



The Chronicle

The Community Newspaper of the Jewish Council of North Central Florida

Issue #7, March 2020

Adar - Nisan 5780

10th Annual Jewish Film Festival, March 15 - 26

The 10th Annual Gainesville Jewish Film festival will kick off on Sunday, March 15 and will run through Thursday, March 26. Unless otherwise noted, most screenings will be held at 7 pm at Gainesville's historic Hippodrome Theater.

Tickets are \$12 each. Passes are \$40 for 4 films, \$80 for 8 films, and \$120 for all 12 screenings. To purchase tickets and festival passes, please visit www.jcncf.org/gjff2020. For all festival inquiries, please call 352.371.3846.

UF student tickets are FREE with valid ID on a space available basis. Students who wish to reserve seats, should contact the JCNCF office.

For the full list of films and their descriptions, please turn to pages 8 and 9.



The Golem of Prague, a New Opera by Composer, Paul Richards



By Paul Richards
Professor of Music, UF

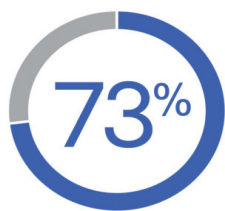
Based on one of the legends of the Golem, a new opera by UF Professor of Music, Paul Richards, with a libretto by UF Professor of English, Sidney Homan, will be premiered at The Hippodrome State Theater on March 28 and 29, and April 3 and 4, by The University of Florida Opera Theater and The Ocala Symphony Orchestra.

The work addresses a number of serious contemporary issues, including the definition and isolation of "the other", the

assimilation pressures on a diaspora culture, the dangers of differing truths, our relationship to semi-autonomous technologies, the extremes that we might go to in hopes of protecting ourselves, and the terrible costs of such protection.

Tickets can be purchased by visiting thehipp.org.

Continued on page 11



Together we can do extraordinary things!

JCNCF's Annual Campaign goal for 2019/2020 is \$200,000, and so far we have raised over \$146,000. That's 73% of our goal. Visit www.jcnf.org to make your secure donation online now, or contact us at 352.371.3846 or office@jcnf.org.

The Jewish Council of North Central Florida operates entirely on the contributions of generous community members like YOU! With that in mind, the JCNCF events that you see listed in this newsletter each month are made possible by those donations. Please consider making a gift to the Annual Campaign or to any of our special funds. Your donation supports Jewish causes locally and globally and means so much to so many.

Name _____ Email _____ Phone _____

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JCNCF Mission Statement

As set forth in the Articles of Incorporation, the JCNCF has been formed to operate and engage in philanthropic, cultural, and other group activities for charitable and educational purposes that shall contribute to the welfare of the Jewish community of North Central Florida and other Jewish communities around the world.

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PO Box 357936
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www.JCNCF.org - chronicle@jcnf.org

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Submissions Policy

News and announcements of events that are of interest and open to the entire Jewish community will be included as space allows. The times and places of regular and special Jewish religious events, as well as Jewish organizational events, will be placed in the Chronicle's monthly community calendar.

Please submit original material of 500 words or less, not published or to be published elsewhere, along with photos of interest to the community. Submissions may be e-mailed in Word document format to chronicle@jcnf.org; or dropped off at the Jewish Council of North Central Florida office. Please submit photos in high resolution with a caption identifying the subject and all people depicted. JCNCF reserves the right to edit all submissions. *The Chronicle* does not publish letters to the editor.

The Chronicle and the Jewish Council do not endorse the goods and services advertised in these pages, and make no representation as to the kashrut of the food, products, and services in such advertising.

If you have any questions, email chronicle@jcnf.org or call 352.371.3846.

**All submissions are due on or before
the 10th of the month prior to publication.**

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PJ Library Needs Your Support!

**Let's make all the children on the waiting list
for PJ Library subscribers!**

On Sunday, March 8, PJ Library will host an activity table at Congregation B'nai Israel's Jewish Cultural Festival. Stop by the table, do a Purim themed craft and help kick off a fund raising drive to provide PJ Library books to all eligible Jewish children in the North Central Florida area. A subscription to PJ Library costs \$40 per child and we have more than 30 children who are waiting to be added to our active list.

A generous donor has pledged to match all donations up to \$600. We would love to raise \$1,200 or more, so that we can serve any new children who are born or move into our community.

Our PJ Library drive begins at Purim and ends at Yom Ha'Atzmaut! Your donation is an investment in our Jewish children's futures!



PJ Library Purim at the Jewish Cultural Festival

**Sunday, March 8, 11 am to 2 pm
Congregation B'nai Israel**

PJ Library Passover Scavenger Hunt

**Sunday, April 5, 4 to 5 pm
Florida Museum of Natural History**

PJ Library & PJ Our Way Celebrate Israel's Birthday

**Sunday, May 3, 11 am to 1 pm
Location TBA**



On Sunday February 9, the weather was perfect for a trip to the Lube Bat Conservancy! We learned about Tu B'Shevat, the New Year for the trees and the importance of bats to the eco-systems in which they live.

