

Chai~Lights



November 1 - December 31, 2025 | 10 Cheshvan, 5786 to 29 Kislev, 5786

A Look Back at High Holidays — Pages 22-27

Photo Gallery — Pages 29-33

Looking Ahead to Chanukah — Pages 34-35



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 NOV Sisterhood Meeting 10 a.m. Hebrew Class 12 p.m.	3	4	5	6	7 Joyce Peckman & Susan Gordon <i>Judy & Adam Starr</i>	8
9 KJCC Board Meeting on Zoom 10 a.m. Hebrew Class 12:30 p.m.	10	11	12	13 Challah Bake 4 p.m.	14 Shabbos Project Dinner 6 p.m. Steve Jacobs <i>Anonymous</i>	15
16 Hebrew Class 12 p.m.	17	18	19	20 Sisterhood Book Club 12 p.m.	21 Rosh Chodesh Kislev Donna Bolton & Gloria Avner <i>Jeff & Cheryl Margulies & Gloria Avner</i>	22
23	24	25	26	27 Thanksgiving	28 Rivka & Max Trent <i>Sisterhood</i>	29
30	1 DEC	2	3	4	5 Ken Salomon & Joyce Peckman <i>Linda Pollack</i>	6
7 Sisterhood Meeting & Installation 10 a.m. Hebrew Class 12 p.m.	8	9	10	11 Cooking Flan with Luz 4 p.m.	12 Erica Lieberman Garrett <i>Lucinda Kurtz & Oran Hesterman</i>	13
14 1st Night of Hanukkah KJCC Board Meeting on Zoom 10 a.m. Hebrew Class 12:30 p.m.	15	16	17	18 Sisterhood Book Club 12 p.m.	19 6th Night Hanukkah Dinner 6 p.m. Judy Starr & Gloria Avner <i>Linda Pollack, Mindy & Richard Agler</i>	20
21 First Day of Winter Rosh Chodesh Tevet	22	23	24	25 Open House at Erica's 1-4 p.m.	26 Rivka & Max Trent <i>Sisterhood</i>	27
28	29	30	31	Services are every Friday at 7:30pm Names denote service leaders Italicized names are Oneg sponsors		

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chailights@keysjewishcenter.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Ken Atlas



I want to start off this message by giving thanks to our Ritual Leaders Joyce Peckman and Gloria Avner. We have a phenomenal team and I'm grateful for all they do.

They worked many hours finding a wonderful new Rabbi to help us with our high holiday services. Additionally, they spent many further hours coordinating between her and the Cantor and setting up the five services that we had. During that time, Joyce and Gloria practically lived at KJCC. We got many many compliments about the new Rabbi and the continuation of our Cantor. And frankly, I think, though I may sound like a broken record, this was yet again the best High Holidays

we've ever had.

I'm also very happy to report that the last of the living hostages have been freed from Gaza. It's hard to believe that some people were over there over two years. I'd also like to thank Judy Starr for her reports on Israel that have kept us posted.

Security continues to be an important focus at KJCC. We are in a safe area, with many safeguards. However, I ask everyone to remain vigilant.

Wishing everyone a happy, healthy, and safe 5786. ◇

Shabbat Service Leaders

November 7	Susan Gordon & Joyce Peckman
November 14	Steve Jacobs
November 21	Donna Bolton & Gloria Avner
November 28	Rivka & Max Trent
December 5	Ken Salomon & Joyce Peckman
December 12	Erica Lieberman Garrett
December 19	Judy Starr & Gloria Avner
December 26	Rivka & Max Trent

WHAT'S UP AT KJCC

Sunday, Nov. 2	10 a.m. Sisterhood Meeting 12 p.m. Hebrew Class
Friday, Nov. 7	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Joyce Peckman & Susan Gordon
Sunday, Nov. 9	10 a.m. KJCC Board Meeting on Zoom 12:30 p.m. Hebrew Class
Thursday, Nov. 13	4 p.m. Challah Bake
Friday, Nov. 14	6 p.m. Shabbos Project Dinner 7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Steve Jacobs
Sunday, Nov. 16	Hebrew Class 12 p.m.
Thursday, Nov. 20	12 p.m. Sisterhood Book Club
Friday, Nov. 21	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Donna Bolton & Gloria Avner Rosh Chodesh Kislev
Thursday, Nov. 27	Thanksgiving
Friday, Nov. 28	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Rivka & Max Trent
Friday, Dec. 5	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Ken Salomon & Joyce Peckman
Sunday., Dec. 7	10 a.m. Sisterhood Meeting & Installation 12 p.m. Hebrew Class
Thursday, Dec. 11	4 p.m. Cooking Flan with Luz
Friday, Dec. 12	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Erica Lieberman Garrett
Sunday, Dec. 14	1st Night of Hanukkah 10 a.m. KJCC Board Meeting on Zoom 12:30 p.m. Hebrew Class
Thursday, Dec. 18	12 p.m. Sisterhood Book Club
Friday, Dec. 19	6th Night of Hanukkah 6 p.m. Hanukkah Dinner 7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Judy Starr & Gloria Avner
Sunday, Dec. 21	First Day of Winter - Rosh Chodesh Tevet
Thursday, Dec. 25	1-4 p.m. Pot Luck Open House at Erica Lieberman Garrett's
Friday, Dec 26.	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Rivka & Max Trent

NOSH

Challah workshop and Shabbos Project Dinner.

Jane will be our teacher extraordinaire for Challah making. Only \$10/person for supplies, enough to make two challahs. Check out the flier. Make your Challahs on Thursday, and bring one to a lovely meat dinner on Erev Shabbat to share.

Sisterhood Cooking Workshops

New this year, educational culinary delights abound. Tiramisu making, led by Loni Ochs, started the series off deliciously. Next up is Flan, to be taught by Luz Levine. Next comes those delicious egg rolls by Jane Friedman. Watch weekly announcements for dates and details.

Game Day coming soon

We've played Five Crowns and Mexican train a lot last season. As we enter this new winter season, we look forward to playing some different games. Anybody interested in Canasta? Farkle? Other Suggestions? This will be a fun winter.

Erica's Open House. Dec. 25

You won't want to miss the pot-luck Open House get-together for KJCC Mishpocha at the home of Erica Lieberman Garrett from 1:00-4:00pm. on Thursday, Dec. 25. Please RSVP to Hippiejap@hotmail.com. 305-570-9310

KJCC Gives a Spring Concert!

On March 8, 2026 at 4PM, the KJCC will be sponsoring a new fundraiser event- an immersion of piano music and history.

March 8th's Sunday afternoon performance will be a walk down the memory lane of 1820 and 1850. Join Jan Price in this historic reenactment, bringing the history of two prominent and important women in history to life through live piano music, period dress, refreshments and a slide show. A program booklet will contain some of the details expressed during the performance.

Jan Price will share how history shaped these women's lives, their connection with Beethoven, Schubert and Chopin, short stories and the intimate letters written revealing their hearts.

