say it again, "Give me something."

I call out, "I gave you tzedaka. You give me a blessing."

He looks puzzled.

I say, "I have a kid who just had 2 knee operations. Do you have a blessing?"

He stops. Looks straight at me, thinking what to say. "I guess you don't believe in Jesus, huh?"

I shake my head.

He says, "I bless you that your kid will be healthy."

Then he takes a step to walk away and stops. Puts his hand on the subway pole, turns back to me and says, "And I give you a blessing, that whatever happens to your kid, God will give you the strength to handle whatever it is."

Wow. I was overcome with emotion.

I had given him a dollar from my pocket.

He gave me a blessing from his heart.

The train stopped. We said goodbye to each other. "Goodbye friend, thank you." "Goodbye friend, have a good day."

At the moment, I didn't know what propelled me to ask him for a blessing. Looking back, I understand it like this:



Shabbat Shalom

BY RABBI JON ADLAND

Pirke Avot 3:19 – Rabbi Akiva said: All is foreseen, but freedom of choice is given. The world is judged in goodness, yet all is proportioned to one's work.

July 17, 2015, Matot-Masei Numbers 30:2–36:13, 1 Av 5775

Rabbi Akiva's words above sum up two critical and often asked questions that come up in conversation when talking about God and our place in the world: *freedom of choice and doing the right thing.* Every theological conversation that is contemplated and discussed will eventually talk about whether or not we have freedom of choice. Every earthly conversation about our role in this world will eventually consider what we must do in acting out our responsibilities in this world.

As to freedom of choice, Rabbi Akiva first brings out the other side of the argument, which is God's omniscience – God's all-knowingness. If God knows everything, then are there any decisions that we make that God hasn't already considered the path this decision will make. If this is true, then is there really any freedom of choice because God already knows what we are going to do.

Akiva acknowledges God's omniscience, but he believes that regardless of an all-knowing God, human beings have freedom to make up their own minds, to make their own decisions, and to travel their own highways of choice. God knows, but doesn't influence.

I want to believe that I am in control of the decisions I make and that I must own the consequences to these actions. As Jews, we believe that the Garden of Eden story isn't about an original sin, but about freedom of choice within a certain set of parameters. Eve and Adam violated God's commandment and suffered the consequences, but like any person who does something right or wrong they also learned from their actions as well. By eating of the forbidden fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden, they gained knowledge about human sexuality. We do have freedom of choice and even though God



Asking for something – a cigarette or money – can be a very degrading and humiliating experience. He had given me the chance to be a giving person – to give (see Ben David, page 7)

knows where those decisions will lead it is still our choice and our consequences.

Rabbi Akiva believes that there is goodness in this world, but he doesn't believe that this goodness is permanent or stagnant. Akiva believes that this world will only continue to be good through the work or actions of human beings. Each of us has a place in the great plan of God's world, but we must figure it out and act on it.

I truly believe in action, speaking out, doing the best I can because things don't happen unless we get our hands or hearts involved. Yes, "The world is judged in goodness," but we must do our part. And people do. I am in awe of the big and little things people do or say to make the world a better place.

In each congregation I've served, I've been in awe at how the congregation has responded to the plight and struggles of everyday people. I toured the Habitat for Humanity facility the other day. I was totally unaware that our local Habitat is building 30 houses a year. They definitely work under the radar. Most of the homes are in Stark County, but a few are in neighboring counties as well. The number of people who donate their time to frame a wall, hang siding, put up cabinets, and paint walls is staggering.

I look at our community garden that is now partnered with a church community and I am in awe of the volunteers who have worked through rain and wet grass to harvest an abundant amount of produce. I feel blessed to know that I am part of a congregation that when asked to help out our Jewish Family Service Food Bank we do so without hesitation. (We can always use paper goods. Food stamps don't cover those items.) Our tradition commands us to provide food, clothing and shelter to those who are needy in our midst and by doing this, God judges the world in goodness, but it only works if we each do our part.

Putting together the two parts of the words of Rabbi Akiva's verse at the top we find that we all have freedom of choice, but choice isn't just about which shirt to put on or which way to turn. It is about making choices that impact on the world around us. When we can, we must find ways to do good, and to bring this world closer to the messianic time when it will be a good place for all.

When you light your Shabbat candles this week, light one to help us make good choices. Light the other candle to remind us that it is our work and effort that will make this world a good place for all.

Rabbi Adland has been a Reform rabbi for more than 30 years with pulpits in Lexington, Ky., Indianapolis, Ind., and currently at Temple Israel in Canton, Ohio. Email: j.adland@gmail.com. ✨



Media Watch

By RABBI ELLIOT B. GERTEL

Some final words about *Mad Men*

This issue marks my 36th year as a columnist for *The National Jewish Post & Opinion*. I was recruited to write TV and movie reviews as a rabbinical student at the Jewish Theological Seminary by publisher, founder and then editor, Gabriel M. Cohen (1908-2007), of blessed memory. At that time, in 1979, I was 25 and he was 71. At his death at age 98 in 2007, Gabe had been editor of the *Post* for 75 years.

Since 2008 (and even before), I've been privileged to work with his daughter, Jennie Cohen, who took over the day-to-day editorial duties and brought a new look and spirit to the paper. When I started it was a weekly. Now, still appearing regularly despite hard times for print media, the national edition appears about six times a year.

Over the years I've written about most TV series and movies with Jewish characters or themes. The recently ended, artistic AMC series, *Mad Men*, was no exception. I first reviewed it on March 5, 2008. That review was picked up by the web's *Jewish World Review* and can be Googled. In recent months I published two reviews in on-line blogs, "Mad Men's Religion" (*American Thinker*), and "Mad Men's Jews" (*Jewish Currents*).

I've saved for here my final observations on *Mad Men*, the account of ad men (on "Mad"-ison Avenue) and one ad woman.

As the series moved into the 60s, Jewish men had achieved enough *quid quo pro* status for office manager (and later partner) Joan Holloway Harris (Christina Hendricks), when married to a medical resident, to urge her husband, "Get one of the Jewish docs to work. You did it on their holiday." (Aug. 8, 2010, written by Jonathan Abrahams and series creator Matthew Weiner)

The series provided a leftist journalist Jewish boyfriend, Abe Drexler (Charlie Hofheimer), for the ambitious lone ad woman, Peggy Olson (Elisabeth Moss). In the April 22, 2012 episode (written by Weiner and Semi Chellas), Peggy's devout Catholic mother Katherine (Myra Turley) is not happy with his inviting Peggy to live together. She refers to him as "Abraham," invoking his biblical namesake.

Mom speaks bluntly to Peggy: "I'm not going to give you a cake to celebrate your

living in sin." Peggy retorts angrily, "I thought you'd be relieved that I wasn't marrying the Jew." (Was it her mother's prejudice that she was mimicking, or was she dealing with issues of her own?) Mom is adamant, "It has nothing to do with that." She is concerned about the morality of it. "You are selling yourself short. This boy, he will use you until he decides to get married and have a family." Does she mean a "Jewish" family?

Peggy asks her mother, "You want me to live alone?" But Mom genuinely believes that loneliness beats immorality and sin. "You know what your aunt used to say. You're lonely, get a cat. They live 13 years. Then get another, and another after that, and you're done."

It is not clear whether the writers respect the mother's conviction, or regard it as anachronistic. But Mom does not come across as anti-Semitic or anti-Judaism. Indeed, one gets the impression that she wants Abe to be an "Abraham," to have some religious conviction, some guiding morality. When Mom enters the house, Abe blurts out, "Peggy made a ham. It's my favorite." Mom responds, "Really?" as if to say, what kind of a Jew would say that? What kind of person makes a "favorite" of something that is religiously prohibited – the kind who would "live in sin"?

Peggy's mother's attitude is to be contrasted with Joan's mother Gail (Christine Estabrook), who complains bitterly about Jews who "close everything on Saturday" (May 18, 2014, written by Weiner, Chellas and Jonathan Igla).

A major insider Jewish woman in the series is a manipulator. As a secretary, Jane Siegel (Peyton List) pursued her husband Roger Steling (John Slattery), a founding partner married at the time but with an ever roving eye. Soon Roger was Jane's husband, and theirs was a stormy though affectionate marriage. In the April 22, 2012 episode (written by Weiner and Chellas), Jane drags Roger to a soiree with (Jewish?) intellectuals, including her therapist, who directs them to take LSD for "clearer perspective."

Jane tells Roger that she needs to separate from him, much to his relief. Later she blames her statement on the LSD, also faulting the drug for her speaking what Roger thought was German, but was actually Yiddish, in which she quoted her father. As they both realize that the marriage is over, Roger is very tender to Jane, telling her that she is beautiful, and how good it is that they could attend that gathering together and tell each other the truth. Roger acquiesces when she promises, "It's going to be expensive."

Jane Siegel was rather innocuous compared to Herb Rennet (Gary Basaraba), a Jaguar representative – a suggested coarse Jew (?)

BEN DAVID

(continued from page 6)

to him.

Though I hesitated and didn't give with a full, open heart or smile, after giving something to him – I actually felt good about myself. I wanted to offer him, too, the chance to give something and feel good about himself.

In the end, he gave me so much – a moment of *netzach*, of eternity – a moment that I will never forget. Our souls are wired to give. That's how the Creator created us. Sometimes the kindest act we can do is to receive – to allow someone else to give to us.

Aryeh Ben David founded, and directs, Ayeka Center for Soulful Education (www.ayeka.org.il), in 2006. This initiative came after almost 20 years of work in formal and experiential Jewish educational settings including Pardes Institute in Jerusalem, Hillel International from and Livnot U'Lehibanot. He is the author of Around the Shabbat Table, a Guide to Meaningful Shabbat Conversations (2000) and The Godfile, Ten Approaches To Personalizing Prayer (2007). Aryeh grew up outside of NYC and studied psychology at Vassar College. He came to Israel in 1978, studied at the Meretz yeshiva in Mevasseret Zion and received Rabbinic ordination from the Israeli Rabbinate. He lives in Efrat, Gush Etzion. ★



who uses *Yiddishisms* and treats Joan like a prostitute. (May 7, 2012, written by Weiner and Chellas; also, April 14 and May 5, 2013). Are the *Yiddishisms* featured to brand the character as a vulgar Jew, or to demonstrate the extent to which old-world Jewish expressions were catching on in rapidly changing American life? The show did have firm head Ted Chaugh (Kevin Rahm) picking up two dozen bagels as a gesture of support for a WASP colleague.

In the April 27, 2014 episode (written by Weiner, Igla and Heather Jeng Blatt), gay talent agent Alan Silver (Jonathan McClain) assures firm heart-throb and antihero Don Draper (John Hamm), whom he describes as a "matinee idol," that his relationship with Don's actress wife is "greed" (financial) and nothing else. Don assures Silver that he is "completely at ease." Come to think of it, *Mad Men's* Jews were all rather innocuous.

