As we turn our attention to the changing seasons and to the first dusting of snow on the mountains, we can take time to reflect on the changes the last 8-9 months have brought to all of us. Our community has been lucky to celebrate, sometimes virtually, many events since the past Shofar was sent out. The Shofar is the link in our community that connects us all. We all turn to it for community announcements, milestones and lifecycle events taking place. We are fortunate that even though we can't always be together physically these days, we can feel connected through this newsletter, and know we are part of something special.

I hope that we have all coped well with our “new normal” and that some point sooner than later, we can resume our pre-covid lives in health and joyous hugs.

As always, but especially now, I am grateful to our many volunteers and our lay leaders of the WRJC. It has been a privilege to work with Sue, our Board of Directors, our numerous committees, Claudie and Rabbi Robbi. Each of them work tirelessly to ensure the WRJC runs smoothly, including synagogue services, programs and Sunday school. Together each person helps make the WRJC the warm, inviting and supporting family we are all proud to be a part of.

Like other communities, our short term plans are dependent on the progress of the pandemic. Programming will evolve and we are attempting to provide meaningful opportunities to connect with our members through our services and programs. We continue to have committees working diligently and this is reflected in the current Shofar that is produced and overseen by our Executive Director Claudie. Rabbi Robbi has brought us meaningful Shabbat Services, High Holyday Services and Chagim programming. We are so pleased to report that once again this Fall, our Sunday School is flourishing with many students.

This edition of the Shofar highlights our Children’s achievements, excellent articles reflecting our Jewish world, and recently we have had the pleasure of reading Ari Goldstein’s pieces about the history and origins of our community. You will read about our Building, Design and Fundraising Committees who are working tirelessly on our new WRJC home in Elkhorn. Our Shofar truly captures the essence of our community in such a meaningful way!

For Rowena and me, the Canadian-U.S. border has remained closed. While it has been especially difficult for me, as Co-President with Sue, watching all these activities from afar, I am proud of what the community has been able to accomplish.

Chag Chanukah Sameah,

Josh Kleinman
Co-President
It’s time for our Year End Appeal. This will not be a typical appeal, reciting all the wonderful programs we have at the WRJC. You can learn about those programs by reading our weekly newsletter and our quarterly Shofar.

So, how else can we encourage each and every one of you to open up your pockets to donate or to make a pledge to donate, and hopefully, very generously this year?

It is very important to many of you that the WRJC has a strong and viable future. Why is there some doubt about that future? Consider the why. It’s a fact that the number of Jewish families living full time or part time in our community risks decline due to age and other priorities. In addition, many of those Jewish families who do move to our community believe, unlike all of you, that they have no need for a Jewish community. That thinking, of course, could potentially lead to the end of our community as we know it.

But as you know, community life, whether you attend one or two days a year or every week, is vital to us to maintain our Jewish identity. It is more important than ever that we have a place to go where we act as one with a common heritage, common holidays, common rituals, common morals, common principles and common beliefs. The WRJC brings us together for worship, study and community.

Each of us has reasons for being a member of the WRJC. Here are a few to consider:

- The WRJC provides a tremendous outpouring of compassion and support in time of need and in time of joy.
- The WRJC is a place where our children and grandchildren are being taught to love and embrace Judaism and enjoy our many wonderful holidays and traditions.
- The WRJC is the place where we can celebrate together holidays, mitzvot and other joyous occasions.
- The WRJC is the place to come together to support others in crisis, to rally together to help others in need, and console one another when a loss of a loved one must be confronted.
- The WRJC is the place where we meet friends, experience friendships and have a sense of belonging.
- The WRJC is the place where we come together to address larger Jewish concerns, worship and engage in Tikkun Olam to improve our society and the world.
- The WRJC is important because it is a special community consisting of all of us, and because it plays an important role in our lives.

It’s hard to be Jewish alone. We need each other to make this work.

We know this has been a challenging year for many of us. But because of that, our role in this community has become more important and more necessary. It is with that in mind that we ask each of you to be especially generous this year when giving to our Year End Appeal.

Do it for yourselves. Do it for your family. Do it for your children and grandchildren. Do it for your friends in the Wood River Valley, and do it for the generations to come.

On behalf of myself, the Development Committee and the entire Board of Directors, we wish you and your family a great and safe winter season. Thank you for being a part of the WRJC family.

Claudie Goldstein, Executive Director/Director of Development

Development Committee members: Margaret Gold, Phil Goldstein, Judy Teller Kaye, Joanne Mercer, Eileen Prager, Bob Safron, Gail Stern, Rhea Schwartz
Chanukah: Which came first: The Chicken (soup) or the Egg?

Chanukah, that holiday of light. The holiday of presents. The holiday that is NOT the Jewish Christmas. Every (American) kid’s favorite holiday.

Our Bar/Bat Mitzvah class was learning about Jewish identity, and because they are American Jews, their identity seems to be tied up with the holiday of Chanukah—because, of course, they get presents just like other kids who are not Jewish. When asked simply what makes a person a Jew, I’ve heard kids say: “people who don’t celebrate Christmas.” How confounding it is to define ourselves by what we DON’T do, rather than what we do! Aside from the fact that most American Jews have a 13 year-old Jewish education—they quit after their Bar or Bat Mitzvah—we have a long way to go in defining who we are. And, a big part of that definition is tied up with Chanukah, which has two very different origin stories.

In the Talmud (Shabbat 21b), the rabbis ask “Mai Chanukah?”—“What is Hanukkah?” This question can be answered in different ways. The rabbis in the Talmud focus their answer on the divine miracle of the cruse of oil that lasted for eight days. The first book of Maccabees, however, focuses on the military revolt against Antiochus and the Hellenizers. Jewish tradition instructs us to “publicize the miracle” by lighting candles and placing them in our windows for the world to see. But which is the miracle we are publicizing? The divine, supernatural miracle of the oil? Or the miracle of human courage and strength in fighting against oppression? Is Chanukah celebration of divine power or of human action? As the Talmud asks, “What is Chanukah?”

