

Federation Focus

Spring 2018

Vol.8 Issue 3

Federation Focus is published three times a year by the Jewish Federation of Central California.
"All Jews are responsible for one another." (Talmud:Shavuot 39a)

יום העצמאות



From the Director

I hope you and your families had a wonderful Passover and meaningful Seder. I was honored to spend the first Seder night with many of our community members at Temple Beth Israel. Every year Jewish Family Services hosts a table for our clients, volunteers and committee members, and this year we had the best attendance ever. TBI Sisterhood did a great job with the food and Rabbi Rick conducted a modern and informative Seder.



Yom Ha'atzmaut

Our 2018 Campaign is still going on and I would like to thank everyone who has made a pledge and encourage those who have not to please consider one.

**Call the JFCC office at 432-2162; Send your pledge in to JFCC (use form on back page);
or Send an email to fedfresno@sbcglobal.net**

As well as pledges, we gratefully accept donations in honor of, or in remembrance. When we receive these donations, we notify the associates or family of those being honored or remembered. We also accept advertisements that will be included in both our Focus publication and on our website. The cost is \$100 annually. We hope you will consider placing an ad and we encourage all of our community to support our advertisers.

Once again we will host our annual Yom HaAtzmaut, Israel's 70th Independence Day Celebration, at Temple Beth Israel. Every year our committee members, lead by Vardit Lichtenstein, work very hard to bring you this event. We hope you will join us at two special events this year: **(see flyer page 4)**

Saturday, May 5 at 7:30 pm — A Celebration Concert of Classic & Israeli Music.

Sunday, May 6 starting at 11:30 a.m. — Annual celebration with music, dancing, fun activities, Israeli Bazaar & Shuk, and an Israeli lunch. Our keynote speaker will be Shlomi Kofman- Consul General of Israel to the Pacific North West.

If you have any questions or suggestions please feel free to call me at 432-2162.

L'hitraot,

Phyllis Farrow, Executive Director



Spring Events



For more information on events listed in the calendar, please contact your local Congregation:

Temple Beth Israel (TBI) 559 432-3600
Congregation Beth Jacob (CBJ) 559 222-0064
Chabad of Fresno- 559 432-2770
Congregation B'nai David (CBD) 559 732-3139
Congregation Beit Shalom (CBS) 559 308-1333

Every Tuesday & Thursday 10-11 a.m./
TBI exercise class sponsored by Jewish Family Ser-
vices as part of its "Tools for Life" program

May 5

Israel at 70 Celebration Concert
 7:30 p.m.-TBI; Call for reservations

May 6

Israel at 70 Annual Celebration/JFCC
 11:30 a.m.-TBI

May 8

JFS Tools for Life
 11:30 a.m.-TBI Preventing Senior Fraud
 Det. C. Rodriguez- Fresno Police Dept.

May 13

Brotherhood Mother's Day Brunch
 9:30 a.m.-TBI

May 14

67th-B'nai B'rith Student Athlete Dinner
 6:30 p.m.-Clovis Veterans Memorial Bldg.
 808 4th Street, Clovis
 Donation \$35; Table of 8 \$280
 Contact Richard Sorsky for information (233-6633)
 richard@lindenpub.com

May 17

JFCC Annual Board meeting
 7 p.m. - CBJ

May 18

Confirmation Services
 7:30 p.m.- TBI

May 18

Congregation Beit Shalom
 7 p.m.-"The Promise"
 RSVP 308-1333

May 20-21

Shavuot

May 22

Fourth Tuesday
 1:00 p.m. – TBI Social Hall
 Retired Teachers Chorus sings Broadway tunes

June 17

Father's Day

June 22

Congregation Beit Shalom
 7 p.m.-"Triumph of the Spirit"
 RSVP 308-1333

June 26

Fourth Tuesday-Vi Cherin Memorial Luncheon
 Hosted by JFCC /11:30 a.m. TBI
 RSVP Judy Haber 431-2102 / jahaber@comcast.net

July 19

JFCC Board Meeting
 7 p.m.-CBJ

July 21

Tisha B'Av

July 24

Fourth Tuesday
 1 p.m. TBI, Social Hall
 Guest Speaker- Franz Weinschenk

August 28

Fourth Tuesday-TBD
 TBI, Social Hall

August 31

Congregation Beit Shalom
 7 p.m.-Dinner & Shofar Blowing Class
 RSVP 308-1333

For more information on services being held for Shabbat and other holidays please contact your local Congregation. A list of all Congregations is printed above and can also be found on our Facebook page,
facebook.com/JewishFederationCentralCalifornia

If you have any events you would like posted on our calendar please contact Phyllis Farrow at **fedfresno@sbcglobal.net**. These events should be open to the entire Jewish community.



