



The Chronicle

The Community Newspaper of the Jewish Council of North Central Florida

Issue #4, December 2020

Kislev - Tevet 5781

We Are Thankful For YOU!

By Virginia Brissette Hirshik, President and CEO
Jewish Council of North Central Florida

As we pause to give thanks this holiday season, I am struck by how fortunate I am to live in an open, active and committed community where opportunities for Jewish life and connections abound. The Jewish Council enjoys a special place in that village and that reality is made possible by all of you reading this. Even in this very challenging time of COVID-19, because of your generous support, we have been able to continue our mission to serve the Jewish community of North Central Florida.

And while I am grateful for all that I am blessed with, this year will be different than other years. Many of us are separated from our families. We had hopes to be reunited this spring, this summer, or this fall. Many have not seen parents or grandparents and had planned to be together for Thanksgiving. Now, even that hope comes with complications and cancellations. But yet, I am thankful. I am thankful for my family, I am thankful for our health, and I am thankful for the roof over our head and the food on the table. I am also so thankful to be part of a team with the Jewish Council's Board and Staff – William Alford and Alicia Rudin.

The first Thanksgiving was a celebration of freedom for the Pilgrims who had escaped religious persecution and made their way to America. Thousands of years before, the Jews had escaped oppression from Pharaoh and made it to the Promised Land. Hundreds of years after landing on Plymouth Rock, we, as Jews, sailed to America to escape persecution in Europe. Each time, people left home to build something better for the next generation. *L'dor V'dor*.

And that's really what we do now. We build something better for the next generation and we celebrate and give thanks for all we have – not only at Thanksgiving, but all year long. We as a community have shown a resilient strength over the last 9 months. We have raised money to fund our international Jewish partner agencies and given back to the broader community. We have fed the hungry, provided relief to the poor, and have managed to connect our community in ways we never thought possible. We have set lessons and examples for the next generation, *L'dor V'dor*. For that and all of you, I am TRULY thankful.



Thank you to everyone who made our socially-distant Mitzvah Day a success!
Members of the Gainesville Jewish community joined thousands of volunteers across the globe in projects to give back!
Please remember that the organizations that we support on Mitzvah Day need your support all year-round!
Turn to page 3 for photos and follow up on some of this year's projects.

A special thank you to the donors who funded meals for GRACE Marketplace, Ronald McDonald House, and the Helping Hands Clinic:

Shifra Armon & William Little, Kim Feigenbaum & Allen Geering, Alison Gerencser, Eloise Harmon, Sharon and Andrew Hirshik, Sharon Huey, Barry & Elaine Jacobson, Becky & David Micha, Dorie Stein, and Marcia & Hank Storch



Together we can do extraordinary things!

JCNCF's Annual Campaign goal (2020/2021) is \$200,000 and we have raised over \$47,000. That is 24% of our goal. Thank you to everyone who made that possible. Visit www.jcnCF.org to make your secure donation online now, or contact us at 352.371.3846 or office@jcnCF.org.

The Jewish Council of North Central Florida operates entirely on the contributions of generous community members like YOU! With that in mind, the JCNCF events that you see listed in this newsletter each month are made possible by those donations. Please consider making a gift to the Annual Campaign or to any of our special funds. Your donation supports Jewish causes locally and globally and means so much to so many.

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JCNCF Mission Statement

As set forth in the Articles of Incorporation, the JCNCF has been formed to operate and engage in philanthropic, cultural, and other group activities for charitable and educational purposes that shall contribute to the welfare of the Jewish community of North Central Florida and other Jewish communities around the world.

Submissions Policy

News and announcements of events that are of interest and open to the entire Jewish community will be included as space allows. The times and places of regular and special Jewish religious events, as well as Jewish organizational events, will be placed in the Chronicle's monthly community calendar.

