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Jewish Federation of El Paso 7110 M. Mesa El Paso, Texas 79912 RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Up Close:

Cindy & David Metrikin

What value do we need most in our world today?

David: I believe we need to enhance and rekindle the ability to listen to, empathize and deal kindly with our fellow man.

Cindy: Kindness, tolerance, preservation of our planet

What do you value most in your friends?

David: Honesty, humility, the ability to listen, to show vulnerability and compassion.

Cindy: Support, joint interests, it out, but I knew instantly! compassion

Who's your favorite Jewish hero (living or not)fictional or not) and why?

David: Not well known-Arnold Van Den Berg is someone who epitomizes for me the definition of a Jewish hero-he built himself out of the ashes of the Holocaust, an industrious and hard-working, effectively generous, caring, family oriented, educator.

Cindy: Golda Meir-Her passion and vision for Israel and its future and her understanding of the conflicts has always amazed me.

How did you meet?

Cindy: We were introduced at a young age in South Africa through a friend, attending sister Jewish day schools. After spending 3 months on an Israeli ulpan program at 16yrs of age our connection, deep affinity and common values secured our bond. And of course, I fell for his good looks, his charisma, and his kindness as well. After dating for 8 years, we married at age 23.

How did you know you were with "the one"?

David: Cindy took a while to figure it out, but I knew instantly!

What do you think is the most important thing in a relationship?

David: As for friendship-honesty, genuine caring, the ability to express real emotion.

Cindy: I think the most important factor in a relationship is compassion and kindness. I think a deep understanding of your partner's feelings and common values creates a solid, meaningful basis to a marriage.

What is your favorite experience or memory as a couple?

David: We have been fortunate to be able to share so many wonderful



memories-chief among them is the myriad we have made traveling to so many wonderful places and experiencing a plethora of cultures.

Cindy: We have been blessed to have spent 44 years together of which we have been married 36. It would be impossible to find one favorite experience or memory. Certainly, the birth of our children and then the recent births of our 3 grandchildren are major highlights. We have traveled, we have moved, and we have forged a remarkable history of memories. We have been truly blessed.

Who is your favorite couple (besides yourselves), fictional or real, and why?

David: Ruth Bader and Martin Ginsburg-icons of American Jewish life who forged ahead in their respective professions, broke new ground and contributed mightily to their marriage, family, community, and country.

Cindy: I have an aunt whose husband has now passed away. I would identify them as my favorite

couple. My aunt is now 90 and she remains a guiding light and a solid support. Their marriage was deeply grounded in spirituality and honesty. Much of my youth was spent growing up in their hometheir marriage and household represented comfort, strength, and commitment.

What advice do you have for young couples today?

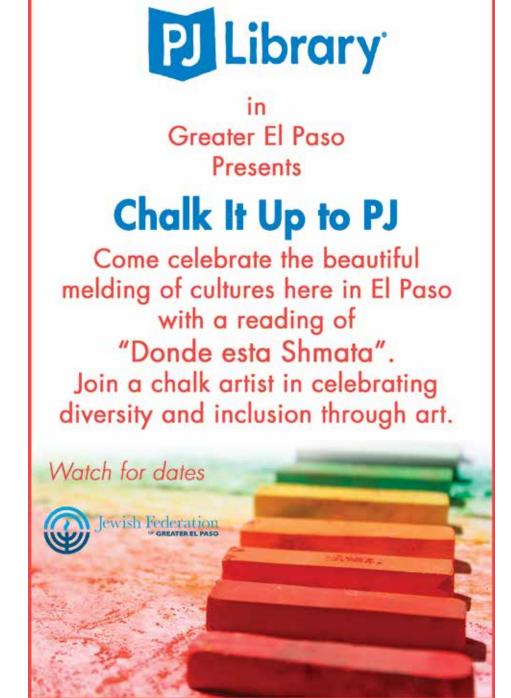
David: Relish the advantages of youth, try to live every day in the present moment, do not underestimate the power of compromise, listen to each other.

Cindy: Remain focused on each other and what brought you together in the first place

What is your Jewish passion?

David: The strength and connectivity of our tradition, the vigor and fortification of our youth, the importance of being an "ohr lagoyim"

Cindy: Israel, and the traditions that bring families together for holidays.





Tu B'Av: Our own Valentine's Day.

Tu B'Av is a relatively littleknown Jewish holiday. It doesn't have a special name, like Passover or Yom Kippur, it is known only by its date, Tu B'Av, or the 15th of the Hebrew month of Av. The Mishna marks it as the beginning of the grape harvest, but this day has another meaning as well: Tu B'Av is

the Jewish holiday of love.

In the days of the Second Temple, the day was considered a joyous occasion, and was marked by unmarried women dressing in white and dancing in the vineyards, hoping to attract a husband. No one is quite sure how Tu B'Av started, or why it became a day of love. The

Gemara, a later, interpretive layer with singof the Talmud, offers multiple explanations. One of the more popular ones is that on Tu B'Av the Biblical "tribes of Israel were permitted to mingle with each other." (Talmud, Ta'anit 30b). Mingle, of course, meaning to inter-marry.

After the destruction of the second Temple, and the diaspora, the traditions associated with Tu B'Av fell by the wayside. This celebration of love went unmarked for several centuries but has recently become popular in Israel as the Jewish "Valentine's Day".

In Israel, many mark Tu B'Av as they share stories of love

ing dancing. It is also a popular day to get married if you are so



Elizabeth Sloane, **Editor**

inclined. Here in the US, most have never heard of it, and may think it's superfluous, given the secular nature of Valentine's Day here. But really, is there anything wrong with celebrating two days of love?

We hope you enjoy the stories of some of our community members

Todah Rabah Thank you to our volunteers

Borderland's Café Europa Guest Speakers

Stephanie Calvo, Mindy Escobar-Leanse, Eddie Trevizo, Rabbi Ben Zeidman

Borderland's Cafe Europa Support Noel Hollowell-Small

Borderland's Café Europa Shabbat **Dinner Meal Deliveries**

Cheryl Decker, Noel Hollowell-Small, Alison Mann, Rebecca Mendez, Shane Wagman Romero

These We Honor With Tributes

Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso

TO: Audrey and Eitan Lavi, Mazel Tov on becoming **Grandparents**

FROM: Sue Bendalin

TO: Tibor Schaechner, Mazel Tov on becoming a

Great Grandfather FROM: Sue Bendalin

TO: The Eisenberg Family in Memory of Jack Eisenberg

FROM: Joe and Carol (Silberman) McElroy

To make a tribute, contact the Federation at 915-842-9554.