You will see authentic dress and hats that the ladies would have worn and learn the needlework and complexities of both creating them and getting dressed. Afternoon tea replete with tea sandwiches at intermission and a special after-performance reception is planned.

She will perform on the KJCC's Steinway piano compositions of Bach, Beethoven, Schubert and Chopin. You will hear some of the most beloved music that still captivates our hearts today.

Please contact KJCC both for tickets and sponsoring space in the program booklet. Contact email: Dr.LmOCHS@gmail.com ♦

Why Dip Challah in Salt?

The reason is that your table is compared to an altar, and since sacrifices brought on the altar all had salt, so too your bread should.

Based on Kabbalah, it is done because bread represents divine kindness, whereas salt represents strict divine judgment. And, we want kindness to overpower strict judgment.

It is done three times because, again based on Kabbalah, bread (חלה in Hebrew) has the numerical value of 78, the name of G-d (יהוה in Hebrew) has the value of 26, and $26 \times 3 = 78$ (26 is the value of G-d's name, and 3 is the 3 times we dip). This reminds us that we don't only live from the bread we eat; but, also the blessing of G-d in our food. ♦



ONGOING PROJECTS AND MITZVAH PROGRAMS OF KJCC

CEMETERY INFORMATION: If you wish to plan for the very distant future, you can reserve space at the Kendall Mt. Nebo Cemetery in the KJCC section. Call Joyce Peckman, 732-447-5225.

CHAI-LIGHTS MITZVAH: Place a greeting or notice in Chai-Lights. Call Gloria Avner, 305-619-0216, to make your donation.

CHAI-LIGHTS ADVERTISEMENT: Your business ad will appear in every issue of Chai-Lights. Call Linda Pollack, 305-587-7429, or email lindap4000@ymail.com for rates.

GIFT SHOP: We have lovely items for all holidays and for every day enjoyment. If you have a special request, call Susan Gordon, 305-766-3585.

MEDITATION GARDEN: Have you visited our beautiful garden? Contact Shari Carlquist, 305-962-0000 or shari@directflowers.biz to reserve an orchid, bench, brick or tree plaque for posterity.

ONEG SHABBAT/DINNER SPONSOR: An oneg costs only \$72; a dinner is \$360. To schedule your special date with Sisterhood, call Joyce Peckman, 732-447-5225.

CARING KEHILAH/SUNSHINE COMMITTEE: If you know of any member who should receive a get well, congratulations or condolence card from the KJCC, call Loni Ochs, 305-772-2584, or email Dr.LMOCHS@gmail.com or Barbara Knowles, 305-772-0503.

TREE OF LIFE LEAVES, SANCTUARY SEAT PLATES, YARTZEIT MEMORIAL PLAQUES: Send your desired inscription to Linda Pollack at lindap4000@ymail.com.

Call the names listed above for assistance or send your request and check to the KJCC, P.O. Box 1332, Tavernier, FL 33070. Recipients of your gifts will be notified by card and listings will appear in Chai-Lights as well. Honorarium and memorial cards can also be requested. Donations can be earmarked to our various ongoing funds; e.g. Rabbi & Cantor Fund, Holocaust Education Fund, Meditation Garden, Scholarship Fund, Sara Cohen Memorial Tzedukah Fund, Sunshine Fund, or General Fund.

HOW CERTAIN CONTRIBUTIONS TO KJCC CAN INSTANTLY BECOME PERMANENT, LIVING MEMORIALS

Yahrzeit Plaques: KJCC has six special, Israeli-made boards in the sanctuary for yahrzeit memorial plaques. Each plaque is accompanied by its own light, which is switched on for both yahrzeit dates and on Yom Kippur; names are also read aloud in memory from the bimah each yahrzeit and are published annually in our Yizkor Book. The cost for eternal synagogue memory is \$400.

Tree of Life Leaves: We have three beautiful, six-foot Trees of Life – the world's most enduring spiritual metaphor – adorning the wall at the rear of the KJCC sanctuary. For \$75 an individual golden leaf can be engraved with your message of memory or love. An example: "To our grandchildren: May they always be in the presence of the Eternal Light."

Garden Bricks and Benches: \$125 buys a single brick and \$200 a double brick in our magnificent Meditation Garden walkway, engraved with your personal message. Purchase a beautifully engraved Garden Bench for \$1,000, as your ultimate tribute.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO KJCC

We appreciate the thoughtfulness of those who support the Keys Jewish Community Center by remembering and honoring friends and loved ones through generous contributions. When you make a donation, please specify the names to be honored and the recipient fund if one is desired.

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2025

Yahrzeit

Dr. Robert Temkin Charlie Temkin
Dorothy Wolfe Philip Fine, Diana Wolfe
Arthur Plutzer Frank (Skip) Rose
Joyce Peckman Frank (Skip) Rose
Pam Friedman Shirley Steinberg
Richard & Mimi Bentolila Leon Bentolila
Eileen Kominsky Natalie Kominsky
Sylvia Zolot Yahrzeit Plaque for Skip Rose
Jeff & Cheryl Margulies Benjamin Margulies,
Ilse Doellefeld
Joyce Ruthen Pauline Roller
Mindy & Rich Agler Eugene Agler

Security

Steve & Joan Jacobs
Richard & Mimi Bentolila
Jeff & Cheryl Margulies
Dr. Paul & Barbara Bernstein
Jan Price
Dr. Oran Hesterman & Lucinda Kurtz

Chai Light Greetings

Jeff & Cheryl Margulies
Dr. Paul & Barb Bernstein
Patricia Isenberg
Dr. Oran Hesterman & Lucinda Kurtz

High Holidays/Cantor/Rabbi

Steve & Joan Jacobs
Jeff & Cheryl Margulies
Dr. Paul & Barbara Bernstein
Dr. Robert Temkin

Yizkor Book

Marshall & Myra Kaplan
Jan Price

In Honor/Memory of

Richard & Mimi Bentolila
Jeff & Cheryl Margulies
Richard and Barbara Knowles
Marla Cartegena
Patricia Isenberg
Lei Steinberg
Beth Kaminstein
Steve Steinbock & Rosemary Barefoot
Dr. Robert Temkin

Meditation Garden

Stuart & Lauren Sax Frank (Skip) Rose
Jeff & Cheryl Margulies Jane's Garden
Linda Pollack Frank (Skip) Rose

Tikkun Olam

Susan Horn & Dot Brooking

Holocaust Education

Dr Paul & Barb Bernstein
Patricia Isenberg

Scholarship

Dr Paul & Barbara Bernstein
Beth Kaminstein

Library

Dr. Paul & Barbara Bernstein

General/Unrestricted

Richard & Mimi Bentolila
Jeff & Cheryl Margulies
Dr. Joe & Linda Levi
Dr. Oran Hesterman & Lucinda Kurtz
Michael Duman
Steve Smith
Alan Beth
Steve & Joan Jacobs

