

THE GREATER DES MOINES

# Jewish Press

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**P**ASSOVER (PESACH, IN HEBREW) IS A VERY POPULAR HOLIDAY FOR MANY JEWISH FAMILIES. THE HOLIDAY, WHICH BEGINS ON THE 15TH DAY OF THE HEBREW MONTH OF NISAN, LASTS FOR SEVEN DAYS (EIGHT DAYS OUTSIDE OF ISRAEL) AS IS THE JEWISH PRACTICE, EACH DAY BEGINS WITH ITS PRECEDING EVENING. ON THE FIRST AND OFTEN SECOND EVENING OF PASSOVER, JEWS HOLD A SPECIAL FAMILY MEAL FILLED WITH RITUAL TO REMIND US OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HOLIDAY: THE COMMEMORATION OF THE EXODUS OF THE ISRAELITES FROM EGYPT AFTER 400 YEARS OF SLAVERY. THIS STORY ITSELF IS RECORDED IN THE BIBLICAL BOOK OF EXODUS, IN WHICH MANY OF THE PASSOVER OBSERVANCES WERE INSTITUTED. AND DURING THE RITUAL MEAL, THE STORY IS READ ALONG WITH COMMENTARY FROM A BOOK CALLED THE HAGGADAH. THE EVENING MEAL, A SUMPTUOUS DINNER INCLUDING UNLEAVENED BREAD (MATZAH), IS ACCOMPANIED BY SONGS, READINGS, SYMBOLIC RITUALS, AND DISCUSSION.

THE EATING OF MATZAH COMMEMORATES THE FACT THAT THE JEWS LEAVING EGYPT WERE IN A HURRY, AND DID NOT HAVE TIME TO LET THEIR BREAD RISE. MATZAH IS REFERRED TO AS POOR PERSONS' BREAD OR THE BREAD OF OUR AFFLICTION AS SLAVES IN EGYPT.

PASSOVER IS THE FIRST OF THE THREE MAJOR FESTIVALS WITH BOTH HISTORICAL AND AGRICULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (THE OTHER TWO ARE SHAVU'OT AND SUKKOT). AGRICULTURALLY, IT REPRESENTS THE BEGINNING OF THE HARVEST SEASON IN ISRAEL. THE HOLIDAY IS ALSO REFERRED TO AS CHAG HE-AVIV (THE SPRING FESTIVAL), CHAG HA-MATZOTH (THE FESTIVAL OF MATZAH), AND ZEMAN HERUTENU (THE TIME OF OUR FREEDOM.)

FROM A TRADITIONAL STANDPOINT, THE FIRST TWO AND LAST TWO DAYS OF THE HOLIDAY ARE THOSE ON WHICH NO WORK IS PERMITTED. WORK IS PERMITTED ON THE INTERMEDIATE DAYS.

## PASSOVER

THE EIGHT-DAY HOLIDAY COMMEMORATING THE EXODUS OF THE ISRAELITES FROM EGYPT  
FIRST SEDER IS THE EVENING OF MARCH 29



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“my federation...”

“...taught me about Israel. It was awesome.”

– **Sydney Pearl**

(2nd grade, Jewish Federation Community School)



Thank you for supporting the All-In-One Campaign



# To Help Each Other, Strengthen Jewish Identity

Adapted from a speech by Natan Sharansky

For years, I had been a foot soldier in two great wars: one, the struggle for human rights in the Soviet Union; the second, the struggle to free Soviet Jewry so that Jews could be Jewish. In those years I was often pressed by my comrades in arms on both sides to make a choice between these two wars. You have to decide, they said, are you the fighter for human rights for everybody or are you fighting for the rights of your own tribe? Do you belong to the world of universal values or to the world of nationalist? I must say, I personally never felt that I needed to choose. I felt that they are deeply connected. That in fact it is the same battle. The battle for freedom and the battle for identity was the same battle for me.

Why did the Soviet Union fall? The Iron Curtain was brought down and hundreds of millions found their freedom only because we found the source of strength in our pride and in our identity. The Berlin Wall was brought down because proud Jews, proud Czechs, proud Germans, proud Catholics, proud Pentecostals together brought down the Berlin Wall.

So we were part of that fight. But, if it was necessary to participate in the fight for universal freedom that we had to be strong as Jews, what led us ~ Jews whose identity had been stripped of us by the Soviet regime ~ to a greater realization of Jewish identity?

In 1967, the Six Day War in Israel reconnected us with our people, with our country and history, and gave us pride for being Jewish. We discovered our identity and this empowered us to fight for our freedom. But even then we, a small group of Jewish activists could never have survived in the struggle in the Soviet Union if it did not immediately become the struggle of millions of Jews all over the world.

Why did these Jews for 20 years spend their time and energy trembling for fear when they traveled to the Soviet Union to bring us books and bring us information from the free world and to press on their governments? Many times I heard from these volunteer emissaries almost the same phrase. "We are from the same cities, and it is almost by chance that we are there and you are here." They were also returning to their "shtetl" and getting from there their energy, their passion to fight for our freedom.

We, Soviet Jews, derived strength from knowing that our family of Jews were behind our efforts. In fact the demonstration of a quarter of a million Jews in Washington in December 1987 was probably the biggest family reunion in history. So the energy that was released from going back to your people was the driving force of the great struggle for freedom.

Today we live in the global, post national, post modern, post

identity world where people of the free world again are asked to make a choice between universalism and nationalism, between freedom and identity. If you believe in the universal values of freedom and human rights, why bother to stick to your national or ethnic identity we are asked?

This question hits home in an especially difficult way for Jews. Doesn't Judaism prize tikkun olam, perfection of the world at large, as its highest value? If we insist on being part of a Jewish state, does that make a mockery of our larger, universal ideals? If so, do we really want to remain part of a small tribe, when the great, global melting pot makes nationalities seem like a thing of the past?

The sad fact seems that when one young Jew believes that he or she must make a choice, that you cannot belong to both worlds, they make the choice in favor of universalism. And then assimilation erodes all our communities. And then it becomes, in fact, more and more difficult for the people of Israel in seeming isolation to defend their Jewish state.

We must remind ourselves that we succeeded in building the democratic State of Israel and bringing the ideas of human rights and equality to the darkest places populated by tyrants and dictators only because we were empowered by thousands of years of dreams and prayers of next year in Jerusalem.

Our main battle today ~ our mutual battle ~ is to strengthen, to deepen, to build and to defend our Jewish identity ~ the identity of one people, those in Zion and those in the Diaspora. And in this battle it was proved again and again that we need one another.

Today, Israel-experience programs bring approximately one third of the Jewish people to Israel. Our aim must be to connect every young Jew with Israel and to connect Israel with every Jewish community of the world. Like in the Soviet Union in the past, we need a strong Israel. But Israel today needs strong Jewish communities.

We have to be able to reach every young Jew in the Diaspora and in Israel by Jewish education. Through schools, special courses, cable TV and internet. And we must be together not only in our great partnerships within Jewish communities, but we must expand these partnerships to every campus in the world where the battle for the future of our young generation is taking place.

Strengthening Jewish identity is the best answer in the struggle for Israel, whose goal is to rescue Jews from wherever they are in harm's way. And most important today, like yesterday, returning to our Jewish roots, rebuilding our Jewish identity, can empower us to fight for tikkun olam, with more justice and more freedom for everybody.

## YOM HASHOAH Sunday, April 11 Holocaust Memorial Service

12:15 pm at the Holocaust Memorial at Jewish Glendale Cemetery

## Memorial Service and Program: "Holocaust Denial: An Affront to Truth"

7:00 pm at Temple B'nai Jeshurun



## Celebrating Israel's 62nd Birthday Israel Independence Day Program Monday, April 19

7:00 pm at Olmsted Center in the Bulldog Theater  
at Drake University

Guest speaker at the community-wide event:  
**DR. JANAN FARRAJ-FALLAH**

A member of the Druze\* community in Israel, Dr. Farraj-Fallah resides in Acco, in the Western Galilee. Dr. Farraj-Fallah was the first woman in Israel to have earned a Ph.D. in the field of Comparative Languages and Hebrew Literature. Her degree is from the University of Haifa. She holds a second Ph.D. in Education from Etvos University. Among her publications, Dr. Farraj-Fallah has authored two books about Druze women. In addition to other professional activities, she serves as the Department Head of Gender Studies at the Arab Academic College of Education in Haifa and is the initiator of The Center for Peace in that institution. Dr. Farraj-Fallah comes to us courtesy of the Israel Partnership within our partnership region, the Western Galilee.

The program is co-sponsored by Drake Hillel and is free and open to the public. For more information, contact jrcr@dmjfed.org

\* The Druze people reside in the countries contiguous to and including Israel. They are a distinct religion, founded as an offshoot of Islam about the year 1000.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Jewish Family Services,

Thank you so much for remembering all the seniors at holiday time. It was such a generous gesture and a delightful surprise.

It is so comforting to know that you are there for me and the many others who may need you at some time.

I feel so fortunate to be living in Des Moines and having such wonderful friends as you.

Fondly, Lora Lee Spiro

## THANK YOU

Dear Elaine,

Hope all is well by you. Still smiling when I think of our July visit – thank you.

Enclosed is a contribution from me and from Mel to go into Mom, Dad and Uncle's fund (Mischkiet-Spiller Holocaust Memorial Fund *edit*). I know you will put it to good use in their memories.

Happy Channukah and New Year,  
Helen Mischkiet Edell

THE GREATER DES MOINES

# Jewish Press

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Inserts to the Jewish Press may not necessarily bear endorsement of the Jewish Federation

We are always happy to consider articles and information for publication. We reserve the right to edit submissions for space considerations and clarity.

Vol. 26, No. 4, March/April 2010





JEWISH FEDERATION COMMUNITY SCHOOL

The beauty of Judaism is that it provides us with a system, a framework of morals and values that can help us in the daily choices we make in our efforts to be a good person. As in any system, the first step is to learn more about it – to study what traditional Jewish wisdom has to say about things like caring for our parents, helping the needy, raising our children or repairing the world. Once we know more, we can use the tools we have been given – our inner wisdom, judgment and free will – to enable us to act on what we know is good and right. The net result is that in studying more about what Judaism has to say, we create more opportunities for ourselves to become better parents, children, friends, leaders and volunteers.

At the beginning of our school year, Suse Cohen undertook the responsibility to teach our students about three things: tzedakah, chesed, and tikkun olam. Tzedakah literally means “righteous.” There’s a basic human responsibility to reach out to others. Giving of your time and your money is a statement that “I will do whatever I can to help.”

Chesed means “kindness.” Chesed is properly described as an act that has no “cause.” It is an act which is not recycled – for example, an anonymous gift to charity. It is proactive and asks nothing in return.

Tikkun Olam means “repair the world.” G-d needs our help. G-d needs us to be partners. The world is not perfect. People are still hungry or homeless and there is not justice for all. Tikkun Olam is finishing the work that G-d started.

Two of our students, Sarah Rose Ballard and Hannah Cline, JFCS 6th grade students, put the concept of Chesed into motion. Their project was called “Hands of Chesed” and consisted of families donating wrapped toys that would be taken to Blank Children’s Hospital – Pediatric Oncology Unit. Sarah Rose and Hannah wanted to accomplish this mission before the holidays so that children who were not able to celebrate Chanukah/Christmas at home would still receive a present. Thanks to the JFCS tzedakah money that is collected each week from our students and many parents, gifts were contributed for this cause. In December, a collection of over 120 gifts were taken to Blank Children’s Hospital.

We received a letter from David Stark, President, Blank Children’s Hospital. “Thank you – from the kids of Blank Children’s Hospital. Your gifts to Blank demonstrate your love for children and your awareness of how important support to children and their healthcare really is. We are pleased to acknowledge your generous gift of assorted gifts.”