A publication of the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso

The Jewish Voice of El Paso, published ten times a year, is dedicated to informing, educating, and uniting the Jewish community by providing news items of local, national, Israeli and international

The Jewish Voice will consider for publication any materials submitted that support the mission of the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso and have relevance and appeal to the El Paso Jewish community. Articles are subject to editing at the editor's discretion and are subject to space limitations. Letters cannot be longer than 150 words and articles must be kept to a maximum of 300 words. Please email to thevoice@jfedelpaso.org

Opinions are those of individual writers and not necessarily those of the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso. The Jewish Voice is not responsible for the kashrut of any product or eating establishment advertised herein.

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Meet our PJ Library Coordinator



Mindy Escobar-Leanse is an actor, puppeteer, voice actor and now, a passionate Judaics facilitator at The Cherry Hill School and

United States with the Jim Henson company, internationally in Poland, Bulgaria, Japan, and Israel. She was raised in an event The J-Center for Early Learning, planner's home and is thrilled to local Jewish schools. She has per- be helping bring the PJ Library formed in New York, all over the events to our community this year.

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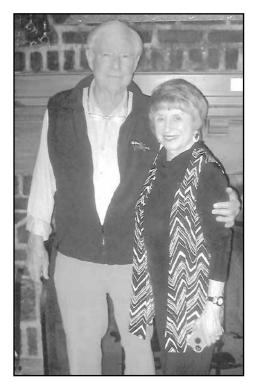
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Still in Love; Still Thankful for It

Mimi and Jay Gladstein

Mimi Reisel was always a rebel, so when most of her classmates went to UT Austin, she chose to go to Oklahoma University, the only El Pasoan of her class to do so. The first week there she met Jay Gladstein and chased him till he caught her.



Jay got drafted and so plans for an El Paso wedding had to be scrapped and the couple were married at the Presidio in Monterrey, California, where Jay was stationed at Fort Ord.

The first years of their marriage were spent in Aschaffenberg, Germany, where their eldest son, Cliff, was born. When they returned to the United States, Jay went to work as a traveling salesman for his father-in-law, Emil Reisel. Those were the days before Walmart ruined all the little Mom-and-Pop stores in the small towns of New Mexico, Arizona, and West Texas. They jokingly credit the fact that Jay was out of town from Tuesday to Friday every week for their happy marriage.

And it has been a very happy one. After 63 years they are more in love than ever. The Gladstein home was bursting with love on Mother's Day when all their children, Cliff and Amy, Denise, and Alfred celebrated along with the loving doggy doodles: Lilly, Ginger, and Peanut. The Gladsteins are blessed with not only grandchildren but also a great grandson, named after Henry Kellen.

Mimi and Jay are supportive of the Jewish community and are therefore members of B'nai Zion Synagogue, Temple Mount Sinai, and Chabad. They also have a fund with the Federation that supports, among other things, Holocaust studies. Every Friday night when they light the Shabbat Candles, they are thankful for their family and for being in such a beautiful and blessed setting as El Paso.



Cupid Used a Can of "Texas WhoopA**"

Lee Schwartz and Bob Novick

Lee Schwartz and Bob Novick have known each other since 1950. Their mothers were best friends and Ruthie Novick taught piano to Lee and her sister Edi. The Novick and the Schwartz families became and stayed very close, although Lee and Bobby went their separate ways after high school. They both married and started a family, but never lost touch completely. Bobby's parents were godparents to Lee's youngest son,

and Lee's youngest daughter was a babysitter of choice for Bobby's children before he moved to San Diego in the late 80s. Although never completely out of touch, raising families in separate cities focused their attention in different directions.

separate ways after high school. Then in 2008, the bashert thing They both married and started happened. Both were divorced. a family, but never lost touch completely. Bobby's parents were with 7 grandchildren (all of whom godparents to Lee's youngest son, lived out of town), Lee decided





that the single life, although fun, was exhausting and when her subscription to Match.com and JDate expired, she was done with the single scene. Bob (also divorced for some years), on the other hand, was still seeking a connection. On a Sunday afternoon in July of 2008, Lee was viewing singles on JDate from all over the world. No names, no tag lines, just photos. And there HE was...Bobby Novick!! It

had been a good while since she had communicated with or seen him, but that face, and smile were unmistakable. She sent him a quick message that both remember to this day: "That's a Novick smile if I ever saw one. Where are you and what are you doing? If you don't respond to this, I'm going to get my can of whoop ass after you." He responded. And they have been together ever since!!

Romance and Chapel #3

Karen and Bill Friedman

During the summer of 1980, my dad, Army chaplain Allan Blustein was newly stationed at Fort Bliss, Texas as the Jewish chaplain at Chapel #3. I was in a master's program in Chicago but was "home" for the summer. On August 8, 1980, we attended Friday night services at the chapel. I was sitting in the back row thinking that this would be just another Friday

night service. 2LT Bill Friedman, West Point class of 1980, had just arrived at Fort Bliss for officer basic training and was being sent to Germany that December. He sat down in the second row. During services, we offered each other cordial smiles. Following services, he introduced himself, we spoke for a bit, and he asked me if I'd like to join him on a visit to Juarez the next

> day, I explained that I didn't drive on Shabbat. Well, that should've put an end to the whole thing!

Bill was invited to a brunch at our home that Sunday. During brunch it was suggested that we go out that day on a chaperoned tour of El Paso. I was going back to Chicago the following week and we dated just about every night that week. When we said our goodbyes, he kissed me and told me we were two ships passing in the night. I thought I'd never see him again. The next Sunday, Bill

was again invited to brunch. I happened to call while he was there (Bill comment: sure!).

We then ended up speaking on the phone every night and actually started to fall in love! He would be leaving for Germany for 3 years a few months later! What to do? Break up? Go live with him? I decided to go back to El Paso for the Sukkot holiday only 6 weeks after we met to see what the situation was with this guy! Long

story short, we got engaged!

Bill left for Germany and returned for our wedding in Chicago on June 14, 1981.

Our oldest son Ionathan was born in Wurzburg in 1982, our daughter Alana was born at Fort

Bliss in 1985, and our son Benji was born in Cleveland in 1987.

We're now retired and living in Delray Beach, Florida. Our kids are all married, and we have 4 gorgeous grandkids!

Just remember, Chapel #3 is where romance and magic happen!

From Dallas to El Paso

Allison and Jordan first met in 2011 in Fort Worth, Texas. Although the two hit it off right away

they were not yet ready for a longterm relationship. They kept in touch, but it wasn't until senior

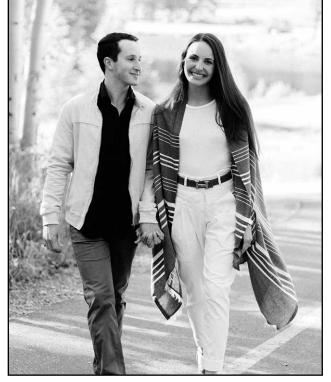
year that they began to date. Allison and Jordan have spent the last seven years together traveling the world, raising their dog children, and motivating each other to be the best version of themselves both personally and professionally.

