



THE GREATER DES MOINES
JEWISH

PRESS

Vol. 37, No. 3 | January/February 2021 | Tevet/Shevat/Adar

טבת / שבט / אדר



Our Gan Shalom students love when it snows. The big hill in the backyard is the perfect for sledding.

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Giovanna Zavell
Editor & Production

*In memory of past Editor,
Mark S. Finkelstein (z"l)*

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Community Report

Beit Sefer Shalom

- All students transitioned to virtual learning on Wednesday, November 18 due to rising COVID-19 numbers
- Check out our remote learning resources on our website
- On December 13, a virtual Chanukah party was held with a musical experience by ShirLaLa
- High School students enjoyed engaging classes with guest speakers David Adelman, Harold Kasimow, and Sally Frank

Gan Shalom

- Students enjoy celebrating Shabbat each Friday
- Chanukah was celebrated in each class through songs, crafts, yummy treats and dreidel spinning
- Enjoy Gan Shalom's Winter Sing Program on our website
- Social Emotional Lessons are taught weekly thanks to Morah Marty
- Thank you to the Waukee Library for sending books and lessons monthly

Engman Camp Shalom

- Due to COVID-19 safety precautions, winter break camp was canceled
- Summer 2021 Camp will take place June 7 through August 20
- Registration for camp will open on January 10 for current Beit Sefer Shalom students and returning ECS campers. On January 24 for new and returning campers
- We are hiring staff for this summer. If interested, contact Anna at anna@jewishdesmoines.org or text/call 515.419.1269

Jewish Family Services and Outreach

- Senior activities are suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- JFS continues to check in on seniors regularly via phone and meal deliveries each week
- If you need assistance or are aware of someone who does, please contact Jody Ingersoll, Jewish Family Services, at 987-0899 ext. 210

Iowa Jewish Historical Society

- IJHS is kicking off our 25th Anniversary Year with the introduction of a new series of articles featuring My Favorite Artifacts
- Look for more announcements about new programs and activities celebrating 25 years of preserving Iowa's Jewish history in the coming weeks.
- Continues to participate in a nationwide effort led by the Council of American Jewish Museums to collect and preserve the stories of what it means to be Jewish in the era of Covid-19 and the protests and struggles for justice. IJHS is collecting the Iowa stories.
- Become a member of the IJHS at ijhs.online. You can help preserve Iowa's Jewish history for this and future generations

Jewish Community Relations Council

- Several community members are participating in P2G's new international leadership program for Jewish young adults called HORIZON
- Jewish Iowans from all over the state took part in a "Across Iowa Candle Lighting" on Wednesday, December 16 for the seventh night of Chanukah

Start the New Year with a Gift to Your Federation

With your gift, we can better support the members of our community by



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Give today online at jewishdesmoines.org or by mail



A Mindset of Gratitude and Meaningful Relationships



Bob Goldberg
Executive Director

Modeh Ani L'fanecha, I give thanks before you. Those are the first words of the morning prayer Modeh Ani. The prayer consists of only twelve words and its power is its ability to create a mindset of gratefulness for the day ahead, and an awareness of our connectedness and dependence on all that is around us.

I started saying the Modeh Ani each morning at the beginning of 2020, and it has given me a tool to find gratitude and appreciation in unexpected places.

I am incredibly grateful to be working with and for our Jewish community, and I look forward to a great year of learning and growing ahead.

While I have much to learn, there are some things that I have picked up along the way that guide my work. These are three things that you can expect from me.

We will focus our precious time mostly on engaging with you, on cultivating nurturing relationships, listening and

learning about what matters most, and inspiring the community. Our role as a Jewish Federation is to find people where they are and help them to connect. We cannot afford to wait for them to come to us. We need to actively search them out. There is more than one way to be Jewishly engaged and when we embrace innovation and collaboration and explore new ways of doing things, we give ourselves the opportunity to grow. I am confident that our strength as a Jewish community is in our ability to connect, relate, and find meaning with each other and with Jewish life.

As an organization, we will strive for operational excellence. We will search out subject matter experts to gather input on how we can improve processes and procedures. We will follow best practices, strive for transparency, clarity, exceptional service, and open communication. Today, we are expected to act nimbly and efficiently during times of constant change. We can do that best when our processes are clearly defined, when everyone knows their roles and responsibilities, and then we can live our highest values by serving the community and whatever comes next.

For me as an individual, I have a little bag of tricks, you could say, to help me keep moving forward towards important goals. Saying the Modeh Ani is a part of that.

I also keep little sticky notes on my computer monitor with helpful sayings. One says, "Before you speak, THINK! Is it True, Is it Helpful, Is it Inspiring? Is it Necessary? Is it Kind?" It's the kind of message the Chofetz Chaim would have supported. The second sticky note says, "Attitude, Energy, Effort." Life is full of unexpected roadblocks that can throw us off our path. At the end of the day, we can only control what we control. So, focusing on attitude, effort, and energy can help us maintain motivation and overcome life's obstacles. The third sticky note is a line from a cute movie called "Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium," that stars Dustin Hoffman, Natalie Portman, and Jason Bateman. Hoffman's character says at one point, "Life is an occasion, RISE TO IT!" I have always loved that line. It reminds me that life is to be celebrated. It challenges me to try to bring forth my best self every day, to embrace victories small and large, and to not always take myself so seriously.

Life is so precious, and a life full of meaningful relationships, and a mindset of gratitude and appreciation goes a long way to finding our happiest and most fulfilling days.

I'd love to hear from you. Please reach out to me at bob@jewishdesmoines.org or on my cell at 402.598.8677.

Until next time.
L'Shalom, Bob

Purim Memories From Growing Up in Gary



Michael Wolnerman
President

I hope that this President's message finds all of you doing well, with peaceful minds and good health. By the time this edition of *The Jewish Press* reaches you, Tu B'shvat and Purim will be right around the corner—celebrations we can look forward to. Perhaps, by that time, the world around us will have vastly improved, with things moving in a better direction.

