



Congregation salutes Steven Levine



Steven Levine received the Ruth and Irvin Balis Volunteer Appreciation Award at a ceremony and reception on April 13. The congregation honored him for his work behind the scenes in a wide variety of capacities.



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Phyllis Jacoby
In loving memory of my husband, Herbert Jacoby

Join us to say thanks to our teachers

By Holly Michelson

Religious School Director

Please join us on May 17 to say a Big Thank You to all of our teachers — Rebecca Balchunas, Beth Caster, Jessica Leisawitz, Linda Murphy, Galen Newman, Esther Shanahan, Rachel Wasserman and Ryan Zeitzer —with a special Shabbat service followed by a yummy ice cream treat. We are hoping to see as many of our students and parents as possible that evening.

On the last day of school, after school, the Youth Committee, once again, will be holding a special parking lot party. Be on the lookout for more information. While usually we would have our breakfast with the Rabbi on the last day of school, this year, to spread out the fun, we will be holding our breakfast earlier in the month. In the past there have been bagels, waffles, pancakes and fruit. Who knows what special treats await our students this year.

Jewish education doesn't just stop with the summer. There are many options for learning and especially practicing (think Hebrew!!!). Here are some options:

For Hebrew Practice:

1. Go to Store.behrman-house.com. Scroll down until you see Play & Learn. Click on it. There are games and ways to practice Hebrew, both learning and practicing letters as well as prayers. You and your children

can also play "Jewparty."

2. Dahbear is another Hebrew option. Go to dahbear.org/lists/. Click on "select teacher" and type Holly Michelson into the search. It will take you to lists I've made over the years of beginning vocabulary, letters, fun miscellaneous vocabulary, Purim words, Passover words, and so much more. Once you've picked a list, you can do a matching game, a memory game, or just flashcards.

Things to do as a family that reinforce our teaching of values:

1. Do Hebrew WITH your child.
2. Read a Jewish novel/book together.
3. Attend services.
4. Bake a challah for Shabbat.
5. Create a family Shabbat ritual.
6. Learn two new Jewish songs.
7. Make cards for people who are isolated or ill (these can be given to the Rabbi to distribute).
8. Clean up trash at a lake.
9. Raise money for a social justice organization.
10. Donate to a local food pantry.
11. Take a trip to the Jewish Museum in Philadelphia.
12. Collect tzedakah each Shabbat and decide where to donate it.



Students in fourth and fifth grades led a Shabbat service in April.



Sixth- and seventh-grade students prepare meals at Opportunity House.

One of my students today offered the best explanation of why we start Jewish holidays, including Shabbat, in the evening. She said we prepare ourselves in the evening and in the morning, we are a new person and can start fresh. She was speaking specifically

about Rosh Hashana and Shabbat, but I loved the explanation. In September we will start a fresh new year. First day of school is Sept. 8. Watch for enrollment information. If you have a child who will be new to the school, let me know! See you next year!!!

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

In memory of Arthur Humber
Ruth & Conrad Heisman

Thank you to Rabbi Michelson
for the Passover presentation
Dorie Karp

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In memory of Tom Gavigan
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Congratulations to Dr. Ian
Gavigan
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General Fund

A donation has been received in
memory of Thomas Gavigan

In memory of Kenneth Barnett
Marina Barnett

50 years — **Celebrating Together**

Congratulations to KZ and RCOS in 5784, for celebrating together the 50th Anniversary of both movements recognizing women in the minyan (8/29/1973).

Be sure to smile and laugh this summer

Pretend that you are a woman, nearly 100 years old, and a visitor stops by to tell you that you are about to have a baby. How do you think you would react? You would probably wonder about the sanity of your visitor or think that someone was trying to pull a practical joke, knowing that your child-bearing years are well behind you. You might even start to laugh. I know that I would.

This is exactly what happens to our matriarch Sarah in the Torah. The three angels that come to visit Abraham foretold of the birth of a child to Abraham and Sarah in their old age. What did Sarah do? She laughed. This becomes so important that when this miracle child is born, he is named Yitzchak (Isaac)

meaning "and he will laugh."