Stories can be spun in different ways for different purposes, and the story of Chanukah has taken on different meanings in different times and settings. Perhaps for us, these two versions of the Hanukkah story can go hand-in-hand. The miracle of the oil would not have been possible without human courage, without the Maccabees taking the initiative and having the faith and determination to rededicate the Temple and light the menorah in the first place. The message of Chanukah is that times of darkness require us not to despair, but to find the courage and hope to light that first light, to take action, to bring light into our world and to make miracles possible. Perhaps this is the direction that we should take in educating ourselves Jewishly. Rather than viewing this through the lens of the holiday, we might view this holiday as a starting point to teach our kids and ourselves about what comes after the victory and what comes into the light. Like the Maccabees who rededicated the Temple in Jerusalem, so may we rededicate ourselves this Chanukah and beyond to teaching our kids what comes after the presents—and how we can give back by working for democracy, justice and peace.

Chag Urim Sameach! (Happy holiday of light!)

Rabbi Robbi
History itself has a history. Our perspectives shift over time, and some moments may only seem meaningful in retrospect. We don't always understand the real significance of an event until many decades later or sometimes even centuries. A classic example of this is the history of Chanukah.

At one level, the Chanukah story is very simple. From the days of Alexander the Great of Macedon, Israel was under the dominion of the Alexandrian Empire of the Greeks. This meant that in the third century BCE, it was under the control of the Ptolemies who were based in Egypt and Alexandria. Then, during the second century BCE, Israel came under the domain of the Seleucids who were based in Syria.

The Seleucid leader, Antiochus IV, who modestly called himself Epiphanes, meaning “God made manifest”, decided to force the pace of Hellenisation on the Jews of the land of Israel. Among other things, he forbade the public practice of Judaism, erected a statue of Zeus in the Temple, and offered swine before it as a sacrifice, in a desecration of Jewish values that Jews of the time called the Abomination of Desolation.

An elderly Priest called Mattityahu, and his sons and their supporters known to history as the Maccabees, rose in revolt. Over the next three years they scored a momentous victory over the Seleucids, reconquering Jerusalem and bringing it back under Jewish sovereignty. They cleansed the Temple and rededicated it, lighting the great Menorah, the candelabrum that stood in the Temple, for a celebration lasting eight days. hat is the story of Chanukah as captured in history in the first and second books of Maccabees. But that is not how the story was ultimately told within the Jewish tradition, as it was ruled that the two books of Maccabees, and others under the same title, should be called Sefarim Chitzoni'im, apocryphal works, and kept out of the Bible. The Chanukah story that is told instead is a very different one, with a powerful message.

The Talmud tells us that in the first century, in the last days of the Second Temple, a Rabbi called Yehoshua Ben Gamla, established a network of schools throughout Israel. The result of this was that from the age of six, every child in the country received a publicly-funded universal education. This was the first education system of its kind anywhere in the world, and also a clear indication of the now familiarly Jewish commitment to education and to ensuring our children are literate in their heritage. According to the Talmud, Rabbi Yehoshua ben Gamla’s memory is blessed, because without his intervention the Torah would have been forgotten in Israel. Without him, there would have been no survival of Judaism and ultimately no Jews.

What Rabbi Yehoshua Ben Gamla and the other Sages understood, and what was not understood at the time of Chanukah itself, was that the real battle against the Greeks was not a military one, but a cultural one. At the time, the Greeks were the world’s greatest in many fields. They were unparalleled in their advances in art, in architecture, in literature, in drama, in philosophy. Even today, their achievements have never been surpassed. But Jews nonetheless believed, and surely history has borne this out, that there is within Judaism, within ancient Israel and still within its heritage to today, something special. Something worth fighting for. Judaism, with its emphasis on the sanctification of life, and the belief that every human being was created in God’s image, held eternal truths that we could not abandon. This was the unique distinction between the culture of the Greeks and the world of Torah and Judaism. As a result, Jew have always known that the real battle is not necessarily fought on the physical battlefield with physical weapons, but rather in the hearts and minds of future generations.

So Judaism, and the Jewish people, became a faith and a nation no longer focusing on its military heroes, but on its spiritual ones. It became a civilisation rooted in texts, and in teachers, and in houses of study. We became the people whose heroes were teachers, whose citadels were schools, and whose passion was learning and the life of the mind. The end result was that Judaism did survive and thrive throughout the centuries, whereas Ancient Greece, the Greece of Athens, the Greece of Alexander
the Great, declined. In fact, it was only a short time after the events of the Chanukah story that Greece began its decline, and Rome rose to take its place.

That is the message of Chanukah, and to articulate our story, we focus in a rather beautiful and symbolic way on just one tiny detail of the original chain of events: That one cruse of pure, undefiled oil was found by the Maccabees among the wreckage and defilements of the Temple, just enough to light the Menorah until more oil could be sourced.

One of the most interesting aspects of this shifting perspective from the original way of telling the story to the current way is reflected in the name of the festival itself. Chanukah, from the word chanuch, means re-dedication. That is what the Maccabees did to the Temple. They re-dedicated it, as described in the books of Maccabees. Yet over time, Chanukah became connected to the word chinuch, a word meaning education. What we re-dedicated was not a physical building – the Temple – but living embodiments of Judaism, namely our children, our students, the people to whom we teach and hand on our heritage and values.

From being the festival of a military victory, Chanukah became the festival of a spiritual and civilisational one.

I believe this history of our history has a message for us all. It teaches us this fundamental truth, as relevant to our lives today as ever before: To defend a country physically you need an army, but to defend a civilisation you need education, you need educators, and you need schools. Those are the things that kept the Jewish spirit alive and the Menorah of Jewish values burning throughout the centuries in an everlasting light. Often what seems at the time to be the headline news, the military victory, is, in the hindsight of history, secondary to the cultural victory of handing your values on to the next generation.