In anticipation of Tu B'Shvat and Purim, I wanted to share the following poem, a personal story.

ON TU B'SHEVAT

By Adam Cohen-Nowak

***I would plant
My wondrous ideas,
My insightful
contributions,
My respect and gratitude,
and a place in this world.
I would plant my talent
and hope,
My hopeful decisions,
My determination,
My loves and hatred,
and, of course,
My dreams and my beliefs***

Some of you may know
(although plenty of you do not)

that I was born in Gary, Indiana and that my family lived there until I was 10 years old. My parents moved to Gary in the 1950's, and I was born in the early 1960's. We belonged to a vibrant Conservative Shul, that, by today's standards could be considered "conservadox". That synagogue holds a special place in my heart. Although it was a challenge to carpool on Sunday School mornings, I did get a treat afterward at the local submarine sandwich shop where my Dad or brother would take me. It was at that shop I learned that the key to a spectacular sub sandwich is quality ingredients, great bread and the magic is oregano and oil.

The Jewish population in Gary, Indiana at that time was large, probably due to the steel mills and other factories. We lived near Lake Michigan in an area called Miller Beach. Our street was lined with Jewish Families of all types. In fact, Crains Chicago Business magazine highlighted this area as a "summer home" destination for those living in Chicago at the time.

One of my fondest memories from my time in Gary was during Purim. I remember practicing for the Purimspiel—once for the Sunday school and once in the evening for families. Hamentaschen baking filled the air, combined with laughter from the kids and adults talking about life and goings-on in the town and all over. Now, I am certainly not a writer, but I want you to imagine this moment and how it smelled, sounded, and felt in the synagogue at this time in the 1960's. I imagine it was very similar to Jewish life here in Des Moines, at the time.

The memory of me as King Achashveros in the Purimspiel sticks with me to this day. I remember practicing my lines, dressing up in a robe with a rope for a belt, wearing eyeliner for a mustache and beard (which was painful washing off), as well as a crown made of aluminum foil and cardboard. I remember most is how I "got over" the fear of speaking to an audience. It was hard, but it worked—and to this day I am much more comfortable talking to an audience. It's a wonderful memory.

Being able to see all of you at Caspe Terrace in person and talking to you about the success we have had, and continue to have, at our Federation is something I truly look forward to. It would be nice to show you again, firsthand, the lesson I learned about my fear and public speaking from that Purimspiel so long ago. I look forward to seeing all of you together (or one-on-one) in the Bucksbaum Theater, without a mask, and closer than 6 feet away. Time will tell, but my hope is that we can be together soon, interacting the way it used to be not so long ago.

Remember, "if you think good it will be good." Best wishes from my family to yours for a wonderful Tu B'shvat and Purim celebration.

Michael Wolnerman
515-778-3867

'Abraham Joshua Heschel Today: Voices from Warsaw and Jerusalem' Book Review



Peter A. Huff
Guest Columnist

Some people write in one language, and no one remembers what they say. Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote in four, and his words will never be forgotten. His titles alone testify to his ability to penetrate to the mystery of human experience: *Man's Quest for God*, *God in Search of Man*, *A Passion for Truth*, *The Insecurity of Freedom*. The titles in complete sentences are particularly compelling: *Man is Not Alone*, *The Earth is the Lord's*, and of course the incomparable "No Religion is an Island." Heschel was one of those unrepeatable acts in the drama of Jewish thought, an uncanny mixture of originality and reverence. Nearly fifty years after his death, we are still trying to trace the arc of his vision and weigh, in the words of his friend Martin Luther King, Jr., the content of his character. This book, edited by Harold Kasimow, a student of Heschel's whose own life has elongated his teacher's legacy,

reminds us of the generous sweep of Heschel's influence and the palpable force of his significance.

We think of Heschel as an American treasure. And rightly so. His 1965 lecture as the inaugural (and first Jewish) holder of the Harry Emerson Fosdick chair at New York City's Union Theological Seminary—delivered just hours after a massive power outage left some thirty million Americans without electricity for a long and now legendary night—brought much needed light and heat to the burgeoning interfaith movement in the United States. Likewise, the image of the bearded rabbi arm in arm with Baptist preacher Fred Shuttlesworth during the Selma civil rights campaign is permanently etched in our nation's moral memory. This, we tell ourselves, is what religion is supposed to be and do. Heschel said his legs were praying, and we imagine his flowing white hair ahead of us today when we march and pray for Black, Indigenous, and transgender lives.

In many ways, Heschel was indeed profoundly American. But there was nothing remotely parochial about the author of *The Prophets*. Perhaps this is one of the secrets of his intellectual courage and ethical rigor. His life divides almost exactly into two even parts—with some thirty years in Europe and another thirty-

something in the U.S. The descendent of Hasidic rabbis on both sides of his family, Heschel taught in Germany, Poland, and England before making Manhattan's Jewish Theological Seminary his institutional base. His impact on the Vatican changed the church if not the world, and his disciples now speak more than the quartet of tongues he employed to express his matchless poetry and prose. The recent release of writings from his Nazi Germany and London periods offers valuable insight into the evolution of his wide-ranging mind. Kasimow's collection, a republication of the special 2007 Heschel issue of the journal *Shofar*, demonstrates how that mind appears when viewed in global perspective. Heschel spoke famously of God in exile, but he himself seems to have transcended the boundary separating homeland and diaspora.

The body of the book is a set of five essays by distinguished scholars from Israel and Poland, Heschel's birthplace. Shorter reviews of Heschel classics—including *A Passion for Truth*, *The Sabbath*, *Israel: An Echo of Eternity*, and *The Circle of the Baal Shem Tov*—supplement the essays, showcasing the interpretive skills of fifteen additional writers from America, Poland, and Japan. The five core chapters address some of the most distinctive features of Heschel's life and work.

