

Wood River Jewish Community

THE SHOFAR

Summer 2021



Summertime

A slice for everyone!

Co-Presidents' Message

Susan Green and Josh Kleinman



Summer 2021. A breakthrough summer from a pandemic and a groundbreaking summer for our new WRJC Elkhorn home. It is wonderful to see and feel what appears to be a light at the end of this Covid tunnel.

We recently completed the period from Pesach to Shavuot, universally known as a time of Jewish freedom of receiving the Torah and of liberation of spiritual and personal growth. As a community, we can relate to the idea of freedom and growth, as we too emerge from the pandemic and embrace a return to normal with our families and community members.

As the summer approaches and more of us are vaccinated, we will be moving forward cautiously, and over the next few months, our WRJC community events will evolve.

Our Shabbat services will be held outdoors, many at the Botanical gardens. We are planning our SV Jewish Film Festival, Ladies Lunch, and our annual Shabbat picnic. Rabbi Robbi, Claudie Goldstein our Executive Director, and our Board of Directors have worked tirelessly to bring back some normalcy to our summer activities. We look forward to seeing our community members and families at many of these events!

We are most excited to announce our first WRJC groundbreaking ceremony for our new home this summer. Our BOD recently passed motions accepting Daniel Hollis's architectural plans for our new home and have agreed in principal to move forward with Petersen Brothers Construction as our contractor.

Our executive members Jeff Rose and Judy Teller Kaye and their committees have been instrumental in moving these plans forward, and for leading the fundraising for our new home. Marty Lyon, a past president of our WRJC and Chairman of our building committee, has devoted hundreds of hours leading us through this exciting project. Marty, your dedication and focus over the last few months has been remarkable.

Kol Hakavod to all our members who have worked on many committees in helping the WRJC and all our members achieve this dream.

All the best & stay healthy.

Josh Kleinman - Co - President
Sue Green - Co - President



DATE: Sunday, July 25th

TIME: 10:00 am

LOCATION: 95 Badeyana Drive, Sun Valley



GROUNDBREAKING

CEREMONY

Join with our community for a nosh as we celebrate the groundbreaking for our new WRJC home in Elkhorn.
Judy Meyer and Gail Stern are planning a fun event in our first very own building!
Rabbi Robbi will lead us in prayer to bless this soon to be sacred space.
Our building co-chairs Jeff Rose and Marty Lyon will give us an update on the design and layout of our synagogue.

Come celebrate our future together!

Please RSVP to Judy at Judith@judithmeyer.com or Gail at gailstern@comcast.net

Congratulations!

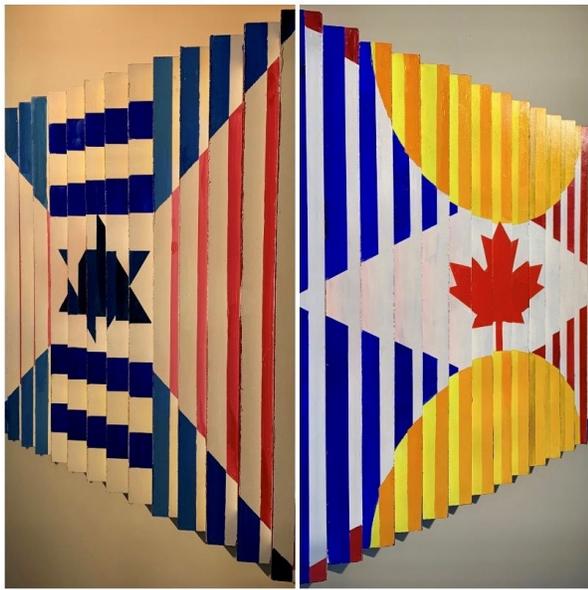
To our WRJC Co-President Josh Kleinman!

About a month ago, Josh Kleinman entered his first (virtual) woodcarving show based in BC that had about 250 entries from the US, Canada and about 12 countries. He entered two of his 3D Agamographs into the NOVICE division

1. Canada / Israel Flag won First prize & Best of Division
2. Chanukah Agamograph won 2nd place



RICHMOND CARVERS
VIRTUAL WOODCARVING SHOW
2021



RICHMOND CARVERS
VIRTUAL WOODCARVING SHOW
2021



UPDATE: WRJC PERMANENT HOME & SUN VALLEY'S FIRST SYNAGOGUE

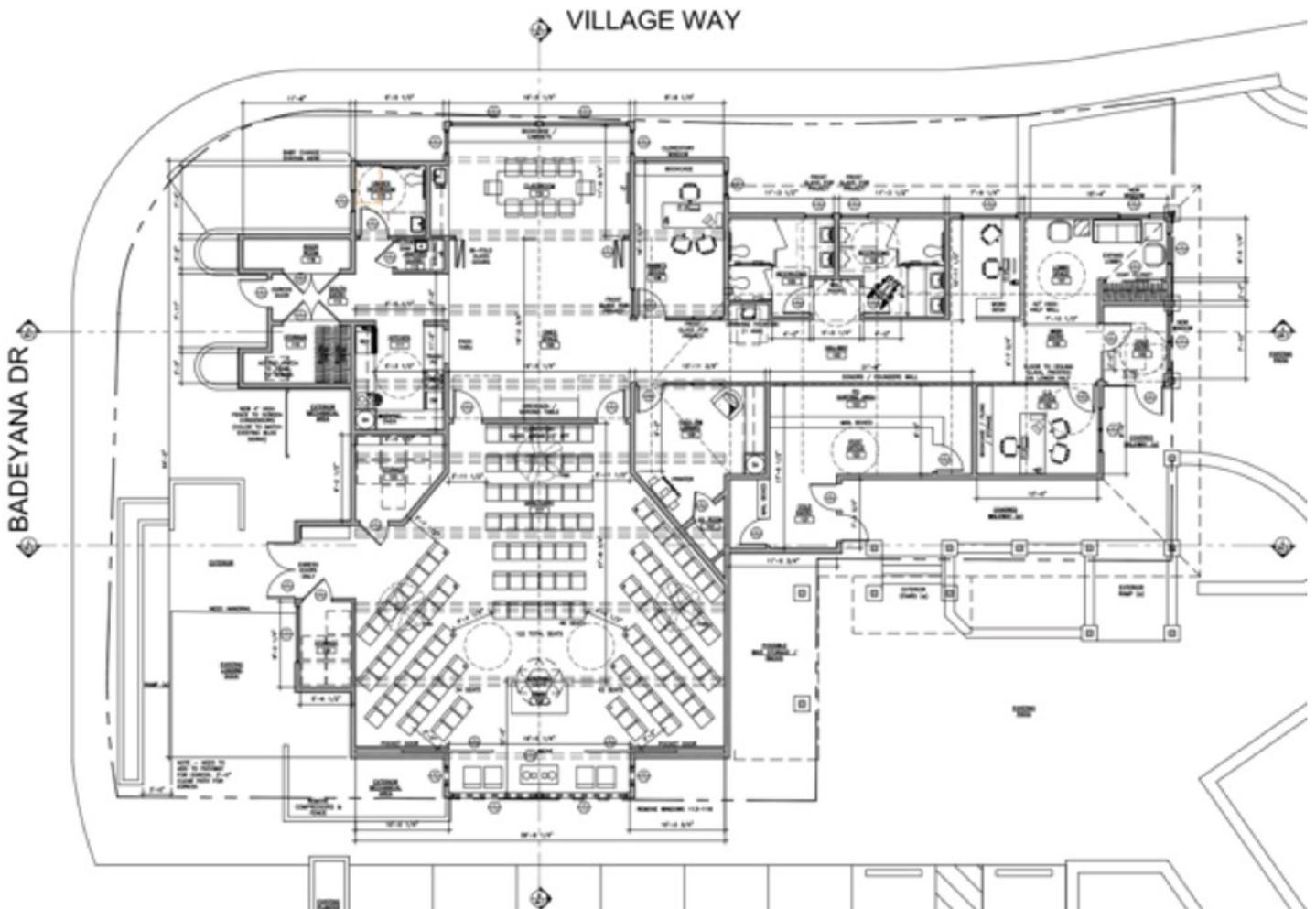
It is an honor to bring you an update on the birth of our community's first Jewish synagogue and the WRJC's permanent home, blessed by giving from many of you who committed your significant 2020 charitable giving. With a view ahead to total community giving - where everyone in the Wood River Valley and WRJC community can donate at the level at which they desire.

