

# The Jewish VOICE

Informing and Connecting Jews in El Paso-Las Cruces

Nissan 5782  
April 2022



Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
El Paso, Texas  
Permit No. 1256

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

**JEWISH EL PASO**  
CONNECTING EL PASO-LAS CRUCES

# WE ARE UKRAINE

*Debra Kanof, Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) Chair*

Jewish communities have existed in Ukraine for more than a thousand years. According to the World Jewish Congress, the Jewish community in Ukraine constitutes the third largest Jewish population in Europe and the fifth largest in the world.

It was during the massacres and pogroms in “the” Ukraine in the 19th and 20th centuries that all four of my grandparents, their siblings and my 3 year old mother sought safety in the United States. The Kanofs (nee Kaganovsky) fled in 1905 sailing in steerage from Hamburg to New York. The Rawlsons (nee Rusdulsky) arrived in 1921.

Later, annihilation of Jews in Ukraine represented the first

phase of the Holocaust, in which an estimated 1.5 million Jews were shot to death at close range. They were not transported by trains to the famous killing sites; rather, these Holocaust victims were taken from their homes, usually on foot, to the outskirts of the cities, towns, and villages where they lived and were brutally shot in ravines, open fields, and forests, often in the presence of local residents and non-Jewish neighbors. Based on present-day borders, one in every four Jewish victims of the Holocaust was murdered in Ukraine.

The Jewish Preservation Committee of Ukraine identified 495 such sites, but a more recent estimate by the Catholic-Jewish Organization, Yahad-In Unum, puts the total number of sites at 916.



Today, Ukrainians are, again, the target of shameless, pointless murder. Today, we are all Ukrainians, whether Jewish, Christian, Muslim or secular. But today, we do not stand by and watch. Please help Ukraine and its citizens in any way you can. Donations can be made through the Jewish El Paso website

(updates section) or a plethora of other organizations online. Should we find ourselves in the presence of these refugees, we will open our arms, our wallets and our homes as well. Watching the bravery and spirit of the Ukrainian people makes me more proud of my Jewish Ukrainian ancestry than ever before.

## Todah Rabah Thank you to our volunteers

**L'Chaim- to Living:**  
Lori Gaman and Eddie Trevizo, Co-Chairs; Alison Furman, Sydney Goldberg, Rose Jacobs, Vanessa Sonnen, Committee Members

# Passover Seder Meals

**Order by - Thursday, April 7**  
**Pick-up/Delivery - Thursday April 14**

**JEWISH EL PASO** [www.jewishelpaso.org](http://www.jewishelpaso.org)

# The Jewish VOICE

*A publication of Jewish 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 Jewish El Paso and have relevance and appeal our 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@jewishelpaso.org](mailto:thevoice@jewishelpaso.org)

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

<p><b>Executive Director:</b> Robert French <b>Director of Philanthropy:</b> Sue Bendalin <b>Administration Coordinator:</b> Desmond Galvan <b>Comptroller:</b> Liz Grzela <b>President:</b> Monika Kimball</p>	<p><b>Editor:</b> Rebecca Mendez <b>Program &amp; Engagement Coordinator:</b> Rebecca Mendez <b>Layout and Design:</b> Beatriz Garcia <b>Printing:</b> PDX Printing</p>
---	---

Office: 915-842-9554 | 7110 North Mesa, El Paso, TX 79912

## It's Just Lunch

Lunch, Dessert & More

Tuesday, April 5 | 11:30 am – 1pm  
@ The Greenery (Sunland Park Mall)  
Guest Speaker:  
Ruth Taber on Aging Well

Shuttle Bus available from Las Cruces  
Registration required by Friday, April 1  
Registration and Shalom Shuttle  
assistance: 915-842-9554

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

**JEWISH EL PASO**  
CONNECTING EL PASO-LAS CRUCES

# Doctors from Israel's Hadassah Hospitals Arrive in Southern Poland to Help Ukrainian Refugees

NEW YORK, NY: March 7, 2022

—Doctors from Israel's Hadassah Medical Organization, a medical center in Jerusalem, have arrived in Lublin, a city in southern Poland, where Ukrainian refugees are streaming across the border by the tens of thousands. The four-person team has come to work with the Medical University of Lublin, the city's largest hospital and just 70 miles from Poland's border.

The Hadassah team **will share their experience in how to triage trauma** patients and

work with the hospital to assess the resources and personnel it will need to treat the refugees, whose swelling numbers may soon stretch the hospital's capacity to its limit. To date, 500,000 to 700,000 of an estimated 1,000,000 Ukrainian refugees have fled to Poland.

Hadassah's doctors bring with them an **intimate knowledge of wartime medicine and the physical and human infrastructure needed** to handle sudden large influxes of patients. That hard-won expertise comes

from treating countless fellow citizens injured in war and terrorist attacks.

The Hadassah team is made up of experts in different areas, such as general surgery, trauma, orthopedics and internal medicine.

Ukrainian Ambassador to Israel Yevgen Korniychuk has expressed his gratitude to Hadassah for its efforts on Ukrainians' behalf.

