Seventh Annual JCNCF Community Mitzvah Day

Healing the World, One Good Deed at a Time

By Dawn Burgess-Krop
JCNCF President

Stone Soup is an old fable about tired and hungry soldiers who come upon a village and ask for some food. When turned away by villagers who do not feel they have enough to share, the soldiers request a large pot and find stones to add to the boiling water. One by one, the intrigued villagers volunteer a different ingredient to enhance the simmering stone soup and soon there is a delicious soup for all to share. The concept of shared responsibility toward an outcome larger than individual effort is embodied in the Jewish Federations of North America motto, "Together we do extraordinary things."

On Mitzvah Day, a group of teens and helpers, came together to make meals for the local homeless community. The ingredients were contributed by many members of B’nai Israel Sisterhood, and a miracle happened - 29 casseroles were created! Still warm, they were delivered to Grace Marketplace, where sometimes as many as 200 people are fed in a single evening. There’s a chill in the air today, but our hearts are warm from the camaraderie and satisfaction of creating a healthy, hot meal for those who need it.


The family that serves together...
For Wesley Melker, (second from left), every day is “Mitzvah Day.” On Sunday, November 22, he and his parents, Amy (left) and Jeremy (right) and brother Jake (center) were part of a team of volunteers who made over 300 sandwiches for Grace Marketplace. But that’s just an average day for Wes. Read about his “socktober” mitzvah project in our monthly tikkun olam profile on page 11.

Right, Daisy Troop 709 made snack bags, decorated placemats and napkin rings for Thanksgiving baskets and wrote notes to Israeli Lone Soldiers.
By Steven M. Slutsky

On the evening of November 4, 2015, a group of community members came together to remember the tragedy of 20 years ago when Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated by a fellow Jew. The commemoration, co-sponsored by the host—the Lubavitch-Chabad Jewish Student Center—and by the JCNCF was for both those who supported Rabin’s initiatives and those who opposed them. It is an important Jewish value that even people who disagree profoundly should work together with civility and respect, for there is truth and wisdom in the honestly held views of both sides of an issue. Reminding ourselves of this is crucially important in today’s world, when the Jewish community has been as divided as it has ever been on matters of policy and security.

The commemoration began with opening remarks by JCNCF Executive Director Virginia Brissette Hirshik and me, a JCNCF board member. I discussed the importance of Yitzhak Rabin in Jewish history and the reasons why his assassination must be remembered. The first part of Rabin in His Own Words, a documentary film that has not yet officially opened in North America, was then shown. This segment focused on Rabin’s early formative years through the Six Day War. After the documentary, Rabbi Berl Goldman discussed the humbleness of Yitzhak Rabin and how he had dedicated his life to serving the Jewish people. The program concluded with some Psalms and prayers and with the recitation of the Mourner’s Kaddish in Rabin’s memory.

May his memory be a lesson and a blessing for all the Jewish people and for the entire world.
JCNCF Local Grants In Action

Israeli Culture and Art Festival: A Great Time for All

By Suzanne Chester

We firmly believe that our love for Israel needs to be passed on to younger generations. At Chavaya, we use experiential learning to achieve this goal for our students. We decided the best way to experience Israel in Gainesville was to build it in our own backyard. Following an intense curriculum focused on Israel, our students celebrated the end of the unit with the Israeli Culture and Art Festival held on Sunday, November 15.

Students and others traveled the country vicariously and had their “passports” stamped. In Jerusalem, we built the Western Wall, where people young and old could place their prayers and wishes. Children also enjoyed an archaeological dig that included several sections of a mosaic that our fifth-grade students created along with other “ancient” artifacts. USY volunteers painted many adorable faces.

We danced to current Israeli pop music and had coffee and hot chocolate and desserts in our Tel Aviv café. In Eilat, we made sand art and played Hebrew water boggle.

We had art for sale, wine tasting, and painting lessons for adults. We all enjoyed the Klezmer Katz and danced to their wonderful music. The children enjoyed the karaoke that Dave Deeter provided. Todah!

Thank you to everyone who came to support our event, including our Temple Shir Shalom friends, volunteers extraordinaire, Congregation B’nai Israel staff—and to JCNCF for the grant that helped make this event possible. I hope we can continue learning and celebrating together!

