

# JEWISH LOUISVILLE COMMUNITY



**INSIDE:**  
**A moving garden**  
Community Garden  
planted at new site  
p.10

FRIDAY Vol. 46, No. 03 | March 27, 2020 | 2 Nisan 5780

## Letter to community: All Jews are responsible for each other

Dear Jewish Louisville,

We have completed another week of social distancing at home. Clearly the reality of the coronavirus has changed our lives, perhaps forever.

If only this were a Hollywood movie; the heroes would make things right before the credits roll.

The truth is, we know that this situation is causing anxiety and uneasiness.

But we also must recognize the many heroes tackling the uncertainty of our "new normal" – embracing our Jewish values of *bikur holim*, caring for the sick, *gemilut chasidim*, acts of loving kindness, *areyvut*, community mindedness and *yetziratiut*, creativity.

We are proud of the incredible efforts by our friends, neighbors and family serving as health care providers, and those ensuring that our basic needs are met. We are eternally grateful to those on the front line; and pray for their health and safety.

Within our Jewish community, we owe a collective *kol hakavod* (all respect) to our community leaders. Our synagogues are livestreaming services, The J is preparing mass quantities of meals for delivery to

our seniors. We are sharing virtual fitness classes for all to take advantage of.

The Jewish Family & Career Services continues to provide client services through telecommunications – something of which we can all be proud.

As always, your Federation is here for you. While we closed our building during this extraordinary period, The Federation itself never closes. We must respond and act together as one united Jewish Louisville to navigate the months ahead, to rebuild and to repair the infrastructure that has supported our community and will continue to serve and change lives for generations of Jewish Louisvillians.

Our response is focused on the following:

- **The Powered by You** Federation annual campaign is ready to respond by using dollars it has, and will raise, to support the most essential needs of our community. We know our donors and community want to help both the individual and organizational needs.
- As we always do during a crisis, we will work with agency and synagogue leaders to hear their needs and serve as a convener and resource.



Jon Fleischaker and Sara Wagner

For more than 30 years, I have had the privilege of working in our Jewish community with outstanding professionals and volunteers. Over the past few years, I have seen our Federation and the JCC become appropriately poised for a new era. The work of our staff and volunteers has been inspiring and we will use this spirit to weather the storm and prepare for the joyful day when we will open our doors again.

Last April, our board of directors approved a new vision: to inspire meaningful lives while transforming our Jewish future. We are more committed than ever to do just that: Here are some highlights from

the past two years:

- LIFE & LEGACY secured over \$7 million
- 60 young moms participated in Momentum trips to Israel.
- The Louisville chapter of the Muslim Jewish Advisory Council was launched
- SAFE Louisville established as a coordinated approach ensuring the safety and security of our Jewish community.
- The Our Community, Our Future Campaign has raised over \$37 million to date.

Together, we will support each other through this crisis and come back stronger than ever. As the Talmud teaches, *Kol Yisrael Aravim Zeh B'Zeh*. Yes, we are all responsible for each other.

We will need everyone's help as we reimagine and reboot. Please, when you are called upon for support, we ask you to give generously. Thank you for making the community stronger.

B'shalom,  
Sara Klein Wagner  
President & CEO  
Jewish Community of Louisville

## Community copes with coronavirus

### Synagogues go virtual as the coronavirus keeps people at home

By Lee Chottiner  
Community Editor

For better or worse, Jewish Louisville has entered the era of the virtual synagogue.

Reeling from the global onset of the deadly coronavirus, synagogues here, as well as everywhere touched by the pandemic, are closing their doors, moving their religious and learning activities online.

Reform and Conservative synagogues are live-streaming their daily minyans and Shabbat services, while Orthodox congregations have suspended services altogether, encouraging their worshippers to pray privately at home. They live-stream their classes, though.

Rabbis and cantors lament the loss  
See **VIRTUAL** on page 19



The sign says it all: The JCC is closed during the coronavirus outbreak.  
(Community photo by Jessica Budnick)

### JCC continues community engagement despite closure

By Lisa Hornung  
For Community

The coronavirus is keeping the JCC closed for now, but its engagement with members and the greater community continues.

Here are some ways that the JCC will remain in touch during the quarantine period:

#### Senior Adults

Senior Adult Programming Director Tara Stone and her volunteers are making sure seniors are getting the food they need.

Stone and her crew normally deliver meals to some 35 people through their Meals on Wheels program.

That number has now jumped to 50, and Stone expects it to keep growing as more seniors realize they

See **ENGAGEMENT** on page 19





# THE DASHBOARD

## Word of the Month Cantor Copes with Coronavirus crisis



D'var Torah  
Cantor Sharon Hordes

I have read countless articles outlining the public health guidelines for staying safe and responsible during this global pandemic.

My email inbox and social media news feeds are flooded with announcements about performances and events being cancelled.

New developments are happening minute by minute, so much so that I have no idea what things will look like by the time you read this.