The mission is part of a joint humanitarian effort launched last week by the Hadassah Medical Organization, Hadassah International and Hadassah, The

Women's Zionist Organization of America. At the request of the Foreign Ministry of Ukraine, and thanks to contributions from generous supporters, the Hadassah Medical Organization donated \$25,000 in medical supplies, which were airlifted to the Polish border with the help of the Ukrainian Embassy in Tel Aviv. Hadassah's two hospitals are ready to treat Ukrainian refugees who are airlifted to Israel. All three organizations have launched fundraising campaigns.



Rabbi Levi Greenberg,  
Chabad Lubavitch El Paso

On a Sunday afternoon in October of 1991 the Rebbe stood in the foyer of Chabad World Headquarters distributing single dollar bills to the thousands who sought to receive his blessing, advice or simply be in his presence for a few moments. A kaleidoscope of humanity lined up for hours as the Rebbe stood and greeted each one with a blessing and a dollar to be given to charity.

Mr. Gary Tuchman, a fresh new CNN correspondent approached the Rebbe with the cameras running and asked, "Rebbe, what is your message

to the world about the Messiah?"

"It was already printed in all the press of all the countries: Moshiach is ready to come now, we all must only do something additional in the realm of goodness and kindness," the Rebbe said.

The first days of Passover celebrate the redemption from Egypt 3,334 years ago and the final days celebrate the future redemption of all humanity. During synagogue services on the final day of Passover we read the prophecy of Isaiah describing the era of Moshiach.

"The wolf will dwell with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the young goat... the cow and the bear will graze..."

Today as Ukraine is ravaged so inexplicably it may seem impossible to happen, but the job description of Moshiach is to usher in an era where former enemies will be allies,

## The Final Redemption

competitors will compete no more, and the hunters and the hunted will live together in peace. A world in which - to use the words of Maimonides - "there will be neither famine or war, envy or competition for good will flow in abundance and all the delights will be freely available as dust. The occupation of the entire world will be solely to know G-d."

Here is the catch. Whereas the redemption from Egypt was solely dependent on G-d, the final redemption depends on us. And whereas the redemption from Egypt was a Jewish redemption, the final

redemption will bring peace and tranquility to the entire universe. It follows that everyone needs to get involved in preparing our world for Moshiach.

The Rebbe distilled this reality succinctly in a soundbite tailor made for the world via CNN - "Add in goodness and kindness." As Jews we prepare for Moshiach through increasing Torah study and doing more Mitzvot, and we have the obligation and pleasure of involving all humanity in this crucial endeavor by inspiring everyone to increase in acts of goodness and kindness.

**JEWISH EL PASO**  
CONNECTING EL PASO-LAS CRUCES

**Graduating in 2022?**  
Preschool, Grammar School, High School, College  
We want to feature you.

Send us a 5X7 picture and a two-line biography by May 10 to be featured in June/July's issue of The Jewish Voice.

<https://jewishelpaso.digitalpigeon.com>  
or email [thevoice@jewishelpaso.org](mailto:thevoice@jewishelpaso.org)



**JEWISH EL PASO**  
CONNECTING EL PASO-LAS CRUCES

**85th Annual Meeting**

**Monday, May 23, 2022 | 6 – 7:30 pm**  
Election of Officers and  
Board Members

**Say Thank You to Monika Kimball for  
her 2 years of service as President**

Presentation of the  
Bernard and Florence Schoichet  
Leadership Award  
to Dana Frank  
Plenty of food and friendship  
Details to follow

[www.jewishelpaso.org](http://www.jewishelpaso.org)



**Samantha Levin**  
Hebrew Teacher,  
The Cherry Hill School

# Carrying the Torch of Jewish Education, from the Ashes of the Holocaust to Southwest Texas

My grandfather, Rabbi Mayer Moskowitz, was born in the city of Czernowitz, Romania, in modern day Ukraine. He was born into a long and noble line of Chassidic Rebbes from the Shotzer rabbinic dynasty. He was the only son of Rabbi Avraham Chaim and as such was destined to be the Rebbe himself at some point. Still a young boy, Mayer's

there he was separated from his mother and sister and sent to a labor camp.

One day, on a work detail, Mayer and two other men jumped into a ravine covered in deep snow. Without enough guards to give chase, the Nazis shot into the snow but Mayer and the strangers he was with miraculously got away. They made their way to Russian occupied territory where the Jewish community was able to send him to British Mandate Palestine via the Aliyat Hanoar (Youth Aliyah) movement. In Israel, Mayer began a new life. Breaking with his Hassidic past, he joined the Mikveh Yisrael

army. He embraced Hebrew as his mother tongue, and he began to assimilate himself into Israeli life.

Sometime later, word got to him that his mother survived the Holocaust and was living in New York. Torn between his love for his new country and culture and the mitzvah to respect your mother and father, Mayer made the decision to leave Israel and reunite

my siblings and I in Jewish day schools and summer camps. Love of Hebrew, Israel, and the Jewish people is in our DNA.

When I was approached to teach Hebrew at The Cherry Hill School, I immediately thought about my grandfather and how I am now part of the continuum. My Saba likes to say that the greatest response to what the



life was upended suddenly, when the Nazis marched into town, publicly executed his father, and proceeded to march the city's Jews to the Sharograd Ghetto. From

Agricultural School in Holon. From there he studied philosophy at Hebrew University, and was inducted into the Hagganah, the pre-state version of the Israeli



with his mother in America.