If we do that, we will ensure that our children, and theirs, light up the world.

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks,

Jewish World

YEAR END 2020
YOUR SUPPORT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

I/We will support the campaign and will contribute the following amount

$180 $250 $500 $1,000 $2,500 $5,000 Other

CHECK INCLOSED: DONATE ON LINE: wrcj.org/Donate

CREDIT CARD #: __________________________ Exp. Date ________ CV_______
BILLING NAME: ________________________________________________
BILLING ZIP: ______________ PHONE: ______________
EMAIL: __________________________

Please recognize this donation in honor/memory of: __________________________

Please keep this gift anonymous. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

PLEASE MAIL DONATION TO POB 837 KETCHUM, ID 83340
OR GO ONLINE WRJC.ORG/DONATE
Tune in on Zoom
Ladies Lunch & Guests Speakers
Alli Frank and Asha Youmans
January 7, 2021@ 12pm–1:30pm

WE MISSED YOU! We want to SEE YOU again!
We hope to see your smiling face and look forward to hearing your voices and enjoying our Winter Ladies Luncheon again!
Prepare your favorite lunch and we will enjoy our meal together

ZOOM LINK will be provided in your EMAIL INVITATION to come.

RSVP requested.
To sign up email claudie@wrjc.org

Chairs:
Ellen Fastow
Claudie Goldstein
Sammie Mailman
Vicki Shapiro
Hello, and on behalf of our Building & Fundraising Committee, we hope that you, your families and friends are healthy and safe during this time. These past months have brought a range of challenges, both large and small, for many of us, but during this same time there are good things happening for the Wood River Jewish Community’s future.

Thanks to the generosity of so many in our community, just a few months ago, as many of you know, the WRJC closed the purchase of its first permanent home. Not only did a great many of WRJC members make donations, but gifts have been abundant from many in our extended community and those connected to our community as well. We hope that many of you who donated and have not in the past been members will now become members of the Wood River Jewish Community for 2021. Your membership dues go directly to the sustainability and operating budget, separate from the building fund, supporting the growing Jewish Community here in the Wood River Valley.

We were able to buy the building for our permanent home not only through the generosity and support of many of you, but through the generosity of our Patron donor, Sun Valley resident Ken Lewis. Today, the WRJC community center will be named after the Lewis family. In making this commitment, the Lewis family is inviting others to consider becoming Patron donors and would like to share the naming of our Community Center with others. In our process of moving forward we are currently assessing potential architects to work with us in the design and construction process beginning in Q1 of 2021.

As many of you know, our permanent home will not only be a Jewish Community Center for Sun Valley, but it will include the first synagogue ever in the Wood River Valley, as both the Mt. Express (https://www.mtexpress.com/news/sun_valley/wood-river-jewish-community-has-found-a-permanent-home/article_d31e50ea-f929-11ea-9b63-ebf18d9534bb.html) and Eye on Sun Valley (https://eyeonsunvalley.com/Story_Reader/7609/Sun-Valley-to-Get-a-Synagogue) featured this fall.

On behalf of the WRJC Board of Directors and the Building Committee, we wish you the happiest of Hanukkah celebrations and look forward to an exciting 2021.

Jeff Rose, WRJC Vice President and WRJC Building Committee Co-Chair
Marty Lyon, Former WRJC President and WRJC Building Committee Co-Chair
NIGHTLY ZOOM CHANUKIYAH LIGHTING WITH RABBI ROBBI

Join Rabbi Robbi and family nightly during Chanukah at 5:00 PM MST December 10-17

Link:  https://zoom.us/j/6248305123
      pwd=bFpnRWNaSncxNEw1MIZ1VWIQUFlldz09
Meeting ID: 624 830 51
Passcode: WRJC

AUTHOR TALK:
NEWARK MINUTEMEN, BY LESLIE K. BARRY

Tuesday, January 19th @ 4:00PM

Fire up your computer and grab a glass of wine for a fascinating Zoom talk by author Leslie Barry. Leslie is the author of Newark Minutemen, a book about a little known and fascinating slice of 1930s American history: A Jewish boxer, Yael Newman goes undercover for the mob and the FBI to help save America from the growing domestic Nazi movement. Along the way he falls in love with Krista Brecht, the enemy’s daughter. Don’t miss this!

ZOOM LINK WILL BE SENT TO YOU
Children Education Update

It is that time of year again. No need to change your zoom backgrounds, we have our very own winter wonderland!

The Children’s Education Committee has continued to work towards promoting a strong program for current families and new families. With Covid spiking again in the valley, we have moved to a virtual program which given the kids experience with remote learning is proving very successful. This learning year, we also welcomed Dana Bernstson as our teacher and we are using a curriculum called Shalom Learning.

We currently have approximately 12 students signed up for our Sunday School class with now three different classes: ages 3-8, ages 9&10, and our Bar/Bat-Mitzvah Prep class for students grades 5th - 7th. We have 2 teen volunteers who have been helping at each class, Bryce Kanowsky and Eden Rose who have both been fantastic youth mentors for the students. Additionally, the WRJC has welcomed three new families this fall!

We welcome all the Jewish families who have recently relocated to our beautiful valley. Our doors are always open to those who choose to come every class or occasionally.

Due to covid concerns and restrictions we have been creative in maintaining our Wood River Valley children’s Jewish education. While the weather was nice, we had a few outdoor classes including a tashlich practice where we threw stones representing our sins into the river. We also had a beautiful Sukkot service where the kids made decorations and then each took turns standing in the center of the sukkah shaking the lulav speaking words of gratitude. Currently, we are back on zoom, using our Shalom Learning curriculum for the younger two groups while Rabbi Robbi and Dana work with the BBMP kids learning about Jewish Values and what it really means to become a bar/bat mitzvah.

Covid pending, we look forward to participating in a Jewish Retreat in McCall in May.