This shows that the saying “one person can make a difference” (or two) did. Thank you Sarah Rose and Hannah for putting what you have learned at JFCS into action. In the Maimonides “Ladder of Tzedakah,” with eight being the highest level, you performed number seven – “giver and receiver are anonymous.” I am sure that we warmed many hearts in December of children who needed to know we cared.

Magen David Adom

Do you know what this means?

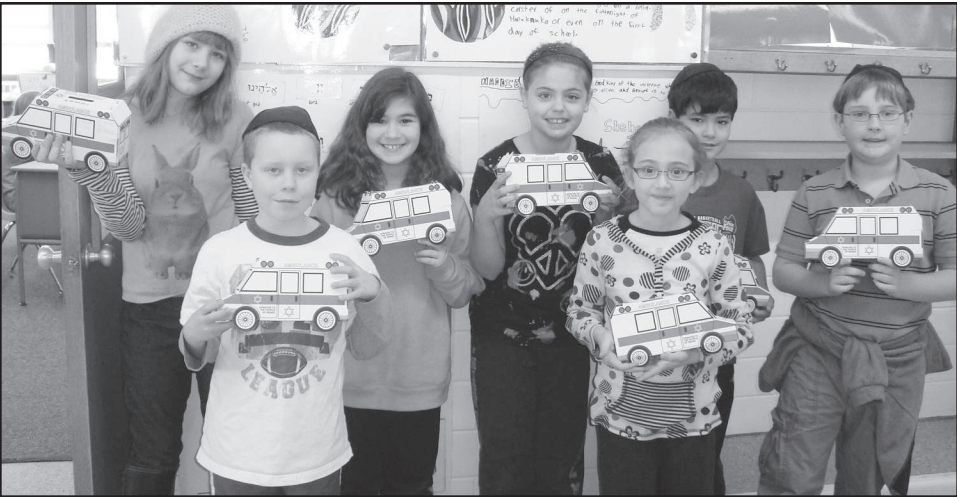
In December, as a school-wide tzedakah project, each child in grades Pre-k - 6th grade received a cardboard tzedakah box shaped like an MDA ambulance. Suse Cohen spoke to each of our classes and explained the role that Magen David Adom has in Israel, the good works that they do and the importance of helping those who need it.

Over winter break, students and their families were asked to collect loose change and place it in the tzedakah box. The tzedakah money collected was brought back in January. I am proud to say that we collected over \$500. Thank you students and parents!

The Magen David Adom is Israel’s national emergency medical, disaster, ambulance and blood bank service. The name means “Red Shield of David” but is usually translated as “Red Star of David.” Since June of 2006, Magen David Adom has been officially recognized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as the national aid society of the State of Israel. The organization dates back to 1930.

This organization was formed by nurse Karen Tenenbaum in 1930 as a volunteer association with a single branch in Tel Aviv. After opening branches in Jerusalem and Haifa, it was extended nation-wide five years later, providing medical support to the public including not only Jews, but Arabs, Muslims and Christians. On July 12, 1950, the Knesset passed a law making MDA's status as Israel’s national emergency service official. This organization has over 10,000 volunteers and runs primarily on donations for supplies, equipment and support of their approximately 1,200 staff members.

JFCS is honored to be able to send our collected tzedakah money to MDA. All students were able to keep their special tzedakah boxes.



26 Reasons Why December’s Best!

By Gabbi Dubansky, age 9

*In December I love Hanukkah.  
I see 8 candles glowing with fire.  
I hear me and my family say prayers.  
I hear the dreidel falling on gimmel making me win.  
I feel my presents being unwrapped.  
I hear the tzedakah box with money inside.  
I see clear white snow falling to the ground.  
I hear my dog barking as I go down the hill in my sled.  
I see my parents light a candle each of the eight nights.  
I see my dog covered in snow.  
I feel the cold snow on my face.  
At Hanukkah dinner out of the window the trees  
know it is time to be still.  
I taste the cold snow melting in my mouth.  
I taste the challah right out of the oven.  
I see my dog run outside, a minute later he’s back.  
I hear my brother yell as the snow hits his skin.  
I feel the snow on my coat as I take it off.  
I see my cat cuddle up on the foot of my bed.  
I hear the bell as family comes.  
I taste fresh, hot cookies.  
I feel the warm blankets when I go to sleep.  
I see the birds heading south.  
I see the ashes from the warm fire.*

**Congratulations to Gabbi Dubansky**, a 4th grader at JFCS, for having her poem published in the recent issue of YALDAH, a Jewish girl’s magazine. Gabbi is the daughter of Robert and Peggy Dubansky.

Jews And Comic Books:



Eric in his collector’s room.

Did you know...Superman’s origins are based on a re-telling of the story of Moses being sent down the river and Batman hints of the Golem? ...Many comic book superheroes were the personification of Jewish values: Integrity, justice, team work, family, and responsibility? ...That “The X-Men’s” creation was based on persecution of the Jews throughout our generation, the more recent and real Holocaust experiences of many of the writers’ and creators’ own families, and a desire to teach future generations to keep it from happening again? ...Fantastic Four’s “The Thing” is Jewish, as are Magneto, Sabra, Kitty Pride and The Atom? ...In essence, Jews created comic books because anti-Semitic attitudes

during the 1930s, 40s and 50s made it difficult to find other jobs for artists and writers?

During January, JFCS Junior and Senior High School students learned these facts and more when they listened to Eric Jaskolka talk about Jews and Comic Books. Eric is one of the world’s largest collectors of X-men memorabilia and comic books. He spoke with the students about the Jewish history of comic books. The topic covered how many of the creators, writers and artists were young Jewish men and how this gave opportunity for many Jewish values, fables, Bible stories and experiences to find their way onto the pages through characters and stories; to how anti-Semitism fueled both the creation and the opposition to comic books during the first 30 years.

Each generation of Jewish comic book creators explore the ambiguities of assimilation, the pain of discrimination, the Jewish theme of the misunderstood outcast, the rootless wanderer. Time and again the triumph of good over evil remained a common comic book theme.

See if you remember the following superheroes and what Jewish values they personify: Superman – integrity; Batman and The Spirit – justice; Captain America – patriotism; Justice League – team work; Fantastic Four – family values; Hulk – anger; Spiderman – responsibility and redemption; and X-Men – anti-Semitism and reconciliation.

In Eric’s presentation, he showed many of the comic books he spoke about and he brought several books about comic books that students were able to review. I think many of the students had no idea that Jews were the start of comic books.

In 1989, Eric started collecting comic books from all super heroes and in 1992 he added toys (i.e. action figures, statues, fast food specials, dishes, dolls, movies, cartoons, etc.). In 1996 he decided to concentrate on being the ultimate X-Men collector. He sold all but his X-Men collection and today he has over 5,200 X-Men comic books and over 5,000 X-Men collectables. Wow! That’s a collection.

– Lyanna Lindgren



## ENGMAN CAMP SHALOM

### The Engman Camp Shalom Experience

Why is Engman Camp Shalom an "experience" for your children? Because we are in the camp "kid business"! For 60 years the Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines has been committed to quality Jewish summer experiences for each child. We carefully select staff and specialists who genuinely care for the well being of our campers.

The ECS day provides a progression of enriching and exciting programs that are purposefully designed for skill and social development. Our staff to camper ratio ensures participation, recognition and success for each child. We maintain the best learning environments for all our campers.

Judaism comes alive in our camp through creative, energizing and innovative experiences that promote Jewish identity, while our Schlichim (Hebrew for emissary; Israeli community representative) helps bring Israel to Iowa. The camp community is nurturing, challenging and, most of all, FUN! Children make friendships that keep them coming back year after year to become CIT's and counselors.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines' Engman Camp Shalom knows how to make a child's summer fun and exciting, something we are proud of. Our new Camp Director Julie Seidenfeld-Olsasky and Assistant Director Jeremy Schwartz, along with Camp Administrator Lyanna Lindgren and the Engman Camp Shalom staff, have created a summer filled with exciting activities and programs that will leave your child breathless.

### Repairing the World – Tikkun Olam

- Week 1: Teva: Nature
- Week 2: Tza'ar Ba'alei Hayyim: Compassion to Animals
- Week 3: Bal Tash'hit: Preserving the Earth
- Week 4: Survivor Week
- Week 5: L'dor Va Dor: Generation to Generation
- Week 6: Hafata'a: Surprise
- Week 7: Cha'eem Bari: Healthy Living
- Week 8: Chesed: Random Acts of Kindness

The first week of camp for ECS will be Monday, June 21. Counselor training week begins Monday, June 14. Our last day of camp is Friday, August 13. Please note that even though Des Moines area schools may be running later into June this year, we are unable to change our start and end dates and still offer eight full weeks.

## ENGMAN CAMP SHALOM REUNION AND EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION SUNDAY, MARCH 7, 2010

12:00 - 2:30pm at Tifereth Israel Social Hall

Come and see your friends and meet new ones too at Engman Camp Shalom's Reunion and Early Bird Registration.

### Early Bird Discount

\$8 discount per week per camper when registrations are received no later than April 1, 2010.

### Multi-week Discount

\$6 discount per week per camper when registered for four weeks. \$8 discount per week per camper when registering for all eight weeks of camp.

## Engman Camp Shalom Welcomes New Camp Director, Julie Seidenfeld-Olsasky



I am pleased to introduce to you Engman Camp Shalom's new Camp Director, Julie Seidenfeld-Olsasky, who moved back to Des Moines in September after living in Las Vegas, Nevada for four years. Julie's parents are Richard and Susan Seidenfeld. Julie is also a graduate from Valley High School. In fact, four years ago, Julie was the office assistant for ECS under Josh Goldsmith and for the Jewish Federation Community School. Many of our families may remember her.

While in Las Vegas, Julie earned her degree in Meetings and Events Management from the School of Hotel Administration, University of Nevada Las Vegas. She also worked at the Jewish Community Center of Southern Nevada as the Family Program Director and Office Manager. After marrying long time beau, Ben Olsasky and the birth of their daughter, Olive, the couple decided to leave Las Vegas in favor of Des Moines and happy grandparents.

While working at the Jewish Community Center, Julie worked closely with JCC Camp Director Neil Popish. She was also able to earn experience with camp, early childhood, family, adult, and senior programming, as well as being a significant member of the staff for the Las Vegas Israel Independence Day Celebration at the Venetian Resort-Hotel-Casino and other JCC fundraising events.

"In the past, I have been a camper, counselor, head counselor, and administrative assistant for Engman Camp Shalom. I am proud and excited to be a part of Engman Camp Shalom this summer. I'm looking forward to combining some of the great ideas for camp from Las Vegas with the traditional Engman Camp Shalom programs I know work so well, which can only mean one thing...a GREAT summer!"

Please welcome Julie into our ECS family at our upcoming reunion on March 7.  
– Lyanna Lindgren

[adult education]

# Conversational Hebrew?

## A new 4-week session for beginners starts in April!

**Instructor: Mark Finkelstein**

Interested? Contact [jcrc@dmjfed.org](mailto:jcrc@dmjfed.org)

Cost: \$20 donation to Jewish Federation.

For other Hebrew classes, check with your synagogue or Temple!

This class is offered by the Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines.