Our group of PJ Library families learned about fruit bats, petted an African spurred tortoise, and a Solomon Islands skink. We observed the bats in their homes and made food enrichment, small cage contraptions filled with vegetables, for them to eat and play with.



Local Couple Lends Their Support

**By Elissa Einhorn, Grants & Communications Manager
The Beit Ruth Village**

Gilda Josephson and Jeff Weingarten have always been drawn to the helping professions – classroom teaching, school counseling, and as psychotherapists – fulfilling their desire to contribute to the well-being of people, generally, and particularly youth.

Their support of the Beit Ruth Educational & Therapeutic Village is an extension of that desire and of their values. The couple was introduced to Beit Ruth, a unique long-term therapeutic and residential community for at-risk teenage girls in Israel, at a Jewish Council of North Central Florida (JCNCF) event several years ago.

“Danielle came on a Sunday morning and talked about Beit Ruth,” Gilda recalls, referring to Danielle Burenstein, Beit Ruth’s New York-based Executive Director. “We also saw a video and heard the girls speak from the Village. I was impressed and was particularly interested because it was a treatment facility for girls who were abused. We were shocked to hear about girls who were removed from their homes and about the poverty and abuse in Israel. It struck a chord.”



From left, Beit Ruth alumna Hodaya Sekori, Beit Ruth Executive Director, Danielle Burenstein; Gilda Josephson; Beit Ruth Managing Director, Iris Twerski, Jeff Weingarten and Beit Ruth Development & Communications Coordinator Illana Schear at JCNCF’s “Celebration for Education” in January.



“The Snake Inside Me,” one of several creations that were part of “The Wedding Dress Project.”

A retired psychotherapist who wrote her dissertation about factors that are helpful to counsel female survivors of incest, Gilda spent her career working with adult victims of interpersonal violence. Jeff, also a psychotherapist, enjoyed a 44-year career working in public schools, primarily as a school counselor at the elementary and middle school levels.

“Beit Ruth really resonated with us,” Jeff says. “It is meeting a need.”

Understanding how important it is to provide a safe place for recovery, Gilda says, “Beit Ruth provides safety, security, and listening – things all kids need to recover from trauma.”

While knowing much about Beit Ruth, and being financial supporters of the lifesaving work that occurs there, Gilda and Jeff had an opportunity to visit the Village in November 2019 while they were on a tour of the Aegean Sea that ended in Jerusalem.

“We contacted Danielle who was so enthusiastic and she put us in touch with Iris (Beit Ruth’s Managing Director in Israel) who made it very easy for us to get from Jerusalem to Afula,” Gilda explains.

Jeff remembers noticing the industrial environment of Afula, where Beit Ruth is located, and then turning down the road that leads to the Village.

“All of a sudden, there’s a gate and Mor (Beit Ruth’s Village Manager) and Iris met us,” he says, with Gilda adding, “They were running to welcome us with open arms!”

After dropping their backpacks off in one of the three residential buildings, the couple was taken on a tour of the Village. They were especially impressed with the artwork created by girls during Art Therapy, in particular, “The Wedding Dress Project.”

“It absolutely floored me,” Gilda shares. “The creativity of the girls and the brilliant idea to have girls express themselves through these dresses was incredible.”

and Voice to the Beit Ruth Village

Jeff mentioned seeing evidence of other financial support throughout the Village, expressing his appreciation that there are others who care about what happens at Beit Ruth. Gilda particularly remembers how Iris explained the requirements for coming to the Village, including that girls visit and make a choice to come.

"This is part of Beit Ruth's approach to give control back to girls who lost so much control," she explains, this time with Jeff adding, "It encourages empowerment."

While enjoying lunch with some of the girls and Rotem, Beit Ruth's supervising social worker, they told her about different therapeutic techniques being used to address post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), specifically EMDR or Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing therapy that uses a series of lights to create rapid eye movement to lessen anxiety associated with traumatic memories. Certified in the technique, Gilda had the equipment necessary for the therapy and decided to donate it to the Village. Then she discovered that Iris knew of an Israeli therapist trained in the technique and hopes to incorporate it into the Village's treatment program.

As they talk about the comprehensive services and programs provided at Beit Ruth, both Gilda and Jeff hope enough funds can be raised to expand the facility and reduce the list of vulnerable girls who are waiting to arrive. Gilda expresses appreciation for the support Beit Ruth receives from several sources but can't help asking, "How come everyone doesn't know about this wonderful place?"