Rabbi Gertel has been spiritual leader of congregations in New Haven and Chicago. He is the author of two books, What Jews Know About Salvation and Over the Top Judaism: Precedents and Trends in the Depiction of Jewish Beliefs and Observances in Film and Television. He has been media critic for The National Jewish Post & Opinion since 1979. ★



Holocaust Educator

By MIRIAM L. ZIMMERMAN

35th annual San Francisco Jewish Film Festival

The San Francisco Jewish Film Festival (SFJFF) boasts a new name: the Jewish Film Institute (JFI). Executive Director Lexi Laban announced the rebranding at the SFJFF annual June press conference. Because the SFJFF has so many year-round programs and because its Internet presence no longer confines it to the San Francisco Bay Area, it needed a new name to better reflect what it does.

The SFJFF will continue to be the flagship program of the Jewish Film Institute. The 35th SFJFF begins in San Francisco on July 23 and ends on August 9 in Oakland and San Rafael, with Palo Alto and Berkeley screenings in between. For a full listing of films, browse to sfjff.org/2015/.

The SFJFF has significantly affected Jewish film worldwide. According to the press release, "The SFJFF has played a pivotal leadership role in the world of independent Jewish film, offering bold and innovative programming, open dialogue, and discussion as well as support to international filmmakers and Jewish-centric programs since 1980.

In 2000, the SFJFF hosted the first-ever *National Conference of Jewish Film Festivals* (organized by the *National Foundation for Jewish Culture*) with 31 participating Jewish film festivals.

Since the birth of the SFJFF, more than 150 subsequent Jewish film and culture festivals have been created worldwide. The Festival – named one of the 50 most innovative Jewish organizations in the U.S. by the *Slingshot Fund* and among the top 50 film festivals worldwide by *IndieWire* – will continue to be the principal program of the Jewish Film Institute and is well positioned to expand its impact at the intersection of film media and Jewish culture for the next 35 years (emphasis theirs)."

The Jewish Film Institute (JFI) will continue the non-festival work of the former SFJFF. Their programs "include the New Jewish Filmmaking project, which has mentored over 300 young filmmakers since its inception in 2002; sneak previews of new releases throughout the year; screenings in senior communities throughout the Bay Area; a filmmaker residency for filmmakers working with Jewish

themes, housed in its home at the 9th Street Independent Film Center in San Francisco; and a robust online shorts program hosted on its YouTube channel."

JFI boasts an online archive of over 1400 films, a resource to a global audience of more than 1.7 million people, according to the press release. "In honor of its 35th anniversary, the Jewish Film Institute will add an additional feature to its online service by offering viewers even greater access to the *JFI Film Archive* – a new Video on Demand (VOD) platform available via Vimeo. "The world of film and media has changed exponentially since 1980 when we invented the idea of the Jewish Film Festival," explains Lexi Laban, Executive Director of the Jewish Film Institute.

"In celebration of our 35th Anniversary, we are reinventing ourselves to meet the needs of a new generation of film lovers (emphasis hers)." It should be noted that SFJFF founder Deborah Kaufman warrants credit for initiating the idea of a Jewish film festival.

The opening night film, *Dough*, stars Jonathan Pryce in a British comedy. Already I could feel my facial muscles contracting; to me (and to my husband Richard who first alerted me to the phenomenon), "British comedy" is an oxymoron. The online movie review IMDb described the film more succinctly than the Festival brochure: "An old Jewish baker struggles to keep his business afloat until his young Muslim apprentice accidentally drops cannabis in the dough and sends sales sky high."

The Festival brochure added more detail: when baker and apprentice "begin to understand each other's personal histories and religious rituals, distrust becomes respect" and eventually results in "a heart-warming intergenerational relationship." Usually the opening night film is one of the best in the Festival, yet neither Richard nor I included it in our must-see film list.

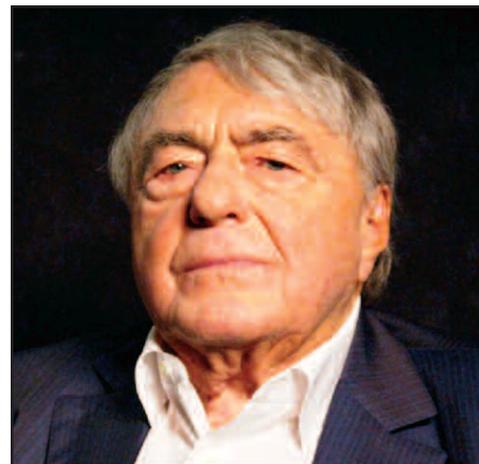
My top priority film in this year's Festival is *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey*. The North American Premiere of this important documentary will be followed by a facilitated discussion at Congregation Sha'ar Zahav in San Francisco, led by Morgan Blum Schneider, Director of Education at the Jewish Family and Children's Services (JFCS) Holocaust Center. The never shown film was repaired and restored by a team working for Britain's Imperial War Museums (IWM).

"The film is an official documentary about German atrocities and the concentration camps compiled with footage shot by combat and newsreel cameramen accompanying troops as they liberated occupied Europe," according to the IWM website, iwm.org.uk/research/german-concentration-camps-factual-survey-film.

Originally, the Allied authorities wanted to show the film throughout Germany after the war, to demonstrate to the German public what National Socialism accomplished. But by the time the film was ready, "there had been a change in Anglo-German relations and it was shelved." The Allies went from a program of "de-Nazification" to "rebuilding."

Atrocities were set aside in the interests of implementing the Marshall Plan and economic transformation of Germany. For more information about this documentary, browse to iwm.org.uk/research/german-concentration-camps-factual-survey-film.

A second must-see Festival film for this Holocaust educator is *Claude Lanzmann: Spectres of the Shoah*. In this documentary, "Lanzmann discusses at length the making of his masterwork (*Shoah*), including the secret filming of former Nazis, the lengthy process of convincing traumatized Holocaust survivors to open up on camera and the exhausting challenge of chronicling one of the greatest atrocities in history."



Picture of Claude Lanzmann courtesy SFJFF.

One of the most engaging and lively documentaries I have ever seen was screened at the press conference. *The Go-Go Boys: The Inside Story of Cannon Films* tells the story of Israeli cousins, Menahem Golan and Yoram Globus, "who found and then lost a low-budget independent movie empire, Hollywood's fabled Cannon Films." Although I am profoundly not an aficionado of action films such as the American Ninja, Death Wish, or Delta (see Zimmerman, page NAT 9)



Picture of Yoram Globus and Menahem Golan courtesy SFJFF.



A FOCUS ON HEALING



Perfectionism

BY RABBI DOV HELLER, M.A.

Cracks enable the light to get in.

Songwriter Leonard Cohen wrote, "Forget your perfect offering. There's a crack in everything, that's how the light gets in." There is no perfection in life. Each of us is given a different hand to play and our job is to do the best we can with what we've been given to work with. There is no "perfect offering."

There are many people who suffer greatly from the disease of perfectionism. Perfectionists hate the hand they have been dealt and spend every waking moment trying to make their hand perfect. They obsess about everything that's wrong. They anxiously wait for that magical day when it will all come together and then they will be able to relax and enjoy life. Their obsession with perfection is exhausting, emotionally and mentally. They have no peace.

At the root of it all, perfectionists hate their limitations and those of others. They hate all those "cracks" and spend their time trying to seal them up even as new ones continue to appear.

Now enter Judaism into the perfectionist's world. Judaism sets the bar high and encourages us to strive for greatness. The Torah commands us to emulate God. We are commanded to strive to emulate the character traits of God, not become perfect like Him. The spiritual culture of Judaism is meant to inspire, uplift, and motivate us to become better people. But within such an environment, the perfectionist only feels depressed and hopeless, for deep inside he worries that he'll never be like these people who seemingly have it all together. Panic eats away at him as his life slips by in mediocrity. Henry Thoreau was certainly speaking about the perfectionist when he said, "Most people live lives of quiet desperation and go to the grave with the song still in them."

There is only one solution. We must embrace imperfection, or what I prefer to call "finitude." Embracing finitude means embracing limitations. It means facing the truth that much of life is about failure, disappointment, missed opportunities, undeveloped potential, broken promises, broken dreams, unmet longings, uncertainty and confusion. There is no perfection anywhere. There is no perfect friend, parent, sibling, spouse. There is no perfect rabbi, community, or *shul*.

Those who have freed themselves from the prison of perfectionism are those who

Meeting the difficult challenges we face

BY RABBI HERBERT HOROWITZ

The horrific tragedy at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C., with the brutal murder of nine of nine church members, presents a profound challenge to all of us. How do we cope with tragedy? How do we deal with the deep traumas in our lives?

Bill Cosby once said, "If you can find humor in anything, you can survive it." Can we really survive anything if we keep our sense of humor? The Nazi brutality of the concentration camps, the Gulag created by Stalin and the murder of millions under Mao-TzeTung as well as the current barbarity of ISIS seems to leave no room for humor.

In his book *Man's Search for Meaning*, Holocaust survivor Victor Frankl asserts that humor helped people survive the camps. Frankl's work introduced logotherapy and hope. Frankl maintained that "I never would have made it if I could not have laughed." He observed: "Humor, more than anything else in the human make-up, affords an aloofness and an ability to rise above any situation, even if only for a few seconds."

Frankl wrote that he and another prisoner tried to invent at least one funny story a day. Here is one of them. A prisoner accidentally bumps into a Nazi guard. The

guard turns and shouts "Schwein!" (which means "pig" in German). The prisoner bows and says "Cohen. Pleased to meet you." The joke clearly demonstrates how humor helps reverse who's in control and who seems to be the superior being. Even in the terrible conditions of the camp, such jokes provided a means of momentarily overcoming extreme adversity.

Natan Sharansky overcame his fear of a threatened firing squad in the former Soviet Union by joking about it. But he was not successful at first. The relief was initially very short-lived, if it occurred at all. But he gradually came to see the power that joking gave him. When he ultimately gained control over his fears, he stopped being at the mercy of his captors.

Captain Gerald Coffee, who was a POW in Vietnam, said: "Laughter sets the spirit free to move through even the most tragic circumstances. It helps us shake our heads clear, get our feet back under us and restore our sense of balance and purpose. Humor is integral to our peace of mind and ability to go beyond survival."