HAROLD KASIMOW, editor



Abraham Joshua Heschel Today

Voices from Warsaw and Jerusalem

Overview Featured on the back cover of the book: "Abraham Joshua Heschel remains one of the most creative Jewish thinkers of the twentieth century. These essays demonstrate that Heschel became a spiritual guide, not only in America but in many other parts of the world, especially in Poland, where he was born, and in Israel, where the prophets gave the world a dream of everlasting peace."

Michael Marmur at Hebrew Union College/Jewish Institute of Religion profiles the many roles that made Heschel so outstanding and so hard to categorize: philosopher, theologian, historian, prophet, poet, and symbol. Alexander Even-Chen from the Schechter Institute for Jewish Studies explores two of his best known

and most provocative theological signatures: the non-omnipotence of God and the idea of divine pathos. Alon Goshen-Gottstein, founder of the Elijah Interfaith Institute, celebrates Heschel's notable contributions to interfaith affairs, especially his still striking assertion that religious diversity is the will of God.

Shoshana Ronen and Stanislaw Obirek, both at the University of Warsaw, offer Jewish and Christian reflections respectively on the priority of action over theory in Heschel's biblically and mystically informed worldview. Stanislaw Krajewski, also at the University of Warsaw, reprises the theme of interfaith engagement, identifying Heschel as the unsung precursor to *Dabru Emet*, the controversial

document on Jewish-Christian relations, signed by over 200 Jewish leaders and first published during the fall of 2000 in the *New York Times*.

In all their variety, the essays find remarkable coalescence in a multifaceted portrait of Heschel as one of the most daring thinkers in twentieth-century Judaism, faithful to tradition

yet dynamically attuned to new concerns and challenges, a much needed bridge between classical Jewish civilization, animated by the Talmud's vision of reality, and the pluralistic scene of post-Holocaust Jewish existence. That, they say, is the Abraham Joshua Heschel for today.

But what about Heschel tomorrow? Here, Shoshana Ronen's assessment speaks with incisive and even prophetic relevance. Approaching Heschel from the angle of secular Judaism, she admires him and his God but can believe in only one of them. The Heschel she resonates with is the activist scholar who boldly tells the truth, calls things by their proper names, and ratifies thought with a corresponding pattern of life, just as his ancient models did afflicting monarch and merchant at ease in Zion. The authority on Nietzsche knows good writing and frank self-analysis when she sees them.

Rising numbers of people in Israel, Poland, and the U.S. feel betrayed by religion and check "none of the above" in their own acts of prophetic protest. No-faith is one of the world's fastest growing faiths. The prospect of the Heschel legacy mastering new idioms in rapidly shifting circumstances is an open question—one the Heschel of yesterday would have confronted with memorable human pathos and prayer that resembled exercise.

Landed Gentry

By Dr. David Friedgood

Our Bible is a series of books containing stories, parables, commandments, laws, history, and other information. As I write this we are about to read the chapter in Genesis 'Hayyei Sarah' literally the Life of Sarah as the Shabbat (Sabbath) morning portion. We recall Sarah as the first female Jew, our first matriarch, who with her husband Abraham founded our monotheistic tradition. I should note that the first two sentences in the chapter announce the death of Sarah. As is true in our tradition, death is a time of sadness and reflection. We mourn Sarah's passing, as did her husband and son Isaac, but her loss became an opportunity to further the development of Sarah and Abraham's family as they evolve into a Hebrew nation.

Historical information in the Bible illustrates this history of our forbearers. Abraham and Sarah were the first of a 'Multitude of Nations.' Abraham converses with God. His name is changed from Abram to Abraham as Sarai's name is changed to Sarah. The Hebrew letter 'hey' (fifth in the aleph-bet) reflects the couples association with God whose name is often abbreviated with a 'hey.' Abraham was a prophet who spoke directly with his LORD. In plain language the two conversed, disagreed and even debated one to the other. Abraham was privileged to know God's plan for him

and his offspring. God says to Abram: "Go forth from your native land... to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation... and all the families of the earth shall bless themselves by you," (Genesis 12:1-3). When Abram enters the Land of Canaan he is told: "I will assign this land to you and your offspring. And he built an alter there to the LORD who had appeared to him," (Genesis 12:7) At age 99 God tells Abraham: "Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall name him Isaac; and I will maintain my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring to come," (Genesis 17:18).

After the death of Sarah, Abraham proceeds to mourn for his wife and 'bewail her.' But life goes on and Abraham rose from the 'face of his dead' and set out to arrange for Sarah's burial (Genesis 23). Sarah died in Hebron, The Hill country of the Hittite clan, south of Jerusalem. Abraham approaches his neighbors and initially was offered the choice of their burial spots for Sarah; his choice, without charge. Abraham however is a landless stranger in his adopted home. He bargains for land, a piece of Canaan that will be his own and that he can pass on to future generations. Abraham is interested in advancing God's plan for the Hebrew people which includes ownership and permanent settlement in the

land of Canaan.

Abraham sits down with the Hittite elders and asks to purchase the Cave of Machpelah then the property of Ephron of Zohar, the Hittite. Ephron begins the negotiations by offering to give the Cave and surrounding field to Abraham as a gift: "I give it to you in the presence of my people, bury your dead." Abraham bows his head to Ephron and continues the conversation: "Let me pay the price for the land; accept it from me, that I may bury my dead there." Ephron then ups the stake: "My lord, do hear me. A piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver – what is that between you and me? Go bury your dead." Abraham knows the strategy, accepts Ephron's terms and weighs out the shekels at the merchant rate (no discount). Abraham is now landed gentry. He owns a piece of the holy land through a legally binding transaction witnessed by the resident Hittite clan. Over the generations the Cave of Machpelah served as a burial site for Sarah, Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, and Leah. "Thus the field with its Cave passed from the Hittite's to Abraham as a burial site," (Genesis 23). Hebrew ownership of property in the holy land is now permanently established and persists to the present day.