For more information about Beit Ruth, visit www.beitruth.com or contact Executive Director Danielle Burenstein at danielleb@beitruth.com or 516-822-0074.



Gilda Josephson and Jeff Weingarten leave a note during their November visit: "The Light You Seek Is In Your Own Lantern, Gainesville, Florida Loves Beit Ruth."

The Jaffa Institute Brings the "Start-Up Nation" to South Tel Aviv

**By Rachel Norman, Grants and Development Manager
The Jaffa Institute**

How do planes fly? Why was Velcro invented? What makes dough rise?

Through the Jaffa Institute's Science Mobile Program, disadvantaged Israeli students are discovering the answers to these questions and many more!

Last year, the Jaffa Institute – a private Israeli nonprofit organization and long-time JCNCF partner – launched the Science Mobile Program to provide the at-risk children who attend our after-school programs with enriching activities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Operating inside an RV trailer outfitted with laptops, robotics kits, arts-and-crafts supplies, laser cutters, and a 3D printer, the Science Mobile traveled to our program sites on a rotating schedule.

This year, the Jaffa Institute expanded this successful project by bringing the program to underserved public elementary schools and building two new vehicles: a Space Mobile and a STEM Kitchen (pictured), which will teach science through cooking.

Additionally, we are empowering the children with the opportunity to use technology to help their community by creating 3D-printed tools for individuals with disabilities, an important reminder that anyone, regardless of their situation in life, can help others.

For more information on the Science Mobile or the Jaffa Institute's other 40 programs, please visit our website, www.jaffainstitute.org, or email Mitch Chupak (mitch@jaffainst.co.il).



North Central Florida Remembers Anne Frank

Yom HaShoah, Sunday April 19 at Cong. B'nai Israel

**By the Yom HaShoah Committee,
The Jewish Council**

Holocaust survivors tell remarkable stories of chance and luck. They would not be survivors without having experienced such good fortune. Few of those who escaped the Nazis have as interesting a tale as Pieter Kohnstam who will be the featured speaker at the Jewish Council's Holocaust remembrance program at Congregation B'nai Israel on Sunday, April 19.

A resident of Venice, Florida, Mr. Kohnstam was born to a German Jewish family who fled to Amsterdam soon after Hitler came to power in Germany. They left behind their home and a prosperous toy company. They rented an apartment in a large building on Merwedeplein. In 1936, Pieter was born in Amsterdam.

That story would not be remarkable except for one thing: The same building housed another family of displaced German Jews. Apartment 37 – 2 was occupied by the family of Otto Frank comprising wife Edith and two daughters, Margo and Anne.

Anne Frank was more than just a neighbor. As Mr. Kohnstam will relate to a Gainesville audience, she was his playmate and his occasional babysitter. Both Peter and Anne attended local public schools.

He recalls Anne Frank as "a vivacious, outgoing girl who adored children. She had an infectious laugh and was well-liked by everyone."

In 1942, the Jews in Amsterdam were ordered to report to a transit camp where they would be sent to Germany to provide labor. Suspicious of this order, both the Frank and Kohnstam families chose to evade it. As Anne Frank's famous diary recounts, the Franks joined others in hiding from the Nazis. Betrayed and sent to concentration camps, only Mr. Frank survived the war.

The Kohnstam family decided instead to run from the Nazis. It required a full year to pass through Belgium, France and Spain before they reached safety and freedom in Argentina. Peter Kohnstam will tell us about that journey which is also described in his book, *A Chance to Live: A Family's Journey to Freedom*.

Pieter immigrated to the United States in 1963 and pursued a career in the specialty chemical industry. He became a U.S. citizen in 1968. He and his wife, Susan, married in 1965, and have two children and three grandchildren. He is frequently invited to schools and various organizations to speak about his experiences as a Holocaust survivor, his book, and matters relating to Jewish and interfaith topics.

Mr. Kohnstam serves on the Board of Directors of the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect in New York. He was also active in the recently opened Southwest Florida Holocaust museum.



Pieter Kohnstam

**Yom HaAtzmaut
JCNCF's Israel Day Program
Sunday, April 26 at 5:30 pm
The Harn Museum of Art**

**Featuring Israeli singer and songwriter
Rami Feinstein**

**More details will be published in
the April edition of *The Chronicle*.**



Soon All Holocaust Survivors Will Be Gone!

Will Their Personal Stories of Tolerance and Triumph be Remembered?