## 5 ways to stay informed!

For current news of pertinence to the Jewish community, read the JCRC's InfoBlog, online at [jcommunitynews.blogspot.com](http://jcommunitynews.blogspot.com)

- To receive the Jewish Federation's E-Newsletter: **Dish It Up**, provide your e-mail address to: [sherry@dmjfed.org](mailto:sherry@dmjfed.org)
- The JCRC InfoBlog is now on Twitter at [twitter.com/jewishnewsblog](https://twitter.com/jewishnewsblog)
- Also on Twitter: **Update J** An update of Federation programming via cell phone, including changes of date, time, location, or content.
- The Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines website: [jewishdesmoines.org](http://jewishdesmoines.org)

For further information, contact [jcrc@dmjfed.org](mailto:jcrc@dmjfed.org)

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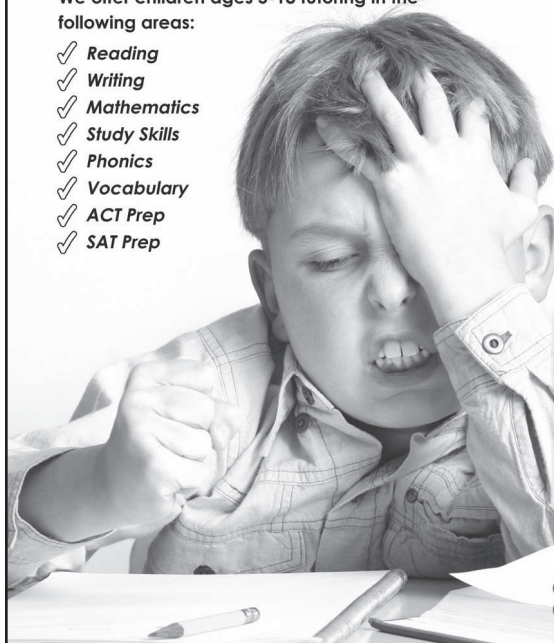
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# senior news

## Upcoming Luncheons:

**Thursday, March 11**, 12:00 Noon at Beth El Jacob Synagogue. We will have Sherry Knox, from Polk County Crisis and Advocacy Services presenting on the topic of "Brain Exercise." We all know how to exercise our body but what can we do to exercise our brain? Besides our speaker we will be listening to a wonderful selection of songs by "The Fat Cat" Jim Wangemann. Come and join us for a delightful time of music and how to keep a healthy brain.

**Thursday, April 15th**, 12:00 Noon at Tifereth Israel Synagogue. We are once again excited and honored to have a concert preformed by Cantor Deborah Bletstein and Laura Berkson. Come join us for lunch. Listen and sing along to the wonderful music!



## The Ideal Gift To Give Is...

## Yourself

**Jan Houk**, with her compassionate heart and desire to meet the needs of the Seniors, has volunteered for 4 years for OASIS. She said that not being able to care for her own Mom, who lived in another state, gave her the idea to assist others who have no family. Ever since she began volunteering she has felt she receives much more than what she gives to others. Her long time senior she was matched with, Janet Morse, feels her volunteer Jan "would do anything for her- nothing seems to be too much." She states "Jan makes me feel good about myself; very uplifting, fun, dependable and a GOOD FRIEND." Her friend takes her out to doctor appointments, shopping, out to eat, to ballet performances and introduced her to many good authors who entertain her at night when feeling alone.

That's what our OASIS volunteers are all about: always reaching out, giving of themselves, making the seniors feel loved and that someone does care. Thanks, Jan, for all your dedication and kindness and just for being YOU.

Pat Nawrocki OASIS Project Services Manager



## one by one by one

How does Hadassah connect us to Israel and to each other?



One Young Judaea spends winter break teaching homeless children in a Los Angeles shelter.



One Young Judaea camper returns home and inspires her family to light Shabbat candles.



One Young Judaea connects with his Jewish homeland as he walks in King David's footsteps.

Celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2009, Young Judaea continues to ensure a vibrant Jewish future.

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## IOWA JEWISH SENIOR LIFE CENTER Spring Newsletter

*"There is scarcely anything in the world that some man cannot make a little worse, and sell a little more cheaply. The person who buys on price alone is this man's lawful prey."*

This November, a donor recognition "thank you" event was held in the Atrium of The Life Center. That event signaled the culmination of the 2009 phase of Project Transformation, a project designed to address the very real need to remodel the resident rooms and common areas of our almost, 23-year-old facility. It was truly a "hamische" event. Conviviality, great food and drink and warm feelings all around.

While the total cost of Project Transformation will probably approach \$350,000. This year's proceeds of close to \$85,000 gave us the opportunity to make a strong beginning to getting things "rolling."

What I wanted to convey to my kind readers, by using the quotation found at the beginning of this opinion piece, is that The Life Center is a rare and special place. An "outlier" in a marketplace where so many providers of long term care services are more concerned with their bottom-lines rather than with the health and welfare of those seniors and their families who sadly put their oft misplaced trust in other nursing care facilities.

The Life Center remains as the manifestation of the Community's commitment to the observance of the Fifth Commandment. In its almost 80-year history, first as The Iowa Jewish Home and then as The Iowa Jewish Senior Life Center, the Resident has always been our raison d'être. Our commitment to excellence in Resident care is second to none, and those who have had need of our services know that there is scarcely anything that we can't or won't do to enrich the lives of those in our care.

Yes, the marketplace is filled with other long term care providers who ostensibly meet the "minimum standards" of care as promulgated by the state and federal regulatory entities. But, when members of our Community find themselves in need of rehabilitation, dementia care or long term care, they know that there is no substitute for the philosophical and professional commitments which are at the very core, the "soul," of The Life Center.

As we move through the coming realignments in our economy, in general, and the health care industry, in particular, The Iowa Jewish Senior Life Center will enduringly hew to its Mission of Service. Your support of that Mission has always and will always be an integral part of meeting the needs of our elders and their families. Please consider joining us with your strong support of the continuing Project Transformation and its promise of a strong and vibrant future for The Life Center.

- Stephen Blend

## PROJECT ELIJAH FOUNDATION: Here's to an exciting New Year!



Julie Kaufman

2010 not only brings in a new year but also a new decade. It is a time in which most of us make New Year's resolutions and think about how we can make ourselves better, whether that be losing weight or spending more time with family, or trying to give back to our communities. Here at Project Elijah Foundation we too are looking to see how we can improve from last year. We had an amazing year, last year, packing over 350,000 meals -- an increase of over 300% in just one year. At the same time, however, when we read the latest poverty statistics we realize how far we have yet to go.

For these reasons, Project Elijah Foundation, having seen the extent of poverty here in the United States, has now decided to put Elijah's Kosher Manna into the general population, not just Jewish food banks and food pantries. We will of course still continue to provide food to these Jewish institutions but the needs here in the United States are simply too immense to ignore. Over 37 million people in the United States lived in poverty in 2007, and that is an increase of almost 6 million since 2000. Ten percent of all Iowans live in poverty. Add this to the unemployment rate and you start to see the extent of this problem. Perhaps the saddest statistic is that children in the U.S. have the highest poverty rate of all age groups. Children cannot learn, grow properly, or become the next leaders of our society if they can't meet the basic needs of everyday life. This is why we feel so strongly about keeping the majority of Elijah's Kosher Manna here in the United States. Of course the recent events in Haiti are tragic. We too will do our part to help the Haitian people but our focus will remain here in the United States.

Knowing the vast amount of work ahead of us, I am excited to tell you that we are working on creating a satellite facility in Washington D.C. this year, and will probably be able to create a satellite facility in L.A. within 18 to 24 months. This will really allow Project Elijah Foundation to help the most amount of people in the most cost effective manner. As we are indeed growing, I am also pleased to announce the addition of Jeri Mace as a grant writer for the foundation. We feel confident that her skills will allow us to find the financial support needed to expand in these new areas. We are looking forward to a great partnership.



As always, if you are interested in volunteering or in helping to organize a packing here in Des Moines or somewhere else, please contact me at the foundation. Blessings to all of you, and I hope we all have a great year.

Shalom,  
Julie

## Best Wishes for a Happy Passover!

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## Cliff Bergman



The genial president of the Ames Jewish Congregation, Cliff Bergman, is the congregation's representative to the Federation Board.

**Jewish Press:** Cliff, having worked with you a bit, I'm greatly pleased to have readers of the Jewish Press get to know you a little better. Let me begin by asking you where you grew up.

**Cliff Bergman:** Thank you. I grew up on Long Island, mostly in New Hyde Park, on the North Shore.

**JP:** Do you miss the East Coast?

**CB:** Yes. But I've been gone a long time by now.

**JP:** Where did you go to college?

**CB:** I was an undergraduate at Brown University in Rhode Island. I graduated from Brown in 1975 with a degree in Mathematics. Then I went to graduate school at the University of California at Berkeley.

**JP:** So you went from coast to coast --- then you ran out of coasts!

**CB:** I graduated from Berkeley in 1981 with a Ph.D. I then spent a year at the University of Hawaii.

**JP:** So you found a creative way to deal with that coastal thing....

**CB:** Yes, although I suppose if I continued going west I might have eventually landed back in New York. (Chuckling) But Hawaii? That was a nice year. [Said with particular context to the weather this Winter.] Then I came to Ames to take a position in Mathematics at ISU. I'm now a full professor.

**JP:** What had you taught as a grad assistant at Berkeley?

**CB:** I had taught calculus and some lower level classes like trigonometry.

**JP:** What propelled you into the field of mathematics?

**CB:** Well, mostly it was about the only thing I was ever any good at. (Smiling) (Interviewer laughs.) I'm drawn to very high level abstraction.

**JP:** Do you do research?

**CB:** Yes, I do. My initial area of research was in an area called Universal Algebra, which is on the border line between algebra and logic -- looking at the logic of algebraic systems. And then about thirteen years ago, some colleagues of mine were setting up a graduate program in Computer Security. They decided they wanted a course in Cryptography of messages and because I was perhaps the only mathematician they knew (chuckling), they asked me if I wanted to

develop a course in this subject. So at present I work in both areas.

**JP:** What do you teach?

**CB:** I teach a lot of the algebra courses, both on the undergraduate level primarily for math majors and our graduate courses in algebra. I also teach a graduate course in cryptography -- and that does have grad students from all over the university, mostly computer engineers, mathematicians, and computer scientists. We videotape the course, and that's made available to people off campus through our Distance Education program. And those external students are practicing engineers.

**JP:** I assume there is a special jargon for the field, but is there a special sense of humor that math majors bring to the classroom?

**CB:** (Chuckling) I don't know. Mostly it's up to me to crack the jokes. They just sit there and take notes.

**JP:** Tell us a bit about your family, Cliff.

**CB:** My wife, Marilyn Vaughan, is an editor, with a journalism degree. She worked for the "Boone News-Republican" for several years and then the "Des Moines Business Record." Then she came back up to ISU and served as the Public Relations Director for the Brunier Museum for a while and has also worked for ISU Extension Communications. She is at present retired.

We have two kids. Kuper just turned 18. He is in the throes of getting his college applications finished. And Asher is 14. He is in the Ames Congregation Religious School and will be confirmed

this year.

**JP:** Turning to another subject, what do you enjoy doing in your spare time outside of your academic work?

**CB:** I do a lot of gardening at home, and I like to cook. Recently I've taken up golf since I felt I didn't have enough aggravation in my life.

**JP:** What type of cuisine do you favor?

**CB:** Mostly Italian, northern Italian.

**JP:** Have you done a lot of traveling?

**CB:** Not a lot of traveling. But Marilyn and I, before we had kids, did a long tour of Europe, and then I've made numerous professional trips back to Europe. My son, Kuper, has already done a lot of traveling. He's been quite fascinated with Japan. He was part of an exchange program with Ames' Sister City. And his high school did a trip to Europe. He's talking about joining the Ames High effort in Uganda this summer.

**JP:** If there is any one place where you haven't been, where would it be?

**CB:** Well, Israel is high on our list. In fact, we may go this summer. There are still some places in Europe where I haven't been. I haven't been to the Scandinavian countries.