Our goal has always been to promote connections and lifelong friendships for all individuals and all families and to instill a sense of belonging and appreciation of our Jewish values into the children.

If you have any questions or want to get your children, grandchildren, nieces or nephews involved, please reach out to the children’s education committee.

Warmly,

Your WRJC Children’s Education Committee: Jami Delgado, Dana Berntson, Noa Ries, Keri Desler, Rabbi Robbi, and Margo Ramsay.

Our teachers: Dana, Bryce, Rabbi Robbi, Noa, Eden (left to right)

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Schmooze!
Rabbi Robbi & Morah Dana

Our BBMP (Bar/Bat Mitzvah Prep) class got off to a great start in November with seven kids - the largest number we have ever had in a B’nai Mitzvah class at the WRJC! They all will become B’nai Mitzvah in 2021. In our first two sessions, aside from a “prayer of the week” taught by Morah Dana, our kids unpacked what it means to be a Jew.

From discussions on history, heritage, race (not!) people-
Frank/Pinizzotto Family

Winter greetings to all the community members that we know and those we look forward to meeting when collectively gathering is possible once again. We can’t wait for that day!

We are the Frank/Pinizzotto family. Lila Pinizzotto (age 12), Lexi Pinizzotto (age 9), Scott Pinizzotto and Alli Frank (definitely not including our ages!)

Lila and Lexi are third generation Sun Valley lovers. My father, Larry Frank, first started skiing in Sun Valley in the late 1950’s and I grew up driving between Yakima and Sun Valley every holiday as a child. As an adult, I continued the tradition of driving/flying from California to Sun Valley whenever possible. I introduced my husband Scott to Sun Valley sixteen years ago and the Pennsylvania boy was hooked! Ten years ago, as a family, we moved to Seattle and the treks to Sun Valley continued. Our plan was to move permanently to Sun Valley June 2020, but given the state of the world we put the move on hold until June 2021. That said, we have spent more time in Sun Valley given the circumstances than not, so we are half and halving it until June. We cannot wait to be settled in the sunshine soon.

We are a family of creatives and outdoorsmen and women. Lila and Lexi are dedicated artists who love multiple mediums: drawing, painting, pottery, building and baking. Both girls are dedicated downhill and nordic skiers, but in the non-winter months their passions diverge. Lila lives for horses and riding, volleyball and always has her nose in a book. Lexi lives for speed, mountain biking, river jumping and swimming. Scott and I have been very fortunate that we have been able to marry our passions with our careers. Scott, an intrepid environmentalist, runs a venture capitol firm that invests primarily in early stage alternative energy companies. When not thinking, working, dedicating himself to climate change, Scott is on his gravel bike logging hours and hours and HOURS in the summer, snowboarding or skate skiing in the winter and (to be returned to one day again) planning incredible family trips. He is our captain of adventure. I am a lover of storytelling. Currently, I am a co-author with Asha Youmans (we are one of the first black/white writing duos) of the book Tiny Imperfections that debuted May 5, 2020. Tiny Imperfections has been optioned by Netflix for book to film/tv. While we wait to see where that goes post-Covid, Asha and I have just finished our second novel, and I have an essay in an Anthology coming out in February called Moms Don’t Have Time to Read Books (all proceeds from this great anthology go to Covid-19 research). When not living in the world of stories, I can be found running or hiking trails all over the valley, downhill and nordic skiing and, of course, reading and watching film and television.

We hope everyone in the WRJC is staying healthy in mind, body and spirit. We will meet you all one day soon.

Scott Alli, Lila and Lexi

Nicole Preveaux
Part time France, Seattle and Sun Valley

James and Joanna Sattler and their children: Eli, Asa, Samuels and Nathan
Sun Valley

Court and Michelle Will and their daughters Ela and Hannah
Par time Seattle and Sun Valley.
Lee Pollock’s Recommendation

Some Interesting Jewish Websites and Newsletters

*Suggested by Lee Pollock*

There is a plethora of free Jewish websites and online newsletters – here are a few I follow and enjoy.

Sign up for any or all and you’ll have lots to read!

**The Forward (www.forward.com).** Once a mass-circulation Yiddish newspaper with a socialist bent that spoke to a large immigrant population, the English language Forward today hosts a wide variety of interesting feature articles and news. (For example, “Meet the Jewish Trump Lawyer Who Grew Up Attending Socialist Summer Camp.”)

**Tablet (www.tabletmag.com.)** Described as “A new read on Jewish life”, Tablet is an online magazine covering a wide range of Jewish related subjects, in the U.S. and internationally. A recent article was “Four Scholars of Jewish Philosophy.”

**National Library of Israel (www.nli.org.il)** The preeminent public library in Israel, about to open a major new facility in Jerusalem. Its collections and the articles they inspire are a treasure trove of Jewish history from all ages. A recent post was “The Last Bar Mitzvah Before Kristallnacht.”

**Jewish Virtual Library (www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org)** Operated by the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, JVL hosts 60,000 articles and 10,000 photographs and maps on Jewish history, Israel-US relations, the Holocaust and many other subjects. It even includes most of the Babylonian Talmud!

**Mosaic (www.mosacimagazine.com)** Founded in 2013, Mosaic presents a full-length monthly essay on Jewish themes and issues and a variety of briefer opinion pieces. A recent post was “How Good is Gal Gadot’s Hebrew School?”

**Fathom (www.fathomjournal.org)** Based in the UK but with a global orientation, Fathom focuses on contemporary and historical issues relating to Israel, Palestine, the Middle East as well as Britain and America. Recently, “What Bibi Learned from Arik and Why It May Not Be Enough.”

And a Facebook Group “Life Before the Holocaust.” A poignant and moving reminder in photographs of the lost world of European Jewry.

For many years the Wood River Jewish Community has supported the Blaine County Hunger Coalition in providing foods and meals to the needy. Again the WRJC recently made a generous donation on behalf of our members.

