

# JEWISH LIFE

ARIZONA

THE JEWISH LIFESTYLE  
MAGAZINE FOR ARIZONA

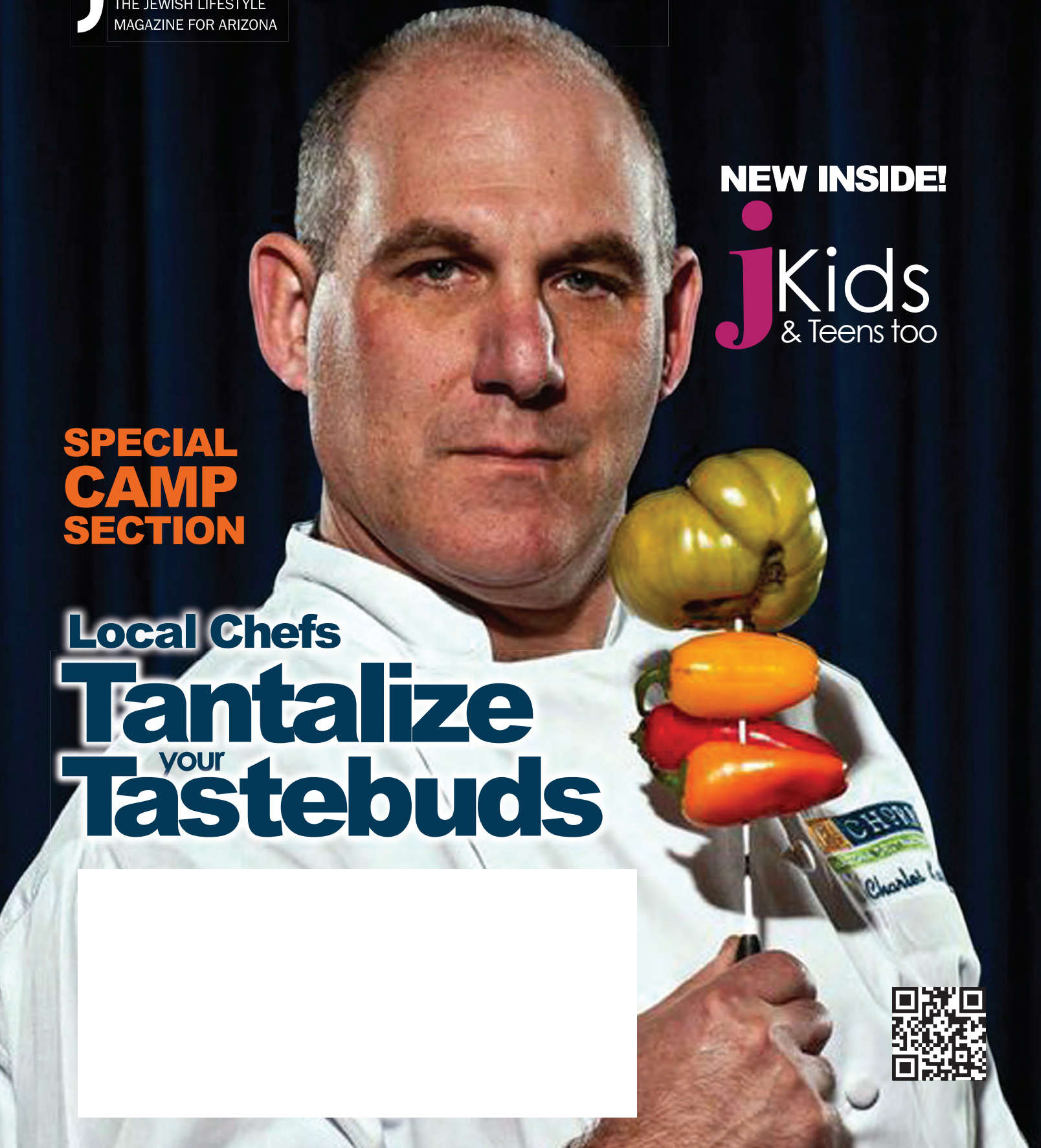
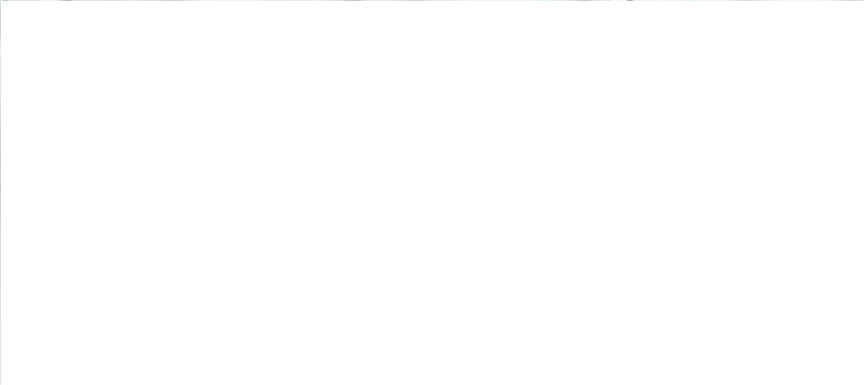
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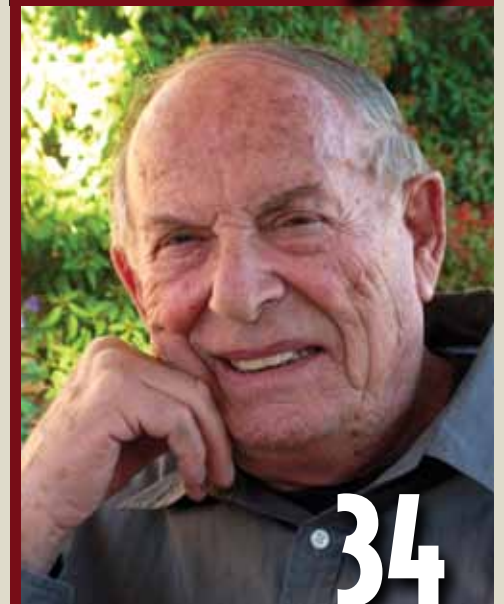
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COVER PHOTO: Chef Charlie Kassels by Matthew Strauss

CORRECTION: Senior author Leon Gildin's name was misspelled in the February Arizona Jewish Life.



## Editor's Letter



Food is such an integral part of Jewish culture, that this month we devoted not just our cover story, but an entire section to the topic that nearly everyone loves. We have highlighted chefs, bakers and other culinary mavens as they share their views on food, wine, restaurants and cooking.

Arizona Jewish Life introduces two exciting additions this month.

Long-time Phoenix resident and award-winning Jewish journalist Leni Reiss has joined our staff as a contributing editor. In addition to contributing interesting features, Leni will be out and about in the community taking photographs at events for our FACES pages, seeking answers to each month's Soundbites question and finding out what folks in the Jewish community want to know more about.

We are excited to have her on board. Check out our BIZ Ins & Outs pages for more details of Leni's noteworthy career. We're so glad she decided to join us!

Second, this month we debut our expanded coverage for kids, teens and their parents. We hope you'll find our new "J Kids & Teens too" section a valuable resource. The debut section features a special coverage of camp options for the coming summer. With spring break this month, summer vacation is just around the corner, and so are some of the camps we feature. This month, we also look at an anti-bullying program developed by a local Jewish teenager. Matthew Kaplan encourages middle schoolers to use positive peer pressure and teamwork to build a culture of respect, acceptance and support. On another note, did you know that the National Day of Unplugging (from technology) has its

roots in the Jewish Shabbat? Read all about it in J Kids.

While it's healthy to take a day to unplug from technology and reconnect with family and friends face to face, we recognize that technology can be a great way to connect to family and friends who live too far away to see regularly. Facebook and other social media are ideal ways to share your children's latest achievements. In future issues of J Kids & Teens too, we invite parents to share those cute moments or astute observations with Arizona's Jewish community. Just email me (editor1@azjewishlife.com) funny or insightful comments from your kids, along with photos, and we'll share them in future issues.

Although my sons are now grown, I well remember the delight or horror of hearing my child share a truth unencumbered by the perceived limitations of society. I refer to horror in the sense of embarrassment when that truth was regarding a nearby adult – like the time my first-grader asked loudly, "Mommy, why does that man want to die?" As I sat momentarily stunned, he added, "Smoking kills people." (OK, so maybe I hammered on the anti-smoking message pretty hard when they were young, but neither of my sons smoke!)

Nowadays as empty-nesters, we rely on our 3-year-old golden retriever Ajax (named for the Greek hero, not the cleanser) to provide comic relief, and occasionally good advice! Here's a photo of our proud boy reminding us what is important in life (and no, we didn't stage this – we simply gave him an empty Cheerios box to play with, and he tore it up and then paraded around with this piece).

I'm sharing my photo to inspire you to share yours.



*Deborah*

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# Letters to the editor

**Dear Editor:**

I have enjoyed reading your magazine and learning about our leaders, lifestyles and events in our community. I was flattered when Associate Editor Janet Arnold contacted me to write a story about Detour Company Theatre. Thank you, Janet, for capturing the essence of Detour Company Theatre and telling our story (February 2014, Take a Detour to a Magical Performance).

I am honored to be included in your prestigious magazine.

**Joyce Lefco**

**Board President, Detour Company Theatre**

**Phoenix**

I just received the February issue of Arizona Jewish life. Amy Hirschberg Lederman's piece (Jewish Soul Mates: Are you my beshert?) is a truly beautiful article about what it means to be or have a beshert. I am a huge believer.

I think that's how things happen and many good and loving relationships are sparked that way. It is a beautiful, beautiful article.

**Ester Leutenberg**

**Tucson**

Amy Hirshberg Lederman's storied connection (Soul Mates, February Arizona Jewish Life) is wonderful! But it sends and reinforces the erroneous Disneyland/Hollywood belief that one person completes another and they can live happily ever after. Setting the bar at that threshold by citing the Ba'al Shem Tov perpetuates the illusory myth that this soul mate is a blessed union from on high and anything else is but a soulful relationship.

At best, Amy's amazing story is something to aspire to, at worst it is unattainable advice to future newlyweds that can only lead them down the path of frustration and disillusionment when they fall short of this seemingly blessed perfection. Work, raising a family, being in a family, health, financial difficulties, death, distractions, bad stuff, and good stuff, too, have to be transcended and balanced in the joint undertaking that is marriage. That is how a couple can realize what Amy and her husband have achieved – beshert.

It is from working together that the Ba'al Shem Tov's words of creating a brighter light from their united being are realized.

**David Jove**

**Miami, FL**

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A Hyde Park "butler" serves tea to a client

# Respect, personal touches guide elder care

By Jane Larson

Polly Morris says she always has related well to older adults.

Even when she was just 18 and helping with her family's antique and design business, Morris says she felt comfortable meeting people moving from their long-time homes to smaller ones or assisted-living centers.

"It's not normal by any means to go from high school into the antiques business, but that's what I did," Morris says. "I've always dealt with older adults ... I have no difficulty envisioning how they were. And I have no difficulty in talking to them as

someone would have when they were 30 or 40, because they don't feel any different inside."

Today Morris has parlayed those insights into her own business named Hyde Park Home Healthcare Professionals, LLC. Hyde Park provides quality in-home health care and services customized to clients' personal interests and lifestyles.

The name is a nod to both the graceful royal park in London and Morris' British heritage.

Morris, her parents and siblings lived in England until Morris was 14. Her mother's family had fled there from Poland before World War II. Morris remembers her mother telling stories

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about drones flying overhead and the sudden silence that meant bombs were about to fall. She remembers looking from their Southsea home toward the English Channel and thinking, “Wow, that little channel is all that stopped my parents from being put in concentration camps.”

The family moved to Scottsdale in 1976, continuing its business dealing in antiques and estate sales. Often Morris would work with clients in Sun City and other retirement communities. Morris’ husband, attorney Randy Nussbaum, has lived in the Valley since 1962.

Morris and Nussbaum have long been involved in the Jewish community and in Scottsdale. She is on the board of directors of the Kivel senior-living community in Phoenix; a supporter of Jewish Family & Children’s Service’s program for teens moving out of Arizona’s foster-care system; and a member of the Phoenix Holocaust Survivors Association’s Generations After, a group that resonates with her because of her family’s years in England. Both Morris and Nussbaum are involved with the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts and Temple Solel.

After the birth of their two sons, Morris sold her antiques and design business. When the boys reached school age, she started college. She earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology and a master’s degree in social work, with a focus on gerontology, from Arizona State University. Meanwhile, the boys grew up — Michael Morris-Nussbaum is now 22, and Daniel Morris-Nussbaum is 20.

She first put her education and her affinity for older adults to work at a senior public housing project in Phoenix, where she helped seniors turn a barren patch of land into their own community garden. She next interned with Hospice of the Valley. While visiting hospice clients in their homes, she got the idea for her own health care business.

The idea solidified as she sat with a group of care facility residents during a lunchtime visit. She felt there was so much more that could be done to enhance their dining experience.

“I saw a need, and I thought, ‘I could do this really well. I could really take care of people and do it from a totally different perspective.’”

After her hospice work, Morris became marketing director for her husband’s law firm. Off hours, she researched assisted-living homes and health care services. She decided her company would



Hyde Park staff offer a luxury touch to home health care.

“If someone says, ‘I want Hungarian goulash,’ and that wasn’t covered in training, we’ll send the culinary instructor out to show them how to make whatever it is that person would like.”

—Polly Morris

focus on consistent service provided by highly trained and experienced employees communicating and working together. She developed training programs to add to their caregiving training and experience, ranging from customer service and caring for chronic conditions to culinary arts and salon services.

After two years of researching facilities and developing the training, Morris started Hyde Park Home Healthcare in September 2013. The company has a dozen employees who provide home health care to clients, both short term and long term, medical and non-medical. The staff includes six personal care assistants, three nurses, a medical social worker and the culinary and salon instructors.

Instead of wearing hospital-style scrubs, Hyde Park employees wear uniforms — navy pants or skirts,

yellow shirts and navy vests — so clients immediately recognize them. Employees also address clients by their last names unless otherwise requested.

Hyde Park assistants can prepare meals ranging from steaks and salads to pasta and sandwiches, and they can give manicures and style hair. The culinary-arts and salon instructors are available to help with special requests or situations, too. “If someone says, ‘I want Hungarian goulash,’ and that wasn’t covered in training, we’ll send the culinary instructor out to show them how to make whatever it is that person would like,” Morris says. “If they have difficult hair, the salon instructor will go with them to show them how to do this particular head of hair.”

Such services are not extras, but are included in Hyde Park’s rates. The company’s hourly fees are higher than competitors, Morris acknowledges, but she maintains that clients deserve quality

home care.

“When we say ‘luxury,’ most of the things aren’t really luxury. They should be standard with every company,” she says. “It starts with the highest-caliber people and the highest training. That’s what makes it.”

Morris’ favorite pastimes carry over to the business, too. She enjoys music and movies from the 1920s and ’30s, and she loves walking and hiking. The family has a cabin on the Arizona-New Mexico border, and when her boys were young, Morris often would pack a picnic lunch and take them for daylong hikes.

What applied to her children now applies to clients, too. “No just putting them in front of a TV and leaving them there all day,” Morris says. “A huge part of our training is engaging people, talking to them and doing what they like to do — finding

the books and magazines, do they like to play chess or checkers or cards, do they like to go outside to the park or to a restaurant?"

That psychological well-being is as important as physical well-being, Morris says, and she is adamant that older adults be treated and spoken to respectfully. "It was just amazing to me. That is a big thing, treating people with the respect they deserve," she says.

Julie Freed, a personal-care assistant with Hyde Park, says she and Morris have known each other since their children were preschoolers. When Freed's children reached high school, she began working with a cancer patient who needed care and transportation. That inspired her to become a certified nursing assistant, and when Morris started Hyde Park, Freed quickly joined her.

Teamwork and communication set the small company apart from other firms, Freed says. And Morris is available around the clock if an employee needs extra help.

"We work as a team, from beginning to end," Freed says. "It's not just writing notes to each other. It's about face-to-face communication."

Ira Shulman, president and chief executive officer of Kivel, has



Polly Morris

worked with Morris on projects including a movie fund-raiser, the launch of a discussion and reading group for residents, and the development of an assisted-living home. He calls Morris "truly dedicated" to helping older adults make the most of their lives.

"I think Polly's new business, in the very crowded field of home health care, is unique because of Polly and the importance she puts into details," he says. "Polly thinks of her elderly clients as important people, not simply as customers."

Morris says about 75 percent of Hyde Park's business so far is short-term engagements for clients ranging from their late 20s into their 80s. The other 25 percent is long-term service for older adults.

The company's next step is applying for Medicare accreditation, a yearlong process that will help the services qualify for insurance coverage, Morris says. The accreditation will allow the medical-care portion of the business to grow.

But Morris vows that Hyde Park will stay a small, personal-touch company. "We will never have more clients or employees than we can handle," she says.

*Josh Weiss contributed to this article.*

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# A Coach for All Seasons: Tucson life coach Molly Eglin

By Sarah Chen



By the end of a coffee with life coach Molly Eglin, you'll want a cup of whatever she's drinking. She speaks passionately, oozing with *joie de vivre* for her family, her profession and most things in general. As an ontological coaching specialist, her ultimate goal for every client is to "be who you are and give your greatest gift."

Eglin's clientele stems mostly from people in transition, primarily families, professionals and individuals who want to "do life differently." She offers one-on-one personal sessions, workshops and small group breakouts. She fashioned her office as her own personal "mini-house," vibrant and colorful with no detail spared to protect privacy, including the compartmentalized waiting room with sound muffling to prevent conversation eavesdropping.

After residing more than 40 years in Tucson, Eglin counts herself among the lucky near-native few who have watched the city grow and change. She relocated from Philadelphia to elope with her husband, Evan, and never looked back. She gets misty-eyed speaking of Evan, a man she met on a blind date, moved to Arizona for and eloped with. They have two daughters, Stephanie and Jennifer.

Although Eglin presents her past as a series of coincidences and happenstance events, her ambition and creativity clearly guided her pursuits. Her journey to become a life coach includes positions as a flower shop manager and owner, a modeling agency receptionist and agent, and concierge of Canyon Ranch. On a whim, she applied for and was surprised to land a position in the ranch's hiking department, a move that changed her life dramatically.

"All of a sudden I became emotionally, mentally, physically strong," she says. "It created spirituality."

This spirituality propelled her confidence with the outdoors, and led to the purchase of a remote seven-acre plot of land southeast of Tucson in Rincon Valley. Their homestead inspired her to found Rincon Valley Farmers Market, a nonprofit farmers market collaborative still operational today. It remains one of the area's first.

All these entrepreneurial stints culminated in her realization of her true passion: life coaching. She attended the Newfield Network Coach Training Program in Boulder, CO, and gained two professional certifications. She belongs to the International

Coach Federation and the Tucson Coaches Alliance. Her return to formal education was a personal triumph; having had undiagnosed attention deficit disorder as a child and being constantly labeled as a bad student, she never attended college. She describes her discovery of ontological coaching as "visceral. Something I knew deeply but couldn't verbalize."

Eglin will tell you her Jewish roots run deep. Her involvements include the Jewish Federation of Southern Arizona and the Jewish Community Center. She and her husband belong to Tucson's Congregation Or Chadash. She laughs when asked if Judaism plays a role in her profession: "Is it a G-d thing? A fate thing? It's *something!*"

Looking to the future, Eglin expects to continue to fill her schedule with personal coaching sessions. One quarter of her individual sessions are pro bono, a self-imposed rule she calls "deeply fulfilling." She also expects to continue her relationship with the Tucson nonprofit, Integrative Touch for Kids, where she facilitates group sessions for families with children with chronic, acute and life-limiting illnesses. Although she has owned her personal practice for only five years, her schedule is constantly full.

Eglin says that public awareness of life coaching has increased in recent years. "Still," she explains, "I am not a therapist." Anything deeply physically, emotionally or sexually traumatizing, she readily refers to other appropriate professionals. "I look at where we are today and focus on moving forward," she says.

Most of Eglin's clients complete six months to one year of coaching, depending on the need. Her most successful clients come for coaching with an open mind, and, after completing coaching, move on in life with a distinct, palpable change in behavior.

"Self-care used to be viewed as selfish," she claims, "yet it is so important."

One gets the sense that Eglin perceives the best in each person she meets and strives to show the world her secrets of living a happier, easier life. "I have to be careful not to coach the world," she confesses, giggling. "It is so, so powerful, this work." [mollyeglincoaching.com](http://mollyeglincoaching.com)

*Sarah Chen lives in Tucson with her husband, son and daughter. She writes on interfaith marriage, raising a Jewish family and life in the U.S. Air Force. Her idea of perfection is walking her dog, reading in a hammock and eating breakfast tacos.*



## Leni Reiss joins Arizona Jewish Life

Leni Reiss has joined the staff of Arizona Jewish Life as contributing editor.

A Valley resident since 1961, she has been an active participant in the community since then, and has been recognized for her efforts by Hadassah and the local federation, among other groups and organizations. Leni served as managing editor of Greater Phoenix Jewish News for 17 years, earning local and national professional awards including one from El Al

Airlines. She presently serves as associate project coordinator of The Conversation: Jewish in America, an annual national conference that brings together American Jews who are leaders or emerging leaders in their fields. In addition, she is the liaison for the American Jewish Press Association to Do the Write Thing, a program for Jewish campus journalists.

Leni and her husband, Barry, live in Phoenix as do her son, Mitchell, daughter, Andrea (Weiss), and eight grandchildren. [azjewishlife.com](http://azjewishlife.com)



## Robin LeMarr new media director at Anderson Advertising

Robin LeMarr joined Anderson Advertising & Public Relations as the company's media director on Feb. 26.

Robin's previous experience includes positions as a media buyer with Grey Advertising in Los Angeles, a media planner/buyer with Owens & Associates in Phoenix, a media planner/buyer/

director with E.B. Lane & Associates, the Media Director with Results Media Group, and an integrated media sales executive with ABC15 and abc15.com.

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Becca Hornstein (L) and Gail Gilmartin

## Leadership changes at Council for Jews with Special Needs

The leadership of the Council for Jews with Special Needs has changed hands for the first time since its inception. CJSN serves as a point of support and resources to

help Jews with disabilities experience religious, social and cultural opportunities. Becca Hornstein, who founded the organization in 1985, retired as of Jan. 31.

"I'm looking forward to spending time with friends and family," Becca says. "Plus, I've been running one book club but now have time to join another where I am simply a participant," she adds. "And though most people don't know, my education was really as an artist and in the last 40 years, I've managed to create only one painting. So I'm hoping to get back to that as well." Gail Gilmartin is the new executive director. Gail comes from a nonprofit background, having worked for the Kidney Foundation, Special Olympics and the Fiesta Bowl. Her degree is in Organizational Communication from Arizona State University, which she believes prepared her well for life in the nonprofit world. "Becca has left such a wonderful legacy here, and I have very large shoes to fill," Gail says. "I'm hoping to work with the board and the community to continue to move CJSN forward to the next level."

A Los Angeles native, Gail has been in Arizona for 20 years and lives in the East Valley with her husband and two daughters.



Carol Kern

## JFCS elects chair and appoints board members

The Governance Board of Jewish Family & Children's Service elected Carol Kern as their new board chair and appointed two new board members: Sandy Mendez Benson and Vicki Cabot.

Mendez Benson, a Harvard Business School graduate, is the owner of Assisted Transition, a senior living placement and advisory service. "I am excited to spread the word about an organization founded by a team of strong women; an organization which does so much for our overall community including our youth, the Latino community and the senior community," says Mendez Benson. "As a Latina, parent of young kids and a small business owner in the senior care industry, I want to invest my limited volunteer time in an organization that gets the big picture about lifting up our community, and that is exactly what JFCS does."

Cabot, a writer and editor, is an adjunct professor of religious studies at Glendale



Sandy Mendez Benson



Vicki Cabot

Business Ins & Outs welcomes submissions of news items about businesses and Jewish organizations including new leadership, retiring leaders and new facilities. Send your business news brief of up to 250 words, along with a photo, to Arizona Jewish Life Associate Editor Janet Arnold at [janet.arnold@azjewishlife.com](mailto:janet.arnold@azjewishlife.com).

Community College.

"My many years living and working in the Jewish community have heightened my awareness of the critical human needs both in the Jewish world and the larger one, and of our innate responsibility to meet them. JFCS provides a continuum of services that touches so many people in so many ways, striving to help those at risk and those in need, individuals and families, children and seniors. It is their stories, and their faces, that resonate and inspire me to share my time and talents to make their world, and ours, just a little better place," says Cabot. Kern served as the Phoenix chapter president, western region president and national president of the Brandeis National Committee. She also chaired Hospice of the Valley Art Auction and Women's Works, a community education day. She serves on the AAHA committee. "I am so pleased to add the talents of Sandy Benson and Vicky Cabot to the JFCS Governance Board. We are fortunate that they have made the commitment to bring their expertise to JFCS, and I look forward to working alongside them," says Kern.