President's Message

by Murray Farber



couple of recent letters in The Fresno

Bee upset me when the writers opposing gun controls asserted that Jews could have saved themselves during the Holocaust if they had guns. I'll save discussion of guns for another time; I'm bothered now by the implication that Jews went to their deaths passively. With the passage of more than 70 years, the courage of Jews involved in hundreds of instances of revolt is being forgotten.

The Six Million and the survivors faced German military might, Nazi deception that moved disbelieving victims into ghettos and concentrate camps with the demonic signage: *Work Will Set You Free*. Plus they faced anti-Semitism and hostility from civilians who collaborated with the Nazis. In response to the writers in The Bee, I cited some of these heroic fighters in my own letter, kept brief by the newspaper's requirements.

I'm still left seething, especially since we just observed Passover, the very period when Jews conducted the most memorable uprising. Historians at the Holocaust Museum have noted that the Germans required more time to quell this Jewish revolt than it took them to conquer some European armies.

The Nazis had forced about 500,000 Jews into the over-crowded ghetto starting in 1939 and gradually deported them to the death camps, reducing the number to about 60,000 by 1942. On the first night of Passover, April 19, 1943, Germans marched into the ghetto for the final transportation of the remaining Jews. But they had to retreat in shock. With Molotov

cocktails, homemade weapons, small arms and some machine guns that had been smuggled in, the Jews carried the battle to the Germans. Ordinary people determined to fight to the last. The Germans countered with 2,000 Wehrmacht and Gestapo personnel, tanks, grenades and flame throwers to level buildings. Jews displayed flags and popped up from cellars and bunkers to kill an estimated 300 soldiers, slowed the deportations and enabled dozens to escape. Not until May 16, after almost a month, could the Germans claim the Warsaw ghetto was destroyed.



Yad Vashem, the Israeli tribute to the Six Million, described the hopeless fight as a battle for the honor of Jews and a protest against the world's silence.

The most incredible Jewish story may have been the achievements of the Bielski brothers in the forest of the Ukraine. After the murder of their parents and two other brothers, the three remaining Bielskis created a partisan unit. Initially, they were trying to save themselves but other Jews joined them. Eventually, some 1,200 survived in a significant rescue between 1942 and 1944 that was depicted in the film "Defiance."

Tuvia Bielski, a Polish army veteran, took command and helped Jews escape from Nowogrodek, Minsk and other towns. At Iwi, over a hundred were saved just as the Germans readied to demolish the ghetto. The Bielskis fashioned an extensive partly underground community that provided medical care, food, a synagogue and schooling for the children. They also conducted sabotage raids and combatted German patrols. When the Germans launched an attack with

(continued on page 6)



**The Jewish Federation of Central California Presents a
Weekend of Celebration at Temple Beth Israel!**

Saturday, May 5 @ 7:30PM



A Special Celebration Concert of Classic & Israeli Music

Featuring:

**-Ronit Widmann-Levy -Gabriel Loewenheim
-Thomas Loewenheim -Efrat Levy -Rabbi Rick Winer**



For ticket information call: 559-432-3600

Sunday, May 6 @ 11:30AM

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

A Community Celebration of Music, Food & Dancing!



**-Keynote Address by Shlomi Kofman
Consul General of Israel to the Pacific North West**



**-Israeli Lunch -Israeli Bazaar & Shuk -Henna Artist
-Bouncehouse -Virtual Reality Game Truck**

**Temple Beth Israel
6622 N. Maroa Ave, Fresno**





Our Tools for Life program is a huge success. Participants in our twice weekly senior fitness sessions are enjoying exercise while improving their good health. The program is free to all but many have been leaving donations to show their appreciation.

Our second Tool is our speaker program. We began with a discussion on mental health led by a speaker from the National Association for Mental Illness, followed by a speaker on handling grief from Hines Hospice. Our most recent speaker discussed the incidence of breast cancer in Ashkenazi women. We are looking forward to our May session which will focus on the handling of fraud against senior citizens. We are also looking into a program to discuss the legal aspects of divorce.

Jewish Family Services continues to support the Jewish community. We are providing prayer shawls for women at the Chowchilla prison at the request of Rabbi Gordon.