In New York, Mayer rebuilt his life once again. He received semicha (rabbinical ordination) and a degree in Jewish education. He served as a Jewish educator for over 65 years. Mayer has 4 children, 15 grandchildren, and 25 great grandchildren. The miracle of G-d to one survivor. He will be turning 93 years old this April.

There is no doubt that my own strong Jewish identity was formed by my Saba's Holocaust experience. It certainly formed my father's identity as he educated



Nazis tried to do is to continue educating Jewish youth. Now I am part of that response.

Our school also runs on the foundation of our 6 core values: Kindness/Chesed, Responsibility/Achrayut, Respect/Kavod, Community/Kehillah, Learning By Doing/Na'aseh, and Giving To Those In Need/Tzedakah. What a tribute to survivors like my Saba that we continue to pass on our tradition's mi dor l'dor (from generation to generation). Our students will eventually make the connection that these 6 core values are the epitome of Never Again.

The Cherry Hill School presents:

Tickets: \$5 each or \$20/family

# TOUCH A TRUCK

Bouncy houses, face painting and more!

SUNDAY 05.15.22 10AM TO 2PM

INCLUDING FOOD TRUCKS & CARNIVAL ACTIVITIES

805 CHERRY HILL LANE, EL PASO TX 79912

A variety of cool trucks, cars and public service vehicles to see and explore!

Please contact our office with any questions: (915) 900-1800

## Invest In You

### Building Community & Memories

[www.jewishelpaso.org](http://www.jewishelpaso.org)



**Jamie Flores, Executive Director,  
El Paso Holocaust Museum  
and Study Center**

Each year, El Paso Holocaust Museum and Study Center is honored to present the community commemoration of Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Days of Remembrance.

El Paso was once home to nearly 100 Holocaust survivors who left war-ravaged Europe, haunting reminders of the Holocaust and continuing antisemitism for a new life. Rebuilding out of tragedy and

## Holocaust Days of Remembrance

immeasurable loss, survivors found a home in the borderland and left an indelible legacy of resiliency and hope for us to follow. These incredible survivors made EPHM what it is- a living memorial, place of education, warning of the dangers of hate, and a charge to respond to injustice wherever we witness it.

Yom HaShoah is commemorated on the 27th day of Nisan and marks the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. From April 19 to May 16, 1943, Jewish resistance fighters held off Nazi military units sent in to liquidate the ghetto. Their courage and tenacity ignited uprisings in other ghettos and concentration camps, inspiring others to fight back. As we commemorate Yom HaShoah,

the stories of Jewish men, women, and children who fought against hate with their actions and words, through music and art, maintaining hope and resiliency- continue to inspire us. This inspiration is needed today when we confront bigotry and violence, hate and intolerance, speaking up for those no longer here, for those targeted and marginalized today, and for future generations that they may inherit a better world.

This year's commemoration will be held the first evening of Yom HaShoah- Wednesday, April 27th. Our theme is "Why We Remember." In today's climate that is rife with intolerance, we are daily reminded of the importance of learning from the past. When we witness

horrific acts of inhumanity and violence, threats to democracy, the devaluing of human life, we can feel overwhelmed. But for EPHM, we always come back to the vision that Henry Kellen, our founder, started 37 years ago: to teach our community about the Holocaust that we may combat prejudice and intolerance. To honor the lives of those who survived and those who perished in the Holocaust. To be inspired by the resiliency and courage of those who came before us, responding to injustice with strength, hope and empathy for a better future for us all.

Please join EPHM on April 27th, 6pm, at Congregation B'nai Zion, as we gather as a community to commemorate Yom HaShoah.



Pictures by Mark Lambi of the El Paso Times during the 2018 EPHM Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Days of Remembrance, at Congregation B'Nai Zion

## Family Day of Learning

On Sunday, April 10th, El Paso Holocaust Museum and Study Center, together with Congregation B'nai Zion and Temple Mount Sinai, are pleased to present a family day of learning. Educating your children about the Holocaust can be challenging and daunting. But the rise in antisemitism, the targeting of Jewish communities, and the current distortions of the Holocaust seen in mainstream media today, are all reminders of why learning about the Holocaust is so relevant today.

But where to begin? How young is too young to learn about this time in history? How can we teach but not traumatize our children? EPHM welcomes families with children of all ages to attend a special workshop at the Museum to tackle these tough questions together.

EPHM's family day of learning



is open to any interested families in the El Paso and Las Cruces area.

The workshop will begin at 9:30am with interactive and age-appropriate activities for kids and a parent/guardian discussion:

**Pre-K – Elementary Age:**  
Hands-on activities on kindness, acceptance, and anti-bullying

**Middle School – High School Age:** Introduction to the Holocaust; interactive activities on key lessons of the Holocaust and survivor testimonies

**Parents/ Guardians:**  
Discussion led by EPHM – how to talk to children about the Holocaust and antisemitism;

key topics to cover; connecting survivor stories

We will conclude with a guided tour of EPHM for families.

For more information and to reserve your spot, please contact EPHM at 915-351-0048 or [jamie@elpasoholocaustmuseum.org](mailto:jamie@elpasoholocaustmuseum.org)

# FACES & Places AROUND OUR COMMUNITY

## Borderland's Café Europa - Purim Bash



President of the Board, Monika Kimball, strikes the gavel at Jewish El Paso Board Meeting.



