

The Jewish VOICE

Informing and Connecting Jews in El Paso-Las Cruces

Elul 5781- Tishrei 5782
September 2021

New Year, New Horizons



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Jewish Federation
OF GREATER EL PASO

Up Close: Shane Wagman-Romero

What value do we need most in our world today?

I was recently reminded of the Jewish value “bal tashchit”, which means “do not destroy.” In modern Judaism, this value is often cited in the context of environmentalism. I cannot think of anything more important today than preserving our planet for future generations. We can each incorporate this value into our daily life through simple acts such as reusing containers, recycling plastic, conserving water, and minimizing food waste. These small actions, in the aggregate, can create larger change. Moreover, the act itself – of continually reminding ourselves of our impact on the natural world - would make us more mindful and connected to ourselves and each other.

What do you value most in your friends?

Kindness. I have a number of dear friends who I have known for many years (sometimes, decades). When I reflect on the common denominator amongst them all, it is that they are all deeply kind and giving.

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

My great-grandmother. She fled the Ukraine as a teenager during the Bolshevik Revolution and hid in the house of a doctor in her village. While she was there, Bolshevik soldiers took over the bottom floor of the house for three days. She had to lie still on a gurney in the doctor’s top-floor office for that entire time, pretending to be a dead body. The gurney had wheels and the floor was tile – if she had moved, the gurney would have rolled across the tile and given her away. Her story reminds me of what people went through to come to this country and why it is important to preserve the values that made us a place of refuge.

You recently moved to El Paso, what is the best thing about being part of our Jewish community so far?

This is my third time moving to El Paso! (This time, we plan on staying.) I enjoy the fact the El Paso community is tight-knit and supportive, rather than disparate and disconnected. Even though I am not from this part of the country, the Jewish community here has welcomed me with open arms.

You are serving on JFED’s board and are also the Chair of the steering Committee for ElPasoConnect, our 20s & 30s

program. Why is it important to you to be so involved?

The birth of my son, Noah, motivated me to become more connected to my heritage and my immediate Jewish community. I want him to grow up with resources that would help him connect with the Jewish side of his identity. Becoming a mother also has made me a bit more existential, and devoting time to my religion and heritage feeds that side of me.

What hopes and dreams do you have for Jewish life here and what role might the Federation play?

I am particularly excited to be chairing ElPasoConnect. We are working on some excellent programming for the upcoming year and, unlike past years, plan to put on an event each month. I hope this program can help provide a space where young Jewish adults can meet those with similar values and give us regular opportunities to enjoy, connect, and celebrate throughout the year.

What advice do you have for young people looking to get more involved in their community?

The first thing I would say is that they should come to an ElPasoConnect event! Beyond that, I would recommend proactively set aside time in their week or month to get involved. The hardest part for me was always finding time to do anything outside of work and family obligations. However, I found I was able to get more



involved if I set aside a specific time of the week to do something community-based.

Judaism has many holidays, the High Holidays of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot, are this month, which is your favorite High Holiday memory and why?

My favorite memory from the High Holidays is simply being with my grandmother. She was the center of our family and was the person who taught me everything I know about being

a Jew. She passed away a few years ago, but I will always have memories of eating apples and honey at her kitchen table.

Jewish holidays revolve around food. What is your favorite Jewish holiday food?

Matzo ball soup! And my grandmother’s brisket.

What is your Jewish passion?

Instilling in my son the value of tikkun olam and performing mitzvot.

Keeping Jewish El Paso
— Jewish —

Announcing the Deborah Benedict Fund

The past 18 months brought home the importance of community. In the space of days, we went from celebrating Purim to working from home, and learning how to connect in this new reality. Our community recruited volunteers to shop for those unable to leave their homes. Other volunteers made regular phone calls to our elders. Holidays were sweetened by meals provided by our friends at our Federation and Foundation.

All of this was possible because of the commitment of so many people in our community. Every day, we’re able to care for one another because of the work and vision of so many people. That is why I have chosen to establish a fund with the JCF El Paso. It is my small contribution towards the continued strength of our beautiful, El Paso Jewish community.

For information on how you can start your own fund with us, please contact Robert French at 915-842-9554.