The two new members join Kern and 10 other board members: Dr. Paul Stander, Noel Williams, Steven Friedman, Jay Fruchtman, Jerome S. Gutkin, Michael E. Johnson, Dr. Jeffrey Packer, Michael Seiden, Edna Ora Sitelman and Leesa Berens Weisz.

[jfcsaz.org](http://jfcsaz.org)



## 2013 Chef of Year Lenard Rubin joins DC Ranch

Lenard Rubin is the new executive chef at The Country Club at DC Ranch. Chef Rubin recently received the American Culinary Federation's Arizona Chapter Chef of the Year Award for 2013, selected by his peers from a field of 200 participants. A two-time James Beard House invitee, Rubin was inducted into the Arizona Culinary Hall of Fame in

2001. He was also named the American Culinary Federation Chef of the Year in 2006 for the Greater Phoenix Chapter and was a national semi-finalist in 2011. He brings 32 years of experience and awards to The Club at DC Ranch and is highly regarded by culinary experts from around the nation. Recipes by Rubin can be found in such collections as *Jewish Cooking in America* by Joan Nathan and *The New York Times Passover Cookbook*. One of his creative Jewish recipes is for Southwestern Tsimmes Stuffed in Chilies.

[ccdc ranch.com](http://ccdc ranch.com) or 480-342-7246



## Rebecca Weinstein moves from Hillel to Temple Emanuel

Rebecca Weinstein has left her position as student engagement and development director with Hillel to work at Temple Emanuel in Tempe, where she will be the membership specialist for the Reform congregation. "I will really miss the students. I didn't realize when I started that I'd end up being a mentor, college counselor and study buddy - I've really

enjoyed that," she says. Rebecca came from Henderson, NV, and first worked for Arizona Broadway Theatre as a stage manager before being brought into Hillel under the tutelage of Rabbi Barton Lee.

In addition to working at Temple Emanuel, Rebecca is attending the Lodestar Foundation's program for nonprofit management, learning the legal, administrative and fund-raising aspects of nonprofits. She looks forward to her new duties, which began on Feb. 18. "I'll always love Hillel, but know it's time for me to move on and grow. I'm anxious to help develop relationships that will encourage congregational engagement and growth at Emanuel," says Rebecca.



## Shotsy Abramson retires from ASU Hillel

After 35 years in a variety of positions at Arizona State University's Hillel, Shotsy Abramson has retired. More than 120 people gathered on Jan. 26 at ASU's Memorial Union to thank Shotsy and pay tribute to her for her years of dedicated service to the students and Hillel. Some of those attending were former

students who now have their own children about ready to attend ASU. Next up on Shotsy's agenda is spending time with family, renewing old friendships and traveling to see family in Philadelphia. Looking back, Shotsy feels her greatest contribution was in simply "being there" for the students, representing "a mature voice they would listen to." Perhaps her favorite program was the Hillel Players, a theatrical troupe she put together and took around the Valley when she worked in the programming area of Hillel. "It was such a creative process and allowed us to bring students into Hillel through a different door," she says. Shotsy also plans to "cook more and eat healthier!" Food is a recurring theme in Shotsy's life: so much so that Hillel has initiated a fund in Shotsy's honor that will provide Shabbat dinners and daily lunches for students, encouraging them to "strengthen their connections to Judaism and each other" while enjoying a nutritious meal. Contributions can be made at 480-967-7563 or at [hillelasu.org](http://hillelasu.org).

## Leon Silver earns advocacy leadership award

Leon Silver received the Advocacy Leadership award from the YWCA of Metropolitan Phoenix at its annual Tribute to Leadership dinner Feb. 1. The award recognizes Silver's commitment to the organization's mission of empowering women and eliminating racism.

Silver is a shareholder in the law firm Polsinelli, where he serves as a commercial trial lawyer specializing in representing clients in the retail and hospitality industries. Silver has spent the last 25 years protecting and promoting freedom, education and empowerment as a board member, board chair, advocate, fund-raiser, public speaker and volunteer lawyer on behalf of Planned Parenthood. He has been honored for his work co-founding and fostering the Liberty Project, a reproductive rights advocacy group made up of law and medical students, and practicing lawyers and physicians. He served on the board of YWCA and volunteers with Take the Lead, a women's empowerment program launched live and by web stream from Gammage Auditorium in February 2014. Silver remains active in the arts. He is a visual artist and plays in a local rock band.

[polsinelli.com/lsilver](http://polsinelli.com/lsilver)



## Chompie's Lovy Borenstein feted

Mazel tov to Lovy Borenstein, founder and owner of Chompie's, for being named one of the Top Ten Women who Move the Valley in 2014 by Arizona Foothills Magazine. Chompie's is celebrating 35 years of being in the Valley this year, and daughter Wendy Borenstein-Tucker wants to get the word out about the deep commitment her mother has to family, whether it be their own or

the many families who come through Chompie's doors. Chompie's, "Arizona's New York Deli," has locations in Phoenix, Scottsdale and Tempe.

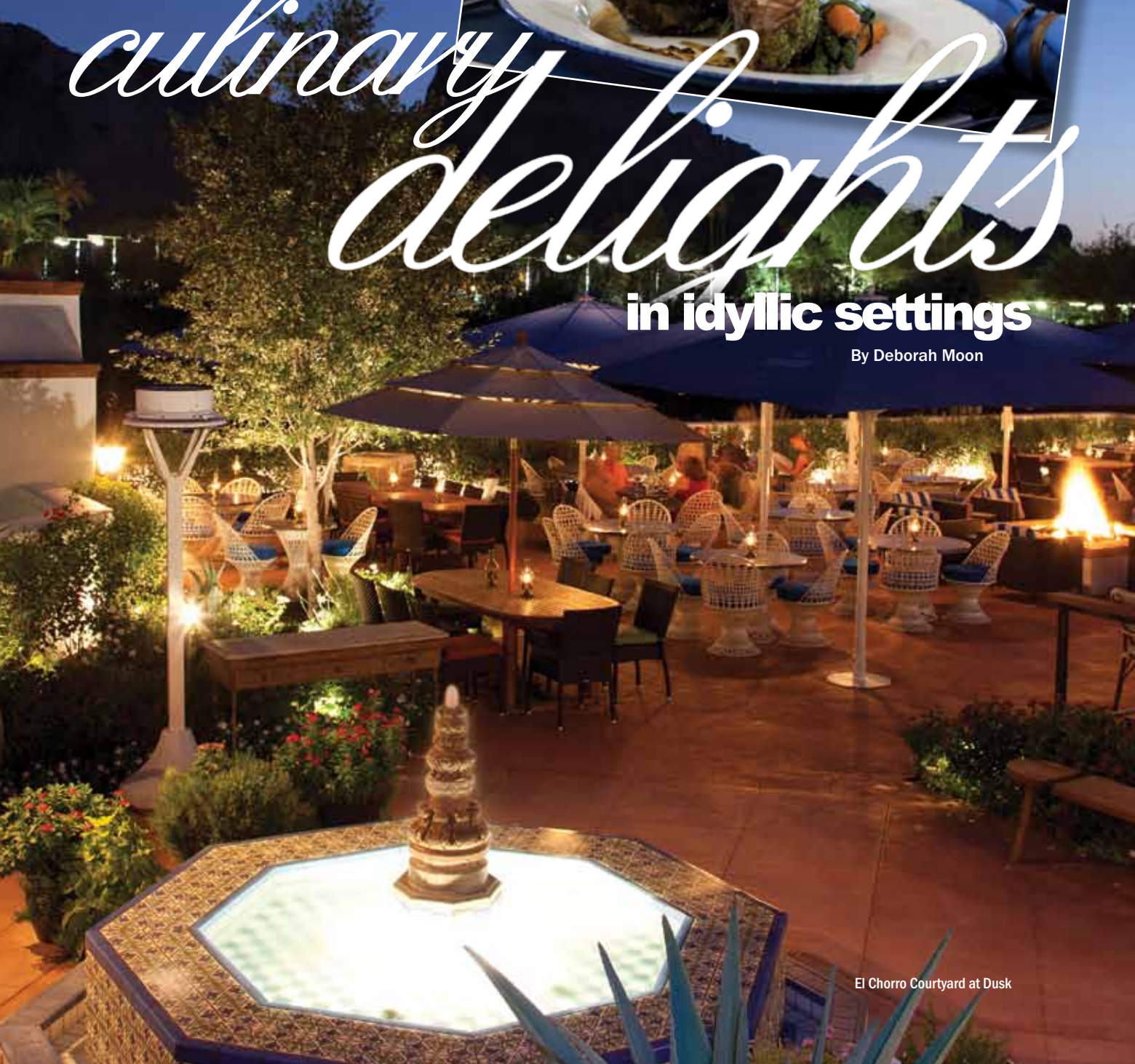
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**Chefs  
Create**

*culinary  
delights*

**in idyllic settings**

By Deborah Moon





“

When I was close to graduating, I realized I liked cooking better than accounting.”

”

Cover chef Charlie Kassels and Sacha Levine, the subject of the next story in our special food section, have a lot in common. The two Jewish chefs not only share a passion for cooking that began in high school, they each love the idyllic, expansive settings of the locally owned Valley restaurants where they respectively practice their art. The classic steakhouse El Chorro sits on 12 acres in the same building that has housed the restaurant for 77 years. Located on The Farm, a 10-acre working farm in southern Phoenix, Quiescence offers a romantic setting to dine on farm-to-table, hand-crafted cuisine.

## Chef Charlie Kassels

**Executive Chef  
El Chorro**

For more than four years, Chef Charlie Kassels has created classic American dishes at the historic restaurant just minutes from the synagogue he grew up attending.

“El Chorro is a classic American steakhouse and fish house that has been in business for 77 years,” says Chef Charlie, noting popular dishes include rack of lamb, braised short ribs, Diamond Ranch prime rib, crispy chicken livers, sticky buns and a variety of fish dishes. Having spent most of his life in Arizona, Charlie says he also enjoys preparing southwest favorites.

He says El Chorro hosts about a dozen bar or bat mitzvah celebrations a year, most from the nearby Reform synagogue Temple Solel. The restaurant has many classic dishes that can fit into a kosher-style diet.

It's easy to go to work each day at the beautiful 12-acre site nestled in an urban area, says Charlie, extolling the views of Camelback Mountain from the restaurant. Originally built as a school in 1934, it was converted into a restaurant and lodge in 1937. In 2009 Valley philanthropist Jacquie Dorrance and



operating partners Kristy Moore and Tim Moore acquired and renovated the historic facilities, incorporating a number of green-building features that made it the first restaurant in the state to earn LEED Gold certification.

Charlie, who had worked for the Moores in the past, was happy to return to Arizona to take charge of the El Chorro kitchen after serving as executive chef of Santa Fe's El Dorado Hotel and Spa for several years.

Charlie has been cooking professionally for 30 years.

He grew up in Phoenix where his mother moved after his parents divorced, but spent summers with his father, Jascha Kassels z"l, in Saratoga Springs, NY, a small spa community that was a popular summer destination for NYC's Hassidic community. Both of his parents were raised Orthodox – their grandparents and great grandparents had immigrated to the Boston area from Russia and Eastern Europe. Though neither of his parents considered themselves Orthodox, he says, “they were kinda old school” and found the Saratoga Springs Orthodox shul a better fit than the only other congregation in town. He became a bar mitzvah at his father's congregation there and attended the Reform Temple Solel in Arizona.

His favorite childhood food memory is helping his mother, Victoria Kassels z"l, make chopped liver. He said his 90-pound, 4'11" dynamo of a mother would fry the livers, and he would do the physical work of turning the crank on the hand grinder clamped to the kitchen counter.

He began working in restaurants during high school and college.

“When I was close to graduating, I realized I liked cooking better than accounting,” he says. So he headed for New York to attend the Culinary Institute of America, from which he graduated in 1987. He went to a resort community near Saratoga Springs for his culinary apprenticeship before returning to Arizona in 1989.

He served as the executive chef for the Westin Kierland Resort in Scottsdale; banquet chef at the Boulders Resort in Carefree; and executive chef at Continental Catering and Barmouche, both in Phoenix, before moving to Santa Fe as El Dorado’s executive chef for a few years. He was named the best new chef in Santa Fe in 2007 and was the featured host chef for the Santa Fe Wine and Chile Festival in New Mexico.

Having worked with the Moores in restaurants previously, he says he was delighted when the operating partners asked him to return to Phoenix to serve as executive chef of El Chorro in 2009. “I love working for the Moores,” he says. “El Chorro is a family operation in a huge restaurant setting.”

Hiw own family includes wife, Mary Kassels, and two children. Herschel Henry, 11, is named for both of his grandparents, while 9-year-old Sara Victoria is named for her grandmother.

Charlie likes to use local, fresh ingredients. He blends seasonal and regional organic ingredients with influences from the Southwest, Continental and Sonoran cuisines.



“  
I feel vegetables are so undervalued. When I eat a carrot just harvested from the farm, the intensity and flavor and sweetness is just amazing.  
”

## Sacha Levine

**Sous Chef  
Quiessence**

Sacha Levine loves preparing farm-fresh dishes in the old farmhouse that has been converted into a high-end romantic dining adventure known as Quiessence. The converted farmhouse offers a variety of intimate dining options ranging from the outdoor table for two on the brick oven patio to dining rooms of varied sizes indoors. The restaurant is the site of about one marriage proposal a week.

Sacha specializes in preparing vegetables, pickling and charcuterie. Situated on a working farm, Sacha and executive chef Dustin Christofolo make extensive use of vegetables and herbs harvested on site. Many of the garden herbs become part of the pickling. The Farm’s citrus grove provides the basis for many a house-specialty cocktail and the kumquat upside-down





Quiescence brick oven patio romance

cake on the seasonal menu.

“I feel vegetables are so undervalued,” says Sacha. “They are naturally beautiful and wonderful and unadulterated. When I eat a carrot just harvested from the farm, the intensity and flavor and sweetness is just amazing.”

Vineyard Road lambs are raised just down the street.

“I get whole lambs and break down and treat each lamb part differently. I make stock and pate,” says Sacha.

Born in Chicago, Sacha and her mother moved to Bullhead City, AZ, after her parents’ divorce. Her Bubbe and Uncle Steve, a “very Jewish but not religious guy,” became major influences in her life after her father’s death when she was 8. Having married into a Jewish family, Sacha’s mother always incorporated Jewish food and traditions into the family life. She would make rugelach every December. Once a week, she would come up with Bullhead City’s best approximation of lox and bagels – with smoked salmon often standing in for the lox.

“I was super scholastic and into theater and was the speech and debate captain in high school,” she says. “But the family was poor, and we knew I needed a career. Our high school had a culinary arts program, and I started in it as a sophomore.”

She says she did great in high school cooking competitions and earned a full-ride scholarship to the Arizona Culinary Institute, graduating in 2003. Her first job was at Atlas Bistro, where during two years she rose from intern to chef. Since then she has worked in a variety of Phoenix restaurants – all independent. She earned a gold medal honor in a National



Raw and Roasted Vegetables



Scottish Salmon with Couscous

FCCLA Food Production competition. In 2010 she took a break from restaurants to work on a farm, where she expanded her preserving repertoire. Before joining Quiescence, she spent two years at Scottsdale’s Rancho Pinot. Before that she was sous chef at FnB Restaurant.

Sacha says her Jewish roots were clearly evident in a series of “pop-up” dinners she and her partner Sandy LeVar created last year. Every other Sunday, with the help of several restaurant friends, Sacha and Sandy created a themed dinner for about 30 to 40 people – reservations required. In honor of the Jewish tradition of eating Chinese food on Christmas, she created a Chinese-kosher mashup she called “My Kosher Christmas” for one of the December dinners. The menu was sprinkled with Yiddish. Sacha says her Bubbe, who died about four years ago, used to give her a hard time about all the fried food she ate. So Sacha created a Bubbe’s Nightmare pu pu platter of

traditional Jewish fried foods. Another dinner featured Middle Eastern fare.

Though she thinks the pop-up dinners are a great way to build community through food, she doesn’t think she’ll do another series since Quiescence, where she became sous chef in November, keeps her very busy.

“I love working at one of the most high-end restaurants in Phoenix,” she says. “Quiescence is unique. The farm is right there, that’s a rarity in Arizona.”

# Tucson's Marianne Banes

This versatile pastry chef knows how to cook too

By Janet Arnold

Men seem to dominate the field of chefs in today's restaurant scene.

Marianne Banes, the corporate pastry chef for Kingfisher and Bluefin Seafood Bistro in Tucson, recalls that there seemed to be more women when she was starting out in the late 1970s, but they fell by the wayside.

"It's a tough business as far as hours and commitment. I made a decision early on to concentrate on my career and have loved every minute of it!" Marianne says.

Marianne is unusual in that she is a pastry chef as well as a traditional chef. "It's somewhat unusual to be able to do both," she explains. "Cooking is science but baking is chemistry – there's very little wiggle room to make an error." While she can do line cook work, and she does everything when she caters, she confides that she loves baking more than almost anything in

**"Baking is chemistry – there's very little wiggle room to make an error."**

– Marianne Banes

the world.

Regulars at Kingfisher often ask for Marianne or contract with her on the side for a special wedding cake or holiday pie. "And every Jewish organization in town calls me for a donation when there's an event," she laughs. Marianne's family is from Cincinnati and moved to Arizona when she was 9. Her father was Orthodox and had dreams of her marrying a "nice Jewish doctor." She explained to him that in her line of business, she basically met line chefs and truck drivers. With her crazy work hours she wasn't sure that marriage was even in the cards for her.

However, at age 38 Marianne married Gregory McNamee, a local author with 37 books to his credit. "He writes mostly history and biographies, but he's got a couple of food books coming up soon," she says, adding "Guess my work has influenced him a bit!" They've always lived in Tucson where Marianne has been with the Kingfisher restaurants for an unprecedented 18 years. Besides baking and Gregory, one of Marianne's other loves is her horse, Bandit the Wonderhorse, who she rescued nearly four years ago and trained herself.

Another point of pride with Marianne is that she is a cousin



Marianne Banes  
Photo by Lyn Sims

Kingfisher: 2546 E Grant Road, Tucson | 520-323-7739 | kingfishertucson.com  
Bluefin Seafood Bistro: 7053 N Oracle Road, Tucson | 520-531-8500 | bluefintucson.com

Both of these cakes are currently on the Kingfisher menu for winter 2014.



An almond olive oil cake with blood orange caramel sauce and whipped cream. A totally non-dairy cake.



**A chocoholic's dream dessert!** The chocolate cake is a triple layer chocolate cake, with salted caramel and a whipped chocolate caramel ganache, served in the restaurant with house made chocolate sauce and vanilla ice cream.

to the Patinkin family: that's the famous actor/singer Mandy as well as lesser-known Sheldon, who was instrumental in the early days of Second City Improvisational Theatre in Chicago. "My grandmother's sister wrote lyrics for Irving Berlin, and many of my Polish ancestors were involved in Yiddish theater, visual arts and even poetry," she says. "Baking is also an art, especially when you decorate. I like to think of myself as an artist with buttercream as my medium."

Marianne has taught cooking classes at a variety of venues including Pima Community College. She still teaches occasionally at Tucson Originals, and she writes for the *Harris' Farmer's Almanac* on both food and gardening. While she loves her life in Tucson, she thinks about the future and dreams of retiring to an old farm in Virginia, where her husband's roots are. "I'm also a gardener," she explains. "I envision an organic garden, about two football fields in size, and maybe a little cooking school in my old farmhouse. After having lived in the desert most of my life, I do love the green back there – and the rivers actually have water in them!"



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# Food Genes

**Bruce Sandground continues family's fascination with food**

By Janet Arnold



“My story is that of ‘The Perfect Storm,’” says Bruce Sandground. “My great grandparents had a kosher bakery in Baltimore. Their name was Morganstein and they called the bakery Morning Star.” His ancestors moved on to having grocery stores in the Washington, D.C., area; his grandmother married a dairy farmer; his mother is a dietician and nutritionist; she married an attorney who is a “foodie” and has a wine cellar with 2,000 bottles of wine.

So, the food and beverage industries are definitely in Bruce’s blood. He credits his lineage as being the reason he is where he is today, teaching others how to provide the best in services and palette pleasers to the public.

Bruce is currently the management and hospitality instructor at the 12-year-old Arizona Culinary Institute in Scottsdale. ACI was founded by former Governor J. Fife Symington III and his partners to “focus on traditional French methods of cooking that would prepare its students for a career in the culinary field.” Bruce is instrumental in the 94% placement rate the school has attained. He brings in chefs from around the Valley to watch the students in action and to speak to them about requirements and also takes his students on field trips to fine restaurants. The 140 students range from 17 to 77 years old, some just starting out, some looking for career changes. They are taught all aspects of cooking and baking as well as an overview of restaurant and hotel services. Bruce teaches them about restaurant management and career development, plus, with a nod to his parents, wines and nutrition.

Bruce attended the Cornell Hotel School – he proudly points to the diploma hanging on his classroom wall. There he majored in food and beverage, but also learned the ins and

outs of running a business. Starting as a dishwasher, he worked his way up to be the assistant executive steward at the Regent International in Washington, D.C. He then ran his own restaurant, the second location of The Sign of the Whale, a well-respected establishment that is still open in D.C.

While running the restaurant, Bruce met his wife, Kathleen, who was educated at the Boston Conservatory of Music and was working as a singing waitress. Since Kathleen is Catholic, they were married by a rabbi from Georgetown University alongside a priest. Kathleen has arthritis and kept urging Bruce to move somewhere with better weather. Bruce told her that if he could sell the restaurant, he would move to Arizona. He sold it in July of 2001, and by September they had relocated.

Bruce first sold spices to the local restaurants, enabling him to get to know all the important chefs in town. He tried his hand at opening a Sign of the Whale restaurant in Tempe, but it didn’t last long. Building upon his Cornell Hotel education and his knowledge of local chefs, he joined the faculty at Arizona Culinary School and finds it to be a perfect match. On the side he has been a kosher sous chef at the Arizona Biltmore during Passover week and also tends bar from time to time. “I’m passionate about wines, spirits and beer,” he says enthusiastically.

The Sandground children, Lauren and Forrest, are both students at Arizona State University. “They call themselves ‘Cashews,’ Bruce grins, “because they’re Catholic and Jewish.” Lauren is a senior and a Flinn scholar, one of Arizona’s highest scholastic honors. She plans to be a lawyer. Forrest is a freshman in business. It’s yet to be seen if the “perfect storm” genes will appear in the children. Though, as Bruce says, “My brother is a contract attorney, but he represents chefs!”

It may be too perfect for them to ignore!

**Bruce is instrumental in the 94% placement rate the school has attained. He brings in chefs from around the Valley to watch the students in action and to speak to them about requirements and also takes his students on field trips to fine restaurants.**

# CHOCOLATE can be good for you? Could it be?

By Janet Arnold



Fitness guru-turned-chocolatier Sue Berliner knows chocolate can be good for you. Sue and her line of BNaked Chocolates can be found at farmers' markets throughout the Valley. Sue will happily fill you in on the nutritional benefits of her unique chocolates, seven different macaroons and a variety of fruit bars. Perhaps her most popular creation is her chocolate truffle – hard to believe it contains only three ingredients: organic raw cacao, maple syrup and cashews. Just as important may be the things that are omitted: Sue's products contain no dairy, no soy, no gluten and no refined sugars. Sue grew up in St. Louis, where she spent the bulk of her leisure time at the JCC, competing in racquetball tournaments and helping her father with his lines for the various JCC theater productions. She moved to Arizona in 1983 and founded Sweat magazine in 1998. The magazine served the fitness community for 22 years, finally closing its doors in 2012. Sue was still driven to provide nourishment for those striving for healthy lifestyles. She simply changed from the written word to the taste-treat delights. "I'm committed to teaching that tasty and healthful ingredients can coexist," Sue proudly states. She has regulars at each market who come not only for her products but also to learn more from Sue directly. In her "spare time," Sue can be seen in the back of many local theaters, as she is one of the few certified audio describers in the Valley. Audio description provides background and information during performing arts programs that can assist those who are visually impaired. Sue provides the service for Phoenix Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company and Detour Theatre Company. Check out your favorite farmers' market for Sue and BNaked Chocolates or visit her site [BNakedChocolates.com](http://BNakedChocolates.com).

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# Bilingual nutritionist shares the many splendors of world of food

By Deborah Moon

Nutritionist Debbie Polisky looks at the world, especially the world of food, with multicultural eyes.

Born and educated in Buenos Aires, Latin American foods and language are part of her nature. Her mother's parents left Hungary before World War II and moved to New York, while her father's parents escaped the war in Russia/Poland and landed in Argentina – so it's no surprise she experienced European and American cuisine growing up.