JFS sponsored 28 people at the Seder at Temple Beth Israel and a number of others were offered sponsorship to the Seder at Chabad. Our distribution of challahs is enjoyed and appreciated.

We welcome your suggestions of how we may be of further help.

E-mail: fedfresno@sbscglobal.net
Phone 559-432-0529

The JFS Committee:

Carol Reba, Chair; Rabbi Paul Gordon; Phyllis Farrow, JFCC Director; Linda Nahin, Community Outreach; Leslie Briney, Rita Karsh, Elizabeth Kassel, Jenny Mann, Amy Schmidt

Syrian refugees find compassion in Fresno

We have two lovely Syrian friends seeking asylum here, anxiously awaiting for over a year for approval for their husbands. They have eight children in all: every one of them sweet, smart, and refreshingly eager to live in a country that doesn't murder its own citizens with weapons of mass destruction.

Despite gracious smiles, their faces occasionally cloud with images of homes and businesses crushed to rubble, or spared but wantonly desecrated by soldiers using walls and furniture for target practice. Memories of family members searched and beaten . . . a cousin, disintegrated by a bomb, within view of his child.

It is incomprehensible how our friends negotiate everyday life, readying children for school, struggling with English, cultivating friends, trying to call family in war zones with intermittent reception.

We listen and comfort, offering a compassionate space for tears or laughter. We visit or plan an outing, provide homework help, make art or break bread together – to sustain the belief that fleeing here was not selfish, but courageous — to save the children.

Other women in currently besieged areas also have bad choices. They are allowed to exit with their children, but must leave their men behind, vulnerable to capture or worse. Many have chosen to stay and die together.

Our relationship with our Syrian friends is characterized by perseverance, grit and a zealous love for our children. And stubborn faith that the destination can be a promised land. May we be part of the promise.

--Helen Siporin/Susan Bluestone

for more information about the Syrian refugees, contact siporin@comcast.net



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE*(Continued from page 3)*

20,000 military and police, the Bielskis moved the entire operation elsewhere in the massive forest.

Resistance occurred elsewhere. At Treblinka, prisoners stole weapons, attacked the guards and 300 escaped, although only 100 survived capture. At Sobibor, prisoners killed 11 SS officers; 300 fled although only about 50 avoided death. The revolt prompted the Nazis to close the camp. In France, Jews - one percent of the nation – formed Armee Juive (Jewish Army) and reportedly were 25 percent of the French Resistance.

Holocaust historian Yehuda Bauer has written that given the conditions, what is surprising is not how little resistance there was, but how much.

**TOOLS FOR LIFE***Presented by Jewish Family Services**at Temple Beth Israel***Senior Fitness Program****Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10-11 a.m.***Chair exercises with qualified instructor***Discussion Group****May 8 * 11:30 a.m.****Preventing Senior Fraud****Det. C. Rodriguez, Fresno Police Department**

*Tools for Life
is free and
open to the
public*



LETTER FROM ISRAEL by Vic Rosenthal

Comments?

K2vco.vic@gmail.com

I'm writing the day after the American, British and French bombing of Bashar Assad's chemical weapons facilities. The attitude of most Israelis is that we don't really care who rules Syria, because whomever it is will likely be our bitter enemy. We do what we can, providing medical treatment for Syrians wounded in the conflict, but the last thing we need is to become part of it.

On the other hand, the war there endangers us primarily because it is a vehicle for the projection of Iranian military power close to our border. Prime Minister Netanyahu has said – and basically everyone agrees – that Iran must not be allowed to set up bases in Syria. A few days ago Israel bombed such a base, killing several Iranian soldiers and officers.

In the south, the Israel Defense Force is dealing with "The Great March of Return," a Hamas-led demonstration of thousands of Palestinians trying to break through the border fence with the Gaza Strip. Western media coverage has been extremely biased against Israel, saying that IDF soldiers are "opening fire" on "unarmed protesters."

It sounds like men, women and children are being mowed down at random. In fact, there are strict rules for when soldiers can shoot – basically, when their lives are endangered or when Palestinians are trying to break through the fence. Almost all of those who were killed were Hamas fighters, some armed with explosives or firebombs, some trying to cut the fence or blow it up.

One can only imagine what would happen if hundreds of demonstrators – including armed terrorists – were able to cross into Israel. Far greater numbers



would be shot, Hamas would have to retaliate, and there would be war.