**By Rabbi Berl Goldman,
Lubavitch-Chabad Jewish Student & Community Center at the University of Florida**

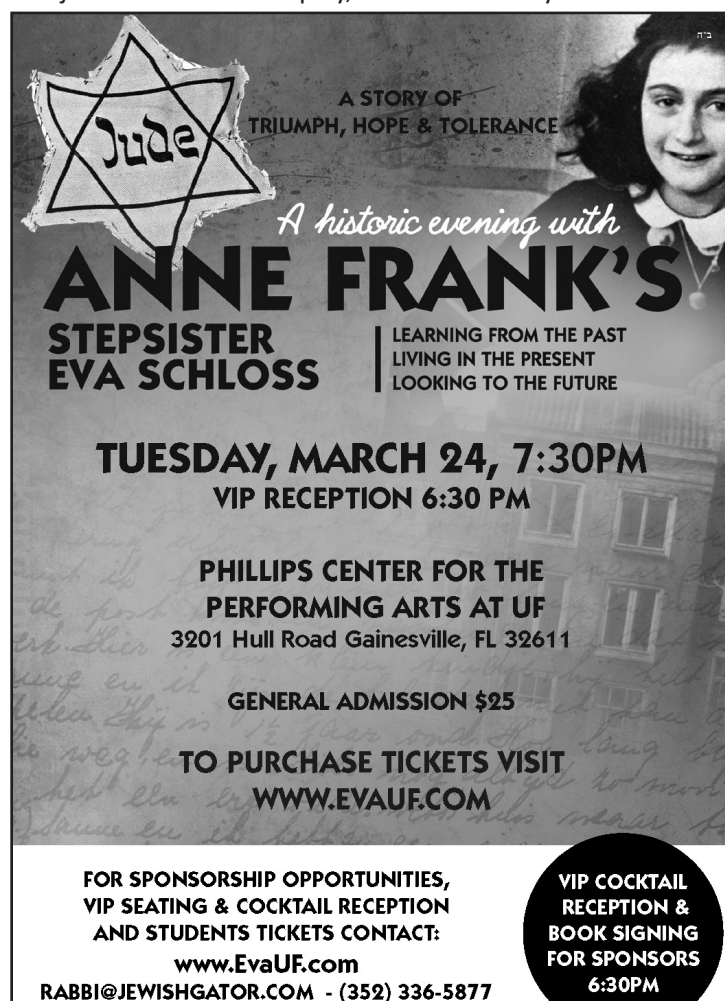
In a study released this year, on Holocaust Remembrance Day, two-thirds of American millennials were not able to identify what Auschwitz is and twenty-two percent hadn't heard of the Holocaust or weren't sure what it was. These are shocking and disturbing statistics, only 75 years after the liberation of Auschwitz. In the words of George Santayana, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." In light of the rise of anti-Semitism and the increase of violence against minorities, it is imperative that people of all ages educate themselves about the history and stories of the Holocaust, one of the worst mass atrocities and genocides ever committed. We must remember those whose lives were brutally cut off, through listening to the recounts of the brave and heroic survivors.

On Tuesday, March 24, 2020, we will have an opportunity never to forget one such story - as told by Eva Schloss. Eva is a survivor of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp and stepsister of Anne Frank. At 90 years old, she is traveling to Gainesville from her home in England to share her story of terrible suffering and joyous triumph.

In 1938, Germany invaded Austria, causing many Jewish families to flee Austria to avoid persecution. Among the emigrants was eight-year-old Eva Geiringer, who with her mother, brother, and father moved first to Belgium and then to Holland, where one of her neighbors was a German Jewish girl of the same age. The two girls became friends and playmates, but then had to go into hiding. Ultimately, both girls and their families were betrayed, captured, and sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp. Eva and her mother survived the concentration, although her beloved father and brother did not make it. Anne Frank did not survive Auschwitz either, but kept a diary that did. Later Eva's mother married Anne Frank's father making them step-sisters.

Since 1985, Mrs. Eva Schloss has devoted herself to Holocaust education and global peace. She is a trustee of the Anne Frank Educational Trust, an author of three books, and the subject of James Still's play, "And Then They Came for Me: Remembering the World of Anne Frank." This is an extraordinary opportunity for people from diverse walks of life, faiths, and backgrounds, to be educated on the Holocaust and anti-Semitism. Eva's powerful story of survival, loss and ultimate triumph is shocking and difficult to imagine. Her insightful message reminds us that life is precious and fragile, that the spirit is stronger than fear, that the power of good is immeasurable, and that love, dignity, and respect make a difference in bringing our communities together. Eva joins many courageous individuals who work tirelessly to end the violence and bigotry that continue to plague our world. She has traveled the world to speak to many engaged communities to spread a message of kindness, diversity, tolerance and our common humanity.