The couple spent four years in Dallas after college and ended up getting married there in 2018. Soon after, they ventured to was only a couple of Jewish community.

years later when they decided to move to El Paso. They are thoroughly enjoying El Paso so far and are both excited for their future here. The people, the opportunity, and the lifestyle are what sets El Paso apart.

In addition to falling in love with Jordan, Allison also fell in love with Judaism and converted in 2018. Carrying forth the Jewish community through gathering, giving, and tradition plays a significant part Allison and Jordan's lives, and they Houston for a work- look forward to being related move, but it a part of the El Paso







ElPasoConnect

(for those of us in our 20s and 30s)

Tour De El Paso Scavenger Hunt

Put your knowledge of our fair city to the test to solve clues and find fun at locations around the city by car.

Join the hunt - Sunday, July 11 from 4-6 pm

Clues | Food | Drinks included

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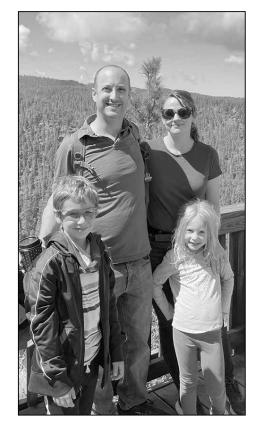
The Jewish Voice **6** | July-August 2021

A Match Made at the Movies

Rabbi Ben and Katie Zeidman

We can't claim it's always a perfect, Hollywood romance, but without Hollywood it would have never happened. In 2006 Ben moved to Cincinnati to continue his rabbinical studies at Hebrew Union College. Together with a group of movie-loving friends he began seeing movies in the theater on opening weekend.

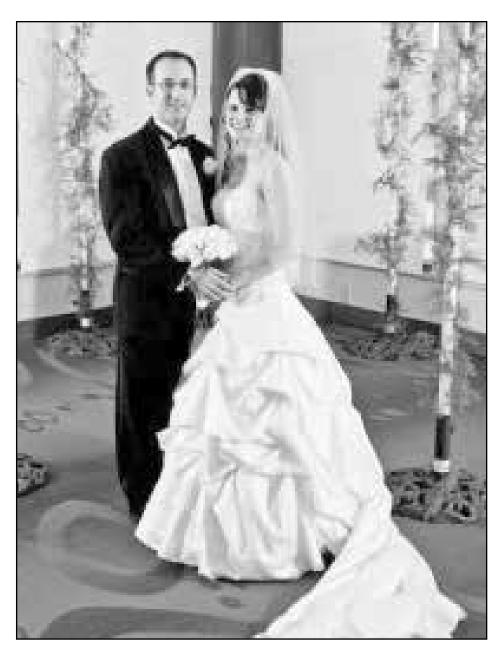
One time Ben's friend's friend invited his friend's sister to attend a screening of the comedy: I Love You, Man (March 20, 2009). Ben noticed her, learned her name was Katie, but tried not to come off too strong.



The following weekend the group went to see an animated film titled Monsters vs. Aliens (March 27, 2009). Ben got there a little early (he can't stand to miss the previews), and Katie was already there. "May I sit next to you?" he asked... terrified. "Sure" she said. He spent most of the movie unable to think of anything other than this woman next to him. After the movie she walked by, and Ben leaned over to his friends to say: "I can't even think straight when she is around... I'm head over heels."

On May 1, 2009, the group went to see one of the worst action hero films ever: X-Men Origins: Wolverine. Ben found a way to sit next to Katie, but this time they spent the entire film making fun of the movie. Afterwards, they spent weeks typing messages to each other online. Ben was so excited to have met someone who had so many similar interests and a wonderful sense of humor. When they began writing to each other online, Katie immediately noticed that Ben's avatar picture was of Pokey, while hers was Gumby. It was fate!

Their first real date was breakfast. That breakfast became lunch. The timing was perfect. Ben was entering the final summer before the final year of rabbinical school. Katie was completing her studies for a degree in Surgical Technology. They began a whirlwind summer of dating.



her degree and Ben was ordained. He asked Katie if she'd like to move with him for a job in New York City. She took a leap. To make his intentions clear, Ben proposed a

About a year later Katie earned couple of days before their departure in an empty apartment where they were crashing on the floor. She said "yes"! When they tried to go to sleep that night, they were too excited. So, they went to see a movie!

Love and Pride

Mindy and Georgina Leanse-Escobar



I find it difficult to know where to begin. It's part of the reason we officially got married, so that we could finally have a date to celebrate our love. The truth is, our worlds started intertwining around 2005 and finally came to a head in 2012. Now, in 2021, with almost 5 years of marriage, I still struggle to tell our story. The truth is: it's long,

and beautiful, and best told over a bottle of wine or dessert. The truth is: we're still falling in love, and I hope that never changes. The truth is: she's better with words than I am. She's embraced my religion, so fully, and integrated Judaism into our everyday life and the truth is: these rituals, rooted in our now shared religion, keep us even more connected.



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FEAR is a four letter word

Good morning Mayor and City Council Representatives.

I am Robert French, Executive Director of the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso and The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso.

Growing up in the United Kingdom, I faced blatant anti-Semitism on a regular basis. My family, friends, and pretty much everyone I know, too. Regardless of your gender, whether you were young or old, it was palpable – and still is. Anti-Semitism doesn't discriminate. Name calling was just the tip of the iceberg. We were spat upon, chased, attacked, beaten up and so much more, simply because we were Jewish.

Whether being verbally or physically attacked, what was even

more disturbing was the silence of the bystanders. On the bus, in the street, in the shops. People just turned and looked the other way. No one ever came to our defense. You could even see the look on some faces of those wishing they could join in. In the UK, as in much of Europe, it has got much worse.

Moving to the USA was a breath of fresh air. Apart from being in Israel, I have never felt so safe living my life as a practicing Jew as I do in cities across this great country. There is greater understanding and tolerance here of all faiths. Or at least there was 30 years ago when I arrived.

Now the change is unmistakable. Whether from the extreme left or the extreme right, or under the guise of protesting the State of Israel, we are under attack. It seems that in this age in which we pride ourselves on being more tolerant, anti-Semitism is still in vogue. After a trip to Auschwitz with Polish friends we sat and lamented the horrors of the camps - millions of Poles died there, too. The difference, however, that we discussed, is that no one is out to destroy the Polish people today. There are many that still wish to rid the world of Israel and the Jews.

I have already witnessed and heard of numerous incidents here in El Paso and we see the daily occurrences of anti-Semitism in the US national press.