This week we observed Holocaust Memorial Day, *yom hashoah*. I was walking down the street when the 2-minute siren went off, and no matter how many times I experience it – the way pedestrians stop and stand at attention, drivers stop in the middle of the roads and stand beside their cars, the absolute silence except for the piercing siren – it is a powerful emotional experience.

During those two minutes, you can't think about anything else. I think about my parents' uncles, aunts and cousins who stayed in the old country until it was too late, and the entire universe of Jewish life in Europe that was wiped out. I think about the indif-

ference of Roosevelt who could have easily ordered the bombing of tracks and death camps with no detriment to the war effort, and about the calculated evil of the British who would sooner have seen Jews go up in smoke than go to Palestine. And I remind myself that "never again" means in part that we can never again depend on any other nation to defend the Jewish people.

Next week we will observe Remembrance Day, *yom hazikaron*, which will also have its sirens, for the more than 25,000 Israelis that have lost their lives in Israel's wars or by terrorism. And then it will be Independence Day, *yom ha'atzmaut*. We purchased our flag this morning, which I will proudly install on top of the antenna on our roof. Wish me luck with that.

TRANSITIONS**Counseling Center**

Margot E. Tepperman, L.C.S.W.

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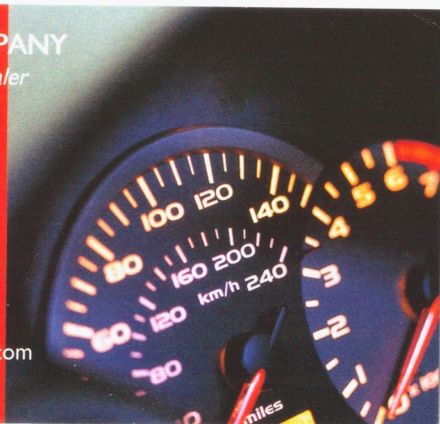
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Los Angeles Temple

Builds Event Space

The Audrey Irmas Pavilion, a five story building, will attach to the 1929 historic Wilshire Temple, the oldest Jewish congregation in Los Angeles.

It will house a banquet hall, meeting and conference rooms and a rooftop garden. The building is expected to open in 2020 and will cost an estimated \$75 million, 70% of which has been raised.

Rabbi Steve Leder said, "Los Angeles deserves a modern masterpiece that brings people together in the heart of the city's most diverse neighborhood."

CHASSIDUS CORNER

Shiloh is an amazing place in the Judean hills of the Shomron. When you stand there, you participate in the fascinating spiritual energy of the Mishkan, the first temporary temple

Moshiach can also be called Shiloh, which means he will become king and reign over the people.

The spiritual source of all of us is through Adam who contained in him all the various levels of the soul, including all the souls of the world. Moses' work included repairing all the sins of Adam. Moshiach will complete these repairs.. As such Moshiach will incorporate the soul of Moshe and Adam and bring the complete redemption. The priesthood will return to Aharon and his descendants and the monarchy to David HaMelech and his descendants, without any additional ceremony.

From this discussion, we learn that every Jew possesses an inner "Moses" with the ability to function as a nation of priests.

Finally, given the opening prayer we say every morning when dovening, let's make love for a fellow Jew a reality in our valley.

-David ben Hirsch HaCohan

The men's basketball team at Yeshiva University became champions for the first time this year, earning a berth in its division's post-season tournament. To accommodate Yeshiva, the National Collegiate Athletic Association moved the game up earlier on a Friday so the game would be over before the start of the Sabbath.



Congregation Beit Shalom

www.congregationbeitshalomvisalia.com
 congregationbeitshalom@yahoo.com
 559.308.1333

Visalia Voices

Congregation B'nai David

www.congregationbnaidavid.com
 559.732.3139

We are looking forward to the spring & summer with Friday night services, Special Events, and Holidays. Partnering with the California Holocaust Education & Resource-Center we'll show the film: "The Promise". This is the story of the 1915 Armenian Genocide. It will be shown on Friday, May 18 at 7 p.m. Food will be available. RSVP.

On Friday, June 22 at 7 p.m we will show the film "Triumph of the Spirit". This is the story of boxer Salarmo Arouch, who was a prisoner in Auschwitz in WWII. He was forced to box other inmates, for the amusement of his captors. He fought on, hoping to save his family, his friends, and perhaps his own soul. . . Food will be available. . .