Our rabbis understood the importance of happiness and laughter. In Pirkei Avot, one of the great ethical works within our tradition, we are taught in two different places: "Receive every person with a cheerful face," and then just a bit later, "receive every person with happiness." (PA 1:15 & 3:16)

In a later text we are taught, "if a person gives his friend all the finest gifts in the world, but does so with a pained/grumpy face, Torah considers it as if he had given him nothing at all. But one who receives his friend with a smile, even if he gives him nothing, Torah considers it as if he had given him all the finest gifts in the world." (Avot DeRabbi Natan 13:4)

Science is confirming what our tradition knew

all along laughter, humor, and even a simple smile are good for us and those around us. It can relax the muscles, improve blood flow to the brain and even improve our digestive and immune health. In some ways, laughter is the "best medicine."

We also know that laughter and joy can be incredible opportunities for bonding. The old saw says, "You can laugh or you can cry." Laughter is one of the ways our people have survived.

Unfortunately, we seem to live in a world that is trying to distance us from these simple, yet important pleasures. The media portrays everything as a conflict. Joy and laughter are painted as frivolous and unproductive and push us to live in a colorless, serious atmosphere that can sap the life out of anyone.

As we prepare for the summer, I take the opportunity to bring some joy, happiness, and laughter into your lives. Not just for your sake, but for the sake of your family and those around you.

Permit yourself to share a joke with a friend. Smile at the people you may meet when you are outside. Play a game with family and friends and don't worry that it is not "productive" or "structured" time. Learn a new blessing for seeing a rainbow, visiting someplace inspiring, or trying a new food to thank God for the incredible world around us.

Try to escape from the pressures and assumptions of the world that can wear us down and give yourself and others, as Rabbi Natan taught, "the finest gifts in the world."

Have a safe and joyful summer.

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***This is the last edition
until September***

Perpetual Memorials

May 1-4

Ernestine Fisher
Helen P. Freedman
Harry Stern
Jeanne Winston

May 5-11

Minna R. Austin
Emil Bernheimer
Joseph H. Chivian
Nathan P. Cohen
Mark Freedman
William Gilbert
Irving Imber
Clara F. Israel
Liebmann Katz
Jeraldine Kozloff

Harry Sack
Charles Schwartz

May 12-18

Joseph Goldsmith
Herman Hammel
Louis Heibron
Paula Katz
Israel Losch
Phyllis Symons

May 19-25

Joseph W. Cohen
Celia A. Cooperman
Helen M. Echenberg
Hortense Grotta
Lena Holzman

Simon Knoblauch
Jacob Rudnick
Ilse Simon
Karl Simon
Selma Katz Simon
Matthew H. Small
Libbie Tamor

May 26-31

Robert Brok
Julius Ehrlich
Samuel R. Frankel
Minnie Freedman
Minnie Winston Hirsch
Rachel K. Loeb
Leah Livingston Winston

ANNIVERSARIES

Mary & Jonathan Avins	May 5	Herb & Chip Karasin	May 28
Jo & Paul D. Cohn	May 11	Elyse & Jeffrey Horowitz	May 29
Radene Gordon-Beck & Hugh Beck	May 15	Amy & Lee Berger	May 31
Gretchen & Alec Platt	May 15	Jodi & Lee Radosh	May 31
Sharon Gernsheimer & Barry Levine	May 26		

BIRTHDAYS

Herb Karasin	May 1	Phyllis Schlanger	May 12	Susan Kerschner	May 21
David Goldstein	May 2	Vicki Graff	May 13	Nancy Knoblauch	May 22
Lin Langlois	May 3	Paul Kozloff	May 13	Harriet Baskin	May 23
Chad Schlanger	May 4	Brett Chronister	May 14	Whitney Sanders	May 23
Catherine Schultz	May 7	Brett Wartluft	May 15	Steven A. Ehrlich	May 24
Gretchen Platt	May 8	Adam Levin	May 18	Mark Weiss	May 28
Chip Karasin	May 10	Steven Levine	May 18	Jeanine Levy	May 31
Jason Kraft	May 11	Dena Hammel	May 21		

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Fein scholarships awarded to four

By Steven Levine

The Lifter-Fein Memorial Scholarship Fund Committee is pleased to announce that we were able to award four scholarships this fiscal year. The recipients were Sophia Horowitz, Molly Nemirow, Talia Spillerman and Emma Tamaccio.