Temple Shir Shalom enjoyed a wonderful Shabbat visit by Institute for Southern Jewish Life (ISJL) education fellow Arielle Nissenblatt on October 23 through 25. This year the Temple is using a Religious School curriculum published by ISJL, which entitles it to three visits from Arielle, a specialist in implementing the curriculum, and in other aspects of congregational life. The curriculum was made possible by a local grant from the JCNCF.

According to Temple Shir Shalom Rabbi Michael Joseph, “The ISJL curriculum has enabled us to increase the educational level and expectations for our students without sacrificing any of the fun, community-building aspects of our school. It helps us to leverage the enthusiasm of our younger teachers and the experience of our veteran teachers to create an interesting and exciting Sunday morning program for our students and their parents—and grandparents!”

For more information about the curriculum or ISJL, please visit the organization’s website at www.isjl.org.

Chavaya student, R. Sager-Brown puts a note in the “Western Wall” at the Israeli Culture and Art Festival

JCNCF Board Member/parent, Dan Wernecke (left) and Debbie Boada, Religious School Director (center)
Thank you to all the donors whom have already made their contribution to the 2015/2016 Annual Campaign! The Jewish Council of North Central Florida is very fortunate to have a number of major donors who feel a deep and strong commitment to the State of Israel and also to Jewish activities in Gainesville and Ocala. Nonetheless, the community can always benefit from more support of JCNCF. Like many Jewish communities, ours doesn’t appear to be growing in number, and thus it is important for us to solicit, and hopefully obtain, a higher percentage of donor participation and larger donations than in previous years.

If you attend one or more of JCNCF’s many community-wide programs throughout the year, if you have benefitted from one of our grants, if your children receive books monthly from PJ Library, or if supporting Israel and Jews in Europe and the Ukraine are important to you, please make a gift today. JCNCF strives to enrich our Jewish life locally and to support our fellow Jews abroad. Making a difference begins with you.

Your Gift to JCNCF’s Annual Campaign Can Make a Difference!

The Jewish Council of North Central Florida supports Jewish life locally and globally and operates entirely on the generous contributions of community members. We are grateful for your donation and thank you for supporting the Annual Campaign and our many community events and programs.

I am/We are pleased to pledge/donate the following amount to support Jewish life in North Central Florida while also maintaining support for international Jewish needs. To make your donation securely online with a credit card, go to www.jcncf.org. Please call or email the JCNCF office for instructions on how to donate stock or to make your gift directly to The Jewish Federations of North America. Contact us at 352.371.3846 or at office@jcncf.org.

Name ____________________________ Email _____________________________ Phone________________________
Street __________________________________ City _______________________ State ________   Zip ____________
Signature ______________________________________ Pledged $____________________  Enclosed $____________

Top Ten Reasons to Give to JCNCF Before December 31

1. Ukrainian Jews: Those trapped in war desperately need our help for food and fuel this winter.
2. Tikkun Olam: JCNCF’s Annual Mitzvah Day helps hundreds of needy people in our community.
3. Adult Hanukkah Party: Latkes and that legendary punch! (You haven’t tried the punch?! Come on December 6 and find out!)
4. Beit Ruth: JCNCF contributions to this program have helped create three on-campus buildings for abused and at-risk girls and young women in Israel. The need is still great. There is a long waiting list for girls needing shelter and care, and Gainesville women have responded.
5. Jewish Film Festival: In partnership with the UF Center for Jewish Studies, you may enjoy a quality film festival that rivals much larger cities.
6. PJ Library: JCNCF partners with the B’nai Israel Community Day School to offer free, high quality Jewish children’s literature, music and enrichment programs to North Central Florida families on a monthly basis.
7. JFNA Immigrant Absorption Program: Your donations assist the many immigrants making Aliyah to Israel in these troubled times.
8. Yom Hashoah: The annual community Holocaust program organized by JCNCF is an important remembrance.
9. Falafels in Westside Park: Our annual Israeli Independence Day celebration is fun for all ages!
10. Giving before December 31: Doing so ensures your tax deduction for this year!

Say Goodbye to 2015 on the Right Note

- Make your donation today and support local Jewish life and, most important, Jews who need us to remember them in Israel and throughout the world.
- Become a sustaining donor with a convenient monthly contribution via PayPal.
- For tax purposes, contributions made on or before December 31, 2015, are deductible on 2015 tax returns.
Israel in Brief: News and Developments

By Ralph Lowenstein

Fertility Curve. Israel’s Central Bureau of Statistics has reported a fertility rate in 2015 of 3.11 births per Israeli Jewish woman, a rate that is trending upward, and a fertility rate of 3.35 births per Israeli Arab woman, a rate that is trending downward.