L'Chaim- to Living! committee and volunteers packaging tickets and prizes.

Keeping Jewish El Paso  
— Jewish —

## Robert Novick and Frieda Lee Schwartz on why they started a JCF Fund...



Being supporters of Jewish El Paso's annual campaign, it is our desire to become part of the permanent financial foundation of our Jewish community. The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso (JCFEP) provides just that avenue.

Lee's and my family have a long history of growing up, participating, and becoming a part of the fabric of the El Paso Jewish community. Our parents and ancestors, as well as so many other Jewish families, have provided the backbone in supporting our Jewish organizations.

We all were active in Temple Mt. Sinai, Congregation B'nai Zion, B'nai B'rith, AZA and BBG, MSTY, Camp Shamayim, Hadassah, Jewish Welfare Fund, the Jewish Community Center, the Jewish Home for the Elderly, United Jewish Appeal, Jewish War Veterans, the Jewish Family Service, the Holocaust Museum, The J Center for Early Learning and Jewish El Paso.

JCFEP continues the legacy, established by our ancestors through investments in our Jewish community's future, by allowing us to designate which organizations we would like our investment's dividends to support. Lee and I decided we want to continue to be a part of JCFEP's permanent effort in helping every Jewish organization here to navigate its future and to thrive.



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

# Up Close: Frances Williams

**Editor's Note:** The Jewish Voice is proud to recognize Frances F. Williams's achievement as the Las Cruces Bulletin's Outstanding Woman of the Mesilla Valley 2021 Winner (alongside with Chenchie Schmukler).

Below is Ms. Williams recognition (republished with permission of the Las Cruces Bulletin) and our Up Close Interview



Frances F. Williams

## Frances F. Williams

### AT A GLANCE

**What roles do you play as a woman?**

Daughter, wife, sister, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and I just became a great-great-grandmother. I'm also a lifelong proponent of women's issues.

**What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?**

1952

**What's your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?**

Chile relleños at Nellie's or Chope's

**What is your job?**

Civil rights officer. And I worked from 1952-87 at White Sands Missile Range, the last 17 years as director of equal opportunity.

**What is your hobby?**

There's no time for hobbies.

**What motivates you?**

Compulsion. I'm a compulsive do-gooder.

### Focused on civil rights

**F**rances F. Williams represents the best that her community, state and the nation has to offer, dedicating her life to serving those who need a helping hand and crashing employment barriers impeding their abilities to be all that they can be.

She was one of the founding commissioners of the New Mexico State Ethics Commission, established to root out corruption in government; helped to build the Vietnam Memorial at Veterans Park, procuring the Huey Helicopter for the memorial; has advocated and worked tirelessly for equal of opportunity in employment establishing and implementing programs leading to an increase of women and minorities in positions never held before; serves as a consultant, adviser to business and government on management and employment issues; served as a housing commissioner for the city and state; a whistleblower who uncovered the corruption in these organizations, resulting in an overhaul of housing authorities in New Mexico; a whistleblower bill protecting them; founding member of Temple Beth El; president of the White Sands Missile Range Museum Historical Foundation raising \$1 million for its expansion; worked to stop a private company wanting to build an electric line across New Mexico which could take private ranchers' property by eminent domain, and impairing the mission of White Sands Missile Range.

#### **What value do we need most in our world today?**

We must remember that we are all live on Planet Earth and have a collective responsibility to take care it, as well as take care of each other no matter where. We must have a commitment and follow the Jewish tenant of "Tikkun Olam" repair the world. It certainly needs it at this time.

#### **What do you value most in your friends?**

My friends are my family. I value their care, concern and help when needed. I value sharing experiences with each other and learn from those, and most of all I love my friends, who I keep close no matter where they are and know that I am there for them as they are for me.

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

I have so many i.e., the Jewish doctors who solved and cured so many of the world's worst diseases, the Jewish Nobel Prize winners who contributed so much to science economics and literature, that are used today to solve many of the problems that plague our world. While Jews number around 15.2 million they have received many Noble Prizes. These are my heroes and make me very proud to be a Jew.

#### **What's the best thing about being part of our Jewish community?**

The Jews in our area have made so many contributions to our town, state and nation. They are the glue, in many cases, that improves the lives of our diverse population. Las Cruces has had three Jewish Mayors, kept farmers from losing their land in hard times, work in a community kitchen to feed the needy, provided gifts at Xmas to families who could not

afford gifts, gave the City of Las Cruces two lions who adorn the entrance to our city hall, have been developers of housing as the city's population has grown, are active in many of the political arenas which have served to better living conditions, passing laws to eliminate hunger, provide for affordable housing, contributed to the defense of this nation in significant roles, worked to eliminate corruption in government, and have worked diligently to make life better for its citizens to live.

#### **What have you seen as Jewish El Paso's role in the Community?**

I have been very pleased that Jewish El Paso has included Las Cruces in their orbit. It has helped to fund programs that would not have been possible in the past, bringing more activities and encouraging membership in the two Jewish places of worship, i. e, Temple Beth El and Chabad. As a founding member of Temple Beth El, we cannot thank you enough for including us in the many activities you have helped to sponsor and brought some new energy to this community.