This historic event will take place on Tuesday, March 24, 2020, 7:30 PM at the Phillips Center for Performing Arts at the University of Florida, with a capacity for 1,700 attendees. We are aiming for one third or more of those in attendance to be, high school and college-age students. A VIP reception and book signing ceremony for sponsors will commence at 6:30 PM. General admission tickets are \$25 and are available at www.EvaUF.com and at the Phillips Center for Performing Arts box office. UF, SFC and High School students can request complimentary tickets, on a first come, first served basis. We are relying on the generosity of sponsors to fill those requests. More information on the event, including sponsorship opportunities, VIP premium seating, and cocktail reception is available at www.EvaUF.com. or email- Rabbi@JewishGator.com or call (352)336-5877.



A STORY OF TRIUMPH, HOPE & TOLERANCE

A historic evening with
ANNE FRANK'S STEPSISTER EVA SCHLOSS

LEARNING FROM THE PAST
LIVING IN THE PRESENT
LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 7:30PM
VIP RECEPTION 6:30 PM

PHILLIPS CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS AT UF
3201 Hull Road Gainesville, FL 32611

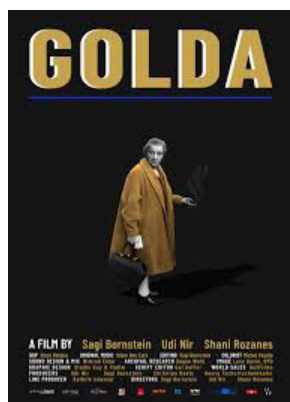
GENERAL ADMISSION \$25

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VIP COCKTAIL RECEPTION & BOOK SIGNING FOR SPONSORS 6:30PM

Tenth Annual Gainesville Jewish Film Festival



Sunday, March 15 - 7:30 pm

Golda

2019 / documentary / 88 min
Israel / Hebrew & English

Directors: Sagi Bornstein,
Udi Nir & Shani Rozanes,

Shortly before her passing, Golda Meir was interviewed for Israeli television. After the interview, the cameras kept rolling. Based on never-before seen materials, testimonies of supporters and opponents and archival footage, *Golda* tells the story of Meir's dramatic premiership.



Monday, March 16 - 7 pm

Breaking Bread

2020/ documentary / 105 min
United States / English

Director: Rudiger Suchsland

Founded by Dr. Nof Atamna-Ismaeel—the first Muslim Arab to win Israel's Master-Chef—the A-sham Arabic Food Festival is creating social change through food. This is a film that gives one hope.



Tuesday, March 17 - 7 pm

Who Will Write Our History?

2018 /documentary/ 95 min
United States & Poland /
English, Yiddish, Polish

Director: Roberta Grossman

The story of Emanuel Ringelblum and the Oyneg Shabbes, the secret archive he created in the Warsaw Ghetto. An important film based on a superb book with the same title.



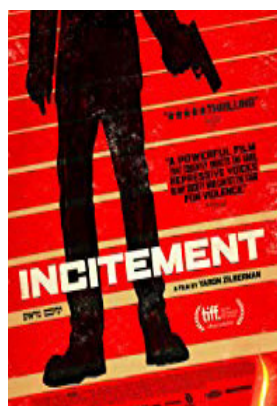
Wednesday, March 18 - 7 pm

Muna

2018 / TV Show / 90 min
Israel / Arabic & Hebrew

Director: Ori Sivan

Muna Abud, a successful female Israeli-Arab photographer who lives and works in Tel Aviv, is putting together an exhibition of her work to be mounted in Paris. Another great Israeli television series.



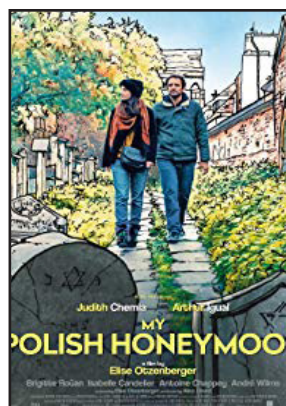
Thursday, March 19 - 7 pm

Incitement

2019 / thriller / 123 min
Israel / Hebrew

Directors: Yaron Zilberman

A riveting docu-drama, the film follows the year leading up to the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, from the point of view of the assassin.



Saturday, March 21 - 8:30 pm

My Polish Honeymoon

2018 / comedy / 88 min
France / French

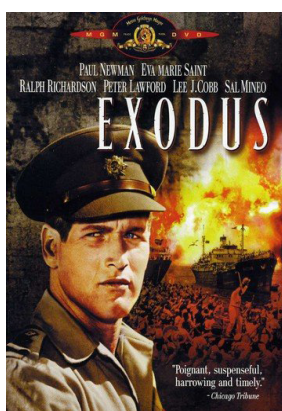
Director: Ronit Kertsner

Anna and Adam, a young couple from Paris head to Poland to discover the land of Anna's grandmother. A comedy with surprising depth to it.