After earning a bachelor's degree in nutrition from the University of Buenos Aires, she worked as a clinical dietician for seven years before she was hired as a bilingual nutritionist. She and her husband, Alejandro Rabinovitz, moved to Arizona in 2000 for her new job. Despite her multicultural upbringing, she had one shock when she arrived: "Super-sizing seemed to be the norm."

Debbie says portion control is a very important component of nutrition. She says her Jewish patients battle not only the American tendency to super-size, but also the dominant role of food in virtually every Jewish celebration, the prevalence of high-fat foods such as chopped liver and latkes, and the stereotypical tendency of Jewish mothers to tell their children (even long into adulthood) to eat everything on their plate.

Yet Judaism also has many positive messages about food, including perhaps the world's first advice on portion control. Medieval physician and philosopher Maimonides (1135-1204) offered numerous rules for healthy eating in his 14-volume opus on Jewish law, the Mishneh Torah. "He would say eat only until one's stomach is three-quarters full – meaning portion control," says Debbie. "We shouldn't stuff ourselves; that was good philosophy of his."

"One aspect of kosher that promotes healthy eating is don't combine meat and dairy," says Debbie. "Both have high fat contents, so if you don't combine, you may have less fat per meal."

While Ashkenazi diets feature many foods high in fat and sodium, the high intake of fish such as herring and salmon provides heart-healthy omega 3 fats, while rye and pumpernickel bread are higher in fiber than many breads. Sephardic culture offers healthier Mediterranean and Middle Eastern foods such as couscous and lentils.

In recent decades, Debbie says many kosher cookbooks have modified traditional Ashkenazi recipes to provide traditional flavors with lower fat and sodium levels.

After 11 years working as a bilingual community nutritionist in a community health center, she decided to open her own business, Words & Health ([wordsandhealth.com](http://wordsandhealth.com)). In her first two years in private practice, she has garnered numerous awards for her work serving minorities and as a health educator. She won the 2012 NBC/Telemundo Hispanic Business Salute Award and the Latin Perspectives 2012 Entrepreneur Award. In 2013, she was honored as one of 40 alumni of Keller Graduate School (where she earned an MBA) for starting a successful business reaching more than 20,000 minorities.

While most of her work has been with the Hispanic community, Debbie says she would like to expand her outreach to the Jewish community. Last year she taught cooking classes and workshops on how to eat healthy on a limited income for Jewish Family and Children's Services in Phoenix.

# YES these cakes are edible!

By Janet Arnold



Ella Levinson with one of her stylized cakes. Photo by Victor Amarillas

If you're looking to design your own cake or have a one-of-a-kind cake created for you, check out **Classic Cakes and Confections**.

Run by Eleonora Levinson and her husband Neil, this unique bakery will come up with something that is sure to please. From cakes that look like cars, guitars, shoes or handbags to more traditional goodies, each decadent creation is handmade by Ella herself, using only the highest-quality ingredients.

Ella began baking with her family in Siberia, Russia. She graduated at the top of her cooking school, and was immediately hired as a professional chef by the local government. Her talents were quickly recognized as she transferred to Moscow, rapidly developing a devoted following of the Russian elite. After emigrating to the U.S., she studied with some of the most famous pastry chefs in the world.

At their bakery near 32<sup>nd</sup> Street and Shea, Ella offers cake-decorating birthday parties for children ages 6 and up. Each party includes a tour of the bakery, an apron and chef's hat, and a wide array of frostings and toppings so the kiddos can create their own masterpieces. The Levinsons have also opened a new location for bakery sales in Scottsdale.

"Our business keeps us so busy," Ella confesses, "that we don't seem to have time for anything else! But we love what we do!"

The Scottsdale location is open to the public at 7144 E Stetson Dr., C-100, 480-994-9662, and the Levinsons participate in the Saturday Farmer's Market at Old Town Scottsdale, 1st Avenue and Brown Street from 8 am to 1 pm. The bakery location at 10801 N 32<sup>nd</sup> St., #3 is open by appointment only (602-795-9662).

To take a peek at some of the unusual cake designs they've created, go to [classiccakesandconfections.com](http://classiccakesandconfections.com)



# 5 SECRETS to Food & Wine Pairing

By Brittany Belsterling

Pairing your food with wine can get overwhelming, but it is also a great foodie adventure.

Here are a few easy-to-remember tips from Ruffino Italian Cuisine, one of the Valley's hidden Italian gems, on how to simplify the food and wine pairing process so you can enjoy the journey to a successful match.

## **Secret #1: Match creamy with creamy.**

Pair cream-based sauces, such as alfredo, or poultry with creamy wines like Chardonnay.

## **Secret #2: Match your regional items with regional wines.**

If you aren't sure what wine pairs with what food, pair with regions. Italian food will always go with a regional wine such as a Chianti or a Tuscan red.

## **Secret #3: Color coding.**

The color of the wine will tell you what it will pair well with. A light, bright white wine with hints of green will pair great with light green dishes like salads or a light fish dish.

## **Secret #4: Watch your weight.**

Don't worry, not your weight – the wine's "weight." If the food is lighter, such as a delicate white fish, pair it with a light-bodied wine such as a Pinot Grigio. If you are having a heavier meal, such as lasagna or a steak, you will want to pair that with a big

red wine with tannins that can stand up to the richer and heavier flavors of the meal, such as a Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel or a Malbec.

## **Secret #5: Know your weight.**

How do you determine the weight of your food and wine? The cooking method and the sauce used will reveal how heavy the food is. For your wine, a quick tip is if the wine is less than 12% alcohol, it will be lighter bodied; wines with more than 14% are heavier wines.

Ruffino Italian Cuisine, located in Ahwatukee, is one of the East Valley's oldest Italian restaurants and has been serving up classic Italian dishes and pairing wines since the early 1980s.

The owner of Ruffino Italian Cuisine, Steve Charron, recommends his personal favorite wine, Villa San-Juliette Cabernet Sauvignon out of Paso Robles, CA, as a "must try Ruffino favorite." Charron says that this wine is not a typical Cabernet Sauvignon, it is more fruit forward and lush than most heavy tannin California Cabernet Sauvignons. "It drinks great alone, and also pairs well with any of Ruffino's filet mignon dishes or marinara dishes."



# SOUNDBITES

## Who would you like to invite for dinner?



**Lois Zeidman**

*Chabad of East Valley Phoenix*

Psychiatrist Viktor Frankl. His memoir describing life in Nazi death camps has riveted generations of readers. It is a real testament to him that he maintained the strength to survive in the camps and also encouraged others.



**David Arkules**

*Congregation Beth Israel Paradise Valley*

Golda Meir is my choice. My grandfather had a kosher restaurant in Chicago and she came there. I only wish I could have met her then.



**Ryan Ballis**

*8th grader, Kurn Religious School, Temple Emanu-El, Tucson*

My brother, who's deployed overseas.



**Alayna Zolot**

*8th grader, Kurn Religious School, Temple Emanu-El, Tucson*

My great-grandfather David; he was alive during the Holocaust and died before I was born.



**Diane Zashin**

*8th grader, Kurn Religious School, Temple Emanu-El, Tucson*

I would like to talk to my great-uncle, because I didn't know him really well. My mom tells me some interesting stories about him; he was a photographer and did all kinds of crazy stuff.

**Jay Bycer**

*Beth El, Or Chadash, B'r-ith Shalom (Prescott) Cave Creek*

Chaim Weizmann because of his love for Israel. His commitment was so strong that although his family remained in London he moved to the Jewish state and became its first president - and Israel named its first scientific research facility after him.



**Fran Garner**  
*Temple Solel Scottsdale*

Aristides de Sousa Mendes, the Portuguese consul general to France during WWII, who defied his country's orders and managed to rescue many Jews.



# NEXT MONTH

### What is the most creative thing you've ever done with matzah?

To share your reply, please send your short answer, name, congregation/organization (if desired), city and photo to [editor1@azjewishlife.com](mailto:editor1@azjewishlife.com) by **March 7**. For this special Passover question, you may also submit a recipe if relevant. Replies will appear in the magazine with recipes available on our website at [azjewishlife.com](http://azjewishlife.com).

## Keeping Kosher: Food Fetish or Pathway to Holiness?

Amy Hirshberg Lederman

In an age when no self-respecting American would be caught without a dietary restriction, from low-fat and high-protein to vegan or gluten-free, Jews have the proud distinction of being the first group to claim an Official Food Fixation.

Since biblical times, the Jewish relationship to food has been more than an awareness of its necessity for human sustenance: It has been a way of relating to and honoring God.

The concept of “prohibited foods” was first introduced in Genesis when God gave Adam only fruits, vegetables and plants to eat. It wasn’t until after the flood that humans were permitted to eat meat. Much later, while wandering in the desert, the Israelites were given a long list of forbidden foods. Animals that didn’t both chew their cud and have split hooves (camels, pigs, horses), rodents, birds of prey (vultures, eagles, hawks and ravens) and all shellfish and fish without fins and scales were removed from the Jewish menu. Added to these restrictions was the mandate in Exodus: “You shall not boil a kid in its mother’s milk.”

The Jewish concern extends beyond what we eat to how the food we eat is slaughtered, prepared and served. For an animal to be kosher, or fit for consumption, it must be killed in a prescribed way. The laws of ritual slaughter (*shechitah* in Hebrew) provide the swiftest, most painless and humane death for an animal. If an animal is killed otherwise, it can’t be eaten. The Hebrew word for “torn apart” is *terefah*, which has been shortened to *tref*, the generic word for anything that is not deemed kosher.

Many ideas have been advanced to justify the reasons for *kashrut*. Some say it was to help develop compassion toward animals; others suggest it was because foods like pork and shellfish contaminate easily and therefore should be avoided as unhealthy. Scholars note that boiling meat in milk was a pagan form of hospitality and worship and posit that Jews were attempting to differentiate themselves from their neighbors. But the Torah makes no attempt to provide a rationale. The real reason is simple and straightforward: We keep kosher because God commanded us to.

The evolution of Jewish dietary laws offers a window into the world and minds of the Talmudic rabbis. It’s amazing to think that more than 2,000 years ago they took the principle of not boiling a kid in its mother’s milk and created an entire gastronomic and religious system around it! Since it was

impossible to identify which baby goat was related to which mother’s milk, the prohibition was extended to disallow cooking any kind of meat with any type of dairy. That law was then amplified to forbid eating meat and dairy together at the same meal. This led to the prohibition of preparing milk and meat in the same pot, serving it on the same plate, as well as the tradition of waiting a significant amount of time between eating meat and dairy. The time between eating the two depends upon the customs of the religious community in which you live. Today, some Jews wait six hours, others wait three and some, just one.

As society developed, so did Jewish law. Today keeping kosher often includes using separate ovens, dishwashers, refrigerators, sinks, blenders and microwaves.

A contemporary practice called *Eco-Kashrut* was introduced in the 1970s by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, founder of the Jewish Renewal movement. *Eco-Kashrut* attempts to sanctify restrictions on human consumption of food, clothing, goods and resources, based on environmental considerations. It is an attempt to add an ecological and environmental dimension to the determination of what is “kosher” or fit for use. That has expanded to include compassion as a key consideration – in both how the animals and the employees and factory workers are treated in the process.

Keeping kosher transforms the everyday act of eating into something special and holy. It can be a wonderful way to teach Jewish identity within the home as well as develop a sense of family pride. By learning to say no to pepperoni pizza or shrimp cocktail, some families report the cultivation of an inner discipline that can help children in later years when they face temptations like drugs and alcohol.

But keeping kosher is not a “one size fits all” proposition, as no two families observe it exactly the same. Nor does it need to be an all-or-nothing deal – that you either do it all the way, all the time or not at all. The evolution over hundreds of years of rabbinic law offers us this insight: For those who are not ready to fully commit, it is better to begin with smaller efforts than not to begin at all. Step by step, meal by meal, year by year, our commitment can evolve over time. But if we do begin, one thing is certain: Keeping kosher will bring new awareness, discipline and a sense of Jewish identity into our kitchens and our lives.

Amy Hirshberg Lederman is an author, Jewish educator, public speaker and attorney. Her columns have won awards from the American Jewish Press Association, The Arizona Newspapers Association and the Arizona Press Club for excellence in commentary. Visit her website at [amyhirshberglederman.com](http://amyhirshberglederman.com).





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# CHEF'S CORNER

**PURIM:  
BEARING GIFTS OF  
FOOD & UNITY**

By Lucia Schnitzer

Photos by Matthew Strauss



The first Jewish holiday I ever experienced was Purim. Think Halloween meets Easter, but much, much better! We feast, visit friends, dress up in costumes and drink to excess – all while handing out our baskets of food called mishloach manot to members of the community. I fell in love with the holiday, and I fell more in love with my fellow Jews as I learned the deeper meaning of Purim.

We read Megillat Esther, which tells us how a Jewish Persian princess saved the Jewish people from the evil leader Haman. The Jews had been assimilating and distancing themselves from G-d, which made us vulnerable to those who plotted to destroy us. Through achdus (unity) and Kol yisrael arevim zeh bazeh (all of Israel are responsible for each other), the Persian Jews survived and triumphed. We pass this message on during Purim as we make baskets filled with food and treats and give them to friends, new members of our community and to someone who has upset us or whom we have upset. We give money to charity, feed the poor and eat and drink together as we celebrate as one people.

So indulge and be holy as we celebrate together.

## What to Include in Mishloach Manot

Mishloach manot can be sent in any container. However, each mishloach manot must contain at least two different kinds of food that are ready to eat. Popular items are hamantaschen, fresh



Lucia Schnitzer and her husband, Ken, own Luci's Healthy Marketplace in Phoenix. The local coffee shop and marketplace opened in 2009 in Lucia's honor after her successful battle with breast cancer. She successfully manages her career, her growing family (four children), her personal well-being and the countless demands of the day.

fruit, chocolate, dried fruit, nuts, candies and baked goods. Drinks are also good things to include, such as juice, tea, coffee, sparkling cider and wine. In addition to food items, you can also put fun small gifts in a mishloach manot basket like groggers (noisemakers) or even small toys, especially if children will be receiving the basket. Some families give mishloach manot baskets specifically for their kids and give them on Purim evening or on the morning of Purim. Also, children love to make mishloach manot for their classmates and friends. This is a great opportunity for them to be creative and partake in the mitzvah of giving gifts of food (for a full guide to Purim visit: [chabad.org/holidays/purim/article\\_cdo/aid/648312/jewish/Purim-2014-Guide.htm](http://chabad.org/holidays/purim/article_cdo/aid/648312/jewish/Purim-2014-Guide.htm)).

## How to Send Mishloach Manot

Many synagogues will organize the sending of mishloach manot, but if your community does not do this or you simply want to make your own Purim baskets, here's how:

Decide who you will be sending your baskets to.

Make a list of supplies. You can personalize each basket, or you can buy items in bulk and place one in each basket. Some enjoy coming up with a theme for their mishloach manot, such as chocolate lovers, Italian basket or sports fans.

Make Purim cards. Though cards are not required, it's nice to send a little "Happy Purim" card along with your mishloach manot.

Assemble your mishloach manot. Putting your baskets together is a great family activity or one you can do with friends.

Deliver your mishloach manot. Traditionally mishloach manot are delivered on Purim. If you have children, give them another opportunity to wear their Purim costumes while they make the deliveries with you!

Keep in mind that Purim baskets do not have to be extravagant or expensive. Ultimately, have fun and make it memorable as Purim is not all about the gifts, but rather what is in our hearts for one another.



# Where do JEWISH PEOPLE EAT?

**Beckett's Table \$\$\$**

3717 E Indian School Road  
Phoenix, AZ 85018  
602-954-1700  
beckettstable.com

By A. Noshman

Let's be honest, if the food is great, it doesn't matter if a restaurant has stand-up-only dining or is appointed luxuriously. We eat because we love, and we love what we eat. However, if you can match great eats with atmosphere, history, music and service, well then you've got something special.

Beckett's Table is all about socializing, community building, Arizona themes and comfort-food dining. From the moment you walk into this friendly place, there is a sense of adventure and experience waiting for you. From the 18-seat community table to the tasteful blues music coming from the rafters, from the giant Arizona flag hanging over the open kitchen to the sparkling design of the space, Beckett's Table invites you to sit down and enjoy the moment.

The community table features special pricing on drinks and things, but I choose my own table because I'm not there to socialize, I'm there to focus on food. I deal with my inner struggle about bypassing a discount and settle in for the experience.

Over the course of several visits, here's what I had:



Roasted Asparagus Appetizer



Legend City Cocktail



Beckett's Original Grilled Cheese

## Legend City Cocktail, \$8

*Woodford bourbon, ricard, lemonade & bitters*

I didn't intend to have a cocktail, but after seeing the Arizona flag and a drink named after Legend City (a Phoenix amusement park that closed 30 years ago), nostalgia took hold and I placed my order. Served in a martini glass, this chilled adult beverage goes down like candy. Well, for me it went down like that, but for my friend it brought on a wrinkled nose and an exclamation of, "Yikes!" It's a bit like an old-fashioned and you have to be a bourbon lover, licorice lover and enjoy bitters as well. I do, and I did.



Butternut Squash Risotto

fresh and warm. Sprinkled with freshly fried bits of onion and accompanied by dollops of mild mustard seed, every forkful was a delight.

**Butternut Squash Risotto, \$17**

*Risotto, roasted butternut squash, roasted shitake mushrooms, parmesan cheese, port wine reduction drizzle, fried brussels sprout leaves*

A generous bowl of savory smells and enticing colors was placed on the table, and you could already tell that this was going to be a treat. Though each bowl is made to order, it was soft like a stew with welcome flashes of texture from pieces of squash and mushroom. The risotto was creamy, making it a pure comfort food experience.

**Chicory Coffee Crème Brulee, \$6**

This dessert didn't have a description, but because my friend had just talked about her Oklahoma-born father's love of chicory coffee before we saw this item on the menu, we took it as a sign. First you must know that every spoonful

of this dessert was eaten. Second you must be a coffee lover, because this creamy dessert is chock full of deep, dark coffee goodness. Chicory in coffee has its roots (there's a pun there) in New Orleans, and Café du Monde patrons have had gallons of it. Espresso lovers will have their eyes roll back in their heads. Trust the French when it comes to desserts.



Chicory Coffee Crème Brulee

**Toasted Coconut Cake, \$8**

*Brown butter ice cream, coconut pudding, smoked cashews*

Pretty as a picture this was, delightfully toasty and light, too. The cashews played off the nuttiness of the coconut. The brown butter ice cream was smooth and delicious. Even non-lovers of coconut would like this. The cake was tall and airy, not rich, which was a pleasant surprise. The ice cream and the cashews added plenty of richness, and you could swirl your bite of cake in the melted parts of the ice cream, adding a cashew or two customizing each bite. This is a must try.

You can't go wrong at Beckett's Table. Everything is about making you feel good and eating well. The dishes are innovative, and the ingredients are farm fresh. They take pride in their work and certainly know what they are doing. The owners are planning a second location in the old Beefeaters building on Camelback. Talk about feelings of nostalgia, that place operated for 45 years and is an Arizona landmark. It will be nice to see it open again. They are planning a different concept for it, and I can't wait to see what happens. Until then, I will be sitting at the community table next time I come. See you there.

**Beckett's Original Grilled Cheese, \$9**

*Four cheeses, roasted red pepper tomato soup*

Comfort food is king and this restaurant has created a variety of ways to take it in. The menu combines homemade biscuits in different dishes, and they are the featured vehicle to bring melted cheese dipped in creamy soup to your waiting taste buds. There is fresh, toasty, creamy goodness in every bite. This appetizer was delicious.

**Special of the Day, Roasted Asparagus Appetizer, \$10**

*Roasted asparagus, homemade mozzarella cheese, pickled Fresno chilies, homemade petite onion rings, mustard seed, pickled Fresno chilies, micro basil, lemon gastrique*

It was not only a feast for the mouth, but a feast for the eyes as well. I'm a sucker for roasted vegetables, and these were served with perfect crispness. The mozzarella was silky smooth,



Contact A. Noshman at [a.noshman@azjewishlife.com](mailto:a.noshman@azjewishlife.com)



Kira Brown is a certified personal stylist and fashion writer. Kira has interviewed many fashion icons including Tim Gunn, jeweler Neil Lane, international makeup artist Jemma Kidd and Ken Downing of Neiman Marcus. Kira also offers virtual style consultations for women and men. Contact her at [kira@fashionphoenix.com](mailto:kira@fashionphoenix.com).





# FASHIONISTA

## Radiant Orchid "Color of the Year" from Pantone

By Kira Brown | Photos courtesy of Pantone

As a new season begins to bud and I start to plan for sunny days, lazy afternoons outside and springtime events, I start to consider packing up my dark, thick winter wear, boxing up the boots and sweaters, and doing a little online pre-shopping. Then I'll be ready to hit the mall or stores for select new pieces to add to my basic, classic wardrobe pieces that mix and match, from season to season.

This year, I'm looking beyond the runway for some fashion inspiration. And when the racks at the mall or pages on my favorite websites aren't calling me, I look to interior design and design in general for inspiration.

This year and in the last few years for me, Pantone has been a key influence in fashion, design, interiors and overall style. By announcing its "Color of the Year" each January, Pantone sets the tone for many in the design industry and, of course, eventually the consumer. This year's selection, "Radiant Orchid," is bright, fresh and bold for spring, and I predict it will be a great color to carry into summer as well. Radiant Orchid and its variant shades look great on most skin tones – and even on men! Look for it in clothes, accessories and more, from Old Navy to couture.

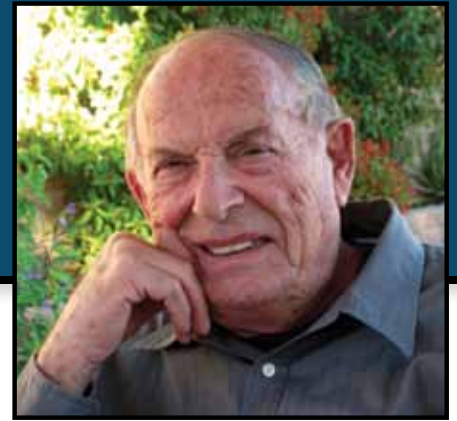
From the runway to the racks and even to your home, consider Pantone's Color of the Year!

Visit [pantone.com](http://pantone.com) for more about the Color of the Year and color inspiration.



# Oskar Knoblauch knows the Golden Rule

By Janet Arnold and Deborah Moon



Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. The Golden Rule. Seems simple enough, yet decades of wars and unrest worldwide prove that it is hardly simple at all.

The Arizona InterFaith Movement is honoring individuals in six categories at their March 25 Golden Rule Awards Banquet. Among them is Oskar Knoblauch, a Holocaust survivor who has shared his story with more than 10,000 students in the Valley during the last few years.

He relives his past, as he says on his website, “because of the need to educate our youth to become the voice against prejudice and bullying. I am honored to be asked to come into classrooms and auditoriums to speak to children and adults of all ages about my book and details of the Holocaust.”

Oskar has compiled his memories into a book entitled *A Boy's Story, A Man's Memory: Surviving the Holocaust*. He is being honored because of his selfless, continued efforts to educate the next generation about what happened and to reinforce that it can never be allowed to happen again.

Local educators praise his work.

“This story of unimaginable horrors, told with such depth of detail and, most surprisingly, with compassion and forgiveness for those who were his tormentors, leaves one in awe,” wrote Irving Elementary teacher Elizabeth Hendrickson. The Mesa teacher’s review is one of many positive comments from Arizona teachers about Oskar’s book.

Chandler teacher Lindsay Taylor, of Summit Academy, said, “Oskar’s message woven throughout this book – one of beauty in the face of terror; hope in the face of loss; humanity in the face of depravity – is one that every single reader of any age can learn from and cherish. Yours is a story none of us will ever forget.”

When Oskar is invited to schools to speak as a survivor, he incorporates an anti-bullying message into his presentations. When he talks to students about the daily horrors of the Holocaust he experienced firsthand, he also tells them about

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“the people who helped us and those who hated us or were indifferent to what was happening all around us.”

Born in 1925 in Leipzig, Germany, he says Jewish kids were verbally bullied even before Hitler took control of Germany in 1933, which added a new dimension to the persecution. After three years under Nazi German rule, the family fled to Krakow, Poland.

“Verbal bullying by Polish teens continued up to World War II,” Oskar says. “With the German occupation of Poland (September 1939), bullying became viral and dangerous throughout Poland, turning from verbal to physical, especially after we were ordered to wear the Star of David on our right forearm. Name-calling, spitting into our faces, throwing rotten food and beating us ... became a daily routine. Authorities and the Polish population at large did not stop or interfere. Pleading with the groups of bullies did not help.