**JP:** You are president of the Ames Jewish Congregation. How long have you served in this capacity?

**CB:** This is my second one-year term.

**JP:** Well let me thank you for being the congregation's representative to the Federation Board. It is very much appreciated. Let me ask you about the congregation. *continued on page 17*

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## Our Jewish Calendar by David Friedgood



The rhythms of our lives are controlled by many influences. As each day follows night, and springtime yields to summer and finally winter's cold, our spirit and physical being changes in a variety of ways. Work and holiday time, the length of days, the smells and tastes of the seasons, all serve to affect how we think and function. As human beings we start out as infants, new and pure. Our lives are then molded by these rhythms as we ultimately yield to the inexorable passage of time. Many of

our childhood memories, and patterns of behavior, relate to life's rhythms. From the dawn of mankind our ancestors tried to understand, measure, categorize, and ultimately control these influences. The calendar, which measures the passage of time, and accurately predicts the seasons, is a result of their efforts. Calendars group days as a means of planning civil, agricultural, and religious events. The calendar in general use worldwide was established under the auspices of Pope Gregory XIII about 1582. It is a solar calendar that accurately keeps track of the seasons. In it, days begin at midnight and each year contains 365 days. Because the years are actually a bit longer, an extra day is added every 4 years, resulting in a leap year. This calendar has undergone several revisions and still has defects, which will require future revision. The Jewish calendar tracks the holy times of our religious year and our life-cycle events. Over the millennia it has been revised and adjusted by generations of Rabbis.

Ancient calendars in the Middle East were luni-solar. That is the months correspond to phases of the moon and the years are brought into line with the course of the sun – thus corresponding with the seasons of the year. Our current Jewish calendar follows this pattern and is based on three independent astrological phenomena: the rotation of the earth about its axis – a day; the revolution of the moon about the earth – a month; and the revolution of the earth about the sun – a year. At the start of our Bible God created light, separating light from darkness. “And there was evening and there was morning, a first day.” (Genesis 1:5) Consequently, days of our Jewish calendar begin at sunset, just as did God's first day. Holidays too, begin at sunset. The day prior to the onset of a Jewish holiday is often referred to as the erev (night) of the holiday – i.e. erev Passover. We also mark the passing of life-cycle events by our calendar. For example - the first day of the Hebrew month of Shvat this year was January 16. If a Jewish woman died at 10 PM Saturday, January 16, 2010, her Yahrzeit (the day commemorating her death) would forever be the 2nd day of Shvat. Our calendar has no proper name for the days of the week aside from Shabbat (Sabbath). Days are referred to by number in relation to Shabbat – the 7th day. Sunday is Yom Rishon (1st day), Tuesday Yom Shilisi (3rd day).

Our Jewish calendar usually has 12 months. In Biblical times the months were typically referred to by number. The present Hebrew names for months are of Babylonian origin. As the moon revolves around the earth the light of the sun is at times fully reflected off the surface of the moon, at other times partially reflected, and sometimes blocked completely. This rotating pattern accounts for the sliver of light called a new moon, the full moon, quarter moon, etc. Ancient astronomers kept careful records of the moon's movement and noted that the new moon sometimes appeared 29 days and sometimes 30 days after the last new moon. Thus each month of our Jewish calendar is 29 or 30 days and is marked by a new moon. In ancient times each month began when two reliable witnesses reported to the Sanhedrin (the governing religious council) in Jerusalem the new moon sighting. The Sanhedrin would declare that day Rosh Hodesh (a new month). Errors inevitably occurred and the Sanhedrin, meeting in secret, would periodically fix the calendar.

According to Biblical law the first month of the year is Nissan, which contains Passover on its 15th day, always a full moon. Nissan also has to occur in the spring season. “This month shall mark for you the beginning of the months.” (Exodus 12:2) “Observe the month of Aviv (spring) and offer a Passover sacrifice to the LORD your God...” (Deuteronomy 16:1) Thus our lunar calendar is also tied to the seasons - the solar cycle. The experience of the Exodus from Egypt (relived on the Passover holiday) is so important to Jewish religious life that the month containing Passover is designated the first month of the year; and Passover, which marks Jewish spiritual rebirth, has to occur in the spring. Also, the lunar calendar contains 354 days and is typically 11 days shorter than the 365 day solar calendar. If corrections are not made, Passover would occur earlier each year and eventually come in the winter. (The Islamic calendar is purely a lunar one without seasonal correction. The holy month of Ramadan is movable, occurring anytime during a solar year.) Herein lies a dilemma: how to fix our lunar calendar to match the solar cycle of seasons. By the 4th century the Nassi (president) of the Sanhedrin, Rabbi Hillel II, codified the calendar. The solution to our dilemma was to add an extra month – Adar bet (Adar the 2nd) seven times in a 19 year cycle. The extra Adar is added before the month of Nissan. A year with 13 months is called a shanah meuberet (pregnant year). Using this system Passover is always in the spring, Hanukah in the winter, etc. Periodically other minor changes are made to keep Yom Kippur from falling next to Shabbat, and for other purposes.

The years of our Jewish calendar are numbered from the beginning of creation, according to traditional Biblical calculation. The current year is 5770 from the day of creation. Even though the first month of our calendar is Nissan, the Talmud holds that the month of creation is Tishrei. Rosh Hashana, our Jewish New Year, is the first day of the 7th month of the year – Tishrei. Traditionally Rosh Hashana is a two day holiday in Israel and the diaspora, because of lingering uncertainty as to when the new moon is actually sighted - 29 or 30 days. Most Reform congregations celebrate the holiday for one day. Other major festivals have a day added outside of Israel because historically it was difficult to notify diaspora Jews on time of the official start for the festival. Yom Kippur is an exception because two days of fasting would be unduly strenuous. *continued on page 17*

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- **You gave Tzedakah to 163 individuals and families totaling \$42,164 dollars in 2008 to 2009.** An additional \$50,000 went to relieve victims of the Iowa floods, including Jewish victims and \$10,000 has gone to feed thousands through Project Elijah.
- **117 children attended Camp Shalom. Ten children received scholarships.**
- **No money from Federation All-in-One Campaign dollars goes to pay for maintenance, utilities or operations at The Caspe Terrace.** These costs are paid by an 100% endowment on The Caspe Terrace.
- **Based on 2009 salaries and benefits, your staff has seen reductions of 13% since 2005,** but without Federation staff, programs get reduced or eliminated.
- **Through the All-in-One Campaign \$41,500 has been given to P2K in our sister city in Israel.**
- **Our Jewish Community Relations Commission works continually with law enforcement to ensure the security of our community and its institutions.** It builds bridges with leaders from other religions and educates groups about Judaism. The Commission works with media and elected officials on issues of anti-Semitism and Holocaust education, and advocates for Israel.



Dr. Wendi Harris and Valerie Cohen



Mike Siegel



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## New Millennium? Time for Some New Jewish Holidays

By David Moskowitz



*I love the Jewish holidays. I really do! From the absence of leavened products on Passover (as we remember our tortuous exodus from Egypt and ask tough and incomprehensible questions about why we eat in a reclining position), to the recitation of [insert name of genocidal lunatic]'s homicidal efforts to annihilate our people, our holidays are a kosher delight!*

OK, that's not entirely true. Our holidays are generally... how do I put this politely ... a bummer. I guess it's in our nature - we can't help ourselves. Our traditions and DNA require us to convert holiday celebrations into endless recreations of the most depressing and sorrowful of events. Mostly our efforts to stave off genocide and disaster. Delightful! They also seem to carry a common thread of victimization.

But it's the 21st Century. Maybe it's time for us to develop some new millennium holidays that will appeal to the kids, the Twitter generation ... Jewish holidays with a little Generation Y swagger. We need holidays that help us feel good about our amazing heritage and tradition. Here are a few suggestions for new Jewish holidays that we can add to the calendar. Holidays that kick some butt (and none of which involve commemoration of events that occurred, or people that lived, three thousand years ago):

### 1. TU B'SPIELBERG

**Date of Holiday:** This holiday is celebrated every year on 14 Adar, the date that coincides with the Academy Awards on television.

**Theme of Holiday:** This holiday pays homage to famous Jewish movie directors and cinematic pioneers. The list ranges from old school directors like Stephen Spielberg (Jaws, ET, Schindler's List, Saving Private Ryan), Billy Wilder (Some Like it Hot, The Apartment, Double Indemnity), Stanley Kubrick (2001, Spartacus, Dr Strangelove), and Woody Allen (Bananas, Annie Hall, Vicky Christina Barcelona), to "new wave" directors like the Coen Brothers (Fargo, The Big Lebowski, No Country For Old Men) and even Eli Roth (Hostel 1 and Hostel 2).

**Holiday Traditions (that only slightly ruin things):** On Tu B'Spielberg, Jews traditionally gather in the lobbies of local movie theaters to honor the role of Jewish cinematic pioneers. At the appointed time, theater managers symbolically agree to "free admission" for all Jews and throw open the doors. The Jews then make a beeline for the best seats at the traditional matinee performance of Yentl. As the sun sets on Tu B'Spielberg, Jews stand up in the theater, raise their cups of Diet Coke, and recite the lengthy "I would like to thank the Academy and my agent and my manager ..." prayer ~ before the orchestra music rises in volume and forces the Jews to stop talking and grumpily return to their seats.

**Holiday Eating Traditions and Restrictions:** Standard theater fare like stale buttered popcorn is not eaten on this holiday; instead Jews feast on half-priced boxes of fossilized Jujubes and Sour Patch Kids. These candy products have special meaning to Jews as they encourage business for local Jewish dentists (we can't recall the special meaning of the stale popcorn but we'll think of something).

### 2. SIMCHAT NOBEL

**Date of Holiday:** This holiday is celebrated every year on the Hebrew calendar date closest to December 10, the date that coincides with the Nobel Prize Ceremony in Oslo, Norway.

**Theme of Holiday:** Did you know that Jews make up only 0.25% of the world's population and less than 2% of the population of the United States? Yet since its inception in 1901, Jew have been awarded a staggering 22% of all the individual Nobel Prizes (and 36% of all Nobel Prizes awarded to US recipients). In the research fields of Chemistry, Economics, Physics, and Physiology/Medicine alone, the corresponding world and US percentages are an even more staggering 27% and 39%. Among women Nobel laureates in the four research fields, the percentage of Jewish honorees is 38% and 50%. Are you kidding me? Jews are, by far, the recipients of these Nobel honors in numbers that are incredibly disproportionate to our tiny population. The purpose of Simchat Nobel is to remind the world that we are responsible for a huge proportion of scientific advancements, so that the world will stop and think twice before persecuting us (of course, none of us should forget that sometimes people don't like being reminded of our accomplishments, and sometimes burn down our villages in a fit of jealousy).

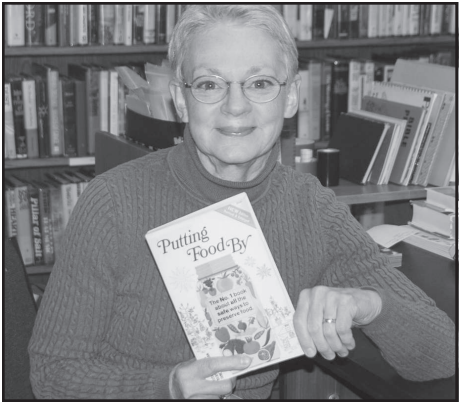
**Holiday Traditions (that only slightly ruin things):** On Simchat Nobel, Jews adorn their homes with a big red number representing the average ACT score of the household. Doctors, accountants, dentists, and research physicists all suspend work at the precise moment that the Nobel Ceremony occurs, and provide free services for that single minute. Let's face it; the Jews didn't win all those Nobel Prizes by disregarding the value of proper billing procedures or agreeing to work for free.