Please submit original material of 500 words or less, not published or to be published elsewhere, along with photos of interest to the community. Submissions may be e-mailed in Word document format to chronicle@jcnCF.org; or dropped off at the Jewish Council of North Central Florida office. Please submit photos in high resolution with a caption identifying the subject and all people depicted. JCNCF reserves the right to edit all submissions. *The Chronicle* does not publish letters to the editor.

The Chronicle and the Jewish Council do not endorse the goods and services advertised in these pages, and make no representation as to the kashrut of the food, products, and services in such advertising.

If you have any questions, email chronicle@jcnCF.org or call 352.371.3846.

All submissions are due on or before the 10th of the month prior to publication.

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Mitzvah Day 2020, Every Mitzvah Matters!



The Storch family, led by Marcia and Hank, provided breakfast for 25 parents and children at Ronald McDonald House of Alachua County!



Dr. Eloise Harman (right) and Runi Foster (left) served breakfast to over 100 clients of GRACE Marketplace.

Dr. David Pawliger, Lynne and Robert Holt, and Andrew and Russell Hirshik got up bright and early to clean 8th Avenue at 8 am.

Congregation B'nai Israel collected 353 pounds of food on behalf of the Bread of the Mighty Food Bank! They also collected enough school supplies to provide 40 local children with the necessities for next semester!



Julia Egan was team leader for Temple Shir Shalom's Pet Food and Supply Drive for Saint Francis Pet Clinic. Chuck Egan organized a bed linen collection for Family Promise. The Egan children, Victoria, Susan, and Charlie helped sort and repackage all the pet food that was donated.



Ari and Ethan Law cleaned their neighborhood of trash and collected items to be recycled

PJ Library Chanukah Activities

Chanukah Lantern Workshop

Sunday, December 6 at 11 am on Zoom

Join Tinkergarten Leader and Gainesville PJ Mom Amy Carson for an interactive lantern-making workshop.



Tour of Israel for Chanukah

Sunday, December 13 at 10 am on Zoom

Join our Israeli tour guide, Rotem, as she explores historical and archeological sites important to Chanukah.

Chanukah Lantern Walk at Westside Park

Sunday, December 13 at 5 pm

We'll learn a little bit about Chanukah Light a menorah and say the prayers Masks must be worn and families are responsible for keeping socially distant



For registration, Zoom links, or questions, please contact Alicia Rudin at family@jcnf.org

Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins, December 10 -18

The Jewish Council of North Central Florida is proud to support local artist and Jewish culture by partnering with the Actors Warehouse to bring the community this FREE on-line streaming production inspired by the children's book *Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins* by Eric Kimmel.

Visit www.actorswarehouse.org for more information and to get your FREE tickets!

Showtimes:

Based on the date chosen, online video is available anytime for a two-day block.

Viewing Instructions:

Upon ticket purchase, an email will be sent. Please be sure to provide email address when making your purchase.

Within the email, click on "VIEW ORDER" to access the video link and pass code.



Actors' Warehouse

Imagine: Ocala Tree of Life Sanctuary



By Dr. Harold W. McSwain, Pastor
First Congregational United Church of Christ



Rabbi Ze'ev Harari and Pastor Dr. Harold (Hal) McSwain at the groundbreaking of the shared Ocala Tree of Life Sanctuary

On October 19, 2020, Temple Beth Shalom and First Congregational United Church of Christ, both of Ocala, Florida, broke ground to create their new *Tree of Life Sanctuary*. Dedicated to the principle of *Tikkun Olam*, which in Hebrew means “Healing the World,” the two congregations commit themselves to creating a relationship and a facility within which their two communities of faith will share space and conduct their respective and mutual worship, as well as educational, social justice, and artistic endeavors.

Responding to the imperatives of their respective religious traditions to accept their part in God’s work to “Heal the World,” the two congregations have partnered with each other in promoting learning, understanding, and bridging differences by elevating and advancing meaningful and transformative interfaith dialogue and witness in their community and the world. This high purpose permeates and guides the practical challenges they will face.