Markets for Gas Fields. The Italian energy company Eni, which is developing huge Egyptian natural gas reserves recently discovered in the Mediterranean, sent representatives to Israel in October to discuss organizing “an east Mediterranean gas hub” that would deliver product from surplus Egyptian and Israeli reserves to Europe, primarily to Italy and Spain.

Reaching for the Moon. Spacell, an Israeli nonprofit organization, is Israel’s contender for the Google LunarX prize competition, which will award $20 million to the first amateur team whose rover travels 546 yards on the moon. Spacell, founded in 2011, now has 30 full-time staff and dozens of volunteers. Utilizing Israel’s cutting-edge nano and micro satellite technology, it hopes to land a “hopping” vehicle the size of a dishwasher on the moon before any other competitors.

Seeking Cure for Cancer. Last month a team of students from Ben-Gurion University in Beersheba won MIT’s most prestigious competition, iGEM2015. The students developed a modular system that would allow a specialist to identify and target only cancerous cells during treatment. Current treatments kill both cancerous and healthy cells in the treated area.

Rowling Opposes Boycotts. Harry Potter author J.K. Rowling has publicly opposed a cultural boycott of Israel generated by 343 English academics and authors. She tweeted, “I believe strongly that cultural dialogue and collaboration is more important than ever before and that cultural boycotts are divisive, discriminatory and counter-productive.”

Israel Still Buying Boeings. The Boeing Company and El Al have announced an order for up to nine 787 “Dreamliners” in a deal worth $2.2 billion. El Al has flown only Boeing aircraft since 1961.

Gulf States Seek Iron Dome. According to the foreign minister of Bahrain, the Gulf countries are using the United States as an intermediary to purchase a larger version of Israel’s combat-tested Iron Dome anti-missile system. The Gulf countries fear they might be attacked by Iran.

Ever Heard of a Jewish Grape? Israel’s Recanti Winery has now grown a Marawi grape species that researchers say is indigenous to Israel, going back to biblical times. The winery produced 2,500 bottles of the white wine and unveiled the product at the Milan EXPO festival last month.

State-of-the-Art Uniforms. Israeli army elite units are now receiving new, customized uniforms. The new shirts are made of high-performance fabric that moves perspiration away from the body and onto the fabric surface, where it evaporates. The shirts have no buttons, since they were found to cause injury when covered by a protective vest.

Arabic Classes Mandatory. Israel’s Knesset voted unanimously last month to make Arabic language classes mandatory for students from the age of six.

The Israel Trauma Coalition has trained French clinicians to provide trauma treatment and coping skills in Paris following the most recent series of terror attacks.

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Celebrate Chanukah with PJ Library Friends!
Enjoy a dairy dinner, menorah lighting and songs!

$20 per family
Please bring a wrapped children’s book your child’s age to exchange.
For more information or to RSVP, please contact Debbie Kimmel-Raad at 352.356.1506 ext 110 or deedee@bnastruggleida.org

PJLibrary Gainesville is a Partnership Between the Jewish Community Day School and the Jewish Council of North Central Florida

Kislev - Tevet 5776
The Chronicle - Page 5
Mitzvah Day: 
Healing the World and Building Community

By Virginia Brissette Hirshik
JCNCF Executive Director

As the rabbis of Pirke Avot stated, “Mitzvah goreret mitzvah—One mitzvah leads to another.” The ripple effect of a single act of kindness might, indeed, be immeasurable. Imagine all the lives impacted by the service projects organized by the Jewish Council in cooperation with Gainesville-area congregations and organizations on Mitzvah Day, Sunday, November 22. Nearly two hundred people came out for this annual day of service. Volunteers donated supplies and worked at projects to benefit over two dozen local charities. Mitzvah Day International estimates that over 40,000 individuals participated worldwide.

The collective impact of this day of service is profound. How many people will have warm clothing and shoes thanks to the thousands of pounds that were donated? How many people will be nourished from each of the 29 crowd-size casseroles donated to Grace Marketplace? How many Israeli Lone Soldiers and hospice patients will receive the comfort intended by the many care packages that were lovingly assembled for them? With just a sampling of our service projects here in North Central Florida, one can see the good being done; multiply that by 550 projects in 20 countries, and the ripple effect is exponential.