Without sounding too cliché, the silence is often deafening. Hatred of any kind is intolerable and must be

defeated.

I rise up in support of this resolution and urge you to sign onto the Mayors Against Anti-Semitism letter on behalf of this council and city. History



Director JFED of Greater
El Paso and The Jewish
Community Foundation of
El Paso

demands that we take action and speak up.

Thank you.

Robert French spoke to the El Paso City Council on 6/8/2021 before their vote on a resolution against antisemitism.

Under Attack

Shahar Peled (former Shaliach - Israel Emissary - in the USA)

You probably all see different media coverage and social media posts regarding the recent situation in Israel, some standing with Israel and some condemning Israel.

The first rocket attack caught me off guard, I was driving in Tel Aviv, unprotected, not knowing what to do. I stopped the car and laid on the floor while seeing and hearing rockets exploding over my head. I can't explain how scary that is. That was just the beginning. After each attack, even those in the middle of the night, the first thing we did was to text our family and friends to make sure everyone's ok. After that, we would turn on the TV to see where the rockets hit and if there were any casualties. I'm a grown man, a paratrooper on reserve duty.

I can take it. But no kid should grow up like this, no elderly person should stay in a bomb shelter or be afraid of not making it because they're too slow to get there in time.

The "war" hurt me, emotionally, physically, spiritually. But what hurt me the most was hearing and seeing the voices (or the silence) of many American Jews. Those condemning Israel and those staying silent while our homeland is being attacked by rockets, by the news and by millions of people around the world and on social media.

I've lived amongst you in the USA. I know you and I'm also one of you. That is the reason I feel comfortable sharing that all those who attacked Israel or stayed silent in the face of anti-Israel and anti-

Semitic attacks - hurt me the most. Hurt us the most.

We're a minority all over the world, yet there's one country in the world that will always be there for us. We must stand together, we must be better than we were 75 years ago, and we must not stay silent. Being anti-Israel is anti-Semitism!

In what reality is launching thousands of rockets aimed to kill civilians ok? In what reality is hiding these rockets in schools and hospitals ok? In what reality, does a terror organization's aim to kill innocent civilians gain support from so many people around the world?

Living in the Middle East, especially while being the only democracy in the area, is challenging.

Hamas's terrorists commit terror attacks, launch rockets, and hide behind their civilians, knowing that Israel will never purposely hurt civilians. They use their civilians as human shields, the opposite of what the IDF soldiers do. If Hamas would've only targeted soldiers, I'd have called it a legitimate conflict, but targeting a civilian population for the sole intention of killing them is a crime that should neither be forgiven nor tolerated. This is the key difference; while Israel is targeting Terrorists and trying its best to avoid civilian causalities, Hamas is doing the polar opposite.

Yes, Israel is a strong country with a powerful military. Unfortunately, history and the reality in the Middle East force us to depend only on ourselves.

DON'T BELIEVE EVERY-THING YOU SEE OR READ!

propaganda machine that would do anything to make you believe their lies. Creating fake scenes, fake funerals, publishing fake numbers, and even killing its own people if it will push its agenda.

Double-check your resources, ask, research and be judgmental of the facts. Ask yourself "what would I've wanted my government to do if this was happening here". Then make up your mind but do it out of knowledge.

Every innocent death, on both sides, is horrible and we should all pray for it so stop once and for all. May we learn to live in peace, prosperity, and peoplehood.



Rocket over Tel Aviv

The Jewish Voice **8** | July-August 2021

Rebecca Caspi

Whenever he called from the United

States, my uncle asked the same question, "Do you

think you're

me

going to stay in Israel?" As the decades passed, the question turned more and more into a jest. And now that I've lived in Israel for almost forty years, including marrying and raising a family here, it's pretty clear that I'm here for good. And I mean that last phrase in two senses—not just that I'm here permanently, but that I'm contributing to the vibrancy and vitality of my adopted homeland.

I've felt that profound sense of pride ever since I started working for the Jewish community in Israel in 1991—first for the Joint Distribution Committee, and then, since 2007, in my current role as the director of the Israel office for the Jewish Federations of North America. And I've experienced it especially deeply lately, as Israel was under relentless rocket attack from ruthless terrorists for two nerve-wracking weeks in

Staying for Good

Rebecca Caspi, Senior Vice President for Israel & Overseas of JFNA and the Director General of JFNA's Israel office

May, and as my staff and I at JFNA worked around the clock to manage Federations' emergency response and to keep the North American Jewish community up to speed on all the breaking news, up to and including the ceasefire that was finally declared.

It was also crucial to us to inform the Israeli public of the wave of antizionism and antisemitism that crashed upon North American shores in the wake of the conflict between Israel and Hamas. Promoting understanding and building awareness about the different challenges faced by American Jews and Israel helps us all to stay connected through thick and thin.

What was also truly fulfilling was the opportunity, just a few days after the ceasefire had been declared, to host the first senior leadership mission to Israel since the pandemic began. Their high-profile trip came on the heels of an emergency fundraising campaign by Federations that raised more than \$3 million to aid the victims of the bombings and the first responders. It included meetings with former Prime Minister Netanyahu and new Prime Minister Naftali Bennett. It featured a visit with an Israeli woman in Ashkelon whose house was ruined by a direct rocket hit in her living room Jewish State. We are working with and a tour of a neighborhood in Lod where violence between Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs jeopardized long-standing relationships that are now being painstakingly rebuilt. The delegation's message of love and support was heard loud and clear throughout the length and breadth of the land.

geared to young adults, to the the Israeli government to ensure that, by the end of the summer, more and more North Americans will have had the opportunity to visit Israel and deepen their own connections to the people and the land of Israel —some may even decide, as I did, to make Israel their home.



Solidarity mission for JFNA leadership Photo credit: Eyal Warshavsky

That visit was followed just a week later by one by the Israel Travel Alliance--a JFNA-convened collection of both Jewish and Christian organizations that sponsor trips, many of which are

So, am I staying? You'd better believe it. I'm staying for good.

JFNA is the umbrella organization of the Jewish Federation system that JFED Greater El Paso proudly supports.



El Paso Holocaust Museum & Study Center's 16th Annual Tour de Tolerance: August 22, 2021

El Paso Holocaust Museum & Study Center is excited to announce its 16th Annual Tour de Tolerance. This year, we are excited to introduce a 7-day virtual running/ walking/being active challenge, August 15-21. The week will end with an in-person 50K Bike Ride and 5K Run/Walk on August 22.

Participants will have the opportunity to join any of the challenges and to mark their progress, individually or as a team, throughout the 7 days on an exciting virtual race platform. Results and photos will be uploaded to this platform, as well as messages and videos to foster the spirit of community, fun, and inspiration that the Tour de Tolerance has always had. And then we will be able to gather in-person for an exciting community athletic event!