The Bible, and Genesis in particular, traces the 'toldot' (generations) of human kind

from Creation to the Egyptian diaspora and beyond. It details our understanding of how monotheism developed. A prophet named Abraham left his home and wandered across the Middle East gradually settling in a land on the eastern Mediterranean shore. There he found a clan of Hebrews, which gradually evolved into a nation under the guidance of their God—the Creator of us all. Abraham lived a life composed of three parts. First, he represented a new beginning for human kind after the great flood in the time of Noah. Abraham preached a unique way of looking at the world and a new way of interacting with all the inhabitants of our LORD's creation. Secondly, Abraham was a prophet with a mission

to bring the word of God to all human kind. From humble beginnings Abraham's message prompted the development of three great religious traditions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), which ultimately became the bedrock of Western Society. Finally, Abraham is tied to the Holy Land. He breathed its air and owned its soil. His family is buried in its earth where he interacted with and experienced the promise of God. His LORD showed him the land which was to become his home and the future home of his people. It became a place where Abraham the sage envisioned the promise of his prophecy. A place where human beings could develop and flourish, safe in the shelter of their Protector and free to develop the potential inherent

in each living creature.

Each of us is endowed with the spirit of our Creator. We are all given the potential to grow, prosper, and flourish as we make our way in this world during the short time we are privileged to live. Each of us can influence our surroundings and leave behind a better place than before we were born. This is the process of 'Tikun Olam,' repair of our world that too often seems broken. The land that Abraham bought into thousands of years ago is the property of all those who envision the true glory of our existence. A land of milk and honey infused with the potential for greatness as envisioned by our forefather Abraham.

*"In the days to come the Mount of the LORD's House
Shall stand firm about the mountains
And tower above the hills;
And all the nations shall go and say:
"Come, let us go up to the Mount of the LORD
To the House of the God of Jacob;
That He may instruct us in His ways,
And that we may walk in His paths." (Isaiah 2:2-3)*

Maggie Matijevich
BSS Board President

Right now is hard. Life is challenging. Our kids are burnt out. Our neighbors are filling our hospital beds. Teachers, nurses, doctors, store clerks and parents are exhausted. Many of us feel like we can't manage much more.

When COVID-19 hit our community, as a school nurse, I felt ready. With a background in public health and communicable diseases- I thought, "this is the big one I've been training for." I was not ready. And I don't think any of us were. This 2020, has become so much heavier than any of us had realized.

However, through all this darkness, one bright shining light has been Beit Sefer Shalom and the Federation's community. Sophie

Supporting All Students Safely

Homonoff and our incredible teachers have worked so hard to give our children the normalcy they deserve. As a parent of two young children I am incredibly grateful for what BSS has offered our children.

When COVID-19 hit March of 2020, Sophie pulled all stops to ensure our children continued to have access—not only to a rich Jewish education—but to their friends and their community that they so relied on. When the 20/21 school year began we offered not only a safe, responsible and evidence based approach to in person learning- but a comprehensive and inclusive virtual program for our families as well. As COVID-19 numbers rose and schools closed The Federation once again stepped up to support our children. Now, as numbers rise and we all find ourselves once

again adjusting to a very distant and virtual life, BSS has risen to the occasion providing a robust school experience on Sunday and Wednesdays.

While BSS continues to offer full and exciting classes for kids, we know that not all families need the same thing. COVID fatigue, along with "Zoom" fatigue are both real challenges. Please know that BSS is still here, however you need us to be. If virtual education isn't for you, please reach out. We want to include every Jewish child in our program in any way that fits your family.

Someday this will be over. I so look forward to a time we can all meet, maybe even without masks, hug and watch our children play. Until then, stay safe, wear your mask, and let us know what you need and how we can help. BSS is here for you.

Virtual Chanukkah Celebrations, Des Moines to Israel

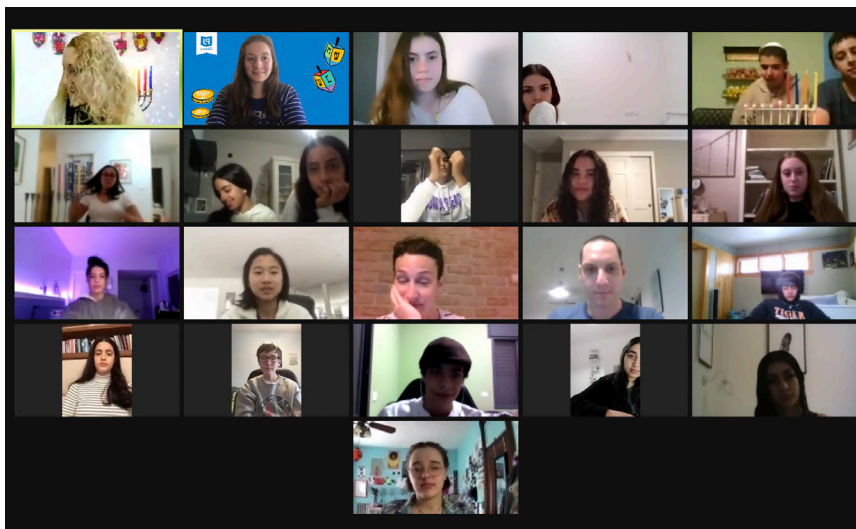
On Sunday, December 13, Beit Sefer Shalom hosted a virtual Chanukkah party with over 60 participants of all ages. Members of the Des Moines and Quad Cities Jewish communities joined together on Zoom to participate in a musical experience by ShirLaLa.

During this 30 minute musical experience, participants were encouraged to sing and dance along to Chanukkah favorites. Visuals accompanied ShirLaLa's video that told the story of Chanukkah.

After the viewing, everyone participated in a Chanukkah themed would you rather and a Chanukkah object scavenger hunt.

Earlier that morning, Beit Sefer Shalom high students had a Zoom Chanukkah gathering with friends in Israel. This year, the high school students are participating in a twinning program through Partnership2Gether. Beit Sefer is twinned with ninth graders at Manor Cabri, located in the heart of the Western Galilee.

