Gainesville Remembered the Holocaust

By Virginia Brissette Hirshik
President & CEO, JCNCF

This year, the Yom HaShoah Committee set out an ambitious schedule of programs for the North Central Florida Jewish community, with three events scheduled during the first two weeks of April. Generation to Generation: Gainesville Remembers the Holocaust, a special exhibit of materials collected from local survivors and their families opened on April 8 at the Smathers Library at the University of Florida. On display through June 30th, the exhibit attracted more than 70 people to the opening reception and talk. The next week, Rutgers University professor Arlene Stein was the featured speaker at the JCNCF Community Holocaust Remembrance program hosted by Congregation B’nai Israel on Sunday, April 15. Despite severe weather warnings, over 100 people came out to hear Stein, who spoke on Telling Our Family Stories: Memory Work and the Meaning of the Holocaust. She is the author of Reluctant Witnesses: Survivors, Their Children and the Rise of Holocaust Consciousness.

The last program in the series was a panel discussion moderated by Jacksonville area writer Stacey Goldring on Living with the Holocaust: Conversations with the Children of Survivors on Monday, April 16 at Temple Shir Shalom. Over 50 people attended the Q & A session with 4 members of the local community.

Annual Campaign to Close May 31

By Virginia Brissette Hirshik
JCNCF President & CEO

JCNCF’s Annual Campaign supports worldwide Jewish causes and local grants and programs. The campaign for 2017/2018 will close at the end of May, and because of your generous support, we have raised over $175,000, which is 97% of our goal of $180,000.

Contributions to the Annual Campaign keep JCNCF programs impactful and accessible for North Central Florida friends and neighbors of all ages. They also provide us with the resources to support vulnerable Jews in Israel, the former Soviet Union, and wherever there is a need.

In addition to unrestricted gifts to the Annual Campaign, we have several designated funds that also benefit worldwide charitable partners and specific local programs. With your help, we are meeting those goals too!

Jaffa Institute
Goal $35,000  Raised $25,100

Beit Ruth
Goal $10,000  Raised $10,554

Yom Ha’Shoah Programming
Goal $3,000  Raised $800

Israel at 70 Celebration
Goal $7,000  Raised $2,000

Thank you to all who have already donated to the Annual Campaign. We appreciate your support of our mission and together we do extraordinary things!

If you have not yet had the opportunity to make a donation, please consider doing so. For your convenience, a pledge card is located at the top of page 2. Or you can visit www.jcnacf.org to make your secure donation online.

For more information about recurring payments, stock transfers or planned giving, please contact the JCNCF office at 352.371.3846 or office@jcnacf.org.
JCNCF’s Annual Campaign for 2017/2018 is almost $175,000! That’s 97% of our goal. Thank you to all who have supported the Campaign this year. Please help us get to $180,000 by May 31. 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.

Name ____________________________ Email ____________________________ Phone________________________
Street ____________________________ City ____________________________ State _____ Zip_____
Signature ______________________________________ Pledged $____________________ Enclosed ____________

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.

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.
Barbara Oberlander to Give Talk at The Village

Meet Ruth Gruber:
Legendary Photojournalist and Human Rights Activist
A Talk By Barbara Oberlander
at The Village, Tower Ballroom
Thursday, May 24 at 2 pm

Ruth Gruber was a pioneering photojournalist and humanitarian whose life is an amazing success story. The daughter of Russian Jewish immigrants, she spent seven decades chronicling many of the major events of the 20th century in Europe and the Middle East, including the tragedy of the ship Exodus. In the process, she became a compassionate, tireless advocate for Jewish refugees and human rights.

Barbara Oberlander has been a resident of Gainesville since 1971. From 1975 until 2005, she was a Professor of History at Santa Fe College, where she also served as Honors Program Coordinator, Associate Chair and Interim Chair of the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Since the fall of 2005, she has been a member of Oak Hammock’s Institute for Learning in Retirement, and has served on both the Curriculum Committee and the Board of Directors, which she chaired from 2007-2009. She has taught several courses there including: Petticoats to Flak Jackets: Women in Wartime; Every Four Years: Memorable Presidential Elections; and Well Behaved Women Rarely Make History (or Do They?) Parts I and II. Her most recent presentations were Hidden Heroes of World War II: Varian Fry and Chiune Sugihara, and Ruth Gruber: Pioneering Photojournalist and Human Rights Activist.
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WINNER AUDIENCE AWARD ATLANTA JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL
WINNER AUDIENCE AWARD PUNTA DEL ESTE INTL FILM FESTIVAL
Israel in Brief: News and Developments