#### **How does Jewish El Paso impact Jewish life?**

Jewish El Paso has provided the impetus to more Jews to participate in activities that we could not provide in the past. I loved getting my Purim Basket, I loved going to the Channukah celebration held at the downtown Plaza, and interesting enough I saw Jewish people that I knew but have not participated in any Jewish activities. It also introduced non-Jews to Jewish festivities who had no knowledge of Jewish life or Jewish history or what these holidays meant. A good time was had by all, and we are thankful to the Federation for their help in bringing new activities and educating not only Jews but non-Jews as well.

**Want to see what's happening in our community?**

Visit our online community calendar.  
[www.jewishelpaso.org](http://www.jewishelpaso.org)

**JEWISH EL PASO**  
CONNECTING EL PASO-LAS CRUCES



**Rabbi Ben Zeidman,**  
Temple Mount Saini

As Passover approaches, we celebrate our redemption from Egyptian bondage. The definition of ‘freedom’ inevitably includes the ‘ability to do as one pleases without hindrance or restraint.’ Yet as Moses and Aaron approach Pharaoh we read: “Thus says the Eternal God of Israel: ‘Let My people go, that they may celebrate a festival for Me in the wilderness’”

## Redemption and Freedom

(Exodus 5:1).

Our ancestors understood that redemption wasn’t total ‘freedom’. It was the renewed opportunity to choose a new commitment. To serve and be subject to God. To have a Master encouraging us to live life meaningfully, with sanctity and value. Now the required sacrifices were not to feed a Pharaoh’s ego or power. They would return blessing upon the giver.

The ancient Passover Festival required bringing sacrifices to Jerusalem. Instead of leaving the offering at the altar, the Israelites would eat it themselves in a feast while camped in the hills of Jerusalem. A gift given to God and then returned to the giver to sanctify life.

Redemption meant obligations which would nourish and sustain us for these many generations. It was the choice to be God’s people. It re-established a relationship with the One who, unlike Pharaoh, would have a reciprocal relationship with us. Like the Pascal lamb, our service would enliven and sustain us.

Leaving Egypt, we became servants to the One who takes no benefit from our efforts. Instead, our offerings are returned to us in ways which make life better. Our service connects us to one another, to ourselves, to the sacred. It brings us continually to the spiritual essence of celebration and community our ancestors felt while feasting in the hills of Jerusalem.

Abraham Joshua Heschel writes: “Is liberty alone, regardless of what we do with it, regardless of good and evil, of kindness and cruelty, the highest good? Is liberty an empty concept – the ability to do what we please? [...] There is no freedom except the freedom bestowed upon us by God; there is no freedom without sanctity” (Man in Search of God, Heschel, 170).

Avadim hayinu, ‘we were slaves in Egypt.’ Now we are ‘free’ to serve God and the Torah’s eternal values. Passover inspires us to celebrate our commitment. To reflect on the joys which redemption have brought to us. As we gather for Passover, we renew our commitment to live in ways which will bless us and generations to come.

## Everything is in Order



**Rabbi Yisrael Greenberg,**  
Chabad Lubavitch El Paso

“Why is this night different from all other nights?” I have a question aside from the traditional four. Every other festive dinner is associated with its respective holiday “Shabbat Dinner” “Rosh Hashanah Dinner” etc. Why is the Passover

festive dinner called “The Seder - Order?”

Technically speaking the title for this dinner reflects the fact that there are so many rituals and mitzvot we need to do in a specific order. But at its core the entire theme of Passover and the rituals we do at the Seder allow us to appreciate that there is an “order” and system to our world. Reliving the exodus from Egypt allows us to absorb the fact that G-d is in control of the world and it is not a lawless, chaotic jungle.

Just the most basic telling of the Passover story proves this point. Over 3,000 years ago a mighty nation enslaved millions of people for centuries and on one fine morning they fled from there into the desert with no

food, water or security. According to all statistics the slaves should have been recaptured by their mighty captors or died out from the harsh desert elements. Seder night proves that the slaves survived until today and the ancient Egyptian empire is only remembered today because of our story. You see? G-d has a plan.

But the obvious must still be asked. If there is a divine master plan, why must everything seem to be going up in smoke? Why are there times where the sheer madness of reality can push us to the brink of despair?

The answer can be found in the Seder centerpiece - the Matzah. On the one hand it represents how the Egyptians forced the Jews out to redemption

so swiftly that their dough could not rise. On the other hand it’s called the “bread of Affliction” since as slaves we were forced to bake it in haste. We celebrate our redemption specifically with the food that symbolizes our oppression.

The double-faced Matzah reminds us that the searing pain we experience at times is like labor before childbirth. Although at the moment incomprehensible, we must never lose hope, especially when things look hopeless, because it is all part of the process of the ultimate redemption when peace and tranquility will reign for all. Because G-d is in control.

Best wishes for a Kosher and Happy Passover.



**Rabbi Scott Rosenberg,**  
Congregation B'nai Zion

What is the difference between matzah (unleavened) and hametz (leavened)? For those who know Hebrew, both are three-letter words that

have two letters in common. Matzah is spelled mem – tzadi – hay. Hametz is spelled chet – mem – tzadi. The difference between them is the hay and the chet - two letters that look almost alike.

The difference between a hay and a chet is a little space on the left side of the letter. A hay has a little space, the chet has no space. So how does this impact Passover?