“One day in desperation while surrounded again and waiting for my regular dose of insults and beating, I stood straight and with a forced smile on my face said to them, ‘I don’t care what you call me, and I don’t care what you do to me, I am proud to be a Jew,’ pointing to the Star of David on my arm. Those must have been the right words! To this day I can see their disappointed faces. Those hoodlums did not expect me to say this. Verbal insults continued, but the physical abuse had stopped.”

Oskar encourages students to apply this message. He urges youth to tell those who seek to bully them that “You are proud of who you are, you are proud of your heritage and culture, and proud to be an important member of the human race. ... after having said that, just walk on with your head high in the sky!”

Oskar says he tossed the word hate out of his vocabulary the day he became a free man at the end of World War II, and he suggests his listeners do the same.

“I also remind students of a few words, which in my opinion are of great importance. Words such as respect, love, tolerance, courage, hope, equality and freedom!”

He says he knows those messages resonate with young and old alike, because of the thousands of letters he has received from students of all ages.

“Knowing that the message is changing some of those listeners is proof that I must be spreading the right words,” says Oskar. “I will continue this work as long as I can.”

## Golden Rule Awards

**HONORING:** Holocaust survivor Oskar Knoblauch, Jerry Colangelo, Arizona Brainfood, Queen Creek Football Team, Casa Maria and the Virginia G. Piper Foundation.

**EMCEE:** Pat McMahon, radio and TV celebrity.

**PRESENTED BY:** The Arizona InterFaith Movement, whose mission is to build bridges of respect, understanding and support among diverse people of faith through education, dialogue, service and the implementation of the Golden Rule.

**WHEN:** Reception 5:30 pm, dinner and awards 6:30 pm, March 25

**WHERE:** Mesa Convention Center Centennial Hall, Building C, 263 N Center St. in Mesa.

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# When teaching seniors, Mark Stern finds it helps to be "Minderful"

By Janet Arnold

There's teaching and then there's teaching. "When I taught university undergrads, there was generally a little intimidation factor, that is, the students being intimidated by the professor. When I teach seniors, I find that I am often the one a little intimidated!" says Mark Stern, with a humble grin.

He currently teaches classes to seniors through Minderful Center, which meets at Temple Chai in northeast Phoenix. "The students are so sharp. It really keeps me on my toes. I thoroughly enjoy it," he admits.

Mark feels fortunate to have discovered The Minderful Center shortly after he settled in Scottsdale in July of 2013. He had retired from academia after serving as vice president for academic affairs and professor of political science at Shepherd University, a 130-year-old liberal arts institution near Washington, D.C., in historic Sheperdstown, WV, in the Shenandoah Valley. Prior to that, he was a professor at the University of Central Florida, where he founded the UCF honors and scholars program in addition to teaching political science.

Like so many seniors today, Mark knows that life and learning do not stop with retirement. He welcomes the opportunity to keep his mind sharp, and with the students in these classes, he knows he has to be ever alert. "These

**Like so many seniors today, Mark knows that life and learning do not stop with retirement. He welcomes the opportunity to keep his mind sharp, and with the students in these classes, he knows he has to be ever alert.**



Mark Stern

older, mature students really know their stuff," he explains. "Rather than the empty vessel metaphor of the traditional college student, these people are bright, energetic and ask good questions." The current students were eager to receive lecture outlines and a syllabus, much as you would find in a for-credit course, "But of course they don't get tested!"

Mark looks forward to each weekly class. In January and February he taught a class entitled "The Tea Party and Party Conflict in U.S. Politics." It's a natural course for him to teach, since his doctoral dissertation examined "Local Politics: Parties and Participation." He received his Ph.D. from the University of Rochester in 1970. Since then, he has written volumes of papers on the political parties, the modern presidents and the Holocaust. He also authored *Calculating Visions: Kennedy, Johnson and Civil Rights* (Rutgers University Press, 1992). In March, Mark taught a class for Minderful called "The Modern Presidency: From FDR through JFK."

Mark also taught a session at the recent Arizona Educators' Conference on the Holocaust, which was held in Scottsdale. "The Holocaust is a particular interest area for me," he says. His talk dealt with Vichy France and the French participation in the Holocaust. He was a fellow at the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies in both 2001 and 2005. In 2013 he presented a paper entitled "Human Rights in the Age of Genocide" at the 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference on the Holocaust at American Jewish University in Los Angeles.

Though Mark grew up in an Orthodox family in Brooklyn, over the years he moved to a Reform point of view. He was president of the Congregation of Liberal

Judaism in Orlando, a temple with nearly 800 family members. (In 2005, the temple changed its name to Congregation of Reform Judaism.) He and his wife, Barbara, are now members of Temple Solel in Paradise Valley, where Barbara sings in the choir. They appreciate the “good sense of Jewish traditions” they have found at Solel.

Barbara is also an educator. She received her Ed.D. from the University of Central Florida and was a professor at James Madison University in Virginia. She is a Brandeis Life Member and is thrilled to be in an area with such an active Brandeis group. The couple has two sons, Benjamin, a physical therapist who lives in Fountain Hills, and Jeffrey, a lawyer who lives in Washington, D.C., and has two children.

Minderful is open to all, but because classes are taught during the day, the privately run school attracts mostly retirees or snowbirds. The school bills itself as offering “Thoughtful Classes for Intelligent Lifelong Learners.” A great many of them are Jewish, perhaps because classes are held at Temple Chai, or perhaps because Jewish tradition teaches us that learning is of the utmost importance at all ages. John Thaxton, director of the school, confides that “A number of my Jewish students take me to lunch regularly at a local deli, in hopes of increasing my Jewish knowledge through food!”

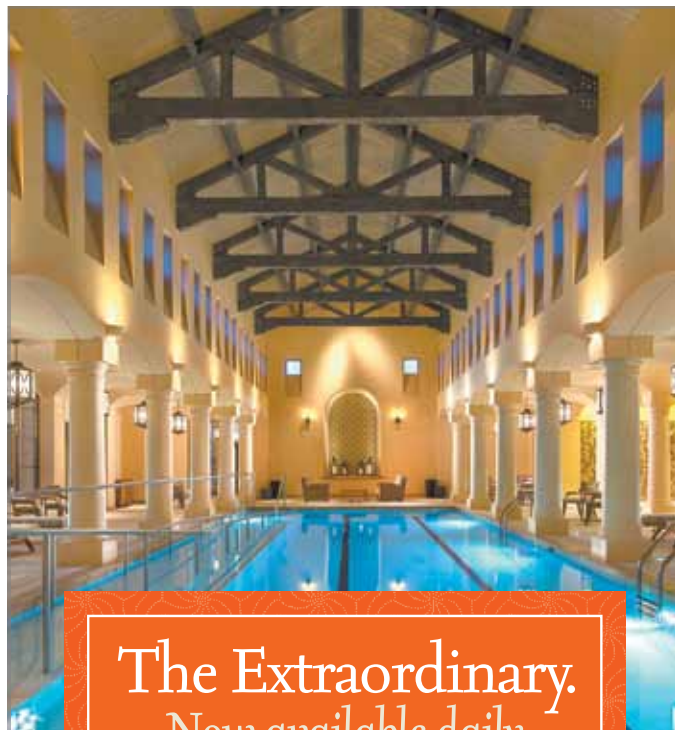
John says he is happy to have Mark on the faculty because he embodies both scholarship and warmth, two key ingredients in working with the students. Minderful offers a wide variety of classes in the areas of arts and culture, history and politics, cinema, health and wellness, writing and other disciplines.

## Minderful Center

“An educational program for Lifelong Learners 50+.” Daytime classes are offered year-round. New classes are added every session, along with ongoing popular classes. The Summer Session (May-September) offers four or five classes, including the year-round “Cinema Weekly” class and “News Weekly” class, as well as other classes such as “Modern Short Stories.” Fall Session (October-December) generally has five to eight classes. The Winter Session (January-April) usually offers 12-14 classes, due to a large snowbird population.

All secular and Jewish holidays are observed. Instructors are chosen carefully to provide a relaxing, stimulating arena for learning. All classes are held at Temple Chai, 4645 E Marilyn Road, Phoenix.

For more information, contact John Thaxton, Director at [John@Minderful.com](mailto:John@Minderful.com) or 480-619-9993. [Minderful.com](http://Minderful.com)



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## Researchers discover natural food supplement delays degenerative brain disorders

By American Friends of Tel Aviv University

Widely available in pharmacies and health stores, phosphatidylserine is a natural food supplement produced from beef, oysters and soy. Proven to improve cognition and slow memory loss, it's a popular treatment for older people experiencing memory impairment.

Now a team headed by Prof. Gil Ast and Dr. Ron Bochner of Tel Aviv University's Department of Human Molecular Genetics has discovered that the same supplement improves the functioning of genes involved in degenerative brain disorders, including Parkinson's disease and Familial Dysautonomia.

In FD, a rare genetic disorder that impacts the nervous system and appears almost exclusively in the Ashkenazi Jewish population, a genetic mutation prevents the brain from manufacturing healthy IKAP proteins – which likely have a hand in cell migration and aiding connections between nerves – leading to the early degeneration of neurons. When the supplement was applied to cells taken from FD patients, the gene function improved and an elevation in the level of IKAP protein was observed, reports Prof. Ast. These results were replicated in a second experiment which involved administering the supplement orally to mouse populations with FD.

The findings, which have been published in the journal *Human Molecular Genetics*, are very encouraging, says Prof. Ast. "That we see such an effect on the brain – the most important organ in relation to this disease – shows that the supplement can pass through the blood-brain barrier even when administered orally, and accumulate in sufficient amounts in the brain."

### Slowing the death of nerve cells

Already approved for use as a supplement by the FDA, phosphatidylserine contains a molecule essential for transmitting signals between nerve cells in the brain. Prof. Ast and his fellow researchers decided to test whether

the same chemical, which is naturally synthesized in the body and known to boost memory capability, could impact the genetic mutation which leads to FD.

Researchers applied a supplement derived from oysters, provided by the Israeli company Enzymotec, to cells collected from FD patients. Noticing a robust effect on the gene, including a jump in the production of healthy IKAP proteins, they then tested the same supplement on mouse models of FD, engineered with the same genetic mutation that causes the disease in humans.

The mice received the supplement orally, every two days for a period of three months. Researchers then conducted extensive genetic testing to assess the results of the treatment. "We found a significant increase of the protein in all the tissues of the body," reports Prof. Ast, including an eight-fold increase in the liver and 1.5-fold increase in the brain. "While the food supplement does not manufacture new nerve cells, it probably delays the death of existing ones," he adds.

### Therapeutic potential for Parkinson's

That the supplement is able to improve conditions in the brain, even when given orally, is a significant finding, notes Prof. Ast. Most medications enter the body through the blood stream, but are incapable of breaking through the barrier between the blood and the brain.

In addition, the researchers say the supplement's positive effects extend beyond the production of IKAP. Not only did phosphatidylserine impact the gene associated with FD, but it also altered the level of a total of 2,400 other genes – hundreds of which have been connected to Parkinson's disease in previous studies.

The researchers believe that the supplement may have a beneficial impact on a number of degenerative diseases of the brain, concludes Prof. Ast, including a major potential for the development of new medications which would help tens of millions of people worldwide suffering from these devastating diseases.

*American Friends of Tel Aviv University (aftau.org) supports Israel's leading, most comprehensive and most sought-after center of higher learning. Independently ranked 94th among the world's top universities for the impact of its research, TAU's innovations and discoveries are cited more often by the global scientific community than all but 10 other universities.*

# Tucson's Brandeis chapter hosts four authors March 12-13



**Brandeis National Committee/Tucson Chapter** hosts four award-winning authors for its 18<sup>th</sup> annual book & author events at the Skyline Country Club March 12 and 13.

All net proceeds from the 2014 book & author events will benefit “Sustaining the Mind,” a BNC fund supporting basic neuroscience research and endowed scholarships for Brandeis science students at Brandeis University. With a worldwide aging population, basic neuroscience research is critical to finding the cause and hopefully a cure for neurodegenerative diseases such as Lou Gehrig’s, Alzheimer’s, epilepsy and Parkinson’s. A limited number of tickets are available for a 6 pm dinner soiree March 12. Dine with the authors at a buffet dinner and enjoy a jazz performance.

The major public event is March 13. Presentations by four award-winning authors, buffet lunch, artisan boutiques and the bookstore Mostly Books will be at Skyline Country Club from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm, March 13.

Elizabeth Burden will moderate the author presentations on March 13. Burden is the host of the Thursday evening edition of “Arizona Illustrated/Arts” on Arizona Public Media, Channel 6.

For information or luncheon tickets, contact Sheila Rothenberg at 520-232-9559 or sheila.tucson@comcast.net. Tickets for the March 12 Soiree are available from Sandra Rollin, 520-299-1400. The reservation deadline is March 3.

## FEATURED AUTHORS

**Philip Caputo** won a Pulitzer Prize in 1972 for investigating vote fraud in Chicago. He wrote the acclaimed Vietnam War memoir, *A Rumor of War*. His first novel, *Horn of Africa*, was a National Book Award finalist, and his 2007 essay on illegal immigration won the Blackford Prize for nonfiction. His most recent books are *Crossings*, a novel about illegal drug and immigrant smuggling along the Mexican/U.S. border, and *The Longest Road: Overland in Search of America from Key West to the Arctic Ocean*, which features anecdotal interviews with people he met along a 2,000-mile journey in a camper.

**Tom McNeal** won the Southern California Independent Bookseller’s Association award for his novel, *Far Far Away*, which was shortlisted for the 2013 National Book Award for Young People’s Literature. He has collaborated with his wife on four young adult novels and a picture book, *The Dog Who Lost His Bob*. His short story, *What Happened to Tully*, was made into a film. McNeal received a B.A. and a teaching certificate from University of California at Berkeley, an M.A. in creative writing from University of California at Irvine and was a Stegner Fellow at Stanford University.

**Thomas Perry** won an Edgar Award in 1983 for his debut mystery, *The Butcher’s Boy*, followed by *Metzger’s Dog*, which was voted one of NPR’s “100 Killer Thrillers, Best Thrillers Ever.” Among Perry’s other 20+ books are the Jane Whitfield series, debuting with *Vanishing Act*, which was included in the “100 Favorite Mysteries of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century” by the Independent Mystery Bookseller’s Association. His most recent novel is *The Boyfriend*. He holds a B.A. from Cornell University and a Ph.D. in English from the University of Rochester.

**Jacqueline Winspear** won the Agatha, Alex and Macavity awards for *Maisie Dobbs*, the first mystery in her national best-selling series about a female private investigator and psychologist in the rigidly stratified and male-dominated society of post-World War I England. *Maisie Dobbs* was also nominated for the Edgar Award for Best Novel and named a New York Times “Notable Book.” Her most recent *Maisie Dobbs* mystery is *Leaving Everything Most Loved*. Winspear was born and raised in Kent, England, and educated at the University of London’s Institute of Education. She moved to the United States in 1990 and now lives in California.

## Book events “Sustain the Mind”

Brandeis National Committee book and author events support the “Sustaining the Mind” campaign, which supports neuroscience research and scholarships at Brandeis University.

Following are some news items about neuroscience researchers excerpted from “Brandeis News Bites” (August 2013).

- Findings from the research lab of Suzanne Paradis were published in the Journal of Neuroscience. Paradis explained that her lab was not intending to study epilepsy, yet discovered something could have implications for millions with epilepsy. Paradis said that is why funding basic research is so important – you never know where the next big, ground-breaking discovery is going to come from. Her team has applied for a patent based on their research.
- Biology Professor Avital Rodal was recently named a Pew Scholar in Medical Sciences. Rodal’s lab explores processes associated with neurodegenerative diseases. Rodal says she believes that Brandeis provides an opportunity to work on amazing research in a collaborative, multidisciplinary environment.
- The National Academy of Science recently elected Gina Turrigiano as a member, which is an honor considering that 200 of the Academy’s members are Nobel Prize winners. Six members of the Brandeis faculty are members of the Academy. Turrigiano’s research focuses on how neurons and neural circuits maintain stability and flexibility.
- Professor Eve Marder was invited in April 2013 to join President Obama’s BRAIN task force made up of 14 all-star scientists. Marder also won the 2012 Gruber Neuroscience prize, a prestigious international award that recognizes the “the best neuroscience research being done anywhere.” Her research has broad implications for the study of many neurological diseases.

# Sustain your mind at Phoenix's legendary literary event

By Melissa Hirsch

A literary tour de force is headed to Phoenix March 16 and 17.

The annual, highly acclaimed Book and Author event is sponsored by the Phoenix Chapter of the Brandeis National Committee. Every year, hundreds of book aficionados travel to Phoenix to revel in this gala event that attracts between 700 and 800 attendees and is fueled entirely by enthusiastic volunteers. A stellar success since its inception 24 years ago, this two-day charitable event is a fund-raiser for BNC's "Sustaining the Mind" campaign, which funds research into neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and Lou Gehrig's, as well as other neurological conditions such as autism and epilepsy.

The March 17 venue will be the elegant JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort and Spa in Phoenix, where in addition to a sumptuous lunch, attendees can visit a variety of high-end boutiques and also have their books signed. This year's marquee headliners are Philip Shenon, New York Times investigative reporter who applies his skills to the mysteries of history; Scott Turow, prosecutor turned master storyteller; Alice Hoffman, author of literary novels for adults, teens and children; Hallie Ephron, mistress of the psychological thriller; Debbie Macomber, author of more than 50 fiction and romance selections; and Leigh Steinberg, superstar sports agent and the inspiration for the film Jerry Maguire. Sean McLaughlin, news anchor for KPHO channel 5, will be the moderator.

This is a rare opportunity to experience authors in a realm that transcends book jackets. Attendees get in-depth perspectives from seasoned and emerging writers, as they discover how those writers get their readers riveted. The authors will also offer insightful glimpses into their literary careers, lifestyles, backgrounds and sources of inspiration.

Previous headliners have include prominent and best-selling authors such as Clive Cussler, Alana Stewart (ex-wife of Rod Stewart), Barbara Taylor Bradford, David Balducci, Jeffrey



**Alice Hoffman**  
Photo by Deborah Feingold



**Debbie Macomber**  
Photo by Deborah Feingold



**Hallie Ephron**



**Philip Shenon**  
Photo by Denis LARGERON

Deaver, James Patterson, Larry King and David Eisenhower, many of whom have been on the New York Times bestseller lists.

Patrons who want to get "up close and personal" with authors



can take the experience up a notch. An additional donation affords attendees the choice of a cocktail soiree the night before at a beautiful Paradise Valley home and/or having dinner with the authors after the cocktail party at the hotel. Both events include book signings. All proceeds benefit “Sustaining the Mind,” a Brandeis University scientific research and scholarship fund-raising program.

The driving force behind this charitable event is co-chair Carol Kern, who was BNC national president from 2008 to 2010. Her adoration of reading coupled with an intense desire to help the university acquire funds for books and research

compelled her to create this “win-win” fund-raising triumph more than two decades ago. It has been gaining in popularity and momentum ever since. It is so popular that, according to Kern, attendees come from such far-reaching

locations as New York, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey and Nebraska.

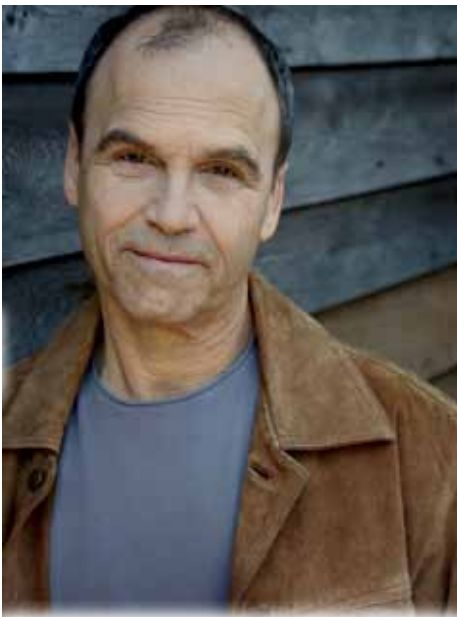
“People actually tailor their vacations around this event,” Kern says. “After each event people rush up to us and tell us it’s the best event ever. I think the dinner with the authors is particularly fun. You realize they are just regular people. They are always very personable and ask questions of you, as well. This event is a great outreach for the community and for the organization as a whole.”

At the helm of the organization’s efforts to secure authors is event co-chair Merrill Kalman,



**Leigh Steinberg**

Photo by Jebb Harris, The Orange County Register



**Scott Turow**

Photo by Jeremy Lawson Photography

who travels to the New York Book Expo to meet and recruit the authors. “In another life, I’d have owned a bookstore,” she says. “I have always loved reading, so this is the perfect opportunity for me. This has enabled me to meet a lot of authors and be in a book world I love being in. The first time I went to the Expo, I felt like a kid in a candy store.”

Past attendees share that enthusiasm.

“The Book and Author event hosted by the Phoenix Chapter of Brandeis last year was, without a doubt, the most exciting author event I have ever attended,” says attendee Terry Bacenheimer. “The authors didn’t let me down! What was so

entrancing about this event was that all the authors were varied in style, content and demeanor. I am not a sports’ enthusiast, but [baseball great] Tony La Russa stole the show for me.”

The annual event is open to the entire community. Each year the committee invites a variety of authors to ensure the event appeals to both men and women. The Phoenix Chapter of The Brandeis National Committee welcomes new members. For more information on Brandeis or to purchase tickets for the luncheon, cocktail party or dinner, visit [brandeisphoenix.com](http://brandeisphoenix.com) or contact Kalman at [mskbfl@aol.com](mailto:mskbfl@aol.com) or Kern at [cak571@aol.com](mailto:cak571@aol.com).

## 24th Annual Book and Author Event

**HOSTED BY:** Brandeis National Committee, Phoenix

**WHEN:** 9 am-3 pm, March 17

**WHERE:** JW Marriott Phoenix Desert Ridge Resort, 5350 East Marriott Drive, Phoenix

**WHAT:** Meet & Hear the authors, shop boutiques and silent auction; lunch.

**INFO:** Carol Kern [cak571@aol.com](mailto:cak571@aol.com) 480-948-9236 or Merrill Kalman [mskbfl@aol.com](mailto:mskbfl@aol.com) 480-296-3355

**TICKETS:** [brandeisphoenix.com](http://brandeisphoenix.com)

Proceeds benefit Sustaining the Mind: Scientific research and scholarships in neurodegenerative diseases.

## Brandeis University & Brandeis National Committee

Founded in 1948, Brandeis is a renowned private research university in Waltham, MA. It is the only nonsectarian Jewish community-sponsored college or university in the country. Named for the late Justice Louis D. Brandeis of the U.S. Supreme Court, the university combines the faculty and resources of a world-class research institution with the intimacy of a small liberal arts college.

Chapters of the Brandeis National Committee, a volunteer fund-raising organization, have contributed more than \$117 million to Brandeis University while utilizing the resources of the university to provide unique programming for members. The BNC raises funds for Brandeis University libraries, neuroscience research and student scholarships. BNC’s “Sustaining the Mind” campaign supports neuroscience research at Brandeis and an endowed scholarship for students in the sciences.

# Arts consortium founder is optimistic there's an arts center in Arizona's future

By Janet Arnold

There's something about an optimist – an energy, an excitement, a means of drawing you in. Elana Thorton is definitely an optimist, and you can feel that positive energy as soon as she opens her door. She dreams of having a performing arts building with events open to the entire community: a place for artists to create and perform, as well as spaces to include an eclectic audience. To realize her goals, she started the nonprofit Arizona Consortium for the Arts in 2007.

You'll recall that the economy was shaky then, and by 2008 we had the official beginning of the Great Recession.

Somehow, those financial facts don't bother Elana. She proudly shows off a framed artist's rendering of her dream building hanging in her living room, clearly laying out the performance and classroom spaces. She lights up when talking about the building and programming and all the benefits to the community it would bring.

Her optimism springs from deep within. Elana was born in Moldova, one of the former Soviet republics. Though she knew she was Jewish, she wasn't allowed to practice it – or even mention it to her neighbors. Her father, Leonid Tolchinsky, knew how to read Hebrew; her mother Polina made hamantaschen for Purim; but they had to hide their heritage to exist.

Then in 1976, with her parents and two brothers, Elana was able to immigrate to the United States, settling in upstate New York. Given the American opportunity to excel, Elana earned her B.A. and M.A. in secondary education and became a teacher in the Albany area, where she taught Russian language and culture. She also volunteered and translated for the Russian resettlement committee at the Jewish family services in Albany. The family could openly practice their Judaism, and Elana was able to spend more time on her paintings.