Students have been getting to know one another through creating short videos and sharing them in a



Google Classroom. Students from each school made introduction videos. Next, each school sent a list of questions they wanted to know about the others and answered in videos.

During the first virtual meeting, students were able to meet in breakout rooms and ask questions.

Students are looking forward to more virtual meetings and the chance to make friends in Israel.

BSS Class Spotlight: Morah Karney's Fourth Grade

Robin Karney
Lead Teacher

"It's Time to Climb," say the 4th graders of Beit Sefer Shalom. This is their favorite online game in the interactive Nearpod Educational Learning App. I never would have heard of Nearpod had it not been for the support of Beit Sefer Shalom and the ability to sign on to CAJE classes this past summer. It opened me up to the possibilities of online learning. I am still trying to figure things out, but isn't that a Jewish Educator's role, Life Time Learning?

The 4th grade splits its time into the following pattern. On Wednesdays, we have a lesson about the Torah portion of the week. This usually involves watching a short video, which focuses on some aspect of the portion. On Sundays, we focus on prayers and recently finished a unit on the Barchu and have begun a unit on the Shema. In addition, we explore the Hebrew calendar including figuring out the shape of the moon and the portion of the

week, we have a word of the day, and discussions and games. Fourth graders also have music time specifically focused on Hebrew. We also have a Hebrew tutor, Russell Braman, who supports our virtual learners.

Beginning January 4, our class will focus on Passover. It is the responsibility of 4th grade to teach other students in the school about the holiday. We will learn about the Hagaddah and how to chant the Four Questions. Each student

will be responsible for creating a presentation on one aspect of Passover.

This past year and the foreseeable future present unique challenges. Our tradition teaches us, "You are not obliged to finish the task, neither are you free to neglect it," says Rabbi Tarfon. We will continue to adjust our teaching to meet the needs of the community.



The Fourth Grade Class, plus their two Madrichim in a Zoom class. In person and virtual students met virtually to learn together.



Chanukkah Goodie Bags Distributed to All Beit Sefer Shalom Students

Students at Beit Sefer Shalom received a bag full of Chanukkah goodies this year. Each bag was filled with Chanukkah activities, including coloring sheets, Hebrew word searches, Mad Libs and more. PJ Library holiday material covered the story of Chanukkah and directions on how to play dreidel. Thank you to the Urbandale Home Depot for providing us with the build it kit! Students received either a recycling truck, battleship or a soccer field. We hope everyone had a Chanukkah full of light.

Making an Unforgettable Year Memorable



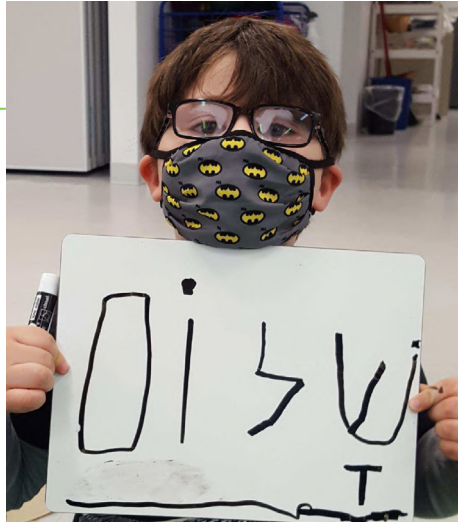
Juli Margolin & Raizel Small
Interim Co-Directors

Our students have continued to enjoy exploring the many acres of land in our backyard. In addition to having some lessons outside, we have trekked through the cornfield, hiked in the woods, and searched for natural treasures including: colorful leaves, pine cones, and acorns. The kids were still eager to spend their days discovering how our natural surroundings changed, even as the weather got colder. In November, we were unable to stay outside for the entire morning, so we moved our learning indoors.

When we transitioned our classrooms indoors, we were required to wear masks for more of our day than we were used to in the summer and fall. The teachers were impressed at how well the kids adjusted to this change. Wearing masks has become a second nature responsibility for them. Along with frequent hand washing, the teachers are taking every precaution to ensure the health and safety of our students.



The Bet Class celebrating Havdalah in their classroom. Students learned the Hebrew word for fire and spices.



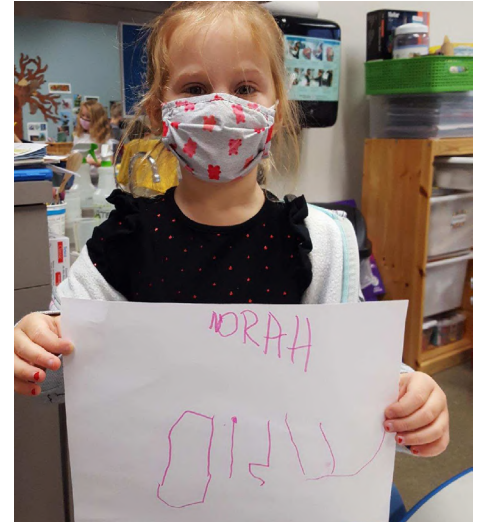
Gimel and Dalet students have excelled in learning to write Shalom in Hebrew.

Morah Anna has been focusing Judaics classes on Shabbat and Havdallah. The kids have been also been learning Hebrew vocabulary for colors, emotions, seasons, and the weather. The older classes have begun learning Hebrew letter sounds and even wrote Shabbat and Shalom in Hebrew! In December, we learned about dreidels, chanukiyot, latkes, gelt, and sufganiyot.



Students singing and dancing with Moreh Benjamin during music class.

Weekly music class with Moreh Benjamin have continued. Instead of a live Chanukah concert this year, we recorded a video with Benjamin leading some of our favorite songs, which was shared with families. We've also enjoyed celebrating Shabbat, at a safe,



social distance with our rabbis.

Morah Marty teaches our Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) classes utilizing Brave, Strong, Resilient, a Sesame Street curriculum. Our students have learned a wide vocabulary to label their emotions including: happy, thrilled and ecstatic. They are learning valuable skills such as conflict resolution and resilience. The kids are building self-confidence and learning how to problem solve.