Tour de Tolerance is not only an athletic event but also an invitation to be part of EPHM's mission and work to educate communities about the dangers of hate, to inspire others to take a stand against injustice, and to unite for a better future for us all. EPHM's Tour de Tolerance is an opportunity to give back, to unite as a community, to be part of the work being done to combat hate and division.

We hope that you will join us in this cause and be part of Tour de Tolerance once again this year. We are grateful to you for your support and generosity through the years.

More details coming soon: www.elpasoholocaustmuseum.org

Summer Lovin'

We're proud to invest in our community's future

\$29,500 in awards to 22 campers for overnight Jewish Summer Camps including 8 who are attending for the first time! \$30,000 in support for local Jewish Day camps!

> Camp Chayolei Hamelech *Camp Gan Israel Camp Interlaken JCC Camp Newman Camp Pardes Chana *Camp Shamayim Camp Young Judea Green Family Camp Shwayder Camp

Watch for stories from our campers in upcoming editions of The Jewish Voice

*local Jewish day camp

www.jewishelpaso.org/summercamp



On hope and Healing - Israel after May 2021

Talia Levanon, CEO Israel Trauma Coalition for Response and Preparedness (ITC)

For Israelis, living under threat is a way of life. With rocket fire, terror, and the potential of war, Israel is a state on high alert. Israel's experience preparing for and coping with crisis makes Israeli experts among the most knowledgeable on the global map. Since 2002, Israel Trauma Coalition (ITC), a leading non-profit (NGO), has specialized in strengthening individuals and communities in Israel and around the world to cope with crisis and trauma and build sustainable resilience capability. ITC has provided its expertise around the globe in countries such as the

USA, Mexico, Italy, France, Japan, and Ukraine. In 2019, ITC received special consultative status at the UN and is recognized by many organizations, regulatory authorities and governments throughout the world.

May 2021 brought another "sevev" which in Hebrew means round. Once again, we are in between rounds and a marathon to wellness. It has never been more challenging. Still coping with the impact of COVID and that of the tragedy at Meron - and now there is a new fracture.

Every day, of the 11 days of fire,

every rocket of the 4,360 fired, brought growing needs. To minimize trauma and to create a sense of support and community, ITC provided support 24/7 — opening hotlines, making hundreds of home visits, supporting parents, children, elderly, and teams.

People were afraid to leave their houses, reflected in an unprecedented increase in calls to hotlines. It is difficult to grasp or explain. Entirely new realities. Like a phone call asking for help for a family with 3 young children who experienced an attempted lynch, violent riots in mixed communities, use of UAV's, the belief that your safe

room is no longer safe and the feeling that after many years of building resilience, this human fabric that holds uncer-



Talia Levanon

tainty and difficulty yet copes is disintegrating.

In our work of healing, focusing on the strength and kindness of others, we try to convey the message that the people impacted are not alone, we listen, contain, provide tools, provide hope. It is more difficult now. Many of us, myself included, feel we are not doing enough - not enough for the children and parents, not enough for the elderly, not enough for the caregivers, not enough for the clinicians. Moving forward, more is needed.

Yet people are seeking our help. People know there is accessible, valuable and life-affirming help available to them. That brings hope.

The ITC came to El Paso at the Federation's expense to help first responders, clinicians and faith healers heal after the 2019 Walmart massacre.



Children from Ashkelon in a bomb shelter



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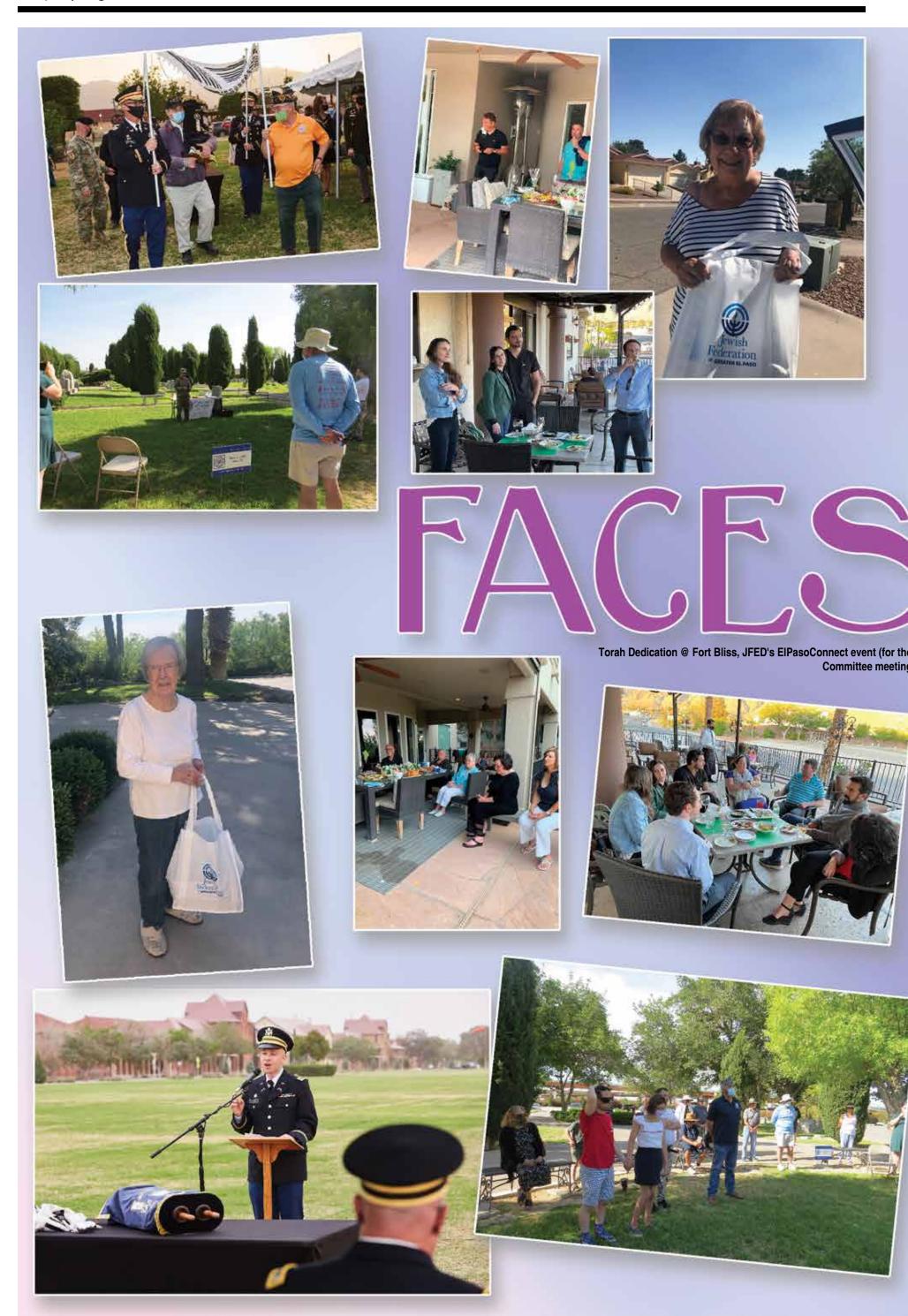
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AROUND OUR COMMUNITY

ose of us in their 20s/30s), JFED's Parlor meeting, JWV Memorial Day Service, JFED's Executive g, JFED's Café Europa Shabbat Meal Deliveries