In 1994 Elana and her husband Jim moved to Phoenix and soon after enrolled their son Jeremy at the Phoenix Hebrew Academy. They were impressed with the welcoming, open arms that greeted them here in the Jewish community, and felt a particular kinship to the Chabad community. "We are so grateful to Chabad for their many kindnesses. That's one of the reasons we continue to volunteer every year to help on their silent auction," she explains. Elana was also an active PTA Board

Member at the former Jess Schwartz Jewish Community High School while Jeremy was a student.

With Jim's help, when Jeremy was in college, Elana and a few colleagues laid the groundwork for the Consortium. She acknowledges it's a hard road, but she is happy to be traveling on it. In the meantime Jeremy earned his master's degree and is an English teacher at Saguro High School.

Realistic enough to know that the actual building may take some time to materialize, Elana and her fellow volunteers at the Consortium are busy creating and performing for the public – reaching out to show what they can already do. Online

is the Blue Guitar Magazine, featuring emerging and established Arizona writers in all genres; the Blue Guitar Jr. Magazine, with articles for or by young people; and Unstrung Poetry Magazine ([theblueguitarmagazine.org](http://theblueguitarmagazine.org)).

The group sponsors a monthly Open Mic program at Dog-eared Pages Used Books, where musicians and performance artists can gather and share their talents, while a new visual artist's works adorn the wall. "We consider these events to be a real celebration of the arts and encourage folks to bring their art, poetry, music,

dance, songs and stories to share," says Elana.

Coming up on March 30 is the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Blue Guitar Festival of the Arts, held at Desert Ridge Marketplace from noon to 6 pm. The afternoon will include a wide variety of talents of all ages, ranging from classical piano students from Arizona Classical Kids to rock bands, as well as performers from dance and theater. Elana invites the whole community to an afternoon of free arts entertainment.

In the meantime, Elana networks and partners with local nonprofit organizations that share resources and forge collaborations. Ever the optimist, Elana is confident that the resources will come from one of their artistic connections and that the drawing on her living room wall will one day be hanging on the wall of the building it depicts. She looks forward to the day when it becomes a reality, giving a home to so many artists of all genres and offering exciting new opportunities for the community to partake in the arts.

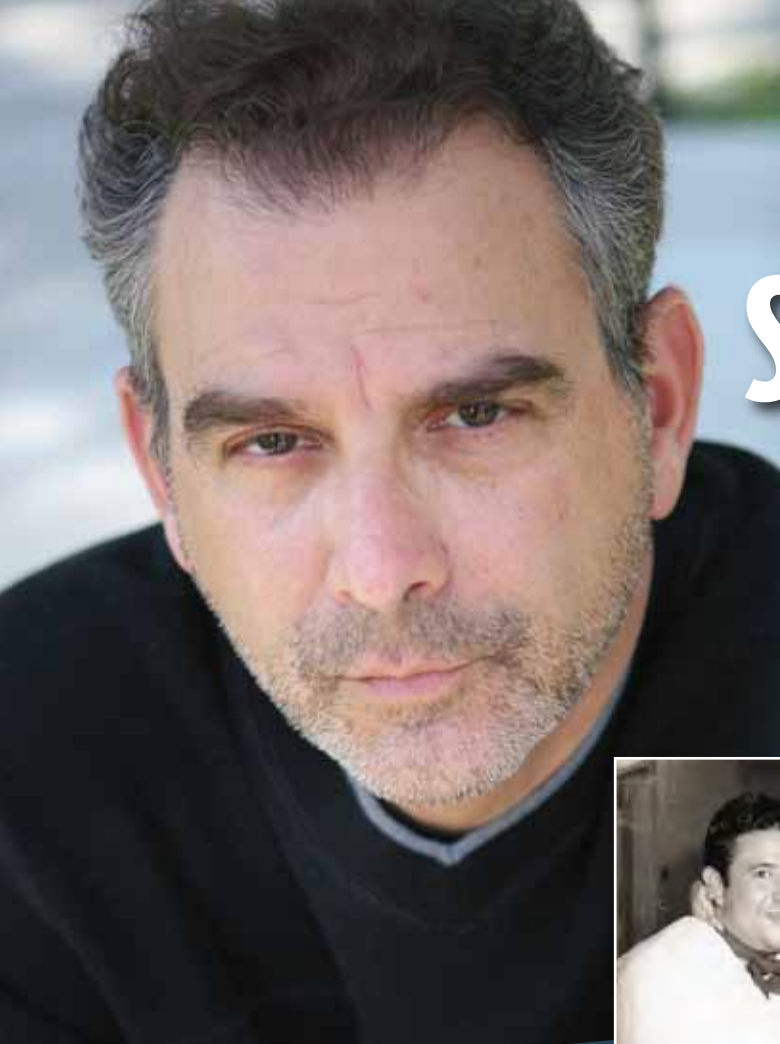
[artizona.org](http://artizona.org)



Michelle Malayeva, an eighth-grader at Pardes Jewish Day School, performs classical piano pieces at the 2013 Blue Guitar Festival of the Arts.



Elana Thorton



# Sandy Hackett brings My Buddy to Tucson

By Deborah Moon



Buddy and Sandy

In a phone interview, Sandy Hackett seamlessly shifts from himself to his famous father, legendary comedian Buddy Hackett (1924-2003), as he describes “My Buddy,” a live musical, theatrical production that explores the bond between father and son. As Sandy’s voice and personality shift, it seems Buddy the father is on the other end of the line instead of his son.

“When I can use my dad’s voice, I become him,” says Sandy. On stage Sandy says he is Sandy on one side of the stage and Buddy on the other. I can picture

his demeanor and bearing shifting as effectively as his voice.

Invisible Theatre in Tucson will feature two performances of the show created by Sandy and his wife, Lisa Dawn Miller, who selected photos from the family’s personal archives to be projected during the show. Lisa, who directs the performance, says the video component complements the theatrical production “about a wonderful father and wonderful son and the times they shared together – it adds subtleties.”

“My father was always funny, (even) the way he walked and moved,” says Sandy. “He was also a stern father and strict disciplinarian. But he

was funny on many levels (including) intellectually – he didn’t like silly. He was honest and raw in his comedy. ... He was also a great friend, mentor and teacher.”

Buddy Hackett entertained audiences around the world for more than 60 years. He was Johnny Carson’s most frequent comic guest on the “Tonight Show.” His films

## MY BUDDY Starring Sandy Hackett

**WHEN:** 8 pm, March 8 & 3 pm, March 9

**WHERE:** Berger Performing Arts Center (1200 W Speedway Blvd., Tucson)

**TICKETS:**

\$35; 520-882-9721 or online at [invisibletheatre.com](http://invisibletheatre.com)

Discounts available for groups, seniors and students. Rush tickets available at half-price one half-hour prior to performance time subject to availability.

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include "It's A Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World," "Music Man" and the Disney classics, "The Love Bug" and "The Little Mermaid."

Sandy delights in seeing his own children enjoying his father's work. He says his daughter, Ashleigh, 8, loves "The Little Mermaid" (in which Buddy voices Scuttle, the goofy little seagull) and his son Oliver, 13, is a fan of "It's A Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World."

Asked about his Jewish life, Sandy says, "I was circumcised, so it started right away – They say it was a big party. I was a bar mitzvah ... and when I was 19 we went to Israel."

Though he says the family doesn't actively practice Judaism, "I still feel my Jewish identity. I understand the Sabbath is a holy day, but Friday night is a big show business night. Saturday is an even bigger show business night, (so you are) traveling or prepping for the show during Shabbat."

Lisa says her father, the successful American songwriter Ron Miller (1932–2007), wrote many Top 10 hits. "He was a Jew who wrote songs with a universal message of peace. My father was not the celebrity Buddy was, but his work will live on for centuries." She selected two of her father's unpublished tunes for Sandy to perform in "My Buddy," including "45 Seconds of Love" about what an entertainer feels on stage. "Sandy performs the son as Buddy and Sandy," she says. The couple is developing a stage show about her father as their next project.

Invisible Theatre has named Sandy Hackett the 2014 Goldie Klein Guest Artist Award honoree. Established in 1988, the award pays tribute to Goldie Klein, mother of IT's artistic director, Susan Claassen.

# Looking for Love

## Is it really that bad being single again?

By Ellen Gerst

It doesn't matter how you returned to the Kingdom of Singleville. You might have experienced the loss of a beloved partner due to death, or you may have divorced a spouse with whom you were very glad to part ways.

For those who have been previously married, there's a good chance you never thought you'd be forced to move here.

You may reluctantly set up a new home and continue to go about the business of your life. However, if you're mad to be in this place, I bet you haven't even given Singleville a chance. There are lots of good things in this kingdom. However, if you are stuck in resentment, you'll be oblivious of what it has to offer.

Here are three new ways to look at your situation.

### 1. Sure, you're missing a companion with whom to share your life. However, maybe sharing is overrated!

**Look at the bright side.** You can now hog all the covers; stay up as late as you want and not worry about bothering a partner; wear ratty old underwear and pj's; watch what you want to on TV; eat cereal for dinner because you don't feel like cooking; not have to sit through endless sports games or chick flicks; or not have to associate with former family members you never liked.

### 2. It may be too quiet in the house for you. However, you can transform this into an opportunity.

**Look at the bright side.** When you're single, you may have lots of time on your hands to think and, even better, to dream. You can take this quiet time to formulate an action plan for the next part of your life. Without having to worry about ignoring a partner because you're too busy, you can continue your education or work toward a higher degree, pursue hobbies you love, learn new things and volunteer for causes dear to your heart.

### 3. You look at older couples walking in companionable silence and feel you've been robbed of this experience. Even if you meet someone new, he/she will only be able to see you as you are now and will never see the young person inside that your former mate did.

**Look at the bright side.** I agree that this is a sad fact of losing and/or divorcing a partner at an older age. However, if you look at the divorce rates these days, there's at least a 50% chance you wouldn't make it to your old age with one partner. When the institution of marriage was first invented, longevity for humans wasn't in the cards. "Till death do us part" might have only meant 20 or so years before one or both parties passed away. Without negating your loss, instead of ruing the fact that you have to look for love at an older age, consider the idea that you're a grown-up now who knows what he/she wants and needs. Your next partner might be better-suited for you and the lifestyle you envision for the second half of your life than the partner you met

and married at a young and naïve age.

I realize that even the good parts of being single don't make the pain of loss go away. Nevertheless, it's necessary for you to work with what you have. You can't undo the past, so your power lies in what you do in the present to build a bright future for yourself.

Living in a single state can be a very selfish time of life – and I mean that in the most positive of ways. Without the distraction of a partner and the responsibilities of commitment to another, it's a period that can be all about you. How often do you have the opportunity to concentrate all your efforts on personal growth? Spend your time building your emotional, spiritual, mental and physical muscles. When you're "buff" you can use these muscles to take you to your next adventure.

## Q and A

**Question:** Can you give me some tips on how to be a successful dater?

**Answer:** The English teacher in me loves a good acronym! Consequently, I say a good way is to act SMART.

**S = Specific:** *Specifically* define your goals, make a plan and put your plan into action.

**M = Maybe:** Don't be so quick to write off dates after one encounter. Even if it wasn't a definite yes, as long as it's not a no, at least say *maybe*. Due to nervousness, shyness or simply being inept at the dating process, a person may not be able to show you who he/she really is. All truths eventually come to light.

**A = Attainable:** There's someone for everyone, but you must be realistic. If you're an out-of-shape, 60-year-old man who only wants to date 23-year-old athletic beach bunnies, you may be narrowing your chances of success. Without over-restricting yourself, draw the picture of your "dream" mate with *attainable* attributes.

**R = Relevant:** Stay *relevant* by reading the latest books, magazines and newspapers so you have plenty of fodder for chitchat.

**T = Timely:** Be prompt when meeting your date. Return emails or phone calls in a *timely* manner. Both of these behaviors these show respect.

Ellen Gerst is a relationship coach, author and workshop leader. Visit [LNGerst.com](http://LNGerst.com). To ask Ellen a question to be answered in a future column, email her at [LNGerst@LNGerst.com](mailto:LNGerst@LNGerst.com).



# Single Profiles: Meet AJ and Jessica

By Masada Siegel

Dating is a challenge. Most single people say it's hard to find interesting, intelligent and attractive people, and, for some crazy reason, they are right. However, meeting a great person should not be so hard; that's why we at Arizona Jewish Life magazine have taken matters into our own hands and found two amazing catches we can't believe are still single. We thought we'd do a little matchmaking and introduce them to the community, with hopes of playing a role in finding them the right match. Who knows, maybe we will be able to write their wedding stories in a future issue. Meet AJ and Jessica!

## Abraham Jordan Frost

Abraham Jordan Frost, otherwise known as AJ, is an Arizona native who grew up in Scottsdale. A shy youngster and an only child, AJ gravitated toward making friends and has a close relationship with his parents, who are supportive of him in all his endeavors.

While AJ enjoys living in Arizona, his passion and ambition took him to the East Coast to experience life and his last name—otherwise known as, well, winter weather.

"I completed my undergraduate degree at Arizona State and finished off my graduate studies at Columbia University in New York. My primary academic field has been the intersection of political science, history and religion, focusing mostly on American politics."

AJ has a great sense of humor and appreciates Arizona to a new level, especially after living in NYC.

"After having lived in New York for a few years, I can tell you that I do not particularly care for the colder climate. I felt, very briefly mind you, a modicum of guilt while my East Coast friends froze in the polar vortex while I dipped my toe in the pool. As for activities, I'm an art enthusiast. Indeed, I enjoy Phoenix Art Museum, an occasional show, the zoo or just walking around without a care for where I'm going. A little confession if I may, even though I've lived in Arizona pretty much my entire life, I never once have gone to the Grand Canyon. Please don't judge me on that," he says with a big smile on his face.

Currently, AJ is using his talent and degrees to help make the world a better place, specifically by enlightening our community as he works for the Valley Beit Midrash, which hosts interesting, educational and fun events.

"I work for the Valley Beit Midrash under the guidance of Rabbi Shmuly Yanklowitz. He has been very supportive of me, and even though I haven't known him very long, I am blessed that I get to work with someone who is so prolific and socially astute. I've been lucky in that the rabbi has trusted me to assist



him in his academic pursuits. It means a lot to me."

AJ is a renaissance man, he knows his music, art and art history, and is the perfect date to visit a museum. Chances are this easygoing man, who is bright and articulate, might just know a little something about the exhibit since he is passionate about learning.

A few things he is looking for in a relationship are, "Someone who is smarter than me, someone who has a good and broad sense of humor, someone who respects the traditions of Judaism and Jewish culture. Most importantly, someone who could put up with me, look at my flaws and say 'Eh, he's not perfect, but I love him just the same.'"

*(Reach out to AJ on Facebook)*



## Jessica Levin

Jessica Levin is bubbly, bright and beautiful with a brilliant sense of humor. An Arizona native, she lived in New York for a few years when she was growing up because of her father's job transfer, but they eventually moved back to Arizona.

"I didn't appreciate Arizona as much growing up as I do now as a professional," she says. "I went to undergrad in San Diego and then came back here for

graduate school. I studied psychology at the University of San Diego and then went to Argosy University, a school for professional psychology, to get my master's in mental health counseling."

Her enjoyment of connecting and helping people extends from her personal life to her professional one.

"I am currently a child and family therapist at a residential treatment center in Scottsdale. I enjoy my job and like working with various cultures and diversities. I have always had a passion for kids and adolescents and therefore find my profession very rewarding as well as challenging. I feel that I have grown a lot from working with such different types of families."

Jessica loves to travel and recently returned from a trip to Europe, where she went exploring. She has a wide range of interests and a great respect for the people she loves.

"I like to work out, try new restaurants, go to sporting events and concerts, and just experience new things. My family and friends are extremely important to me, and I love spending time with them. My sister lives in San Diego, and my parents are residents here but go back-and-forth to San Diego often."

Jessica is always on the go, but she still has time to keep her eyes open for that special someone she hopes to meet eventually.

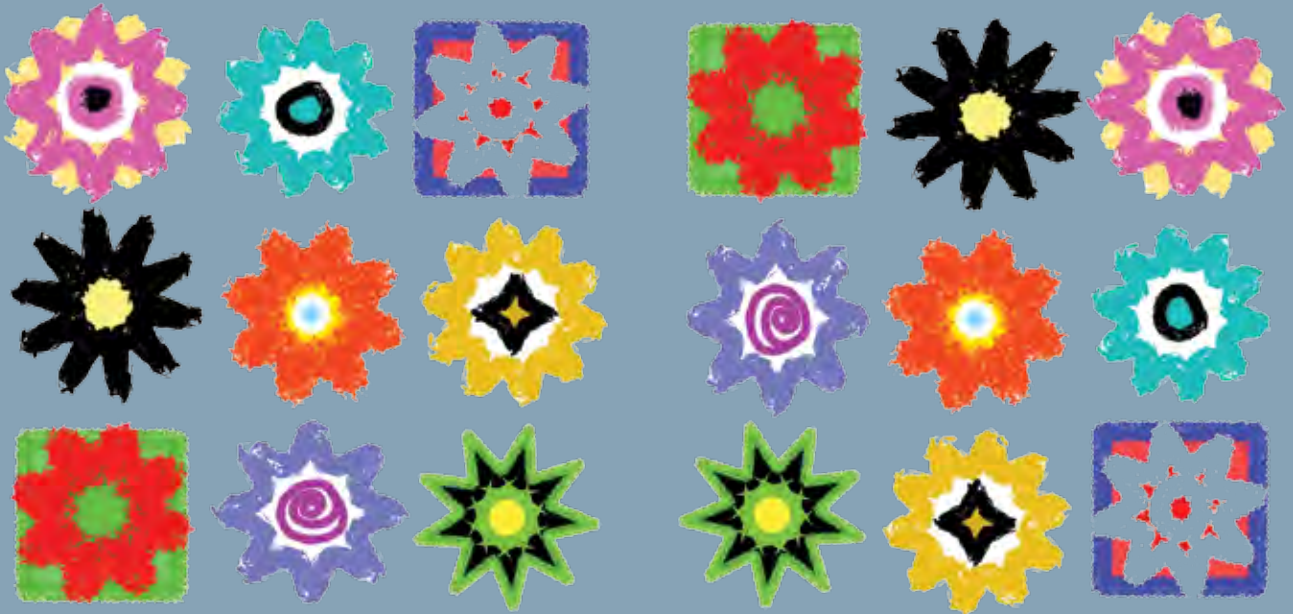
"I am looking for a partner that is someone who is respectful and will challenge me to be a better person. Someone who will experience life to the fullest with me, travel, go on adventures, try new things. I'd like to be with a person who is respectful, sincere and has good family values."

*(Reach out to Jessica on Facebook)*

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# Positive Peer Pressure



## Matthew Kaplan teaches peers to fight bullying

By Debra Rich Gettleman

The American Heritage New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy defines “peer pressure” as: “The social influence a peer group exerts on its individual members, as each member attempts to conform to the expectations of the group.”

In common colloquial terms, we think of peer pressure as the negative and insidious way teenagers coerce each other to drink alcohol, experiment with drugs and rebel against their parents. But what if you turned peer pressure upside down and thought of it as a good thing – as a way for kind, thoughtful young people to bring about change within their social sphere? Think of the power you could harness by using peer pressure to make teenage life more accepting, inclusive and tolerant. Well, luckily for kids today, Matthew Kaplan is doing just that with his Be O.N.E. (Open to New Experiences) Project.

In the summer before his eighth-grade year, Matthew, a local Phoenix student who was attending Arizona School for the Arts, founded The Be O.N.E. Project after witnessing his younger brother become a victim of cyber bullying.

“He started to get text messages from ‘friends’ saying really cruel things like ‘you’re stupid,’ or ‘you’re a jerk,’” Matthew explains. When his mom attempted to intervene on her son’s behalf, she was given the age-old story that “kids will be kids,” and that there was nothing that could be done to fix the problem. “I saw my brother start to internalize the negative things people were saying to him,” says Matthew. “I saw him sitting alone at lunch.”

Matthew grew up in a family that encouraged action and standing up for your beliefs. At a certain point he thought to himself, “Enough is enough. Kids can be kids in a nice way.” With his mom’s encouragement, and the help of his amazing seventh- and eighth-grade life skills counselor, Liz Kuhl, Matthew decided to do something to address the bullying that had become rampant at his school. After spending the summer researching, talking to students and educators, and identifying the issues associated with bullying, Matthew determined that the best way to combat bullying was to use positive peer pressure to spread the message of inclusion. “You can’t just talk at kids,” he says. “You need to engage them. This program is completely



Teamwork exercise

interactive.”

Matthew developed the program through trial and error and has honed it into a powerful three-hour interactive session that includes activities and large and small group discussions. He starts the process by meeting with school principals to assess the issues of exclusion and bullying at any given school. Then, based on the

specific school interests, he tailors a program to fit each school’s individual needs. “We usually start with a light icebreaker,” he tells me, “to help kids break out of their shells.” Then Matthew leads groups in various activities and discussions about how they want to view themselves and others and how their actions can be hurtful even when they’re just “kidding around.”

“This is a program about changing behavior,” Matthew clarifies. “At the end of the day, I always give kids the opportunity to apologize to someone.” He then tells me the extraordinary story of one of his brother’s bullies who apologized for her behavior and confessed to not knowing how to channel her own insecurity. “The majority of bullying behavior comes from insensitivity,” says Matthew. “Kids really don’t realize how hurtful they are being.”

According to Matthew, “The Be O.N.E. Project breaks down barriers, opens lines of communication and instills a sense of trust and community. By fostering a school culture of mutual respect, acceptance and support, The Be O.N.E. Project empowers students to create for themselves a nurturing learning environment, which reduces physical, verbal and cyber bullying.”

With a generation raised on IMs, Tweets and Facebook messages, anonymity is one reason cyber bullying is such a threat to kids. “When we don’t see people’s faces,” Matthew says, “we don’t know how much something hurts them.” Middle school is the perfect time to use positive peer pressure to interrupt potential cyber bullying and bad behavior. “Kids are just



Matthew Kaplan

[thebeoneproject.com](http://thebeoneproject.com)



beginning to access technology,” says Matthew. “We give them the tools so they can use their power to be either supportive or destructive. They can choose which way to go.”

Matthew thinks that waiting to intervene until high school, when many anti-bullying programs go into effect, is too late. By the time kids get into high school, bullying, intimidation and subsequent isolation have become habits that are deeply ingrained and difficult to combat. “Students in fifth through eighth grades are at a critical juncture in their development and growth,” explains Matthew. “During this time frame, kids develop their sense of themselves and how they want to be perceived by others. Most students who bully during this time do so because they feel pressure to conform and to feel better about themselves. Social media makes the bullying easy and anonymous.”

Most middle school bullies do not perceive their behavior as bullying because they do not recognize the harm they are doing. “They feel alone,” Matthew says, “and they externalize their insecurity.” The Be O.N.E. Project works to raise students’ awareness and sensitivity to others, and also helps improve personal self-esteem and promotes positive self-image.

Matthew was raised in a family that blended Conservative and Reform Jewish ideals and credits his early interest in combatting bullying to his summers spent at Camp Ramah in California. “It was at Camp Ramah that I first learned the concept of lashon hara (literally evil tongue), which forms the foundation of my work at The Be O.N.E. Project,” says Matthew. “The core goal

of The Be O.N.E. Project is to make kids realize that the words they say are powerful, and that they must choose whether to wield this power to be supportive or destructive.”

Matthew’s press coverage and popularity has been extraordinary. In addition to being featured on “Good Morning America” and “Sonoran Living Live,” he was awarded the AmTrust Caring Kid Award and was chosen as one of the 51 National Child Awareness Month Youth Ambassadors who attended a three-day leadership training on Capitol Hill. In addition, Go Inspire Go, a nonprofit group that uses social media to share stories of everyday people doing extraordinary things, launched a campaign this year to tell the stories of 50 real life heroes in 50 states. Matthew was selected to be the kick-off story of their 50/50 mission for his work on The Be O.N.E. Project.

Over 900 students in Arizona have participated in Be O.N.E., and Matthew hopes to offer the program to schools throughout Arizona and across the country. He is offering the program free of charge for the first year. But he assures me that even if there is a fee for the program in the future, no school will ever be turned down because of budget. Matthew contends, “The solution to bullying shouldn’t be only for those schools who can afford to pay for it.”

If you know of a school that would be open and excited about embracing the powerful message of Be O.N.E., contact Matthew Kaplan at [thebeoneproject@gmail.com](mailto:thebeoneproject@gmail.com).

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# Overnight camps nourish youth to grow into strong adults

By Deborah Moon

Overnight camps help young campers learn valuable life skills that enhance their lives in college and beyond. Numerous studies have shown youth benefit from attending

sleep-away camps.

The American Camp Association lists numerous benefits young people develop through their experiences at residential camps. In terms of social skills development, campers learn leadership, communication and participation skills. Campers also learn skills that make them valuable members of communities, including a sense of caring, fairness, citizenship and trustworthiness. They build character and gain self-respect as they gain skills in responsibility, resourcefulness and resilience.