CONTRIBUTIONS CONTINUED

Tree of Life

Dr. Oran Hesterman & Lucinda Kurtz

— SISTERHOOD DONATIONS —

Onegs

In Honor/Memory of

Richard & Barbara Knowles... Sam & Barb's Birthday
Lucinda Kurtz.....Oran's & Lucinda's Birthdays
& Dr. Oran Hesterman

Barnet Coltman Mother Evelyn's Memory
Shari Carlquist.....Her Birthday
Joyce Peckman Service Leaders
Linda Pollack Frank (Skip) Rose
Rivka & Max Trent Ramon Rizzo's Birthday

Gloria AvnerHer Birthday

Rosemary Ciotti & Dennis MillerRuth Lieberman

Dinner Sponsorships

Anonymous Shabbos Project

Linda Pollack Chanukah

General Donations

Linda Pollack Slichot Pizza night

Beth Horowitz Shana Tova Greetings

Susan & Paul Roberts.....Wes & Rita Conklin

Dinner Sponsorships

Linda Pollack Chanukah Dinner

AnonymousShabbos Project Dinner

ONEG SPONSORS

November 7Judy & Adam Starr
November 14 Anonymous • Shabbos Project Dinner
November 21Jeff & Cheryl Margulies • Gabriel's 16th Birthday
November 21 Gloria Avner • Her Birthday
November 28 Sisterhood
December 5Linda Pollack • In Honor of Skip Rose
December 12 Lucinda Kurtz & Oran Hesterman • Oran's Birthday
December 19 Linda Pollack • Hannukah Dinner
Mindy & Richard Agler • Their 49 1/2 Anniversary
December 26 Sisterhood

Happy Anniversary

November

		Years
2nd	Michele & Alan Lindenbaum.....	
6th	Thomas & Renee Brodie.....	32
6th	Susan Horn & Dot Brooking	
23rd	Marcia Kreitman & John Hawver	11
27th	Stanley & Jenny Margulies	
27th	Robert Dandrea & Joni Sages Dandrea	22

December

5th	Max Trent & Rivka Rizzo-Trent.....	4
11th	Jamie & Laura Goodman	20
14th	David & Pat VanArtsdalen	44
27th	Joe & Linda Levi	

Happy Birthday!

November

2nd..... Emily Cohen
2nd..... Matt Temkin
3rd Katherine Shabathai
4th Zoey Barrett
7th Ari Robert Freundlich
7th Joel Stein
7th Michele Lindenbaum
8th Melissa Katz-Fusco
8th Nico Wilbur
13th Tami Antelman
14th Larry Wolfe
16th Lorelei Alexander
18th Diana Loi-Kamely
18th Ross Alexander
20th Betty Small
22nd..... Gloria Avner
24th Will Travis Pollack
27th Kenzi Tainow
29th Benjamin Rakov

December

1st..... Rachel Levine
4th Jan Hartz
4th Judith Klein
5th Geri Smith
5th Joseph Beth

5th Stuart Sax
6th Marla Koche
7th Rhett William Casey
11th Caroline Maggi
11th Oran Hesterman
11th Sara Rose Friedman
13th Robin Margulies Juenger
15th Richard Bentolila
16th Diana Lal
16th Samuel Klimpl
17th Bruce Forman
17th Lilian Forbes
18th Emelyn Anne Juenger
18th Jerry Small
19th Jonah Gross
19th Lorena Kaufman
19th Terry Willner-Tainow
20th Jennifer Erin VanArtsdalen
22nd..... Laura Molly Friedman
22nd..... Lisa Miller
22nd..... Stuart Smith
27th Cantor ilana Plutzer
27th Claire Tallent
28th Elaine Schulberg
28th Len Levi
28th Michael Klimpl
29th Joan Stark

Yahrzeit Plaque:

Franklin "Skip" Rose
12/7/1929 - 9/15/2025
In Loving Memory - Always
The Zolot Family

Leaf on the tree of life:

IN GRATITUDE
Lucindia Kurtz
and
Oran Hesterman

In Memoriam – November 2025

Eugene Agler

by Richard & Mindy Agler

Jerrold Benowitz

by Roos-Mary Benowitz

Elaine Ruda

by Sylvia Berman

Shirley Leventhal Strumor

by Murray & Bev Blitzer

Robert Scott Coltman

by Barnet O. Coltman

Lillian Skolnick

by Susan Gordon

Helene Tulsky

by Patricia Isenberg

David Kamely

by Yarden Kamely

Sol Levy

by Beth Kaminstein

Jacob S. Raub

by Harvey & Judith Klein

Ethel Hankin

by Richard & Barbara Knowles

Deborah Krissel Cannon

by Michael Krissel

Benjamin Margulies

by Jeff & Cheryl Margulies

Ilse Doellefeld

by Jeff & Cheryl Margulies

Adele Kaufman

by Jeff & Lisa Miller

Mitch Harvey

by Linda Perloff

Murray Pincus

by Linda Pincus

Ann Plutzer

by Arthur Plutzer

Tillie Pollack

by Linda Pollack

Raymond K. Hess

by Jan Price

Albert Kaminsky

by Elaine Schulberg

Shirley Schulberg

by Elaine Schulberg

Florence Cohen

by Jules & Nettie Seder

Rose T. Steinberg

by Lei Steinberg

Marianne Cimkowski

by Stephen Steinbock
& Rosemary Barefoot

Bertha Swartz

by Muriel Swartz

Harold Tainow

by Jon S. Tainow &
Terry Willner-Tainow

Samuel Tallent

by Claire Tallent

Kenny Temkin

by Robert Temkin

Beverly Tobin

by Andrew M. Tobin

Hilda Dacosta

by Max Gordon Trent
& Rivka Rizzo-Trent

Dick Jacob

by David & Pat Vanartsdalen

Zara White

by Susan White

Esther Gold Willner

by Johanna Willner

Diana Wolfe

by Larry & Dorothy Wolfe



In Memoriam – December 2025

Alex Avner

by Gloria Avner

Clotilde Bentolila

by Richard & Mimi Bentolila

Martin Segal

by Paul & Barbara Bernstein

Hetty Clark

by Alan L. Beth &
Candace J. Stanlake

J.d. Stanlake

by Alan L. Beth &
Candace J. Stanlake

Rose Beth

by Alan L. Beth &
Candace J. Stanlake

Daniel Birnbaum

by Norbert Birnbaum

Eva Levine

by Barnet O. Coltman

Morris Hitzig

by Wes & Rita Conklin

Harry Friedman

by Jane Friedman

Harry Wolfe

by Michael & Suzanne Gilson

Leonard Hesterman

by Oran Hesterman
& Lucinda Kurtz

Mildred Hesterman

by Oran Hesterman &
Lucinda Kurtz

Jerry Levy

by Yardena Kamely

Janet Kaplan

by Marshall & Myra Kaplan

David M. Kaplan

by Marshall & Myra Kaplan

Anita F. Katz

by Melissa Katz-Fusco

Gary Kreitman

by Marcia Kreitman
& John David Hawver

Claire Lempel

by Linda Pincus

M. Arlene Hess

by Jan Price

Clayton Allan Rakov

by Neal Cathy Rakov

Ruth Greenwald

by Paul & Susan Roberts

Rhonie Lee Klipper

by Mary Lee Singer

Sylvia L. Singer

by Mary Lee Singer

Sheila Cohen Steinberg

by Lei Steinberg

Peter F. Steinberg

by Lei Steinberg

Steve Cimkowski

by Stephen Steinbock
& Rosemary Barefoot

Bernard Swartz

by Muriel Swartz

Frances Willner

by Jon S. Tainow &
Terry Willner-Tainow

Carlie Trent

by Max Gordon Trent
& Rivka Rizzo-Trent

Elizabeth Vinarsky

by Gregory & Maya Zakharin





**KEYS JEWISH
COMMUNITY CENTER**
Congregation Ohr HaYam
Cathy Kaplan Sisterhood



**Happy Hour
CHALLAH BAKE WITH
JANE FRIEDMAN**

Wine, Cheese, and Creativity

**Sisterhood invites all KJCC Members,
men as well as women,
to our**

Shabbos Project Challah Bake

**Thursday, November 13, 2025
4:00 p.m.**

**Have your supplies at hand:
Cookie sheet, large bowl, measuring spoons
and cups. We will provide everything else.**

**RSVP to Erica Lieberman-Garrett at
305 570-9310 or hippiejap@hotmail.com**

**BY NOVEMBER 8TH
so we can purchase sufficient supplies.**

Donation \$10

WORLD JEWISH REPORT

Medina Roy



And the Winner is...

Geraldine Brooks, Jewish author of many best-selling novels, many inspired by events in Jewish history, has been awarded the prestigious Library of Congress's 2025 American Fiction Award. Brooks is the author of "People of the Book," which chronicles the preservation of the famed Sarajevo Haggadah, and "The Secret Chord," a novel exploring the life and times of King David. A former foreign correspondent for the Wall Street Journal, Brooks won the 2006 Pulitzer Prize for fiction for her novel "March," a reimagining of "Little Women" from the father's perspective.

The award comes at a time where the Library of Congress is embroiled in controversy with the Trump administration's overhaul of government institutions to advance its ideological agenda. In August, the library drew controversy after some sections of the online version of the United States Constitution were briefly deleted due to what was explained as a "coding error." And in May, Donald Trump fired Carla Hayden, the Librarian of Congress, over her alleged "pursuit of DEI and putting inappropriate books in the library for children," cutting short her ten year term. Hayden's acting replacement, Robert Randolph Newlen, said of Brooks's award, "One of the reasons we invited Brooks to become the next Library of Congress Prize for American Fiction winner is how she makes readers feel. "I am honored by this wonderful prize from America's greatest library," Brooks said. "As a writer inspired by history, it is moving to be connected by the Library of Congress Prize for American Fiction to the institution created by John Adams for the very first Congress, saved by Thomas Jefferson after the conflagration of 1812, and carried into the present by visionary librarians who value inclusion, free expression and truth."

In 1984, Brooks married Jewish author and journalist Anthony Horowitz and converted to

Judaism. Her latest book is "Memorial Day," a memoir about the sudden death of her husband in 2019.

Last year's winner of the American fiction award went to James McBride, who also infused his Jewish background into his books, including "The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store." Previous Jewish winners include E.L. Doctorow, Philip Roth and the prize's very first honoree, Herman Wouk for his novel "Marjorie Morningstar." (www.jta.org, 8-27-25)

A Sign Causes International Outrage

In the northern German town of Flensburg, an antisemitic sign was seen in a shop window and went viral, causing international outrage. Passers-by spotted a sign in the window of a used bookstore printed on white paper and reading, "Jews are banned from entering here! Nothing personal, not even antisemitism, I just can't stand you." The 60-year-old-shop owner, Hans Velten Reisch, told German media that he put up the poster himself, out of anger over the war in Gaza. He was surprised over the public outcry. Photos of the sign drew outrage not only from Jewish leaders but also from politicians and public officials who said the message "smacked of the Holocaust." Even Israeli opposition leader Yair Lapid threatened to sue the shopkeeper "for every cent he owns" on behalf of his late father, journalist Tomislav Lempl. (Lempl survived the Budapest ghetto under the Nazis and later reported on the 1961 trial in Jerusalem of Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann.)

"This is a reminder of the darkest chapters of Germany's history and has absolutely no place in this city," said Fabian Geyer, mayor of Flensburg, a city of almost 100,000 near the Danish border. The shop owner said police ordered him to remove the sign from the front door which he did. But local media reported that the sign was still

visible inside the store.

The incident comes as both antisemitic incidents and anti-Israel protests have been on the rise in Germany. The board of the Orthodox Rabbinical Conference of Germany said that German Jews were becoming “collateral damage” in a conflict unfolding 1,500 miles away. “The war in Gaza must never be used as a pretext for outright hatred against Jews in Germany. Yet that is precisely what is happening: people who have nothing to do with this war are becoming collateral damage,” the rabbis’ statement said. “We make it clear: Jews in Germany are not responsible for Gaza.” (www.forward.com, 9-19-25)

An Honor in Tenaflly

In September, the street sign outside Tenaflly (NJ) Borough Hall was renamed “Edan Alexander Way” in tribute to the 21-year-old American Israel Defense Forces (IDF) soldier of the Golani Brigade who survived 584 days in Hamas captivity. Alexander, 21, joined the IDF after graduating from high school in Jew Jersey. He was captured near the Gaza border during the barbaric Hamas attack of October 7th, 2023. He was one of 251 people kidnapped and was held underground in tunnels never seeing daylight. Following his release, he returned to his family in Tenaflly. He was the only remaining U.S. citizen among the hostages still alive in Gaza.

“It’s not just my name on a sign. It’s a reminder of how powerful a community can be that refuses to give up,” Alexander said. “I never felt completely alone. I knew my family and my town and so many people were fighting for me, keeping my name alive, pushing for my return. That gave me strength.” Rabbi Mordecai Shain of Chabad of Tenaflly said Alexander committed to putting on tefillin every day. “The idea is that you put it on every day to connect your heart and your mind to God,” Shain said. “He did it with his whole heart.” (www.cbsnews.com, 9-29-25)

More About Edan

Freed hostage Edan Alexander from Tenaflly, New Jersey, announced that after 584 days in Hamas captivity he plans to return to serve in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). “...I will once again put on the IDF uniform, and I will proudly serve alongside my brothers,” he said at a Friends of the Israel Defense Forces (FIDF) gala event in September. My story does not end with survival – it continues with service.” (His appearance at the gala comes

amid turmoil of the fundraising group with recent allegations of “internal financial mismanagement, cronyism and a toxic workplace culture.” Two top leaders of the FIDF recently resigned which claims it has raised \$306 million to support Israeli soldiers since October 7th, 2023.)