We will have the building's groundbreaking on July 25th, and we invite all of you, your friends, and your families to our Groundbreaking Ceremony at our new home at 95 Badeyana in Sun Valley's Elkhorn Village.

Our architectural firm, Ketchum-based firm Hollis Partners (HP), led by Daniel Hollis, has completed our initial plans. Below you will see our building's layout. We are now engaging a designer to work with HP to bring the feeling of our Wood River community, both aesthetically and spiritually, to our new home. In doing this, we are designing a space that will be used primarily by the WRJC and be flexible to share with the community, both providing rental income to the WRJC and service to the Sun Valley Community. While surpassed our 2020 giving amount of \$1.75M, contributions today continue from WRJC members, members of our greater Jewish community, and non-Jewish friends of the WRJC. And we hope to have WRJC total community giving - at whatever level you feel comfortable as a donor, founding donor, or even co-naming the building. All the information is on our website www.wrjc.org.

Thank you,

Jeff Rose & Marty Lyon, Co-Chairs of the WRJC Building Committee and its members; Ron Greenspan, Phil Goldstein, Julianne Roos, Judith Teller-Kaye, Robert Safron and Claudie Goldstein.



Rabbi's Message

Putting the *Mitzvah* in *B'nai Mitzvah*

This issue of the Shofar has something that no other Shofar has ever had – the inclusion of 7 of our 10 B'nai Mitzvah kids this summer and fall and their stories. For those of you from larger communities, 10 B'nai Mitzvah may seem like a drop in the bucket, but for a small, often part-time community like the WRJC, it is nothing short of a miracle, and reflects our growth and the WRJC's commitment to these wonderful families who have given us the privilege of teaching, guiding and cheering on their young adults.



A Brief History of Bar Mitzvah

The history of Bar Mitzvah, translated as “son of the commandments”, goes back to the 2nd century C.E. according to the Mishnah. A father is responsible to fulfill certain obligations for his sons, including circumcising him, entering him into the covenant of Abraham, teaching him Torah, a craft, and to swim as well as finding him a bride (Kiddushin 29a). Sometime in the 4th century C.E. for the first time, a 13-year-old boy receive an *aliyah* (Hebrew for “to ascend”) to the reading desk on the *bimah* on a given Shabbat to read verses of Torah. After 500 C.E., boys younger than 13 were called for an *aliyah* and occasionally laid *tefillin* (bound small leather boxes containing Torah verses) to their forehead and arm, as prescribed in the Torah for worship. Until the age of 13, religious practice is voluntary; at 13, the *mitzvot* become obligatory.

Mordechai Ben Hillel used the term “bar mitzvah” for the first time in the 14th century. During the 16th and 17th centuries in Germany and Eastern Europe, the laying of *tefillin* and receiving an *aliyah* became the most important features of bar mitzvah. It also became customary for the family to sponsor a party – at home or in the synagogue – following the ceremony. In Poland, the bar mitzvah gave a *d'rash* (interpretation) of the Torah portion of the week, or for more talented and bright students, on a matter of Tamudic law. Boys with pleasant singing voices were encouraged to chant Torah. Those with exceptional voices also led the community in worship.

A Brief History of Bat Mitzvah

On March 18, 1922, Judith Kaplan, the 13-year-old daughter of Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, the founder of Reconstructionist Judaism, became the first young girl to celebrate her Bat Mitzvah in America. The ceremony, at which she recited the blessings and read from the Torah, took place at her father's synagogue, the Society for Advancement of Judaism in New York City. Despite Judith's pioneering role, the bat mitzvah did not become commonplace until the 1970's. Today, in Reform, Reconstructionist, and Conservative Judaism, girls and women have the same religious rights and obligations as boys and men. As such, *b'not mitzvah* (plural of bat mitzvah) read Torah, lead services and offer *d'verei Torah* (sermons) publicly in synagogues. In recent years, the role of women in Orthodox synagogue life has changed and today, some modern Orthodox communities hold women's *minyonom* (prayer quorums) at which girls read publicly from the Torah.

Tikkun Olam: the repair of the World

We have really emphasized the “Mitzvah” – in our BBMP (Bar/Bat Mitzvah Prep) group – the word *mitzvah* means “commandment” and is also defined as a “good deed” - we are commanded to do good deeds in Judaism. Each of our candidates were instructed to find an organization that could use their help in performing the Jewish tenant of *tikkun olam*, and we emphasized how the actions of one person can make a difference in the lives of those who are not as fortunate as they are.

It Takes a Kibbutz

In BBMP class, our kids learned an important Jewish-themed lesson, a Hebrew word of the week (contemporary words spoken by Israelis their age) and, a prayer of the week. We had intense, intimate conversations about being Jewish in challenging times, discussions about Israel, antisemitism and so much more. In the Before Times (and hopefully again soon!) small, private pandemic-aware services such as we are having this year will make way once again to the congregation being invited to attend the service, as it is traditional to invite the community that has supported you to the service, although a celebration later can be more intimate with family and close friends in attendance.