For some people, laughter works in dealing with trauma and tragedy. For others, hope and inner strength is the key to maintaining ones equilibrium. The Ethics of the Fathers (*Pirkei Avot*) chapter 5 *mishnah* 4 records: "With ten trials was our Father Abraham tried and he stood firm through them all, to show how great was the love of our Father Abraham for God." The *Mishnah* further comments:

(see Horowitz, Healing page 3)



embrace their humanness, limitations and imperfectness. They live in reality and taste its sweetness. They have stopped looking for "the answer" that will make life perfect. They are at peace with their brokenness and feel no shame or remorse. This is not a state of resignation. I am not describing people who have given-up and are resigned to mediocrity. Far from it; because of their total acceptance of their limitations they feel emboldened to become their very best self. They play the hand they have been dealt without bitterness, resentment or pressure. They have made peace with it and are content with their portion. They rejoice in the struggle and the slow process of change. They celebrate being just human.

We either embrace life as imperfect or we fight it with disdain and anger. The latter option is the world of the perfectionist. One who fights finitude experiences chronic existential despair. One who embraces finitude and limitation finds

peace, vitality and joy in living.

"Everything has a crack in it, that's how the light gets in." Let's embrace our "cracks" and our brokenness and let the light of the beautiful shine through. Life doesn't have to be perfect to be wonderful.

Rabbi Dov Heller is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist who holds Masters Degrees in Clinical Psychology from Antioch University and in Contemporary Theology from Harvard University. He also holds a B.A. in philosophy and was ordained a rabbi in Jerusalem in 1982. He is director of the Aish HaTorah Counseling Center in Los Angeles, founder of the Relationship Institute, and runs a private practice specializing in adult psychotherapy, marriage counseling and personal guidance.

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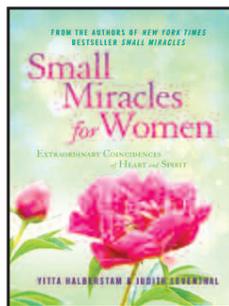
Book Excerpt

BY JUDITH LEVENTHAL

The Ultimate Gift

Small Miracles for Women. By Yitta Halberstam and Judith Leventhal. New York: Sterling Ethos, 2015. 256 Pages. \$14.95

Hospital waiting rooms may vary in size and decor, but in atmosphere they're all basically the same. The mood is tense, serious, fearful. People pace nervously, glance at their watches; they stare into space; they weep quietly. The waiting room is the place where destinies change forever. And it's the place where Caroline Matthews* met Bill Gardner for the first time on a cold January morning.



The hospital had waiting rooms on every floor, but both had separately chosen to retreat to the first-floor visitors' atrium. Caroline was huddled in a corner, crying softly; Bill, watching from afar, was struck by her despair. Most people steer clear of their weeping neighbors, but Bill Gardner reached out. "What's the matter?" he gently asked, leaning toward Caroline compassionately.

"It's my mother," she sobbed. "She's been here since October waiting for a heart transplant. If she doesn't get one soon, she'll die."

Caroline's mother, Barb, was fifty-six years old and had had a massive heart attack in October. She had been confined to the cardiac care unit of the hospital ever since, waiting for a heart that would match her blood type and size. She had been added to a waiting list that stretched four thousand names long, and the odds were that she would die before the perfect match was found for her.

Throughout her life, Barb had been extraordinarily devoted to her daughter, who was now thirty-one. When Caroline's first marriage had failed, Barb had taken her daughter and grandchild into her home until the two had been able to get back on their feet. Caroline couldn't bear the thought of her mother slipping away from her like this. Her mother had to live; she needed her mother to live!

After pouring her heart out to Bill Gardner and being comforted by his empathy, Caroline noticed his own dazed and stricken look. The emotional combat fatigue straining his features indicated that he was not an expectant father eagerly awaiting news of the birth of his child.

Something far more serious had brought him to this waiting room today, Caroline realized – so, gently, she too made inquiries.

"My wife has a rare brain defect," he answered, "but the doctors say they can treat it. She should be out of here in a week."

Janie Gardner had always been healthy and robust, but a few weeks earlier she had suddenly begun experiencing debilitating headaches. Then she had had a grand mal seizure that brought her to the hospital. A CAT scan revealed the startling news that the thirty-eight-year-old woman had been born with an arteriovenous malformation—a rare brain defect that deprives the brain of blood—and that she had been living on borrowed time.

"My God," a radiologist gasped when he read the CAT scan. "How has this woman been able to survive all these years?"

The defect was so advanced that the only option now was a twenty-seven-hour, two-part operation, but doctors were confident that it would be successful and that Janie would make a complete recovery. Caroline was happy, for Bill's sake, that the prospects for his wife's recovery were good. By contrast, her own mother's chances for survival grew slimmer every day.

After a long conversation, Caroline and Bill finally rose from their seats in the visitors' lounge, bade each other good luck, and said good-bye. They never expected to see each other again.

But over the next few days, they kept running into each other. They always seemed to be headed for the same bank of elevators, the same hospital corridor, or the same waiting room at the exact same time. And soon they developed a special bond, as they tried by turns to support one another, offer hope, and provide cheer. Bill spoke often of his and Janie's four children; Caroline shared stories about her son. And they promised each other that, when their loved ones finally recovered and were discharged, they'd all go out together and celebrate.

But one morning, Caroline entered the atrium and found the usually optimistic Bill dissolved in tears. In the aftermath of the operation, it seemed, Janie's brain had started hemorrhaging. She was now in a coma and on life support.

Each day after that, Bill provided Caroline with updates whenever they encountered one another. And by now they were running into each other so regularly that each no longer feigned surprise when they saw the other in the lounge.

"Janie's coming out of the coma!" Bill told Caroline excitedly one day. "I read her a get-well card that our daughter Tess had sent, and tears rolled down her face as I read it. And then...Tess had asked at the end: 'Mommy, if you like this card, please

squeeze Daddy's hand.' And she did! Janie squeezed my hand!" He added, "The doctors say that Janie's making rapid strides, and we should begin discussing plans for rehabilitation soon."

But a few weeks later, the worst-case scenario for Janie Gardner occurred. Her brain ruptured, in what doctors call a "lethal bleed." This time, there was nothing that they could do but helplessly watch her fade away.

Two days later, Bill Gardner finally faced the truth: This time, there would be no miraculous recoveries, no sudden reversals, no inexplicable changes-for-the-better. Janie was on an irrevocable journey toward death.

And it was then that Bill, who always thought of other people first – even in the throes of deepest grief – thought of seeking out the nurse in charge of organ donations.

Janie had always been a fervent exponent of organ donation. She believed that donating your organs was a way of doing service – a final gift to the world from beyond the grave. Bill knew that Janie would want him to proceed with the plan he had just outlined in his head.

Bill found the nurse in charge of organ donations and made his unusual request. He wanted to donate his wife's organs when she expired. She nodded. But Janie's heart, he added – he wanted to donate her heart to someone specific... Could that be done? The nurse stared at him, nonplussed.

Direct donations of organs to specific recipients was almost unheard-of, she explained. In fact, she had never seen it done. But technically, she didn't see why it couldn't be done. She hastily referred him to the medical director of cardiac transplantation and the director of heart and lung transplantation. They had performed countless transplant operations, but none like the one Bill Gardner had in mind. The doctors told Bill that the chances of the matches being perfect, in terms of organ and body size, were about one in a million.

But Bill Gardner was not discouraged, nor was he deterred by the daunting statistics. Caroline Matthews had opened his heart to the plight of her mother. And now he wanted to bequeath to her the ultimate gift of his heart – the one belonging to his cherished wife.

As doctors made arrangements for organ matching tests, Bill raced downstairs to the visitors' atrium where he was certain he would find Caroline. At first, she couldn't comprehend what Bill was telling her. She cried on hearing that Janie was near death. And she cried even more when Bill told her that he wanted to give Janie's heart to Caroline's mother. "No one has ever given me a gift like this before," she sobbed.

(see Leventhal, *Healing* page 3)

Gaucher disease and the potential for misdiagnosis

BY STACI KALLISH, DO

Gaucher disease is a genetic condition caused by the inability to make an enzyme, glucocerebrosidase, which breaks down fatty substances in the body. This leads to build up of these substances in many tissues of the body, including the bones, organs, and bone marrow. Symptoms of Gaucher disease include anemia and low platelet counts, which can lead to fatigue, easy bruising, and bleeding. The spleen and liver can become enlarged, and the bones can be affected, with bone pain and low bone density. The most common form of Gaucher disease is type 1 Gaucher disease, which affects 1 in 45,000-60,000 people in the United States. Gaucher disease is much more common in the Ashkenazi Jewish population, where it affects approximately 1 in 850 people.

Gaucher disease can present in childhood with the above features and with poor growth. However, some people with Gaucher disease do not show symptoms until adulthood. This variability and the rare nature of the disease can make the diagnosis difficult. Many people with Gaucher disease experience a delay between symptom onset and eventual diagnosis. This delay may be months or even years long.

The features of Gaucher disease show overlap with some more common diseases, leading to further difficulty in making this diagnosis. People with Gaucher disease may initially be suspected to have leukemia, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, viral infections, or other conditions. While these conditions may be more common than Gaucher disease overall, Gaucher disease is actually more common in the Ashkenazi Jewish population than blood cancers, indicating Ashkenazi Jews with these symptoms should be evaluated for Gaucher disease early in their diagnostic work up. A delay in diagnosis of Gaucher disease can lead to complications, including irreversible bone damage, bleeding complications, and worsening of low bone density. Unnecessary procedures may also be performed, including treatment with steroid medications, biopsy of the liver, or removal of the spleen.

The diagnosis of Gaucher disease can be made with a blood test measuring the deficient enzyme, glucocerebrosidase. Genetic testing (also a blood test) may be useful for confirmation of the diagnosis or in high-risk populations, such as Ashkenazi Jews, as they are likely to have mutations common in their population.

LEVENTHAL

(continued from Healing page 2)

Miraculously, Janie Gardner's heart proved to be a perfect match for Caroline's mother. Barb underwent the successful operation on February 14 – Valentine's Day.

At Janie Gardner's funeral a few days later, the Gardner children sang their favorite song from the movie *Titanic* – Celine Dion's beloved "My Heart Will Go On."

* *The names in this story, a dramatization, are pseudonyms. Reprinted with permission.* ✨



The diagnosis may be made by biopsy of the bone marrow, but this is an invasive procedure and may not be necessary if Gaucher disease is diagnosed in another manner. Bone marrow biopsy may also provide false negative results and miss a diagnosis of Gaucher disease.

It is particularly important to consider Gaucher disease in people with symptoms suspicious for the disorder and to make the diagnosis in a timely manner as specific treatment is available for the condition. Gaucher disease may be treated with enzyme replacement therapy, which is an IV therapy that replaces the deficient enzyme, or with an oral therapy that reduces storage of the accumulating fatty substances. Treatment for Gaucher disease can normalize blood counts (hemoglobin and platelet counts), normalize spleen and liver size, and prevent the bony complications of the disease.