Prior to COVID-19, a librarian from Waukee Library visited us monthly bringing stories, songs, and activities. In the new school year, the Waukee Library has shifted their model. They now send us monthly Story Time in a Box, which is filled with ready-to-go activities, song sheets and books that we get to keep.

The first half of our school year has certainly not been like any other. Despite all of the changes COVID has brought, the dedication and creativity of our teachers to ensure the best quality education remains strong. We appreciate their hard work, the support from our parents, and the resilience of our kids to make this year unforgettable.



Oh, dreidel, dreidel, dreidel! Each class practiced spinning the dreidel during Judaics with Morah Anna. So many of them quickly learned how to spin the top between their fingers. The Bet class used dreidels to paint with, and created really cool pieces of art.



Students explored Caspe Terrace whenever the weather allowed. We were lucky to have such sunny days this Fall. So many treasures were found on nature walks—acorns, rocks, animal footprints and plenty of walking sticks.

Gan Shalom Camp Summer 2021

June 7- August 20

10 Campers
Per Group

COVID-19
Safety
Protocols
Enforced

Gan Sha'om
we grow children

Registration for current Gan Shalom students opens January 10
Registration for new campers opens January 24

Learn more at ganshalompreschool.com

12 Campers
Per Group

Engman Camp Shalom Summer 2021

June 7- August 20

COVID-19
Safety
Protocols
Enforced

Registration for current Beit Sefer Shalom students & returning ECS campers opens January 10
Registration for new campers opens January 24



Engman Camp Shalom
we grow spirit

Learn more at engmancampshalom.com

At Engman Camp Shalom, We Are Always Looking Towards the Summer

Giovanna Zavell
ECS Director

There is never really a time I am not thinking about summer camp—the warm weather, endless opportunities to enjoy the outdoors and spend time with new and familiar campers. Planning for summer camp is one of the most exciting parts of my job, mainly because the goal is to plan fun activities for the campers.

In my last article, I talked about things I learned from running camp during a pandemic. Since the end of camp, I've continued my learning through American Camp Association webinars and hearing from other camp professionals, from both day and overnight camps. Each camp is different, but there is one theme that is common across the board—safety and fun.

This summer, we plan to welcome returning and new campers back to Caspe, however we will have limited spots

available. Our goal is to keep groups small, aiming for 10 campers per group, with the possibility of raising it to 12. Our campers will remain in those cohorts throughout the day, the usual intermingling of campers and counselors will not be as possible as years past.



Each week this summer will have a different theme, and within that theme we will offer focused tracks for campers to sign up for. These tracks may include art, sports, nature, science, and more. Our plan is to offer at least two different tracks each week. For example, if a camper signs up for

the sports track, they will take part in mainly sports games all week long. Or, if a camper signs up for the art track, their focus will be on multiple art projects throughout the week.

We are introducing these tracks to our camp because we know not every camper is the same, nor do they have the same interests in how they want to spend their day. We want each camper to come to camp and have the most fun possible, doing exactly the activities they want to do, without having to worry about playing in a soccer game or painting if they don't want to.

Stay tuned for more details regarding scheduling for this summer. In the meantime, be sure to register for the weeks you plan to send your camper. Spaces will be limited, so we encourage you to register early.

If you have any questions about camp, please don't hesitate to reach out.
anna@jewishdesmoines.org
515.419.1269

Our Campers 'Can't Wait for Summer!'



"My favorite thing about camp is the giant water slide. I get to make up funny poses and slide down it really fast."
— J.T.



"I like camp because everyone is really nice. You're never left out in an activity. I'm always really excited to see everyone."
— Lester



"I love to play outside. I like to play tag and gaga with all of my friends."
— Alma

Engman Camp Sha'om
we create spirit

WE'RE HIRING FOR SUMMER 2021!

DO YOU LIKE SPENDING TIME WITH KIDS? DO YOU LIKE PLANNING FUN AND INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES? ARE YOU LOOKING FOR ONE OF THE BEST SUMMER JOBS AROUND? APPLY TO BE A CAMP COUNSELOR TODAY!

INTERESTED? CONTACT ANNA AT
ANNA@JEWISHDESMOINES.ORG OR 515.419.1269

Delivering the Spirit of Chanukkah to Our Seniors



Jewish Family Services continues to connect and support our community. We provided grocery gift cards to several families to help with their Thanksgiving meal. While we would normally host a Chanukkah luncheon, this year we partnered with a community member to deliver Chanukkah gift bags to our seniors.

Pictured is Barbara Leventhal-Beckerman delivering a Chanukkah gift bag to Max Yaro.

We hope everyone had a wonderful Chanukkah.

In Memoriam

FRANCES BURNS
SUSAN ZUCKMAN
ALEKSEY PERSION
FRANCES ROSEN
FLORENCE HIRSCH
RACHEL GUBANI
DORIS JEAN CHRENEN
STEWART TERRANCE FRIED
DRORA KALISKI
SUZANNE ENGMAN
JAKE NAGORNER
EDITH JULIA BREDEHOFT
MARILYN SCHNEIDER
ROSELIND RABINOWITZ
HERMAN GIVANT



May Their Memories Be For A Blessing



Remembering: Robert A. Press

Giovanna Zavell
Editor

When Robert moved back to Des Moines in 2004, he joined a men's lunch group called ROMEO—Retired Old Men Eating Out. During one of the luncheons that took place after the passing of Robert's wife, the men discussed what would they do differently if they had to live their life over. When asked by his son, Tom, what he told the group, Robert said, "I told them I wouldn't have changed a thing. I just wish your mother would have lived longer."



Robert and Phyllis Press

"My dad believed life was wonderful, and the best way to enjoy it was to keep it simple and enjoy its simple pleasures," says Robert's son, Barry. Robert, known by his friends and family as Bob, was proud of his Jewish identity and was active in the Des Moines Jewish community growing up. He attended Saturday services at Tifereth and celebrated all of the holidays with his entire extended family. He took several years of Hebrew in school and could read and speak the language fluently. He attended North High School, and was a proud Polar Bear and attended many reunions.