In his blog “Nurturing Resilience,” on the website of Psychology Today, Dr. Michael Ungar, PhD, has explored why kids who went to summer camp are more successful in college. Ungar points out that camp makes kids resilient. Campers form new relationships; learn how to be proud of their achievements; have the chance to be “just kids” who interact without the baggage they carry at school; feel in control of their own lives; get a day balanced with activity, fresh air and good food; gain a sense of belonging; and acquire an awareness of culture.

That last benefit is why some families choose Jewish camps. Several studies show Jewish camps have the added benefit of building Jewish identity to create confident, engaged Jewish adults. For instance the Camp Works study by the Foundation for Jewish Camp found that as adults, former campers are: 45% more likely to attend synagogue monthly or more; 55% more likely to be very emotionally attached to Israel; and 30% more likely to donate to a Jewish charity.

For nearly 100 years, the American Camp Association, with more than 7,000 members, has worked to ensure the quality of camp programs and to make sure campers have the opportunity to learn powerful lessons in community, character-building, skill development and healthy living – lessons they say can be learned nowhere else.

According to the ACA website ([acacamps.org](http://acacamps.org)), “Camp provides children with a community of caring adults, who nurture experiential education that results in self-respect and appreciation for human value. All of the outcomes – self-identity, self-worth, self-esteem, leadership and self-respect – build personal competencies. ... For years, campers’ parents have reported that when their children return home from camp, they are more caring, understand the importance of giving, are more equipped to stand up for what they know is right and are willing to be more responsible. These are the qualities that will help build a successful nation and a civil society.”

## Sometimes day camp is the right answer

By the American Camp Association

For 150 years, camp has been the natural extension of traditional education – an expanded learning environment that provides enrichment and a hands-on experiential education like no other. Experts agree that camp is essential to a child’s development – teaching life lessons such as leadership, teamwork, empathy and problem-solving.

The most successful camp experiences occur when families and children work together to find a camp that best matches everyone’s needs. What about families who feel a sleep-away camp is not the right fit, but still want their child to experience all that camp has to offer? The answer may be right around the corner at a day camp. The American Camp Association reminds families that the benefits of day camp are extensive:

**Camp close to home** – Perhaps a child is too young for resident camp, or perhaps scheduling does not allow for extended time away from home. Regardless of the reason, day camp is an excellent alternative.

**So much to do** – Day camps offer a wide range of programming and activities including sports, arts, science and education. Like resident camps, day camps offer team-building activities, leadership training and wilderness programs.

**Keep those neurons pumping** – Research indicates that participation in intentional programs, like camp, helps reduce learning loss during summer months. Camp is the ultimate classroom, using experiences to teach problem-solving and skill-development.

**Get those bodies moving** – Camp provides children the opportunity to try new things and participate in human-powered activities. According to surveys by both the Kaiser Family Foundation and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, an American child is six times more likely to play a videogame on any given day than to ride a bike. According to research conducted by ACA, 63% of children who learn new activities at camp tend to continue engaging in these activities after they return home. This leads to continued physical exercise that lasts a lifetime.

**Budget-friendly options** – In certain circumstances, day care expenses, including transportation by a care provider, may be considered dependent care services and paid with a dependent care flexible spending account or pre-tax dollars. In addition, day camps may qualify for special tax incentives like child and dependent care tax credits.

It’s not too late to find the perfect day camp experience. Families can visit [CampParents.org](http://CampParents.org) and use the Find a Camp database to research camps by location, cost and activities offered.

Day camp is life-changing, providing growth and development through teachable moments, experiences, friendships and, most importantly, fun.

*Originally published in Camp e-News. Reprinted by permission of the American Camp Association. ©2011, American Camping Association, Inc.*

## East Valley Jewish Day School to relocate



EVJDS students dress in PJs to put bullying to sleep

East Valley Jewish Day School is moving to Temple Beth Sholom of the East Valley on July 1 to be ready for the opening of the new school year on Aug. 6. The move will benefit both organizations as the temple had some under-utilized space available and the day school needed more space to accommodate its students.

TBS President Deborah Bloom says, "It is the hope of both our organizations that this new location for the school will provide greater visibility for the school as well as room for growth. We are grateful that we can offer this benefit to the Jewish community and be part of a wonderful opportunity to promote Jewish education."

EVJDS Executive Director Emily Zappa is thrilled to be moving to a larger facility and appreciates the temple's offer. "We are aware that a lot of people don't know about us. They don't realize that five years ago we became an independent Jewish day school, separate from the JCC." To that end, the board, staff and students are brainstorming to determine if a new name for the school might help to clarify branding issues.

"Our students come from all over the metropolitan area, and we'd like our name to reflect the depth and breadth of the families we serve," says Zappa. As a community Jewish day school, East Valley welcomes students from all sects of Judaism. The day school provides classes for kindergarten through seventh grade. Located about 4 miles from its previous setting, the new address for the school is 3400 N Dobson Road in Chandler. Registration is now under way.

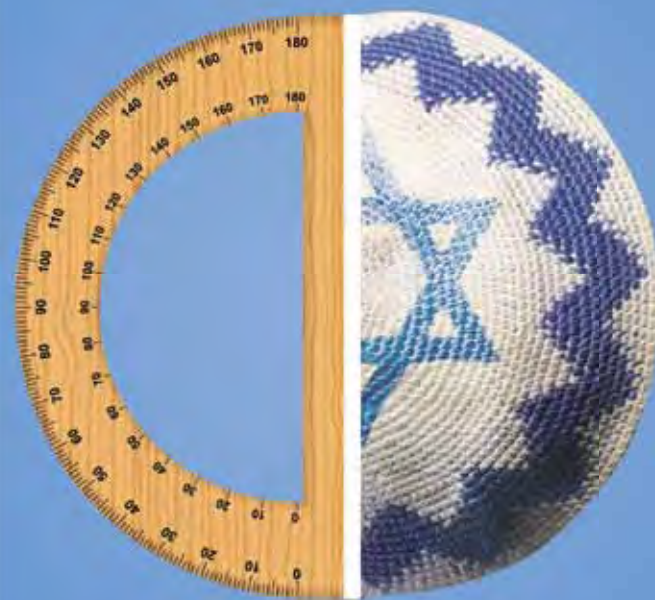
evjds.org

## Beth Israel kids explore ancient Hebrew



Congregation Beth Israel's aleph class uncovers the hidden treasure in learning the aleph bet: (front row, kneeling): Ella, Ava, Adin, Olivia, Melanie, Asher and Lauren; (back row): Jessica, Hannah, Morah (teacher) Donna Harris, Jaimee and Morgan. Morah Donna told her students that that the Israelites encountered hieroglyphic symbols, picture writing, in Egypt. That inspired the creation of Hebrew characters, which likewise referenced objects or the form the sign represented. Aleph, the first Hebrew letter meant "ox." After a discussion of how the Hebrew alphabet was invented, Congregation Beth Israel's aleph class carved their own hieroglyphics.

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Brian Mitchell enjoyed meeting campers last summer during his first year as director of Camp Daisy and Harry Stein.

# Meet Camp Stein Director Brian Mitchell

By Deborah Moon

Last February Brian Mitchell became camp director of Camp Daisy and Harry Stein, the only Jewish overnight summer camp in the region. Previously known as Camp Charles Pearlstein, Camp Stein is located in Prescott and is owned and operated by Congregation Beth Israel in Scottsdale.

Brian grew up as a camper and counselor at Camp Sabra in Lake of the Ozarks, MO. He graduated from the University of Indiana at Bloomington. Prior to joining Camp Stein, Brian was director of the University of Missouri Hillel at Columbia after serving as senior assistant director of the Union for Reform Judaism's Crane Lake Camp in West Stockbridge, MA.

Brian resides in Scottsdale. His parents live in St. Louis, and his sister, a brother-in-law, niece and nephew live in Kansas City, MO.

Brian has been a member and standards visitor of the American Camping Association. He was a "Yitro Fellow" through the Foundation for Jewish Camp and has led seven Birthright Israel trips. Currently, he is a member of the third cohort of the JCC Association and Foundation for Jewish Camp's Lekhu Lakhem program.

We reached Brian just before he left for the latest Lekhu Lakhem retreat and asked him to share some of his thoughts as we head into a new camp season. Some of his replies have been edited for brevity. Did you enjoy returning to a camp setting last year after leading a Hillel for a couple of years?

Yes – very much. The summer of 2012 (while leading a Hillel) was really the only summer I had been away from camp as far back as the mid-1990s, and it was challenging for me because of my love of Jewish summer camp. Being back at a camp last summer really renewed my love and spirit for all that Jewish overnight summer camp can offer. And what better place to return to it than Prescott, AZ?

Was the Hillel experience helpful for your work with college students on Camp Stein's staff?

The Hillel experience was very helpful to me in so many ways. Of course, the interaction with college students on an everyday basis for nearly two years allowed me to learn new and more engaging ways of communicating with that age cohort. The Hillel experience also taught me a lot about building and facility management, as well as development and fund-raising, two major areas that I focus a lot of my time on as the Camp Stein director.

**What was your favorite experience with Camp Stein last summer?**

What makes Camp Stein such a special place is our intimate size. Having only 150 campers and 60 staff members at one time, I really had the opportunity to get to know nearly our entire camp community. This closeness to the campers and staff was my favorite part of last summer. Oh, and of course Maccabiah!

**What are you most looking forward to this coming summer?**

Having started as director last February, only four months before camp started, it really felt like I was doing all I could just to stay afloat. Now, having lived through my first summer, and starting in September to plan and organize an entire summer from the beginning, I am really looking forward to seeing all of the hard work and dedication over the nine-month offseason come to fruition on opening day. We also have a few facility upgrades and some new staff additions to camp this summer that I think are going to “wow” our camp community!

**What does it mean to be a member and standards visitor of the American Camping Association?**

All of the top (day and overnight) camps in the country including Camp Stein are members of The American Camp Association. To maintain membership, every three years, camps are visited by camp professional volunteers (mostly current and former camp directors like myself) to make sure they meet the highest standards. If the camps are meeting these standards (e.g., maintenance, food service, program design, staffing), they become “accredited” for the following three summers. I have had the opportunity to visit several camps and guide them through this accreditation process, while making sure they meet the minimum standards required by the ACA. When parents send their kids to camp for the first time, they primarily look for those camps that are ACA accredited.

**I understand you are currently one of 19 Jewish camp leaders in the Lekhu Lakhem program. What is the most important thing you've gained from the program so far?**

Being a member of the Lekhu Lakhem program has been amazing. This program is designed for Jewish camp directors to become better equipped, informed and experienced when it comes to Jewish text and learning, and has gone/will go a long way to making me a more confident Jewish educator. The faculty for this program is unbelievably experienced and knowledgeable, and I feel honored just to be in the room with them. The networking that goes on between the 19 directors at our retreats is a huge bonus. And, to be honest, it's a really fun group to be around!

**How does this differ from your experience as a Yitro Fellow?**

The Yitro Fellowship was really designed to teach me how to be a “middle manager.” As an assistant director at the time of this fellowship, it taught me how to work better with my director, but also gave me useful tools and experience to lead Jewish programming on my own. Both fellowships have been great professional development tools for me, and have really allowed me to grow as a full-time camp professional.

**What would you most like the community to know about you?**

I am in this position as director of Camp Stein because I myself am a product of Jewish overnight summer camp. Having spent so many wonderful summers at JCC Camp Sabra and URJ Crane Lake Camp, and now my first at Camp Stein, I have shaped and strengthened my Jewish identity and become much more connected to Judaism than I ever thought I would be after my bar mitzvah in 1990. It's so hard to put into words, but I know I am who I am because of camp.



While attending a conference to train young Israelis to work at Jewish summer camps in the Diaspora, Camp Stein Director Brian Mitchell met the four Israelis who later came to Camp Stein to work last summer. Two of those staffers and four other Israelis will be at camp this summer. In April Brian returns to Israel to attend this year's conference.

And even though I am currently a resident of Scottsdale, I will never forget my roots or ties to the greatest sports city in the United States, St. Louis!

**Anything else?**

For any families interested in learning more about Camp Stein, please visit [campstein.org](http://campstein.org). Also, mark your calendars for Sunday, March 30, from 10 am to 2 pm, when we are hosting an open house at Camp Stein in Prescott, for all new, current and prospective families to spend a beautiful afternoon at camp! We still have a few spots open across most age groups and sessions, so sign up today!

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# Sports and Judaism all in one overnight camp

By Deborah Moon

On the website for the new JCC Maccabi Sports Camp ([maccabisportscamp.org](http://maccabisportscamp.org)), Camp Director Josh Steinharter writes, “As a kid who hoped to one day play shortstop for the Yankees, I faced a dilemma every summer. ‘Why do I have to choose between sports camp and Jewish overnight camp?’”

Fortunately for like-minded kids today, that is no longer a dilemma. Thanks to Josh’s dream and a grant from the Foundation for Jewish Camp Specialty Camp Incubator, young Jewish athletes can have both camps in one at the new JCC Maccabi Sports Camp. During two-week sessions at the new overnight Jewish sports summer camp near San Francisco, boys and girls in fourth through ninth grades can learn more about their favorite sport of choice – baseball, basketball, soccer or tennis. The camp combines intensive clinics and creative programming to help young Jewish athletes advance their skill levels while enjoying other sports and camp activities mixed in with the core values of a Jewish summer camp experience.

“Parents and campers are thrilled about our new camp,” says Josh. “The response has been overwhelmingly positive and supportive, not just from families but also synagogues, day schools, JCCs and other Jewish organizations.” Josh says the reaction he gets most often is either “What took you so long?” or “I would have totally gone to this camp as a kid!”

Though he says there are lots of amazing Jewish camps, unfortunately there aren’t enough kids going to Jewish camp.

“Our hope is to provide that same quality Jewish experience by using sports as the hook and vehicle to connect kids to their Jewish community,” says Josh. “A successful experience at our camp involves a camper leaving with stronger skills and confidence in his or her sport and a stronger sense of Jewish self and community.”

Josh already has seen how sports can connect youth to their Judaism. He served as the delegation head for Team San Francisco for five years, including 2009 when San Francisco hosted the JCC Maccabi Games. He also led the

SF delegation to the Maccabiah Games in Israel in 2011.

“Some look at the Games and think of it as just a sporting event, but because all the participants are Jewish, it creates a unique and special experience, giving kids (an opportunity) ... to meet peers around the country and learn about other types of Jewish communities and practices. ... Since the idea of melding the worlds of sports camp and Jewish camp had been brewing in my mind for years, my experience in the Games helped to give the camp more shape and structure, both thematically and programmatically.”

Like all JCC Maccabi experiences, the camp culture is guided by Jewish values. Sportsmanship, ethics and the community-building nature of team play go hand in hand with Jewish values.

Josh says he has many ideas on how to weave Judaism into the sports camp experience. “Some (are) as nuanced as relating the everyday rituals of playing sports (dressing the right way, stretching before games, following rules) to the rituals of Jewish life.” Campers will celebrate “Shabbat as a separation from the routine week, giving athletes a chance to leave their specific sport and rejoin the community as a whole.

“One very specific way we are connecting sports and Jewish values is by giving every camper who registers their own camp water bottle,” says Josh. “Shmirat haguf, guarding the body, is one of our core values. By teaching the merits of hydration and creating a strong healthy body and therefore mind, we are teaching our campers how to be strong athletes and strong Jews.”

For seven years, Josh has held the position of athletic program manager for youth & coach development at the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco. He is an alum of URJ Goldman Union Camp

Institute.

JCC Maccabi Sports Camp is a nonprofit specialty camp being funded by the Jim Joseph Foundation and AVI Chai Foundations in partnership with the Foundation for Jewish Camp. JCC Maccabi Sports Camp is a nationally affiliated camp of the JCC Association.



Josh Steinharter

“As a kid who hoped to one day play shortstop for the Yankees, I faced a dilemma every summer.”



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# Create summer memories for a lifetime

By Janet Arnold



For many of us growing up, summer was a time to run through sprinklers, play sandlot baseball or go for long bike rides and maybe even sit outside under a tree reading a book.

But not when the temperatures reach 110-115°. Summer in Arizona is a different animal. While residents are not willing to trade the heat for the bitter cold and snow of other places, they do have to figure out just how to manage during the summer months, particularly for the kids.

Fortunately, day camps abound. Camp Shemesh at the Valley of the Sun JCC in Scottsdale offers a variety of camps for children from kindergarten through eighth grades, with a counselor-in-training program for those in ninth and 10th grades.

The ever-popular, all-round camp is broken into age groups and available weekly from May 27-Aug. 1. Each week offers a wide variety of indoor activities as well as swimming. In addition, the VOSJCC offers specialty camps. The Sports Specialty Camp also runs every week from May 27-Aug. 1, with a different sport highlighted each week. Other specialties are offered by the week from June 2-July 18. Among these enticing theme camps are interest areas such as cooking, ballet, science and acting.

New this year is a special one-week camp serving campers from 5 to 13 years old with mild to moderate disabilities. Offered May 26-30, this half-day program is specially designed, according to the camp's brochure, "to enhance social, motor, language and other vital life skills that promote greater independence. Campers' days will be filled with traditional summer camp activities like adaptive physical education, movement, music, adaptive art, swim lessons, socialization and free swim."

Also new this year is the enthusiastic camp director, Harry Rubenstein. "Combining my background in education and a true love and understanding of camp, I know this camp experience will be one of the best the campers have ever had," Harry promises. Parents making decisions should note that the early-bird deadline for discounts is March 21. Prices go up after that time. The Valley of the Sun JCC is located at 12701 N Scottsdale Road. The brochure is online at [vosjcc.org](http://vosjcc.org), or call 480-483-7121, ext. 1277.

At the Tucson JCC, plans are also under way for a fun-filled summer at Super Summer at Camp J. The Early Childhood camps are offered for 2- to 5-year-olds in two-week sessions from May 27-Aug. 1 on a half- or full-day basis. Programming is also available May 22-23 and again Aug. 4-6 to help fill out the summer.

There are general, all-round camps for grades K-2 and 3-5 that are also offered in two-week sessions, as well as a specialty sports camp for grades 2-5 that includes a trip to Phoenix for



EVJCC Camp Pool



Tucson JCC Campers



VOSJCC Shemesh Robotics

a Diamondbacks baseball game. For grades 6-9, there is a travel camp that takes a wide variety of field trips, and also a "back by popular demand" athletic-conditioning camp.

While all of these camps require JCC membership, there are several offerings that do not. One is a leader-in-training program for those in grades 9-12. There is also a half-day, weekly tennis camp for those in grades 1-9. And from May 26-July 25, the JCC offers a program designed for young adults (16+) with special needs.

The Tucson JCC also partners with two sleep-away camps. From June 9-13, returning for its 12th summer, is a full-week experience at the Shalom Institute in Malibu, CA, for those entering grades 3-9. New this year is a week in July at JCC Ranch Camp in Black Forest, CO, for those



entering grades 5-8.

Scott Zorn is serving his ninth year as head of the camps. "I'm super excited about camp this year and creating great experiences and memories for the kids through the comic and super hero themes," says Scott. The early-bird deadline for discounts at the Tucson JCC camp is March 31. The JCC is located at 3800 E River Road. [tucsonjcc.org](http://tucsonjcc.org), 520-299-3000

At the East Valley JCC in Chandler, camp for children ages 2 through kindergarten will be offered in three, three-week sessions, from May 27-July 25. Camps for first- through ninth-graders will be available those same dates, but can be registered for on a weekly basis. New this year is the JCC Youth Coordinator and Camp Director Brandon Welner, a graduate of Arizona State University. Though the JCC facility at 908 N Alma School Road doesn't have a pool on its premises, the children are bussed to a nearby site for swimming. Registration is under way. There is no definite cutoff for discounted prices, but families are encouraged to register soon to ensure spots. [evjcc.org](http://evjcc.org), 480-897-0588.

Many temples and synagogues hold their own preschool day camps, and some have programming for older children as well. High schoolers may want to check on available jobs as counselors-in-training or assistant counselors.

If you will be experiencing your first summer in Arizona, please remember that water safety and swimming lessons are a must and that children should never be left unsupervised near a pool – not even for a second. Add sunblock and a little common sense, and you can start building great summer memories for your kids to remember as wistfully as you remember yours.

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\$180 registration after April 15<sup>th</sup>

**Glee I • June 16- 20<sup>th</sup>**  
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\$180 registration after April 15<sup>th</sup>

**Wild Things!! • June 23-27<sup>th</sup>**  
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\$180 registration after April 15<sup>th</sup>

**Dr. Doolittle Jr. July 7<sup>th</sup>-July 25<sup>th</sup>**  
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**BONUS WEEK!** **Glee II • July 28<sup>th</sup> – August 1<sup>st</sup>**  
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# Summer recreation was important for pioneer families

By Eileen Warshaw

Summer camps were not an option in the pioneer west; however, summer recreation was an important part of Arizona desert life. Early “water holes” were man-made lakes located at Carrillo Gardens, where picnic grounds, band enclosures and boathouses could be found – complete with small boats to rent and paddle across what must have seemed like an ocean.

In 1903 the family of Emanuel Drachman, one of 10 children of Jewish pioneer Phillip Drachman, purchased Carrillo Gardens. Its new name, Elysian Grove, was likely inspired by the Elysian Fields of Greek mythology. To this day, residents refer to their neighborhood as El Jardin in memory of the lovely gardens at the park.

The outdoor entertainment included the first swimming pool in Tucson. A wooden-floor pavilion was large enough for parties and formal dances with an accompanying orchestra. When the adults were not monopolizing the floor, young and old roller-skated across the surface. Roy Drachman remembers his father taking him as a 4-year-old to hear Teddy Roosevelt speak from the pavilion and being instructed by his father to “Remember this historic moment.”

There was good reason to ride the mule trolley to the Grove.

Elysian Grove was home to the first motion picture machine in Arizona. In 1903 “The Great Train Robbery” was the first movie shown. Filmed in New Jersey, it starred the first Wild West cowboy star, the very Jewish Max Aronson, alias “Broncho Billy” Anderson. The show at the Grove was outdoors using a hand-cranked projector. The center of outdoor activities in Southern Arizona, Elysian Grove hosted barbecues, greyhound races and baseball games. In 1906 the city celebrated the opening of the first electric streetcar system with much fanfare at the Grove.

In 1910 the first dog race took place in front of an overflow crowd on the newly built dog track. During the race a dog caught the fake rabbit and wandered off with the cloth ear.

The amusement area opened in May each year, usually for Cinco de Mayo. Live entertainers and production companies from the western United States and Mexico performed there from May to February each year.

Emanuel Drachman was a business promoter his entire life. In 1910 he brought the first airplane to Tucson. The bi-wing was disassembled and brought by train on a flatbed car to Tucson. The fuselage was wheeled from the train station through the streets of Tucson to Elysian Grove; the wings and propeller followed by wagon. At the Grove the aircraft was reassembled, and on Feb. 20, 1910, Charles “Birdman” Hamilton took off from the adjacent dry riverbed of the Santa Cruz. The crowd roared approval as Godfrey Sykes, a research member of the Tucson Carnegie Institute, immortalized the event on a wooden box camera. The plane reached the staggering speed of 35 mph



Why Buy A Ticket? Tucson residents watch Charles Birdman Hamilton's first airplane flight over Elysian Grove near Tucson.

and an altitude of 900 feet. There were four crashes, however, into a low fence. Profits were undermined by the fact that folks could see easily over the fence ... so why pay admission?

While the Grove was family friendly, the entertainment seldom made the Drachman family any money, and the Elysian Grove beer gardens and saloon supported the entertainment ventures.

In 1915 the temperance movement and specter of Prohibition, along with a shifting population, put Elysian Grove out of business. Emanuel Drachman then partnered with a Jewish businessman from Mexico City, Benjamin Goldsmith, and built the Opera House on the corner of Broadway and Stone avenues in downtown Tucson. There was no air-conditioning in the early 1900s, and it did get very hot in the summer. The theater was designed with sides that could open using ropes and pulleys that moved the side walls up into the ceiling. A great number of oscillating 16-inch fans were installed to move the air and the mist of water emanating from a primitive overhead sprinkler system hooked to a garden hose. This Rube Goldberg contraption is possibly the first cooling system in Tucson.

At the Opera House, Tucsonans could enjoy the fruits of the new industry movie-making brought to the Southern Arizona region. The first movie made in Southern Arizona was “Heading South” starring Douglas Fairbanks, the Brad Pitt of the early 1900s. Opening night of the film was scheduled at the Opera House on May 23, 1918. The building was packed with dignitaries and moviegoers, and since it was May, the walls were closed when the film started to roll. The movie had just started when the celluloid film got stuck, and the images of flames in the projection room flashed on screen. Everyone got out of the theater with only a few minor bumps, but the theater burned to the ground and the partners had no insurance. Undaunted, the partners rebuilt the building, which provided summer fun for multiple generations.