At least one other Israeli soldier taken hostage on that day has returned to service. Ori Megidish, who was rescued by Israeli forces three weeks after her abduction, rejoined the military and was assigned to an intelligence unit. (www.forward.com, 9-19-25)

Turning Dreams into Reality

A team of researchers from Tel Aviv University (TAU) has achieved a global breakthrough: the development of a human engineered spinal cord from stem cells, which may restore the ability for paralyzed individuals to be able to walk again. Following remarkable success in animal trials where over 80 percent regained the ability to walk, the Israeli Ministry of Health has approved moving on to human trials. Within about a year, the first Israeli patient is expected to undergo this historic and extraordinary surgery.

Behind the breakthrough is Professor Tal Dvir and his team, who developed pioneering technology based on the patient’s own cells, ensuring the body will not reject the implant, envisioning a three-dimensional spinal cord tissue implant allowing electrical signals to flow again through the body. “We decided that the first patient will be Israeli because we believe in our medical system and in Israeli capabilities,” Professor Dvir said.

The achievement reflects Israel’s unique ability of a small country with great scientists, offering hope to thousands of paralyzed people in Israel and around the world showing how the Israeli spirit knows how to push the boundaries of science. (www.instagram.com/israelgood_newsonly, 8-25-25)

An Important Victory

Canadian director Barry Avrich’s “The Road Between Us: The Ultimate Rescue,” has won the People’s Choice Documentary Award at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) after much controversy. The film is a riveting account of one family’s fight for survival during the October 7th, 2023 terrorist attack on Israel by Hamas. The film follows retired Israeli general Noam Tibon as he races across his country under siege to rescue his son, journalist Amir Tibon, and his family from

terrorists who infiltrated their home in Kibbutz Nahal Oz near the Gaza border. Avrich used interviews with both men, a walk-through of the places Noam visited, dashcam and Israeli army footage, as well as bodycam video live streamed by Hamas “with a raw urgency of a survival film,” the TIFF wrote in a press release.

Originally, TIFF organizers pulled the documentary from the schedule in August, citing “failure to meet legal clearance for all footage.” That call was swiftly met with backlash from Canadian politicians and a consortium of Hollywood celebrities – including Amy Schumer, Howie Mandel, Debra Messing and Mayim Bialik – who wrote a letter condemning the move. The letter claimed that the attempt to silence Israeli and Jewish creativity is becoming too common since the Hamas attack. “The deliberate effort to marginalize and silence Jewish voices in the arts worldwide is intolerable, and it cannot be allowed to persist,” the letter read.

Soon after, TIFF reinstated the film and CEO Cameron Bailey apologized. He did so again at the sold-out premier in Toronto. “I want to apologize, especially to the Jewish community, for mistakes I made in the lead-up to this day. In an environment of rising antisemitism, I want to apologize.”

Avrich said he was humbled and overwhelmed by the premiere audience response. “And to now win the TIFF People’s Choice Award validates our mission to make films for audiences and let them alone decide how they want to interpret the story, after they have actually seen the film.” Avrich said he hopes schools and community organizations, regardless of their faith, see the film. “It’s a story of family...there’s a universal message...” (www.msn.com, 9-16-25)

In Memoriam

–Aron Bell, Holocaust survivor and last of the Bielski brothers whose brigade saved over 1,200 Jews from the Nazis, died in September. He was 98. Bell, who changed his name from Aron Bielski, was born in Stankiewiczze – part of present-day Belarus – and was the youngest of ten brothers and two sisters. In 1941, when the German army arrived in Stankiewiczze, the town’s Jews were imprisoned in the Novogrudok ghetto. Two of Aron’s siblings were murdered in the village, and his parents were killed in a mass killing there in December 1941. The older Bielski brothers – Asael, Tuvia and Alexander (known as “Zus”), escaped to the nearby forest and Aron joined

them. Together, they formed the Bielski Brigade, one of the largest rescue efforts of Jews during the Holocaust providing refuge for more than 1,200 Jews. “If you were in the company of those three brothers, you felt like you had a whole army behind you, you were fearless,” Bell said in his 1996 testimony to Steven Spielberg’s USC Shoah Foundation.

In the forest settlement, the group established workshops, a bakery, a school and a hospital. Aron was only eleven or twelve at the time, but he played a key role in sneaking into the nearby ghetto to encourage fellow Jews to escape. “It is Aron who brings life into the community. He finds other survivors and introduces them to our district,” Aron’s brother Tuvia wrote in his diary.

Following the war, Bell immigrated to British Mandate Palestine and served in the army during Israel’s War of Independence in 1948. In 1954, he moved to the United States where he married his first wife, Judith, with whom he had three children. He spent decades living in Palm Beach, Florida and frequently spoke to school children about his experience during the Holocaust. He wrote two books – “Forest Scout: Reminiscences” and “Between Hitler and Stalin.”

In 2007, Bell and his second wife, Henryka, were charged with exploitation of the elderly, theft, and scheming to defraud after they convinced a 93 year-old Catholic Holocaust survivor to give them power of attorney and began withdrawing her money. The charges were dropped a year later after the couple agreed to repay the woman \$260,000 in stolen funds.

Aron Bell was the last surviving brother of the brigade. The brothers’ story of defiance inspired several book adaptations of their story and one of them, Nechama Tec’s tale “Defiance: The Bielski Partisans” was made into the 2008 film “Defiance” with actor George MacKay playing Aron Bell. (www.jta.org, 9-25-25) ◇

Memorial Brick:

SKIP ROSE
Friendship, Fun,
Fulfillment & Fidelity
Memories Always
by Linda Pollack 2025



KJCC Sisterhood BOOK CLUB

Last Thursday of Each Month
Live at 12:15 p.m. • Zoom at 12:30 p.m.



November 20

Shanda

by Letty Cottin Pogrebin

An intimate memoir from a founding editor of Ms. magazine who grew up in a Jewish immigrant family mired in secrets, haunted by their dread of shame and stigma, determined to hide their every imperfection—and in denial or despair when they couldn't.



December 18

The Goddess of Warsaw

by Lisa Barr

An enthralling story of a legendary Hollywood screen goddess with a dark secret. When the famous actress Lena Browning is threatened by someone from her war-time past, she must put her skills into play to protect herself, her illustrious career, and those she loves, then and now.



We will always Zoom and usually meet in person as well.
An invitation to the Zoom session will be sent prior to each meeting.
Note: We will meet earlier than usual in November and December.

For questions or to join, contact Linda at Lindap4000@ymail.com.

Let us know if you would like to host a meeting and/or review a book!