**Holiday Eating Traditions and Restrictions:** The Simchat Nobel holiday features simply awful Swedish treats like gravlax (salted lox), tiny smelly meatballs, vodka, and weird cheesecake. These are followed by a presentation at the nearest Ikea of the ceremonial Simchat Nobel platter (served on a large-scale reproduction of the actual Nobel Prize medallion). None of the items are edible, in the tradition of other Jewish holiday platters. The Simchat Nobel platter contains six items, each representing one of the Nobel prize categories and each designed to counteract the Swedish food that was consumed earlier and currently carving a hole in your intestines: a chocolate bundt cake representing a black hole (Physics), a cruet of Good Seasons Italian salad dressing (Chemistry), a glass cup containing pure Kaopectate (Peace), chopped liver formed into the shape of a colonoscope (Physiology/Medicine), two cookies baked to resemble Joseph Heller and Philip Roth, a pair of Jewish authors who were (a) neglected by the Nobel committee and (b) appear to be next in line for Nobel consideration (these faces are periodically updated) (Literature), and slices of kosher salami arranged to represent the various versions of Turbo Tax (Economics).

*continued on page 17*



In the Kitchen with Mary Paul Even by Karen Engman



Mary Paul Van Lyzin was born in Duluth in 1947 and like a true blue Minnesotan she loves cold weather. She grew up skiing and skating and lamented that it was too icy this winter in Des Moines to do enough of either. Named after her grandfathers, both of whom were named Paul, she has always gone by “Mary Paul”.

She attended Stanbrook High School and then the University of Minnesota/ Duluth where she majored in biology. Her master’s degree in ecology came from the University of Minnesota/St Paul, where she eventually took a job doing research on animal waste management in the Agriculture Department. It was during this time that she met Harvey Even while skiing during a vacation break. They had more in common than just their red hair; they discovered they both grew up in Duluth. Harvey went to dental school and in 1972 they married and moved to Des Moines where he practiced

orthodontics with Michael Rovner. They have two daughters; Inessa (32) who lives in New York City and Anya (30) who resides in Philadelphia with her husband Peter Lee. Sadly, Harvey died suddenly from a heart attack ten years ago. Mary Paul has filled her life with many diverse and fun activities. Ruth Rissman recruited her to help in the library at Tifereth Israel Synagogue over 20 years ago, and then five years ago Mary Paul trained Rita Weinberg to assist her. This volunteer position was a natural for Mary Paul since she worked at the Duluth Public Library when she was in high school and she loves to read. For years, Mary Paul volunteered on the Pioneer Farm at the Living History farms. She owns an old spinning wheel that belonged to her great grandmother. Calling herself a practical weaver, she weaves rugs and dish towels and belongs to The Weavers Guild of Des Moines. She also likes to knit mittens and socks. Gardening is her favorite pastime. Her backyard has been certified as a natural wildlife habitat by the National Wildlife Federation. Every spring it yields a profusion of

beautiful flowers but it’s a challenge to maintain since her yard is very shaded. Mary Paul is a member of the herb study group that helps maintain the exterior herb gardens at the Des Moines Botanical Center. She also helped re-establish the Center’s lending library last March. Mary Paul taught cooking classes at the Wire Whisk in the East Village while it was still in business. She currently works at Cownie Furs repairing coats. She loves this work because of the variety of coats she sees. She recently repaired a 1960’s checkerboard patterned rabbit coat as well as numerous furs purchased on E-Bay. Cooking is a hobby and she owns 227 cookbooks even though Mary Paul claims to rarely follow a recipe exactly.

She loves to make soups but remarked that they never turn out the same way twice since she adds ingredients that are “on hand.” She enjoys ethnic cooking, since her roots are Polish, Harvey’s family was from Russia, and her son in law Peter is Korean. She and Peter cook together and she now enjoys making Kim Chi, the Korean version of sauerkraut that uses Napa cabbage. When I interviewed Mary Paul, she was planning a dinner for SSENIPPAH (that’s happiness spelled backwards), a group of widows who meet monthly. She was going to prepare a Polish national dish called Bigos, which is a hunter’s stew containing several types of meat, but she was substituting turkey for the ham.

continued on page 17

Sauerkraut

A Recipe from Mary Paul Even

Parve

Quarter each cabbage, cut out the core; shred fine and weigh. Using 3 Tbsp of kosher salt\* for every 5 lbs of cabbage, pack a container (gallon glass jars work well) with alternate layers of cabbage and salt, tamping down every two layers of cabbage to get rid of trapped air and to start the juice flow. Top with a layer of salt. Cover with a clean plate and keep it submerged with a jar of water placed on top. Cover the whole gallon jar with a cloth. Keep in the jar until it stops bubbling (fermenting). The sauerkraut will be a clear, pale gold in color and pleasantly tart in flavor. This will take from 1-2 weeks. Drain and rinse with cold water. At this point it is ready to eat, can or freeze. Mary Paul keeps her fermenting cabbage in the downstairs laundry room since the smell can be pungent.

Great with meat and potatoes or add it to soup

\*add dill weed and /or dill seeds, currants, and cherry leaves along with the salt to produce the Russian variety

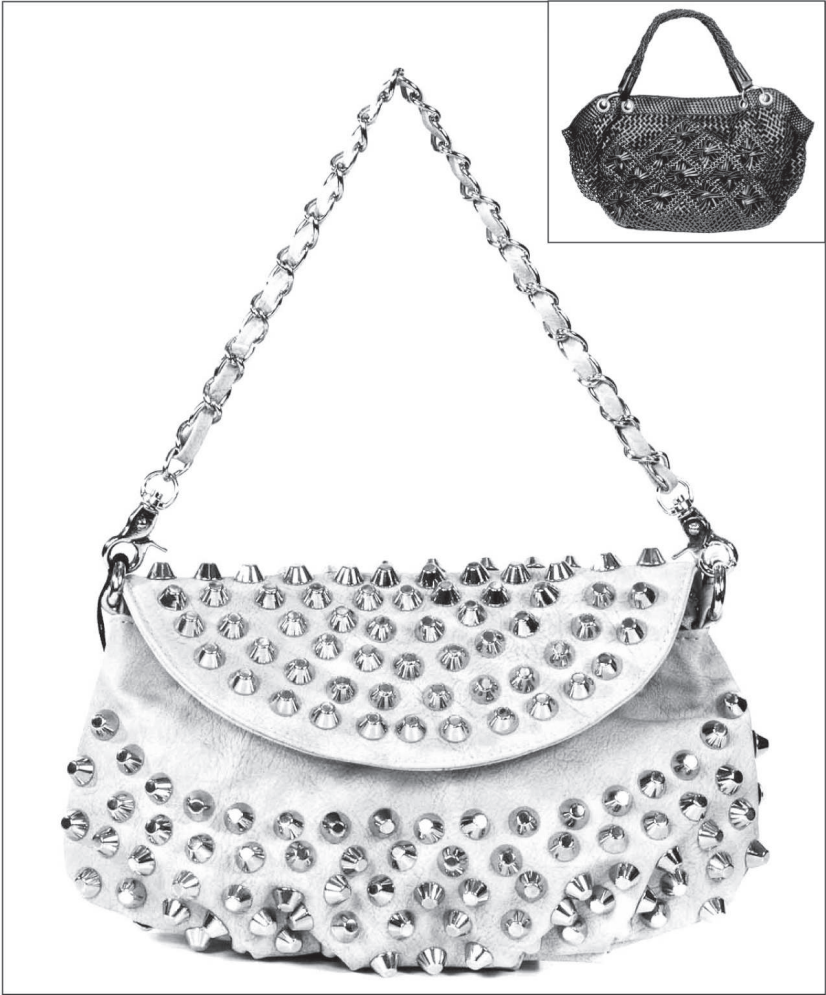
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BETH EL JACOB SYNAGOGUE

March 16 – **Rosh Chodesh Nissan** – 12:00 Noon – 2 PM Join Beth El Jacob for the Grand Opening of My Favorite Café at BEJ, a weekly opportunity to enjoy a kosher nosh and a schmooze. On the menu: Choice of soups and a homemade roll, with your choice of a spinach, kasha or potato knish or a scoop of egg, tuna or salmon salad on a bed of lettuce. Cost per person is \$6.

March 23 – **My Favorite Café** at BEJ’s first-ever Pre-Pesach Pizzza-palooza! On the menu: pizza, bowl of soup, and a house salad. (Cost per person is \$6.) Call in advance (by Monday, 274-1551) and order a pie to make your Pesach prep easier! (\$12 a pie.) Can’t make it? We offer delivery service for a nominal fee...

March 7-21 – **Selling of Leaven** (Mechiras Chametz) Contact the shul office (274-1551) to request a contract for the ritual sale of leaven for Pesach. BEJ offers this service to the Jewish community, free of charge.

March 29 – **The Burning of the Leaven** (Biur Chametz) Bring your bagels, baguettes, and buns to burn! On the morning before Passover, chametz may be eaten until the fourth hour of the day. After that, only foods that are kosher for Passover are eaten. We’ll burn any leavened foods in our possession after morning services.

March 29 – **Share the beauty and excitement of the Pesach Seder** with your BEJ family. Join us for the traditional Yom Tov meal and listen and learn from the Hagaddah. (following Evening Services, \$25 per person, pre-paid reservations required.)

March 30 – **My Favorite Café** at BEJ invites you to join us for a delicious Yom Tov lunch following Morning Services. (\$18 per person, pre-paid reservations are required.)

March 30 – **Join us for a sumptuous family-style Seder meal with all the trimmings!** Ask the Mah-Nishtanah and enjoy all of your favorite Pesach fare! (following Evening Services, \$25 per person, pre-paid reservations are required.

March 31 – **Enjoy a mouth-watering Pesach luncheon with your friends at BEJ.** Traditional favorites (just like Bubby used to make!) take center stage as we celebrate our exodus from Egypt. (following Morning Services. \$18 per person, pre-paid reservations are required.)

April 2 – **Friday Night Congregational Dinner** - Our monthly congregational dinners offer fabulous food, fellowship, and learning. (following Friday night services. \$12 per person, reservations required.)

April 14 – **My Favorite Café** 12 -2 PM Join us for a kosher nosh and a schmoozel! Bring your friends, your cards, or your Mah-Jongg set, we’ll provide the entertainment! On the menu: Choice of soups and a homemade roll, with choice of a spinach, kasha, potato knish or a scoop of egg, tuna or salmon salad on bed of lettuce. \$6 per person.

May 2 – **Lag b’ Omer BBQ** – 5:00PM – Come celebrate BBQ-style with BEJ! Live music, good eats, and a little volleyball will round out the festivities. (\$6 per person \$18 maximum per family)

**Beth El Jacob: Everything is here...except you!**

JUDAIC RESOURCE CENTER

**Pesach Schedule for Judaic Resource Center of Iowa**

- March 29th – Monday Night  
Mincha/Maariv 7:30 pm; 1st Seder 8:30 pm
- March 30th - Tuesday  
Shacharis 10:00 am; Mincha and Maariv 7:30 pm; 2nd Seder 8:30 pm
- March 31st - Wednesday  
Shacharis 10:00 am; Mincha and Maariv 7:30 pm
- April 2nd – Friday Night  
Mincha and Maariv 7:30 pm
- April 3rd - Shabbos  
Shacharis 10:00 am
- April 4th - Sunday  
Mincha and Maariv 7:30 pm
- April 5th - Monday  
Shacharis 10:00 am; Mincha and Maariv 7:30 pm
- April 6th – Tuesday  
Shacharis 10:00 am; Yizkor 11:30 am; Mincha 7:30 pm  
Followed by the feast of Moshiaich.