Unmasked...



Robert French, Executive Director, Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso, The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso

One of the most interesting comparisons I have learned about is the one the Kabbalistic sages made between the holidays of Yom Kippur and Purim. In fact, the Hebrew, Purim and the formal name of Yom Kippur, Yom HaKippurim - A Day Like Purim - draws even more similarities between the two most unlikely polar opposites of Jewish “celebrations”. Yes, even with its solemnity, Yom Kippur is a celebratory holiday. It is a time to celebrate the opportunity to renew, to refresh, to re-energize, to recharge. We associate the holiday of Purim with frivolity and, for many, merriness through libations. Are they also compared because on Purim, we don masks, whereas on Yom Kippur, we unmask ourselves and reveal our true selves before G-d and humanity as we ask forgiveness from those we have wronged?

One of the burning questions I ask myself as we ride the wave of the Covid-19 pandemic is what takeaways will we learn? Out of the multitude of challenges we’ve faced during these trying times from loss and grief to isolation and mental health issues, to name but a few, what benefit, if any, will humankind gain from this past

year-and-a-half? How will we have grown personally? As a community? Will we still call our neighbors to see how they are? Are we still offering to help with errands? Are we making time to call forgotten, long-time friends and family to check

Mortals are equal; their mask differs.
Voltaire

us at the onset of the pandemic be our guide, or will we let the contentiousness of the mask-wearing and vaccination debates lead us to a path of polarization and indifference? Wrapping Tefillin daily is just one of the changes I have



in? Will that sense of coming together, adaptability, and community-building that united

incorporated into my life. A personal time to reflect and to pray for the well-being of others.

Communally, in Las Cruces and El Paso, the synagogues, Jewish day schools and our other Federation partners have communicated and met frequently, coordinated efforts, and collaborated as appropriate – to keep our community safe, engaged and comforted throughout. We have made a commitment to continue to keep meeting and working together.

We watch in dismay and trepidation at the ubiquitous rise of anti-Semitism and the indifference of an oft-silent world. We have the opportunity to allow these Days of Awe to make meaningful changes in our lives. To act differently. To come together. To unite against the challenges we face as a community. To respect differences. To agree to disagree. Respectfully.

Your Federation is committed to continue listening and adapting and evolving. May 5782 be a good year for the Jewish people, for Israel and for the entire world.

The Jewish VOICE

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 concern.

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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The Jewish VOICE
Informing and Connecting Jews in El Paso-Las Cruces

Our Yom Kippur Table



Rabbi Scott Rosenberg
Congregation
B'nai Zion

Every Jewish holiday has special foods associated with it. For example, on Rosh Hashanah we dip apples in honey for a sweet New Year. During Chanukah, we eat latkes and jelly donuts to remind us of the miracle of the oil. On Pesach, we eat Matzo and Marror.

So, if every Jewish holiday has special foods associated with it, what do we eat on Yom Kippur? This may sound like

an irreverent question given that fasting, refraining from all food and drink, is at the core of our observance. Yet within our tradition there is a custom related to how we present our tables for Yom Kippur. According to this custom, after we clear our tables from our pre-fast meal, a clean tablecloth is spread, and the Challah tray is cleared of crumbs and placed back on the table. Books are then placed on the Challah tray and a cover is placed over the books.

These books are placed in the center of our table to symbolize their importance to us on Yom

Kippur. Until the conclusion of Yom Kippur, it will be the Machzor and the Torah that will serve to nourish our souls. Words of confession and repentance fill our mouths. Expressions of hope refresh our spirits. Forgiveness from God sustains us for the coming year.

The Machzor guides us in prayer and the Torah guides in life. They instruct how to choose right from wrong. Their words guide us down a path toward holy living. As we are taught: "Its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace."

We do have a special "food"

associated with Yom Kippur! When we are not permitted to take food and drink into our body, we can sustain ourselves on this one day with books. Prayer and study provide us nourishment on this day. We detach ourselves from our physical needs and find transcendence in the spiritual.

May we find soulful sustenance in prayer and study on this holiest of days and may we derive spiritual nourishment so that our New Year starts with a true spirit of sweetness and blessing.