Emma Tamaccio will be graduating from Wilson High

School but had not decided on a post-high school when the award was decided.

Molly Nemirow will be returning to Wagner College, where she is studying vocal performance and math.

Talia Spillerman will be returning to George Washington Law School.

Sophia Horowitz will be

returning to Emerson College where she is studying media arts production.

Applications for the 2025 Lifter-Fein Memorial Scholarship will be announced later this calendar year.

The Lifter-Fein Memorial Scholarship Fund Committee is composed of Steven Levine, chair; Pat Frankel; Rabbi Bri-

an Michelson; Bruce Cohen; Holly Michelson and Scott Davis.

Contributions to the scholarship fund can be sent to RCOS or made online at ohebsholom.org/support/.

If you have any questions about the fund, please contact Steven Levine at levkom2@verizon.net or at 484-332-8726.



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SPECIAL THANKS TO:

- * MARTY BECKERMAN FOR CHAIRING THE BALIS NOMINATING COMMITTEE.
- * JEFF GERNESHEIMER WHO DESIGNS OUR INVITATIONS AND UPDATES THE PLAQUE OF RECIPIENTS.
- * ERIC SHOCKET'S TABLE 13 FOR CATERING ANOTHER DELICIOUS EVENT.
- * SWEET STREET DESSERTS DONATED A NICE ASSORTMENT OF TEMPTING DESSERTS.
- * BARBARA ROSENZWEIG FOR DONATING DELICIOUS HOMEMADE DESSERTS.
- * BRUCE & PIYALI COLE FOR DONATING THEIR TIME AND INGREDIENTS FOR OUR ALCOHOLIC AND NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINKS
- * GRETCHEN PLATT FOR PHOTOGRAPHING THE EVENT.
- * BALIS COMMITTEE: PIYALI COLE, LYNN DRIBEN, SANDRA FISHMAN, JILL HAAS, MARGO LEVIN, MICHELLE MART, BARBARA ROSENZWEIG, LAURIE WAXLER, SUSAN WEISBERG, AND TRACY WEISS.

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Learn more about John Robbins

By Doris Persky Leisawitz
Treasurer

When next you see John Robbins, our synagogue security officer, you will know a bit more about this interesting fellow!

John, 57, grew up in Nescopeck, a small town on the Susquehanna River, just northwest of Hazleton. He has a degree from PCT (Penn State) in automated manufacturing. Over the past 30 years he has worked his way up to the position of plant manager and is in the process of building a new plastics plant in Allentown. He will serve as manager when it is up and running, producing high-end cosmetic packaging.

John has used his skills in industrial automation and robotics and worked in five states and abroad in recent years.

Moving 11 times in 15 years has been no easy feat. He now calls Kempton home and says it is the best place he has ever lived with its beautiful rolling acres of land right outside his front door.

John enjoys spending time with his son, Justin, who recently graduated and works for a large bank. Downtime with his greyhound rescue dog Ruby is always a welcome diversion.

He prefers working on home



projects rather than taking vacations, which is understandable for a guy used to working 70 to 80 hours a week! He enjoys tinkering with his hot rods and race car collection as well as refurbishing his childhood home in Nescopeck. An admitted news junkie, this busy guy will never pass up a good seafood dinner! A lifelong coin collector, he is most proud of his collection of mint Walking Liberty Half Dollars.

His interest in security originated during the pandemic. Security seemed an interesting sideline and one that would keep him busy and engaged when he retires from industry. John also finds gratifica-

tion in serving people and giving back to his community.