WRJC's B'nai Mitzvah Process

It is truly a team effort: Our amazing success this year in the numbers of young people who have come forward to be a link in the chain of Jewish tradition through hard work and study has truly inspired us. It is so true that "it takes a kibbutz" to raise a young Jewish adult! It takes financial support from the community, inspiration from our teachers and our *madrichim* (classroom helpers), Eden Rose and Bryce Kanowsky; Claudie's efforts to help in all ways possible; committed parents; curious students; and most of all, a most excellent and dedicated education partner. Morah (a title for an honored teacher) Dana Berntson, has been invaluable, and she co-teaches the BBMP class (and the younger classes as well); and also serves as the tutor for the majority of our kids. Morah Dana and I decided that we wanted our kids to be able to walk into a synagogue anywhere in the world and be able to take part in the prayers – and, to understand what they are praying! We know that every Jewish community has their own *minhag* - or customs - when it comes to melodies in worship. Morah Dana has a background with the Conservative movement, and my cantorial and rabbinic training was Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist and Renewal, so finding common melodies was a great challenge we enjoyed! We are intentionally teaching the more "traditional" common melodies and every young adult who goes through our program will lead the majority of the prayers for both Shabbat services; read from the Torah; give a *d'var Torah* and will be able to, at any given time, lead prayers for our community and for other communities they may encounter in their lives. Although we do not have a post B'nai Mitzvah program (yet!), we hope to be able to include and support these accomplished young people well beyond a successful weekend. For example, it has been such an honor to have been asked to write college recommendations for our kids.



Dana Berntson, our Sunday school teacher

B'nai Mitzvah Roll Call!

Mazel tov to our WRJC B'nai Mitzvah in the last year: Rowan Desler, daughter of Michael and Keri; Riley Siegel, daughter of Julie and Neil; Moise Bicas, son of Tamar Dolgen and Sergio Bicas; Sofia Delgado, daughter of Rick and Jami; Jack Margolin, son of Alex Margolin and Deanna Harned; Ella Will, daughter of Court and Michelle (participating from Mercer Island, WA), Ben and Abe Gross, sons of Dayna and Marlen; Gemma Cooper, daughter of Misha and Kit (participating from Santa Barbara, CA) and Lila Pinizzotto, daughter of Scott Pinizzotto and Alli Frank (participating from Seattle, WA).

You are just beginning your Jewish journey, so to you we say: Chazak/Chazakah v'nitchazeik! Be strong, be strong, let us strengthen one another!

~ Rabbi Robbi & Morah Dana



**SUNDAY, JULY 18 at 10:00am
at the office**

The Board convenes its Annual Meeting & Election. This is an opportunity to update the community on the status of the organization and to reflect on the past year of events and accomplishments.

Present the 2021-2022 Operation Budget .
Elect Board Members . Report of Committee Chairs.

About Our Sunday School Children

Amelie Ries

Thank you for choosing me as one of the students to be featured in this magazine. I really appreciate it.

In the Wood River Jewish Community's Sunday school program, we are learning about Jewish history and culture. For example, why was the holiday Purim created? The holiday Purim was created first, because we are all alive, second in honor of a young heroine named Esther.

I love Sunday school because of my teacher Dana's enthusiasm. It is a treat that not all teachers have. The kids in my class are very nice and bright. I am 9 years old.

We are learning about the history of the Jews and our cultures. In class I like the format and structure of the learning platform. I also like the videos in class.



Gemma Cooper

Gemma Cooper is celebrating her Bat Mitzvah on Sept. 24, 2021. Gemma lives in Santa Barbara but feels just at home in Sun Valley. She loves to write short stories, bake tasty treats, play the violin, spend time with her friends and help plan trips and outings for her family. She also enjoys volleyball, hiking and running. When she has downtime, you will find her curled up with a book or snuggling with her dogs, Freddy and Wolf.



Lila Pinizzotto

My name is Lila, I am thirteen years old and I am in the BMMPS Sunday school group.

I like Sunday school because Rabbi Robbi and Morah Dana always have fun ways of teaching us about the religious and cultural parts of being Jewish. I have learned a lot since I've started Sunday school and I am excited to learn even more.



Ella Will

Ella is going to become a Bat Mitzvah on July 24, 2021 at the Roundhouse on Bald Mountain. Ella originally planned to have her Bat Mitzvah on Mercer Island in WA, but like many of us, her plans were upended by Covid. Fast forward a year, with her family's connection to our community further strengthened after spending much of the last year at Ella's grandparents' home in Hailey, and after a conversation with Rabbi Robbi, the family knew that having a more intimate and special ceremony in person in Sun Valley just felt right. Ella has prepared for her Bat Mitzvah, despite all the challenges the last year threw at her, with an immense amount of dedication. Ella's depth of knowledge from her Judaic studies is impressive and her commitment to her faith is unwavering. She takes initiative, is self-motivated and demonstrates an incredible amount of maturity.



Lexi Pinizzotto

Hi I am Lexi, I'm nine years old and I'm a part of the Wood River Jewish Community Sunday School.

First I will start off by saying that the Sunday school teachers are funny, nice, kind, and my teacher is Dana. Second is I learn so much about holidays and people who changed the world for Jews. Lastly Sunday school is interactive even over zoom and all the kids are fun.



BECOME A

MEMBER

JOIN TODAY!

**Contact Claudie Goldstein
208-726-1183**



Jack Alexander Margolin

Jack is finishing the 7th grade and is currently attending The Sage School in Hailey. His after-school interests include lacrosse, alpine skiing, piano lessons, hip hop dance, and building forts with friends. In other free time, he is an avid trampoline jumper, enjoys playing video games with friends, and helps out a lot around the house. He loves listening to music, a passion handed down from both of his parents. His favorite dessert is a root beer float, and he would be delighted to eat ramen for every meal, although pizza and Mexican are pretty close seconds.

Jack's great-grandfather (Julius Margolin) survived a Russian Gulag during World War II and his grandfather (Ephraim Margolin) grew up in Israel. His unique lineage has given Jack a deeper understanding of his Jewish heritage and of the injustices of war and repression.

Jack's torah portion for his Bar Mitzvah is Bechukotai, which is the same Torah portion his father (Alex Margolin) read in 1978. At the beginning of his Hebrew studies, Jack was not too excited about his Bar Mitzvah. However, over the years, as he has learned more of the context of the

Bar Mitzvah, and its importance to his ancestors and family, he knows that he will be glad he spent this time learning. As Jack progressed in his Hebrew lessons this past year, he truly enjoyed his time spent with super morah Dana, his Saba, Rabbi Robbi, and learning the Hebrew language. He says, "Becoming a Bar Mitzvah means I am coming of age. That means that I am old enough to be responsible for my actions, and to help my community, which will make a better world. My chosen mitzvah project is to create a food drive for the Hunger Coalition in Hailey. I am asking people for food donations and delivering the food to the Hunger Coalition."



