

The Jewish VOICE

Informing and Connecting Jews in El Paso-Las Cruces

Elul 5782 - Tishri 5783
September 2022



Shanah Tovah - Happy New Year

Up Close: Janet Wechter

Family, friends and community service have been central to Janet Kent Wechter's life. Although her move to El Paso in 1989 from Louisiana was originally a temporary one to help her sister, Mona Goldberg, she found a nice Jewish community and a sisterhood of women in the National Council of Jewish Women and her future husband, Randy Wechter. They have two adult children, Ryan (29) & Jenny (27), who grew up surrounded by the Jewish Community Center, the El Paso Jewish Academy and family Shabbat dinners with grandparents Sylvia and Aaron Wechter. Randy and Janet love traveling and follow The Grateful Dead, now Dead and Co. The music is magical. Aside from her family commitments, the symphony, garden club, Jewish non-profits and interior design work have occupied much of Janet's time. She enjoys practicing yoga and meditation, hanging out with her five dogs, reading and watching the latest series on Netflix.

What value(s) do we need most in the world today?

Our world needs so many things right now, but if I have to choose just one value, then I choose one that incorporates so many others and that value is INTEGRITY. Our world needs to know and do the right thing. Good and honest principles with strong moral character could do wonders for the world.

Who is your favorite Jewish hero and why?

My favorite Jewish hero is my dad, Sidney Kent; he taught me to live with integrity, how to love, give and forgive. A Jewish hero who inspired me is Ruth Dayan, an Israeli social activist who founded the Maskit Fashion & Decorative Arts House in 1954. It was a way to create jobs for the immigrants making Aliyah and Arab refugees while preserving Jewish ethnic crafts and culture of the various

communities living in Israel. She was the first wife of Israeli Foreign Minister and General, Moshe Dayan. She died at 103, Feb 22, 2021. She dedicated her life bridging cultural divides.

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

The best thing about being a part of our Jewish community is coming together to celebrate and worship together. And in times of crisis, we can always depend on one another. I only wish we could celebrate our differences as much as our similarities. Less judgment, more tolerance, compassion and inclusiveness is what every community needs.

Why is it important to be involved in the Jewish community?

It is important to be involved in the Jewish community because we need one another and when we engage and get involved, the quality of our lives improve greatly. As Elie Wiesel once said, "Jews alone are vulnerable. Jews must not be alone."

What made you decide to start your own non-profit?

As my tenure on the boards of the Jewish Federation, The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso, and The El Paso Symphony Orchestra were coming to a close, I realized I needed a break from board meetings and commitments. Randy and I traveled in our RV to beautiful places throughout our amazing country and continued our 34 year journey following our favorite band, Dead & Co (once The Grateful Dead.) My daughter, Jenny, had asked, "What do you want to do now, Mom?" She mentioned I might integrate my passion for creating beautiful spaces with community service. That got the wheels moving in my head and after telling others my ideas, they wanted to be involved. So with their support, I founded Harmonious



Home which just launched a great website, www.harmonioushometx.org.

Describe your non-profit and its goals?

Harmonious Home is a new non-profit which helps people transition from shelters and transitional living centers to independent living. We work with the Center Against Sexual and Family Violence to identify our clients. We furnish and decorate the apartments, giving people a nice home and hope for a better life. It's a privilege to live in a safe home, but interior design can significantly evoke happiness, inspire confidence, empathy, pride, creativity, security and energy. We offer this to our clients.

What changes have you seen in our community and what are your hopes for the future?

Our Jewish community, like so many others, is getting smaller. Jewish education has been through ups and downs, but now we have The J Center for Early Learning and The Cherry Hill School to offer our youngest generations. I was sad to see UTEP's Inter-American Jewish Studies Program become a memory. It's programs like this that need strong financial

support in order to survive. The pandemic brought new challenges, and we all found ways to adapt virtually. My hope is that our younger generations get involved taking leadership roles to ensure the future of our Jewish institutions. I've always hoped for a shared campus that houses both the Reform and Conservative communities, early childhood and elementary schools. And who knows? Maybe Jewish El Paso would have a better chance at not just surviving, but thriving!

What have you been working on since your presidency and work with the Jewish El Paso Board?

The early months of the Pandemic and the end of my presidency coincided; events were postponed and everything went virtual. I had an opportunity to slow down and center myself. I stayed busy with online classes, interior design projects, completed a Kundalini Yoga Teacher Training and worked on Harmonious Home. I am looking forward to staying involved with Jewish El Paso and growing our local Lions of Judah chapter, one in a dynamic international philanthropic group of women turning 50!

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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

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Pro-Choice and Pro-Life and So Glad for Them Both



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

Family, friends, and eating wonderful and traditional foods – so many incredible memories are formed on Rosh Hashanah and the holidays but, more importantly, it’s when we get the opportunity to reflect on the past year, and we look forward to a year anew.

On Rosh Hashanah it is inscribed, and on Yom Kippur it is sealed - how many shall pass away and how many shall be born, who shall live and who shall die... But repentance, prayer and righteousness avert the severity of the decree.

Some of us are troubled by these words in the Unetaneh Tokef prayer that we recite on these Days of Awe, where it is seemingly predetermined what may befall us.

To me, the message is clear. Our actions can change the outcome. In other words – we have a **choice**. And, if we make the choice correctly, we get to enjoy a better **life** for yet another year, until the cycle repeats itself. Our behavior determines consequences.