Sunday, March 15 through Thursday, March 26

The Gainesville Jewish Film Festival is a partnership between the Jewish Council of North Central Florida and the Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Florida. It is made possible, in part, by: Alexander Grass Chair in Jewish History, Bud Shorstein Professorship in American Jewish Culture and Society, Dawn Burgess-Krop & Dr. Harry Krop, Friends of Jewish Studies Tree of Life Fund, Gary R. Gerson Annual Lecture Series, Harry Rich Endowment for Holocaust Studies, Mikki and Morris Futernick Visiting Professorship, the Norman and Irma Braman Chair in Holocaust Studies, and Dr. Steven Slutsky.

To purchase tickets and festival passes, please visit www.jcncf.org/gjff2020
For more information, please call 352.371.3846



Sunday, March 22 - 1 pm

Exodus

1960 / drama / 208 min
United States / English

Director: Otto Preminger

The epic blockbuster about the founding of the state of Israel is marking its 60th Anniversary. This landmark film is also among the early explorations of Holocaust survivors in American popular cinema. This has to be seen on the big screen to be appreciated.



Sunday, March 22 - 7 pm

My War Hero Uncle

2018 / documentary / 52 min
Israel / Hebrew

Director: Shaked Goren

Through stories, Memorial Day ceremonies, and letters, the uncle was always a present absence for the nephew, the film's director. Fifty years after the uncle's death, two truths are revealed—the uncle's and the nephew's. This is a great film.



Monday, March 23 - 7 pm

Those Who Remained

2019 / drama / 83 min
Hungary / Hungarian

Director: Barnabás Tóth

A beautifully filmed and lyrical story of the healing power of love after enormous loss.



Tuesday, March 24 - 5 pm

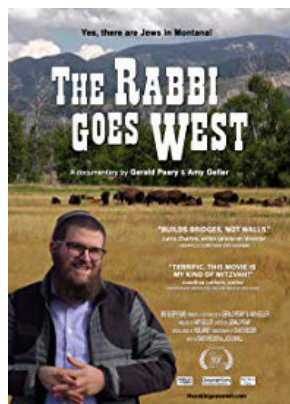
Svetlana Boym:

Exile and Imagination

2018 / documentary / 60 min
United States / English

Director: Michal Aviad

A nicely done documentary about a leading scholar of comparative literature who died at a very young age, but left an enormous intellectual legacy.



Wednesday, March 25 - 7 pm

The Rabbi Goes West

2019 / documentary / 73 min
United States / English

Directors: Amy Geller & Gerald Peary

A Chabad rabbi and his wife adapt to their new home in Montana and encounter a mixed reception from that state's small Jewish community.



Thursday, March 26 - 7 pm

Aulcie

2020 / documentary / 75 min
United States & Israel /
English & Hebrew

Director: Dani Menkin

Aulcie tells the inspiring story of Aulcie Perry, an African American basketball legend who led Maccabi Tel Aviv to an upset win in the European Championship, then decided to settle in Israel permanently.

New ShabbaTones Chorus Celebrates Jewish Music

Have you ever sung a popular song in the shower? Do you recall the music of your synagogue service from years ago? Does that music carry special feelings for you and remind you of the way you felt when you were there? It does for me. I associate particular music with places and times of growing up or meeting people when I first heard a piece of music. Music has this special ability to reach down deep into us and to touch parts of our minds and souls that we do not usually think about because music bridges feelings and memories and times of life. Jewish music is a treasure and source of pride for those who open the door and look inside. This aspect of music is the reason I love to sing and to bring it into my life and into the lives of others.

Non-denominational and independent, the ShabbaTones Chorus preserves and performs Jewish music from ancient to modern and across continents. The Jewish and non-Jewish singers carry a deep feeling of tradition and classic appreciation for these various forms of history and art. The richness of the ethnic diversity within Jewish culture is reflected in our songs. This is what will be for all to hear at our first concert, April 23rd, 7:30 pm, at the Thomas Center.

If you would like to support our efforts to bring quality Jewish choral music to the north central Florida area, donations can be given on our website, www.ShabbaTones.org.

Jewish Choral Music Through the Ages

April 23, 2020, at 7:30pm

Thomas Center

302 NE 6th Ave, Gainesville, FL

Including Beloved Sing-Along Favorite - Story of a Polish Hassid who finds inspiration in a wordless melody- A majestic Rossi motet in 8 parts from the seventeenth century Italy- Selections written and sung by Paul Richards-Adijo, Kerida Sephardic Lovesong- Dona, Dona - Five Hebrew Love Songs by Eric Whitacre, and much more!

Special reception after the concert.

GET YOUR TICKETS NOW at

www.ShabbaTones.org/tickets/



PICTURES of RESISTANCE

GFAA
GALLERY



January 14 - March 14 2020

1314 S Main | gainesvillefinearts.org | Tues. - Sat. 11 - 5

The UF Center for European Studies and the Gainesville Fine Arts Association present a travelling exhibition of the photos of Faye Schulman, the only known Jewish partisan to document the WWII experience on film.