But this wonderful life that Bob lead was not always easy. At the age of 16, Bob lost his father. As the oldest male in his family

of four, he quickly had to take on more responsibilities to support his family—helping his sister, his two brothers, and of course, his mother. This was during the depression, and his family had very little economically. "But in his mind, he always had everything he needed," says Tom.

"Like the greatest generation he was part of, he enlisted in the army," says Tom. "He told me he was working and heard about Pearl Harbor on the radio and immediately enlisted." Bob served in WWII from 1943-1946 as a staff sergeant in both Europe and the Philippines.

After returning home, Bob met Phyllis (Sis), who soon became his wife. They were engaged on Sis's birthday and married on Bob's birthday. The two did everything together.



Robert with his mother, Judith, and brother, Burton

Bob's children describe their parent's as soulmates—having a vernacular of their own full of love. This language lives on today through each member of the Press family. "We had the best parents children could ask for," says Tom.

"My mom and dad were excellent ballroom dancers," says Barry. "They taught dance at the community college. And danced whenever and wherever they



A young Robert and Phyllis

had the opportunity. They were a delight to watch." The couple was married 57 years until Sis's passing in 2005, then Bob stopped dancing. There was one exception, of course. Bob danced with his granddaughter, Rachel, at her wedding in 2012. "That was the one and only time," Barry says.

"He always wanted to be the best son, brother, husband, father, grandfather and extended family member he could be," says Barry. The kindness and care Bob showed to others extended well beyond just his family. Bob had the natural ability to talk to anyone, regardless of social position, religion or political preference. "When he met someone new, he could strike up a conversation and make a connection," says Bob's friend, Cindy Press. "Bob was a model for us all to seek what joins us rather than what divides us."

"I know my dad didn't believe he was any more special than any of us," says Tom. Tom always laughs at the comment his mother made before her passing. She said 'I know you think your father is perfect, but you will find out differently!' "He was so grateful for everyone and everything he had," says Tom. "He seemed to be related to almost everyone, in some way."

Collections Corner: F. Brody and Sons Paperweight

Sarah Carlson

IJHS Curator, Manager of Collections

This month IJHS acquired a paperweight with an advertisement for F. Brody and Sons in Des Moines on the front and a mirror on the back. The F. Brody and Sons company was a wholesaler of men's and women's furnishings founded by Falk Brody in 1880 on the east side of Des Moines. Before founding his new business, Brody had peddled tinware, soaps, and other notions from a wagon.

During World War II, F. Brody and Sons switched to

manufacturing for the war effort, making bib overalls called "Brody's Big B." When the war ended, the company went back to selling fabrics, sportswear, hosiery, and jackets.

IJHS is always looking to expand our collection of business history and memorabilia from across the state. If you have an artifact that you would consider donating, please contact sarah@jewishdesmoines.org.



New Series From The Iowa Jewish Historical Society

Twenty-five years ago, the Iowa Jewish Historical Society was founded to preserve the history of the Jewish people of Iowa and share our story through educational programs and exhibits.

At the heart of preserving our history and culture is our collection—the objects, photos, and documents that bring the past and the present to life for visitors of all ages and backgrounds here in Iowa and around the world.

With thousands of artifacts

in the IJHS collection, different objects have special meaning to many of our visitors, whether they see an artifact in person or learn about it online from our searchable collections database.

As part of our 25th Anniversary, IJHS is introducing a new series entitled 'My Favorite Artifact.'

To kick off the series, IJHS board members are picking their favorite artifact and sharing with us what that item means to them and why those chose it as their

favorite out of all the objects in the IJHS collection.

Our first article is by Jan Hockenberg.

We will be sharing stories about My Favorite Artifact here in the Jewish Press, on our Facebook page, website, and blog. If you would like to pick an artifact to write about, please email ijhs@jewishdesmoines.org for more information.

Documenting the Impact of COVID-19 on Iowa's Jewish Community

Please help the Iowa Jewish Historical Society ensure that future generations understand the struggles Iowa's Jews faced and the successes that we achieved during this challenging and unprecedented year by participating in an oral history interview.

We need your perspective, whether you are a middle schooler or a senior; a first responder or a COVID-survivor; a rabbi, student,

teacher, congregation member, or sit on a medical advisory board. All interviews will be conducted online.

Don't wait for someone else to do the interview. Please call Sandi Yoder at 515-987-0899 ext. 216 or email sandi@jewishdesmoines.org for more information on how you can help.

Questions can include:

•How has COVID-19 impacted your life? What has changed? What

has remained the same?

•How has your work been affected? What impact has that had on you?

•Are there any rituals or Jewish practices that have been particularly meaningful to you in this moment?

•Where are you finding strength and support in this challenging time? What is bringing you joy?

My Favorite Artifact: 'Schindler's Cup'



Jan Hockenberg
Guest Columnist

I have served on the IJHS board since 2006. Through my involvement as a board member, I have become increasingly grateful to those people, past and present, who have passionately given their time, talent, and financial support to preserve Iowa's Jewish history.



The Schindler Cup, which sits on display in the IJHS Museum.

I am very proud of our Iowa Jewish Historical museum and our collections. One of my favorite artifacts in our museum is the "Schindler Cup." The cup, which has been labeled with the historically significant Schindler name, belonged to Phyllis and Irvin Karp. It was used during the Holocaust by the Karp family, who survived the forced labor and death camps, immigrated to the US, and put down roots in

Des Moines. That makes it a very special treasure! Phyllis Karp, when asked why she saved this cup and brought it to the United States, said, "This will remind me, every day, that there is a better tomorrow."

Oskar Schindler, through his factories and his now-famous list of "workers," saved the lives of 1,100 Jews, including the Karp family. Workers in Oskar Schindler's munitions factory received cups (and bowls) such as this one, to use for drinking and eating. These functional pieces were produced in Schindler's enamelware factory.