As the world endures many challenges and stands on the precipice of so many more, we have a collective and individual responsibility to choose how we interact as a community, between organizations, between friends and family. How many times have I heard community members comment, as they watch the current market conditions, that they wish they had given more to Tzedakah when it was riding high! How quickly did we take the cohesiveness of the

early days of the pandemic and turn it into discord? When was the last time we called our neighbor to check in now that we are no longer under a lockdown? Why is it that we discarded organizations that we once supported, that still do so much good for the community and the Jewish world, just because we disagreed with a statement they issued? Have our priorities shifted back to work and materialism over family and relationships? We are not perfect nor never will be. But we have choices on how we behave, whether we react or we respond, whether and how we dialogue or disengage.

On a recent trip I was flabbergasted by the blatant lack of responsibility and the rewriting of history shown today by some of Europe’s biggest culprits during

the Holocaust. It was like their role had been whitewashed from history. August’s CNN special on Anti-Semitism in America showed the frightening reality of what our nation is facing today. It’s on our doorstep like never before. Jewish history has taught us that only when we are united and cohesive as a people, we are strong and able to face the challenges before us. We can agree to disagree on some issues, but in the end, history shows we must be united by our heritage and faith.

Let us reflect on the positive steps we can take individually and collectively and the **choices** we can make for a better **life** – on the students we help get a Jewish education, the seniors we program for, those we help with mental health issues and food insecurity and to those for whom we secure financial assistance in times of need, the campers we send to camp, the funds we endow for the Jewish future, how we support Jewish life here in El Paso and Las Cruces and the way we might best engage one other to do so.

This New Year, my hope is that we are all **Pro Choice and Pro Life**.

Shanah Tovah – Happy New Year



El Paso Teens Learn to Change the World...

By Robert French

Through Joyce Jaffee’s leadership and generosity, the Jaffee Family NextGen Teen Philanthropy program has arrived in Las Cruces and El Paso. The program redefines Jewish philanthropy by showing young adults that they, too, can change the world through a personal and engaged relationship to lifelong giving. Participants learn about modern philanthropy and apply their knowledge by making heartfelt grants to the organizations and causes they care about within the Jewish community. The program



helps young people learn about leadership, service, financial literacy, and long-term investing to use their tzedekah for good.

This wonderful opportunity is a

partnership between The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso and each of our local Synagogues and Temples as they become Bar/Bat Mitzvah: Chabad El Paso,

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Contact Robert French, Executive Director @ 915-842-9554 or Stuart Shiloff, President @ 915-799-7815 for details. www.jcfep.org

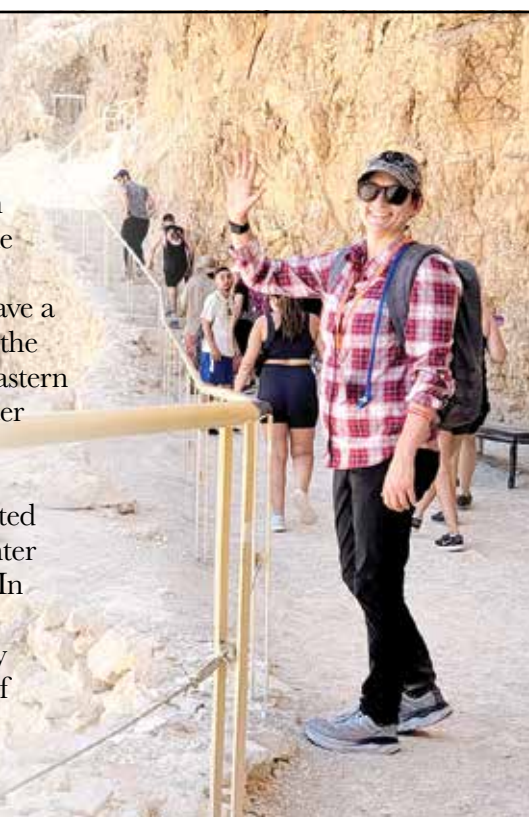
Meet Sara!

By Sarah Tolley

Meet Sarah Tolley, the new PJ Library Program Coordinator for Jewish El Paso. She is excited to take on this role in the community because Sarah wants Jewish children to take pride in their heritage and have a well-rounded Jewish education. Sarah is a native of the Eastern Shore of Maryland and grew up in Southeastern Pennsylvania. She has lived in Texas since 2019. After a year of living in Texas and attending Texas A&M University, she found her Jewish roots and started to pursue her Judaism. Upon graduation, Sarah accepted a position at William Beaumont Army Medical Center doing clinical research as a certified athletic trainer. In addition, Sarah supports athletic trainers across the entirety of Fort Bliss. Outside of work, she is actively involved in the Jewish communities within the city of El Paso and Fort Bliss and volunteers as an Athletic Coordinator with Team Red White, and Blue.

Favorite Jewish Holiday: Purim

Favorite Jewish Food: Hamantaschen



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The National Torah Scroll



By Rabbi Levi Greenberg,
Chabad El Paso

In the early 1940s the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe sent a rabbi to meet with a philanthropist in Chicago who hailed from a well known Russian Chassidic hamlet. American life had caused him to abandon traditional practice, and the rabbi was instructed to speak

with him only about Judaism and not to solicit nor accept any donations.

Towards the end of their conversations the philanthropist pulled out his checkbook and asked, “Who should I write the check to?”