MACCABEE DELI

- 1150 Polk Blvd 515-277-1718
- SPECIAL PESACH HOURS**
- Sunday March 28th 11:00 am - 4:00 pm
- Monday March 29th 10:00 am – 3:00 pm
- Thursday April 1st 11:00 am – 2:00 pm
- Friday April 2nd 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
- Sunday April 4th 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

TEMPLE B’NAI JESHURUN

**The Temple Bnai Jeshurun will have their Temple Seder on the second seder night of Passover, Tuesday, March 30, at 6:00 p.m.** Seder reservations will be taken until March 15th or until spaces are filled. Please make your reservations early! Call Temple office at 274-4679 or email officemanager@templebnaijeshurun.com

**Adult Education Programs for Shabbat Mornings – Spring 2010**

- Saturday, Feb 6 11:00-12:00 am - **Jewish Texts and Jewish Law**
- Saturday, Feb 13 11:00-12:00 am - **The meaning of Shabbat.** Shabbat practices.
- Saturday, Feb 20 11:00-12:00 am - **The Afterlife.**
- Saturday, Apr 17 11:00-12:00 am - **Judenhass** – A History of Hatred of Jews
- Saturday, Apr 24 11:00 am -12:00 am - **History 16th Century to Modernity**
- Saturday, May 15 11:00 am -12:00 am - **History of Jewish-Christian Relations**

**INTRO TO JUDAISM - CONVERSION CLASS**  
Saturdays will be from 11 am to 12 am; Thursdays will be from 7 pm to 8:30 pm

- Course Materials:** Accessible Judaism: A Concise Guide by Rabbi Jacques Cukierkorn (Provided by Rabbi Kaufman)
- Living a Jewish Life by Anita Diamant and Howard Cooper
- Saturday, Feb 6 11:00-12:00 am
- Jewish Texts and Jewish Law**, read pages 59-68 in AJ.
- Saturday Feb 13 11:00-12:00 am
- The meaning of Shabbat. Shabbat practices**, read pages 106-111 and 168-172 in AJ
- Saturday, Feb 20 11:00-12:00 am
- The Afterlife.** Read pages 79-84 and 99-103 in AJ.
- Feb 27 and 28 at TI - Purim Spiel
- Thursday, Mar 4 7:00-8:30 pm
- The Jewish Calendar**, read pages 104-105, 111-122, and 134-137.
- Thursday, Mar 11 7:00-8:30 pm
- Modern Judaism**, read pages 43-52 and 85-86 in AJ
- Thursday, Mar 18 7:00-8:30 pm
- Second Seder at TBJ**
- Tuesday, Mar 30 7:00-8:30 pm
- Outline of Jewish History to 200 CE**, read pages 19-28 and 53-56 in AJ.
- Thursday, Apr 8 7:00-8:30 pm
- Jewish History 200 CE to 1947**, read pages 29-34 in AJ.
- Saturday, Apr 17 11:00-12:00 am
- Judenhass – A History of Hatred of Jews**
- Saturday, Apr 24 11:00 am -12:00 am
- History 16th Century to Modernity**
- Thursday, Apr 29 7:00-8:30 pm
- Israel.** Read pages 35-38 in AJ
- Thursday, May 6 7:00-8:30 pm
- The Jewish Life Cycle.** Read pages 89-99 in AJ.
- Saturday, May 15 11:00 am -12:00 am
- History of Jewish-Christian Relations.** Read pages 151-159.
- Thursday, May 20 7:00-8:30 pm
- Living a Jewish Life**

TIFERETH ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE

- Saturday, March 6th – 9:00 a.m.
- Women’s League Shabbat Celebrating 90 years**
- Friday, March 12th – 6:00 p.m.
- YAD Family Shabbat service**
- Sunday, April 25th – 4:00 p.m.
- Cantor Bletstein’s Concert** (see ad on page 15)
- PASSOVER WEEK SCHEDULE**
- Monday, March 29th, 7:30 A.M.
- Ta’anit Bekhorim (Fast Of The Firstborn)** Study Session With Rabbi Steven Edelman-Blank in the Tifereth Library
- Tuesday, March 30th, 9:00 A.M.
- First Day Pesach Services**
- Wednesday, March 31st, 9:00 A.M.
- Second Day Pesach Services**
- Friday, April 2nd, 6:00 P.M.
- Shabbat Evening Services** followed by Women’s League Passover Family Dinner
- Saturday, April 3rd, 9:00 A.M.
- Shabbat Morning Services** In The Bookey Chapel
- Monday, April 5th, 9:00 A.M.
- Seventh Day Pesach Services**
- Tuesday, April 6th, 9:00 A.M.
- Eighth Day Pesach/Yizkor Services**



## B'nai Mitzvah



**Hanna (left) and Julia Anderson**, daughters of **Daryl and Greg Anderson**, will be called to the torah for their B'not Mitzvah on Saturday, April 10, 2010 at ten o'clock in the morning at Temple B'nai Jeshurun. In lieu of sending individual invitations, the entire Jewish community is invited to worship and celebrate with us at Hanna and Julia's B'not Mitzvah, and at the Kiddush luncheon immediately following.



Please join us as our daughter, **Dani Rachel Lipman**, celebrates her Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, May 1, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. at Temple B'nai

Jeshurun. The Jewish community is cordially invited to a Kiddush luncheon following services.

**Andi and Jeff Lipman**

## Mazel Tov

**Sterling Springgate** of Morgantown, West Virginia has been named to the West Virginia all state high school football team for 2009 as a junior. He is also a 3-year starter as place kicker and kickoff kicker as well as an honor student. He is the son of **David and Judi Farber Springgate**, grandson of **David and the late Ann Farber**, and nephew of **Jan and Jeff Farber**.

**Miriam Liya Copeland** arrived January 31, 2010. Congratulations to **David, Christine and Jacob** and grandma **Margaret Harrison**.

## In Memoriam

*We note with sorrow the recent passing of*

*Helen Auerbach*

*Sophie R. Clayman*

*Marvin M. Davidson*

*Evelyn Kilberg*

*Vivian Kroloff*

*Naomi Mercer*

*Paula Waizman*

*Ben Witten*

*Milton Zeichik*

# Dutch Jazz Comes To The Caspe Terrace, March 2

*Word of the Jazz at The Caspe Terrace concert series is spreading!*



**Eric Vloeiman**

A rare jazz fan Abe Goldstien and his wife, Jackie, who began the series with the help of the Jewish

Federation of Greater Des Moines and the Waukee Area Arts Council several years ago, was contacted by an agent representing Dutch trumpet player Eric Vloeimans. It seems she had heard about the venue in Waukee from a jazz fan from Nebraska who has attended every Jazz at The Caspe Terrace performance.

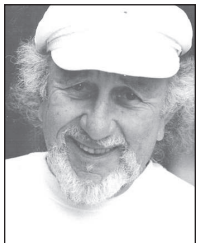
As a result of the call, Eric Vloeimans' trio will appear on the Bucksbaum Stage at The Caspe Terrace on March 2, 2010, at 7:30 p.m.

As with previous Jazz at The Caspe Terrace performances, do not expect your "run of the mill" jazz concert. For starters, Eric's current trio, Fugimundi, features an unusual instrumentation — Eric on trumpet, Anton Goudsmit on guitar and Harmen Fraanje on piano. According to a recent review in All About Jazz, "They can do whatever they want on their respective instruments, as evidence by Vloeimans' ample use of the entire technical and sonic range offered by the trumpet, Fraanje's encyclopedic knowledge of the piano and

its possibilities, and Goudsmit's superb team player approach. It all came together in one of the most uplifting jazz concerts in recent memory."

Regarded as one of Europe's best performers with an extraordinary talent for playing original music with outstanding quality. Vloeimans prefers recording original compositions on his many award winning CD's, however he can often be heard performing a wide variety of tunes. As a composer he does not feel restricted to one particular style, and he has managed to create an evocative, harmonic language of his own. His writing is fresh and creative, yet not without feeling and respect for tradition. Eric Vloeimans is unique among many of Holland's top international jazz artists in that he does not shy away from playing beautifully. He is a rare musician that has mastered the entire range of the trumpet — the energy load to the soft high notes, a velvety texture to almost wooden sounds. The talent and the expressive power of Eric Vloeimans' music have been honored by his winning the Dutch Edison Award four times, the Elly Ameling Prize of the City of Rotterdam, the Boy Edgar Award and the prestigious Bird Award at the North Sea Jazz Festival.

A Dutch journalist summed up Eric's music best — "Nothing makes me as happy as the trumpet of Eric Vloeimans. Every day. He blows so much beauty and purpose into life." *continued on page 17*



## BENJAMIN "BABE" WITTEN

Benjamin Witten passed away on Sunday, January 17, 2010 at the age of 91 in Phoenix, Arizona after having suffered a stroke in January 2007. Ben was known to all as Babe / Uncle Babe / Zadie Babe.

Babe was born on May 1, 1918 in Winterset, Iowa and when he was 6 months old, his family moved to Des Moines, where his mother operated a small grocery store and his father started a junk business. Babe was a member of the "greatest generation," serving with distinction in the Army Air Force in World War II, where he flew 25 missions and earned the Distinguished Flying Cross. In 1946, Babe married Alicia Hoffman and they had three children. Babe and his brother-in-law, Joe Blumenthal, took over the scrap metal business and expanded "Witten & Sons" into one of the largest scrap-metal dealers in the mid-west. In 1961, Babe moved his family from Des Moines to Phoenix, Arizona where he resided until the death of his wife, Alicia, in 1974; at which time he moved back to Des Moines.

Babe was beloved by hundreds of friends and admirers because of his zest for life, his fun-loving nature, his intellect, spirituality; his creativity and his generosity. He charmed everyone with whom he came in contact. As was true with Will Rogers, Babe truly never met a stranger.

He hosted many gatherings in his home, regaling his guests with stories and stimulating them with brainteasers. His positive attitude was infectious and ever present. Ben was a generous man. He was not only generous with the money he gave (whether he had any to give or not) to his friends, his family, his Synagogue and several veteran's groups, but he was very generous with his time as well. When in town, he would help out by cooking a family meal, taking his young grandchildren out for lunch, by making repairs around the house or by running errands for his family. He was always doing something to help somebody. Babe holds the distinction of having donated more blood (over 42 gallons) than anyone else in the history of central Iowa blood donors. He was also inducted into his high school's Hall of Fame in 2007.

Babe began sculpting in 1948 using scrap metal as his inspiration and medium. He created hundreds of works which are installed in homes and public buildings throughout the world and have been featured at the Iowa State Fair, on television and in local newspapers. To see a sampling of his art, visit his Art Yard website at <http://www.art-yard.com>.

Babe was predeceased by his wife, Alicia, his sisters, Jenn Brody and Anne Blumenthal and his daughter Linda Starkey Smith.

He is survived by his long-time companion, Ruth Starkey of Des Moines, Iowa, his daughters, Rochelle Witten of Phoenix and Donna (LeRoy) Luepker of Lowden, IA, his sons Blake (Janet) Witten and Dwayne (Susan) Witten of Phoenix, his ten grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and many beloved nieces, nephews and cousins.

A memorial service was held at the Arizona State Veteran Home on Sunday, January 31. A celebration of life gathering will be held in Des Moines in May. The family asks that instead of flowers, donations can be made in Babe's name to either the Arizona State Veterans' Home, Hospice of the Valley or The American Red Cross.

The family would also like to thank all those at the Arizona State Veterans' Home and Hospice of the Valley for the care and dignity with which they treated Babe during the last three years. Dad, if you are right and there is an afterlife, we will all see you again someday. P.S.: Say "Hi" to Mom for all us. Arrangements by Sinai Mortuary of Arizona.

*This is a privately sponsored tribute*



## Cantor Meir Finkelstein

**Congregation Shaarey Zedek, Southfield, MI**



## Cantor Deborah Bletstein

**Tifereth Israel Synagogue, Des Moines, IA**

# In Concert

**Featuring local musicians and special guests**

**Sunday, April 25th at 4:00 p.m.**

at Tifereth Israel Synagogue General Admission \$36; Seniors and Students \$18. Tickets available by calling the Tifereth office at 515-255-1137

**CANTOR MEIR FINKELSTEIN** is one of the best-documented composers of contemporary Jewish music. He has composed over 100 settings for the liturgy, and his compositions are sung in synagogues worldwide, his most famous being "L'Dor Vador."