*Eileen R. Warshaw, Ph.D., served as executive director of the Jewish History Museum in Tucson before retiring the end of January 2014.*

## “Unplug” & Reconnect March 7-8

In celebration of the fifth annual National Day of Unplugging from sundown Friday, March 7 to sundown, Saturday, March 8, the nonprofit Reboot is asking individuals and families to reconnect with each other by putting down their smartphones, tablets and computers for 24 hours.

The NDU has roots in the Jewish tradition of the Sabbath, but this modern day of rest was developed for people of all backgrounds as a way to bring balance to the increasingly fast-paced way of life and reclaim time to connect with family, friends and our communities.

Everywhere you look – playgrounds, dinner tables, sidewalks and cafes – people are glued to their phones and tablets, texting and emailing or scrolling through Facebook. Children and loved ones constantly hear, “Just a minute” or a distracted “Uh-huh” as heads are buried into connected devices. This message is reverberating throughout our society: our relationship with technology is taking over our ability to be present in our interpersonal relationships.

“In its fifth year, the National Day of Unplugging is more than a day – it’s become an international movement and a chance for individuals and families to pause and make a conscious choice to connect with the world around them,” said Reboot Executive Director Robin Kramer. NDU balances the value and importance of technology in today’s world with the goal of encouraging people to be more mindful of their technology use. Parenting experts warn that digital distractions are harming interpersonal relationships, hindering youth from developing face-to-face communication skills and teaching children that disappearing into digital devices for endless hours is an appropriate pastime. Many toddlers even know how to use an iPhone or iPad before they can put together a full sentence. “Technology has given us unprecedented opportunity to connect and share,” said Randi Zuckerberg, New York Times Bestselling Author of *Dot Complicated*, whose main character is a technology-overloaded little girl who rediscovers the wonder of the outdoors after she is forced to unplug. Reboot is offering a package of tips to give families ideas for unplugging and sample activities for facilitating tech free time. To view the list, visit [NationalDayofUnplugging.com](http://NationalDayofUnplugging.com).



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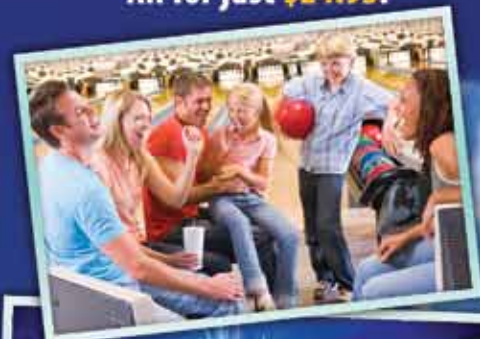
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# Camp is fun, even when mom forgets to pack the swimsuit

By Debra Rich Gettleman

"I don't want to get wet!" my 6-year-old son, Eli, screamed emphatically as we entered camp on the penultimate day of the session.

"Shoot," I thought to myself. "I did it again." It had been a hellish morning. We were already 20 minutes late, and I'd forgotten it was "water day."

"But I'll get you some extra clothes from the office," I countered, trying to sound upbeat. "I'm sure lots of kids won't have swimsuits. They always have extra clothes."

"I don't want to get in the water," he insisted. "And I'm not wearing someone else's clothes. Will you just forget it?"

After one more failed attempt to convince him that he could at least play in the water and let himself air dry, I gave up and kissed him goodbye, certain that if I'd been a better mother and remembered his water attire he'd already be happily frolicking in the sprinkler and kiddie pool outside his classroom.

As I got into the car, I tried to talk myself down. "Everyone makes mistakes, Debra. Don't make this into a bigger issue than

it is. He's probably already forgotten about it." But much as I tried to let it go, my "you suck as a mother" gene kicked in, and I knew I had to do something. I made a beeline to the nearest Old Navy. Hurrah for the end of summer sale! For 32 bucks I got a swim top, trunks, sandals and a beach towel. I was back at camp in a record 10 minutes.

When I arrived, all of Eli's camp buddies were splashing with abandon. Eli was seated inside with his teacher filling homemade lava lamps. "Hi," I smiled holding up my bag of swim treasures.

"Hi, mom," he smiled with a deep sense of joy that told me I had done the right thing. I scooped him up and showed him what I bought. He hugged me gleefully. Then I started pulling off his shoes, socks and T-shirt. But he pulled away. "Mom, please!" he insisted. "I love what you got. I'll wear it at home today, after camp. But I don't want to get in the water right now. I already told you that."

I stared at him cluelessly. "But I thought you were just saying that because I forgot to bring your swim stuff from home."

He looked back at me with a baffled expression that questioned the logic of such a ridiculously flawed assumption. "Um ... no. I just don't want to get into a baby pool. I'd rather go in a real pool when I get home from camp." He hugged me and returned to the lava lamp filling station. Then, with a dismissive wave, he added, "See you later, mom."

"Um ... OK ..." I stammered, still holding onto my Old Navy paraphernalia. "I'll just leave it here by your cubby," I went on. "You know, in case you ... change your mind."

"I won't," he chirped cheerfully. And with that, I dejectedly slunk from the room.

Sometimes as adults we get so used to people not saying what they mean, we don't recognize the simple truth when it hits us squarely upside the head. Maybe listening better and taking my kids at face value is the lesson I should take from this experience. Maybe I just need to stop reading into everything my kids say and do. Maybe if I stopped projecting my own insecurities onto my children, we'd all be a whole lot better off.

Maybe sometimes a cigar really is just a cigar.

Sometimes as adults we get so used to people not saying what they mean, we don't recognize the simple truth when it hits us squarely upside the head.

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Debra Rich Gettleman is a mother and blogger based in the Phoenix area. For more of her work, visit [unmotherlyinsights.com](http://unmotherlyinsights.com).

# Parents Resource Directory



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# Kids & Teen EVENTS



## MARCH

*Lots doing around the state, especially with Purim falling in March this year. Time for the whole family to dress as their favorite characters – either from the original Purim story, or with a modern twist. Other events for both parents and kids are listed here as well.*

### March 1, 15, 22 and 29 – MIMkids Musical Adventures Series – 10-11am – ages 6-10

Participants discover new cultures by actively participating in music making, creating musical instruments and exploring MIM's exhibits, with a designated tour guide. Contact Katherine Palmer at 480-245-6962 or programs@MIM.org

### March 5-27 – Mini Music Makers Series – Wednesdays and Thursdays

9:30-10 am for children ages 0-18 months

10:15-10:50 am for children ages 18 months-3 years

11-11:45 am for children ages 3-5

Explore music from around the globe with your children while singing, dancing- and playing instruments. Reservations required. Contact Katherine Palmer at 480-245-6962 or programs@MIM.org

### March 5-26 – Nurturing Parenting Series – Tucson JCC 5:30-7:30 pm

March 5 Developing Family Morals, Values and Rules

March 12 Praising Children and Their Behavior

March 19 Alternatives to Spanking

March 26 Learning Positive Ways to Deal with Stress and Anger

All classes are free. Includes light meal. Free child care available.

520-299-3000 or family@tucsonjcc.org

### March 6 and 27 and April 24 – Mother's Circle – 10-11:30 am

Not Jewish but raising Jewish kids? The Mothers Circle is an umbrella of free educational programs and resources for women of other religious backgrounds raising Jewish children. At the Ina Levine Jewish Community Campus, 12701 N Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale. Contact Linda Feldman, 480-634-8050 or lindaf@bjephenix.org

### March 8-9 – Mini-Yogis Yoga for Kids Teacher Training

Open to anyone interested in learning how to teach yoga to kids 3-11. Taught by Shana Meyerson. March 8 at noon-6pm and March 9 at noon-4 pm at VOSJCC, 12701 N Scottsdale Road. denisek@vosjcc.org or 480-483-7121 ext. 1281

### March 10-14 and March 24-28 – Club J Spring Break Camps at VOSJCC

Scottsdale School District: March 10-14 (register by March 3)

Paradise School District: March 24-28 (register by March 17)

Learn about different animals and their habitats. Animal themed arts and crafts, and a trip to the zoo. 9 am-3 pm, extended care available. Daily and Weekly rates. 12701 N Scottsdale Road.

Contact Alex Sachs, 480-483-7121, ext. 1283, alexs@vosjcc.org

### March 14-16 – Scottsdale Center for the Arts 44th Annual Arts Festival

The U.S. debut of Happy Rainbow, an interactive outdoor installation including a 40-foot-wide bounce house! Imagine Nation, the Festival's family area, offers free arts activities, storytelling and dancing. The Festival also includes more than 20 live bands and more than 185 jury-selected artists Friday and Saturday 10 am-6 pm, Sunday 10 am-5 pm, outdoors at 7380 E 2nd St. in Scottsdale. Shuttle service available. \$8 for adults, \$5 for students, Free for children 12 and under. 480-499-8587 or scottsdaleartsfestival.org (Happy Rainbow will also be at Scottsdale Public Art's Canal Convergence/Spring Equinox event, March 20-23, at the Scottsdale Waterfront.)

### March 17 – After-school kids classes at the VOSJCC

A new session of classes begins, with a variety of offerings: Wacky Arts and Crafts on Mondays; The Natural World: Small Animals on Tuesdays, Cook Around the World and Sports Adventures on Wednesdays; Israel and Me on Fridays, plus on-going yoga and zumba classes. 480-483-7121 ext 1275 or youth@vosjcc.org

### On-going classes for kids at Tucson JCC

Sundays: Chess, Piano, Pottery; Mondays: Performing Arts and Soccer; Tuesday, Arts & Crafts, Guitar, Reading Enrichment; Wednesdays: Martial Arts, Cooking, Parent/Child Art & Clay, Teen Cycling; Thursdays: Dance, Zumba, Football; Fridays: Basketball, Computer. Check for times and fees at 520-299-3000 ext. 192 or tucsonjcc.org

### March 23 – Annual Greasepaint for Tomorrow Gala!

Celebrating Greasepaint Youtheatre's 30th Anniversary! 3-8 pm. A performance, featuring more than fifty Greasepaint kids, a silent auction, raffle and dinner at Arizona Country Club, 5668 E Orange Blossom Lane, Phoenix. Adults \$100, children 10 and under \$40. Greasepaint Youtheatre is a non-profit theatre located in Scottsdale, offering workshops, camps and performances for children and teens. 480-949-7529, greasepaint.org

### Phoenix Zoo, Celebrating 50 years, has a myriad of programs for children and families.

18 months-2 years – March 7 – 10-10:45 am: Farm Tots, with Horses being the March emphasis

2-5 – Fri, Sat & Sun - 8-9 am: Breakfast with the Animals

5-8 – March 12 & 15 – 12:30-2:30: Around the World

9-13 – March 12 & 15 – 12:30-2:30: Wild Trek

Check out these and much more at phoenixzoo.org

### March 30 – Camp Stein Open House in Prescott

(See story page 52)

## PURIM HAPPENINGS – Have fun – dress in costume!

**March 2**

### Temple Solel's Purim Carnival – noon-3 pm

Mazel Music, Fire truck boarding, games, food and fun! Register and purchase wristbands, \$25 in advance at [templesolel.org/forms](http://templesolel.org/forms) or \$30 at the door. 6805 E McDonald Dr, Paradise Valley, 480-991-7414, [templesolel.org](http://templesolel.org)

### March 9 – Purim Family Carnival at the VOSJCC – 4-6 pm

Live music by Yehuda and the Gefilte Fish, with hamentashen decorating, mask & grogger making, a family photo booth and an interactive Megillah reading! Free. 12701 N Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale, 480-483-7121, [vosjcc.org](http://vosjcc.org)

### March 9 – Purimshpiel and Carnival at Temple Emanu-El in Tucson 10 am-1 pm

Hear the shpiel Megillah Mia!, a parody of Mama Mia! A carnival will follow with rides, games and food. Free, with nominal fees for rides and food. 225 N Country Club Road, 520-327-4501, [templeemanuelutucson.org](http://templeemanuelutucson.org)

### March 14 - Family Purim Shabbat Potluck Dinner at Tucson JCC – 6-7:30 pm

Including a costume contest, mask craft and delicious hamentashen. A sit-down dinner with blessings for Shabbat. Bring

a vegetarian/dairy dish (for 10) to share. \$3 per person. Jewish Heritage Room of the JCC, 3800 E River Road, 520-299-3000, [tucsonjcc.org](http://tucsonjcc.org)

### March 16 – PurimPalooza! At Congregation Anshei Israel in Tucson, 9:30 am-12:30 pm

Festivities start at 9:30 am with a creative Megillah reading and a costume parade. A carnival starts at 10:30 am with games, prizes, face painting and an inflatable “jump, climb & slide.” The event is free. Lunch (pasta, salad, hamantaschen) will be for sale 11 am-12:30 pm. 5550 E 5th St. 520-745-5550, [caiaz.org](http://caiaz.org)

### March 16 – Carnival at Temple Emanuel of Tempe – 11:30 am-1:30 pm

“Esther and the Knights of Shushan,” with princesses and knights, will be performed. 5801 S Rural Road in Tempe. 480-838-1414, [emanueloftempe.org](http://emanueloftempe.org)

### March 16 - Chabad Center in Chandler's Grand Purim around the World – 4:30 pm

Visit England this year! Multimedia Megillah reading, followed at 5 pm with dinner, hamantaschen and groggers, music and dancing, and a prize for every costume! \$20 adults/\$14 kids in advance; \$25/\$18 at the door. 875 N McClintock Dr. in Chandler. RSVP by March 9 to 480-855-4333, [chabadcenter.com](http://chabadcenter.com)



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# Peres, Cisco and Israeli students set a Guinness record



By Mylan Tanzer

President Shimon Peres does not let his age of 91 deter him from attending and addressing several events on a daily basis. A few years ago, at one of these events, he was asked if he wants to be remembered as a leader who never stopped pursuing peace. Expecting a positive answer in some variation or another, Peres, as usual surprised everyone present by saying, "I want to be remembered as someone who always thought outside the box."

On many occasions he has said embracing high-tech and advanced technologies is a primary manifestation of thinking outside the box. In this respect, Peres practices what he preaches. In his last ministerial post before he was elected president, he served as the minister for regional economic development, where he worked tirelessly to raise the international profile of the Israeli high-tech entrepreneurial sector and became the main catalyst for advancement in nanotechnology and electric cars. Not surprisingly, he was asked by Paul Singer and Dan Senor, the authors of *Start-Up Nation*, to write the forward to the book.

Therefore, it should come as no surprise that last month, Peres addressed Israelis using a new, advanced, high-tech tool that allowed him to set a new record recognized by the Guinness Book of Records. He taught an online civics class to more than 9,000 high school students simultaneously, located at 71 different schools throughout Israel.

The idea was the initiative of Peres and the Israeli branch of Cisco, which developed the video conferencing technology called "TelePresence System 3000." This web-based technology possesses remarkably clear video images that allow participants to see every expression of other participants, with CD-quality audio allowing participants to hear every word. The standard system allows multi-point meetings of up to 48 locations. For this occasion, Cisco Israel was able to expand the infrastructure to reach 71 schools of the Amal vocational educational network across the breadth of the country.

Sensing this would be a seminal event, Cisco and the staff of Peres contacted the Guinness World Records company, which dispatched Senior Vice President Marco Frigatti. Frigatti commented, "We immediately liked this new record idea for three reasons. First because talking about civics and talking about democracy is relevant for everybody in the world, and the contribution we make is so important a topic for the young generation. The second important aspect was that we had a special feature, a person who has seen the country from its origins to today, and who better to speak to the students? The third part was about the technology, a web-based solution that can be used within education to keep everyone connected and informed. The number to beat for this record was 5,000 participants, and so far we've counted over 7,000, which means (they and) the president of the State of Israel will be Guinness World Record holders."

Addressing both Jewish and Arab students at the 71 Amal schools, from Cisco Israel Headquarters in Netanya, Peres began by saying, "I am older than you, but even at the age of 91, I can still get thrilled, thrilled to see so many of you, thrilled at being a teacher and thrilled that by teaching, I am also a pupil. My whole life I have been a pupil. I am jealous of you that you are students. Why is it so important to be a student? Because to learn and know is more important than money, which comes and goes. Knowledge always stays."

During the 45-minute class, Peres emphasized values, equality, freedom of expression and good citizenship. "Israel is small and you, the youth of the country, are competing with the youth of the world and you need to excel," he said. "In each of you there is more potential than you think. If you study, you will discover that you (will) be better people and achieve things that you didn't think were possible." Peres continued, "As a citizen of Israel, the most important thing is to maintain your values and to treat others as you want to be treated. It is easier to love than to hate."



# CELEBRITY HEROES

## SCARLETT JOHANSSON STANDS WITH ISRAEL



Just before the Super Bowl, Scarlett Johansson parted ways with the international charity Oxfam because of a dispute over her work for SodaStream, a company operating in a West Bank settlement. Johansson appeared in a SodaStream ad that aired during the Super Bowl.

SodaStream is a Tel Aviv-based company that makes home soda machines and has its main plant in an Israeli industrial park next to the West Bank settlement of Maaleh Adumim. In an interview with Associated Press Television News, SodaStream's chief executive Dan Birnbaum, said the company does not want to "sacrifice" the jobs of 500 Palestinians who work in the SodaStream factory "for some political cause" of activist groups.

Oxfam International, a humanitarian aid organization for which Johansson had served as global ambassador for eight years, opposes all trade with Israeli settlements.

In a statement about her decision, Johansson said, "While I never intended on being the face of any social or political movement, distinction, separation or stance as part of my affiliation with SodaStream, given the amount of noise surrounding that decision, I'd like to clear the air.

"I remain a supporter of economic cooperation and social interaction between a democratic Israel and Palestine. SodaStream is a company that is not only committed to the environment but to building a bridge to peace between Israel and Palestine, supporting neighbors working alongside each other, receiving equal pay, equal benefits and equal rights."



## NATALIE PORTMAN HELPS ISRAELI YOUTH AID SYRIAN REFUGEES

Israeli-born actress Natalie Portman, in Tel Aviv to work on her new film, recently heard about a local project to aid Syrian refugees and decided to join in. The civil war in Syria has created a severe humanitarian crisis, with millions of refugees and displaced persons in constant mortal danger due to severe shortages of basic necessities. In response to the harsh winter, Dror Israel, the "Hanoar Haoved VeHalomed" (Working & Learning Youth) Movement and Israeli Flying Aid organized a nationwide humanitarian drive to collect life-saving winter supplies.

The nationwide operation to collect winter supplies began in late January and was led by Israeli youth to aid non-combatant women and children. During the operation, titled "Human-Warmth - Israeli youth aiding Syrian youth," 30 tons of winter equipment were collected.

Portman donated part of her personal winter wardrobe and sent a contribution through the operation's fundraising website.

"When I heard about Operation Human Warmth I felt deeply moved and compelled to get involved," said Portman. "In the middle of a brutal winter, these children have no shelter and their lives are in serious jeopardy from the cold. I am proud to take part in an operation where Israeli youth of all backgrounds are taking action to help out those whom need it most."

Toward the end, Peres took questions from students from Amal Jerusalem, Amal Tel Aviv and Amal Kseifa, a Bedouin town. In his concluding remarks, Peres said, "I am proud of the students who broke the record. I had the privilege of being your teacher."

Frigatti, who supervised the proceedings to verify the new record, confirmed that a new record was set. "I have an interesting surprise because you're holding two records; not only have you taught a wonderful civics lesson, but you're also the oldest head of state in the world." He added, "The record set through using advanced technology for the sake of education, with the president as a special teacher, is an inspiration on a global scale."

After the record was announced, President Peres thanked Guinness World Records, Cisco Systems and the pupils at the Amal Schools across the country. He said, "This record should really be for all the students who participated, they created this record. We have to spread education; this is about encouragement of that goal. The more that can participate in these sorts of lessons the better. What we have to do is invest at least as much in education as we have in entertainment and make it accessible to all pupils." President Peres smiled and added, "About the second record, I suggest people start earlier and not to wait until they are my age."

At the beginning of the class, Cisco Systems Israel CEO Boaz Maoz said, "Cisco Israel, at the initiative of its Chairperson and CEO Mr. John Chambers, has been working closely with the Israeli government over the past year and a half in the fields of education, health care, infrastructure, communications and cyber. The cooperation is aimed at transforming Israel into the world's first digitized country. The initiative aims to boost economic growth and reduce inequality gaps using technology and communication. As part of this effort we invited you, Mr. President, to teach the largest online civics class ever to over 200 classrooms and 8,000 students. The class will be broadcast using the most advanced technology, which will bring leading experts to every classroom in Israel."

By the end of the class, the figure had of course grown to 9,000 pupils. Peres is a monumental figure of historical proportions, not only in Israel but throughout the global community, and will be the subject of a future column. Though he did not say anything that will go down in history and stuck to the expected presidential clichés, the idea and the implementation are vintage Peres and this is what will be remembered. As Bill Clinton said when toasting Peres at his gala 90<sup>th</sup> birthday party, "Shimon, you are the social Einstein of the world. You never stop reminding us how special every child is and that we have much more in common than what divides us."

Mylan Tanzer is an American native who moved to Israel in 1981. He was the founding CEO of the first Israeli cable and satellite sports channel. Since 2005, he has launched, managed and consulted for channels and companies in Israel and Europe. Tanzer lives in Tel Aviv with his wife and five children. He can be reached at mylantanz@gmail.com.



**1 COUNCIL CAMARADERIE** — Claire Bickel and Leona Pomush, both Life Members of National Council of Jewish Women, enjoyed the camaraderie of the 70 women at the Jan. 12 luncheon held at Starfire Country Club in Scottsdale. Past President of NCJW/AZ section and long-time council member Lynn Schmelzer received the Hannah G. Solomon Award. Keynote speaker was NCJW Director of Washington Operations Sammie Moshenberg.



1



2

**2 RIGHTEOUS FEW** — Jeff Kuznitsky, left, meets Marty Brounstein, author of *Two Among the Righteous Few*, at Scottsdale's Appaloosa Library. Brounstein shared his personal connection to subjects of the book, a Dutch couple who saved the lives of at least two dozen Jews in southern Holland during World War II. The standing-room-only crowd of about 200 people attended the Jan. 25 event sponsored by Scottsdale Library. Photo by Leni Reiss



3



**3 BUSY ACTRESS** — Local actress Debra Rich has had a busy few months. Above, George Lopez helps Rich into a car trunk in a scene from the film "Car Dogs," which was filmed in the Valley during December. "It was great fun to work with George Lopez and Nia Vardalos. The ASU interns were fabulous. I only wish we could make Arizona a more attractive option for other LA production companies. We definitely have the talent, appealing weather and geography to entice film and television producers," says Debra. Then in January and February she starred in the sold-out screwball comedy, "Mama Wont Fly," at Theater Works in Peoria, starring (from left) Debra Rich, Barbara McBain and Alexandra Utpadel.



4

**4 CELEBRATE ISRAEL** — Sun City Temple Beth Shalom Brotherhood and the Israel Center and Volunteers for Israel sponsored a Celebrate Israel event Sunday, Jan. 19 attended by over 50 people. The VFI Ambassadors are, from left: Karen Kamenir, Helen Freedman, Jane Cohen, Harris Caplan, Vera Varadi, Joe Varadi and Marty Cohen. Israel Center Director Shahar Edry captivated the attendees with details about the beauty of Israel and all it has to offer as well as providing information about upcoming Valley events to continue celebrating Israel. Throughout the afternoon, attendees enjoyed inspiring and fun Israeli music by Gal and Erez and were entertained with a performance by Beth Shalom Cantor Baruch Karitan. To host a similar event, email VFI Regional Manager Helen Freedman at HPFreedman@aol.com. Photo by Shahar Edry



5

**5 TUCSON TORAH REPAIR** — On Feb. 4 the Arizona Center for Judaic Studies at The University of Arizona hosted Rabbi Yochanan Salazar, a traveling sofer (scribe), who repaired and restored its Torah scroll, written 200 years ago in a Sephardic script in Northern Italy. The University of Arizona Hillel Foundation provided space for the rabbi to work on the Torah. The event was attended by 150 students and other campus and community members. Throughout the day, Rabbi Salazar took breaks to explain his work and answer their questions. Associate Professor of Judaic Studies Beth Alpert Nakhai coordinated the acquisition of the Torah from an anonymous donor. Its restoration was made possible through a generous donation from the Thomas and Sara Borin Foundation.