The Hispanic families that have helped to make our social events always a big success (Chanukah, Passover, Picnic, Break the Fast, cultural and religious) is now out of work due to COVID.

The WRJC and Rabbi Robbi made a generous donation on behalf of our members.
Join us or our new series of free one hour online zoom cooking classes! Each month one of our members will welcome you to their kitchen to share a little about themselves and walk you through one of their favorite recipes. You will receive the list of ingredients to buy and enough information before hand to cook along, or you can join in, watch and be entertained by some of our favorite congregants.

Stay tuned for future guest chefs!

**DECEMBER 9th at 3:00MST: LATKES!!**
This zoom class is perfectly timed right before Hanukkah. So join in with Marlene Samuels and get those latkes ready for the holidays!

**JANUARY 14th at 3:00MST: SHAKSHUKA!!**
Josh Kleinman, our president and fearless leader, will lead you on a Shakshuka journey from his kitchen in Vancouver. You don’t want to miss this one!

**FEBRUARY: CHICKEN MARBELLA!!**
Join long time member and balabusta Judy Meyer to make Chicken Marbella the classic Silver Palate recipe. A perfect comfort meal for a cold winter eve!

No charge - To sign up for a class
E-mail either Leslie Kaplan: lesliedk@comcast.net
or Candice Stark: cstark@thestarks.org
This story of family and war is wrapped up in a gripping mystery. Fictional Israeli writer, Yoel Blum, is convinced by his publisher to take a short trip to Amsterdam for the release of the Dutch translation of his new best-seller. He is reluctant. Up until the day his mother died, she would continually make him promise to never go to Amsterdam, the city of his birth. He was a small child when his mother, older sister and he emigrated to Israel. With the urging of his wife, Yoel and his wife take the two day trip to Amsterdam....what harm in that? That question is answered when Yoel tours the Jewish Historical Museum. He stumbles upon pre-war footage of Dutch Jews and is shocked to see the young face of his mother. His mother is posed with the man Yoel assumes was his father and his older sister. His mother is lovingly looking at the infant she is holding. But the infant clearly is not Yoel. Who is he?

When Yoel returned to Israel, he couldn’t get Amsterdam and the film out of his mind. He knew that his next book HAD to be set in that city. So, he returns to immerse himself in all things Dutch....and to try to come to terms with his mother’s admonishment that the past was the past and one should always look toward the future. Yoel rents a room in a little hotel in the neighborhood where his family lived before the war. He takes the scraps of information provided by his older sister and sets out to begin taking notes for his novel. In fact, his novel is a re-creation of his mother’s life.

There are a few elements of this book that I found extremely compelling. The first is that Amsterdam itself is one of the main characters of the book. Amsterdam of the 40’s with the clear awareness of what was to come and the lively, hip Amsterdam of today. The sun reflecting off of the leaves on the trees that line the canals, the bicycle traffic, the details of the old Dutch buildings all play a role in the novel that Ms. Elon wrote and the novel that her protagonist Yoel is writing. Another element that intrigued me was the seamless blending of yesterday and today. As Yoel writes about the woman he imagines to be his mother, the reader experiences his confusion as to what is current and what is history. This is very different from books that alternate chapters between, for example, 1942 and 2015, a commonly used tactic. This flawless merging throws the reader off a bit and demands her attention.

Ms. Elon writes in Hebrew. The translation renders the text a bit stilted and awkward in places. However, this criticism is far outweighed by the compelling story Ms. Elon gives us.
Hi Everyone,
To bring up your spirits in these tough times, in the next several months we will be offering some good film recommendations for you to watch in the comfort and safety of your own homes.

Have fun watching!
Linda Cooper
The Great Sun Valley Jewish Film Committee: Jay Cooper, Penny Coe, Buzz Coe, Stan Joseph, Harriet Joseph, Fran Michael, Lois Rosen,

The Angel
is an Israeli-American spy thriller film. It is an adaptation of the non-fiction book toward fascism. Israel written by Uri Bar-Joseph. It tells the true story of Ashraf Marwan, a high-ranking Egyptian official and son in law of Egyptian President Nasser whose son in law became a spy for Israel.

NETFLIX—Starring: Marwan Kenzari, Hannah Ware, Toby Kebbell—1h 54m

The Plot Against America
THE PLOT AGAINST AMERICA, a limited series based on the acclaimed Philip Roth novel of the same name, imagines an alternate American history during World War 2 told through the eyes of a working-class Jewish family in New Jersey as they endure the political rise of Charles Lindbergh, an aviator-hero and enophobic populist, who captures the presidency and turns the nation toward fascism.

HBO

Bombshell
Austrian actress Hedy Lamarr fled an oppressive marriage to create a name for herself as one of Hollywood's top leading ladies in the 1940s. Behind the glamour and sex appeal, though, was a talented and inquisitive inventor who created a radio system that is now considered the basis of Bluetooth technology.

NETFLIX—Starring Hedy Lamarr, Mel Brooks, Charles Amirkhanian—1h 28m
FIRST-EVER 50-STATE SURVEY ON HOLOCAUST KNOWLEDGE OF AMERICAN MILLENNIALS AND GEN Z REVEALS SHOCKING RESULTS

Disturbing Findings Reveal Significant Number Of Millennials and Gen Z Can’t Name A Single Concentration Camp Or Ghetto, Believe That Two Million Or Fewer Jews Were Killed And A Concerning Percentage Believe That Jews Caused The Holocaust

NEW YORK, NEW YORK: September 16, 2020 — Gideon Taylor, President of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference), today announced the release of the U.S. Millennial Holocaust Knowledge and Awareness Survey, the first-ever 50-state survey on Holocaust knowledge among Millennials and Gen Z. The surprising state-by-state results highlight a worrying lack of basic Holocaust knowledge, a growing problem as fewer and fewer Holocaust survivors – eyewitnesses to a state-sponsored genocide – are alive to share the lessons of the Holocaust.