“No one,” replied the rabbi to the man’s surprise. “I did not come here for your money.”

The man was shocked and the rabbi explained with the following analogy. The holiest object in Judaism today is a Torah scroll. Every letter must be written precisely as dictated by our 3,000-year-old tradition and even one missing or faded letter renders a scroll illegitimate. In Eastern Europe religious scribes traveled from town to town offering their services to check the community Torahs to ensure all the letters were still intact.

The Jewish nation is compared to a Torah scroll and every Jew is another letter. Even one “faded” Jew impacts the entire nation.

“I am like a traveling scribe,” concluded the rabbi. “My goal today is to ensure your “letter” is intact through strengthening your connection to Torah study and Mitzvah observance.”

Upon hearing this analogy the Previous Rebbe made one correction. Letters in the Torah scroll are ink on parchment and when a letter goes missing it ceases to exist. Jews are better compared to letters engraved in the Two Tablets. Engraved letters may fade due to accumulated dust that hides them from view, but they are never truly lost. You just need to clear away the dust and the letter will be revealed in all its beauty.

While Rosh Hashanah is called

the Day of Judgment, confession is absent from the Rosh Hashanah liturgy. The Yom Kippur liturgy, on the other hand, is all about confession, repentance and seeking forgiveness and yet the day is considered even holier than Rosh Hashanah!

On Rosh Hashanah we access a level of our Jewishness that transcends the details of our behavior. On Yom Kippur we reach a level of unity that emphasizes how even while dealing with the muck of ignorance, apathy and assimilation, every single Jew remains essential. Our nation is incomplete if even one letter is “faded.” And the incomparable holiness of Yom Kippur gives us the power to clean away all the “accumulated dust” and ensure that every Jew is connected in a revealed way.

What Kind of Relationship Do We Have with G-d?



By Rabbi Yisrael Greenberg,
Chabad El Paso

Approaching Rosh Hashanah, let’s think about one simple but critical philosophical question: What kind of a relationship do we have with G-d?

Reviewing the past year, we can easily find places where we weren’t exactly perfectly behaved.

Maybe we shirked this mitzvah, skipped that one or ignored the other one.

And reviewing G-d’s record, we can find things to complain about. This past year, there was no shortage of disasters, tragedies and outrages in this world we can easily pin on the Creator.

So now the question is: As we approach Rosh Hashanah, are we approaching G-d in fear? Are we afraid to ask Him to bless us with a good new year because we weren’t good last year? Are we afraid He’s going to punish us with some tragedy or disaster?

Let’s address this approach to G-d—and expose it for the faulty and unhealthy approach that it is.

For the record, G-d unconditionally loves the Jewish People. Every one of us. As the prophet Malachi says, “‘Ahavi

Es’chem,’ Amar Hashem”—“ ‘I love you,’ says G-d Almighty.”

Our relationship with G-d is based on a loving relationship, like the unconditional love of a parent towards an only child born to him late in life. Even if the child may disappoint his parents, they always love him.

As we approach the Jewish New Year and as G-d waits for every Jew to come back home, G-d doesn’t wait to judge us or give us a citation for last year’s bad behavior—as if he’s a police officer parked around the corner waiting to give you a ticket. Instead, G-d is waiting for us to reconnect to Him and start the New Year with a new relationship.

Therefore, let us approach G-d not out of fear but out of love. And if there are things that make our record look a bit spotty, let

us remember that “fear of G-d” means not fear of punishment but fear of disappointing G-d—which, like fear of disappointing a loving father or mother, itself is really based on love.

Let us recommit ourselves to observing any one mitzvah that we may have resolved to keep last year but for whatever reason didn’t—and reconnect to G-d through that mitzvah. He is waiting there for us at Rosh Hashanah—to welcome us with a smile and to give us a Shanah Tovah Umetukah—a good and sweet year.

May the year 5,783 be a year of health and wealth in the entire universe. Let us hope and pray that we are blessed with abundance and prosperity in everything, both materially and spiritually, and with abundant health, happiness and joy.

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The Anniversary of the First Day



By Rabbi Ben Zeidman,
Temple Mount Sinai

It is said (Vayikra Rabbah 29:1) that the anniversary of the first day of creation takes place a few days before Rosh Hashanah, the New Year. By this counting Rosh Hashanah itself is the anniversary

of humanity's creation (the sixth day of creation). A happy moment! But within hours Adam and Eve ate from the Tree of Knowledge and had to begin a process of teshuvah, repentance.

Can you imagine giving birth only to be forced into passing judgment over your child a few hours later? Rosh Hashanah is therefore a day for both celebration and reflection. In the liturgy of the shofar service on Rosh Hashanah, we read these words multiple times:

HaYom harat Olam - Today the world is born anew. This day, the whole of creation stands before You to be judged. As we are Your children, love us in the way parents do. As we are Yours in service, guide us by the light of Your justice, grace, and holiness.

Literal reading of the creation story aside, the Truths being taught are powerful still today. Humanity is imperfect. Yet, we have a unique capacity for reflection, growth, and change. So, on the Rosh Hashanah we celebrate our potential to recreate and renew ourselves. On this day the world is born anew.

During the High Holy Days, we "stand in judgment." Before God and before ourselves. We celebrate reality and possibility. We take the time to reflect on how we might continue to grow and become the people this world needs. Through our heartfelt efforts over the course of these sacred days the world is born anew.