To reduce the likelihood of misdiagnosis of Gaucher disease, people should be aware of the symptoms. People who suspect they may have Gaucher disease or who have symptoms of Gaucher disease should be evaluated by a clinical geneticist or other specialist with experience in diagnosing and treating the condition. Family members of those with Gaucher disease should discuss this family history with their physicians. An evaluation for Gaucher disease may be recommended for them as they may be at risk for being affected and may have only mild features of the condition.

Increased awareness about Gaucher disease can help some people avoid a delay in diagnosis and treatment. For more information about Gaucher disease, visit the National Gaucher Foundation at www.gaucherdisease.org.

A clinical and biochemical geneticist, Dr. Kallish is an assistant professor of clinical medicine in the division of Translational Medicine and Human Genetics at the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania who sees patients with Gaucher disease and other rare diseases. Dr. Kallish participates in the International Gaucher Disease Registry, which is funded by Genzyme. ✨

HOROWITZ

(continued from Healing page 1)

"The potter will strike only those pots that are sturdy because he knows that they will withstand even repeated blows."

Abraham's trials included being thrown into a fiery furnace by Nimrod but he emerged unharmed. Famine forced him to flee to Egypt, where both he and his wife Sarah faced imminent danger. But his greatest challenge was, at God's command, to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice. Rabbi Mecklenberg, the author of *Haktav V'Hakabbalah* asks the question: "God knew that Abraham would pass the test. If so, what was its purpose?" His insightful comment applies to us all. "Only when a person is tested and stretched does he exhibit his full potential."

The Hebrew word for test is *Nisah*, to rise up, to hold up in the face of adversity, pain and challenges in our lives. In the *Torah* portion "*Naso*" the twelve tribes of Israel garnered hope by raising their individual flags. Oftentimes we do not realize the inner strength we possess and the potential for renewal in our lives. We must raise the flag of hope to move forward.

The prophet Jeremiah purchased a plot of land for 100 *shekalim* from a cousin, Anatot, during the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. Why would he take such a risk? Jeremiah said, "*Yesh Tikvah B'Yisrael* (there is hope for Israel). We will survive the challenge and *v'shav ubanim l'goulam* (Israel will return to its land)."

David Goldberg, CEO of Survey Monkey, died suddenly of a heart attack recently at the age of 47. His wife, Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook, posted a message to mark the end of *Shloshim* (the 30 days of mourning). Below are some of her inspirational words.

"I think when tragedy occurs, it presents a choice. You can give in to the void, the emptiness that fills your heart, your lungs, constricts your ability to think or even breathe. Or you can try to find meaning. These past 30 days, I have spent many a moment lost in the void. And I know that many future moments will be consumed by the vast emptiness as well. But when I can, I want to choose meaning and life."

For all who experience tragedy and trauma, may these words resonate: "*Ki nicham Hashem m'Tzion* (for the Lord shall comfort Zion)". May the Almighty ease our pain with His gifts of humor, hope and inner strength.

Herbert Horowitz is Rabbi Emeritus of Shore Parkway Jewish Center, Brooklyn, NY. He is a popular lecturer and scholar-in-residence. He can be reached at rabhh18@gmail.com. ✨





Jewish Educator

BY AMY HIRSHBERG LEDERMAN

Jewish mourning rituals provide comfort and strength

I met Barbara several years ago when she called me out of the blue and asked if I would be willing to read my story *My Grandmother's Candlesticks* to her seventh grade class. I was thrilled to be considered a “real author” and readily consented. Upon meeting Barbara, it took only a few minutes to see that she was special – as a teacher and a woman. For in her regal frame resides a heart as big as Montana, a passion for teaching that is infectious, and sadly, a soul struggling with profound grief and loss.

Barbara tragically lost her *fiancé*, Ben, six months ago to pancreatic cancer. Though their relationship was only a few years old, they had traveled more emotional territory than many do in lifetime relationship. What has made it harder for Barbara is that Ben asked to be cremated and not to have a memorial service. I am certain that had Ben known how much worse Barbara's grief would be because of these requests, he would have reconsidered and given her what she now needs most – a tangible and community-oriented way to mourn Ben and a place to go that marks his grave so that she can still feel “connected” to him.

In Judaism, death is viewed as a natural process. Our deaths, like our lives, have meaning even if we do not understand at the time why a person has died tragically or prematurely. Traditional Jewish thought affirms a belief in the resurrection of the dead (as is written in the *Amidah* and Maimonides Thirteen Principles of Faith) as well as an afterlife, where those who have lived a worthy life will be rewarded in the World to Come.

Jewish mourning practices are extensive and offer the mourner specific times and places to express the anguish, sorrow and guilt that often accompany death. They serve two distinct and significant purposes: to show respect for the dead and to comfort the living who must go on with their lives.

Respect for the dead body (*kavod ha-met* in Hebrew), is a matter of paramount importance in Judaism. After a person dies, the eyes are closed, the body is covered and candles are lit next to the body. The body is never left alone before burial as a

sign of respect. Most communities have an organization known as the *Chevra Kaddisha* to care for the dead whose members volunteer their time to sit with, care for and prepare the body for burial. This *mitzvah* is considered extremely praiseworthy because it is performed for someone who can never repay the person who performs it.

In preparation for burial, the body is thoroughly cleaned and wrapped in a simple, plain linen shroud. Autopsies are generally discouraged as a desecration of the body but are permitted in cases where it may save a life or local law requires. The body is not embalmed, and no organs or fluids may be removed, with the more recent exception of organ donation in certain cases.

Because of the requirement of burying the entire body in the earth, Jewish tradition does not believe in cremation. The body is never displayed at funerals; open caskets are forbidden by Jewish law as disrespectful to the dead.

To comfort and aid the living, there are a number of rituals which offer the mourner distinct periods of time in which to grieve, both publicly and privately. There is the recitation of the Mourner's *Kaddish* which is recited at the burial and for eleven months after the death of a parent at daily, Sabbath and festival services. The process of sitting *shiva* (seven, in Hebrew) is traditionally observed by the family of the deceased for seven days after the burial. Friends and family members visit the mourner's home and offer emotional support, food and other help while sharing stories and memories of the deceased. This helps the mourner in the first days of loss by enveloping him or her with a community that cares.

The next period of mourning is called *shloshim* (thirty, in Hebrew) when mourners do not attend parties or celebrations, shave, cut their hair or listen to music for 30 days. The final period, *avelut*, is observed only for a parent. This lasts for 12 months during which time the son or daughter avoids parties and celebrations. Every year, on the anniversary of the death, family members observe the deceased's *Yahrzeit* and recite the *Kaddish*.

Jewish mourning rituals enable the mourner to mark his or her loss with meaningful observances. The time frames of a week, a month and a year suggest a deep sensitivity to the fact that healing is a process and it is important to give ourselves time to grieve without feeling compelled to return to life at full speed.

Barbara did not have the opportunity to see her beloved Ben buried, nor is there a grave site she can visit when she wants to feel connected to him. She did not sit *shiva* and desperately missed the warm

Parkinson's Progression Markers Initiative (PPMI)

Jon Gilman, 31, a software engineer in Boston, is passionate about health and fitness. He runs. He bikes. He practices yoga. And he uses apps to track his physical activity. Motivated to learn more about how his body works, Jon got genetically tested and learned he has a genetic mutation that puts him at increased risk for developing Parkinson's disease.



PARKINSON'S
PROGRESSION
MARKERS
INITIATIVE

Play a Part in Parkinson's Research

While Jon may never be diagnosed with Parkinson's, and no one in his family has it, he learned that his specific genetic mutation is more prevalent in certain ethnic populations, particularly those of Ashkenazi Jewish, North African and Basque descent.

Each year approximately 60,000 people in the U.S. are diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, a chronic, degenerative brain disorder second only to Alzheimer's in prevalence. The cause is unknown, but most researchers believe a combination of genetics and environmental factors can increase risk. No cure has yet been found for Parkinson's; people who are diagnosed face an inexorable worsening of symptoms over time.

The Parkinson's Progression Markers Initiative (PPMI) is The Michael J. Fox Foundation's flagship global clinical study, <http://michaeljfox.org/ppmi/genetics>, which is expanding into several cities around the country seeking insights into the causes, onset and progression of Parkinson's disease. Clinical studies like this could help speed the development of new therapies benefiting all Parkinson's patients, and ultimately find a cure. ✨



embrace of the community in her first week after his death. It is worth considering these hard truths when contemplating our own wishes upon death, as much for ourselves as for those who love us and will have to carry on without us.

Amy Hirshberg Lederman is an author, Jewish educator, public speaker and attorney who lives in Tucson. Her columns in the AJP have won awards from the American Jewish Press Association, the Arizona Newspapers Association and the Arizona Press Club for excellence in commentary. Visit her website at amyhirshberglederman.com. ✨

ZIMMERMAN*(continued from page NAT 8)*

Force franchises, all under the Cannon aegis, the human interest story behind the rags to riches glitter and back to rags kept me riveted for 88 minutes.

Charles Bronson, Sylvester Stallone, Jean-Claude Van Damme, and Chuck Norris notwithstanding, most of the Cannon Group's action B-movies featured less than outstanding actors. The Golan-Globus marriage produced a few award winning films yet aspired to more.

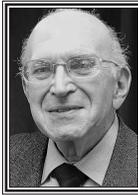
For example, his Oscar-nominated film, *Operation Thunderbolt*, based on Operation Entebbe, was nominated for Best Foreign Language film in 1978. I must also mention that between 1984 and 1988, three Golan films were nominated for Golden Raspberry Awards for worst picture (*Cannonball Run*, *Tough Guys Don't Dance*, and *Cobra*).

In researching the Cannon oeuvre, I discovered that Menahem Golan co-wrote and directed *Hanna's War*, released in 1988. Unfortunately unavailable on DVD, this fictionalized story of Hanna Senesh, Hungarian paratrooper on a suicide mission in World War II, is based on her diaries and the memoir of her co-parachutist, *A Great Wind Cometh*, by Yoel Palgi. It would be terrific if a future SFJFF would screen this film.



Picture from *In Silence* courtesy SFJFF.

Smart, thoughtful, and deliberate, SFJFF and JFI offer so much to so many, and always, they show films of high quality on important subjects. This year, the Festival creators called out documentaries and feature films that deal with the same important subjects. For example, *The Singing Abortionist* depicts the life of Polish-born abortion doctor Henry Morgentaler, who survived Auschwitz and Dachau. *The Law* is "a sexy, riveting film about the legislative process" and about Simone Veil, played by Emmanuelle Devos, the leading force behind France's 1975 abortion law.