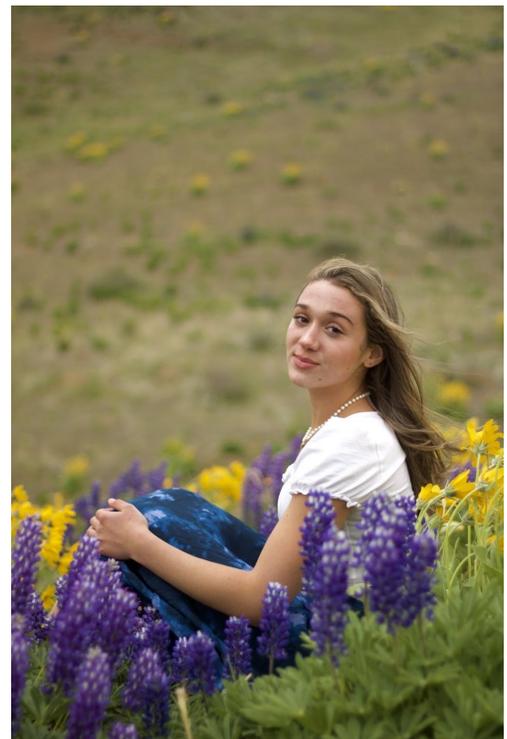
Jack's mitzvah project helps families who don't have enough to eat. Jack appreciates that he is in a position to help others, and hopes that his example of helping his small community will inspire others to help, and that will help the larger world.

Sofia Rose Delgado became a Bat Mitzvah on June 5, 2021.

Sofia lives in Hailey with her parents, Jami and Rick, her two brothers, Gabe and D.J., and her two labs, Cosmo and Kobe. Sofia attended Wood River Middle School as an 8th grader this year and will be attending Sun Valley Community School in the fall. Sofia loves to play volleyball and participated in an elite travel team this spring. She loves to sing, hike, be outdoors and travel.

For her mitzvah project, Sofia is bringing awareness about Eating Disorders to our community by handing out informational bags and wrist bands to teens. Additionally, she created a fundraising page to donate to the National Association of Eating Disorders. This organization is instrumental in supporting individuals and families who are struggling to combat eating disorders. Additionally, it offers a 24-hour hotline, resources, support groups, recommended providers and treatment programs, advocates for legislative policies and supports academic research in the field.

For more information about NEDA, go to <https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org>



Rabbi Robbi's Upcoming Summer Classes



If you can decode Hebrew, YOU can chant Torah!
You do not need a beautiful voice to do so - just a beautiful heart!
(and it's fun!)

LEARN TO CHANT TORAH!

Rabbi Robbi is offering a series of weekly classes this summer & fall (for those who have taken the 1st and 2nd modules of Morah Dana's Hebrew class, this is the 3rd part of that series). No charge.

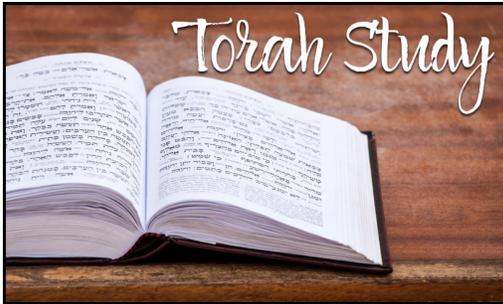
Please register at 208.726.1183 or contact Rabbi Robbi at rabirobbei@wrjc.org



ADULT B'NAI MITZVAH CLASS

Even if you have already become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah in your youth, this is an opportunity for you to learn or re-learn these ancient prayers from an adult lens along with other adult students. You must be able to decode Hebrew and a pre-requisite is the Trope class. We anticipate a great class coming together for their B'nai Mitzvah next summer or fall.

If you are interested, please contact Rabbi Robbi at rabirobbei@wrjc.org



Wednesday Night Torah Study at 7:00pm Wednesdays, July 21, August 4, August 11

Throughout the summer, Rabbi Robbi will be offering Torah study based on the weekly Torah Parashah (Reading)

Community hike and Torah talk with Rabbi Robbi

On August 21 at 10:00am
Led by Ted and Margaret Gold

Location to be announced.

More info: Contact Margaret at margaretgering@hotmail.com



Let's Play
Mah-jongg

Co-hosts:
Julie Weil and
Margery Friedlander

More info: weiljulie58@gmail.com
mgfriedlander@gmail.com

SUMMER LADIES LUNCH

TOGETHER LIVE AND IN-PERSON!

Ladies, mark your calendars for Tuesday August 17.

We will all meet together once again and celebrate friendship and sisterhood.
Co-chairs Ellen Fastow, Sammy Mailman and Vicki Shapiro
are planning a lovely luncheon event at The Valley Club.

\$40 members. \$45 Non members



Name: _____

Members attending: _____

Non Members attending: _____

\$ _____

\$ _____

Check to be mailed to WRJC POB 837. Ketchum, ID 83340
Call 208-726-1183 or Email: wrjc@wrjc.org



Co-Hosts | Sponsors

Dolgen-Bicas Family | Rose Family | Bloom Kurtz family | Gershater Family
Juli and Michael Roos | Joanne and Elliott Mercer | Eileen and Fred Prager
Cathy and Phil Goldstein | Penny and Buzz Coe | Judy and David Kaye
Susan Passovoy and Bob Kaplan

The Annual WRJC PICNIC SHABBAT



FRIDAY, JULY 30 at 5:00pm
SAWTOOTH BOTANICAL GARDEN

Welcoming back all of our community to come together for an evening of fun, friends, prayer and song, kids activities and more...

Bring your family and friends, Everyone's invited. The picnic is free of charge

BBQ Dinner and drinks will be provided
Please bring your favorite dessert for 8 people

BE A SPONSOR:

Maitre D: \$500

Chef: \$250

Cook:\$100

Server: \$50

Dinner :\$25

Name: _____

Members or friends attending: _____

Children attending: _____

I will be a sponsor: _____

Check to be mailed to WRJC POB 837. Ketchum, ID 83340 or email the office at wrjc@wrjc.org



SAVE THE DATES!

Sunday, July 25
Monday, July 26
Tuesday, July 27



2021 Sun Valley Jewish Film Festival

presented by the Wood River Jewish Community

VENUE: SUN VALLEY OPERA HOUSE

The Film Festival is only made possible with the generous help from our community of supporters. Your contribution, large or small, is the key to the Festival's success.

BECOME A FILM FESTIVAL SPONSOR

Producer: \$2,000
Publisher: \$1,000
Director: \$500
Actor: \$250
Screenwriter: \$100
Supporter: \$50

Donate online at www.wrjc.org or send your deductible donation to: PO Box 837, Ketchum, ID 83340



Linda Cooper, Chair. Jay Cooper. Buzz Coe. Penny Coe. Stan and Harriet Joseph. Fran Michael . Karen Saks. Ken and Vonnice Molkner. Ellen and Joseph Fastow. Lois Rosen . Bob Safran.