*Flickering shadows,
Whispering dreams of oil's glow...
Eight days of laughter!*

SISTERHOOD REPORT Loni Ochs



5 786 has arrived with all the undeniably festive activities that define our High Holy days! It was an inspiring start with our Erev Rosh Hashannah dinner, with over fifty people in attendance. We somehow managed to not trip over the new carpet and runners (or ourselves) as we navigated two days of delicious luncheons, and the Yom Kippur break fast. The sukkah in the memorial garden was lovingly decorated, and the weather cooperated just barely with our shaking of the lulav and etrog! Our Simchat Torah celebration was a joyous milestone that had us singing and dancing with the torahs and then feasting with a chocolate fountain!

We thank the Kaufman family for hosting a lovely oceanside Tashlich soiree, complete with a crepe making station and an overall beautiful spread. Lorena is always the most gracious host-ess!

The Challah Bake on November 13th, Thursday at 4pm is gearing us up for the Shabbat Project the next night. Jane Friedman will guide us in challah dough making, braiding, and baking. If you have ever wanted to learn the art of challah making, you will not want to miss Jane's master class! Then we get to honor the gift of Shabbat together the next night on Friday November 14th with our hopefully beautiful loaves. We will celebrate the Shabbat Project with a meat potluck dinner at 6pm followed by services. Please contact Loni Ochs at Dr.LMOchs@gmail.com 305-772-2584 to coordinate your meat potluck offerings.

The Sisterhood is delighted to invite everyone to our annual Chanukah Shabbat Dinner on Friday, December 19th, at 6pm followed by services at 7:30. Bring your light to the KJCC...all Chanukiahs welcome, the more the merrier! This will be a dairy potluck dinner, with lots of latkes & sufganiyot of course. There is no charge as always, but we welcome donations to help defer costs. Please contact Erica Lieberman Garrett to coordinate your dairy potluck offering. hippiejap@hotmail.com 305-570-9310

The Sisterhood is sponsoring a series of four cooking classes as a fundraiser starting on October 30th with Tiramisu, taught by me. The second class on December 11th will be Flan taught by Luz Levine. Jane Friedman & her famous egg rolls will be January 15th. Charge is \$25 per class, 4pm at the KJCC. Flyers will be forthcoming, stay in touch with your inbox for further info!

The Sisterhood Book Club led by Linda Pollack meets every 3rd Thursday of the month, always on zoom and usually in person to nosh & discuss the latest book. November's selection is *Shanda* by Letty Cottin Pogrebin, a Jewish immigrant and founding editor of *Ms. Magazine*. This is her memoir of intimate family secrets, shame & stigma. December is gracing us with *The Goddess of Warsaw*, by Lisa Barr. A legendary Hollywood screen goddess has dark secrets in her past life in the Warsaw ghetto and must defend her present reality from the horrors of her past. Any new members who wish to be added to the book club announcement mailing list, please contact Linda at (305)587-7429 Lindap4000@ymail.com

Once again, I would like to thank the sponsors (YOU) that we rely on to support the onegs and dinners throughout the year. To honor a loved one or celebrate a milestone or just because, contact Joyce at joycepeckman@gmail.com or 732-447-5225. Oneg sponsorship is \$72 and dinner sponsorship is \$360. The sisterhood ladies always put together a delicious spread with love for our congregants after Friday services. We are grateful for everyone's continued support in funding challah, wine, coffee, soda, cake, and paper goods.

The Sisterhood is having our monthly meeting on Sunday, November 2nd at 10am in person at the KJCC to plan our busy season. Bring some noshes and your best ideas for our lively round-table discussions. ♦



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Congregation Ohr HaYam
Cathy Kaplan Sisterhood

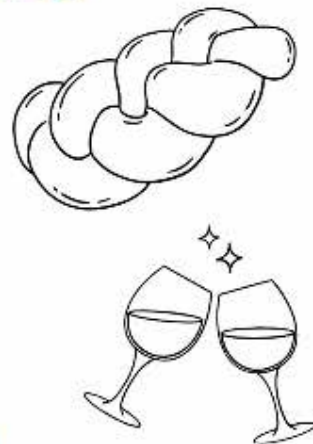
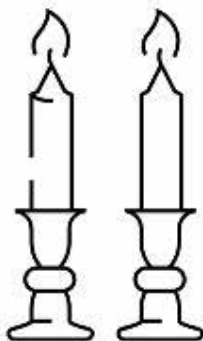
The Shabbos Project