The soul of our tradition encourages us to take the time and reflect on complex

themes like human purpose and investing our lives with meaning. Otherwise, we rarely give ourselves the space to consider them seriously. In this way, through each of us, the world is born anew.

Over the days and weeks to come, as the Days of Awe approach, may we give ourselves the space to consider how we might direct ourselves down a path that elevates and sanctifies our lives. May we take the time to ensure that our actions and our behaviors are in keeping with our hopes and dreams. So may the New Year, be sweet and joyful for us all.

Shanah Tovah u'Metukah – A Happy and Sweet New Year to everyone!



By Rabbi Scott Rosenberg,
Congregation B'nai Zion

A police officer is called to a domestic murder. A woman has shot her husband and she's still standing in the kitchen, rifle in hand, over his lifeless body.

The policeman asks her "Why

did you shoot him?"

She says, "He walked on my wet floor after I mopped."

Just then the police officer's radio crackles with "Officer Jones, have you arrested the suspect yet?"

He replies "No, the floor's not dry yet."

I love this joke. It reminds me that until the "floor is dry," our fate is not sealed.

Our sins may be great. We may even have been "caught red-handed." Yet according to Jewish tradition, teshuva, repentance, is still possible, irrespective of our sins, if we are alive.

Our sins differ but the path to teshuva is similar for all of us.

Teshuvah starts with regret. We must recognize the error of our ways and feel remorse for what we have done. It is difficult to

apologize for a wrong if deep down we don't believe we committed the wrong.

This step is not about rationalizing or seeking excuses. It is about coming to accept that we were wrong. We didn't need to do what we did, yet we did it.

The next step is confession. Openly and honestly letting those who were impacted by our misdeed know that we are aware of what we did and that it was wrong. We stand before the afflicted and accept our responsibility.

Making amends, setting things right, as best we can is the next step in the process of teshuvah. Doing what we are able to do to heal the pain and help those victimized by our misdeeds restore their wholeness is essential to repentance.

Finally, teshuvah is only complete if we resolve not to repeat the offense. Having recognized the wrongfulness of our actions, having sincerely and wholeheartedly apologized, having made restitution and committed to continuing to support the process of repair if appropriate, we also must work diligently not to repeat the same behavior when the situation presents itself again.

The floor of teshuvah is still wet for all of us. We can do the difficult work necessary to repent and restore our relationships so that our lives can remain filled with hope and promise, goodness and peace in this coming year.

May 5783 be a year of blessing for all of us!

Life Doesn't Have to be Perfect to be Wonderful



By Rabbi Bery Schmukler,
Chabad Las Cruces

It says in Ethics of Our Fathers: "Lo olecha hamlacha ligmor – It is not your job to necessarily finish the task," "V'lo atoh ben chorin l'hee-batel memenah – but that does not free you from trying." Maybe you won't be able to finish the project, or do it as well as you think you should, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't start or try.

The point is: you should not be dragged down by yesterday's failures, nor should you be frozen by your anxieties about tomorrow. Just get up and do whatever you can do today – even if it's less than perfect.

One author put it this way: "The imperfect book that gets published is better than the perfect book that never leaves my computer." A 20-minute walk that I do is better than a 4-mile run that I don't do.

These are the lessons for us to internalize in our imperfect lives and our imperfect world as we find ourselves in highly imperfect times. Let us do what we can – to strengthen our relationships, to learn, to grow, to become more spiritual and more Jewishly involved in this upcoming New Year.

You can't commit to keeping Shabbat or coming to shul every week? Make it one Shabbat a month. You don't see yourself

becoming strictly observant? Ok - take on just one new mitzvah. Start putting on Tefilin every weekday – that one important step. Make sure to light the Shabbat candles every Friday night – keep that one mitzvah consistently.

Does that mean you're doing things "perfectly" – and that there's no need or room for further growth? No! But hey, none of us are perfect. We are all aspiring Jews, so let's do whatever we can do today – and just a little more.

Judaism is about the process, not the product. It's about your effort, not your success. It's about the journey, not the destination. To be a Jew is to be "Yisrael" which means "One who struggles with God." Aspiring and striving is what authentic spirituality is all about. It is not incumbent upon you to finish the job, but that doesn't free you from starting and doing the best you can.

And it is this philosophy of not

letting the perfect be the enemy of the good; of doing the best you can today; of always getting back up and continuing to walk; that enables us to rise to the heights of our potential and achieve true greatness.

Perfect lives? It's a myth. It's not part of the bargain. It doesn't exist.

This month, as we hear the Shofar, listen closely and you will hear different sounds: Broken sounds, sobbing sounds, stilted and frustrated sounds – all of which are symbolic of so many of the experiences of our imperfect, often difficult, lives. But at the end, in the final analysis, it's an uplifting, invigorating, emboldening and triumphant sound – leading to a crescendo of a message, you can meditate on these words while listening to the blast of the Shofar: "LIFE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE PERFECT TO BE WONDERFUL."

Shana Tova.

Let the Games Begin

By Madeleine Bendalin & the Schecter Family

I'm certain that the Schecter family could have fun anywhere, but being in Israel, the Jewish homeland, made our family trip more meaningful and memorable. This past July, members of my family traveled to Israel for a family trip coinciding with the opening ceremonies of the Maccabiah Games. While it was our first time in Israel during Maccabiah, this was a special competition time for all participants, because the event was postponed several times due to the pandemic.