Greater El Paso Jewish Demographic Study

Although the history of the Jewish community in Greater El Paso has been well documented, there is a lack of understanding of the basic demographic structure of the Jewish population in this region. To fill this gap, this study, initiated and funded by the Aaron and Sylvia Wechter Family Fund, aims to develop a comprehensive understanding of the size and characters of the local Jewish population, and to provide valid data about the Greater El Paso Jewish community that can be used by communal organizations and their leadership to design programs and policies that support and enhance Jewish life. This study was conducted by a research team at The University of Texas at El Paso, which includes Dr. Danielle Morales (Assistant Professor of Sociology) and Karla Martine (Graduate Research Assistant at Department of Sociology and Anthropology).

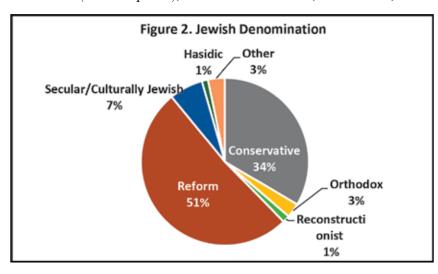
Survey Methods

The central component of the study is an online survey that asks a broad set of questions regarding Jewish identity, attitudes, and engagement with the community. The survey was distributed with the help of the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso. Specifically, a survey link was sent out to community members through the Federation's monthly and weekly email blasts (see Figure 1). The survey was opened between December 2019 and February 2021. Other approaches were also utilized to promote the study and recruit participants. For example, survey information was advertised on four issues of The Jewish Voice; a survey brochure was created and distributed via email blast and social media platforms. In total, 448 respondents took the survey, and 383 of them completed the survey.



Characteristics of Survey Respondents

The average age of all survey respondents was 62 years old, and only 22% of respondents were below 50. About 60% of respondents were women. In terms of race/ethnicity, 82% of respondents were non-Hispanic White, 13% were Hispanic, 1% Native American (non-Hispanic), 1% African American (non-Hispanic), and 4% were Asian, multiracial, or from other racial backgrounds. For marital status, 68% were married, 14% divorced,



10% widowed, and 8% never married. The Jewish population in Greater El Paso was also highly educated. More than half of respondents had a graduate or professional degree, and 35% had a bachelor's degree. About 48% of respondents were currently employed, 38% were retired, 5% were homemakers, and 9% were looking for jobs, in school, or unable to work. The majority (70%) of respondents resided in El Paso, Texas, while 30% lived in Las Cruces, New Mexico. In El Paso, three zip codes were the most populated (79912, 79902, 79922), and in Las Cruces, the most populated zip codes were 88011, 88012, 88007, and 88005.

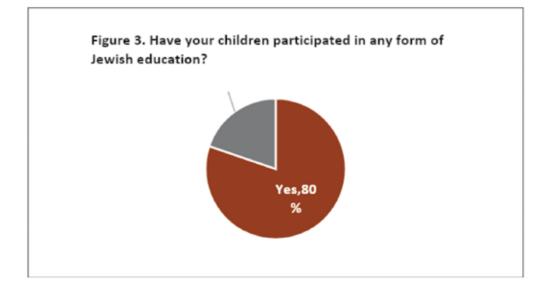
Among the 430 respondents who reported their Jewish denominations, more than half self-identified as Reform, 34% were Conservative, and 7% identified as Secular or Culturally Jewish (Figure 2). Further, the majority (85%) of respondents had at least one parent who was Jewish, and more than 70% were raised Jewish. Finally, six respondents reported that they were Holocaust survivors. Twenty-nine respondents had household members who were Holocaust survivors.

Household Composition

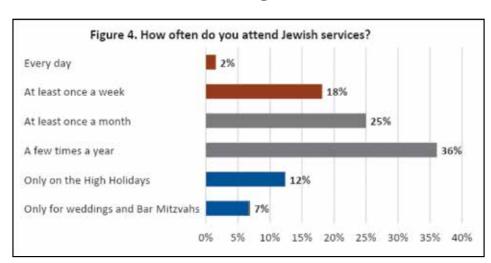
Close to 78% of respondents lived with other adults, and 22% lived alone. About 80% of Jewish households in Greater El Paso were childless, 16% had one or two children, and 4% had three children or more. The majority of children living in Jewish households were school-age children (6-18 years old), and most of them had participated in a certain form of Jewish education, such as Jewish school, summer camp, youth group, or tutoring (Table 1 & Figure 3).

Group		Age	N	%
Infants & Toddlers		0-2	19	12%
Preschoolers		3-5	25	16%
School-aged Children	Middle Childhood	6-11	65	42%
	Young Teens	12-14	25	16%
	Teenagers	15-18	18	12%
Adult children		>18	3	2%
Total			155	100%

Table 1. Child Age Distribution

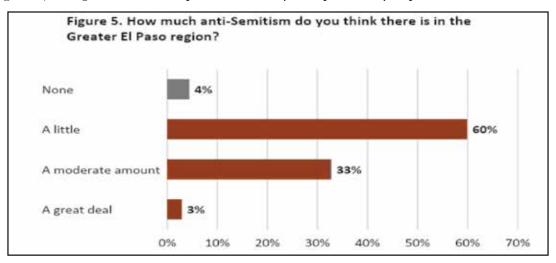


Jewish and Religious Life



In terms of congregations in Greater El Paso, 33% of respondents belonged to Temple Mount Sinai, 31% belonged to Congregation B'nai Zion, and 6% belonged to Chabad El Paso; in Las Cruces, 25% belonged to Temple Beth-El, and 4% belonged to Chabad of Las Cruces. Further, 20% of respondents reported that they attended Jewish services every day or at least once a week, 61% attended at least once a month or a few times a year, and 19% attended Jewish services only on the High Holidays or for weddings and Bar Mitzvahs (Figure 4). For Kosher, more than 20% of respondents kept Kosher inside the home, and 16% kept Kosher outside of the home. In terms of holidays, close to 90% of respondents held or attended a Seder last Passover, and 48% fasted all day during Yom Kippur. Last year, about 61% of respondents participated all eight nights in the lighting of Hanukkah candles, and only 15% had a Christmas tree.