Shabbat Dinner

~~~ Meat Dinner ~~~

Friday, November 14, 2025

6:00 p.m.



Please RSVP to Loni Ochs at  
305-772-2584 or [Dr.LMOCHS@gmail.com](mailto:Dr.LMOCHS@gmail.com)  
by November 8th

to coordinate your dish and to reserve your space.

No charge for dinner  
TKU to our Anonymous Sponsor



*From the Committee for Israel*  
**About Leket Israel:**  
**Let All Who Are Hungry Come Now and Eat**

*By Judy Starr*

**L**eket serves as a major food bank for Israel. Its name means “gleanings.” It seeks to rescue food which would otherwise be discarded and serve it to those at risk of hunger. Our Torah commands farmers to let the poor gather – glean -- from the corners of their crops and anything that falls to the ground during the harvest. Think of Ruth gathering food from the fields of Boaz, whom we know by the way that she married and who together were ancestors of David. In the words of our Passover Haggadah, we call all who are hungry to come and eat. During the High Holidays we bring food for the local food bank. Imagine now a food bank that feeds 415,000 people through the help of 95,000 volunteers supported by a staff of 160. Families, children and seniors at senior centers or homes, who would otherwise go hungry do not because of these “gleanings.” An estimated 2.6 million tons of quality food were discarded in 2023 and early 2024; it is estimated that half of this food could have been served to people in need. Leket secures surplus food or food that would have been discarded and delivers it to 300 different nonprofits for distribution. Through their partners they coordinate the distribution of nutritious food as well as the preparation of healthy meals. In addition, they offer Nutrition Education Workshops.

Leket, based in Ra’anana in central Israel, began in 2003 as Table to Table, through the motivation, imagination, and efforts of Joseph Gitler, who moved from California

to Israel in 2000. It has sponsorships from over 100 organizations including Mastercard, El Al, Samsung, Israel Discount Bank, Chevron, McDonalds, Perrigo (generic drug manufacturer), Microsoft, and Intel. With support from both companies and people around the world, it has branches in at least three countries, with Leket USA, Leket UK, and Leket Canada. In addition, it has a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator. While I can not confirm it, I seem to recall that it also has a relationship with Federation.

The need for Leket and organizations like it persists; hunger always needs to be addressed. Meeting this need is in harmony with our heritage to feed the hungry, help the poor (hopefully to become self-sufficient), to improve or to heal the world around us. Food, medical advancement, and philanthropy are central to who we are. The “gleanings” of Leket fulfill a most basic part of the mission of our heritage. Hopefully it will one day not be needed, but as the day seems far in the future, there is Leket to give sustenance to those who would otherwise go hungry.

To find out more, or to support the work of this organization, please visit their website. Thank you.

**Source**

<https://www.leket.org/>

Suggested links on home page:

- See “About Us” for a “table of contents” of what the organization does.
- See “The Food Waste and Rescue Report” for a picture of their work in a broader scope (under “Research and Data”. ◇



# THEY ARE HOME!

The moment we've prayed for, hoped for, and worked for has arrived.

*Article and photos shared by Jake Braunstein of America's Pro-Israel Lobby*

"After two harrowing years in darkness and captivity, 20 courageous hostages are returning to the glorious embrace of their families. 28 more precious loved ones are coming home, at last, to rest in this sacred soil for all of time. And after so many years of unceasing war and endless danger, today the skies are calm, the guns are silent, the sirens are still, and the sun rises on a holy land that is finally at peace."

Matan Angrest, Ziv Berman, Gali Berman, Elkana Bohbot, Rom Braslavski, Nimrod Cohen, Ariel Cunio, David Cunio, Evyatar David, Guy Gilboa-Dalal, Maxim Herkin, Eitan Horn, Segev Kalfon, Bar Kupershtein, Omri Miran, Eitan Abraham Mor, Yosef-Chaim Ohana, Alon Ohel, Avinatan Or, and Matan Zangauker have now been reunited with their families.



Omri  
Miran



Eitan Mor



Avinatan  
Or



Matan Zangauker



Nimrod Cohen



Eitan Horn





Yosef-Chaim Ohana

Rom Braslavski



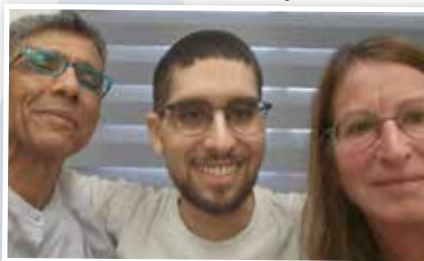
Ziv and Gali Berman

Segev Kalfon



Matan  
Angrest

Evyatar David



Guy  
Gilboa-  
Dala



Maxim Herkin



Alon Ohel





*Postcard, October 17th*  
by Judy Starr

Yesterday all the red ones peaked  
in our backyard, in all the neighborhood  
and the broad lotus shaped leaves  
on the tree by the house on the corner  
have mostly turned gold  
and the remaining greens fading or pale at their borders.

The sky is that keen autumn blue  
that was always Dad's favorite color  
and I think was yours, too.  
This afternoon the ripples on the creek  
are bordered in light  
like rows of dancing diamonds  
while this morning to the east  
you could see even more brightness  
massed across the surface of the bay  
like a shawl of gems  
sprawled across the surface of the bay  
while further east the four-mile bridge  
spread across the harbor  
where barges park and white sails tame the wind.

This morning when I came across your picture  
in the living room of our old apartment  
a photograph from times so far  
from where you'd find me now -  
I thought of your favorite song  
about leaves that break away  
from twigs and branches  
and swirl in the cool breezes to the ground  
(to form those loosely-woven carpets which the children  
love to jump upon and hear the textured crunch -  
do you remember?) -

and the line in the lyric  
about the hands we used to hold.

We always were amazed about the leaves  
that once were buds of tight soft greens  
like peridots in chains  
twined around the branches  
of now half-bare-branched trees  
reminding me of you once more  
and how you told me time delivers all  
the way the winter after summer  
will first grace us with the beauty of the fall.

*Photo Credit: Judy Starr*

# MY VOICE, MY STORY

Posted by the Centre for Domestic Training and Development

[https://www.instagram.com/cdtd\\_org/](https://www.instagram.com/cdtd_org/)



At the Talia Agler Girls Shelter (TAGS), every girl has a story of resilience, of hope, and of transformation.

On 12th August, we had the honor of Launching My Voice, My Story, a publication that brings together the lived experiences of survivors of human trafficking, gender-based violence, child labor, and forced migration.

These are not just stories on paper, but testaments to the strength of the human spirit and the power of safe spaces to restore dignity and dreams.

Since its founding in 2012 with the support of the Global Fund for



Children, TAGS has grown into more than just a shelter. It is a place of healing and opportunity, where girls and young women receive:

- Protection & safety from exploitation and abuse
- Education support to rebuild their future
- Psychosocial care for healing and wellbeing
- Life skills & reintegration pathways to prepare for independence

The launch of My Voice, My Story was made even more meaningful by the presence of Richard and Mindy Agler, Co-Directors of the Tali Fund and parents of the late Talia Faith Agler, in whose memory TAGS was founded, as well as a delegation from the United States.

We are truly grateful to them, to our partners, and most importantly, to the brave girls who entrusted us with their voices.

Their stories call on all of us to continue standing together protecting, empowering, and uplifting vulnerable girls everywhere. ◇



## Rosh Hashana



Rabbi Efrat, Cantor Michael, and Joyce prepare Torah for Rosh Hashanah Day One's readings.



The Lieberman sisters flew in from Canada.



Joe Shabathai led our first Shabbat Service of the new year.





Barbara Bernstein  
welcomes 5786  
creatively.



Pres. Ken  
Atlas loves  
our Rosh  
Hashanah  
Shanah  
dinner.



We share  
dessert  
with our  
lovely  
helpers



## Yom Kippur service & Break the Fast dinner

The 25 hours of fast on Yom Kippur end with the short, sweet and meaningful Havdalah service. We moved on then to the social hall, cleansed, inspired, happy we were here, and hungry. We are truly blessed, delighted with our new rabbi and how well she worked with our Cantor. Next Year in . . . The Keys Jewish Community Center, Congregation Or HaYam.



Rabbi Efrat Zarren-Zohar is delighted with Jane's Round Challah at our Break-the-fast





## It takes a village to create a Sukkah!!





## Simchat Torah!

We danced in the shul  
and dined in the social hall.



We end with the last  
parshah and begin again at  
the beginning. How do we  