The goal of Mitzvah Day International, now known as Mitzvah Day 365, is to encourage people to seek out opportunities for service regularly and to make every day a “Mitzvah Day.” Through the relationships created by these one-day projects, the Jewish Council and our congregational partners work to heal the world every day. JCNCF’s Adopt-a-Street team, led by Dr. David Pawliger, shown in the photo at left with Seema Kramer, has cleaned up a stretch of 8th Avenue every other month since the first Mitzvah Day in 2010, thereby providing a wonderful example of a simple but extremely important gesture that addresses a need and makes a difference. (continued on page 7)

The family that serves together … Marcia Cohen Storch (right) and her daughter, Deborah Katz (left) “baked it forward” at Ronald McDonald House on Mitzvah Day.

The family that serves together … Mitzvah Day 2015 at Ronald McDonald House with the Storch/Katz family. From left, Hank Storch, Ben Katz, Amy & Jason Storch, Debra, Josh & Leila Katz, Shaina & Andrew Storch.
One Partnership, One Service Project, One Good Deed at a Time

At a recent dinner gathering of leaders from the Jewish and African American communities, a long-term working relationship that sprang out of the first Mitzvah Day was recognized. Dinner guests Tracy Hickmon of the Gainesville Police Department’s Black on Black Crime Task Force and former Maimonides Director Randy Kraft first made each other’s acquaintance after JCNCF’s inaugural Mitzvah Day. Through that initial meeting, a connection between the Pine Ridge After-School Program and the Jewish community was established. Five years later, the social action committee at Temple Shir Shalom has become part of a “Friends of Pine Ridge” coalition that regularly offers tutoring for children and mentoring for their parents as well as special events at holidays and other times of the school year.

The Jewish Council is grateful for all of the volunteers, team leaders, and sponsoring organizations and businesses who made the Seventh Annual JCNCF Community Mitzvah Day such a success. We appreciate your dedicated service, your inspired leadership, and your incredible generosity. Thank you for being our partner in healing the world every day.

The first Mitzvah Day also established a relationship between the Jewish community and the Helping Hands Clinic of the First United Methodist Church, which offers medical and other support services for Gainesville’s indigent and homeless population. Today, JCNCF and its partner-volunteers from the B’nai Israel Community Day School sponsor a meal at the Helping Hands Clinic once a month. Lev tov, led by Rebbetzin Rebeca Shalom at Congregation B’nai Israel provides meals at St. Francis House twice a month.
by Rabbi Berl Goldman

The miracle of Chanukah is commemorated every year with the kindling of the menorah, recalling the victory of a small Jewish force against a tremendous Greek army, which was seeking to spiritually and physically annihilate the Jews. When the Maccabees came into the desecrated Holy Temple more than 2,000 years ago and found one small jug of pure, holy, undefiled oil—enough to illuminate the Temple for one night—a miracle took place: the tiny jug of oil lasted for eight nights. Chanukah has symbolized religious freedom ever since. The holiday contains a universal message for people of all faiths that ultimately good will triumphs over evil, freedom over oppression, and light over darkness.

Hanukkah begins at sundown on Sunday, December 6.

The Board and Staff wish our friends and family in North Central Florida and around the world all the light, love and latkes of the season.

Public menorah lightings were initiated in 1974 by the Lubavitcher Rebbe of righteous memory. This public display is a symbol of the Chanukah miracle but also, and more important, a reminder to everyone who sees it of the timely universal message it carries for us, even today. The Gainesville Center joins hundreds of Chabad-Lubavitch centers across the globe, from the White House to Moscow, in staging public displays of the menorah and its symbolic lights. Hundreds of thousands annually participate in public menorah kindling ceremonies, which publicize throughout the world the universal message of Chanukah and the joy it brings.

Science has given us the greatest technologies and conveniences, yet it alone cannot free us from the moral and social challenges of our day. Our children need a better diet than the value system fed to them by Hollywood, the Internet, and mass media. They need—nay, they want—inspiration, a noble cause to live for, a moral purpose that frames their pursuits and interests with meaning and direction.
## The Miracle of Lights

Judaism teaches that every human being is created in the image of the Divine, charged with the duty to illuminate his or her surroundings, to make our universe a better place, a brighter place, a holier place. Darkness has no reality of its own—it’s merely the absence of light. Let’s teach our youth that they are the menorah, and that in a world of moral darkness one small act of goodness and kindness will cast a light of epic proportions—just like the tiny flask of oil that miraculously burned for eight days. We should always remember that through the efforts of good people, the world can shine with lights of goodness and kindness.