On Passover, we mix flour and water and immediately bake it in the oven. If less than eighteen

minutes elapse from the time the dough is mixed until the bread is baked, the dough becomes matzah. If more than eighteen minutes go by, the dough becomes hametz, which a Jew may not eat or even own on Passover. That is why rabbis carefully supervise the baking of matzah. Eighteen minutes, a tiny space, is the difference between obligatory and forbidden. The smallest thing makes all the difference.

Little things matter. A small

act of insensitivity can hurt a lot and little kindness can work miracles. Little things make a difference.

As we prepare for Passover this year, I hope each of us can make a little space in our lives for at least one small act of kindness toward a family member, a friend, or even a stranger. Acts of kindness help promote redemption which is the abiding theme of Passover.

Chag Kasher v'Sameach!

## Little Things Make a Difference



# Looking for ROMEOS!

## We are Retired Old Men Eating Out

We meet for lunch at 12:30pm, every Wednesday at the Great American on Cromo. If you're over 65+ looking to share lunch, laughs, kibbutz and telling lies to each other, come join us.  
Call the Jewish Batman, Ira Batt: 915-472-2288



**YOUR AD HERE**  
Advertise in  
**The Jewish Voice** and reach  
over **1,000 households**

# The Jewish VOICE

Informing and Connecting Jews in El Paso-Las Cruces

Call 915-995-0512 or  
[kgetz@jfedelpaso.org](mailto:kgetz@jfedelpaso.org)

# Bea Weisz Memorial Scholarship Fund

Applications are now being accepted

Applications must be received on or before  
May 16, for distribution by August 12, 2022

It was the wish of Ms. Weisz that proceeds from the fund would be given to a needy and worthy Jewish college student(s) in El Paso to enable him or her to pursue his or her studies

**Applications are available online at**  
[www.jewishelpaso.org](http://www.jewishelpaso.org)

*In July of 2001 the Beatrice L. Weisz Memorial Scholarship Fund was established.*

## TEXAS NEURODIAGNOSTIC, HEADACHE & SLEEP DISORDERS CENTER, P.A.

**BORIS KAIM, M.D. F.A.A.N., FAASM**

Board Certified in Neurology, Psychiatry and Sleep Medicine

PRACTICE LIMITED TO CONSULTIVE NEUROLOGY, PSYCHIATRY, ELECTROENCEPHALOGRAPHY, NERVE CONDUCTION, EMG, SLEEP DISORDERS, AND TESTING FOR DIABETIC NEUROPATHIES.

**2311 N. Mesa, Bldg. F • El Paso, Texas 79902**  
**Phone: (915) 544-6400**



**NOW LEASING**  
GREAT RETAIL SPACE THROUGHOUT EL PASO  
**915-225-5700**

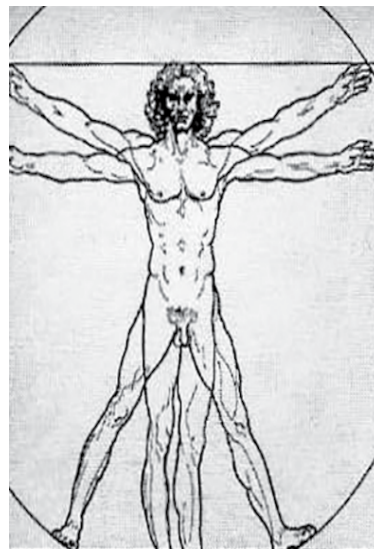
# NEED PRINTING?

WE ARE A FULL SERVICE PRINTING SHOP

FLYERS • BUSINESS CARDS • POSTCARDS • CATALOGS  
ENVELOPES • COUPONS • TICKETS • AND MANY MORE



208 Octavia St. • El Paso, TX 79901  
915.544.6688 • [www.pdxprinting.com](http://www.pdxprinting.com)



## Roberta L Fenning D.O.

PSYCHIATRY & OSTEOPATHIC MANUAL THERAPY

DOCTOR OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE  
5290 McNutt Rd Suite 106  
Santa Teresa, NM 88008

Phone: 915 494-1237 Fax 575-332-4545  
Text: 915 494-1237 Email: [refenning@aol.com](mailto:refenning@aol.com)

**ROBERTA L FENNIG D.O.**

# “It’s scary but empowering”: Access to genetic testing expands in El Paso

Originally published on *El Paso Matters* November 16, 2021  
By Victoria Rossi

At 34, Robin Krasne’s aunt died of breast cancer. Her father and grandfather died of brain cancer. For her uncle, it was pancreatic cancer. For her cousin, ovarian cancer. “I have way too much cancer in my family lineage,” Krasne said.

Between 5-10 % of cancers are hereditary, according to the American Cancer Society. “I thought, ‘that sounds like my family,’” she said.

Krasne was certain she’d inherited genetic mutations like BRCA 1 and BRCA 2, which put both women and men at higher risk for breast, pancreatic, colon and ovarian cancers. Years ago, she asked her ob-gyn to receive genetic testing, “more for confirmation,” Krasne said, but her doctor always talked her out of it.

Each time Krasne went in for her annual exam, her gynecologist “would say, ‘there’s so much that can be done now for breast cancer, maybe that information would weigh you down more than help you.’”

In the end, Krasne decided she wanted that information. “If you know that there’s something

that is a threat in your world, like a car accident, then you take steps to prevent it, like wearing a seatbelt or not speeding. If you have knowledge, you have the opportunity to act proactively.”