## DRAKE HILLEL

# ATTENTION Drake Alumni!

Drake University Hillel is in the process of creating a Drake Jewish alumni list so that we can stay in touch with our alumni and alumni can connect with each other. If you are a Drake alum, please take a minute of your time to email your contact information (name, address, phone number, and email address) to [duhillel@drake.edu](mailto:duhillel@drake.edu). Drake Hillel sends bi-annual newsletters to update alumni on our happenings, and we will be hosting events for alumni throughout the coming years. We would love to hear from you!

At Hillel, we will be having an alumni Shabbat dinner during Drake Relays this year! The date will be Friday, April 23, 2010 at 6:00pm. Location TBA. Food will be kosher. **Please RSVP to [duhillel@drake.edu](mailto:duhillel@drake.edu) by April 16.** Bring your family, and please let us know if you need a vegetarian meal. This will be a great time to reunite with fellow Drake alumni from Des Moines and around the country as well as converse with current Drake Hillel students. We hope to see you there!!

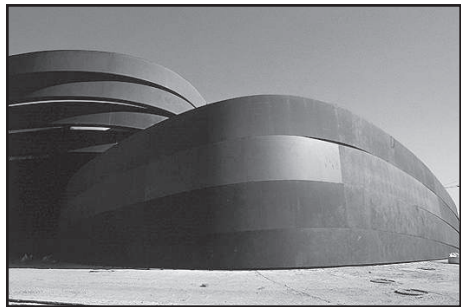
Thanks!

Jamie Schenker, Parent/Alumni Chair



## The Israel Design Museum to Open March 4, 2010

**The Condé Nast Traveller Innovation and Design Award for Culture Presented to Design Museum Holon in Israel, designed by Ron Arad**



The construction of Design Museum Holon, the highly anticipated creation by Ron Arad Architects was completed during winter 2009. Significant in so many ways, the sweeping arcs in multi-coloured hues will be Ron Arad's first ever commercial architectural project and is also the realization of a 16 year regeneration programme in the city of Holon, just out of Tel Aviv. [ See: [www.dmh.org.il](http://www.dmh.org.il) ]

In 2004, Ron Arad Associates were invited by the Municipality of Holon to create a new Design Museum in Holon, envisaged as an international hub for innovation in the field of design. Ron Arad was briefed to design a structure that would be iconic and thus, could be featured on a postage stamp. After five years of construction, the museum, a fluid circular structure built with neutral tones

of steel, is currently under construction and is scheduled to be inaugurated in the beginning of 2010.

Design Museum Holon accommodates two primary galleries and a number of diverse alternative exhibitions spaces in-between. As well as creating a leading creative arena for the field of design, Design Museum Holon will create an encompassing design experience for the general public, while seeking enriching dialogue between designers, curators and the audience. They aim to play a key role in changing the perception of the design-environment- community relationship by examining the holistic impact design has on urban spaces, using the city of Holon as a case study internationally.

The city of Holon, outside Tel Aviv, has been going through a regeneration programme for the past 16 years under the direction of its mayor, Motti Sasson, and the municipality managing director, Hana Hertsman who has initiated the project. Ms. Hertsman said: "Not only does this award acknowledge the incredible design of the architecture by Ron Arad, but also highlights the role of design and culture in Holon's day to day life. We are turning the city of Holon into an entirely open gallery, in which art is accessible and available for all."

### EDITOR'S NOTES:

#### Ron Arad:

Since his career began in 1981, Ron Arad has exhibited at many major

museums and galleries throughout the world. 2009 was a significant year for Arad with the completion of Design Museum Holon, an unprecedented turn out to his retrospective at Centre Pompidou in Paris, and an exhibition in July at the MoMA New York, which was scheduled to move on to the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam.

#### Design Museum Holon:

The Design Museum Holon accommodates two primary galleries and a number of diverse alternative exhibitions spaces in-between. As well as creating a leading creative arena for the field of design, Design Museum Holon will create an encompassing design experience for the general public, while seeking enriching dialogue between designers, curators and the audience. They aim to play a key role in changing the perception of the design- environment- community relationship by examining the holistic impact design has on urban spaces, using the city of Holon as a case study for the entire world.

#### The Condé Nast Traveller Awards for Innovation and Design:

An expert panel of judges, including Sir Nicholas Serota of TATE and Sir Christopher Frayling, former chair of the Arts Council and Rector of London's Royal College of Art, compiled a shortlist of recent and innovative designs, revealed in a special supplement in the May issue of Condé Nast Traveller.

## Des Moines/Israel Partnership BIKE TOUR PLANNED IN THE WESTERN GALILEE AND JERUSALEM, MAY 5 - 12

If you're an avid bicyclist, you'll love the unique tour that will have you cycling through northern Israel and Jerusalem with people who share your interest! The trip is scheduled to begin in Israel on May 5th and will conclude in Israel on May 12th. Costs are \$1200 per person in addition to airfare. Bikes are available for daily rental in Israel. Interested? Contact the Israel Partnership office at the Jewish Federation. Call 515-277-6321 x 214.



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**Bergman** form page 8

**CB:** It is interesting. When I was growing up, my family was affiliated with an enormous congregation on Long Island, with many Jewish professionals and kitchen staff – and, as a result of its size, we were really very detached from the whole thing. I don't think that the average member had much understanding of what was going on in the synagogue. AJC is at the absolute opposite extreme. It is completely 'Do-It-Yourself.' We have a quarter-time rabbi [Rabbi Wirtschafter] – that is the extent of our employment. He lives in St. Paul and comes down one weekend a month. So that has worked out very well for us.

**JP:** Very good.

**CB:** All the teachers are members of our congregation, and pretty much anything that is going to get done, gets done by members.

**JP:** What hands-on aspects have you worked on for the congregation, in addition to serving as president?

**CB:** I've done several things. I've helped take care of the building, and that has been kind of good, because the fellow who is really in charge of that knows a lot more than I do about buildings. So I've learned a lot, just as an apprentice. I'm in charge of the gardening around the synagogue. I'm also involved in making a decision whether to adopt the new Reform prayer book, and it's a task I find very interesting. I think, for example, in a large congregation, this is something that the average member would not concern him- or herself with.

**JP:** Cliff Bergman, I thank you so much

for the interview. Let me wish you and your family all the best.

**CB:** Thank you.

**Calendar** from page 9

Throughout our history the passage of time has been of major concern to the Rabbis. Sections of the Mishna, Talmud, Maimonides' Mishna Torah, Joseph Karo's Shulchan Aruch and many other texts of Jewish law are devoted to calendar issues. Our religious and secular lives are marked by days on the calendar, but more important the days are a reflection of who we are individually and as a people.

*"A season is set for everything, a time for every experience under heaven;  
A time for birth and a time for dying,  
A time for planting and a time for uprooting the planted;  
A time for loving and a time for hating;  
A time for war and a time for peace."  
(Ecclesiastes 3:1-2,8)*

**Mary Paul Even** from page 13

Mary Paul's signature dish is her sauerkraut. Her kids grew up loving it and she makes several varieties. Kraut made with only red cabbage is called Rot kohl and is sweet and sour. Her basic recipe is from Ruth Hertzberg's *Putting Food By* but she sometimes adds currants, dill weed and cherry leaves to make a Russian version. The leaves, which she saves and dries over the summer, are from cherry trees in her yard.

This is a timely recipe because cabbage usually goes on sale in early March so there's plenty of sauerkraut for St Patrick's Day on March 17, which also happens to be her daughter Inessa's birthday.

*The Jewish Press thanks Mary Paul Even for*

*sharing this recipe for sauerkraut with our readers. If you have a recipe to share or a question I can research, call Karen (515-274-3300) or email (aengmandsm@yahoo.com).*

**Jazz** from page 15

Expect to be mesmerized by the music, entertained by the casual approach of the musicians and immersed in the outstanding acoustics of The Caspe Terrace.

"We are putting The Caspe Terrace on the jazz map," says Goldstien, who notes that the band's other stops on this tour (underwritten in part by the Dutch government) include Montreal, Oakland, Chicago and Washington, D.C.

Tickets for the first Iowa performance by Eric Vloeimans are \$20 for adults and \$15 for students (advanced sales). Tickets will also be available at the door for \$25. Tickets for the performance are available by calling Abe at 515-279-6452.

The performance will be followed with a reception hosted by the Waukee Area Arts Council.

*To learn more about Eric Vloeimans and hear samples of his music, visit [www.ericvloeimans.com](http://www.ericvloeimans.com).*

**Millennium** from page 12

**3. LAG B'STAR TREK**

Date of Holiday: This holiday is celebrated every year on the Hebrew calendar date closest to March 22, the date in the year 2233 when James Tiberius Kirk will be born in the town of Riverside Iowa, as anyone with an even passing interest in Star Trek knows. Captain Kirk's future birth date is important to Jews because he was played in the original Star Trek television series by Jewish actor William Shatner, who was also born on March 22 (in Montreal, Canada).

Theme of Holiday: Star Trek is a clear example of an iconic cultural treasure that most people don't realize is filled with Jews and Jewish influences. Leonard Nimoy, an Orthodox Jew who speaks and writes Yiddish, played Mr. Spock. Nimoy created Spock's split-hand "Live Long And Prosper" Vulcan salute based on the traditional kohanik blessing and its recreation of the Hebrew letter shin. The list doesn't end there: J.J. Abrams (the director of the last summer's blockbuster Star Trek movie revival) is Jewish, Walter Koenig (played Chekhov on the original Star Trek and attended Grinnell College) is Jewish, and Whoopi Goldberg (played the recurring role of Guinan on Star Trek: The Next Generation) is a self-described Jewish-American princess who adopted the name Goldberg after her Jewish mother told her that her given name of "Johnson" wasn't Jewish enough to make Whoopi a star. So she counts. Star Trek is ours. Stop arguing.

Holiday Traditions (that only slightly ruin things): On Lag B'Star Trek, Jews seek out and attend Star Trek conventions, dress as Star Trek characters, and demand that all of Paramount's Star Trek profits be turned over to Jewish charities. After a round or two or three of holiday wine, the Jews remember that Paramount is now part of CBS, which is run by a Jew -- Sumner Redstone (real name Sumner Murray Rothstein). The holiday concludes with a celebration of the disproportionate Jewish influence in large media corporations, and a half-hearted promise to try to remember that and tone things down during next year's Lag B'Star Trek.

Holiday Eating Traditions and Restrictions:

On Lag B'Star Trek, Jews further honor Star Trek by eating all of their meals from a Star Trek replicator device, which is a protein resequencer that creates foods in space by rearranging subatomic particles into amino acids, proteins, and cells, and then ultimately forming them into a corned beef sandwich, on rye bread with a little deli mustard. Jews without replicators just ask their parents to make them the sandwich.

**4. Y'UR GONNAH GE'DIT**

(CRUSHING OUR ENEMIES DAY):

Date of Holiday: This holiday is celebrated every year on the Hebrew calendar date closest to June 7, the date in 1981 when the Israeli Air Force launched the mission known as Operation Opera that destroyed the Iraqi nuclear facility near Baghdad.

Theme of Holiday: Jews have frequently crushed their enemies into dust, but our reputation has more frequently depicted us as bookish and pacifist people who can readily be used as history's willing scapegoats. Those days are over. The Y'ur Gonnah Ge'Dit Holiday celebrates both our ancient and modern history of kicking butt and taking names. From ancient Biblical accounts of the Israelite conquests, to the Maccabees' battles for independence from Antiochus IV Epiphanes, to the Bar Kokhba revolt against the Roman Empire (Lag B'Omer is merged into Y'ur Gonnah Ge'Dit), the Jews are a military power to be reckoned with. Powered by our Nobel-honored super-brains, we Jews have demonstrated our military process for millennia. Just look up Samuel ibn 'Adiya (warrior poet), the Habbani Jews of Southern Yemen, and the Mountain Jews of Daghestan. You have no chance. Put down your weapons and surrender your lands. In more modern times, the examples include Nili (Jewish espionage network that helped the UK defeat the Ottoman empire in Israel during World War I), the Jewish Combat Organization in Poland during World War II, the Haganah, the Palmach, the Lehi, the Irgun, the ISF (including the Mossad), and obviously the IDF... the list goes on. Don't mess with us. Give up. We will kill you. Be afraid.