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**Hanukkah Events**

*For specific details, contact sponsoring organizations.*

- **For Millennials at the Craft Center Reitz Union**
  - 7 pm
  - $8.00 in advance $10.00 at door. Please RSVP.

- **Gatherings at the Mauffray Home**
  - 5 - 7 pm
  - 18+, $10 per person
  - Ice skating at 5:30 & Menorah lighting at 6:30 pm

- **Hanukkah Party, 6 pm**
  - Program at Cong. B’nai Israel, 10:30-1 pm

- **Hanukkah Family Celebration, 5-6:30 pm**
  - Gainesville - City Lot 10 corner of SW 1st Ave & NE 2nd Ave

- **Sisterhood Family Hanukkah party at Temple Shir Shalom, 6-8 pm**

- **Lox & Latkes, Hanukkah for Seniors at Lubavitch-Chabad, 10:30am -12:30 pm**

- **Lights on Campus Hanukkah Menorah Lighting, 7:30 pm**
  - Join the Jewish Gator nation at Plaza of the Americas near Library West. Giant Menorah lighting with song, dance, and food. Free.

- **Celebrate Chanukah with Cong. Beth Israel of Ocala, 10 am. Lunch is $10.**

- **Frozen in the Fall Movie Viewing at Cong. B’nai Israel, 5:30 pm**

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Left, Lisa Zumberg & Samantha Boada help the children light their chanukiah in this blast from the past from 2004.

Right, PJ Library children and their parents gather for a story at the annual Chanukah party in 2014.

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From left, Rabbi Berl Goldman, Dr. Desmond Schatz, Xeve Silver, Mike Warren and UF Students Josh Levy and Jason Fuentes gather to light the Can Menorah at Bo Diddley Plaza. Foreground, Daniel Silver.
Gainesville’s Homeless: Our Own Refugees

By Marjorie Abrams

Today, all forms of media are filled with heart-wrenching images of refugees from Eastern Europe. In the spirit of Tikkun Olam and the dictum to “think globally and act locally,” I feel a commitment to help our local refugees. They are those who are homeless, due in large part to structural changes in the economy, lack of affordable housing, mental illness, military injury, domestic violence, and drug addiction.

My awareness and support of efforts to help were inspired more than a decade ago by Arupa Freeman. Arupa and her husband, Bob, started a free food pantry, for homeless people, out of their own home. They also started the Home Van, which delivered needed items directly to people who lived in Gainesville’s tent cities.

Dorie Stein and I were the first to support these efforts and continue with financial and material donations. As a result of my experiences with Arupa, I dealt with the topic of Gainesville’s homeless population in my book Murder on Hogtown Creek (2010).

In May 2014, Grace Marketplace opened as the one-stop center for the homeless and began offering limited services. Friends and I asked what we could do to help. With a larger group of volunteers, we established our mission as “Friends of Grace.” In that capacity, we organized the 2014 “First Annual Day of Grace” for fund-raising, support, and awareness.

Other such events followed. The “Second Annual Day of Grace” took place on November 14, 2015. In just a short time and with limited funding, Grace has made significant strides rejuvenating people’s lives by providing social services, clothing, shower and laundry facilities, and meals both to residents and those in the adjoining Dignity Village.

If you are not already doing so, I urge you to go to Grace’s website (gracemarketplace.org) to learn about the organization’s successes and what you can do to support its efforts. You can also visit Grace off NW 39th Avenue about a quarter of a mile east of Waldo Road.
the United States and decided he wanted to sponsor a Socktober sock collection drive. Wes reminds us that winter is coming and homeless people need socks!

Upon conceiving his idea, Wes snapped into action. He sought his parents’ permission and proceeded to email his school principal, Cory Tomlinson. After two planning meetings, Wes invited friends over to make posters to place around school and decorated collection bins with the message “Happy Socktober!” His mom, Amy Melker, helped Wes with the collection bins, and his grandfather, Richard Melker, worked with Wes to design and create a T-shirt from a kit they ordered online. Wes set a goal of collecting 1,000 pairs of socks. He designed a meter to visually illustrate progress and called it the “Sockometer.” Wes did not just depend on visuals to advertise his project—he created and read announcements about Socktober for the school’s morning news. He also devised incentives. During the second week of Socktober, every student bringing in socks was allowed to wear a shirt that was “out of dress code.” During the third week of Socktober, students donated socks in order to wear a hat to school. Wes’s efforts earned him the nickname “Sock Man” at Archer Elementary. Something tells me this may be a sustaining nickname.