Nationally, there is a clear lack of awareness of key historical facts; 63 percent of all national survey respondents do not know that six million Jews were murdered and 36 percent thought that “two million or fewer Jews” were killed during the Holocaust. Additionally, although there were more than 40,000 camps and ghettos in Europe during the Holocaust, 48 percent of national survey respondents cannot name a single one.

The study reveals that Wisconsin scores highest in Holocaust awareness among U.S. Millennials and Gen Z. Arkansas has the lowest Holocaust knowledge score, with less than 2-in-10 (17 percent) of Millennials and Gen Z meeting the Holocaust knowledge criteria.

We calculated our Holocaust “knowledge score” by using the percentage of Millennials and Gen Z adults who met all three of the following criteria: 1) have “Definitively heard about the Holocaust,” AND 2) can name at least one concentration camp, death camp, or ghetto, AND 3) know that 6 million Jews were killed in the Holocaust.

In what might be considered a disturbing sign of the times, 59 percent of respondents indicate that they believe something like the Holocaust could happen again.

**The states with the highest Holocaust Knowledge Scores are:** Wisconsin, Minnesota, Massachusetts, Maine, Kansas, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, Idaho, Iowa, and Montana.

**The states with the lowest Holocaust Knowledge Scores are:** Alaska, Delaware, Maryland, New York, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, Florida, Mississippi, and Arkansas.

**Major Survey Findings**

**Camps and Ghettos**
- Nationally, 48 percent of U.S. Millennial and Gen Z could not name a single one of the more than 40,000 concentration camps or ghettos established during World War II. This number is reflected in individual
with an astounding 60 percent of respondents in Texas, 58 percent in New York, and 57 percent in South Carolina, unable to name a single camp or ghetto. 56 percent of U.S. Millennial and Gen Z were unable to identify Auschwitz-Birkenau, and there was virtually no awareness of concentration camps and ghettos overall. Only six percent of respondents are familiar with the infamous Dachau camp, while awareness of Bergen-Belsen (three percent), Buchenwald (one percent) and Treblinka (one percent) is virtually nonexistent.

Number of Jews Murdered
- When asked how many Jews were killed during the Holocaust, 63 percent of Millennials and Gen Z did not know six million Jews were murdered. The states with the lowest scores for this question are Arkansas with 69 percent, followed by Delaware with 68 percent, Arizona with 67 percent, Mississippi and Tennessee with 66 percent, and Hawaii, Iowa, Vermont, and West Virginia with 65 percent.
- When broken down further, 36 percent of Millennials and Gen Z thought that two million or fewer Jews were murdered. Arkansas ranks as the state with the lowest awareness of this widely known data point, with 37 percent believing two million or fewer were murdered, followed by 36 percent in Georgia, Indiana and Ohio; 35 percent in Minnesota; and 34 percent in Arizona, Iowa, Kentucky and New Hampshire.

Responsibility for the Holocaust
- In perhaps one of the most disturbing revelations of this survey, 11 percent of U.S. Millennial and Gen Z respondents believe Jews caused the Holocaust.
- The findings were more disturbing in New York where an astounding 19 percent of respondents felt Jews caused the Holocaust; followed by 16 percent in Louisiana, Tennessee, and Montana and 15 percent in Arizona, Connecticut, Georgia, Nevada and New Mexico.

Holocaust Denial
- Also troubling is the percentage of Millennials and Gen Z that have witnessed Holocaust denial or distortion on social media. Approximately half (49 percent) of U.S. Millennials and Gen Z have seen Holocaust denial or distortion posts on social media or elsewhere online.
- 30 percent of respondents across all 50 states indicated that they had seen Nazi symbols on their social media platforms or in their community. The state with the highest response was Nevada with 70 percent. Other states with high scores include: New York with 67 percent; Arizona and Texas with 64 percent; and Colorado, South Dakota and Washington with 63 percent.

Holocaust Education
- A consistent bright spot across all the survey findings is the desire for Holocaust education. 64 percent of all U.S. Millennials and Gen Z believe that Holocaust education should be compulsory in school.
- 80 percent of all respondents believe that it is important to continue teaching about the Holocaust, in part, so that it does not happen again.

“We came to realize that, although a number of states already mandate Holocaust education which is an excellent first step,” said Claims Conference Holocaust task force leader Matthew Bronfman. “For the mandates to have a significant effect in classrooms there must be state funding to support the mandates. The Holocaust is a broad topic. Specialized teacher training and thoughtfully developed curriculum are needed for students to benefit.”

Claims Conference Executive Vice President Greg Schneider said of the survey, “Not only was their overall lack of Holocaust knowledge troubling, but combined with the number of Millennials and Gen Z who have seen Holocaust denial on social media, it is clear that we must fight this distortion of history and do all we can to ensure that the social media giants stop allowing this harmful content on their platforms. Survivors lost their families, friends, homes and communities; we cannot deny their history.”

The Claims Conference recently launched #NoDenyingIt, a digital campaign in which survivors, in personal and moving videos appeal directly to Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg – imploring him to remove Holocaust denial from his platform. The survey findings underscore the importance the urgent need to understand the Holocaust denial is hate speech and to remove denial of this critical historic event.

Survey Taskforce
A U.S. Millennial Holocaust Knowledge and Awareness Survey task force led by Claims Conference Board member Matthew Bronfman, was comprised of Holocaust survivors as well as historians and subject matter experts from museums, educational institutions and leading nonprofits in the field of Holocaust education, including Yad Vashem, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Claims Conference and George Washington University.