Wishing you and yours a Shana Tova! May 5782 be a year of health, goodness, and blessing!

Birth Announcements



Welcome Max Jude Schwartz
(born June, 2020)!
Congratulations to
parents Haylie and
Jeffrey, big brother
Boze and grandparents
Shari and Stuart
Schwartz



Ellie was born 07/02/2020
to Rachel Eckman.



Elliott was born to Dr. Moti and
Amanda Lavi on April 19, 2021.



Gabriella Ximena Koshinsky was born
on May 3rd, 2021 at 3:30pm weighing
5lbs 4oz and measuring 18 inches long.




Maddux David Sitcler,
great grandson of
David & Cheryl Decker
of Temple Beth-El, was
born February 2021.

High Holiday Service Schedules

Congregation B'nai Zion

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Rosh Hashanah</i></p> <p><u>Erev Rosh Hashanah, Monday, September 6, 2021</u> 7:00 PM Erev Rosh Hashana Service 7:05 PM Candle Lighting</p> <p><u>1st Day Rosh Hashanah, Tuesday, September 7, 2021</u> 9:00 AM Shacharit 7:00 PM Mincha/Maariv 7:59 PM Candle Lighting</p> <p><u>2nd Day Rosh Hashanah, Wednesday, September 8, 2021</u> 9:00 AM Shacharit 7:15 PM Mincha/Maariv 7:57 Havdallah</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Sukkot</i></p> <p><u>Erev Sukkot, Monday, September 20, 2021</u> 6:30 Evening Service 6:48 Candle Lighting</p> <p><u>Day 1, Tuesday, September 21, 2021</u> 9:30 Shacharit 7:46 Candle Lighting</p> <p><u>Day 2, Wednesday, September 22, 2021</u> 9:30 Shacharit 7:38 Havdallah/Holiday Ends</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Yom Kippur</i></p> <p><u>Erev Yom Kippur, Wednesday, September 15, 2021</u> 6:30 Musical Interlude (tentative) 6:45 PM Kol Nidre 6:54 PM Candle Lighting</p> <p><u>Yom Kippur, Thursday, September 16, 2020</u> 9:30 AM Yom Kippur Service 11:00 AM (Approximate) Yizkor 5:30 PM Mincha 6:30 PM Neilah 7:46 Shofar blowing</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Shmini Atzeret/Simchat Torah</i></p> <p><u>Monday, September 27, 2021</u> 6:38 PM Candle Lighting</p> <p><u>Tuesday, September 28, 2021</u> 9:30 Shacharit including Yizkor (approx. 11 am) 6:30 PM Mincha/Erev Simchat Torah Service 7:37 Candle Lighting</p> <p><u>Wednesday, September 29, 2021</u> 9:30 Shacharit/Simchat Torah services 7:29 Havdallah/Holiday Ends</p>



Congregation B'nai Zion
805 Cherry Hill Lane
El Paso, TX 79912 (915) 833-2222

Fort Bliss
1441 Pershing Rd. Fort Bliss, TX
To RSVP email scott.i.klein.mil@mail.mil Rosh Hashanah

September 7, 2021
Time: 7:00PM

Yom Kippur
September 15, 2021
Time: 7:00PM

Sukkot
September 21 and 29, 2021
Time: 7:00PM

Temple Beth-El
3980 Sonoma Springs Avenue
Las Cruces, NM 88011
To RSVP call Temple Office - 575-524-3380

Rosh Hashanah
Monday, Sept. 6- 8PM
Tuesday, Sept 7 - Family Service 9 am, Morning Service 10 AM
Wednesday, September 8 -Torah Study and Shofar Service, 10AM

Yom Kippur
Thursday, Sept. 16
Times: Family service: 9 a.m.
Morning service: 10 a.m. Afternoon Congregational Sharing at 1 p.m.
Text study at 2:30 p.m. Afternoon service: 4:30 p.m.
Yizkor and Neilah: 5:45 p.m. until 7:30