Wes has a November birthday and seldom uses the gifts he receives. For his birthday party this year, in lieu of gifts, he asked his friends to bring—you guessed it—socks! Wes loves science and art and found the T-shirt he designed with his grandfather, using ammonia to set the design, to be an interesting project.

By Dawn Burgess-Krop

If you are feeling “low energy” and could use a boost, you need only to spend an hour with 10-year-old Wes Melker (photo above) to recharge your enthusiasm battery. In the month of October, Wes sponsored a “Socktober” campaign for his school and collected over 1,100 pairs of new and “gently used” socks for local homeless shelters.

As a fourth-grader in the magnet program at Archer Elementary, Wes was inspired to sponsor a Socktober collection drive while viewing a recent Kid President video. Kid President videos, which come out every Thursday, were introduced to Wes by his third-grade teacher and are a combination of fun and social action. Wes learned that there are approximately 600,000 homeless persons in the United States and decided he wanted to sponsor a Socktober sock collection drive. Wes reminds us that winter is coming and homeless people need socks!

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Wes’s older brother, Jake, and his parents, Amy and Jeremy, all supported his project. His grandparents, Dorothy and Richard, also were supporters and sock contributors, as were family throughout the state.

I must confess that after watching the Kid President video on “How to Become Awesome” with Wes, and hearing about the teamwork, planning, school spirit, and charity created by the Socktober project, I came away feeling pretty enthusiastic myself—and realizing that Wes actually had achieved being awesome. Now I need to get busy and clean out my sock drawer.
By David Pawliger

While leaving B’nai Israel after minyan one dark December evening in 1999, I heard music emanating from a classroom. I peeked through the door to learn the source of the melodies and was invited to join a small group of instrumentalists for the purpose of keeping rhythm. Violins, clarinet, harmonica, and accordion were being instructed by Lisa Johnson in a kapelye (band) sponsored by the Jewish Community Center Without Walls (JCCWW), which at the time was a branch of JCNCF. This is the short story of the evolution of the group that became the Klezmer Katz.

In the 1990s, Lisa organized the 24th Street Klezmer Band, bringing traditional Jewish music to the Gainesville area. Inspired by her klezmer camp experience, she taught a slow-jam klezmer class for one semester at Santa Fe Community College for people of all ages and abilities. The class then moved to B’nai Israel as a kapelye, initially under the sponsorship of the JCCWW. The kapelye was open to anyone with an interest in the klezmer genre. After a year of instruction and practice, the group was able to perform recitals and small informal concerts. Musicians came and went, but as proficiency improved and some more experienced instrumentalists joined, requests for performances became more frequent, including for congregation and general community events.

Klezmer Katz became the adopted name, and for several years we played a regular monthly gig in the Lightnin’ Salvage Room at Satchel’s Pizza.

B’nai Israel, has generously continued to provide space and use of its piano for the group’s weekly Tuesday rehearsals over the past sixteen years. Every third Tuesday, rehearsals have been open to anyone who would like to jam with the Katz.

For all these years, Lisa, a retired teacher, has continued to contribute her knowledge and expertise to the group. Multitalented, she has added a Hawaiian sound with her lap steel guitar. Instrumentation also includes piano, violin, flute, accordion, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, euphonium, string bass, percussion, and vocalist. Current members of the group include a physician, an attorney, an entomologist, an artist, a psychologist, a midwife, teachers, businesspeople, and a student.

The klezmer tradition originated with itinerant Jewish musicians in Eastern Europe playing for weddings and other celebrations. Immigrants brought it to the United States in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The Klezmer Katz is thrilled and proud to be able to continue the tradition in North Central Florida.

The Klezmer Katz: Then & Now

The Klezmer Katz will be playing at the Commons of The Village on Tuesday, December 8 at 7 pm.
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.

Mazel tov to newlyweds Florence Fox Vendeland and Jerry Elliot (photo at right). They wed on October 18 at Temple Shir Shalom officiated by Rabbi Michael Joseph. The couple each has three children and their great grandson had the opportunity to be the ring bearer. The couple recently honeymooned in Canada and will reside in Gainesville.