Survey Methodology and Sample
The Holocaust Knowledge and Awareness Study was commissioned by the Claims Conference. Data was collected in the United States and analyzed by Schoen Cooperman Research, with a representative sample of 1,000 interviews nationwide and 200 interviews in each state with adults ages 18 to 39 via landline, cell phone and online interviews. More information, please visit: www.claimscon.org
The World’s Greatest Entertainer: the Story of Al Jolson by Ushi Derman

Admired by Frank Sinatra, adored by Judy Garland, and defined by Bing Crosby as his spiritual father, we can safely state that much like Russian literature came to the world from the creases of Gogol’s “The Overcoat”, as Dostoevsky said, the American entertainment tradition came out of the mythological black suite of Al Jolson, who died this week 70 years ago.

Bob Dylan, even though born half a century after “Jolie”, said Jolson was “somebody whose life I can feel”. Did Dylan feel this way because both of them were artists, sons of immigrants, who, while eagerly trying to spot the American style, invented a new style? Or was that the shared fate of two Jewish Americans, Shabtai Zisel Zimmerman and Asa Yoelson, striving to break the chains of tradition and past, therefore changing their names? Whatever the answer might be, both Dylan and Jolson each in his time, became the heroes of that remarkable success story of Jewish immigrants in America’s new world.

Asa Yoelson was born in 1886 in a small town in the Russian pale of settlement, Kaunas area, Lithuania, then part of the Russian empire. His father was a cantor, Moses Yoelson, and his mother’s name was Naomi. Those were rough times for the Jews of Russia. The 1881-1882 pogroms were followed by massive anti-Semitic legislation and then came the “cold pogroms” led by Czar Alexander III, that lasted for 14 years.

Like millions of other Jews from the pale of settlement, Moses Yoelson hoped for a better life in the “Goldene Medina”, as the Jews called America with sparkling eyes. In 1891 he crossed the ocean and managed to find a job as a cantor and rabbi in the Talmud Torah synagogue in Southwest Waterfront quarter, Washington DC. His family joined him three years later.

Asa and his brother Hirsch, later Harry, were brought up in a harsh orthodox home. Their father designated his sons to carry on with the family tradition as cantors. He used to force them to sing loud, inserting toothpicks in their mouth to keep it open.

The first life changing event in young Asa’s history occurred in 1894 when his mother Naomi, to whom he was strongly attached, died at a young age of a malignant disease. He was only eight years old when he could hear her agony cries from the next room. Later he’d say that those days caused him to mature very fast. He said, “since then I’ve been scared to stay by myself. And that fear became my creative drive, that pushed me as a grown man to go on stage every night.”

When he was 14 year old, he ran away from home with his brother Harry, and changed his name to Al Jolson. They performed in street corners as a musical entertainment duo, combining ragtime and Vaudeville. They stayed in motels, sometimes even on the street and lived from hand to mouth. At one point, Al parted from his brother and left to New York alone – which was his second major turning point.

Today, Blackface is justly considered an offensive practice that mocks and humiliates African Americans, but back then, at the beginning of the 20th century, it was a legitimate, popular and loved form of entertainment. In 1904, Jolson was performing successfully in the Kinney Theater in Brooklyn, when one night his friend, the comedian James Francis Dooley, advised him to go on stage wearing black make up on his face, white lipstick, black shoes and white socks and a black suite. Jolson reported in his biography that this character released him from a creative block he was experiencing.

From that moment onwards he was unstoppable. His career skyrocketed, and everybody referred to him, until his death, as the world’s greatest entertainer.
Despite the blackface practice, Jolson himself was not a racist, though, quite the opposite. Back in 1911 he already acted against the discrimination of the blacks in Broadway, and helped black artists, playwrights and song writers including Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Fats Waller, and Ethel Waters with their careers. One time, already at the peak of his success, upon hearing of a restaurant in Connecticut that refused to host jazz singers Noble Sissle and Eubie Blake, and though he did not know them personally, Jolson invited them to dine with him at that place. He introduced black styles to his fans, and thanks to his unique style in jazz and blues covers, as well as his anti-racism attitude – his audience loved black music.

Jolson did to jazz, blues and ragtime what Elvis did to rock 'n roll. He was called the king of Broadway and even had the mythological producers, the Schubert brothers, name a Broadway theater after him. Jolson was also the first to invent the idea of paths from the stage into the audience.

The third crucial breakthrough in his career took place in 1927, when Jolson entered the hall of fame of cinema as star of the first talking movie: The Jazz Singer. Author Samson Raphaelson based his script about Jack Robin, a cantor’s son who turns his back to tradition and becomes a popular entertainer, on Al Jolson’s real biography.

During the Korean War, Jolson used to perform for soldiers in the battle fields, and was very devoted, even though his doctors begged him to slow down with long travels. On October 23, 1950 after returning from another long tour, entertaining Americans in the front, he was staying in a hotel suite in San Francisco, playing cards, and getting ready to go on air in Bing Crosby’s radio show, when suddenly he felt unwell. They called in a doctor for him, and Jolson checked his own pulse and said with a smile, “Oh, I’m going”, then suffered a major heart failure and died. His funeral was the largest ceremony any other artist ever had, with more than 20,000 people who came to see the final curtain fall on the great Al Jolson.

Al Jolson’s story, like many others, is displayed in the new Core Exhibition of the Museum of the Jewish People, slat ed to open this coming December, in a section about unprecedented influence of American Jews on world culture.
ISRAEL INNOVATION: GRASSHOPPERS AS A PROTEIN ALTERNATIVE THAT COULD FEED THE WORLD

In 2019, Rowena and I attended a Federation P2G (Partnership Together Canada/Galil Panhandle) conference in northern Israel. Dror Tamir, CEO of an Israeli Startup, Hargol Foodtech, made a presentation to our group about the nutritional benefits of grasshoppers as a protein alternative.

They are delicious & are kosher. Here’s the story:

As with many of Israel’s leaders in agricultural innovations & solutions, Dror Tamir, the co-founder and CEO of Hargol Foodtech, grew up on a Kibbutz. His exposure to grasshoppers was by chance. His grandparents told him stories of the 1950s where local swarms of locusts would invade their farms. They would scare the swarms away with pots and pans, but some people would come with sacks and collect them mostly Yemenite, Moroccon & Tunesian Jews, to eat. He learnt that the grasshoppers were a source of food and also kosher.