By Ralph Lowenstein

Many Millennials Unaware of Holocaust
More than one-fifth of all millennials (persons aged 18-34) in the United States have not heard of or are unsure if they have heard of the Holocaust, a study conducted this year by the Jewish Claims Conference has found. The study was released in April on Holocaust Memorial Day. The study included 1,350 Americans aged 18 and over. The survey found that many Americans were unaware of basic facts about the Holocaust. Some 41% of millennials and 31% of all Americans believe the number of Jews killed by the Nazis was less than 2 million. The actual number: 6 million. 45% of all respondents could not name a concentration camp or ghetto from World War II, and 41% could not identify Auschwitz. The study found that the vast majority of respondents support Holocaust education in public schools to prevent it from happening again. (JTA)

Israel to Build More Desalination Plants
With its natural water sources at their lowest in a century, Israel plans to build two new desalination plants, it announced last month. Israel has built five desalination plants along the coast over the past 13 years, and has been able to sell surplus water on occasion to both Jordan and Egypt. (Reuters)

Annual Funds for Terrorists and ‘Martyr’ Families
In its 2018 budget, the Palestinian Authority has allocated $360 million, 7% of the total PA 1918 budget, to two institutions that assist terrorists imprisoned in Israel, released terrorists and families of “martyrs”. (Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center)

Saudi Crown Prince Meets Israeli Officials
Indicating the increasing joint military and economic interests of Saudi Arabia, Israel, Egypt and Jordan, the Saudi crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman met with senior Israeli officials in Cairo in March to discuss the normalization of ties between Israel and Saudi Arabia. Included in the discussion was Israel’s participation in a new mega-city and economic zone to be built on Saudi territory on the eastern shore of the Red Sea near the border with Jordan. (Israel Hayom)

Israeli Economy Gets Stronger
A new report by the 35-member Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development has found that the Israeli economy is one of the strongest in the world. Israel’s economy grew by 3.3% in 2017, helped by a robust high-tech center, and the OECD forecasts 3.5% growth in 2018. “The Israeli economy has grown faster and more consistently than nearly any other in the OECD for the past 15 years,” said OECD chief economist Alvaro Pereira. (Israel Hayom)

Prince William to Visit Israel
The British Foreign Office has announced that Prince William will soon visit Israel, breaking a 70-year taboo by the English government. No member of the monarchy has been allowed to visit Israel on an official visit since its independence in 1948. Even when Princess Alice of Greece, Prince Philip’s mother, was recognized as “Righteous Among the Nations” for sheltering a Jewish family in her Athens home during the Holocaust, and was buried on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem, Prince Philip, Prince Charles’ father, was not allowed by the Foreign Office to visit her grave until 1994, and then only on a private visit. (Jewish News-UK)
A Treasure Among Us

By Heath Lynn Silberfeld

Who knows Ibtisam, the woman whose name means “somebody who has a big smile”? She’s often in our midst, at our parties and simchas, in the kitchen or circulating among us, making sure we are enjoying ourselves and the food she has prepared. Those of us who have dined on her culinary creations—and there are many of us who have—know her for what she gives us in her food: freshness, great taste, delightful combinations, and an abundance of love.

Of course there’s more to Ibtisam than her catering business. Ibti Hijazi, as we know her, was born in 1957 into a Muslim family in the ancient Arab village of Tamra, in the Lower Galilee, about 12 miles east of Acre. The State of Israel was young then, and the village was, and remains, “peaceful, open, kind, and close knit.” Arabs and Jews participated in school exchanges through high school and learned each other’s languages, which is why Ibti is fluent in speaking, writing, and reading Arabic, Hebrew, and English. “It was all very friendly and easy,” she recalls. “Our parents raised us to be accepting of everyone around us.” Ibti’s parents still reside in Tamra, as do her three brothers and six sisters (Ibti is the oldest) and their offspring, and Ibti returns to visit two or three times a year. In her mother’s kitchen she learned to love food and cooking, and at large in Israel she learned more of the pleasures of fresh ingredients.