As I Heard It

BY MORTON GOLD

Good performances

Folks have been leery of sending me CD's to review of late. With a mixture of surprise as well as welcome, I received one. The disc is titled: *Sim Shalom's Live Jazz High Holidays*.

Even though I live in Maine and far from the Big Apple I have heard about this temple and the large attendance for their unusual services. After listening to this disc I understand



German Concentration Camps Factual Survey, described above, is paired with *In Silence*, the fictionalized story of five brilliant Jewish artists, expelled from Czechoslovakia and Germany that "conveys the promise of the 1930s, when classical music and popular jazz were sites of innovation and seduction. Then came the camps, a place of unbearable silence."

Nazi-seized art is contrasted in *Dealing with the Devil* and *The Art Dealer*. *Mussa* "movingly demonstrates the human impact of immigration policy" in Israel by depicting the story of a 12-year-old refugee from Darfur. *Manpower* is a feature film about four men in crises, one of whom is an Israeli policeman whose award involves a trip to the Buchenwald concentration camp in Germany. His new assignment is to deport African migrant workers. The stories of these four men are woven together by filmmaker Noam Kaplan to depict "painful realities of 21st Century life in Israel."

From mentoring young filmmakers to consulting with aspiring Jewish film festivals, JFI and its signature program, the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival, have made a significant impact on all things relating to Jewish film. The miracle of electronic media results in a worldwide opportunity to take advantage of such resources. You do not have to live in the San Francisco Bay Area to experience world class Jewish film.

Dr. Zimmerman is professor emerita at Notre Dame de Namur University (NDNU) in Belmont, Calif., where she continues to teach the Holocaust course. She can be reached at mzimmerman@ndnu.edu. ★

their popularity.

The vocal soloist in each selection is Steven Blane who is the rabbi of the temple. Even on this disc one can discern that he has an understanding and outgoing personality. He has a sweet, trained lyric tenor voice and makes many one liners during a live *Rosh Hashana* service in 2014. It was recorded in the studio with world renowned jazz guitarist Saul Rubin. On seeing one congregant leaving (early?) he remarked "If you're gonna go, have fun!"

On first listening to this CD initially I didn't quite know what to make of him or the approach to each prayer. By the time I got to cut no. 10, *O'chillah L'eyl*, I realized what I suspected from the start, namely that the rabbi was a split personality. He really is a traditional *hazzan* who likes jazz and who also doubles as a rabbi. He knows and likes the idea of improvisation which is at the heart of jazz as well as *chazzones* (cantorial art). I will not state that I liked each selection, many, especially the instrumental interludes, I did not even though I thought that the arrangements were good and all were well performed.

I did not think that most were appropriate in reflecting the spirit of the texts, even though they surely were entertaining. Even though it was not stated on the jacket, this was a *Rosh Hashana* service as Rabbi Blane said, "see you on *Yom Kippur*" at the end of the disc. If this is the case, I do not understand why *Kol Nidre* was sung. There is a quartet of gifted instrumentalists that perform in each selection. They include: Carol Sudhalter, flute and tenor sax; Tai Ronen, a really fine Bass player who also made the arrangements; Frank Levatino, drums; Jack Glottman, piano and Itai Kris on flute.

After the conclusion of *Hinei Mah Tov*, Rabbi Blane remarked "It is okay to clap. No booing."

The second selection was *Kol Nidre*. While Blane's voice lacks the sonority of a Richard Tucker or an Alberto Mizrahi, he does give a moving account of this prayer. After the first time, there is an extended solo for the double bass and the prayer is concluded from "*Nidra Na*" to the end. In the *Barchu* and *Sh'ma* that follow, I question the appropriateness of the Balafonte-like vocal treatment in the *Sh'ma*.

The rendition of Debbie Friedman's *Halleluyah* follows and is a foundation for his free treatment of the vocal line. It was good, yes but why was it necessary? In singing the *Hatzi Kaddish*, the *hazzan*, rather than the "jazz singer"/entertainer emerged again. In the *Avot* that followed, he remarked that "you will never hear the *Avot* (done) that way again. Personally, I hope I never will! Not because it was poorly performed. On the contrary, it was

(see Gold, page 10)



A Playful Path

By BERNIE DE KOVEN

The Homegrown Jew

I think it's been happening ever since Babylon. And once we got to America, it's been *really* happening. Each of us has somehow decided that Judaism is something we can make up as we go along.

Not completely, mind you. Certainly not from scratch. But we do have that certain itch for making Judaism, well, shall we say "relevant." And we do feel that we have a certain right to decide on our own just how relevant to make it.

We have our rabbis and teachers and traditions and books, thank Something, but for many of us the god thing seems a little too far, shall we say, out. Even those of us who grew up observant – after we leave home, and maybe don't go to shul so much anymore – ultimately decide that we have the right, if not the commandment, to be Jewish in our own particular, not necessarily kosher, if you know what I mean, way.

I, for one, despite being the son of a Rabbi and Rebbetzin, *aleyhemhashalom*, grew up into what I've come to understand as a Paradox Jew. For a long while, a very long while, even though I *davened*, laid *tefillin*, and *shokled*, and prayed with all my heart and soul and might to *HaShem*, ultimately I grew less and less certain as to Whom I was praying, and why and what for. I became a vegetarian and decided that was *kosher* enough. I made up my own prayers and decided that was religious enough. My home was my *shul*. My wife my *chazzan*. We lit candles. But our *Shabbosim* became more and more a day of communion with the spirit that had grown between us. Not God's. But ours. The divine We.

One day I was talking to someone, an old business connection, and I mentioned Shabbos to her, and she said "Jewish? You're Jewish? I never would have guessed."

And on that day, or maybe a little later, I decided that I needed to reclaim my Jew. That maybe I my homegrown Judaism had gotten a little overgrown, and I once again needed to reinvent my religion.

Because, see, I really felt that Judaism is my religion. A Jew I have always been. But religious, I guess it depends on what you mean.

So I started with the things that meant the most to me – Jewish-like things: traditions, customs that connected me back

to the wise and weary soul of my people.

One of those things: *brachos* (blessings). You know, after years of saying a blessing every time you take a bite of something, or see a rainbow or come out of the bathroom, and then you, well, lapse – you miss it, this thanking thing, this quiet pause, this moment of appreciation for the gift of life itself.

But it's hard to make a blessing when you're not sure the word "god" means anything real enough for you to actually thank.

Though we're vegetarians, mostly, every now and then we eat a piece of fish – because, you know, it's good for our free radicals or something. And there it is on our plates, this piece of a beautiful, powerful animal. And we have to say something. So we started saying "Thank you, Fish." And that was pretty much as far as we got.

Most recently, though, I've been thinking of saying "planet" or "earth." I'm going to try it out on easy things. Like when someone sneezes, maybe I'll say "Earth bless you." Or when something happens to me that didn't kill me maybe I'll try saying: "Thank you, planet." Maybe that'll get me closer. Because it's part of me, this gratitude impulse, that I inherited, that I value, and, as a Jew, and as a me, I don't want to let go.

And there are Jewish teachings that I want to remember better: like things about compassion, about not judging people until you really understand their circumstances. There's a saying, a Jewish saying I remember that goes something like *dan'l'kafzechus*, which has something to do with giving people the benefit of a doubt, or even better, "assuming positive intent." This was a teaching that touched my wife very deeply. And, in passing, she one day told me a story of how she plays a game of *dan'l'kafzechus* when she's driving. It goes like this:

If someone cuts in front of her, for example, or blows their horn (well, actually their car's horn) at her, instead of getting angry, she tries to think of all the possible reasons for that person being so ungodly rude, so to speak. Like maybe he's on his way to the hospital for some kind of emergency. And not only that, but his kids don't have a ride home from school. And even worse, he has to go to the bathroom. Or maybe he's trying to make way for the car behind him, because someone in that car is violently ill.

And on and on she goes, thinking up excuse after excuse, plausibility after semi-plausibility, until the anger fades and is replaced by a quiet sense of fun, and maybe even sanity.

No one ever said the life of a homegrown Jew would be easy or even better, but it's good to know we can do such

GOLD

(continued from page 9)

very well performed. I simply feel that the instrumental interlude was inappropriate because it did not reflect either the meaning or spirit of the text. It was very good jazz, however.

The same may be said for *M'chalkayl Chayim* that follows. However it was in the rendition of *U'nitaneh Tokef* that I felt the sincerity and devotion of a *hazzan*, regardless of the style. This was exceptionally well performed. I enjoyed his singing of the *B'rosh Hashana* that followed but not the instrumental interlude, simply because I did not think it was appropriate... "who shall live and who shall die."

If one wanted to refer to Rabbi Blane as Hazzan Blane instead, one could do so on the basis of his rendition of *O'chilah L'eyl* that followed. The prayer of *Aleynu* followed (no. 11) "This melody is really old" and again I liked the vocal part and at a different venue I would have admired the instrumental interlude for the same reason previously stated. "Now comes the fun part, the *Shofar Service*."

Indeed. After blowing *shofar*, and prior to *Areshet S'fateynu* he announced "Everybody Dance."

And so they should have. A rendition of *Sh'ma Koleyhnu* followed. Even with the jazz style, I believe that this was among the most appropriate and also inspiring performances on this CD. *Yasher Koach*. A rendition of *Ashamnu* that followed was not only traditional but was also among the best performed *t'fillah* on this CD. As for *Avinu Malkeyhnu* that followed, I suppose that this "hip" treatment might really be successful at a coffee house, or perhaps even at a concert hall.

It simply is not my cup of tea at any service in a synagogue of whatever "stream" we have. I will state however, that R. Blane sang it very well. On the other hand *Hayom* that followed was the most successful and perhaps even the most enjoyable toe tapping cut on the disc. I loved it. I believe that this was not only suitable but also appropriate. The CD, *The Online Synagogue*, may be obtained at www.SimShalom.com.

To conclude. Enjoyable? Yes. Musically well performed? Definitely. Appropriate? Jury is still out.

Dr. Gold is a composer/conductor and an arts reviewer. He may be reached at drmortongold@gmail.com. ★



things, even though we're not doing what the *rabbonim* might want from us. We can take the sensibilities that we've inherited, we can honor our parents and theirs, we

(see De Koven, page 11)

The Sobar

Hoping to be Jerusalem's first live music club for young people

The city of Jerusalem, with its rich history and beauty is also, unfortunately a magnet for disaffected teens and young adults. They come from all over Israel as well as the rest of the world, looking for excitement, entertainment and of course, other youth.

Many Jewish parents from the wide world send their kids to Israel, hoping they will find some sort of life changing Jewish experience. Sometimes it does not work and the young people, at loose ends, often end up on their own in Jerusalem. As we well know, that can result in risky behavior even leading to drugs and other street trouble.