If you are a knitter, if you would like to learn to knit, or if you participated in our knitting project last winter for the I Have A Dream Foundation, this event is for you!

Please join us for afternoon tea at Candice Stark's home. We will celebrate your accomplishments and brainstorm and plan new knitting projects to support our vital organizations here in the Wood River Valley.

Our goal is to deliver even more beautiful, hand knitted items this fall and winter.

With a summer head start, we will even have time to teach new knitters who would like to participate and make a difference.

RSVP for address by July 16. Coni Foster 786-382-6359 or conifoster@hotmail.com
Please do not hesitate to contact Coni with questions. All are welcome. Thank you!!



Have you ever wished you could converse in Hebrew?

Now is your chance to learn some conversational Hebrew in a relaxed setting with two of our very own, Sergio Bicas and Dana Berntson!

Join them this summer on Thursday evenings, 5-6pm, in the park for lessons in conversational Hebrew. Classes will be held at Rotary Park in Ketchum or TBD depending on the lesson (i.e. shopping at farmer's market, Atkinsons etc.) All levels are welcome, you do not need to know how to read Hebrew. Take one lesson, take them all! Class Fee: Donation

Class Dates: July 1, 8, 15, Aug 5, 12, 19, Sept 2, 9, 25

Please REGISTER: danahenry17@gmail.com

The Algebra Cheaters



problems if their lives depended on this? Ach, maybe but probably not, huh?”

I don't really understand what he's asking me, what he might say next, or where he's headed with his seemingly disjointed comments and questions. One thing of which I am absolutely positive—my father's talk is a lesson that will be tied to the five numbers tattooed on his right arm. “You know my numbers?” He asks me. His question is rhetorical. “I passed such tests like what those *nicht guttnick* (no good) cheater boys never in their whole lives would imagine there could be! And you know something else?” He adds, “Still, I know nothing from the answers. Maybe you could say because of this, I'm also a cheater, huh?” He laughs at his last remark, inhaling with an airy little sniff that suggests he's greatly amused by his own verbal cleverness.

At home, during dinner, I sit next to my father at the kitchen table. I tell him about my cheater classmates, about the ways in which they write on their arms, how much it disturbs me and how much willpower it takes for me not pick up my books and move to a different seat. First, he grimaces. A second later, his face is transformed by the cynical smile with which I'm more than familiar. When his sleeves are rolled-up, I see his numbers and they, too, look as though they were scribbled on his arm. They appear to be a faded black — more like charcoal gray, and are followed by the geometric symbol of great significance. The symbol, a triangle, is a special code designating him as a Jew, that triangle representing one-half of the Star of David.

In the decades since he was marked with them, my father's numbers have seeped into his skin so deeply, they reach down into the very core of his soul. Unlike my cheater-classmates, he was anything but the master of his own skin scribbles.

“So nu?” he asks me in his Polish-accented English, “Do you think for these boys who do such writing on their skin, they have answers? You know something what I learned?” He asks. “Maybe these boys will pass their algebra quizzes by their cheating, yes?”

I shrug my shoulders, not sure what my response should be and wonder if there is a correct answer to his questions. But my father continues. “What I want to know is if these boys, these cheaters, would be able to solve important

“So, you know I never cheated in math, yes? But you know what else? For sure I cheated at death! Those boys what are in this class of yours? Do you really think that for *eine sekunde* (one second) their cheating would for them help if they had to pass the staying-alive tests like what I had to pass —every second of every day of every month for those four years when I was in hell?”

What I do come to realize, during our dinner conversation, is that in my next math quiz-day, whatever distress I may experience upon seeing the cheaters' arms is likely to be replaced by different emotions. Maybe I'll regard them as fools? Or will I feel pity for them? Because I now realize that their lack of awareness, lack of worldliness, and their naïveté about cheating versus knowing would, under different circumstances, surely be their death sentences.

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Marlene Samuels earned her Ph.D. from University of Chicago where she serves on the Advisory Council to the Graduate School, Social Sciences Division.

About our members: Candice Stark and Leslie Kaplan

Last December, as a response to Covid and so many of us being “locked down” and isolated, our ED, Claudie Goldstein, reached out to Leslie Kaplan and Candice Stark to organize some on-line zoom cooking classes. Claudie had introduced Leslie and Candice at a Shabbat service several years ago and they have been fast friends ever since.

Many of you participated in our Zoom Cooking Classes and many of you were our honorary chefs. Thanks to all for your participation. We hope to start classes back up in the fall.

And please check out our web-site for the recorded cooking classes and recipes. They are informative, fun and, sometimes, hilarious. Link to website: www.wrjc.org



Left to right: Marty and Leslie Kaplan, Candice and Richard Stark.

With their approval, we took a peek at an e-mail conversation between Leslie and Candice. Read on!

Hey, Les!

Can't wait to see you. It's been too long!

We just got back from a family beach vacation at Litchfield Beach in SC. Had a big crowd because, as you know, SC is “home” for me ... even though I lived in California for 30 years and am now full time in Ketchum! We had 11 in the house including my hubby, Richard and son, JD, who's 22. The crew included my mom, Betty (who will be 90 in September and is ah-mazing) and my step-father, my brother and his wife and two boys, my sister-in-law and her 22-year-old son and his adorable very southern girlfriend.

We had a blast. The beach was a short walk, we had a fantastic porch with incredible views of the marsh, and the weather was perfect. I feel like it was a “normal” vacation after the last crazy year. Really an amazing week.

So, how was your trip to Seattle and Montana? See your family? Is Syd still in town? What are you guys up to? Let's get together!

Talk soon!

Xo Candice

Hi Candice,

I really miss you! Your family beach trip sounds fabulous, a perfect getaway from the spring thaw. It was nice to be in Seattle but Maggie (the dog) much prefers to "free roam" in Ketchum. Plus, she missed Wallis lol (Candice's dog.) She was counting the days. We had a nice but short visit in Missoula with my sister and her family. We picked up my dad (Leonard, 95) and brought him with us back to Ketchum. He's been doing well since we moved him out of our family home in the DC area. He'll stay with us for several weeks; a good change of scenery for everyone. So glad to be back in

these beautiful mountains.

It was great to have Sydney (daughter, 21) with us in Seattle and Ketchum. She just went back to NYC to start her internship for the summer. She'll be back in August for a family gathering and some hiking and backpacking before she starts her senior year at NYU. Where does the time go?

Love to see you and Richard! How's JD?

Xo Les

Hey Les,

Well, good news! JD is moving to Bozeman to go to school at Montana State. He's moving on July 9th. Our house is going to be a morgue! He plans to go to school part time and work part time. We just nailed down an apartment for him today which is a relief because housing rentals are hard to come by. He and Richard are out at Bigwood playing golf this afternoon and I just played pickleball. It was freakin' hot! I'm also still playing a lot of tennis and have started playing in a USTA league.