Chabad Lubavitch Center for Jewish Life

6516 Escondido Drive, El Paso TX 79912
Open to the entire Jewish community free of charge.

Rosh Hashanah

September 6: Evening Services - 6:45pm
September 7: Morning Services - 9:00am | Shofar Service - 11:00am
Evening Services - 6:45pm | Tashlich Service - 7:00pm
September 8: Morning Services - 9:00am | Shofar Service - 11:00am
Evening Services - 6:45pm

Yom Kippur

September 15: Kol Nidrei - 6:45pm
September 16: Morning Services - 9:00am | Yizkor - 11:00am | Mincha - 5:00pm
Neilah - 6:00pm

Sukkot

September 20: Evening Services - 6:45pm
September 21: Morning Services (Lulav & Etrog) - 10:00am Followed by lunch in the Sukkah. | Evening Services - 6:45pm
September 22: Morning Services (Lulav & Etrog) - 10:00am Followed by lunch in the Sukkah. | Evening Services - 6:45pm

Shemini Atzeret & Simchat Torah

September 27: Evening Services and Hakafot - 6:30pm
September 28: Morning Services 10:00am | Yizkor - 11:30am | Followed by lunch in the Sukkah. | Mincha - 6:30pm | Main Hakafot -
September 29: Morning Services - 10:00am | Hakafot - 11:00am

Chabad of Las Cruces

2907 E. Idaho Ave. Las Cruces, NM 88011
Services and Dinners OPEN to ALL.
For more info & to RSVP visit www.ChabadLC.org

ROSH HASHANA

Monday, September 6: 7PM Services, 7:45PM Community Dinner by RSVP
Tuesday, September 7: 10AM Services, 11:30 Shofar Blowing, 12:30PM Kiddush Lunch
Wednesday, September 8: 11:30-12:15 Express Shofar Service followed by Kiddush Lunch

YOM KIPPUR

Wednesday, September 15: 7PM Kol Nidrei Opening Service
Thursday, September 16: 10AM Morning Services, 11:30AM Yizkor Services, 6:30PM Mincha & Ne'ilah Closing Services, 7:47PM Yom Kippur Ends with Break Fast

SUKKOT

Tuesday, September 20: 6:45PM Community Dinner in the Sukkah by RSVP
Wednesday, September 21: 10:30AM Holiday Services & Shake the Lulav

SIMCHAT TORAH

Wednesday, September 28: 6:45PM Yizkor Service followed by Simchat Torah Buffet Dinner and Dancing

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4408 N Stanton St, El Paso, TX 79902
Please help us prepare by registering to attend each service.
RSVP links also available at www.templemountsinai.com

Rosh Hashanah
Sept. 6
SERVICE: Erev Rosh Hashanah
TIME : 8:00pm

Sept. 7
SERVICE: Rosh Hashanah Family Service
TIME : 9:00am

SERVICE: Rosh Hashanah Morning Service
TIME : 10:30am

Sept. 12
SERVICE: Kever Avot Memorial Service
TIME: 5:00pm

Yom Kippur
Sept. 15
SERVICE: Kol Nidrei
TIME : 8:00pm

Sept. 16
SERVICE: Yom Kippur Family Service
TIME: 9:00am

SERVICE Yom Kippur Morning Service
TIME: 10:30am

SERVICE: Yom Kippur Afternoon Programs, Study, Prayer, & Service
TIME 1:30-4:30pm

SERVICE: Yizkor Memorial Service/N'ilah Concluding Service
TIME : 4:30pm/5:15pm

Sukkot
Sept. 20
SERVICE: Erev Sukkot Service
TIME: 6:15pm

Sept. 21
SERVICE: Sukkot Festival Morning Service
TIME : 10:30am

Sept. 24
SERVICE: Sukkot Shabbat Service
TIME : 6:15pm

Sept. 27
SERVICE: Simchat Torah Celebration
TIME : 6:15pm

Sept. 28
SERVICE: Shemini Atzeret Festival Morning Service with Yizkor
TIME : 10:30am

The Voice in the Forest

As a child I was taught a beautiful Chassidic melody composed by one of the legendary Chassidic masters known as the “Shpoler Zeideh.” For many years he journeyed from town-to-town incognito, seeking ways to aid his fellow Jews, whether it was guiding them in living more Jewishly or assisting them in their financial straits.