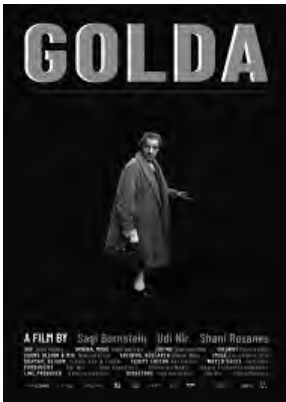
Members of both communities of faith recognize that preserving their respective religious practices and symbols, designing their building, raising funds, maintaining security, coordinating their religious calendars, and organizing how they govern and maintain their assets, all are “Sacred Covenant.” Their endeavors summon a shared commitment with a willingness to learn from the wealth of each other’s faith traditions and personal experiences, offering mutual support in challenge and transition, and as powerful examples of interfaith cooperation and ministry.

This interfaith initiative will create and promote sanctuary that is a “safe and sacred” space of great hope and inspiration for our respective and mutual futures. We can accomplish together, both in resources and public witness, what could never be accomplished alone.

The church’s pastor, Dr. Harold W. McSwain, and the temple’s rabbi, Rabbi Ze’ev Harari have been close colleagues for over a decade, having not only preached at and served each other’s congregations, but have worked closely together to foster interfaith dialogue and cooperation with other faith traditions, as well. They, as their two congregations, are committed to each other’s welfare, to honoring each other’s respective religions, and to serving Ocala and the Central Florida Region as a mark of love, justice, compassion, and regard for the integrity of every human being. For further information, contact: Tree of Life Sanctuary, P.O. Box 771318-1318, Ocala, Florida 34477-1318, occalatreeoflifesanctuary.com.



Tenth Annual Gainesville Jewish Film Festival - Sun



Sunday, November 29 - 7 pm

Golda

2019 / documentary / 88 min
Israel / Hebrew & English

Directors: Sagi Bornstein,
Udi Nir & Shani Rozanes,

Shortly before her passing, Golda Meir was interviewed for Israeli television. After the interview, the cameras kept rolling. Based on never-before seen materials, testimonies of supporters and opponents and archival footage, *Golda* tells the story of Meir's dramatic premiership.



Monday, November 30 - 7 pm

Breaking Bread

2020/ documentary / 105 min
United States / English

Director: Rudiger Suchsland

Founded by Dr. Nof Atamna-Ismaeel—the first Muslim Arab to win Israel's Master-Chef—the A-sham Arabic Food Festival is creating social change through food. This is a film that gives one hope.



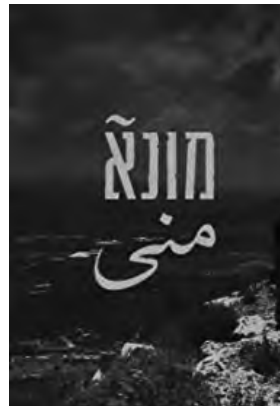
Tuesday, December 1 - 7 pm

Who Will Write Our History?

2018 /documentary/ 95 min
United States & Poland /
English, Yiddish, Polish

Director: Roberta Grossman

The story of Emanuel Ringelblum and the Oyneg Shabbes, the secret archive he created in the Warsaw Ghetto. An important film based on a superb book with the same title.



Wednesday, December 2 - 7 pm

Muna

2018 / TV Show / 90 min
Israel / Arabic & Hebrew

Director: Ori Sivan

Muna Abud, a successful female Israeli-Arab photographer who lives and works in Tel Aviv, is putting together an exhibition of her work to be mounted in Paris. Another great Israeli television series.



Thursday, December 3 - 7 pm

Incitement

2019 / thriller / 123 min
Israel / Hebrew

Directors: Yaron Zilberman

A riveting docu-drama, the film follows the year leading up to the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, from the point of view of the assassin.