The Maccabiah Games hosts over 10,000 athletes from 80 countries around the world, with two commonalities: Judaism, and a love for sports. Opening ceremonies at Teddy Stadium was an experience like no other. Athletes were of all ages, and many families had multiple generations participating in the games. This year the opening ceremonies were also attended by President Biden, cheering on the United States delegation of 1,400 athletes.

My uncle, Marc Schecter, an El Paso native, participated in men's singles and doubles tennis for the United States, alongside thousands of other Americans, and coming in second in his age division. Seeing him walk on the stage representing the U.S. and the El Paso community was a very special moment, especially for my grandmother, Rose Schecter, who put a lot of funding and time towards tennis lessons and tournaments over the past 40 or so years.

In Judaism, we are heavily focused on the generational impact of storytelling and keeping traditions and

Jewish values alive. L'dor v'dor means 'from generation to generation' and is all about the connections that family members make and pass down to future generations. Going to Israel was a multi-generational trip for our family that included my grandmother, uncle, aunt, and two brothers. For myself, a highlight was praying at the Western Wall alongside my grandmother. This was a moment I had anticipated the entire trip and knowing that other families were also able to engage in similar experiences with their families and loved ones demonstrates the impact of these traditions. While we each have a deep connection to Israel, in our family we also have a huge connection to the sport of tennis.

Growing up, my brothers became great tennis players, taking after their parents, their uncle and their grandfather, David Schecter. Tennis has been a part of our family for at least three generations, and something that brings us together to watch and to play. Ironically, I might be the only family member that doesn't play, but I appreciate the bonding impact it has in our family. We've been spectators at tennis tournaments around the world but seeing my uncle play was a highlight for us all.

Thinking back on the experience in Israel, I can't imagine that there is another opportunity other than Maccabiah that would bring us all together to cheer on our family members as they compete on the other side of the world.

I hope we make the Maccabiah Games a new Schecter family tradition, and travel to Jewish communities across the world to cheer each other on.



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Shabbat Dinner

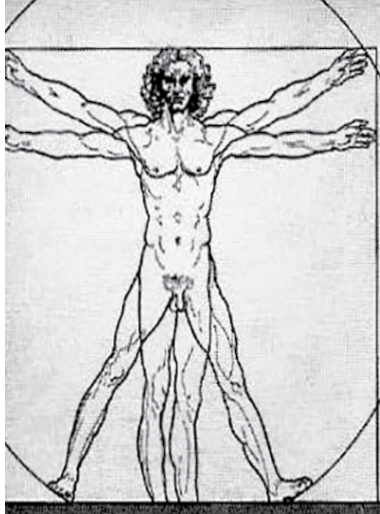
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Comfort Food – Remembrances & Nostalgia

By Ruth Taber

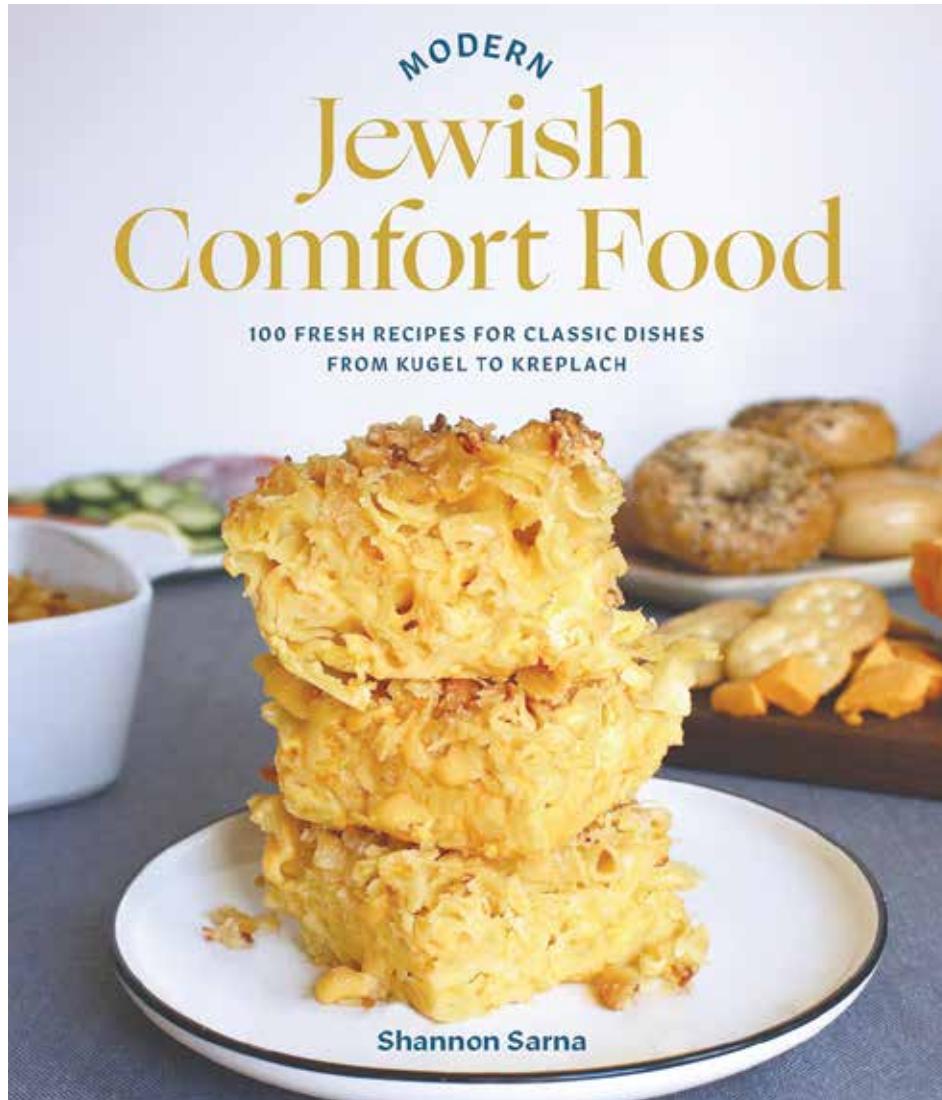
Comfort food – remembrances and nostalgia of goodies we enjoyed in our childhood - obviously means different flavors/textures to different people. Jewish comfort food conjures up a mixed bag of memories depending on your background – especially where your parents/grandparents/great-grandparents came from. The main feature of Jewish cooking through the ages has always been adapting and “assimilating” local foods (often improving) of their new locales.