In addition to protecting us he is present at other houses of worship, active shooter drills at schools and numerous sporting events. He is grateful for the extensive training he received from his security firm and the state police.

The next time you see this friendly, outgoing and interesting fellow in the vestibule take a moment to express your gratitude for his service to us, maybe strike up a conversation. John Robbins plays an important role in our synagogue life. We are ever so grateful. Thanks, John, you are a mensch.

May 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 No Religious School	29 12 PM Torah Study	30 3:30 PM Hebrew School	1	2 6 PM Happy Hour @ Nitro Bar: West Reading Motor Club	3 6 PM Shabbat Service w/ Cantor Stuart Binder and then Dinner	4 10 AM Haftarah Study
5 9:30 AM Religious School 12 PM Kauffman's Chicken BBQ	6 12 PM Torah Study 7 PM Executive Committee Meeting	7 11 AM Lunch & Learn @ The Highlands 3:30 PM Hebrew School	8 6 PM Judaism Lecture @ Wyomissing Library with Rabbi Michelson	9	10 7:45 PM Sisterhood Shabbat Service	11 10 AM Tot Shabbat w/ Cantor Stuart Binder
12 9:30 AM Religious School	13 12 PM Torah Study 7 PM Executive Committee Meeting	14 3:30 PM Hebrew School	15 7 PM Finance Committee Meeting	16	17 7 PM New Member & Teacher Appreciation Shabbat Service	18 10 AM Tot Shabbat w/ Cantor Stuart Binder 7 PM Kozloff Night of Music
19 9:30 AM Religious School	20 12 PM Torah Study 7 PM Board Meeting	21 3:30 PM Hebrew School	22	23	24 7:45 PM Shabbat Service	25
26 No Religious School	27 Memorial Day RCOS Office Closed	28 No Hebrew School	29	30	31 7 PM Wyomissing Baccalaureate Service 7:45 PM Shabbat Service	1 10 AM Haftarah Study

Give this new member a warm welcome

Steven A. Ehrlich

Retired Army SFC Steven A. Ehrlich, a combat veteran, is a first-generation American born in Brooklyn, N.Y., to Holocaust survivors in 1964. After moving to New Jersey as a child and completing his high school education, Steven enlisted in the New Jersey National Guard while attending Rutgers University.

In 1985, he chose to serve in the regular Army, serving as a military police investigator. Steven retired at the end of 2009. Steven is the father of three children: Conner, 27, and 24-year-old twins Kayla and Wesley. After retirement, he attended Penn State University, majoring in security and risk analysis. Due to a multitude of injuries as a result of his Army service, Steven has been retired for the last 10 years. His relationship with RCOS was fostered by Rabbi Michelson after they met while Steven was a patient in Reading Hospital. As a retiree, Steven plays competitive pool, In the American Pool Players Association. He resides in Exeter Township with his daughter.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP WITH STREAMING

Did you ever wonder how RCOS provides live video of its events on YouTube? Artificial Intelligence? Smart Phone App? Magic? No, four volunteers make this happen. Streaming requires very basic computer capabilities plus the willingness to give some of your time (~1.5 hours). We need a few more volunteers. Old or young doesn't matter, just a desire to help out. After about an hour of training scheduled at your convenience, you too can become a stream producer and take a turn at broadcasting our events.



If interested, contact Steven Levine at levkom2@verizon.net or 484-332-8726.

Teacher Appreciation and New Member Shabbat Friday, May 17th at 7pm



FREE!



Celebrate our
Religious School Teachers and
Welcome our New Members.
Join us for an ice cream oneg
featuring Cherry on Top Ice
Cream Truck immediately
following the service.



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Sunday, May 5th, 2024
12:00 noon - 3:00 pm
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\$10 Quarter Apple Cake

\$13 Kauffman's Chicken BBQ Platter

\$22 Quarter Apple Cake &
Chicken BBQ Combo Platter

\$22 Quart of Jewish Brisket

\$11 Pint of Jewish Brisket

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