“It’s scary, but empowering,” she said.

Recently, Krasne has sought to expand other El Pasoans’ access to genetic knowledge. On behalf of her synagogue, Congregation B’nai Zion, she received a \$10,000 grant from the Jewish Community Foundation to bring more genetic testing to El Paso via a Georgia-based nonprofit called JScreen.

Affiliated with Emory University, JScreen subsidizes the cost of reproductive and cancer screening and offers patients genetic counseling via phone or video to help them understand — and, crucially, act — on the results.

“We want our panel to be actionable, meaning that if somebody tests positive, there’s steps that they can take to increase their screening, or have preventive options, that really is going to be beneficial to them in the future,” said Emily Goldberg, a genetic counselor at JScreen.

B’nai Zion will cut that subsidized cost in half for anyone living in El Paso and Las Cruces-

area ZIP codes, bringing the total out-of-pocket cost — which includes the two tests and genetic counseling — to about \$325, or roughly \$175 if covered by insurance.

“And if anyone has a greater (financial) need, then they can contact us and we could consider purchasing the program for them,” Krasne said.

JScreen was founded in 2013 by a Jewish couple who gave birth to a child with a rare genetic disease called Mucopolysaccharidosis Type IV. The progressive neurological disorder causes death in early adulthood and is more common among Ashkenazi Jews, people with Eastern and Central European Jewish heritage.

Though JScreen was founded to provide reproductive screening for people in the Atlanta area of Ashkenazi Jewish descent, who are at higher risk of many hereditary cancers and other genetic diseases, it has expanded to cities across the country and now offers screening to people of any background, regardless of their family health history.

That’s more access than what’s currently allowed by many health insurance plans, which have increased coverage over the years, but won’t always fund testing without a close family history of genetic disorders. Medicare, for example, will cover genetic screening only for patients who have had cancer before, Goldberg said.

In contrast to accessible commercial testing programs such as 23andMe, JScreen and its partner lab Invitae are HIPAA compliant, protecting health privacy and requiring a doctor’s approval before someone can get tested.

This lack of access has implications for people from marginalized groups: Because people with European or Caucasian ancestry have to date received more genetic screening than Mexican American or African Americans, for example, these groups aren’t as genetically well documented, said Brittanie Morris, a genetic counselor working with McGovern Medical School at UTHealth Houston.

“There’s a definite need for increased diversity in our genetic testing population. So our knowledge of what genetic conditions are more prevalent among non-European populations, including people with Mexican ancestry, could be limited,” Morris said.

This means that people from minority groups are more

likely to receive uncertain results known as “variants of unknown significance,” which according to Morris are more often than not benign, but can nevertheless cause emotional distress or frustration.

But as more people from marginalized backgrounds receive genetic screening — assuming they consent to contributing their anonymized health data to large-scale studies — the more scientists will understand about the genetic risks and traits common to these groups.

El Paso, where eight in 10 people have Hispanic or Latino heritage, could contribute to that scientific understanding.

Both Goldberg and Morris recommended that people seeking genetic testing first contact their doctor, and attempt to consult with a genetic counselor trained to interpret test results, help patients emotionally process those results and then act on them.

Krasne, meanwhile, cautioned that people interested in genetic testing also consider the potential impact on their access to life insurance plans.

The results of Krasne’s blood test were not what she expected: she had no known genetic mutations that put her at higher risk of cancer. “There was relief,” she said, but that hasn’t stopped her from undergoing regular mammograms and colonoscopies. A negative test result does not rule out other forms of cancer, which are not inheritable but instead can result from environmental exposures or mere chance.

“I’m going to live in a state of heightened awareness regardless — it is just on the front of my mind,” she said.

A few weeks ago, Krasne took JScreen’s test, a process that involves spitting into a tube and sending a saliva sample by mail to a testing lab. She’s waiting for her results. With the rapid advancement of genetic testing capabilities, the news could be different this time. A decade ago, when Goldberg started as a genetic counselor, “we could test for like 18 conditions,” she said. “Then it was 36. And then it was 96. And now it’s more than 200.”

Krasne isn’t just testing for herself, though. “I’m concerned for my kids, too, and I’m concerned for, in the future, my grandchildren. I want to know what we’re passing on. But I think there’s a lot of power in that knowledge.”

**JScreen**  
GENETIC TESTING

**Giving you the gift of health.**

**ReproGEN**  
Screen for Tay-Sachs and 220 other disease genes to learn your risk for passing on a genetic condition to your future family.

**CancerGEN**  
Screen for BRCA and 60 other cancer susceptibility genes to learn your hereditary risk for cancer.

Use coupon code **EPLC50** to save 50% on testing.

- 1 Register for a test at [JScreen.org](https://JScreen.org)
- 2 Enter your insurance and physician's information
- 3 Enter event code 'EPLC50' and click 'apply'
- 4 Your kit will arrive in the mail to the address you provided

SPONSORED BY





Ruth Taber

## Opinion: We'll be healthier and happier if we adjust our thinking about aging

Originally published on *El Paso Matters* in March 4, 2022

More than 10,000 people turn 65 every day in our country. Close to 12 million are over 80 and many are living well into their 90s. But the sad truth is how many people – young and old – refuse to accept elderhood as a normal stage of human life, following childhood and adulthood.