In terms of Jewish identity, about 34% of respondents reported that being Jewish is mainly a matter of religion, 33% felt it is a matter of culture, and 32% reported it is a matter of ancestry. Finally, more than 95% of community members believed that there was a little to a great deal of anti-Semitism in Greater El Paso (Figure 5). 144 Jewish adults reported that they had personally experienced anti-Semitism in the region.



Community Life

Close to 70% of respondents volunteered for a local Jewish organization last year. Among them, less than half volunteered for more than 5 hours per month. At the same time, about 54% of respondents volunteered for a local non-Jewish organization, and about 70% of them volunteered more than 5 hours every month. Most community members had lived in Greater El Paso for more than 20 years. Close to 40% of them had not changed their addresses for more than 20 years. Only 12% of respondents reported that they planned to move out of the area. In terms of the reasons why they wanted to move, some of them were looking for a larger Jewish community or more career opportunities, and others wanted to move closer to their children or grandchildren. A large proportion (80%) of the community members had been to Israel multiple times. They self-identify as "Pro-Israel" and felt emotionally attached to Israel. During the year of 2020, 57% of respondents attended Jewish adult education classes or programs, and 61% of those programs or classes were sponsored by a synagogue. More than 85% of respondents rated their health in general as good or excellent, while 20% had health issues.

Respondents believed that the strengths of the Greater El Paso Jewish community lie in its rich culture, diversity, and flexibility of ideas. At the same time, community members expressed the need for a new Jewish Community Center, more programs for the younger generation, more family-friendly activities, and more kosher food options and services (see Table 2).

What do you consider to be the strengths of the Greater El Paso Jewish community? "The rich culture and blending of ideas. The flexibility of ideas." "We are big enough to make an impact together and small enough for each of us to make an individual contribution and be counted." "I believe that in El Paso and Las Cruces, the Jewish community is active and maintains a visible presence. There is a spirit of cooperation and cohesion with the general community in that interfaith events regularly take place." "The openness of the community. Acceptance and warm welcome to all." What programs, services, or organizations do you think are missing from the Greater El Paso Jewish community? "Perhaps more encouragement/programs for young singles, teens and up." "Continue with the schools and elementary education." "I believe increasing family friendly activities to keep the younger generation of Jewish people engaged is vital. I have worked hard to do this with my own children. I believe as a community, we need to promote youth engagement and involvement as much as possible. "A Jewish community center with programs and activities for seniors and all age groups. Jewish senior housing community." "Jewish community center is greatly missed in the El Paso area."

Table 2. The voice from the community

Acknowledgments

We thank the Aaron and Sylvia Wechter Family Fund for funding this project. We are grateful for the local religious leaders and community leaders for promoting this study. We also thank all community members who participated in our project.

Contact Information

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Office: 915-747-8471, Email: xdeng2@utep.edu

The Jewish Voice **14** | July-August 2021



Noel Holowell-Small.

Shoichet Young Leadership Award Winner: Noel Hollowell Small

The Bernard and Florence Shoichet Young Leadership Award annually recognizes a young leader in our community for their involvement and commitment. This year's recipient, Noel Hollowell-Small, is just such a person. Noel has stepped up to assist the Jewish Federation and our community during its time of need, volunteering to assist with meal deliveries during holidays and Shabbat dinners, as well as providing support for our senior program, Café Europa.

Noel

representative of her peers, working with us to help plan and promote ElPasoConnect, our 20s and 30s group. She has been a leader as well, co-chairing committees for our Chanukah program at San Jacinto and Rise Against Hunger, at which we packaged 20,000 meals to help fight international hunger as well as supporting local hunger together with El Pasoans Fighting Hunger. She will again be co-chairing Rise Against Hunger in November 2021.

Noel is active in her community in has also acted as a many other ways as well. As a parent

to two young children, she is active with The Cherry Hill School and the J-CEL as well as at Temple Mount Sinai, volunteering to support their events. In fact, Noel's footprint is everywhere! An involved, upright and engaged community member who is always ready to say "yes"!

Since moving to El Paso, Noel has been a force for good in our Jewish community and we look forward to continuing to build on this wonderful relationship with her as a committed and dedicated young leader and volunteer. Mazal Tov!

Born to Lead - Bea Weisz Scholarship Recipients



Riley Genevieve Miner graduated from El Dorado High School in 2021, and will attend Brandeis University in the fall, with an eye towards a master's program in the future. Like many families, hers has been hard-hit by Covid, making her excellent academic record and personal achievements all the more impressive.

Riley graduated in the top 10% of her class while also participating in the Brandeis University Genesis Precollege Program, El Dorado High School Varsity Swim Team, National Honor Society, Destination Imagination, Mock Trial, Math Club, Robotics Team, and Science Fair.

She is also active in Jewish life and has taken on leadership roles in the Jewish community of Greater El Paso.

Judaism, and her connection to the Jewish Community, are an important part of Riley's identity, "The foundation of my Jewish identity is formed on the connections I have made through Jewish Programs in my community, and across the world. I have also found that these connections have allowed me to grow around those who share similar Jewish values."

Riley attended Temple Mount Sinai's Religious School and she is president of Mount Sinai Temple Youth (MSTY) after serving as the Membership Vice President for two years. She is currently The Reform Jewish Youth Movement (NFTY) Southwest Membership Vice President and will be serving as the NFTY North American Membership Vice President next year at Brandeis. Riley is also heavily involved with The Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) youth programs through the Religious Action Center.

We wish Riley the best in her future endeavors, both academically and within the global Jewish community.



Eleanor Ann Schoenbrun graduated from Franklin High School in 2021. She will attend Yale University in the fall to study Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology and then pursue medical school. Raised by a single mother, she hopes to be the first doctor in her family and give back to her community.

Eleanor has maintained a record of excellent academic achievement throughout school, while also being involved in extra-curricular and community service activities. She was student Council President, NHS Parliamentarian, HOSA founding officer and 4x state medical reading competitor, on the Points of Light Youth Advisory Council, TX Student Councils Summer workshop/ Advanced Leadership Workshops Junior Counselor, NASSP LEAD Conferences/Speaker, Founder of Pennies FUR Pets and Kans for Kids, among others.

She is also active in Jewish life and her Jewish heritage plays a

key role in her identity, "From my naming to my Tzedakah box to the mezuzah on the doorframe, I am constantly reminded of my Jewish heritage and faith. From the Chanukah latkes--and the annual oil burns!--and spending time with family over a bowl of matzo ball soup or making kugel with my Nana, my Jewish household surrounds and embraces me daily. From lighting Shabbat candles every Friday and sitting down to a family meal, especially now when traditions, spreading kindness, and believing in something that brings good into the world is needed now more than ever."