The song he composed is titled “The Voice in the Forest” describing the heart wrenching story of a father searching desperately for his children.

“Children, where have you been that you have already forgotten about me? Come back home, I’m sad and lonely!”

The song is a description of G-d’s yearning for us to come home. To see through the distractions of life and perceive

the truth of existence, that we are here to make our world a more divine space, where goodness and kindness prevails over selfishness and ego.

The days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are called the “Ten Days of Teshuvah” and serve as the foundation on which the new year is built.

Teshuvah is colloquially translated as “repentance” and the elementary significance of these days of awe is that we all ought to engage in introspection and identify areas of life where we need to improve. But apologizing to G-d for our naughtiness and doing better is important all year round, and these ten days represent something more significant and profound in addition to the basics of cleaning house.

The true meaning of Teshuvah is “to return.” To return to our essence - to return to our truth. From the moment we are brought into existence, life throws every distraction possible in our way and we spend a lifetime sifting through the layers of distractions to discover the path to living in a way that brings ourselves and the entire world closer to perfection. As we stumble through the dense forest of life we need to listen out for the “call of our Father” imploring us to find the proper path.

During these “Ten days of

Teshuvah” this clarion call is stronger, more perceivable, and discernable to our souls’ ears. It creates the perfect setting for us to make good resolutions to start the new year with a commitment to more mitzvah observance, Torah learning and charitable giving.

May we all be inscribed and sealed for a good and sweet new year.



Rabbi Levi Greenberg
Chabad Lubavitch El Paso

Todah Rabah

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Rabbi Yisrael Greenberg, 1LT. Scott Klein

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For Registration Assistance Call: 915-842-9554

*Borderland’s Café Europa is funded by a grant from
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www.jewishelpaso.org

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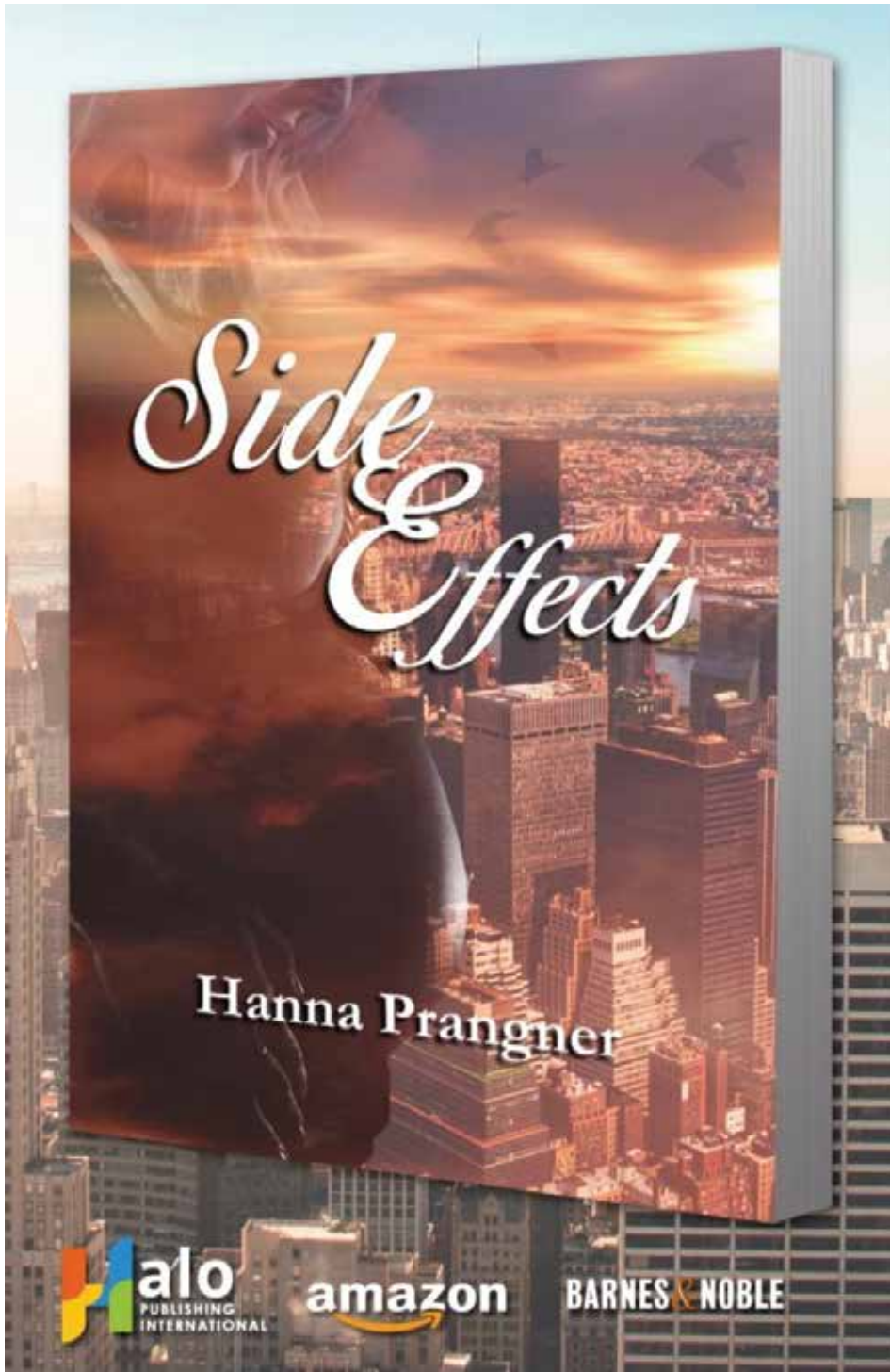
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www.jewishel Paso.org/elpasoconnect