Phyllis and Irvin Karp lived in Des Moines for fifty years and produced three more generations, who have generously shared and continue to share their memories, support, talents, and friendship with our community and our state. During this time of social distancing, the Karp family story and their "Schindler Cup" remind us to be grateful for what we have, and even if our cup is currently only half full, better days are ahead.



Celina holding the Schindler Cup at Caspe Terrace in Waukee, IA

Join Now!

Give Yourself or a Friend the Gift of Helping Preserve Iowa's Jewish Heritage for This and Future Generations

The artifacts, photos, manuscripts and other treasures that the Iowa Jewish Historical Society collects and preserves are our history – the irreplaceable record of the accomplishments, contributions and personal stories of Jews in Iowa.

Join now at www.ijhs.online or complete this membership form.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, and Zip Code _____

Membership Levels

Membership Year: July 2020 through June 2021

Lifetime	\$5,000	_____
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Supporter	\$180	_____
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In addition, I want to make a donation to the Iowa Jewish Historical Society
\$ _____

Please make your check payable to the IJHS and send it to
33158 Ute Ave., Waukee, IA 50263.
For more information: (515)987-0899 ext. 216 or
ijhs@jewishdesmoines.org



TBJ Worship Schedule

Temple B'nai Jeshurun | 5101 Grand Ave, Des Moines, IA 50312
www.templebnajeshurun.org

Email to be sent weekly with links, contact us if you are not currently receiving Temple emails.
Schedule subject to change. Please visit our website for the most up to date calendar

JANUARY

Ongoing Study of the Historical Books | Wednesdays | 1 p.m.
Shabbat Morning Singalong | Fridays | 10 a.m.
Erev Shabbat Service | Fridays | 6 p.m.
Traditional Torah Study (TTS) | Saturdays | 9 a.m.
Shabbat Service | Saturdays | 10 a.m.

FEBRUARY

Ongoing Study of the Historical Books | Wednesdays | 1 p.m.
Shabbat Morning Singalong | Fridays | 10 a.m.
Erev Shabbat Service | Fridays | 6 p.m.
Traditional Torah Study (TTS) | Saturdays | 9 a.m.
Shabbat Service | Saturdays | 10 a.m.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Family Shabbat Service | Friday, January 1 | 6 p.m.
Book Club, "The Alice Network," By Kate Quinn | Monday, January 11 | 6:30 p.m.
Zoom Adult Ed Discussion | Sunday, January 17 & February 21 | 4 p.m.

TBJ Sisterhood Continues to Grow and Offer Programming



The Sisterhood offers a number of events throughout the year, including a new program coming soon focusing on l'dor v'dor. For any questions, please contact Rebecca Shaffer at bookcclane@me.com

Tifereth Worship Schedule

Tifereth Israel Synagogue | 924 Polk Blvd, Des Moines, IA 50312
www.tifereth.org

Email to be sent weekly with links, contact us if you are not currently receiving Tifereth emails.
Schedule subject to change. Please visit our website for the most up to date calendar

Recurring Events

Minyan via Zoom | Tuesdays | 9 a.m.
Shabbat Evening Services via Zoom | Fridays | 6 p.m.
S.T.E.P. (Sunday Torah Education Program) via Zoom | Sundays | 10 a.m. | Led by Mike Kuperman

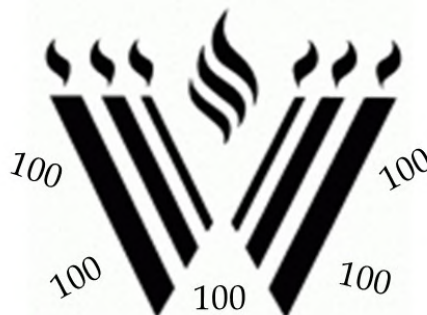
NEW RECURRING EVENTS

Introduction to Judaism | Sundays beginning January 10 | 1-2:30 p.m.
Intermediate Hebrew Taught by Rabbi Barton | Wednesdays beginning January 6 | 6:15-7:15 p.m.
Beginners Hebrew Taught by Russell Braman | Wednesdays beginning January 6 | 7:15-8:15 p.m.

Special Events

"Racial Justice from a Jewish Perspective" Discussion Group Co-Led by Julianna Dubin and Christine Dietz | Tuesdays,
January 12 and February 9 | 6:30-8 p.m.
Book Discussion: *Girl from Foreign* | Tuesday, January 26 | 6 p.m.
Zoom Parlor Meeting to Learn More About Camp Ramah | Monday, February 1 | 5:30 p.m.

Women's League Celebrates 100th Anniversary of Affiliation



Save the Date! 100th Anniversary Gala will be Sunday, June 6, 2021

Tifereth Israel Women's League will be having their 100th Anniversary Gala on
Sunday, June 6, 2021. More information to come. For any questions, please contact
Jody Jacklin at jpuppydog1@gmail.com

Ames Jewish Congregation

3721 Calhoun Ave, Ames, IA 50010

www.ajciowa.org

We will be continuing our Zoom schedule of worship services (an assortment of rabbi-led, lay-led, and family-oriented) as well as other events. At 5:30 p.m. on most Friday nights when there is not a Shabbat service scheduled, we will have a "Zoom Schmooze," a time for casual conversation. We also are planning a virtual Purim event. We warmly welcome anyone and everyone who would like to join us at one or more of our services or other events. Generally, a schedule is available a few weeks in advance on AJC's website, calendar and emailed to those who have asked to be notified about AJC events. To receive emails with Zoom links and more details about upcoming events, or if you have questions about AJC, please contact AJC at ajciowa@gmail.com.

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Happy New Year!

Bruce Sherman, Dave
Lettween and families



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Two Great Camps One Great Campus

Registration for current Beit Sefer
Shalom and Gan Shalom students
and returning ECS campers opens
January 10

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Learn more at
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&
ganshalompreschool.com