6

**6 INTERNATIONAL TEACHERS** — (from left) Bassam Nasser from Yemen, Ince Ardelt from Germany, Bassant Wahba from Egypt, Aprirak "Save" Tengrang from Thailand and Nimit Kumwapee from Thailand shared with 8th grade Hebrew High School students on Feb. 4. The international students spoke about their countries, their cultures, and their Buddhist and



7

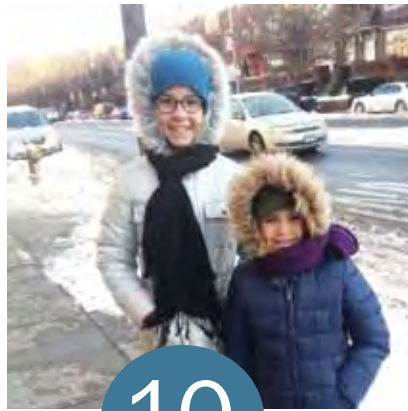


Muslim religions. The students are living with families in the greater Phoenix area for the academic school year and attend local high schools. They are in Arizona with the AFS international exchange program and Youth Education and Study program.

**7 SHALOM, Y'ALL** – Arizona Jewish Historical Society board member Elaine Waxman and president Mark Sendrow greet guests at the Jan. 21 showing of “Shalom, Y'all,” a film documenting the southern Jewish experience. A capacity crowd of more than 200 was on hand at the Arizona Jewish Historical Society in Phoenix for the film. Among the viewers were (pictured) Valley transplants Marion Cohen (New Orleans), and Gretchen Freeman (Pine Bluff, AR) and Alan Silverman (Floralla, AL). Other transplants not pictured included Susan Gitenstein Assadi (Floralla, AL), Bill Adler (Clarksburg, WV) and event sponsor Ellen Edwards (Nashville, TN). Photos by Leni Reiss



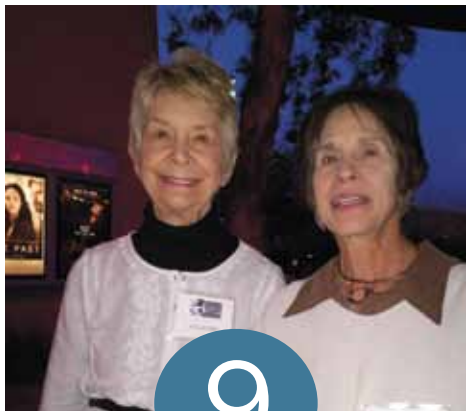
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10

**8 GIRL SCOUT MITZVAH** – In January the East Valley JCC Girl Scout Troop joined forces with the Early Childhood Learning Center, the NAEYC accredited preschool at the East Valley Jewish Community Center, for their January Mitzvah project: writing letters to Israeli soldiers. The girls

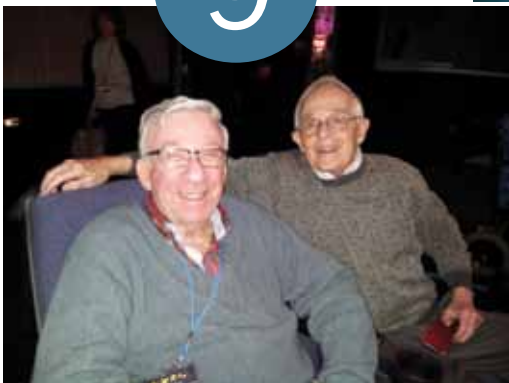
created artwork and wrote notes to show support and respect for the men and women who risk their lives on a daily basis to keep the State of Israel safe. Holding the letters for the Israeli soldiers are, from left, back row: Annabelle Brian, Erica Keene, Eliya Levi-Karavani, Emma Freireich and Kaja Liora Hammerschmidt; front row: Aishlynn Spiegelglass, Yuval Levi-Karavani and Maddie Wortzel. Photo courtesy of EVJCC



9



**9 FILM FESTIVAL** – Sharon Dunn and Debbie Schwartz volunteer at Greater Phoenix Jewish Film Festival on Feb. 10 at Harkins Camelview Scottsdale. Burt Mannis and Herb Rosing are in the audience at the Feb. 10 showing of “Downtown Express,” one of several sold out screenings at the 18th annual Jewish Film Festival. Photos by Leni Reiss



**10 CHABAD WOMEN** – More than 3,000 women from around the world gathered in New York Jan. 23-26 to pay respect to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka on the 26th anniversary of her passing. The conference of Chabad Shluchot (Rebbetzins) included a dozen women from Arizona. Above, second from left, Chabad of the East Valley Co-Director Shternie Deitsch, meets women from other states. Shternie took three of her daughters

along to be with the 750 young girls in attendance at a simultaneous conference for girls ages 8-13. Her 12-year-old daughter Chaya (pictured above with sister Rachel, 8) spoke at the final banquet for the girls.



11

**11** AIPAC ANNUAL DINNER  
 The American Israel Public Affairs Committee in Phoenix was held Jan. 30 at The Arizona Biltmore Hotel. More than 800 supporters were inspired by speakers including Jeremy Bash, who recently served as chief of staff for Secretary of Defense and CIA Director Leon Panetta, and AIPAC Western States Director Elliot Brandt. Attendees included (pictured from top left, clockwise) Skeeter Marcus (left), Lois Gamiel and Freya Winsberg (right); Brenda Schwartz and Francine Coles; U.S. Rep. Ron Barber (D-AZ) and Temple Chai Rabbi Bonnie Koppell; and Adam and Sami Schwartz. Photos by Leni Reiss

# Purimshpiels around town

By Janet Arnold

From as early as the 1400s Purimshpiels (plays related to Purim) have entertained and enlightened. The performances have changed with the times, starting with simple home plays or those performed by traveling troupes to today's often elaborate temple and synagogue spoofs. The basis of all the stories is the biblical Book of Esther, often referred to as The Megillah. The book is rather long, hence the phrase "the whole megillah" is humorously applied to situations that are longer and more involved than expected. It is, however, one of the mitzvot of Purim to be sure to listen to the entire text.

Purim is perhaps the most joyous celebration on the Jewish calendar. Because this year, 5774, is a leap year for the Jewish calendar, with an extra month of "Adar" included just prior to the regular month, Purim will be celebrated on March 15-16, during Adar II. The "small Purim" (Purim Katan) is observed on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Adar I.

Two separate events are coming up at **Temple Solel** in Scottsdale. A Purim carnival on Sunday, March 2, will take place from noon to 3 pm. And on Saturday, March 15, is "A Very Seinfeld Purim Festivus," a take-off on the mock holiday created by the Seinfeld TV character Frank Costanza, played by comedian Jerry Stiller (who called it "Festivus for the rest of us"). The "Festivus" begins with dinner at 6 pm at the Reform temple at 6805 E McDonald Dr. in Paradise Valley (480-991-7414, templesolel.org).

**Congregation Kehillah in Scottsdale** is presenting "The Age of Ahasuerus," with a hippy-dippy, groovy script. Grab your best tie-dyed duds and join the "Dawning of the

Age" at 7 pm on March 15 at 6140 E Thunderbird Road (602-369-7667, kehillahofarizona.org).

**Temple Emanuel of Tempe** is offering "Esther and the Knights of Shushan," with princesses and knights, to be performed at their Purim carnival on March 16 from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. This Reform temple is located at 5801 S Rural Road in Tempe (480-838-1414, emanueloftempe.org).

**The Chabad Center in Chandler** is having its Grand Purim around the World party, visiting England this year on March 16. The evening will begin at 4:30 pm with a multimedia Megillah reading, followed at 5 pm with a delicious themed dinner, hamantaschen and groggers, music and dancing, with a prize for every costume! \$20 adults/\$14 kids in advance; \$25/\$18 at the door. RSVP by March 9 to 480-855-4333. The Center is located at 875 N McClintock Dr. in Chandler (chabadcenter.com).

We hear on good authority that Queen Esther is making an appearance at the **Valley of the Sun JCC's Purim carnival** on March 9 from 4 to 6 pm. Also appearing is the live band Yehuda and the Gefilte Fish. This free event includes a family photo booth, carnival-style games and a variety of food booths at 12701 N Scottsdale Road. Admission is free (480-483-7121, vosjcc.org).

The celebration at **Temple Emanu-El in Tucson** will begin at 10 am on Sunday, March 9. The Purimshpiel is "Megillah Mia!" a parody of "Mama Mia!" featuring the music of Abba. A Purim carnival will follow with rides, games and food. The event is free, with nominal fees for

rides and food (225 N Country Club Road, 520-327-4501, templemanueltucson.org).

Also in Tucson, **Congregation Anshei Israel** will celebrate PurimPalooza! on March 16, starting at 9:30 am with a creative Megillah reading and a costume parade. A carnival starts at 10:30 am with games, prizes, face painting and an inflatable “jump, climb & slide.” The event

is free. Lunch (pasta, salad, hamantaschen and a beverage) will be for sale 11 am -12:30 pm (5550 E 5<sup>th</sup> St. 520-745-5550, caiaz.org).

We have listed only a few of the congregations around the state to give you an idea of the diverse offerings. The important thing is that you have a great time on this most festive holiday!

## ■ [HAPPENINGS]

### Jewish talents converge in “West Side Story;” see it in Phoenix March 21-23

*In any great adventure,  
that you don't want to lose,  
victory depends upon the people that you choose.  
So, listen, Arthur darling, closely to this news:  
We won't succeed on Broadway,  
If we don't have any Jews.*

So say the lyrics from “You Won't Succeed on Broadway,” one of the songs from the over-the-top, deliciously funny Monty Python Broadway hit “Spamalot.”

Nowhere does the confluence of Jewish talent come together better than in “West Side Story,” with the book by Arthur Laurents, music by Leonard Bernstein, lyrics by a fledgling Stephen Sondheim and choreography by Jerome (Rabinowitz) Robbins.

This Broadway revival comes to town March 21-23 to the beautifully restored Orpheum Theatre in downtown Phoenix. The show is presented by Theater League, a nonprofit company that has been producing shows for more than 35 years. 602-262-7272, theaterleague.com

### Phoenix BBYO chapters honor Sheinbeins

The Phoenix chapters of BBYO, the pluralistic Jewish teen organization, will honor Tina and Irwin Sheinbein at Celebrate BBYO-Phoenix on Sunday, March 23, at 10 am at the Ina Levine Jewish Community Campus, 12701 N Scottsdale Road.

“Irwin and I met through BBYO in 1967 when I was asked to attend the Boys' Conclave as the newly elected Nsiah (president) of the girls' groups.”

Tina went on to become regional director of BBYO from 1988-1992. Both Tina and Irwin have been active in the Jewish community; Tina is now the executive director of Jewish Free Loan.

The Sheinbeins have four children and four grandchildren. Their family, including Tina's parents, Gladys and Sol Levitt, will be at the kosher brunch to celebrate the special occasion.

Free, but RSVPs required: celebratebbyo2014@gmail.com.

### Library hosts Holocaust exhibit, programs

The U.S. Holocaust Museum's traveling exhibit “State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda ” is at the Burton Barr Branch of the Phoenix Public Library through June 1. The exhibit is open the hours of the library; tours available Tuesdays and Thursdays; call 602-262-7939 to schedule.

Free programs in March take place in the library's Pulliam

Auditorium, 1221 N. Central Ave., Phoenix. Visit ushmm.org/events/propagandaspeakerseries to register.

**March 4, 10 am and 1 pm:** Susan Campbell Bartoletti, author of the award-winning Hitler Youth: *Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow*, will discuss the effects of propaganda on children and young adults.

**March 19, 7 pm:** State of Deception curator Steven Luckert, media expert Dr. Nancy Snow and 12 News anchor Brahm Resnik explore what the Nazis might have done with the Internet and social media at their disposal.

**March 20, 6:30 pm:** Luckert and Arizona State University faculty members discuss how we understand and find meaning in the historical events of World War II and their impact on the post-war period.

### Tucson sculpture garden grows March 9

A dozen new additions to the Tucson Jewish Community Center's Sculpture Garden will be unveiled 1-3 pm, March 9. The Fifth Annual Sculpture Garden Exhibition features the work of artists from Tucson and across the country. This is a free event.

“The goal was to find sculptures that would draw an audience through the entire landscape,” says 2014 Juror Lauren Rabb. “There are myriads of children who experience the Sculpture Garden, and this year I wanted some works that would attract and delight them, and perhaps even offer teachable moments.”

The exhibition kicks off with a preview party and fundraiser at 11 am, March 9. Attendees will be the first to view the new arrivals and enjoy a light brunch while sculptors discuss their. Tickets are \$50; call Lynn Davis at 520-299-3000 ext. 106 or ldavis@tucsonjcc.org.

### Rabbi Adam Chalom in Tempe and Tucson

Arizona Jewish Historical Society, Hillel Jewish Student Center, Valley Beit Midrash, Or Adam Congregation and Tucson Secular Humanist Jewish Circle will host the dean of International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism for an educational program March 6-9.

IISHJ Dean Rabbi Adam Chalom will explore how secular Judaism offers opportunities to express Jewish identity and sense of community through celebrations and activities that combine cultural observance of holidays, life cycle celebrations, learning opportunities and social action based on humanistic and Jewish values.

On March 6 and 7, Chalom will present free evening talks at Hillel Jewish Student Center at Arizona State University, 1012 S Mill Ave., Tempe. He will lead a weekend seminar (March 8-9) at the same location. Seminar registration required: For seminar registration or info on other programs at ASU, contact Or Adam Congregation 480-663-7788 or info@oradam.org.

Rabbi Chalom heads to Tucson March 9 for a 3 pm talk about “The Secular Synagogue: Judaism Beyond God” hosted by TSHJC at 2099 E River Road. A light dinner will be available for purchase. Free, but reservations are encouraged: Becky at schulmb@aol.com or 520-296-3762, or Hafez at hafezsusanward@gmail.com or 520-797-5622. secularhumanistjewishcircle.org.



Tina and Irwin Sheinbein

# MARCH CALENDAR

## March 1-22 (Tucson)

### March 27-Apr. 13 (Phoenix)

[Around The World In 80 Days](#), produced by Arizona Theatre Company. Based on the novel by Jules Verne, this whirlwind journey is filled with exotic locales and great fun. At the Temple of Music and Art, 330 S Scott Ave. in Tucson; and at the Herberger Theater Center, 222 E Monroe in Phoenix. Check on days, times and prices at [arizonatheatre.org](http://arizonatheatre.org)

### March 1

[30th Anniversary Signature Event for Temple B'rith Shalom](#) includes dinner, entertainment, silent and live auctions. 5 pm at The Club at Prescott Lakes in Prescott. \$75, 928-708-0018, [brithshalom-az.org](http://brithshalom-az.org)

### March 2

[Cabaret and Cabernet](#), a sparkling evening of song and surprises is a fundraiser for Congregation Kehillah. 5 pm at VOS JCC, 12701 N Scottsdale Road. \$72. RSVP: 602-369-7667 or [administrator@congregationkehillah.org](mailto:administrator@congregationkehillah.org)

[What is Judaism All About?](#) Four classes by Rabbi David Rosenberg. 1:30 pm at Beth Emeth Congregation, 13702 W Meeker Blvd., Sun City West. Free; open to all faiths. Also March 16, 23 and 30. Registration required: 623-584-7210

### Hockey Schtick Night at the Phoenix

[Coyotes](#) starts with music by Todd Herzog, cantorial soloist at Temple Solel. 6 pm at Jobing.com Arena, 9400 W Maryland Ave., Glendale. First 500 ticket buyers get a free Coyotes kippah! Contact Dan Berman at 602-680-5550 ext. 1 or [dan@groupticketsamerica.com](mailto:dan@groupticketsamerica.com)

### March 3

[Educators' Conference on the Holocaust](#), sponsored by the Bureau of Jewish Education and the Phoenix Holocaust Survivors Association and others. Speakers and workshops on teaching about the Holocaust to high school and college students. 7:45 am-3:30 pm at the Ina Levine Jewish Community Campus, 12701 N Scottsdale Road. \$68. 480-634-8050, [bjephoenix.org](http://bjephoenix.org)

### March 5

[Generations After](#) holds a monthly discussion group for children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors. 7 pm at VOSJCC, 12701 N Scottsdale Road. RSVP to [hgold52@aol.com](mailto:hgold52@aol.com)

### March 6-9

Rabbi Adam Chalom is Humanistic scholar in residence – (See page 69)

### March 7

[Jewish National Fund Breakfast for Israel](#). 7:45 am at Hilton Scottsdale Resort & Villas, 6333 N Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale. Speakers include Ariel Kotler, development office for JNF in Israel. RSVP to Kaci Garrison at [kgarrison@jnf.org](mailto:kgarrison@jnf.org) or 602-277-4800 ext. 967

### March 8-9

["My Buddy"](#) performed by Sandy Hackett, for Invisible Theater in Tucson. (See page 43)

### March 9

[Jewish Genetic Disease](#) screening. 10 am-2 pm at the Valley of the Sun JCC. Screening for 18 diseases more common among those of Ashkenazi Jewish descent. 12701 N Scottsdale Road. \$75, or free with college ID. Registration required: 480-668-3347 or [jewishgeneticsphx.org](http://jewishgeneticsphx.org)

[Passages Lecture Series](#) presents Michael Semple, PhD: [Leaving Afghanistan After 13 Years](#). 7:30 pm at Beth El Congregation, 1118 W Glendale Ave., Phoenix. \$18. 480-634-8050, [bjephoenix.org](http://bjephoenix.org)

[Michael Feinstein: The Gershwins and Me](#). Performing with a big band, this multi-platinum-selling pianist and vocalist returns to Tucson to celebrate the music of the Gershwin brothers. 7 pm at Centennial Hall, 1020 E University Blvd. in Tucson, \$35-\$105. 520-621-3341, [UApresents.org](http://UApresents.org)

[Cactus Kosher Hot Dog Day](#) sponsored by Beth Emeth Congregation's Men's Club. 11am-2pm at 13702 W Meeker Blvd., Sun City West. \$5. 623-584-7210

### March 10

[The Shaol & Louis Pozez Memorial Lecture](#) presents Beth Wenger, director of the Jewish studies program at the University of Pennsylvania, speaking on [Civics Lessons: Jews and American National Holidays](#). 7 pm at the Tucson JCC, 3800 E River Road. 520-626-5758, [Judaic.arizona.edu](http://Judaic.arizona.edu)

### March 12-13

[Tucson's Brandeis National Committee](#) hosts four authors for 18th annual book and author events. (See page 39)

### March 13-16

[43rd Annual Carousel Charity Horse Show](#) trots into Scottsdale to benefit Camp Soaring Eagle, a Sedona camp for children with serious illnesses. Presented by the American Saddlebred Association of Arizona. Free. Times vary. At West World of Scottsdale, 16601 N Pima Road. [carouselcharityhorseshow.com](http://carouselcharityhorseshow.com)

### March 15-16 – Purim

[Purim](#) is the most festive holiday on the Jewish calendar. It commemorates the salvation of the Jews in ancient Persia from the evil Haman, with the help of the lovely Queen Esther and her uncle Mordecai. See page 68 on Purimshpiels and page 62 for Kids' Calendar of Carnivals and Festivities.

### March 15

[Peter Nero: The Gershwin Project](#). Hailed as one of the premier interpreters of Gershwin, Nero performs a night of the composer's treasured songs. 8 pm at Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts, 7380 E Second St., Scottsdale. 480-499-8587, [scottsdaleperformingarts.org](http://scottsdaleperformingarts.org)

[AAHA! An Auction of Heirlooms and Art](#), the signature fund-raising event for Hospice of the Valley. 6 pm at the Arizona Biltmore Resort and Spa, 2400 E Missouri Ave., Phoenix. Dinner, live and silent auctions. \$250. 602-636-6380 or [hov.org/art](http://hov.org/art)

### March 16

[Passages Lecture Series](#) presents Eric Goldman, PhD: [The American Jewish Experience: a Journey through Cinema](#). 7:30 pm at Har Zion Congregation, 6140 E Thunderbird in Scottsdale. \$18. 480-634-8050, [bjephoenix.org](http://bjephoenix.org)

### March 17

[24th Annual Brandeis National Committee Phoenix Chapter Book and Author Event](#) (See page 40)

### March 20

[BRCA and Hereditary Breast/Ovarian Cancer in the Jewish Population... What's New in 2014](#). Jewish Genetic Diseases Center sponsors talk by Dr. Jeffrey Isaacs and genetics counselor Kathleen Hunt. 7 pm at Ina Levine Jewish Community Campus, 12701 N Scottsdale Road. Free. 480-668-3347, [jewishgeneticsphx.org](http://jewishgeneticsphx.org)

[People of the Book](#) by Geraldine Brooks will be discussed at the Arizona Jewish

Historical Society with Nancy Siefer leading the discussion. Free. 7 pm at the Cutler-Plotkin Jewish Heritage Center, 122 E Culver St., Phoenix. RSVP required: [azjhs@aol.com](mailto:azjhs@aol.com)

### March 21-23

[West Side Story](#), the iconic musical, is being presented by Theater League. (See page 69)

### March 22

[Square Dance Social](#) with caller Jack Peterson. Dancing, refreshments, fun. 7:30 pm at Beth Emeth Congregation, 13702 W Meeker Blvd, Sun City West. \$9. Reservations required to Geri at 623-214-7721

### March 23

[BBYO Brunch](#) to honor Tina and Irwin Sheinbein. (See page 69)

### March 25

[Golden Rule Awards Banquet](#) sponsored by Arizona InterFaith Movement. (See page 35)

[Keyboard Conversations with Jeffrey Siegel: Mistresses and Masterpieces](#), Romantic music from Chopin, Liszt, Schumann and Brahms. 7:30 pm at Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts, 7380 E Second St., Scottsdale. \$25-49. 480-499-8587, [scottsdaleperformingarts.org](http://scottsdaleperformingarts.org)

### March 26

[Atheism, Agnosticism and Perfect Belief: The Parameters of Jewish Conceptions of G-d](#), a panel discussion facilitated by Prof. Joel Gereboff, ASU Jewish studies faculty. 7 pm at Congregation Beth Tefillah, 10636 N 71st Way, Scottsdale. Presented by Valley Beit Midrash. \$18. 602-445-3112, [valleybeitmidrash.org](http://valleybeitmidrash.org)

### March 27

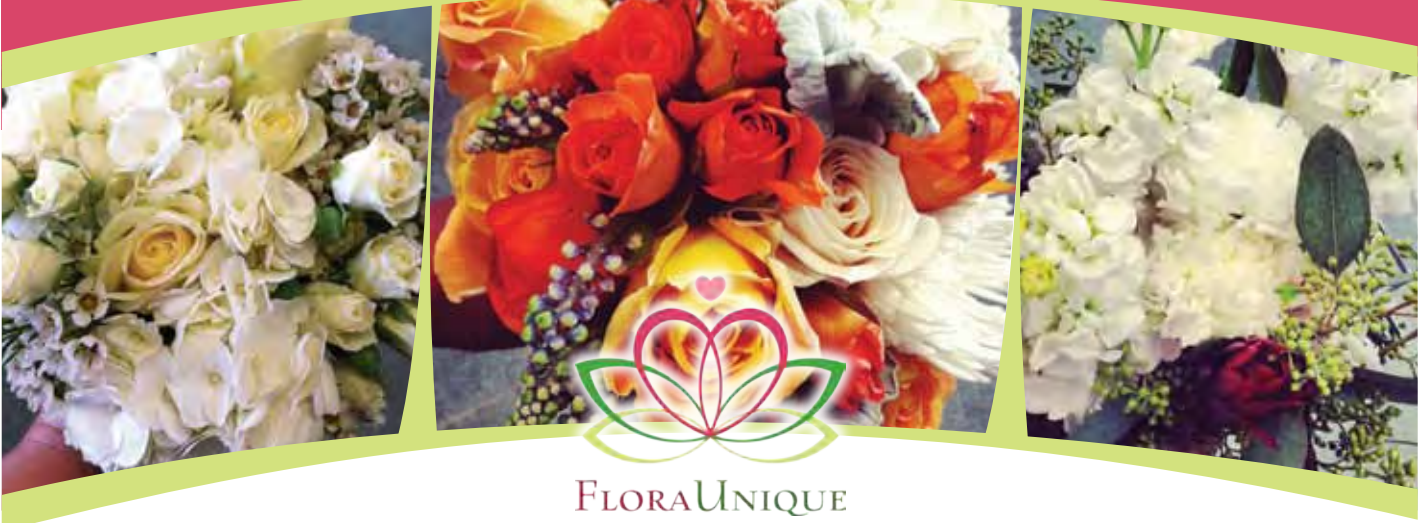
[Upping the Ante: A Casino Night](#) to support Jewish Life at Arizona State University. 7 pm at home of ASU alumni Jay and Rachel Feitlinger. Young adult cocktail and gaming hour begins at 6 pm. Live music, black jack, craps, roulette, raffle prizes, live auction! Tickets (\$118, \$18/student, \$36/young adults 22-30) include play money, drinks, appetizers and desserts. [hillelasu.org](http://hillelasu.org) or 480-967-7563

### March 30

[6th Annual Blue Guitar Festival of the Arts at Desert Ridge](#) (See story page 42)

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