Hey, I just want to say how much fun it was to do those on-line zoom cooking classes for the WRJC with you. How many did we have? Seven? All our chefs did such a good job. Have you got those on our website at WRJC now? Are you up for starting that back up in the fall?

Let's take a hike soon!

Xo Candice

Hey Candice,

I'm so happy for JD. An exciting new adventure for him! Marty and Richard should connect and play golf. Marty was a golfer in high school and college and has continued to play on and off. He can give Richard some tips lol. I've been getting out for rides on my new mountain bike; it's a whole different piece of machinery than my old bike. It's super fun, rolls right over the big rocks and the suspension is cush! I'm impressed you're playing tennis in a league now; I'll have to come watch a match.

I agree, the cooking classes were fabulous. Our chefs were amazing and so game to do it; I really appreciated that. We had great turnouts from the community; I think

people loved being able to connect as a community even if it was over Zoom. The other thing I love about the classes is the connection it gives us to our Jewish roots. Food is such an important part of any culture and we learned a lot about different family traditions around food. Got me thinking about some of my mom's specialty Jewish dishes and how important they were in our own family rituals. My favorite are her cheese blintzes which she served with her canned peaches. It was part of our traditional "break the fast" meal at Yom Kippur.

I would love to continue the classes in the fall and perhaps we can even begin to do some "in-person" classes. We need to find chefs with big kitchens!

Xo Les

Here's to summer hiking, barbecues, and maybe a concert? And to getting those cooking classes going again in the fall! Candice and Leslie

Please welcome Leslie Kaplan who is now working part-time at the WRJC office assisting Claudie with anything and everything . Leslie and her husband Marty are members of the WRJC, from Seattle, and now, since their daughter is away at college they are spending more of their time in Ketchum. Leslie is a retired CFO, having held many finance positions in a variety of start ups in the biotech, software and internet sectors. She began her career in finance at Bristol Meyers in NYC, after earning her MBA from Cornell. She is originally from the Washington, DC area.

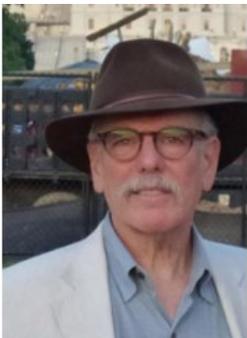


His passion is small towns and old buildings.

He first came to Idaho in the summer of 1972 to help a friend renovate an old building in Boise called The White Savage, which still stands today, in use for its original purpose as an apartment building. But that is far from the whole story of Alan Minskoff.

Alan Minskoff is a true renaissance man. And, although I have not yet met her, dare I say that his wife Royanne possesses those same qualities. In addition to saving old buildings, Alan is a writer, an author, an editor, an entrepreneur, a college professor, a magazine publisher, a philanthropist, a lover of small towns, and an evangelist for urban renewal and historic preservation.

Alan Minskoff was born and raised in Westchester County, NY, the youngest of three children. Along side other Jewish families in New York, his family was a major developer of office properties in New York City and environs. The firm was founded by Alan's grandfather Samuel in 1908. But as we already know, Alan chose a divergent path for himself.



After graduating from Lehigh University, Alan made his way west to the University of Chicago where he was pursuing a master's degree in The History of Culture. It was during his studies there that he heeded the call of a classmate and friend, and in 1972 headed to

Boise to work on the renovation of The White Savage Apartments.

But Alan always wanted to write. He considers himself a journalist, not an academic. James Baldwin was an inspiration. And, remember, he cares about old buildings. After the renovation of The White Savage, Alan joined an organization called Friends of Old Buildings to preserve Boise's historic structures. It evolved into the magazine Idaho Heritage, which was dedicated to small towns, old buildings, and the arts.

"If I had to look back at my life and say what was an achievement, the fact that we saved most of the buildings we identified in the first issue of Idaho Heritage is very satisfying," Minskoff said.

This was the time of America's bicentennial and there was renewed interest in the history of the country's evolution. The staff at Idaho Heritage

applied for and won a grant and, in 1976 and 1977, Alan travelled to small towns around the state, all under 1,000 in population, to tell the stories of these communities. In total he visited 24 towns. Forty years later, Alan would go on to revisit many of those towns to see how they were faring. From these travels came the book *The Idaho Traveler*.



But we're getting ahead of our story.

Royanne Klein was raised in Boise. Alan and Royanne first met in Boise in the 1970's. She was a recent theater graduate from Boise State University. Ironically, Royanne soon moved to New York City to work for the Owens Corning Fiberglas Company. Alan returned to NYC in 1982 to work in his family's business. It was while he was back in NY that he and Royanne reconnected. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Alan and Royanne married and returned to Boise in 1984. Alan wanted to get back to his true passion of preserving history and worked editing magazines.

Alan has participated in building preservation efforts in and around Boise, including the Idanha, the Egyptian and The Cabin. He continued his journalist efforts as editor of Boise Magazine, Boise Journal and McCall, ArtIdaho.

Royanne pivoted and became the managing general partner of their family's real estate portfolio. During that time, Alan and Royanne had two children, Hank and Laura. They live most of the year in Boise and spend three months in Ketchum and have enjoyed many wonderful times here in the valley with their family. The Minskoff family have been long time members and supporters of the WRJC.

In addition, Alan and Royanne are well known for their leadership and philanthropic work in many of Boise's non-profit organizations. Royanne was chair of the Boise State Foundation, she also chaired Idaho Public Television's Foundation. Alan serves on the board of Idaho Heritage Trust

(which has funded more than 500 projects in Idaho), and they were co-chairs of the Idaho Shakespeare Festival capital campaign, just to name a few.

Oh, and did I mention, Alan is a writer?

In 2001, Alan joined the faculty of the College of Idaho where he directs the journalism department. Alan and Royanne believe so strongly in the journalism program at C of I that they recently endowed a scholarship for journalism students at the college.