Shannon Sarna, author of a new book : *Modern Jewish Comfort Food* (Countryman Press) grew up in upstate New York and was brought up by a Sicilian American mother and a Polish Jewish father - a delicious sounding culinary combination to me!

In her collection of 100 recipes, Sarna serves up contemporary variations of old favorites - showcasing the diversity of worldwide Jewish cuisine brought here by Jewish immigrants from Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, and beyond.

In the introduction she notes her personal “ultimate” comfort food is a “steaming bowl of egg noodles, lightly buttered with a big dollop of cottage cheese on top and tons of black pepper.” She writes that her father prepared that for her Sunday lunch because that’s what his father prepared for him. (In Poland, she notes, the noodles were homemade and the cheese was “pot cheese”). I smiled because my mother never bought noodles; she always made them from scratch and pot cheese was easily available in New York City’s “appetizing stores”.

Chicken stock and soup are important basics in the book; stock is made from bones, while broth is made mostly from meat or vegetables. The bones create a thicker liquid. Along with legs, and wings she suggests chicken feet -which my mom always included. (They were hard to find in El Paso until WholeFoods arrived; their meat department carries them frequently.) Sarna offers recipes



for classic Jewish chicken soup, Yemenite chicken soup (which includes minced ginger) and the Sephardic Jewish Greek Lemon and Orzo soup.

Stuffed vegetables have been staples of all cultures around the world and Sarna serves up some interesting combos; in addition to familiar stuffed cabbage rolls she includes stuffed eggplant, Syrian stuffed zucchini, stuffed onions (with pomegranate sauce) and two Israeli stuffed pepper recipes – one with meat and a vegetarian one from her friend who calls it “garbage peppers” because she uses up odds and ends of veggies in the fridge!

“Kugel”, which Sarna notes is predominantly an Ashkenazi dish, is a Yiddish word from High German. Early kugels were like baked bread dumplings; by mid-18th century they had moved on to noodle or potato kugels. Her “Modern” kugels include Pineapple-Upside Down

Kugel, a Triple Veggie Kugel , a Cakey Crunch Sweet Potato Kugel - and - the “American-comfort food-meets Ashkenazi casserole”: Mac and Cheese Kugel!

Shakshuka rates its own chapter. This North African dish made from tomatoes, hot pepper or hot sauce and eggs arrived in Israel with Libyan and other North African Jewish immigrants. Sarna writes this dish is one of the most popular in Israel and by now is popular all over the world. Shakshuka is an Arabic word meaning “all mixed up” and Sarna writes that “it can be made 1000 different ways depending on the cook, season or ingredients on hand.” Try her Smoky Vegan Shakshuka, Mexican Inspired Shakshuka or a Shakshuka Pizza-which she describes as her “favorite Israeli-Italian-American mash-up”.

The book is full of goodies: Schnitzels, Matzo balls, Kreplach - filled with meat, sweet cheese or even corned beef and cabbage! Briskets, Wine Chuck Roasts, Flanken or make your own easy Gravlax (smoked salmon) and of course sweets. Lots of mouth

watering color photographs including “how to” techniques enhance the recipes and best of all - there are no long tedious lists of ingredients!

I’ve included a recipe from Sarna’s chapter on latkes; some people only enjoy them at Hanukkah – too bad. They’re easy to make and offer a resting place for all sorts of food combos in addition to the standard potato/onion versions. Enjoy this tri-veggie latke for new color and taste. I made the entire recipe and froze the excess in several portions since I only cook for one person.

Beet, Carrot and Potato Latkes - adapted from *Modern Jewish Comfort Food* by Shannon Sarna. Recipe makes 16-24 latkes

2 medium fresh beets, peeled
1 large carrot, peeled
1 medium russet potato peeled
2 large eggs
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon fresh thyme*
1 to 2 teaspoons fine sea salt**
Vegetable oil for frying***

*I didn’t have fresh thyme – left it out. ** I’m not a salt fan and substituted a teaspoon of Bragg’s “Sprinkle” – 24 herb/spice” combo without salt. ***I used olive oil

1. Cut peeled beets, carrots, potatoes in pieces for food processor grater. Grate coarsely in three or four batches. (I grated my veggies with a hand grater.)

2. Place grated veggies in bowl, add lightly beaten eggs, flour, thyme, and about 1 teaspoon of the salt (or substitute); mix all together.