In 1976, Ibti left Israel for Washington, DC, where she remained for 24 years. There she gave birth to her three sons, earned a degree in early childhood education, and attended a cooking school because she has always known that preparing and serving food are her passion. She was chef and owner of a small bistro in DC, Jasmine’s Café, until her move to Gainesville in 2000.

Ibti’s first catering client in Alachua County was the Jordan Glen School, where her sons attended, and she has since built a solid clientele for Ibti Hijazi Catering, including among others the UF Center for Jewish Studies, the Levin College of Law at UF, UF Hillel, and both Congregation B’nai Israel and Temple Shir Shalom, where her knowledge of kosher food preparation is put to good use. Her menus are rooted in traditional Middle Eastern and Israeli foods, but with that special Ibti twist—a different ingredient, a different technique, a different way of serving or presenting—rarely is anything prepared exactly as before. “I don’t give away my secrets, other than to say that I would never serve something I wouldn’t eat,” she told me. How many of us have relished her salmon and couscous? That pairing is the dish Ibti most enjoys preparing for herself and others.

“I love the synagogues and the rabbis, and I’ve made a lot of friends in Gainesville. Being here feels like home to me, and I feel part of a helping community.” As a gift to her Gainesville community, Ibti prepares lunch once a week, sometimes breakfast, for the B’nai Israel Day School teachers. She also brings food to those who are ill or otherwise needy. (I definitely needed those chocolate–raspberry bars she brought to our interview.)

Ibti elevates the art of dining through her scrumptious signature dishes, which she sets out in the most beautiful and inviting ways, as many of us experienced this year at the January dinner honoring Ralph Lowenstein. The lavish buffet enjoyed at that celebration was the product of three days of full-time work—planning, shopping, preparing, plating, serving, cleaning up—accomplished by a crew of seven working with natural and locally sourced provisions, or “honest food,” as Ibti refers to her ingredients. This Passover, we again enjoyed the pleasures of the community seders at B’nai Israel and at Shir Shalom prepared by Ibti for the 12th consecutive year.
Breaking Bread with Ibti Hijazi

Ibti’s life journey has taken her to many places, but she has always remained connected to her roots and community in Israel. Life remains good in Tamra, she says, with the Gaza Strip and the West Bank seemingly far away. “I don’t like war. I hope to see peace in my lifetime. There are beautiful people everywhere, and we Israelis of all persuasions share a history and many food traditions. The respect we feel and give to each other are what’s most important. You even can look at our languages to see that we are all connected in our thoughts and in our hearts.”

A view of contemporary Tamra. In 1881, the village was described as “A large village, with a small mosque on the east and well on the north. There is a rock-cut tomb west of the houses. South of the village, in the valley, a fine olive-grove extends as far as Rueis.”
Tikkun Olam with Temple Shir Shalom

By Adela Beckerman, President of Temple Shir Shalom

The mission of the Social Action Committee at Temple Shir Shalom, which is chaired by Nancy Parks, reflects the spirit and pursuit of “Tikkun olam.” Committee members, as well as members and friends of the congregation are involved in a host of community service activities.

Every Monday afternoon committee members tutor about 14 elementary school students at the Pineridge Community Center. Students receive help with their homework, and participate in a broad range of academic enrichment activities. The Committee also helps host the annual Pineridge Community Center Christmas Party providing gifts and snacks to each student.

Each year, the committee offers educational programming on a different theme. This year, as Rabbi Joseph described in last month’s Chronicle, two lawyers from south Florida (one a recent UF Law School graduate and former member of the congregation) spoke about the challenges immigrants face and suggested opportunities for volunteer work to assist immigrants in the Gainesville community.

The committee partners each year with JCNCF and other Jewish organizations in Gainesville to organize Mitzvah Day projects. The committee’s projects have included packaging pet care supplies for the St. Francis House Pet Care Clinic (which provides free and low cost veterinary care for Gainesville’s indigent population) and preparing and serving breakfast at Grace Marketplace. For the past three years, the committee has participated in an Interfaith Habitat for Humanity work day. This past winter, the committee also collected over 125 pounds of food for the Bread of the Mighty Food Bank during Shir Shalom’s annual Warm Welcome Soup Shabbat.

This past fall, community building activities took place at Temple Shir Shalom when Richard Spencer was in Gainesville. One such activity involved a service project -- packing toiletry kits for Dr. Eloise Harman’s medical mission to Haiti. Dr. Harman delivered these kits to children in orphanages, and jail inmates, all of whom appreciated receipt of the toiletries.