Saturday, December 5 - 8:30 pm

My Polish Honeymoon

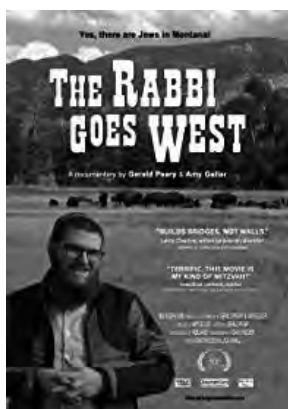
2018 / comedy / 88 min
France / French

Director: Ronit Kertsner

Anna and Adam, a young couple from Paris head to Poland to discover the land of Anna's grandmother. A comedy with surprising depth to it.

Monday, November 29 through Wednesday, December 9

The Tenth Annual Gainesville Jewish Film Festival is going virtual this year! The event streaming platform, Elevent (www.goelevent.com) will bring the festival directly into your home! How will this work? Films may be streamed to a computer or to television via Apple TV, Roku and ChromeCast. Each film will be available to view on the designated date of screening and will be accessible for 72 hours. For example, the opening film *Golda* is scheduled for Sunday, November 29 and guests may view that film starting at 12 am that day. Every film will also have a scheduled post-screening discussion, led by a scholar from the University of Florida, which will follow each of the specific screening times. *Golda's* discussion will start at 8:30 pm on Sunday, November 29. Tickets are \$12 per screening. Passes are \$40 for 4 films, \$80 for 8, and \$120 for all 11 screenings. For more information and to purchase tickets please, go to www.jcncf.org/gjff2020 or contact the Jewish Council at 352.371.3846 or office@jcncf.org



Sunday, December 6 - 3 pm

The Rabbi Goes West
2019 / documentary / 73 min
United States / English

Directors: Amy Geller & Gerald Peary

A Chabad rabbi and his wife adapt to their new home in Montana and encounter a mixed reception from that state's small Jewish community.



Sunday, December 6 - 7 pm

My War Hero Uncle
2018 / documentary / 52 min
Israel / Hebrew

Director: Shaked Goren

Through stories, Memorial Day ceremonies, and letters, the uncle was always a present absence for the nephew, the film's director. Fifty years after the uncle's death, two truths are revealed—the uncle's and the nephew's. This is a great film.



Monday, December 7 - 7 pm

Those Who Remained
2019 / drama / 83 min
Hungary / Hungarian

Director: Barnabás Tóth

A beautifully filmed and lyrical story of the healing power of love after enormous loss.



Tuesday, December 8 - 7 pm

Svetlana Boym: Exile and Imagination
2018 / documentary / 60 min
United States / English

Director: Michal Aviad

A nicely done documentary about a leading scholar of comparative literature who died at a very young age, but left an enormous intellectual legacy.



Wednesday, December 9 - 7 pm

Aulcie
2020 / documentary / 75 min
United States & Israel /
English & Hebrew

Director: Dani Menkin

Aulcie tells the inspiring story of Aulcie Perry, an African American basketball legend who led Maccabi Tel Aviv to an upset win in the European Championship, then decided to settle in Israel permanently.

The Gainesville Jewish Film Festival is a partnership between the Jewish Council of North Central Florida and the Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Florida. It is made possible, in part, by: Alexander Grass Chair in Jewish History, Bud Shorstein Professorship in American Jewish Culture and Society, Friends of Jewish Studies Tree of Life Fund, Gary R. Gerson Annual Lecture Series, Harry Rich Endowment for Holocaust Studies, Mikki and Morris Futernick Visiting Professorship, the Norman and Irma Braman Chair in Holocaust Studies, and UF Center for African American Studies.

Student Voters Ride to the Polls in Style

By Jamie H. Zinn, Director of Development, University of Florida Hillel



This past election was the first time many UF students were eligible to exercise their right to vote. At UF Hillel, we wanted to make sure Jewish Gators knew where, when, and how to cast their ballot, and celebrate this *shechecheyanu* moment with them.