While there are drop-in centers where teens can get soft drinks, a meal and some interaction with local service personnel in downtown Jerusalem – these Centers do not offer entertainment venues. Most of them close when the sun goes down and the young people have had no positive place to “hang out” safe from negative influences where they can be inspired in a positive way.

Tracy Shipley, an experienced addiction counselor and Creative Arts Therapist, lives in Jerusalem and raised her three children there. She has personally seen the problems of at risk young people after dark in the City. This inspired her to solve the problem.



Tracy Shipley – daughter of JPO columnist Jim Shipley.

The concept is called “The Sobar” – a “sober bar” – that offers the opportunity for youth to play, create, listen to and learn music of all types while being treated to snacks, soft drinks and a warm atmosphere where they will feel at home. There will be no smoking, no alcohol, and obviously no drugs. Older bands will be recruited to play at the Sobar and to offer workshops to inspire the kids.

Over the past two years Tracy and her volunteers have been offering Open Mic nights for youth and her Sobar Band has performed for hundreds of Jerusalemites who had the opportunity to hear about

DE KOVEN

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can be our own best kind of Jew.

Bernie De Koven is the author of *The Well-Played Game*, *A Playful Path* and *Junkyard Sports*. *A Playful Path* is available at: <http://press.etc.cmu.edu/content/playful-path>. One can also purchase and download the book from <http://aplayfulpath.com> where one can also be entertained and learn more about the author. ★



the Sobar idea from the young band members. Now, in partnership with AMI-Neshima, a non-profit organization designed to foster vibrant pluralistic Jewish Identity through music and art, Tracy plans to open a permanent venue for The Sobar that will be open full time and serve this in-need population of young people in the Capitol City of Israel.

The “AMI” in AMI-Neshima stands for Art, Music, Identity. Tracy says “They are the perfect partner for the Sobar because young people express themselves best through art and music.”

They have found the ideal location to open the permanent Sobar in downtown Jerusalem, far from the bar scene but with easy access. The building is in need of huge renovations, but the City of Jerusalem sees the potential of this venue and is eager for the project to succeed. The Municipality of Jerusalem has agreed to invest in renovations as well as totally equipping the facility to handle a large population for music and other types of entertainment geared toward a positive experience for young Jewish people, however there is one condition. Their funds must be matched by other donors.

The City’s plan calls for The Sobar Project and AMI-Neshima to raise \$80,000 and the City will match the amount raised. Tracy Shipley has recently completed a whirlwind visit to the U.S. engaging musicians, artists and related philanthropies in the fund raising effort. “We are hoping to make a permanent home for The Sobar a reality within the next year,” states Shipley. “But we need grassroots support as well as that of well-known musicians, artists and philanthropic organizations to join us in this worthwhile effort to help Jewish kids in our Holiest City to be inspired by music and positive enrichment keeping them out of harms way. Tracy would love to tell you more, including some great success stories, if you are interested. Just contact her at: sobar-jerusalem@artists.org.il or call her at 972-54-810/8918. You can see her activities of the past two years on their FB page sobarjerusalem. You can also make direct donations earmarked for the Sobarat

Former Auschwitz guard sentenced to prison



BY EVA MOZES KOR

JULY 15, 2015 – I am disappointed in the German court’s decision this morning in sentencing Oskar Groening [age 94] to jail (for four years). They found him guilty of being a small cog in a big machine that killed a lot of people, and I agree with that – he was guilty. He has accepted responsibility and admitted his guilt. They are trying to teach a lesson that if you commit such a crime, you will be punished. But I do not think the court has acted properly in sentencing him to four years in jail. It is too late for that kind of sentence. All it does is make the court feel good, like they have done something. His guilt does not decrease just because he is old, but why did they not do this 20 years ago?

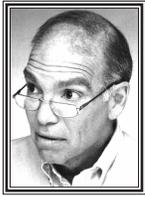
My preference would have been to sentence him to community service by speaking out against neo-Nazis. I would like the court to prove to me, a survivor, how four years in jail will benefit anybody. Groening said in his statements that he was wrong, it never should have happened, and it should never happen again. That is exactly what I want him to tell the young people in Germany who want to bring back a Nazi regime. I told Oskar Groening that I have forgiven him, but that does not absolve nor condone what he has done.

Some people, including journalists, have questioned my right to testify in this trial because I have forgiven the Nazis. My forgiveness has nothing to do with the perpetrators. It is for my healing alone. The reason I am speaking out is because so many survivors are still suffering emotionally, 70 years later, and they do not understand they have the power and the right to forgive. The world is hurting so much, and I think it desperately needs something besides punishment.

Eva Mozes Kor is a survivor of the Holocaust, forgiveness advocate, and public speaker. Powered by a never-give-up attitude, Eva has emerged from a trauma-filled childhood as a brilliant example of the human spirit’s power to overcome. She has lived most of her life in Terre Haute, Ind., where in 1984 she founded the CANDLES Holocaust Museum (www.candlesholocaustmuseum.org). ★



Neshima-AMI. Contact Yishai Ashkenazi, CEO of AMI-Neshima at 972-258/76767. Their address is P.O. Box 2454, Jerusalem, Israel 9102302. They also have a web site: www.artists.org.il. ★



Shipley Speaks

BY JIM SHIPLEY

National identity

By what form is a nation born? What makes its nationhood and citizenry stand out from all the others? Having just celebrated a birthday on July 4th, I am acutely aware of the rebellious group of British Subjects who declared independence from England and how and why they did it.

Jews have a national identity that goes back a bit farther than 1776. Near as we can tell, we were a people almost 6,000 years ago. We formed a nation a little over 2,000 years ago (sorry, creationists). We built our capitol city from the ground up on the site of an ancient ruin – kind of like New York and Chicago.

We slowly developed our own language. We call it Hebrew. Some of our people – alright almost all of our people got tossed out of our own land a couple of times, but we came back to join those who stayed. Same national dream, same language. Same peoplehood.

I have a colleague who told me we had no more right to the land of Israel than the Hittites or the Canaanites. He said, “after all they lived there once, too”. Yeah buddy, but they are gone. Long time gone. On the ash heap of history. We are still there. Even when the Romans cast us out, many villages remained. Jewish towns that never left.

When the Romans were defeated by the Caliphate, we were there. Waiting for the day when we could regain our sovereignty. In the late 1880’s the first Aliyah brought the first pioneers back to join those who never left. They and those who followed in the first years of the “Return” were citizens of a conquered land. A land that at the time was part of the Ottoman Empire.

We just saw a wonderful special on PBS titled *1913, The Seeds of Conflict*. It is about Israel, known at the time as Palestine.

While the Jews who came from Eastern Europe in that first Aliyah and then the second in the early 1900’s were under the yoke of the Ottoman Empire, they knew they were different. They had come to expand the indigenous Jewish population and sow the seeds of the Third Jewish Commonwealth. According to newspapers of the time the Arabs and the Christians who lived there considered themselves Ottomans.

The Jews, who knew their history, knew that there had been Babylonians, then Romans, then the Caliphate now called Ottomans. The others had passed and disappeared, so would the Ottomans.

According to the Arab newspapers of the time, the Arabs were upset at the fact the Jews came to re-claim the land as the last indigenous people to have dominion. They, the Arabs, wanted to remain loyal Ottomans. They had no dreams, no ideas of Statehood.

Nowhere in the literature or news of the time does the word “Palestinian” appear. They were Arabs. They spoke and wrote in the Arab language. According to the writers and reporters of the time, they were loyal Ottomans.

The deal that England made with the tribes of Arabia in 1918 was if they would fight the Turks, who now ruled the Shrinking Ottoman Empire, they would become rulers of the Middle East. Ibn Saud Hussein, the Emir, unhappy with the Ottoman rule over his people, accepted the deal (see: Lawrence of Arabia).

So, the Arabs joined the Brits, the Turks were defeated, Britain of course, never following through on their promise to Hussein, created a bunch of phony states and there you have the Middle East today.

But there were Jews, now calling themselves Israelis still in the land of their forefathers and vowing this time, to stay and form the Third Jewish Commonwealth. And there were Arabs, calling themselves Arabs. Not Palestinians. Arabs. Not Ottomans anymore.

A national identity can begin in many ways. The United States became a nation and a people through a revolution against a tyrannical foreign regime. France, Germany and other European nations came about after many tribal wars and treaties. Ours began with our own wars against various tribes and the eventual emergence of a set of laws and some brilliant early era politicians who over 2,000 years ago recognized the viability of nationhood.

The present upheaval in the Middle East is the unraveling of those phony states set up by the British and the French after World War One. Israel? The only change there is the forming of the Third Jewish Commonwealth in 1948. The same people, the same dream, the same concepts. Never Babylonians, never Romans, never Ottomans. Jews. Israelis.

We have this indisputable right to our land. History as documented, not fictionalized proves it if one is willing to connect the dots. To me, the ultimate proof was in that PBS documentary. No, we would not, as those other occupied peoples did, call ourselves Ottomans, or, God forbid, Palestinians. We are, were and always will be the Jews of our own land, Israelis.

Jim Shipley has had careers in broadcasting, distribution, advertising, and telecommunications. He began his working life in radio in Philadelphia. He has written his JP&O column for more than 20 years and is director



Jewish America

BY HOWARD W. KARSH

Where are we now?

It has been a few months since I have written. I do want to stay in touch, but as I told you, I don’t want it to be same old, same old. We all note that the world is rushing forward, almost manically, but it is still not clear toward what. We still have no clear picture about the United States and Iran, the World and Iran. By this time we have passed all the proposed deadlines, even the extended one.

When Secretary of State, John Kerry, had a bicycle accident, he assured us that this misfortune would not have a negative effect on the negotiations. He was right about that. But, it did not seem to have any positive effect either. We are still waiting. We now have some assurances that the U.S. Senate will have oversight rights, but what does that mean. If there is any progress on the ground, it is hard to see.

The news about ISIS is mixed and controversial. We seem to be having some effect in combined air attacks, but just as soon as we think something positive is happening, they just get in their pickups and choose a new location. We were told that the Iraqi Fighters seem to have no will to fight. We have known this about the Middle East armies since 1948.

They present well, but when the bullets start to fly, they leave their positions. If you were to travel to the north of Israel, near the source of the Jordan, in the area where the Ancient Tribe of Dan lived, you can visit the batteries that the Syrians used in the wars against Israel, strategically located, and even more important are the chains to make sure that the soldiers their didn’t leave.

The news from North Korea seems almost comedic, but unstable personalities with armaments present a danger to the world. All of the countries in the Middle East who are currently assisting the US are clear about becoming nuclear secure.

Jews remain unsettled in France, the object of vicious anti-Semitism in England in other countries where there has never been issues before. The Jewish population of Denmark and Ireland are both under 5,000, and portend a time when there will be unsustainable numbers.