Fast forward 35 years and Dror is a serial entrepreneur. At Hargol (meaning grasshopper) they are confronting a huge problem – the lack of protein in people’s diets worldwide. The moment he recognized the problem he realized that grasshoppers are the solution. Grasshoppers are in fact the best alternative for protein and can help the over 1 billion people who suffer from lack of protein in their diet, mainly in Africa and Asia and mainly children. With the growing demand for protein expected to double over the next decade, as well as population growth and changes in consumer behaviour, and the need for sustainable farming practices there is a huge market growing.

Due to existing protein sources reaching its limitation, meat-based protein’s harm to the environment and plant-based protein requiring heavy processing, there is a crucial need for cleaner, healthier protein. There is a race today for new protein sources as each has their limitations.

There are some cricket farms across Europe & USA, but they are not suited to extensive farming as they are an individual species and tend to die quickly and have a distinct taste.

The real solution is grasshoppers which are kosher or halal. Grasshoppers have amazing nutritional contents, with a whopping 70% protein with no processing. They are low in cholesterol and fat, and the market already exists as grasshoppers and locusts are consumed by 2.5 billion people and in some countries are considered a delicacy. With such a high demand and the short season of 4-6 weeks a year for their collection in the wild…Hargol understood that given the high demand and 11 months a year with no competition it was a unique business opportunity.

Culturally, the eating of locusts is also a Jewish tradition. Not only are grasshoppers/locusts the only kosher insect in the world, but they are mentioned in Leviticus.

Hargol’s operation is in northern Israel in the Galilee on four sites. Near Rosh Pina, Hargol has a breeding farm where the grasshoppers lay eggs and are incubated. They are then moved to another facility before they are harvested under EU recommendations. They also have two facilities where they grow feed (grass) for the grasshoppers. The grasshoppers are then frozen and sent to another facility that processes them into food by drying and milling them.

Grasshoppers are considered a delicacy in populations where there is a lack of dietary protein. The problem is that they only have them for four weeks a year to harvest and Hargol can provide them year-round.

As a model, they intend to work with a Jordanian partner and will build a Jordanian farm so the product can be distributed to Africa and other Arab countries. According to Dror, this is another good opportunity to promote peace.

Hargol is also one of The Peres Center for Peace and Innovation’s companies on exhibit.

Josh Kleinman
Beholdisrael.org
The Mount Hermon Ski Club will be meeting every Thursday at 10:15 at the top of Baldy (Warm Springs door of the Lookout Day Lodge). We will ski from 10:30-12:30.

Mount Hermon Ski Club Skiers will be required to ski with an N-95 mask at all times- if you do not bring your two own N-95 masks, two will be provided for a fee of $20 cash at the door.

Skiing will be by reservation only this year due to COVID-19. Reservations need to be confirmed between 5:00 pm and 6:00 pm the Wednesday before skiing.

Thursday, November 26 is our first meeting. We will be meeting all Thursdays of the ski season.

Please contact Jim at cell 310-415-8554 to make your reservations.

Restricted to WRJC members and friends and family of WRJC members. 4-8 skiers per week due to COVID-19.

Our goals are to introduce Baldy to new WRJC members and to create life long friendships among all WRJC skiers.

Sincerely,
Jim Fabe

Thinking of Passover in December!

I know, I know, it seems a bit crazy to bring up Passover when we are just going to celebrate Chanukah!

But it is not too soon to get our act together when it comes to ordering the specific Passover holiday foods that each of us might like to have in the pantry and ready to go when it is time to think about the Seder.

It seems doubtful today that we will be having a community event unless, miraculously, we all get vaccinated against Covid 19.

Our board member Coni Foster has had conversations with Atkinson’s Bellevue store manager about ordering Passover foods for us. He is proposing that we pre-order what we would like and he will deliver our orders to the store closest to each customer. He and Coni compiled a list of food items most commonly used at Passover. Coni prepared a spread sheet for us and the office will send this out to you in the next week or so. You will be able to check the items you would like to have, and if there is something you want that is not on the list, they will use their best efforts to add that to the order.

This will be a win-win for us and for Atkinson’s. In the past, we were not so proactive in informing them of the things we wanted, and, as a result, they ordered somewhat blindly. This is a chance for us to support our local grocery store and help our community, while at the same time, fulfilling our individual needs.

So please be attentive when the spread sheet is sent out to you and make Atkinson’s (not Amazon) your preferred purveyor of Kosher l’Pesach matzoh!

Getting back to December, my best wishes to you and your family for a happy Chanukah. Let’s all hope that as we close out 2020, that we can all be together again sometime soon in 2021.

Sue Green, co-prez
All services are held at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, 201 Sun Valley Road.

Trouble To Join a Meeting On Zoom?
Watch this video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hIkCmbvAHQQ or call the office for help.

Knitting For Charity

Baby it’s Cold Outside!
The weather is getting colder and the pandemic is bringing hardship to many in our beautiful valley.

The WRJC has an opportunity to make a difference. A knitted hat, scarf and lap robe can provide extra warmth for some children, seniors and families in need this winter season. Do you knit? Let’s put your skill to use and form a group that is willing to make the needed items. You don’t have to be an expert. We’ll have instructions so that everything will be similar.

Please join in this mitzvah. If you are interested contact Coni Foster at conifoster@hotmail.com or 786-382-6359 or call the office. Thanks!

Chanukah Menorahs, Dreidels, Chanukah Candles, Chocolate Gelts, Chanukah Cards are available at the office.
Tributes From 8/31 to 11/17, 2020

WE ARE THANKFUL FOR YOUR GENEROSITY.
None of the work we do would be possible without the generous support of our donors.

We apologize for misspelled or missing names. Please email us at claudie@wrjc.org with any corrections.

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