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May the coming New Year bring blessings for peace, respect and harmony.

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We are all familiar with Shabbat. The fourth of the Ten Commandments teaches us to work for six days and rest on the seventh in order to remember that G-d created the world 5,782 years ago. Additionally, we are commanded to keep a cycle of seven years which dictates the agricultural schedule in the Land of Israel.

For six years farmers in the Land of Israel work the land and in the

seventh year known as “Shemittah” no work is done and whatever does grow must remain in the fields for all to partake. Whatever grows in that year doesn’t belong to you.

This coming Jewish New Year (5782) is the beginning of a Shemittah which has a tremendous impact on the Jews living in Israel. For those of us living in the diaspora there is a profound lesson from Shemittah to elevate and inspire our approach to life.

While the weekly Shabbat emphasizes that G-d created the world, the Shemittah year emphasizes that G-d controls the world.

Although the Creator has given

the earth to us humans, for food and use, we must remember that the real and permanent proprietor is G-d. In order to emphasize and reinforce this awareness at all times, so that it be actualized and implemented into the daily life, G-d set aside the Seventh Year as a Shabbos-like year, when all work of the land ceases and the proprietor no longer claims possession of these properties. This is how a Jew attests to the fact that the true Master of the world is G-d.

The concept that the Supreme Being is the permanent Master of the world with all that is in it, finds a most conspicuous practical application in the matter of tzedaka (charity), which

requires every Jew to give away part of his or her hard-earned money to worthy causes. The Seventh Year teaches a special concept in giving tzedaka: a) A person does not give away his own, but only that which G-d has temporarily entrusted to him or her as His agent to the poor; b) Through sharing his possessions with others, a person justifies that which he or she keeps for himself.

May we implement the message of Shemittah in our lives by projecting through our actions our appreciation that G-d is the creator and controller of the world. And He will in turn bless us with a good and sweet new year. Shana Tova!

Who is Really in Control?

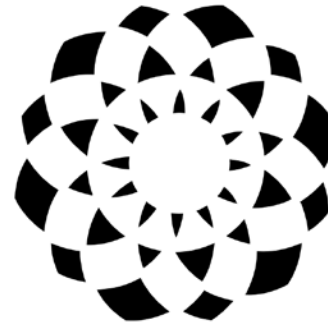


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Meet Our Comptroller



Kelly Getz has over 20 years of experience in finance and accounting. She has an extensive background with federal grants. She had received her bachelor’s degree as well as her master’s degree in Business Administration from the University of Phoenix. Kelly was raised in a military family and has traveled extensively her entire life. She is a proud wife and mother and has lived in El Paso for over 30 years and has very strong ties to the community.