And then there is back at home. At last (see Karsh, page 13)



of Trading Wise, an international trade and marketing company in Orlando, Fla. ★



Book Review

REVIEWED BY RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN

A true warrior of World War II

Airborne (The Combat Story of Ed Shames of Easy Company). By Ian Gardner. With photos by Ian Gardner. Osprey Publishing. 2015. Pp. 295. \$25.95.

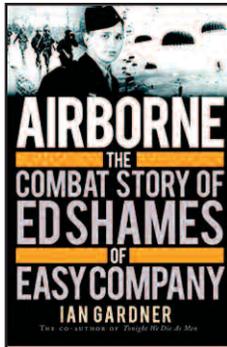
Author Ian Gardner and Colonel Ed Shames had already bonded while Gardner with Shames' unique input, was working on his literary trilogy concerning WWII daring exploits of the 3rd Battalion, 506 Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division.

The present book focuses on Shames in the war's context capturing the compelling legacy of a soldier's hero. It perhaps puts to rest some thorny issues regarding the colorful personality of a great American who has brought honor to his Jewish people, so burdened by its powerlessness during the Holocaust's colossal devastation.

The book is a timely contribution as we celebrate the 70th anniversary of WWII's successful conclusion and witnessing the natural diminishing presence of the Greatest Generation which gave humanity a critical victory in its darkest period. It corrects Shames' unfortunate portrayal in the HBO mini-series of *E Company's* Band of Brothers. I personally can attest to his humble *menschlichkeit* though he would admit to being a straight shooter particularly back then.

Edward David Shames was born on June 13, 1922, in Virginia Beach when it was but a rural community. He was the youngest of the four children of David and Sadie who ran the "Shames Provisions" country store, with the family living above it. The father's sudden death at age 42 and the Great Depression challenged the family.

While still at Henry Clay Elementary School Shames proves that no one should mess with him when teaching a bully, two years his senior, an unforgettable lesson. Of consequence later on would also be growing up rowing and fishing in Chesapeake Bay, target practicing with his father's pistols, and learning navigation



British Schindler

A hero passes

Sir Nicholas Winton, 106, passed away peacefully in his sleep at a hospital in England on July, 1, 2015. He organized the rescue of 669 Czech children, mostly Jewish, from Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia during the 9 months before war broke out in 1939. The children were transported to Britain and other countries while their families and contemporaries who remained did not survive. At that time, Nicky Winton was a 29 year old stockbroker.

The story became known to the public in 1988 when it was featured on *That's Life*, a BBC TV program hosted by Esther Rantzen. In 2003 he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II for Services to Humanity for this work.

A biography by his daughter Barbara Winton titled, *If It's Not Impossible...the Life of Sir Nicholas Winton* was published last year. Below is the book description:

Approximately 6,000 people in the world today owe their lives to Nicholas Winton. They are the descendants of a group of refugee children rescued by him from the Nazi threat. Some of them know of his existence and the part he played in their history, many others do not. It was a short event in his life but a critical one for those whose lives were saved. For him that intervention was over in a flash and other adventures supplanted it. Only much later did this episode re-emerge in his life and ever since has brought him visitors from all over the world anxious to learn his story.

This book lays out that story in detail, exploring the motivation and early experiences that led to him to save young lives, while others looked the other way. His motto, **"If something is not impossible, then there must be a way to do it"** led him to follow his own convictions and undertake an operation others had dismissed as unnecessary or too difficult. His life thereafter was full of exploits stimulated by similar motivation which, though not so consequential, remain testimony to his character. ✨

when hiking with the gift of maps and a compass from his sacrificial mother.

Shames went to great length to firmly train his 3rd Platoon. Though his strictness was resented by some, it did pay in saved lives proudly holding the best record among the Division's 500 platoons as well as Ed being the Division's first to receive a battle-field commission following D-Day. Indeed, his profound and faithful care even beyond the normal call of duty for those under his

KARSH

(continued from page 12)

count there are so many Republican candidates for President of the United States, that there are strategic questions about how to give them fair representation. And in the Democratic Party, there are now three candidates, Hillary Clinton, Lincoln Chafee, and Bernie Sanders. Others considering a run including Jeff Boss, Robby Wells, and Willie Wilson are unknown to me and I would guess, you as well.

The fact that President Obama is a "lame duck president," affords both the candidates and the Democrats in Congress an opportunity to worry more about themselves than the party.

And then there is Israel. The present government has no commonality, and if they were to continue for very long, it is only because of the reality, that there is no one presently in government that put together anything better. It is a joyful time for small parties, who in other circumstances would have no voice.

It must have occurred to you all that when a country is as divided as Israel, that only the Almighty can prevent agents of ISIS or some other defiant group from opening up another front. We don't speak about it, because the prospect is too real and to frightening. Even though we have never had a real peace in Israel, the enemies of Israel have never had the might to threaten the States, as ISIS is doing in Iraq, Syria and Lebanon. How do you fight against people who are only too glad to martyr themselves?

I know a young man who recently retired from the FBI. He had a prominent position as the head of anti-terrorism on the West Coast. He worked without limits, and slept restlessly. This was in the United States.

I leave you with this final thought. "Why would any sane person want to be President of the United States, Prime Minister of Israel, Chief of Police in any large American City, Superintendent of a Public School System, Detectives dealing with vice or drugs, when it is possible to live in the State of Colorado and live high on legal drugs, or the State of Washington, where along with the drugs there is legal assisted suicide-if need be.

If any of you see the light, please write. *Howard W. Karsh lives and writes in Milwaukee, Wisc., and can be reached at hkarsh@gmail.com. Submitted Jun. 15, 2015.* ✨

command ought not to be questioned.

In January 1945 he uncovered in the Belgium village of Foy a German commando team whose eight members wore American uniforms and who had lived in
(see Zoberman, page 14)

My Kosher Kitchen

REVIEWED BY SYBIL KAPLAN

Vegan, vegetarian & gluten free recipes

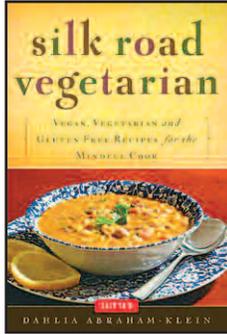
Silk Road Vegetarian. By Dahlia Abraham-Klein. Tuttle Publishing Company. 192 pp. 2014. \$16.95 paperback.

Although Dahlia Abraham grew up in New York, her parents trace their ancestry to the Babylonian Exile (now Iraq) and Persian conquest (now Iran) of the 6th century BCE. Her ancestors traveled Persia, Afghanistan and Bukhara (capital of Uzbekistan), speaking Farsi, Judeo-Persian. In the early part of the 19th century, they settled in Afghanistan, in the middle of the "silk road" which was an extensive, interconnected network of trade routes across the Asian continent. (It derives its name from the 3rd century CE silk trade of China, although spices and other goods moved along this route.)

The author's great-grandfather owned a vineyard in Uzbekistan; her grandmother moved to the States in the 1950s and grew her own grapes to make wine. The author's mother and siblings grew up in Kabul, Afghanistan, then moved with her family to Israel in 1949. The author's father, who had grown up in Kabul, lived in India, visited Israel, where he met and married her mother in 1952; they lived in India until 1956.

The author's family was merchants, absorbing the culture, languages, tastes and cuisines of all the places in which they lived. Abraham-Klein grew up in New York and, as a teen, became unable to eat wheat, dairy and sugar. She has a Master's degree in education and a degree in naturopathy.

This cookbook is subtitled "Vegan, Vegetarian and Gluten Free Recipes from the Mindful Cook" and contains 121 recipes in eight chapters. This cookbook has bases, condiments and other useful recipes normally found in supermarkets but are easy to prepare and can be sealed and stored such as hummus dip, tomato paste, za'atar, duck sauce and mango chutney. The appetizers chapter has among others vegan chopped liver, stuffed grape leaves, and Italian zucchini fritters. In the soups chapter, one finds soups



like Persian bean and noodle soup and pumpkin soup.

Among those in the salads chapter are minted beet salad and Middle Eastern lemon potato salad. Afghan squash goulash and Bengali potato and zucchini curry are among the main dishes. Rice dishes include Bukharian green-herbed rice and Greek-inspired spanakorizo. Notably in the side dishes chapter are sesame noodles and Shawarma-spiced potato wedges. The desserts chapter has, for instance, orange blossom date balls and orange zest almond cookies.

The book is enhanced by 174 color photographs of finished dishes and instructions. Among these are stamp-size color photographs which show the reader how to prepare slivered orange peel, fold stuffed cabbage and remove coconut meat.

Because Mrs. Abraham-Klein is not a chef and has no formal culinary education, she has produced a cookbook that is easy to follow; has interesting cultural and historical notes about each recipe; bold-faced ingredients and numbered instructions. All recipes are labeled vegan, gluten free.

Besides the fascinating history of her culinary heritage, there is an essay on "the spice Pantry with descriptions and photographs; others on tofu and legumes; an informative article on grains such as rice and quinoa; and a feature on food preservation. One nice touch is maps inside the front and back covers of the "silk road."

For those who are fascinated by exotic cuisines or are in need of vegan, vegetarian or gluten free recipes, this is a great resource for creative, healthy recipes.

Persian Spinach and Yogurt Dip (6-8 servings)

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 large thinly sliced onion
- 1 minced clove garlic
- small pinch saffron
- 1 Tbsp. hot water
- 3 cups stemmed, washed and chopped fresh spinach
- 2 cups thick plain yogurt
- salt to taste
- freshly ground black pepper to taste

Heat the oil in a large skillet and sauté onions for 15 minutes or until they are soft and beginning to color. Stir in garlic and sauté for 1 minute or until fragrant. Steep the saffron in a small bowl with hot water. Let sit until water is tinted. Add spinach to the skillet and sauté for 5 minutes or until wilted. Add saffron water and stir to combine. Cool completely. Fold in yogurt, season with salt and pepper. Refrigerate for several hours to allow the flavors to meld.

ZOBERMAN

(continued from page 13)

the States. When their Corporal in charge refused to reveal vital information, Shames shot him after being warned, causing his comrades to open up. Criticized by some for the killing, Shames' concern was his soldiers' safety. On a lighter note, Shames threw away in anger a pen sent by his devoted wife-to-be, Ida, unaware that it was a very expensive gold gift. Deprived of basics in a harsh winter he expected something practical with Ida thinking that he was taken care of.

Shames, who stood up to an anti-Semitic comment by a British officer in England before the invasion, was the first of his Division to enter Dachau and the horrors he faced are still with him today. My own father, Yechiel, a Polish Holocaust survivor, served with the Red Army's 118th Infantry Division that was decimated at Stara Rusa, and he miraculously survived following a bayonet fight with German paratroopers.