Sponsored in part by:



The Alexander
Grass Chair in
Jewish Studies



Front photographs from A Partisan's Memoir by Faye Schulman. Used with permission from Second Story Press, Toronto.



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HOWARD M. ROSENBLATT

Attorney at Law

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Gainesville, FL 32606-6667

E-mail: howard@hmrpalaw.com

The Golem of Prague, March 28 & 29, April 3 & 4, at The Hippodrome

While Rabbi Judah ben Loew, chief Rabbi of the Jewish quarter in late 16th century Prague, is at evening prayers with his family, two men sneak into the ghetto and plant the body of a deceased child near the baker's shop in order to reinforce the myth that the Jews use the blood of children to bake their bread. The next day, while the Rabbi's family is weaving blankets for the coming winter, his adolescent granddaughter Eve singing about weaving the man of her dreams, an angry mob comes into the ghetto, beating and dragging away the baker. Pearl, the Rabbi's wife, pleads for him to take action, no matter the cost, to protect his people. A few days later, at one of their regular visits to talk about the latest in philosophy and science, the Rabbi pleads with Emperor Joseph II to take action to protect the Jews. When it becomes clear that the Emperor will not prove helpful, the Rabbi resolves to create a golem, a creature fashioned from clay that will serve as the protector the Jews need. With his student Jacob and son-in-law Isaac, he brings the creature to life by the banks of the Moldau, inscribing the word Truth on the golem's forehead.

The Rabbi names the golem Joseph, and he takes his place as servant and protector of the community. Eve and Joseph develop a particularly close friendship, and she teaches him to weave. When the men from the opening of the opera return to the ghetto to plant more fake evidence, Joseph catches them and is hailed as a hero by the community. Joseph resolves to continue to protect the ghetto at any cost. Sometime later, Joseph has grown huge and the community has concerns that he is getting harder to control. Eve playfully grants him his freedom, but the creature doesn't understand how he is to make decisions. When someone starts a fire in the ghetto that burns the food and blankets that were set-aside for winter, the golem violently attacks and kills a group of Christians outside the gates of the ghetto. The Rabbi visits the Emperor, who insists that Joseph must be destroyed, and the Rabbi agrees, seeing that his creation has gotten out of control. He does so by changing the inscription on Joseph's forehead from Truth to Death. At the end of the opera, we see Eve sneak into the attic where Joseph's body is laying, knife in hand, poised, perhaps, to reawaken the golem.



Paul Richards
UF Professor of Music

One OF A KIND!
The *Only* Retirement Community
Affiliated with the University of Florida



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Oak Hammock
at the University of Florida®
Where Living, Learning
and Nature Meet.


Oak Hammock has redefined retirement living.
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An Age-Old Question: Will the Bullying End?

By Heath Lynn Silberfeld

This is another in a series of articles about anti-Semitism and bullying—and progress made in countering them—in the Alachua County school system. Subsequent articles in this series will focus on actions taken by the school board and how other parents and students who attended the May 2019 school board meeting currently perceive any progress made.

Raquel Sokol's stories about being bullied are substantively different from those of Mason Steinberg. For Mason, the problems related to anti-Semitism and other bullying behaviors at Howard Bishop Middle School (Bishop) have subsided to a satisfying extent. Raquel's experiences and assessment are still very much on her mind, and she has left Bishop because of them.

Consider this taunt—"You should have died in the Holocaust because you are a Jew"—and you will sense what Raquel has endured while maintaining her Jewish pride. "It was bad when people started laughing about people who are dead while watching a Holocaust documentary. Some were doing that to get a reaction out of me. I tried not to let them get to me but they did, and the teacher noticed me sobbing—but nobody got disciplined for it," she rightly objected.

The administrative response at Bishop has been weak, reports Hannah Sokol, Raquel's mother. Last summer the district paid for teachers to attend an Echoes and Reflections training (<https://echoesandreflections.org>), however it was not well attended because it was offered the week before teachers had to report for the new school year.

Raquel reports that bullying at Bishop, bad as it was, is only half the reason she changed schools. Poor-quality education is the other half. Hannah told me about a math teacher who didn't teach well. One time he sent home a hundred questions that the students were supposed to answer, with their unprepared parents expected to do the teaching over a weekend. Another time the teacher provoked Raquel to tears and—eventual justice—he has since been fired.

Although my focus here is not on the quality of general education in Alachua County, education is of course important for overcoming bullying. For example, a teacher's failure to teach a group of bullies that their remarks were cruel and insensitive and that their behaviors were not going to be tolerated impacted Raquel because they were not disciplined, their bullying did not subside, and she remained one of their targets. "One of the worst parts of being bullied is watching the perps being treated as 'normal' people."