Two new initiatives have started this spring. The committee has partnered with several churches to support the work of Family Promise, a service program for homeless families. Committee members provide and host dinners to Family Promise families.

Shir Shalom has also joined over 150 reform congregations in the URJ Religious Action Center’s (RAC) Brit Olam (“covenant with our world”) movement. Participating congregations affirm their “commitment to meaningful social justice work, addressing issues of systemic change around a variety of issues, all grounded in ... sacred and enduring Jewish values.” Our Social Action Committee will be expanding its social justice initiatives with the support of the training and resources available through the Brit Olam movement.
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@jcncf.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 Howard Rosenblatt for receiving this year’s 2018 Snead/Bryan Distinguished Service Award from the National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors.

Mazel Tov to Noam Bilitzer, son of Amira Bilitzer and a 2011 graduate of the Institute of Culinary Arts at East Side High School. On April 3, Noam took top place on the season premier of the hit Food Network show Chopped.

Mazel Tov to Jacob Rosenblatt, Son of Stacey Rosenblatt and Josh Rosenblatt, who celebrated his Bar Mitzvah on April 14!

Mazel Tov to Victoria Egan, Daughter of Charles and Julia Egan, who celebrated her Bat Mitzvah on April 21!

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North Central Florida Congregations & Organizations

**Gainesville**

**B’nai Israel Community Day School (DS)**
Debby Kinman-Ford, Director
Melanie Gonzalez, Day School Registrar
www.bnaiisraeldcs.org
352.376.1508, ext 101

**Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Florida (CJS)**
Dr. Jack Kugelmass, 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
Thalia Castro-Vega, Family and Youth Programing
Caroline Birdrow, Adult Programing and Administration
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

**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

**The Tabacinic 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
Ann Eisenstadt, Office Manager
www.shirshalom.net
3855 NW 8th Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32605
352.371.6399

**UF Hillel (HLL)**
Rabbi Adam Grossman
www.ufhillel.org
2020 W University Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32603
352.372.2900

**Ocala and Other Locations**

**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)**
Rabbi Karen Allen
www.bethisraelocala.org
7171 SW Hwy 200, Ocala, FL34476
352.450.2056

**Congregation Beth Sholom (CBS)**
www.bethsholomcitrus.org
102 Civic Circle, Beverly Hills, FL 34464
352.746.5303

**First Congregation Sons of Israel (FCSI)**
www.first-congregationsonsofisrael.org
161 Cordova Street, St. Augustine, FL 32084
904.829.9532

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

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

**Temple Shalom of Central Florida (TSCF)**
Rabbi Mel Glazer
www.templeshalomcentralfl.org
13563 County Road 101, Oxford, FL 34484
352.748.1800

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The JCNCF Office Will Be Closed
Monday, May 7 through Tuesday, May 15.
We Will Also be Closed
Monday May, 21 for Shavuot.
Community Calendar for May 2018

**Tuesday, May 1**
Torah Study with Rabbi Joseph at TSS, 9:30 am. (Repeated May 8, 15, 22, and 29)
Torah on Tuesday with Rabbi Kaiman at CBI, 12 pm. (Repeated May 8, 15, and 22)

**Wednesday, May 2**
Friendship Circle at CBI, 10:30 am (Repeated May 16, 23 and 30)

*Lag B’omer*: Jewish Unity Day at LCJC, 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm. Adults $12, Children $8, Students $8 Family $36.
For more information visit www.JewishGator.com

**Saturday, May 5**
Circle Minyan at CBI, 10 am

**Sunday, May 6**
Last day of Religious School at TSS, 9 am.
Temple Shir Shalom Annual Meeting at TSS, 9 am to 12 pm
Cong. B’nai Israel’s Jewish Food Festival at CBI, 11 am to 2 pm.

**Wednesday, May 9**
Humanistic Judaism Meeting, at the JCNCF Office, 7:30 pm.

**Monday, May 14**
Florida Free Speech Forum, Nathan Crabbe of the Gainesville Sun, 11:30 am

**Thursday, May 24**
*Meet Ruth Gruber*, A Talk by Barbara Oberlander at The Village, 2 pm.
For more information and to RSVP please contact the JCNCF office at 352.949.3941 or office@jcncf.org
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