The book's sales proceeds will admirably all go toward wounded warriors and their families. Shames tellingly shares, "I've often wondered why I survived when most of my colleagues did not...Although it's been over 70 years since they died, to me it only seems like yesterday and it was a true privilege to know them."

Rabbi Israel Zoberman is the spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach, and the son of Polish Holocaust survivors. He and his family lived in the Wetzlar Displaced Persons Camp in Germany after the war. Rabbi Zoberman served in the IDF in the 1960's. ★



Coconut Milk

(2 cups) A substitute as a base for curries, in lieu of cream, and as a dairy in desserts.
2 cups water
2 cups grated fresh or frozen coconut

Bring water to a boil in a large saucepan. Stir in the coconut and remove from the heat. Cover and let cool. Puree with an immersion blender, line a sieve with cheesecloth and set it over a bowl. Pour the puree into the sieve and squeeze the cloth to extract the liquid. Remove the cheesecloth and use the coconut milk right away or store it in the refrigerator for up to 2 days, Shake before using.

Baked Lemon Rice Pudding (4 servings)

- 1/2 cup short-grain rice
- 2-1/2 cups unsweetened coconut milk
- 2 Tbsp. packed brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- grated zest of 1 small lemon
- 1 Tbsp. chopped vegan butter

fresh strawberries or any seasonal berries

Wash and soak the rice according to instructions. Combine rice and coconut milk in an ovenproof casserole dish and set aside for 30 minutes. Preheat the oven to 150°F. Add sugar, vanilla, lemon zest and butter to rice mixture and whisk gently to combine. Bake uncovered for 2 to 2-1/2 hours or until top of pudding is lightly browned. Allow pudding to cool, then gently peel off skin at the surface and discard. Chill in refrigerator for about an hour or until pudding thickens. Garnish with strawberries or seasonal berries and serve. ✨



KAPLAN/ISRAEL

(continued from page 16)

Jerusalemite, who lived 38 years in the Gush Katif where he worked as cultural director of a community center. After 11 months in a hotel and nine years in a caravan, now at age 76, he and his wife have moved into their permanent home three months ago. For the past 20 years, members of Gush Katif hold an annual Yulis Basketball Tournament in memory of his son, Itai Yulis.

To realize that after 10 years, there are still perhaps as many as 160 families who are not in permanent housing and whose lives are still in a form of limbo is disheartening. According to an *Arutz 7* article, on July 16, leaders and representatives of the Gush Katif community attended a program, marking ten years since the Disengagement from the Gaza Strip and northern Samaria.



Yehudah Gross holds a Kassam rocket that had landed near his home in Gush Katif.

First lady, Nechama Rivlin, told those gathered, "The story of the Gush Katif and its residents is not a local story, but the story of a nation....We must take on the commandment, 'and you shall tell it to your children', for the story of the

Jews in Sports

BY MARVIN MIGDOL

Jewish announcer to miss kickoff

DALLAS – Brad Sham, the Dallas Cowboys' broadcaster for 26 years, will not be at the opening game this year because it falls on Sept. 13, the beginning of *Rosh Hashanah*. This is the first time that there has been a conflict between a football game and the Jewish New Year. (Veteran announcer Verne Lundquist will fill in for Sham.)

In 2009 Sham required private jet service and a police escort to Arlington's AT&T Stadium in order to be on time to broadcast a game on *Monday Night Football*. He was a reader at Temple Emanuel (Reform) earlier that day on *Yom Kippur*.

This brings to mind Sandy Koufax, very outstanding left-hander, who decided not to pitch in Game 1 of the 1965 World Series because it fell on *Yom Kippur*. (See story and photo on page 17 of this link: indiamond6.ulib.iupui.edu/cdm/compound/object/collection/JPO/id/23724/rec/19)

2016 will mark Marv Migdol's 50th year as a National Jewish Post & Opinion writer. He was prolific up until recent years. Marv is writing his fifth book, *Eros and Judaism*. ✨



residents of Gush Katif, who risked their lives and made the desert bloom, who put their lives on the line and founded institutions of education and culture, of *Torah* and community," she said. "Who dedicated their lives to *Torah* and working simply for its sake. Who established wonderful and breathtakingly beautiful farms. 'And you shall tell' of the land, our homeland, which absorbed the blood of its children, and knows how to return love to those who love it."

Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein then spoke of the conclusions that he drew from the Disengagement. "First is that although the majority decides, it may not always be right," he began. "Not all that seems popular at the time is the most appropriate and correct thing to do."

"The second relates to the troubling phenomenon which stands out from those days, and even exists today in different forms, which is the dangerous phenomenon of the 'pack mentality' which has a cumulative impact on the public and the public opinion," he continued. "In the Disengagement, we saw this in the behavior of the media – not only in what they

Drew got a kidney!

In late May a kidney match was identified for Drew and she underwent successful transplant surgery. Her family reports that their prayers have been answered because she is doing wonderfully. The surgery has made a complete difference in her life.



Drew, age 12, a Jewish child in Indianapolis, had been suffering from a rare disease since age 6. Alport's Syndrome causes hearing loss, eye problems and kidney failure. Drew had attended Hasten Hebrew Academy until she was too weak to complete full school days. Her condition worsened last summer requiring her to need daily dialysis.

On dialysis, she was still feeling tired and low on energy. Now she is able to play with her friends without tiring and is much happier.

The family wants to stress the importance of organ donation and to encourage others to put this on their Driver's License. There are still over 100,000 people on a kidney transplant waiting list. Because of the generosity of a young man who had agreed to be a donor, Drew received the gift of a full life. Most likely, other's lives were saved by those who received his other organs. The family believes that according to Jewish law it is okay to donate an organ to save a life, but not for experimental purposes only.

We here at the *Jewish Post & Opinion* wish Drew and her family *mazel tov* on this special blessing and wish Drew continued improvement in her health – *bis a hundert und zwanzig*. ✨



published, but in the way they published it, and also, in what they omitted from publication – which was it seems 'opinion setting' according their own opinions of course, and which selected what was appropriate or not for the public to know."

The event was held in partnership with the second Gush Katif Museum in Jerusalem which screened footage and images of the days leading up to and during the Disengagement, as well as testimonies and interviews with members of the community.

If you are planning a visit to Israel in July or August, we strongly urge readers to contact the International Young Israel Movement and participate in this significant part of Israel's history. For more information and to sign up for a bus trip, contact office@iyim.org.il.

Sybil Kaplan is a journalist, food writer, lecturer and cookbook author. ✨



Seen on the Israel Scene

BY SYBIL KAPLAN
PHOTOS BY BARRY A. KAPLAN

The Jewish Post & Opinion

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Gush Katif – A blot in Israel's history

According to a plan by Deputy Prime Minister Yigal Allon, in 1970, two Jewish communities were created on the southwestern edge of the Gaza Strip, about one and a half kilometers from Gaza City, bordered on the southwest by Rafah and the Egyptian border, on the east by Khan Yunis, on the northeast by Deir el-Balah, and on the west and northwest by the Mediterranean Sea. He wanted a civilian presence, vital to Israel's security in the area, to prevent Egyptian invasion and attacks by Fedayeen (a volunteer militant group). Each year they built more communities until there were 21. In 1979, after the signing of the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty, the communities were united into one bloc that became known as Gush Katif.

What occurred next is not only still a controversial and contentious issue but heart-rending and painful to hear.

Israel Prime Minister Ariel Sharon proposed disengagement of the area because it was too costly in money and lives. The government adopted the idea on June 6, 2004 and it was enacted in August 2005. The eviction (or expulsion as the residents call it) involved 8,600 residents. Houses, public buildings, greenhouses, synagogues and farms were demolished. Within 24 hours of the last residents leaving, all of these had been totally demolished by Arabs. By September 12, 2005, security personnel had been evacuated.

Beginning in April 1985, the Gush Katif communities in the southwestern edge of the Gaza Strip were on the forefront of Arab terrorist violence. In 1987 the uprising of Arabs in Judaea, Samaria and Gaza began what is referred to as the First Intifada, and these communities came under attack. May 1994, the majority of the Gaza Strip was transferred to the Palestinian Authority. In September 1996, Arab riots occurred in these and other areas. September 2000 attacks began what was known as the Second Intifada, affecting these communities. Spring 2005, 5,500 artillery shells and kassam rockets fell on Gush Katif communities.

This August marks the 10th anniversary of the expulsion. In commemoration, the



Gush Katif Museum tour guide, Debbie Rosen, and Sybil Kaplan in front of the Gush Katif emblem – a split magan david with a palm tree growing in the middle.

International Young Israel Movement is sponsoring 10 busloads of supporters in July and August to travel to the area and hear firsthand what occurred. Their purpose is to show solidarity, to explore, to discover and give visitors the opportunity to visit the Gush Katif Museum in Nitzan, between Ashdod and Ashkelon, 42 miles from Jerusalem, and meet with former residents.

Your reporter and photographer were part of the first busload with Oreet Segal, tour guide for an all day bus trip. She was originally from Brooklyn and in Israel more than 40 years. More significantly, she is a former resident of the original Gush Katif Moshav Ganei Tal, an agricultural cooperative where farms are individually owned. Most farmers of Ganei Tal grew and exported geraniums and tomatoes. Mrs. Segal is a current resident of the 2010 rebuilt community, 30 miles from Jerusalem.

At the time of the expulsion, residents never believed it would take place. Soldiers, specially trained, came to work with them on the eviction. Many residents resisted peaceably until the last moment, but, ultimately, they packed their belongings in containers which were stored until they

had permanent housing and were initially taken to live in hotels. From there, they were moved to caravans until they could resolve their housing issue. Mrs. Segal and others from Ganei Tal lived in hotels for two and a half months; her family then lived in a caravan six and a half years before building a home in Ganei Tal.

Today, 10 years later, 80 percent of the residents are in permanent houses, however, over half have not worked or have no income and are dependent on the compensation they received as they still try to move forward and organize their lives. Compensation was based on the number of years each person lived in Gush Katif and calculations of square meters of their former home there.

Our guide for the Gush Katif Museum that opened three years ago was a former resident of a Gush Katif community, Debbie Rosen, who told us about her personal experiences and then led us from room to room where there were videos about Gush Katif.



Packing boxes for residents' possessions during the move from Gush Katif are recycled as seats at the Gush Katif Museum.

Across the road is the community of Nitzan where Yehudah Gross operates a hardware and frame shop. He settled here after living in the Gush Katif bloc 23 years and awaits a permanent place for his store.

From here we drove to Bnei Dekalim, built within the past couple of years, to meet Shlomo Yulis, a sixth generation (see Kaplan/Israel, page 15)