Ken Wald, Distinguished Professor of Political Science and Samuel R. “Bud” Shorstein Professor of American Jewish Culture & Society at UF, is spending the fall 2015 semester as the Shoshana Shier Distinguished Visiting Professor of Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto. He’s already given three public talks on “The Choosing People: The Puzzling Politics of American Jews” and is teaching a course on Judaism and politics. In his spare time, he’s learning how to end every sentence with “eh?” and to pronounce “about” as “aboot.” He and Robin are enjoying living in downtown Toronto and like everything about Canada except the weather.

Mazel tov to Lauren Cohen, daughter of Kim and Ron Cohen, on her bat mitzvah at Congregation B’nai Israel on December 5, 2015. Lauren attends Oak Hall Middle School, where she is an excellent student. She has studied dance for six years and participated in many musical theatre productions. Lauren also enjoys tennis, volleyball, skiing, and art. In honor of her bat mitzvah, Lauren will be adopting a child from the Holocaust Remembrance Program “Remember Us.” The young child matched with Lauren is Minuta Cohen, who perished at the tender age of six. Lauren will be bringing her memory alive. In addition, she helped raise money for Ukrainian Jews so they can make Aliyah to Israel.

Ryan Dehart turns 13 on December 11th, and eight days later, becomes bar mitzvah at Kanapaha Middle School. Son of March and Sue Dehart, Ryan is a seventh grader at Kanapaha Middle School. His sister, Hannah, is a senior at Buchholz High School and he has an older brother, Matthew, who is married with two children, and lives in Long Beach, California.

Ryan loves Batman and playing video games. He is an accomplished pianist and plays soccer for the Gainesville Soccer Alliance, a travel soccer team. Mazel tov, Ryan!

Alisha Kinman, daughter of Michael Kinman and Debra Kinman-Ford, and Nadav Katz, son of Yossi and Tova Katz, are pleased to announce their engagement. On November 12, Nadav proposed to Alisha in a villa overlooking the Sea of Galilee in northern Israel.

Originally from Jerusalem, Nadav graduated from the University of Florida with his Bachelor of Science in Psychology, and his Master of Business Administration. He serves as an Assistant Director for Accounting at the University of Florida.

Alisha graduated with honors from the University of Florida with her Bachelor of Science in Public Relations and Communication Studies. She acts as a Marketing Coordinator at UF Health Communications.

In Memoriam

Our community mourns the passing of these beloved friends and family members:

Blanche Abbott, Jeanette Abeles, Esther Buncher, Alan Kalishman, Philip Miserendo, Samuel Barry Monchek, Lillian Schwartz, Sol Shalom, and Salvador (Sali) Susi

May their loved ones find solace in their memory.
North Central Florida Congregations & Organizations

Gainesville

Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Florida (CJS)
Dr. Jack Kugelmass, Director
Sandra James, Office Assistant
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PO Box 118020, Gainesville, FL 32611
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Congregation B’nai Israel (CBI-G)
Rabbi David Kaiman
Jenifer Petrescu, Executive Director
Suzanne Chester, Chavaya (Religious Education) Director
Kristen Sanger, Administrative Coordinator
Stephanie Savage, Programs
www.bnaigainesville.com
3830 NW 16th Blvd, Gainesville, FL 32605
352.376.1508

Congregation B’nai Israel Community Day School (DS)
Debby Kinman-Ford, Director
www.bnaisraelcds.org
352.376.1508, ext 101

Gainesville Chapter of Hadassah (HAD)
Meredith Bacharach, President
mwbacharach@gmail.com
352.256.7631

Hillel at the University of Florida (HLL)
Rabbi Adam Grossman
www.ufhillel.org
2020 W University Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32603
352.372.2900

Lubavitch-Chabad Jewish Student & Community Center (LCJC)
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

Isser and Rae Price Library of Judaica at the University of Florida (LIB)
Dr. Rebecca Jefferson, Director
cms.uflib.ufl.edu/Judaica/Index.aspx
George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611
352.273.2865

Temple Shir Shalom (TSS)
Rabbi Michael Joseph
Debbie Boada, Religious School Principal
Ann Eisenstadt, Office Manager
wwwshirshalom.net
3855 NW 8th Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32605
352.371.6399

Ocala

Chabad Lubavitch Jewish Center of Marion County & The Villages (CLJC)
Rabbi Yossi & Chanie Hecht, Directors
www.jewishmarion.org
3500 SW 34th Avenue Circle, 34474
352.291.2218

Congregation Beth Israel (CBI-O)
Rabbi Karen Allen
wwwbethisraelocala.org
7171 SW Hwy 200, 34476
352.450.2056