Since Raquel began attending the Oak Hall School, she has not had to endure a single mean-spirited taunt or behavior—though I know of anti-Semitic incidents perpetrated at that school in the not-too-distant past. Nonetheless, no longer does Raquel have to cope with episodes of anxiety exacerbated by bullying based on her Jewish heritage or with the subsequent challenges to her health, well-being, or sensitive spirit. Now her grades are no longer affected by bullying like they were at Bishop. She is on the Oak Hall debate team and is able to use her voice for what is important to her—especially addressing climate change.

Surely what Mason achieved in seventh grade has had a positive influence on his experiences in eighth grade. Eighth grade at Bishop might have been better for Raquel had Mason been a year ahead of her instead of behind her, but we can never know. The positive side is that Raquel has grown, as Mason has, and those who follow them from grade to grade have a chance of being spared at least some bullying.

Bigotry is learned at home and must be met head-on by teachers and administrators, as Ben Steinberg, Mason's father, told me last month. There is hope for improvement in that arena but much remains to be implemented. At the May 2019 Alachua County School Board meeting, every board member spoke one-on-one with Raquel after she spoke eloquently of being the mark for anti-Semitism bullying. The board members expressed their dismay and promised to make changes, but Raquel has not witnessed any. And I have yet to receive return phone calls in order to inquire about what, if any, changes have been implemented at the board and school levels.

Raquel greatly admires Taika Waititi, the talented storyteller who just won the Best Adapted Screenplay Oscar for his film *Jojo Rabbit*, which he wrote and stars in. He is a Jew. His Jewish mother is from Russia, and his father is an indigenous New Zealander. "Like Waititi, I'm not just doing things for myself. I'm doing them for all of the kids who have a story to tell." The stories Mason and Raquel tell and the stories they have yet to write will surely be bound in the annals of *Tikkun Olam*.

"Anti-Semitism doesn't affect us only on a grand scale. It affects us on a personal level as well," Raquel observes with an understanding beyond her years. "The first step is that we need to make sure people are actually educated about what a Jew really is. Everyone is different, and people need to fear less and learn more about themselves and others." With her parents' approval, she's been educating herself to combat hatred because "hatred affects everyone considered different, based on gender, race, religion, whatever. Nothing will change if we don't combat it."



Raquel Sokol

Transitions: Community Life Events

Do you have a life cycle event you would like to share with our JCNCF community? Please submit items to chronicle@jcncf.org. Submissions may be edited as space allows. Pictures are welcome and encouraged! Transitions may include birth, engagement and wedding announcements, bar and bat mitzvah, graduations, promotions and honors, and memorials.

In Memoriam: Our community mourns the passing of these beloved friends and family members:

John Charles Collett,
Father of Jackie Collett-Diamond & Eric Diamond,
Grandfather of Hunter Diamond, Elizabeth Diamond,
and Nathan Collett.

Paul Zimmerman,
Husband of Ruth Zimmerman,
Father of Marcia & David, Lynda & Howard,
and Susan & Norm.

Marc Heft,
Husband of Ann Heft,
Father of Adrienne Heft, Sara Heft, and Jordan Heft,
Grandfather of Caleb and Malia Heft.

May their loved ones find solace in their memory.

Mazel tov to Sarah Knowles and
Michael Knowles on the birth of their
son, Jude Martin Knowles!

Mazel tov to Rabbi Aharon Notik and
Pessie Notik on the birth of their son,
Yehoshua Zelig!

Mazel tov to Yael Sullivan and Riley
Sullivan on the birth of their son,
Ari Sullivan!



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mwbacharach@gmail.com

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Volunteers Needed for Helping Hands Clinic Dinner Thursday, April 23

Please help the Jewish Council serve a meal to 40 or more homeless and/or hungry women at the Helping Hands Clinic, which is an ongoing project of the First United Methodist Church. Volunteers are asked to provide one or more elements of the meal. For questions about appropriate menu items and quantities, please contact the office at 352.371.3846 or office@jcncf.org. Thank you!



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morrobay03@embarqmail.com
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Sunday, March 8	PJ Library Purim at the Jewish Cultural Festival	Congregation B'nai Israel
Sunday, March 15 - Thursday, March 26	10th Annual Gainesville Jewish Film Festival	The Hippodrome Cinema
Sunday, April 5	PJ Library Passover Scavenger Hunt	The Florida Museum of Natural History
Sunday, April 19	Yom HaShoah Community Holocaust Remembrance Program	Congregation B'nai Israel
Sunday, April 26	Yom HaAtzmaut JCNCF's Israel Day Program	The Harn Museum of Art