celebrate? With a chocolate  
fountain and fruit of course.  
After a lively fun service led  
by Erica Lieberman Garrett  
and Gloria Avner.



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**Thursday, December 11, 2025 4:00 pm**

**RSVP to Susan Gordon at (305) 766-3585 or  
susangordon424@yahoo.com to reserve your space.  
Please rsvp by December 6th so preparations can be  
made.**

**Donation \$25**





Joyce Peckman's grandson's IDF graduation ceremony from Basic Training. Mazel tov Yosef!



Coming ever closer to a Bar Mitzvah next year, Sean Kaufman's participation in Shabbat services becomes ever fuller



Randy Klein Gross and Rosemary Ciotti bless Challah after co-leading a beautiful service

Susan & Randy at the Delray Beach Arts & Crafts Festival



Mazel tov to Lily, daughter of Loni Ochs. Biggest smile ever!



**KEYS JEWISH COMMUNITY  
CENTER  
SISTERHOOD  
CHANUKAH SHABBAT DINNER  
5786**

**Friday, December 19, 2025  
6:00 p.m.**

**Dairy Dinner - Latkes!**

**Services at 7:30 p.m.**

**Bring Your Own  
Chanukiah to Light!**

**Dinner sponsored  
by Linda Pollack**



**No charge  
Donations Always  
Welcome**

**Rsvp to Erica Lieberman Garrett by 12/10 to  
reserve your spot and coordinate your dish.  
305-570-9310 or hippiejap@hotmail.com**

On October 30th, the KJCC Sisterhood launched the first of a four part series of DIY food-related workshops. Twelve women and John Hawver, under the guidance of Sisterhood President Loni Ochs, created our own versions of that delicious and beautiful Italian dessert, Tiramisu.





KJCC people have been having  
some pretty cool road trips  
and Vacations this fall!



Gloria visited old friends in San Francisco  
and met the artist who created the Maya  
Angelou sculpture in front of the San  
Francisco Library.

The sculpture of Maya Angelou, in the  
form of a book, was created by the sister of  
the friend Gloria visited in California.



Against an autumn leaves  
background, Susan Gordon  
celebrates Rosh HaShanah  
with her sister and family in  
Western Mass.





Susan and her  
grandsons love  
cruising together.



Ken Atlas had  
a great time in  
the lost City of  
Atlantis (Nassau,  
Bahamas),

## HIDDEN IN THE CANDLES OF CHANUKAH: SHORT DAYS' JOURNEY INTO LIGHT

by Gloria Avner

As an avocational ethnologist, I studied world religions for years. As a practicing, enthusiastic Jew I look for answers to life's big questions in my own tribal heritage. Every early religion found powerful teachings and created ceremonies of hope, appeasement, and gratitude in the time of shortest, darkest days. How could life go on if the sun did not return to warm the earth. I have read words from contemporary rabbis linking Chanukah to winter solstice, saying that in our earliest days, sacrifices were made for eight days both before and after the shortest day of the year. Whether we are talking about bonfires or candles, it is all about light (and not just the oil or the *latkas*).

"Light" is a big concept. As an artist I am in love with light and the act of creation. Light against dark is what makes a painting come alive. My father, whose personal light went out 20 years ago on the eighth day of Chanukah, gifted me with light through his name. "Av" is the Hebrew word for father and "*ner*" means both candle and light. Every synagogue in the world has its *ner tamid*, or everlasting light.

The light of "*yiddishkeit*" nearly went out when our Temple was desecrated by the Greeks of Ahashverosh's time, 2100 years

ago. Their primary goal was to assimilate if not annihilate us. Laws were passed making Torah study illegal. Disobedience was punishable by death. When the unlikely band of students warriors, the Maccabees, recaptured the temple, cleansed and restored it, they needed oil to re-dedicate it (the meaning of the word Chanukah) but to complete the dedication they needed an additional seven days in which to replace the consecrated oil that had been defiled by the Greeks. With only one "kosher" vial left, holding enough oil for just one day, they needed a miracle that would last the exact length of time of the creation.

We all know the historical events behind the "Great Miracle that Happened There," (*Nes Gadol Hayah Sham*). But where is the deeper meaning of the miracle? This is Judaism. There is always more.

Anyone who has ever prepared a Friday night "parshah" knows how many stories lie within each Torah portion and that within each story there are as many layers as we have time and energy to discover. It does not surprise me as I look for hidden meanings in the light of Chanukah, that I am thrown back to "B'reishit", the beginning, the creation of primordial light.

*When Adam and Eve came into being in the Garden on the sixth day of creation, light stepped beyond its bounds. There were thirty-six hours of intense, limitless light says the teaching, and Adam could see from one end of the world to the other. Adam and Eve failed to do their mitzvot and were punished. The brilliant light that was visible for such a long uninterrupted time and distance was withdrawn, hidden away, saved for the righteous in the world to come. We weren't ready for it.*

How does this primordial light relate to Chanukah? Let's count the candles. Not the





My father, whose last name means Father Light in Hebrew (Av Ner), created this Chanukiah for me. His light went out on the last night of Chanukah, many years ago.

helper candles, or *shamashim* with which we light the candles, but the Chanukah candles themselves. One plus two plus three plus four plus five plus six plus seven plus eight

makes thirty-six. The twelfth century Kabbalist, Rabbi Eliezer of Worms, says that "the 36 candles on the menorah correspond to the 36 hours when Adam and Eve were bathed in The Primordial Light of creation." Today, as we kindle our lights in our own homes, he suggests we are calling forth a remembrance, if not a revelation, of that intense, now hidden light. The light was ours before the *mitzvot* were disobeyed.

The mysterious expansion of light came to Jews who were rededicating themselves and their temple to the practice of Judaism. They did not succumb to a culture that did not want them to worship their one God in their own way. What was really won was religious freedom. The myriad meanings of the number 36 could fill reams, and range from double "chai" (the Hebrew word for life) to equivalence of the names of God to the amount of years it took Jacob to transform himself on his journey to the number of righteous souls in every generation who keep alive that spark of primordial light. We talk about Chanukah as a minor holiday, and yet there is an understanding that when the messiah comes the only holidays that will still be celebrated will be Chanukah and Purim. The Sanhedrin declared it a holiday one year after the event and it has been observed with candle lighting ever since (though Hillel and Shammai did have their disagreement over whether to start

with one and go up to eight or start with eight and go down to one. Hillel's school won)

Rabbi Ozair puts it in terms of Earth school. We are here to learn, "training ourselves to reach higher levels of consciousness. The Chanukah lights serve as antennae for holiness, drawing down the energy of the 36. With every day of Chanukah that passes, the light gets stronger. We place our lit candles in the window as a beacon to all passersby to remind the world that darkness can indeed be dispelled, obscurity can be illuminated, and that it is God's Light which will prevail." Unafraid to be different, to be a minority, we put our lights and belief system on display, on the line.

In the dark of winter, we are encouraged to look within, reconnect with the light of creation by correcting behavior, observing *mitzvot*, rededicating our inner sanctuaries, and shining our light on all around us. It is not surprising that Chanukah is the favorite holiday of children and mystics. As we enjoy our traditional foods, chant our blessings, sing our songs and spin our dreidels, may we happily give and receive both presents and Presence. ◇



We brought our chanukiahs to the Bimah on our 6th night one year.



Linda Perloff

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# TRUST THIS TIME

by Lucinda Kurtz

Waves roll onto shore,  
murmur their good morning.  
Brilliant orange rays light clouds  
with bold Jack o' lantern smile.

On this new moon of Cheshvan,  
aroma of Fall's first fires  
mingle with memories  
of nourishing New Year.

Still moments of fragrant chill,  
crunch of golden leaves  
call us to inner landscape,  
sanctuary of hidden dreams.

Aroused by perfume of promise,  
we inhale the truth of ourselves  
recognize the scent of our soul  
trust this time of tender silence.

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