Temple Beth Shalom (TBS)
Rabbi Ze’ev Harari
www.jewishocala.com
1109 NE 8th Avenue, 34470
352.629.5837

Temple B’nai Darom (TBD)
Rabbi Harold Jaye
www.facebook.com/TempleBnaiDarom
49 Banyan Course, 34472
352.624.0380

Temple Shalom of Central Florida (TSCF)
Sheldon Skurow, Spiritual Leader
www.templeshalomcentralfl.org
13563 County Road 101, Oxford, FL 34484
352.748.1800
Jewish Community Calendar for December 2015

December 1
♦ CBI Hanukkah Arts & Crafts Night for Millennials at the Craft Center Reitz Union at UF, 7 pm

December 2
♦ Friendship Circle at CBI with guest speaker Barbara Oberlander on Ruth Bader Ginsburg, 10:30 - 1pm
♦ CBI Preparing for Hanukkah After School Program for K-7, 1-5 pm
♦ CBI Lev Tov at St. Francis House, 5:30 pm.
♦ Caregiver’s Support Group, 7pm

December 6 ~ First Night of Hanukkah
♦ Hanukkah Factory at Lubavitch-Chabad, 1-4pm $8.00 in advance $10.00 at door. Please RSVP.
♦ JCNCF Hanukkah party at the Home of Bill & Esther Mauffray, 5-7 pm. 18+, $10 per person

December 7
♦ Torah Study with Rabbi Kaiman at CBI, 12pm

December 8
♦ Torah Study with Rabbi Joseph at TSS, 9:30 am
♦ Hadassah Rosh Chodesh Meeting, 10 am at CBI, Presented by Dr. Beverly Brechner on “The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty with Iran.”
♦ Hadassah Lunch Bunch is cancelled at Bistro 1245
♦ Hanukkah Party at Congregation B’nai Israel, 6 pm
♦ The Klezmer Katz at the Village, 7 pm

December 9
♦ Friendship Circle Hanukkah program, 10:30 -1pm
♦ Lubavitch-Chabad Downtown Grand Chanukah Family Celebration, 5-6:30 pm ~ Union Street Farmers’ Market in Downtown Gainesville - City Lot 10 Corner of SW 1st Avenue & SW 1st Street. Music, dancing, food and the Klezmer Katz. Free & open all.
♦ PJ Library/B’nai Israel Day School Young Families Hanukkah Party & Dinner at CBI, 5:45-7pm. $20 per family
♦ Hadassah Book club meeting at CBI, 7-9 pm
♦ Back to Basics Adult Ed with Rabbi Joseph at TSS, 7 pm

December 10
♦ Lox and Latkes, Hanukkah for Seniors at Lubavitch-Chabad, 10:30am -12:30 pm
♦ Lights on Campus Hanukkah Menorah Lighting 7:30 pm. Join the Jewish Gator nation at UF campus at the Plaza of the Americas in front of Library West. Lighting the giant Menorah with song, dance, and Hanukkah food. Free.

December 12
♦ Temple Shir Shalom’s Family Hanukkah party 6-8 pm
♦ Light, Latkes, Sushi- Student only Hanukkah party at the Lubavitch-Chabad Center, 8:30-10-30pm

December 13
♦ Frozen in the Fall Movie Viewing at CBI, 5:30 pm

December 14
♦ Torah Study with Rabbi Kaiman at CBI, 12pm

December 15
♦ Torah Study with Rabbi Joseph at TSS, 9:30 am

December 16
♦ CBI Lev Tov at St. Francis House, 5:30 pm
♦ Back to Basics Adult Ed with Rabbi Joseph at TSS, 7 pm
♦ Smart Conversations with 92nd St. Y at CBI, 7:30 pm

December 22
♦ Torah Study with Rabbi Joseph at TSS, 9:30 am
♦ Torah Study with Rabbi Kaiman at CBI, 12pm

December 23
♦ No meeting for Friendship Circle at CBI

December 26
Cookies for Champions Delivery with CBI, 9 am

December 29
♦ Torah Study with Rabbi Kaiman at CBI, 12pm
Jewish Council of North Central Florida, Inc.
PO Box 357936
Gainesville, FL 32635

Address Service Requested

Jewish Council of North Central Florida

The Jewish Federations
OF NORTH AMERICA
THE STRENGTH OF A PEOPLE.
THE POWER OF COMMUNITY.
The Network of Independent Communities

Highlights from This Issue

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Save These Dates

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