In partnership with Hillel International, UF Hillel launched MitzVote, a civic engagement campaign that provided Gators with the education and resources they needed to mobilize and vote in the 2020 general election.

Over 40 UF Hillel MitzVote student ambassadors and volunteers leveraged their networks to help us reach hundreds of students, encouraging voter registration and helping their peers make a voting plan.

“For me, it was about getting young Jews out, involved, and understanding that there is a direct connection between American politics and Judaism,” re-

flected Jakob Levin (photo above), a third year student and MitzVote ambassador. “What our people and our religion have valued for so long is directly related to American civics.”

The pinnacle of the campaign were the MitzVote Mobiles, a fleet of six passenger golf carts UF Hillel rented to drive students to early voting at the Reitz Union.

“With the prevalence of COVID-19 in our community, we needed to be creative in how we helped students get to the polls. In keeping with UF Hillel’s commitment to prioritizing the health and safety of our community, we decided to rely on open air golf carts,” explained Rabbi Jonah Zinn, Executive Director of UF Hillel.

Driven by trained student volunteers, the MitzVote Mobiles transported over 200 voters to the polls in unique Florida style. This innovative approach captured the attention of WCJB and *The Gainesville Sun*.

You can read more about this effort and UF Hillel’s ongoing work by visiting ufhillel.org or contacting jamie.zinn@ufhillel.org.



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Transitions: Community Life Events

Do you have a life cycle event you would like to share with our JCNCF community? Please submit items to chronicle@jcnf.org. Submissions may be edited as space allows. Pictures are welcome and encouraged! Transitions may include birth, engagement and wedding announcements, bar and bat mitzvah, graduations, promotions and honors, and memorials.

**By Ken Wald,
JCNCF Board Member**

When Alex and Beverly Sherman retired to Gainesville in 1996, they did not receive the memo telling them to confine their Golden Years to family and hobbies. Rather than turn inward, they dived into Jewish life, becoming leaders of our community and role models for many of us. The passing of Alex is a great loss to his family, friends and fellow Jews.

Of all Alex's contributions to the Jewish Council of North Central Florida, I most vividly remember his role on our publications committee which oversaw the *Chronicle*. We once received a letter from a reader that was rather surly and condescending toward some of the religious leaders in our community. As we did not have a policy governing letters—and were delighted that somebody had finally written one—we published it.

None of us were happy to print a letter that violated the rule against speaking of a fellow Jew with Lashon hara, an evil tongue. Accordingly, we formulated a lengthy statement that explained the concept and urged letter-writers to adhere to it. In the future, we would publish letters that focused on issues relevant to the Jewish community without engaging in personal attacks on other Jews. Being composed of Jews, the committee had a lengthy discussion about the policy which it eventually sent to the Board of Directors which adopted it after another lengthy discussion.

Throughout these conversations, I was fascinated by the expression on Alex's face which mirrored his tone of voice. Alex was anguished by the letter. It discomfited him to his core. The idea that one Jew should launch a written attack on another in a community publication ate at him. He grimaced when he talked about the letter we'd published. I don't think he could comprehend why a community member would want a letter like to appear in print because it was so far outside his own code of conduct.

People who practice engineering, Alex's occupation, are stereotypically known to display an even temperament, to be reserved, analytical, cautious. On this matter, Alex's demeanor did not conform to the stereotype. He was passionate, pained by the violation of norms and insistent that we proceed vigorously to discourage the publication of such letters in the future.

As I've mulled over this incident, I think that Alex's discomfort with the letter grew out of his commitment to *Am Yisrael*, the people Israel. Alex invested in our community because he loved his tribe and wanted to maintain it. We were his people who deserved from one another the same unconditional love parents give their children. When we failed him in that regard, he felt a responsibility to educate us so our better angels would emerge.