Holiday Traditions (that only slightly ruin things): On Y'ur Gonnah Ge'Dit, there are no celebrations of candles that burned quite slowly, no serene prayers celebrating the first tree fruits under the starry autumnal skies, no mention of the children of the world holding hands in a prayer for peace. No, this R-rated holiday is all about fear. To enhance our fearsome reputation among our enemies, the holiday's tradition requires recitation of "what we are going to do to you if you even look at us funny." Jews around the world work themselves into a frenzy by watching *Inglorious Bastards* and walk around during the day carrying baseball bats. I think most people will get the message.

Holiday Eating Traditions and Restrictions: None. Eat whatever you want to conserve your energy for battle. Focus on Gatorade and energy bars, and whatever is in your neighbors' refrigerator. We also have bologna sandwiches in the mess tent.

I have more holidays up my sleeve; the new millennium is a perfect time to reset our holiday traditions.

*Please be among the first to write the author at [iowadavid@me.com](mailto:iowadavid@me.com). He craves attention and gets so very little of it.*

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# Your Pictures, Documents, Family and Business Records May be the Iowa Jewish Historical Society's Treasure!

Do you have a stack of old family pictures tucked away on a shelf, or a closet of pictures and newspaper articles about your business? Before you put them back up on the top shelf or throw them away because you think that no one seems to be interested in them, please call the Iowa Jewish Historical Society and let us take a look! Your old photos, papers, and memorabilia may have an important role to play in documenting and understanding the richness and diversity of Jewish life in Iowa.

These artifacts—the newspaper articles, photographs, books, manuscripts, clothing, recordings, furniture, household goods, and other items—are the heart of the Iowa Jewish Historical Society's collections. Finding and preserving these artifacts and using them to teach the history of the Jews in Iowa is one of the most important responsibilities the Iowa Jewish Historical Society has—and one of the most exciting. These artifacts are keys to deepening community understanding of Jewish history and culture. Some are rare pieces—the Karpis' enamel cup from Schindler's factory, the jacket Jacob Szneler wore in a German concentration camp—while others are more common and were part of the daily activities of Jews who carved out their lives in Iowa. In both cases, these artifacts are tangible pieces of the past that are constantly used for research, exhibition, education programs, publications, and loans to other museums. These treasures are critical to helping the Jewish and non-Jewish communities understand the important roles Jews played in the development of the state.

The IJHS's goal is to collect items that illustrate all phases of Jewish social, political, and cultural history in Iowa. Some of the areas in which IJHS collects include:

- Family histories—i.e., diaries, letters, photographs, personal memorabilia, genealogies, etc.
- Household goods, including kitchen utensils, dishes used the 19th and early 20th century
- Items brought by Jewish immigrants from their native countries
- The business, professional, and other occupational roles of Jews in Iowa—records, photos, manufactured objects, advertisements, etc.
- The organization and history of synagogues and temples in Iowa, newsletters, membership lists, photos, data on rabbis and cantors, etc.
- The role of Jewish volunteer associations in charity, welfare, assistance to the elderly, etc.
- The participation of Jews in the political structure of Iowa's municipal and state governments, the U.S. government, and international entities
- Documentation of Iowa's Jewish cemeteries

These are the types of items that make history personal—the stories that connect people of the past to us and to future generations. It is also what makes the items personal to your family and ones you want to keep but may be willing to share by letting us make copies that can be used for exhibits, education programs, and research. If you do, please email Sandi Yoder, Executive Director, at [ijhs@dmjfed.org](mailto:ijhs@dmjfed.org) or call me at 515-205-0379.

## Recent Donations for the Iowa Jewish Historical Society That Show the Variety of Items We Collect



**An Unusual Megillah** Dr. Craig Shadur recently donated an antique Megillah to the Iowa Jewish Historical Society. The Megillah is made from silver with an ornate stylized filigree-like floral design. The top of the case is designed in the shape of a crown, presumably a symbol for Queen Esther, the heroine of the Purim story. The Megillah contains a hand-written parchment scroll of the story of Esther that is read on Purim. The scroll is in excellent condition and is very well preserved. The Megillah is now on exhibit in The Caspe Heritage Gallery.

**Sound Recordings** Mrs. Lora Lee Spiro recently donated more than 170 tapes of weddings, bar and bat mitzvahs, funerals, and miscellaneous services recorded by her husband, Cantor Pinchas Spiro, who passed away in 2008. In 1990, the Cantors Assembly enthusiastically adopted Cantor Spiro's idea of establishing a series of Ba'al T'fillah Institutes in many parts of the country to train new lay service leaders to carry on the ancient musical legacy of the venerable old Ba'a'ley T'fillah, leaders of prayer, who were fast disappearing from the American scene. All the text books used at these Institutes were written by Cantor Spiro. In 1994, the Cantors Assembly presented Cantor Spiro with its highest honor, the 39th Kavod Award, in recognition of his contributions to the preservation of the traditional nuscha'ot. In 1998, the Jewish Theological Seminary of America awarded Cantor Spiro the degree Doctor of Music, honoris causa, in recognition of his lifetime achievements.

**You Are Invited!** Sunday Afternoon Openings of The Iowa Jewish Historical Society's Caspe Heritage Gallery **March 28, & April 11, 2 – 4 p.m.** Featuring the Traveling Exhibit: **"From Distant Places to Dubuque's Shores: 175 Years of Jewish Presence"** about Alexander Levi, a French Jew of Spanish descent who became a successful businessman and philanthropist and was the first naturalized American to sign a state charter.

**Special Offer** from Jewish Major Leaguers Baseball Cards Dr. Martin Abramowitz, who was the featured speaker at the Iowa Jewish Historical Society's inaugural "Jews Love Baseball" event last summer, has announced that the sixth and final Jewish Major Leaguers baseball card set, the 2010 "Deck of the Decade," will be offered at a pre-publication reduced price of \$29 if ordered by April 30! Dr. Abramowitz will donate \$10 to the Iowa Jewish Historical Society for every order he gets through IJHS.

This is a completely different set of cards from the ones he sold when he spoke last summer. "The Deck of the Decade" set includes 2009 player photos, season highlights and stats, including the 2009 season MVPs plus EVERY Jewish Major Leaguer from 2000-2009, stats of the decade, career leaders, and the usual assortment of "oddball" cards.

**To order** email Dr. Abramowitz at [jewishmajorleaguers@rcn.com](mailto:jewishmajorleaguers@rcn.com) to order and let him know you saw the information in the Jewish Press.

**Special Note:** The IJHS is grateful to Trudi Rosenfeld and Mollie Lasky for their work on establishing the Tributes donation program. Over the years, their hard work and your generosity has resulted in gifts totaling more than \$18,000 for the support of IJHS' programs and activities. Trudi has now passed responsibility of this program to Susie Kimelman. Please send your Tributes to Susie at 147 Tonawanda Dr., Des Moines, IA 50312-2905.

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# [calendar]

**Tuesday, March 2** 6:00 pm  
**Saturday, March 6** 11:30 am  
**Thursday, March 11** 12 Noon  
**Sunday, March 14**  
**Wednesday, March 17**  
**Sunday, March 21**  
**Monday, March 22** 7:00 pm  
**Sunday, March 28** 2:00-4:00 pm  
**Tuesday, March 30 - April 6**  
**Friday, April 2** 5:30 pm  
**Saturday, April 10** 10:00 am  
**Sunday, April 11** 12:15 pm  
**Thursday, April 15** 12 Noon  
**Sunday, April 18**  
**Monday, April 19** 7:00 pm  
**Tuesday, April 20**  
**Friday, April 23**  
**Sunday, April 25** 4:00 pm

**Jazz at The Caspe Terrace (see article on page 15)**  
**Tifereth Israel Women's League celebrating 90 years**  
**Senior Luncheon at Beth El Jacob Synagogue**  
**Spring Break, no school**  
**Spring Break, no school**  
**Spring Break, no school**  
**Executive Committee Meeting at Federation office**  
**Caspe Heritage Gallery open**  
**PESACH**  
**Passover Shabbat Family Dinner at Tifereth**  
**Hanna & Julia Anderson B'not Mitzvah at the Temple**  
**YOM HASHOAH**  
**Holocaust Memorial Service at Glendale Cemetery**  
**Caspe Heritage Gallery open**  
**Holocaust Remembrance at the Temple**  
**Senior Luncheon at Tifereth**  
**Ohringer Family Education Day**  
**Temple Sisterhood Symphony Matinee**  
**Israel Independence Day Speaker at Drake University**  
**YOM HAATZMAUT**  
**Temple Shabbaton**  
**Cantor's Concert at Tifereth**

## "Israel Is Wonderful," Says Lizabeth Reyes



Lizabeth Reyes, a vibrant and cordial lady, is employed on the housekeeping staff at the Jewish Federation. One day recently

Lizabeth, seeing some books about Israel at the Federation mentioned that she had lived in Israel and that she had a wonderful time there.

It turns out that several years ago Lizabeth was working for an engineering firm in her native Mexico when the head of the company announced that he was going to Israel to work on a project. He would be taking his family, that only spoke Spanish, with him and he wanted to know if she would come along to take care of his family. Being the adventurous person that she is, she agreed.

So for three years, Lizabeth and her employer's family lived in Ra'anana, which is north of Tel Aviv. Accompanying the children throughout the day, Lizabeth sat in on their early education and learned Hebrew along with them at school.

She also had plenty of free time to explore Israel and recounts with affection her visits to Tel Aviv, Mount Hermon, and as she called it, Yerushalayim (Jerusalem.) She said she was sometimes called to accompany Spanish-speaking tourists to act as a translator.

Lizabeth, who is now married and has three children, ages 8, 6 and 1, would like to visit Israel again at least one more time. About the Israelis, she says they are beautiful people, and she misses the friends she made there.

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## **FAQ**

### **What are the benefits of donating my car to the Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines?**

The Federation benefits by receiving a cash donation to fund new and existing programs and increase community awareness through local events. You benefit by being able to reduce your taxable income when taxes are itemized. Plus you avoid the costs associated with selling your car. No need to pay for advertising, no loss of privacy and possible security risk, and no need to pay for vehicle registration, insurance, and repairs to keep your car in running condition while you wait for a buyer.

### **Does my car have to be running to donate it?**

No. In some cases we can take your car, running or not. However, it must have an engine and be towable.

### **Do you only accept cars for donation?**

Many types of motor vehicles are accepted including boats, motorcycles, trucks, and cars, motor-homes, airplanes, time-shares, and even houses. If you are uncertain as to whether or not your vehicle is eligible, please contact Linda at the Jewish Federation 515 277-6321 ext. 221.

### **How long will it take to pick up my vehicle?**

We make donating your car as simple and convenient as possible. In some cases, if we receive your call early in the day, a same-day pick can be available. A tow company will contact you within two to three business days.

### **Do I have to be with the vehicle at the time of pick-up?**

No. Special arrangements can be made by calling our representatives.

### **Will I get a tax receipt for my donation?**

Yes, you will receive an IRS Form 1098C in the event that the sale of the vehicle exceeds \$500. If the vehicle does not exceed \$500, the thank you letter that you will receive can be used as a tax receipt.

### **How is the value determined on the vehicle donated?**

The value is determined by the gross proceeds raised from the sale of the donated vehicle.

### **What if my car is valued over \$5000?**

Effective January 1, 2005, you are no longer required to have vehicles appraised. The value you may claim will be the amount of gross proceeds received from your vehicle.

**For more information call Elaine at 515 277-6321 x211 or Linda at 515 277-6321 x221.**