Aging, dying and death are not diseases and there is no fountain of youth. Aging can't be avoided or bypassed (other than by illness or death). But high pressure medical/pharmaceutical marketing (often combined with over-medicalization/treatment) urges people to believe they can delay or avoid aging. Not so!

Dr. Thomas Perls, director of the large, long running New England Centenarian Study (which in addition to many participants over age 100 includes more than 600 individuals over age 105 and 200 more over 110) writes: "I don't think the trick is staying young. I think the trick is aging well."

In a country that practices ageism (discriminates against people just because they're old) aging well is not easy. And, unlike other isms, we will all be vulnerable to its effects if we live long enough. Individuals, institutions and, unfortunately, many older people foster ageism by repeating accepted casual comments/responses/so-called jokes.

Treating illness among society's elders is challenging since board-certified geriatricians (physicians trained, knowledgeable and certified in treating older patients) are in short supply, here in El Paso and throughout the country.

Geriatrics, a specialty not often chosen by new doctors, unfortunately suffers from low prestige; geriatric specialists spend more time with their patients and earn less than other physicians in our society.

Why should there be a specialist for older patients? Someone in their 80s may respond poorly or have an adverse reaction to a medication prescribed by a physician who does not have experience with an aging clientele. (Until recently, clinical trials on new drugs never included anyone over 64.)

To make matters worse, too many internists/family care

physicians who have taken care of patients for years are retiring earlier — suffering from burn-out, overwork and too many hours spent on required computers/electronic medical systems. Less time with a patient can lead to a more difficult path through their "elderhood."

You don't have to be over 80 to collect snide comments. AARP notes about two-thirds of today's workers aged 45 to 74 have experienced age discrimination in the workplace. Employers can't put an age cap on jobs but you'll note they're looking for "young, vibrant person to join our team" which translates as "we are not looking for old people."

Should we care about ageist attitudes? Unless you have dreams of immortality and barring accidents/illness, all of us will be older one of these days. Our attitudes matter, positive or negative.

In a 2002 research paper from Yale University's School of Public Health, Becca Levy and colleagues found that older people with positive attitudes about aging lived almost eight years longer than those with less positive self-perceptions of aging. Attitudes about aging can influence the lifespan and wellbeing of our fast-growing aging population.

Other experimental studies

have shown that older individuals with negative attitudes about aging may suffer an increase of cardiovascular reactivity to stress and reduced memory performance.

Positive age beliefs predict better cognitive performance, and negative age beliefs predict worse cognitive performance. Age beliefs tend to be internalized early in life and unfortunately remain stable over the lifespan if there are no interventions.

Hopefully you're not spending too much on assorted pills/potions promising long-lasting youthfulness, great memory recall, and other ways to "avoid aging." (You'll do a lot better with the Mediterranean diet – fresh veggies, fruit, fish, nuts, etc.)

And think of this the next time you watch the TV commercial depicting a "happy" active couple (with a bit of gray hair) smiling and telling viewers that since they've been taking these wonderful memory pills their memory is so much better. How do they know what their memory would be like without the pills?

*Ruth Taber, MSPH, is a graduate of Yale School of Public Health (1954) and a member of the Association of Health Care Journalists and is guest speaker at Borderland's Cafe Europa on Tuesday, April 5*

## Opinion: The Magen David Why would a Gentile Wear it? Just Because

Weeden Nichols  
*Las Cruces, NM*

I've always had an affinity for Jewish people and a particular interest in Judaism. I have been affiliated, over the course of my 82 years, with several Christian denominations, for all of which I have had a certain respect and affection. However, upon reflection, I never have found any of the so-called "proofs" of the existence of God, and of an after-life, to be without flaw. My conclusion at the 82-year point, is that it is good to live as though God exists, and as though one is ultimately accountable. One can't do much harm living that way, and might even do some good.

Jesus is viewed as an important figure by all three of the "Religions of the Book." I would consider myself a follower of Jesus as teacher in the rabbinic

tradition and, perhaps, prophet.. but not as a Savior or Person of God. I find most of the teachings of Jesus that don't seem to have been adjusted or added later, to be pretty much the same as those of Rabbi Hillel, and much like the writings a few centuries later of Moses Maimonides (one of my favorites). Most of the teachings of all three have to do with how one should, or should not, treat others, or with the responsible use and treatment of resources. I don't think any of the three totally omitted treatment of animals.

For many years, and in a steadily growing fashion, I have been ongoingly heartbroken over the centuries and centuries of murder, massacre, and mistreatment of Jews simply for being Jews. Several years ago I began wearing a Star of David

(Magen David) in public – not because I wish to misrepresent myself as a Jew – but in support, solidarity, and sympathy. If I happen to "draw fire" from

someone who wants to kill a Jew, that might not be so bad. I must be pretty close to the end of my life anyway, and it might save one Jew.





**Sunday, May 1 | 3:30-7pm  
@ Keystone Heritage Park**

**w/ Israeli Artist, Hanoch Piven,  
who created this month's front cover**

**To sponsor, volunteer, or get involved  
visit [www.jewishelpaso.org](http://www.jewishelpaso.org)  
or email [letsconnect@jewishelpaso.org](mailto:letsconnect@jewishelpaso.org)**