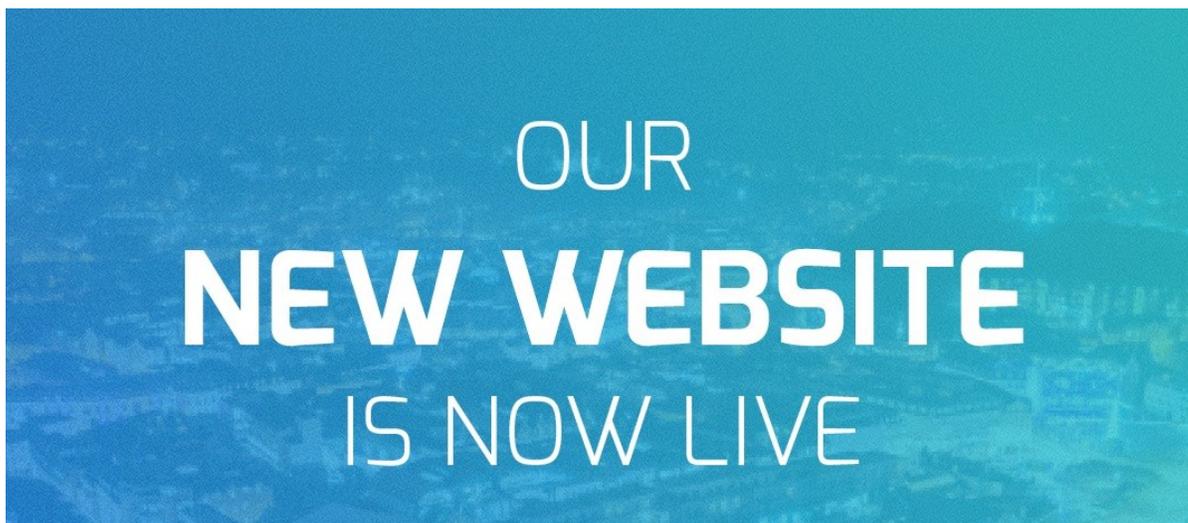
Over the years Alan has written many pieces, both poetry and prose, and published in many journals and magazines. In addition to the 2019 publication of his book *The Idaho Traveler*, Alan researched and wrote the book *Idaho Wine Country*, the first comprehensive exploration of the state's emerging wine industry. The book was published in 2010.

While Alan and Royanne are still very much involved in their professional and philanthropic pursuits, their family takes front and center. Both of their children live in New York City. Son Hank



works with a developer of affordable housing and daughter Laura is an executive coach. Alan and Royanne are recent grandparents, Hank and his wife Jen have a new baby girl! And Laura and her fiancé Matt are getting married right here in Sun Valley in October.

If you see Alan and Royanne around town please ask them to elaborate on any of the fascinating things they have done in their lives so far!



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

When Curious George Made a Daring Escape From the Nazis

The authors of the children's book series fled wartime France with the manuscript tied to their bikes

By Jeff MacGregor

Article submitted by Penny Leopold

Practical, unflappable, loving, forgiving, patient—the Man in the Yellow Hat is who we would all like to be. Curious George is who we are. Well-meaning and disastrous, impulsive and forgetful, selfish and ingenious and in constant need of forgiveness. He may be the most human character in postwar literature.

And he arrived with nothing, a refugee, to become a world-wide sensation—the ultimate American story, one worth remembering on the 75th anniversary of the publication of *Curious George* and with an upcoming documentary about his irrepressible creators.

On May 10, 1940, Adolf Hitler sent three million troops through the Low Countries into France. Parisians fled by the hundreds of thousands before the Germans captured their city on June 14. Among them a young couple, German Jews who had been living in Paris for just four years. They had waited too long. There wasn't a car or a bicycle left in the city. The husband bought every spare part he could find and built two bikes from scratch. At 5:30 on the morning of June 12, they rode out of Paris with a monkey hidden in the basket.

Hans Reyersbach and his wife, Margarete Waldstein, were artists from Hamburg, but they had met in Rio de Janeiro. Hans had moved there in 1925 after serving in World War I. He sketched and painted, and sold plumbing fixtures up and down the Amazon. Margarete, a photographer, arrived a decade later. If Hans was dreamy and sweet, Margarete was ambitious and unsentimental. They were perfect for each other. They were married in Rio in 1935 and honeymooned in Paris and never got around to leaving—until they pedaled away with the manuscript and art for what would become one of the most popular children's books of the 20th century.

That first day they rode 30 miles south to Étampes. They could still hear the German shelling. The next day they made it to Acquebouille, another 20 miles south, and slept a fitful night in a barn. Then to Orléans, exhausted, where they squeezed onto a packed train—one of the last. Eleven days and almost 1,000 miles after leaving Paris, they rolled into Lisbon, where they waited months to cross the Atlantic to Brazil. At last they sailed for New York City.



In America, a friend named Grace Hogarth had just been hired as a children's book editor at Houghton Mifflin. She saw a kind of bravery in the book's optimism. "It took courage to print and publish colorful books in a gray wartime world," she later recalled. She signed them to a four-book contract, and "Fifi," their primate protagonist, was renamed "George."

You can find the day-to-day, even hour-by-hour notations of their escape in Hans' meticulous notebooks, saved at the University of Southern Mississippi, in a collection that bears the couple's pen names: H. A. and Margret Rey. The trove was the basis for Louise Borden's book *The Journey That Saved Curious George*, reissued this year, and has been a gold mine for documentary filmmaker Emma Ryan Yamazaki, whose film about the Reys and Curious George is to arrive on the festival circuit next year. "It was because of who they were that they were able to make Curious George," she says.

How much of any author finds its way into a character? Like Margarete and Hans, George rides a bike and dreams of flying. Of escape. Every story in every book is a series of close calls. George needs help and people give it. Like most of us, he doesn't set out to commit mischief. His curiosity propels him, and he just gets caught up in the gears of circumstance. In that way maybe he reminds parents how children learn and offers a subtle commentary on the slapstick dangers of fate and conformity.

So far 75 million copies of the *Curious George* books have been sold worldwide in over a dozen languages. But the monkey who escaped the Nazis in a bicycle basket never had a closer call than his very first.

This article is a selection from the November issue of Smithsonian magazine

Why Music is Fundamental to Jewish

Prayer- *Jewish tradition teaches that music unlocks the door to divine connection.*

BY [JOEY WEISENBERG](#)

Music is the most immaterial and ephemeral of all the art forms. We can't see music, we can't grasp it in our hands, but we can feel it working through us and the world. As such, music represents our connection to the divine, to each other, to everything. Music is a wordless prayer that opens up our imaginations to the divine source of all life.

In the Hebrew numerological system known as **Gematria**, the numerical value of the words for prayer, *tefillah*, and song, *shirah*, are identical. From this we can see that music is a form of prayer, and prayer is a form of music. They are like two legs of the spiritual throne, mutually supporting each other. Indeed, the Talmud teaches us that music and prayer are virtually synonymous, declaring: ***Where there is song, there is prayer.***

Is it possible that music can open our ears and our hearts so that we can better sense the nuance and subtleties of the world around us? If we open our mouths and sing our imperfect songs, can we connect with the divine songs of all creation? Can our prayer chants open the gates of heaven? Can our melodies unlock divine mysteries?

Jewish tradition suggests that it can. The prophets of ancient Israel surrounded themselves with music, using its power to help them enter an ecstatic mindset. In one story, the prophet Elisha wanted to hear the word of God, so he requested that a musician start to play. As soon as the musician played, Elisha's prophetic abilities commenced: "And when the musician played, the hand of God was upon him."