Meet Our Program & Engagement Coordinator



Before joining the Jewish Federation, Rebecca Mendez served as the Program Coordinator for the REALIZE Board Training Program, a BoardSource based governance program in partnership with the Paso del Norte Health Foundation and the United Way of El Paso County. She was involved with developing the curriculum training materials, delivering training sessions, and the program’s fall summit events.

Rebecca is an avid supporter of Israel and is excited to be serving the El Paso Jewish community through the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso.

Facing the Future with ORT

There is a strong sense of renewed hope as the world cautiously emerges into a post-pandemic era at the start of 5782. ORT's global education network is also embarking on a journey to Face the Future together.

ORT is driven by Jewish values and innovation. We prepare people and communities for meaningful, self-sufficient futures. And we deeply value the long-standing support we have received from the Jewish Federations of North America and the assistance it has enabled us to offer students worldwide.

Our work is as relevant now

as it has been through all the challenges of ORT's 141 years. Driven by the adaptability and passion that has always been our hallmark, our ORT family of more than 200,000 people in over 30 countries demonstrates the life-changing impact of education.

The current challenges are clear. Lives have been irrevocably changed by the pandemic. In Russia and Ukraine, our students have lost parents and grandparents to Covid and are living with the emotional and financial consequences. In Brazil and Argentina, severely dented economies mean fewer parents

can afford the fees needed to continue their child's education.

But ORT strives to provide a framework and the tools for students to succeed whatever their circumstances.

Dan Green, World ORT

Director General and CEO, says: "The collaborative approach that has made STEM programs and other curricula so powerful across our network also guides our approach to Jewish

education. A firm grasp of Jewish history, culture and values can help students see the bigger picture as they go about their daily lives. The result is a richer Jewish communal life."

In Israel, as in many other countries, our work is changing lives. At our newly-renovated Kfar Silver Youth Village near Ashkelon, some of Israel's most at-risk youth enjoy their formal studies alongside farming and other extra-curricular activities that address their emotional needs.

ORT teachers worldwide explore Jewish texts alongside

providing critical-thinking skills and a project-based learning approach. So, it might be a field trip, museum visit or sitting down with older Jews to hear their personal stories – our students are well-positioned to get a sense of who they are and their place in Jewish history.

As we move forward from a time of great uncertainty, one thing is guaranteed – ORT teachers will continue to change lives and prepare students for meaningful futures. And we will ensure our students face the future with hope and determination.



Yulia Tkachuk – Robotics student from Chernivtsi, Ukraine



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The Most Difficult Instrument in the World

Carlos Gámez

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of reports from mainstream media to scientific papers stressing the importance of learning how to play a musical instrument at an early age, such as the violin or the piano. These reports often conclude that children exposed to music at an early age will develop solid mental skills and possibly help minimize life-threatening health-related issues. Often, these reports encourage not only children to play but even adults if they've never had the opportunity to play a musical instrument.

I often chuckle when I listen to people discuss the most complex musical instruments, such as the French horn, while dismissing the most basic and arguably the most complex musical instrument in the world: the voice. If one is tired, stressed, happy, or sad, the voice is the most expressive and delineative mechanism in our human anatomy, providing a clarion of our disposition. In his book *Music in the Hebrew Bible*, Jonathan L. Friedmann states, "A song whose subject is G-d can, for the believer, inspire a sense of an indwelling divine presence. This does not mean that G-d is reduced to an emotion. But when music is the conduit to experiencing divinity (as it often



was in ancient Israel), G-d is perceived as a feeling."

The prohibition of musical instruments on Shabbat and holy days such as Rosh Hashanah and Pesach came into effect in the rabbinic period. Nevertheless, despite these injunctions, singing was not. Shaming others for the "lack of a beautiful voice" is the most significant affliction anyone can impose on others. People

should be encouraged, if not in a public setting, to sing. Sing, sing, sing, and sing as much as possible. In preparation for their Bar or Bat Mitzvah ceremonies, children should be encouraged to chant their portions. In his book *Judaism's Theological Voice*, Jacob Neusner states that the "God's voice in the Torah is an 'active voice,' words inform our minds, but melody evokes the

divine presence."