Eleanor attended Sunday School through elementary school, JCC through Kindergarten, and was a Diller Teen Tikkun Olam Scholarship Semi-finalist.

We wish Eleanor the best in her future endeavors, both academically and within the global Jewish community.

The Beatrice L. Weisz Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in July 2001 at The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso. It was the wish of Ms. Weisz that proceeds from the fund would be given to Jewish college students in El Paso to enable him or her to pursue their studies. Applications are reviewed and awarded by a committee of the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso. We have two worthy candidates awarded this year. Watch for details to apply for next year's scholarship in our email and The Jewish Voice and on our website.

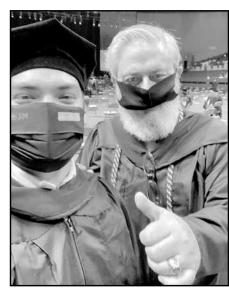
CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADS!



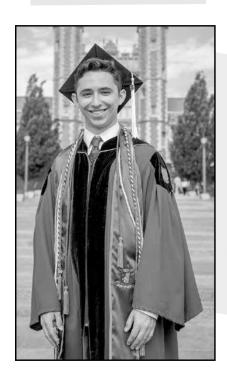
Liam Hanan Lanski
is a proud member of the
Kindergarten Graduation
Class of 2021 at the J
Center for Early Learning.



from Coronado High
School and served as
Vice President and
President of DECA,
Sophomore Class Vice
President, and a National
Honor Society and
Student Council member.
He will be attending Duke
University in the fall and
studying economics and
finance.



Julian Gonzalez Herrell graduated from Texas A&M School of Law, Class of 21, with an LLM Degree.



Adin Ehrlich graduated in May from Washington University in St. Louis with Bachelor's Degree in Biology-Neuroscience and a minor in History with Latin Honors. He will be attending **Baylor College** of Medicine in Houston this Fall.



Evan Hyman
graduated from elementary
school and will be attending
Lynn Middle School's
Engineering Magnet Program.





Eduardo Madero, an alumnus of the El Paso Jewish Academy and Coronado High School, is graduating from University of North Texas with a Bachelor's in Business Computer Information Systems.

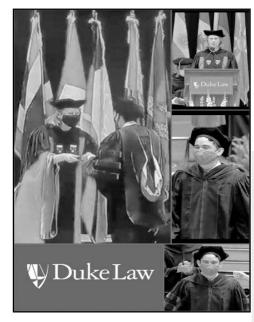




Riley Genevieve Miner graduated from El Dorado High School and is eager to begin her term as the NFTY North American Membership Vice President while attending Brandeis University this fall.



Molly Blumenfeld graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University of Miami with a Bachelor of Music and a cognate in Biological Anthropology and Women and Gender Studies. She is attending Boston Conservatory in the Fall to pursue her Master of Music in Opera Performance.



David Yates
graduated from Duke
University School of Law
with his Juris Doctor
degree.



Jacob Saltman
graduated from
Centennial High School in
May 2021 and will attend
Texas Tech University
where he plans to major in
electrical engineering.

The Jewish Voice **16** | July-August 2021

Vacant or Vacation?



Rabbi Bery Schmukler.

all hopefully taking some time for "down time" to **Chabad Las Cruces** relax and re-ener-

Yes,

summer

is upon us

and we're

gize after a long and difficult year.

It's been said that what one does while on vacation is where their true interest lies.

Some people laze around. Others get busy with sports or sight-seeing. Still others utilize the opportunity to read a book or two. We tend to gravitate to our true areas of interest when our time is our own.

Did you ever wonder why we sometimes spend weeks or months planning the ideal vacation, only to experience complete let-down one or two days into the much-anticipated trip, itching to get back to work? It's because at our core, humans have a need to be productive, to make a difference. Whatever one's occupation, it's not just a means to pay the bills. Our work is part of our soul's mission to make our unique contribution to G-d's wonderful world.

Yes, a relaxing respite from time to time is extremely important, but not as an end in itself, rather because it serves an important purpose in recharging our mental battery in order that we can get back to work. Thus, an occasional vacation can be more than simply fun and relaxing but actually holy and meaningful.

So, here's a novel idea. Consider using the summer months to IN-CREASE your Jewish activity: Light Shabbat candles (late evening hours

now!) or BBQ using kosher meats, or do a good deed towards someone else. And now that our schedules are loosened up a bit, it's a great time to learn Torah with a class online or attend Minyan on Shabbat or weekdays -or perhaps add to your own prayer time at home. More time in the day makes for more chances to fill our day with Mitzvot. TOGETHER, let's pledge to use the summer time wisely.

And your ONE mitzvah may be the ONE that will tip the scale of kindness in our physical world.

Enjoy a fantastic and rejuvenating



online community calendar. www.jewishelpaso.org/calendar











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Of Note

Josh Meyers has released a solo album titled "Changes" under the name Yo Calev. He has also released a music video titled "Shabbas Kodesh" about the importance of Shabbat. In 2020, as part of the 7th day Boyz, he released 3 music videos. His music videos can be found on Youtube.

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An in-person visit to Jewish Fort Bliss Wednesday, August 18 | 10:45am - 2:00pm Transportation and lunch provided. Zoom option available

Watch for registration details by email

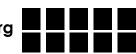
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Borderland's Café Europa is funded by a grant from The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso

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A Talk with David Greaves, former Israeli bobsledder, and current President of the Bobsleigh Skeleton Israel (BSI) and Larry Sidney, a former Israeli Skeleton athlete and current Israeli Curling athlete and current Secretary General of BSI.

Thursday, July 22, 2021 @ 6 PM MT

Watch the weekly email for details. Questions? Contact justin@hcri.org

In partnership with Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism, Congregation Beth Israel – West Hartford, CT, Congregation Beth Yeshurun - Houston, TX, Congregation Brith Shalom - Bellaire, TX, Congregation Emanu El – Houston, TX

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Although our event will be held virtually, we will be providing a box full of fun and interactive activities that they can complete on their own or as a family. We will also host daily zoom sessions where they will be able to show their crafts and participate in other virtual activities with other attendees, staff, and volunteers.

Packet pick-up will be held on
Saturday July 10th at 11pm at the
El Paso Holocaust Museum parking lot.
Cost: \$25.00
Ages: 8-12.

Registration: www.elpasoholocaustmuseum.org/events/

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This event made possible, in part, by a generous grant from The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso



Register Now! Call Noelle Meyer 915.532.1967