In another story, Saul, who had not yet become king, joined a roving band of prophets and musicians who were playing a harp, drum, and flute to help the prophets enter a state of expanded consciousness. These three instruments — harp, drum, and flute — represent the three paradigmatic elements of music: harmony, rhythm, and melody. Joining the parade of musicians, Saul found that this musical-prophetic experience allowed the spirit of God to rest upon him and allowed him to transform into an *ish acher*, a different person, to find an alternate reality of himself in which he became capable not only of prophesying, but ascending the throne of Israel.

Music, we might assume, must have opened up the prophets' ears, enabling them to hear the divine voice speaking through them. Music, in this sense, worked like an elite reconnaissance unit sneaking through the prophets' defensive bulwarks and barriers, or like a sweet talking lover wooing his beloved. Music paved the way for the bestowal of the great gift of divine love, of the prophecies

which we have at least partly retained in the words of the Torah and later poetry and writing.



Is it possible that music also can help us enter different realms and discover alternate realities in which we might pursue better versions of ourselves? Can music open us up to our own inspiration and prayers as it opened up the pathways of the prophets?

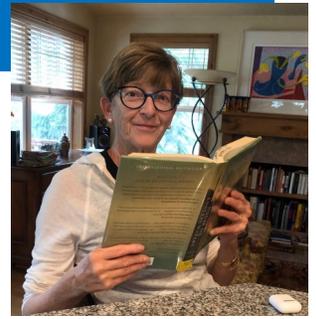
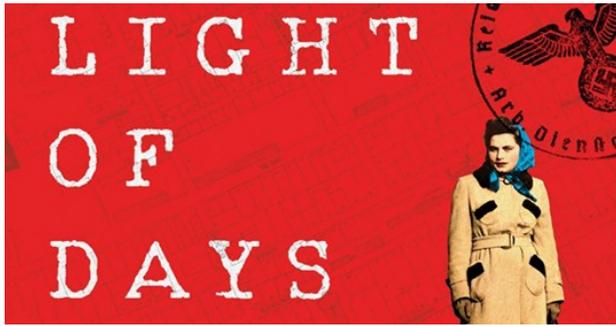
The 18th-century Hasidic master Nachman of Breslov offers that there might be something left that we can access from this source of prophecy. A sacred musician, he explains, is called a *chazzan* — a Hebrew word with the same root as the word *hazon*, meaning "vision," and which is also the common modern term for a prayer leader. The chazzan, Rebbe Nachman tells us, "snatches the song from the place where prophets suckle."

Melodies form a divine ladder that connects the earth with the heavens. In Hebrew, the word *sulam* means both "ladder" and "musical scale." Perhaps the most famous story of a path to the heavens is the story of Jacob's ladder, in which the patriarch dreams of a ladder on which angels are going up and down. Angels, according to the medieval authority Maimonides, had one essential function: singing.

Jacob's ladder must then have been a kind of musical scale, with melodic angels rising and descending along with the prayers of mankind. When we sing, we hope to allow ourselves to experience a state of elevation, a taste of the heavens, a glimpse of the best versions of ourselves.

To be a musician then is to be an activist of the spirit. But the music doesn't do this on its own. It requires us to react to the music, to open up, to change along with it. We must allow the sound of our singing to awaken us, to bring us to positive action, to let song help us to do our work in the world with sensitivity and grace.

Ultimately, melodies are just a bunch of notes—whether they're fundamentally meaningless or transcendent depends entirely upon how we choose to listen, how we choose to direct our intentions, and whether we let ourselves join the song. Singing signals not an escape from life but an imaginative attempt to remind us what is yet possible. Music offers us rung after rung to climb to the heavens, where we hope to discover our best selves, so that we can then emulate that holiness in our regular lives. Let us find our melodies, and let us find our prayers, and let us bring the world to life.



by **Judy Batalion**

***Warsaw with a weeping face,
With graves on street corners,
Will outlive her enemies,
Will see the light of days.***



These lines are from a song written by a young Jewish girl in the Warsaw Ghetto shortly before her death.

Like me, I am certain that many of you have read dozens upon dozens of books about the Holocaust and about World War II. Ms. Batalion's years of meticulous research has brought to the fore the story of brave, bold and fearless women resistance fighters in Hitler's ghettos. Outside of a few famous young women like Hannah Senesh, Holocaust history has not focused on these remarkable young women whose courage and nerves of steel helped to save many people from the gas chambers. This book also helps to debunk the theory that Jews went quietly like sheep to their slaughter.

On October 10, 1924 a baby girl was born to Moshe and Leah Kukielka in Jedrzejow, Poland. Renia in Polish, Rivka in Hebrew. Renia's town had a thriving Jewish population...about 45% of the town was Jewish. There were bookstores, synagogues, Jewish publishing houses and libraries. Renia, in a move that ultimately saved her life, went to the local public school where she became fluent in Polish...real Polish, not Polish peppered with Yiddish words and Yiddish accents. Renia belonged to the local Labor Zionist youth group. All the numerous youth groups held summer camps. Renia and the others came home from camp on September 1, 1939...the day Hitler invaded Poland and the life that Renia and other young people like her knew came to an abrupt and horrifying end.

Renia is one of about a half dozen young women, young girls really, who are the focus of Ms. Batalion's book. Each one has a story like Renia's. Some came from religious homes, some from peasant homes, some were sophisticated young girls from cities, some rich and others poor, some communists, some socialist Zionists and

some secular, with strong attachments to traditions. All had belonged to youth groups, groups that trained them in communal living and physical strength training in preparation for a life in Palestine.

It is through the various youth groups that these girls found their way into the life of Jewish Resistance fighters. There were many objectives that could be obtained by innocent looking young girls with fair hair, blue eyes, small noses and perfect Polish. They were couriers....sharing news from various ghettos, relaying messages, bringing food and ammunition into ghettos. Their jobs entailed sneaking people, mostly young children, out of the ghettos and into hiding in the forests. Many of these girls, trained in the use of weapons, were some of the last defenders of the ghettos.

The author follows the lives of those who survived. Almost as sad and tragic as their lost childhoods, was their feelings of displacement in Israel. Instilled in them by the youth movements was the dream of going to Palestine to help build a new Jewish country. This is what kept them going through danger, arrest, torture and the camps. Yet Renia observed that "We feel like we are smaller and weaker than the people around us, like we don't have the same right to life as they do." Of course there were exceptions, and the strength and positive outlook of Renia made it possible for her to adjust, accept and live a new and fruitful life. But for many, their lives were permeated with a profound sadness for all that was lost. "The one who survives will be like a leaf cast about by a gale, a leaf that doesn't belong to anyone and has lost its mother tree, which has died..."

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