In July, Beekeeper Darren of Kingsburg Honey will return to give a class on Beekeeping and Honeymaking. Just in time for the New Year and to get the kids interested in Rosh HaShanah. . Darren will cover the Life cycle of Bees, Beekeeping as a Hobby, and Honey making. There will be honey tasting and different flavors will be available. \$5 adults/children free.

How to Blow the Shofar in Time for the Holidays! is a class given by Maurice Kaminsof Los Angeles on Friday, August 31 at 7 p.m. Dinner and Shofar Blowing Class are \$20/adults, free for children 12 and under. Bring your own Shofar or purchase one in our Gift Shop .

Please like our FB Pages: Beitshalom and Californiaholocausteducation&resourcecenter

- Cynthia Fischer Simonian

Our Sunday School term will end on May 6. At 11a.m. we will have our 11th Annual Cake Auction and family picnic. Our Cake Auction has gotten bigger and better over the years with lots of delicious cakes, pastries and other interesting items!

The last weekend with our Student Rabbi Meir will be May 18-19. In the fall we will be looking forward to working with another student rabbi.

Our first night Passover Seder was well attended with lots of good food, lots of member participation; the children enjoyed looking for the Afikomen prize.

Myriam Farris, a congregant and Holocaust survivor, will be honored in Sacramento on May 16 at the State Assembly in Sacramento. Myriam has self-published a book of her remembrances and survival.

Several families have hosted and befriended an Israeli student who was recruited to be on the College of the Sequoias women's basketball team. Michal (Mickey) Sasson from Gan Yavne has spent the last year living in Visalia, playing basketball and studying at COS. She will be receiving a scholarship from a college in Indiana to play on its team along with her sister, who is already there.

We continue to extend our condolences to the families of several members and former members who have passed away - Miguel Romero, Lita Reid, Bob Briney, Peter Golombek and Raul Gallegos. May their memories be for a blessing.

Congregation B'nai David welcomes those in our community who are interested in Judaism and want to attend Friday evening services.

- Marcia Brooke Smith

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Jewish Federation North America	\$15,000
Honest Reporting Media Central	500
Israel Independence day	5,000
Guest Speakers Israel	1,500
Krembo Wings (youth program)	1,941
Total Israel/Overseas	23,941

Local

JFS	\$20,000
Interest free loans	3,000
CBJ/Yom Hashoah	1,000
JCRC	500
CBD/Holocaust Project	1,800
Prison Project	600
Camperships	1,500
"New Cemetery"	2,500
TBI/ Cemetery	8,000
Manchester School Holocaust Program	1000
FYBGI	2,000
Camp Shalom	1,000
TBI-4 th Grade Class/B'nai B'rith Dinner	280
Total Local except JFS	\$23,180
Grand total except restricted funds	\$67,121
Jewish Studies Program (restricted fund)	\$5,000
Play "Hold Me Heal Me" (restricted fund)	\$3,500

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General Donation

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**In memory of my mother,
Diane Zealer**

**In memory of Pauline Mok
Steve and Ete Rothenbergin**

**In memory of Sara Trump
Suzanne and Jack Benninga**

**In memory of the Farbers' dog
Mollie
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Our Mission

The mission of the Jewish Federation of Central California is to build and strengthen the Jewish community locally, overseas and in Israel, by

- ◆ *Raising funds and allocating them to identified Jewish community needs and priorities at home and abroad*
- ◆ *Providing education and cultural programs to promote community awareness of the Federation and its mission*
- ◆ *Listening to a broad spectrum of opinions from throughout the community to assure all Jewish voices are heard*
- ◆ *Evaluating efforts to ensure that Federation human and fiscal resources are used most effectively.*

For your convenience we accept Visa/Master Card for your pledges and donations. We appreciate your adjusting your gift to accommodate our 4% bank charge. Thank you.

Federation Offers Youth Scholarships

The Jewish Federation of Central California provides subsidies for Jewish youth to travel to and attend recognized Jewish camps and other programs in U.S. And Israel. Applications or requests must be received 30 days prior to need. For information call the Federation at **432-2162**.

Jewish Federations of North America protects and enhances the well-being of Jews and Jewish communities in North America, Israel and around the world. We strive to realize our core values of *chesed* (caring and compassion), *Torah* (Jewish Learning), *tikkun olam* (repair of the world) and *tzedakah* (social justice). As the focus of the federations, JFNA acts upon these values through philanthropy, strategic initiatives, and collective leadership—in partnership with local communities, national and international agencies.

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AND CALENDAR LISTING

August 15, 2018

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