I hope this sentiment flourishes among those of us who had the privilege of working with him. As a mechanical engineer, Alex knew a lot about transmitting energy through networks. He showed us through his actions how to sustain and strengthen the human energy that binds us more tightly to one another in what Martin Luther King called a beloved community. That legacy transcends his immediate family to incorporate all of us who are part of *Am Yisrael*. May his memory be a blessing for us all.



Alex and Beverly Sherman

Gainesville Congregations & Organizations

B'nai Israel Community Day School (DS)

www.bnaisraelcds.org
352.376.1508, ext 101

Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Florida (CJS)

Dr. Norman J.W. Goda, Director
Sandra James, Office Assistant
web.jst.ufl.edu
PO Box 118020, Gainesville, FL 32611
352.392.9247

Congregation B'nai Israel (CBI)

Rabbi David Kaiman
Jenifer Petrescu, Executive Director
Shauna Sikron, Coordinator of Jewish Learning
Cassidy Oody, Programing Coordinator
www.bnaigainesville.com
3830 NW 16th Blvd, Gainesville, FL 32605
352.376.1508

Gainesville Chapter of Hadassah (HAD)

Meredith Bacharach, President
mwbacharach@gmail.com
352.256.7631.0

Hillel at UF (HLL)

Rabbi Jonah Zinn
www.ufhillel.org
2020 W University Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32603
352.372.2900

Interfaith Encounter Association (IEA)

www.interfaith-encounter.org

Isser and Rae Price Library of Judaica (LIB) at the University of Florida

Dr. Rebecca Jefferson, Director
cms.uflib.ufl.edu/Judaica/Index.aspx
George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611
352.273.2865

Society for Humanistic Judaism (SHJ)

Rick Gold
goldrickus@gmail.com
571.337.8018

The Tabacnic Lubavitch-Chabad Jewish (LCJC) Student & Community Center

Rabbi Berl & Chanie Goldman, Directors
Rabbi Aharon Chaim & Pessie Notik, Co-Directors
www.jewishgator.com
2021 NW 5th Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32603
352.336.5877

Temple Shir Shalom (TSS)

Rabbi Michael Joseph
Ross Van Boven, Director of Religious School
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Ocala & Other Congregations & Organizations

Beverly Hills Chapter of Hadassah (BHCH)

Miriam Fagan
352.746.0005

Chabad House of Ocala & The Villages (CHOV)

Rabbi Yossi & Chanie Hecht, Directors
www.ourchabad.org
13030 CR 103, Oxford, FL 34484
352.330.4466

Congregation Beth Israel (CBI-O)

Elaine Morrison, President
www.bethisraelocala.org
4511 SW 48th St. Ocala, FL 34474
352.236.0701

Congregation Beth Sholom (CBS)

Cantor Alisa Forman, Spiritual Leader
www.bethsholomcitrus.org
102 Civic Circle, Beverly Hills, FL 34464
352.746.5303

First Congregation Sons of Israel (FCSI)

Rabbi Joel Fox
www.firstcongregationsonsofisrael.com
161 Cordova Street, St. Augustine, FL 32084
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Ocala Chapter of Hadassah (OHAD)

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Temple Beth Shalom (TBS)


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352.629.5837

Temple Shalom of Central Florida (TSCF)


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Save These Dates

WHEN	JCNCF Programs & Events	WHERE
Sunday, November 29 through Wednesday, December 9	Tenth Annual Gainesville Jewish Film Festival	Streaming Online
Sunday, December 6, 11 am	PJ Library Chanukah Lantern Workshop	Zoom
Thursday, December 10 through Friday, December 18	Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins	www.actorswarehouse.org
Sunday, December 13, 10 am	PJ Library and PJ Our Way Visit Israel for Chanukah	Zoom
Sunday, December 13, 5 pm	PJ Library and PJ Our Way Chanukah Lantern Walk	Westside Park
Thursday, December 24 Friday, December 25	Christmas Eve & Christmas Day	JCNCF Office Closed
Thursday, December 31 Friday, January 1	New Year's Eve & New Year's Day	JCNCF Office Closed