As we finish 5781 and enter into 5782, may all of us partake in the art of singing no matter how pulchritudinous or unsightly anybody's voice can be. The single and most important musical instrument is in our bodies. Channel your energies no matter how mad, sad, happy, or satisfied you are. You will feel better. Shanah Tovah 5782.

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What the F?

Stuart Shiloff, President of The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso and Monika Kimball, President of the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso

Understanding your Foundation and Federation

If you're confused about the difference between

The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso and the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso, we're here to clarify...

Similarities abound:

- The names sound alike,
- Both raise money to enhance the Jewish community,
- Both are located in the same office, and
- Both attract community leaders to their Boards.

There are two other important similarities, says Stuart Shiloff, Foundation President:

“Donors place their trust in both organizations, and both are good stewards of the funds they receive.”

Yet there are some notable differences:

The first difference is in their goals: The Federation funds needs that exist today and invests in the Jewish future, too, whereas the Foundation's focus is more on long-term sustainability and funding and on lessening the dependence our Jewish organizations' have on annual contributions. (If not, one bad fundraising year could dramatically decrease the programming or services they're able to provide.)

They also differ in how they get their donations: The Federation reminds us each year to give to the annual campaign. (Who among us hasn't gotten that phone call or invitation?) The Foundation receives a donation when someone decides to open a fund. It might be in their lifetime, or it might be in a bequest. (It's more like don't call us, we'll call you. Although you might get a phone call anyway.)

And the last big difference is how those donations are distributed: The Federation distributes contributions the very same year they were received.

The money goes mainly to local agencies, but also the national organization, and international Jewish causes. Federation supports local Jewish education, incentivizes our youth to attend Jewish summer camps and more. They engage our community with programs like PJ Library, community events, The Jewish Voice, and much more. Moreover, during the worst of the pandemic, they assisted with meals for seniors during Passover and helped those hit hardest by the pandemic, who needed help making ends meet.

The Foundation, on the other hand, holds the donations in funds that they manage



which distribute portions of their income every year. These funds (that now tally close to \$14 million) will exist forever. Each year their assets grow, so does the amount they're able to give. (Kind of like the goose that laid the golden egg.) These monies go wherever the Fund's donor wants them to go. – They can go to a specific Jewish

organization or for a specific purpose. In addition to these directed funds, The Foundation also contributes to: scholarships, each Rabbi's discretionary fund, grants that make a positive impact in the community, and more. They even contribute to the Federation to help enable the operation of many of their most popular programs such as Café Europa, Shalom Shuttle, and ElPasoConnect that engages Jewish young people in our community. Lastly, the Foundation makes it possible for any of us to create a fund that continues in addition to what we contribute to the Federation's Annual Campaign.

The symbiosis between the two organizations is exemplified by Federation. President Monika Kimball commented, “We are always so grateful when our donors endow their annual campaign gift. It enables us to know we can count on those funds, and it enables the donors to make an impact forever. You might compare the Foundation



Stuart Shiloff

Monika Kimball

as the community's savings account, while the Federation represents the checking account. For Shiloff and Kimball, the most important conversation is about how the two organizations can cooperate even more closely to address the community's needs. “Our Executive Director, Robert French is at the helm of both organizations. We meet regularly and Monika and I speak often,” says Shiloff. “The community we live in is small so we need to be in sync regarding how we can best enhance it.” Kimball notes that cooperation is essential as the community continues to change. Our obvious need for collaboration has clearly been demonstrated, and we have a duty to share information and ideas so we can plan together successfully. It is therefore fortuitous that Robert French is professionally guiding both organizations.

Shiloff believes the success of the Foundation and the Federation is the product of the community's history of generosity. “The people who came before us helped build an amazing Jewish life in El Paso and Las Cruces, and they developed strong institutions to serve the community,” he says. “We are reaping the benefits of their generosity. Now it's our turn to make sure future generations have a strong Jewish infrastructure and Jewish life here.”

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