3. Heat about one-quarter cup oil in large frypan on stove top - Medium-High

4. Fry 2-3 inch mounds of veggies until brown and crispy on each side. Place on wire rack and sprinkle more of the salt (or substitute) if desired.

Best to eat the latkes warm – plain or topped with bit of sour cream and fruit; try applesauce/ sliced peaches etc.

Ruth Taber, food writer for the El Paso Times for more than twenty-five years; wrote for *Travesias*, a Mexico City Travel/Food magazine, *Sabroso*, New Mexico magazine and numerous other publications.



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El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame

Written by Erline Gordon

Bruce Gordon was inducted into the El Paso Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2022 at a ceremony at the Radisson Hotel on Wednesday, June 22. He was inducted as the posthumous candidate and was one of eight inductees. His wife, Erline Gordon,

accepted his award.

"Coach" Bruce Gordon passed away August 20, 2016. He grew up in El Paso, and sports was a major focus in his life. He was involved in sports as early as elementary school. He played football at Sul Ross State University in Alpine but finished his education with a bachelor's degree

in biology and a master's degree in education from UTEP.

Bruce began his 33-year teaching and coaching career at Canutillo High School. He also was coached at Ross Junior High, Coronado High School, and Austin High School. In addition to coaching, Bruce taught biology, integrated physics and chemistry, and anatomy.

Among his career highlights, Bruce coached over 30 all-district football players and over 185 district track champions. His Coronado High School sophomore and junior varsity football teams won five district championships. The junior varsity track teams hold five district records, and the varsity teams hold three district records. Runners and relay teams coached by Bruce ranked at both

state and national levels. In 1991, one student set a national record in the 400-meter hurdles. Bruce instilled in his athletes the idea they can achieve anything they set their minds to achieving. He left a lasting impression on many of his students and athletes.

Bruce's favorite and primary roles were that of husband, father, son, grandfather, brother, cousin, uncle, and friend -- but the role of Coach always touched him. Coach Bruce led by example and with humor. His students continually quote his witty "Gordonisms." He touched the lives of his students, many of whom came back to let him know that their accomplishments were due to the leadership, discipline, unity, camaraderie, and work ethic he instilled. The stories and memories students shared were some of his proudest moments.

Bruce's Hall of Fame plaque will be permanently displayed at the Don Haskins Center at the University of Texas at El Paso.



Texas Jewish Historical Society

Texas Jewish Historical Society (TJHS) President Sheldon Lippman of Austin is pleased that El Paso once again has representation among the Society's officers with Susie Novick serving as 2nd Vice President and Joyce Davidoff serving on the Board of Trustees.

Other El Pasoans included among the 500-plus membership are Bernadine Belkin z"l, Jennie Block, Mimi and Jay Gladstein, Erline Gordon, Patty and Mark Hutman, Olga Koshaleva and Vladik Kreinovich, David Novick, Lee Schwartz, Rabbi Ben Zeidman, and former El Pasoan Dorothy Borschow, now of Dallas. Many TJHS members have family ties to El Paso.

Founded in 1980 by Rabbi Jimmy Kessler of Galveston, TJHS is dedicated to collecting, disseminating, and preserving the richness of Jewish history in Texas. More expansively, the Society's mission is "to expand and enhance the knowledge and understanding of the Jewish presence in Texas and the history of Jews from their first arrival in the State to the

present."

In that spirit, TJHS supports scholarly studies and preservation projects that further its mission. For example, TJHS solicits grant applications for research projects. A recent grant was awarded to Gabrielle Dyer, a Texas A&M PhD candidate, to gather in-depth information on Jewish communities along the Texas-Mexico border, including El Paso.

TJHS also recognizes outstanding historic site preservation. An example is the recent consecration of the Jewish section of the Wild Willow Cemetery in Bonham, Texas, even though there is no Jewish community remaining in Bonham. Other examples of extraordinary historic preservation projects include physically moving the B'nai Abraham Synagogue building from Brenham, Texas, to its new permanent home on the Dell Campus in Austin where it continues to serve as an orthodox synagogue. TJHS has lent its support to book publishing, filmmaking, research travel, and a wide array of


projects that aim to preserve Texas Jewish history.

TJHS offers other ongoing activities:

- A Speaker's Bureau presents programs to organizations and congregations on historical people, places, and events in Texas history, including the "Galveston Movement." During the early stages of the COVID pandemic, TJHS Speaker's Bureau participant Vickie Vogel of Austin offered a Zoom presentation entitled "Little Known Texas Jews" to members of Temple Mount Sinai. The Speakers Bureau continues to offer Zoom presentations and in-person speakers upon request.
- Members can donate their genealogical records, artifacts, and other family Judaica and organizational records to the TJHS Collection at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at UT Austin.
- The TJHS website, www.txjhs.org, offers a searchable database of Jewish

burials in cemeteries throughout Texas.

- TJHS members travel on history-rich tours to US and international locations.
- TJHS members have an opportunity to write and publish their family stories in The TJHS Magazine, which are archived in the TJHS Collection.
- TJHS holds its Annual Gathering (now hybrid meeting with in-person and virtual attendance) for all members with speakers on topics of Texas Jewish interest.
- TJHS has frequent interaction with New Mexico Jewish Historical Society for shared family, immigrant, and Crypto-Jewish history.
- TJHS will soon have online membership registration, making it more convenient to become a member. For information about its affordable membership and more details about TJHS, visit txjhs.org or write to president@txjhs.org. Texas Jewish Historical Society is also on Facebook and will appreciate having new followers!!



The History of Jewish El Paso- Lunch with Mimi Gladstein

Thursday, September 15 | 12 – 1:30pm | @ The Greenery

Registration required by Monday, September 12

Transportation available from Las Cruces at 11:00am

Please call Jewish El Paso to arrange transportation via Shalom Shuttle 915-842-9554

Mimi is the author of five books and co-editor of two. Mimi has been recognized with international awards for teaching and research on John Steinbeck. In addition, Mimi was the first Director of the Women's Studies Program and is recognized in the reference work *Feminist Who Changed America*. In 2011, Mimi was inducted into the Hall of Honor by the El Paso County Historical Society.

Borderland's Café Europa is funded by a grant from The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso
Jewish El Paso | www.jewishelpaso.org | 915-842-9554

Social & Personal

Mazel Tov – Congratulations to...

to Dr. Shauna Goldman and Bobby Montes on their marriage to Ben and KC Marcus on the birth of their son; grandparents-Meyer and Mindy Marcus to Zach Krasne on his new position at Hello Amigo Benjamin Charter on his Bar Mitzvah

Drs. Louis and Laura Alpern on the birth of their granddaughter Zoey; parents - Noah and Adrienne and big sister Lailah Jean

Megan Jenny Wechter on graduating from the Masters of Education program at Harvard University; parents - Randy & Janet Wechter, grandmother, Sylvia Wechter Isabella Trejo on her Bat Mitzvah

Raquel Sirkin - Alcala on her Bat Mitzvah

Adam & Amanda Levine on the birth of their son Gabriel; grandparents - David & Cindy Metrikim

Baruch Dayan haEmet – May G-d bring Comfort to...

the Holland, Ross, and Kleiman families on the passing of Sal Holland the Horwitz family on the passing of Julian Horwitz Dr and Mrs. Carl Lieb on the passing of Bernadine Belkin Judge Linda Yee Chew on the passing of Robert "Bobby" Perel Mr. and Mrs. Jonny Rogers on the passing of Dede Rogers The Garcia family on the passing of Cecilia Vasquez Margie Hauptman on the passing of Guy Hauptman

*To post your announcement please visit www.jewishelpaso.org/Announcement
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Back to School

By *Samantha Levin*

The week of August 1st through 5th The Cherry Hill School teachers had the opportunity to participate in professional development offered by several professors from The Department of Education at UTEP. Dr. Jessica Slade and has been instrumental in helping The Cherry Hill School move toward the implementation of Project-Based Learning. Project Based Learning (PBL) is a teaching method in which students learn by actively engaging in real-world and personally meaningful projects and

this happens in every class for two hours each day! The Texas State Standards are addressed through meaningful projects which provide opportunities for students to use critical thinking and problem-solving to explore all content areas. The teachers were also treated to presentations given by Dr. Denise Golding who modeled how to read aloud books with attention to the standards and Dr. An Song, whose active presentation, “We are Composers & Choreographers; Let’s explore MATH in Music and Dance”, got the teachers up and moving!



By *Celia Chavez*

In the beginning . . . the first words of Genesis have been on my mind a lot lately. It's the beginning of a new school year, soon we'll have the beginning of a new Jewish year and we also have a new Judaics teacher beginning at The J Center for Early Learning - Ms. Rachel Kimmelman. Ms. Rachel was born

and raised in El Paso and is truly passionate about creating joyful Jewish experiences for her students. After all the creating G-d rested and blessed Shabbat so that's where we'll begin - with all our students helping to create the tablecloth we will use for Shabbat each week. We hope this will be a meaningful beginning to a year filled with laughter and learning.



With the Russian invasion intensifying and multiple locations under fire, support for the Jewish community is needed urgently.

Jewish Federations have allocated some \$40 million of the over \$64 million we have raised to 35 NGOs operating on the ground in Ukraine and neighboring countries to support refugees and Jewish communities in their time of need. We are continuing to allocate funds based on the changing needs in the field.

Immediate and short-term needs that are being addressed include:

- Helping people make Aliyah to Israel
- Securing the local community and its institutions
- Maintaining critical welfare services
- Assisting internally displaced people in multiple locations.
- Providing medical equipment to the Ukraine Health system
- Securing temporary housing for people in transit
- Providing food, medicine, and cash for those sheltering in Ukraine
- Maintaining hotlines for Jews in the regions and their families in Israel

To donate and learn more visit:

<https://www.jewishfederations.org/crisis-in-ukraine2022#give>

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AROUND OUR COMMUNITY

Borderland's Cafe Europa -
Shabbat Dinner at
Congregation B'nai Zion.



El Paso Holocaust Museum - Tour de Tolerance



Hadassah - Dine and Discussion

El PasoConnect - Havdallah Dinner



FACES & PLACES

AROUND OUR COMMUNITY

Congregation B'nai Zion & Temple Mount Sinai



Temple Mount Sinai – Food Festival



Jewish El Paso Call Session





Shofar Across Borders

Sunday, September 18 | 2 – 2:30pm

The sound of the Shofar breaks the quiet of a desert afternoon where two nations meet to bring in the New Year

Join us – Live and In Person

Cesar Carrasco, Shane Wagman Romero – Co-Chairs

Registration required by Wednesday, September 14 to receive location

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