I have felt tension rising in me with every dire statistic or disappointing cancellation, but I also am noticing more unexpected funny memes from Jewish friends. I literally laughed out loud at a post that suggested that eating lots of matzah would negate the need to amass so many rolls of toilet paper.

Whenever I start to panic about what to do about all of the Passover seder gatherings around the world, I just think of the post titled, "2020 Pesach Seder," a traditional list of the order of the seder in Hebrew, but with the word urchatz ("washing the hands") inserted seven extra times!

Turning to humor is a coping mechanism that really can work during these trying times as long as everyone still takes the public health protocols seriously.

You can laugh, joke and wash your hands thoroughly before interacting with another person. However, some of the safety protocols conflict with our traditions, making them challenging to follow.

One is to avoid public gatherings. Part of our tradition, a part that played a huge role in our survival as a people over the centuries, is gathering as one. We are a communal people. Our worship protocol requires us to assemble in groups of

at least 10 to perform a complete service.

Many of us also have the habit of hugging, kissing and shaking hands when we see our friends and family at the synagogue. We kiss our tzitzit and prayer books before touching them to the Torah scroll. Now, instead of meeting in person, there are countless congregations live-streaming their services and adult education classes. This exemplifies another survival technique that has worked for us over the years: our ingenuity and ability to adapt to changing circumstances. These creative adaptations would certainly fall into that category.

Another problem we may experience as we count down to Pesach is to rid our refrigerators and pantries of chametz. One solution is to start stocking up on items that are permissible to eat during the holiday. Here is a link to an article that suggests the items that would be best to have on hand during a pandemic, many of them – certain fruits and vegetables, etc. – are naturally kosher for Passover: <https://nbcnews.to/3daLro8>.

When you feel like the stress is just too much, I suggest watching this video, which combines one of the most comforting elements of Jewish tradition, a blessing, with the public health imperative to pay closer attention to washing our hands: <https://bit.ly/2QoTAVe>.

On the plus side, Passover preparation and coronavirus precautions do overlap in the areas of cleaning and disinfecting.

As we move forward into uncharted territory, I encourage you to look back occasionally and discover how our ancestors found ways to persevere in difficult times. They used their heads; they adapted; they even created their own brand of humor to ease the tension.

We have always valued pikuach nefesh (the saving of a life) and the principle of v'ahavta l'rei'echa kamocha, (loving our neighbors as ourselves) over anything else. Look after your own physical well-being during this pandemic, but also do the tough things that will increase everyone's chances to stay healthy.

(Cantor Sharon Hordes is a spiritual leader at Keneseth Israel.)

## Snapshots: Purim Parade



Preschoolers from the Early Learning Center celebrated Purim right by parading through the halls of the JCC in full costume. Queens, pirates and few wild animals marched through the downstairs and upstairs hallways, delighting the staff, some of whom were in costume themselves. (Community photos by Robbyn McClain)

## Candles

Here are the candle lighting times for Shabbat in April:

- April 3 @ 7:51 p.m.
- April 10 @ 7:57 p.m.
- April 17 @ 8:04 p.m.
- April 24 @ 8:10 p.m.

## Contacts

Got a story idea? A letter? A gripe? A kudo?

Send it along to *Community Editor* Lee Chottiner at [lechottiner@jewishlouisville.org](mailto:lechottiner@jewishlouisville.org). You can also call Lee at 502-238-2783.

Not getting your paper? Want to subscribe? Putting your subscrip-

tion on hold? Development Associate Kristy Benefield can handle all circulation questions. She can be reached at [kbenefield@jewishlouisville.org](mailto:kbenefield@jewishlouisville.org) or 502-238-2770.

Got an item for the Community eblast? Send it to [weeklyupdate@jewishlouisville.org](mailto:weeklyupdate@jewishlouisville.org).

## Deadlines

Deadlines matter, especially for newspapers. Got a news item for next month's *Community*? Send it in by Wednesday, April 14 (though sooner is better). The paper should be in your

mailbox by Friday, April 24.

Submitting an item for *Community's* weekly eblast? Please submit it by Friday. The eblast is sent out every Monday afternoon.

## Corrections

The clothing sold at Chabad's Friendship Corners is new. Many of the items have never been sold or tried on. The Feb. 28 story, Twelfth Friendship Corner location opens in Portland, errone-

ously reported that the clothing contained flaws and couldn't be sold retail.

Have a correction? Send it to [lechottiner@jewishlouisville.org](mailto:lechottiner@jewishlouisville.org).

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# YOU POWER THE TRADITION OF RESILIENCE.

These are challenging times for our Jewish community as we deal with the direct and indirect results of a global pandemic. We are sensitive to the needs of our community, flexible in approaching these new and unforeseen situations, and accommodating in providing the information and services needed to endure while recognizing the rapid changes around us all.

Your continued support of the Federation in these times is a source of strength for us, in all ways imaginable. This is an opportunity for our Jewish community to come closer together and to implement our most important *Tikun Olam* behaviors and actions.

While we closed our building during this extraordinary period, The Federation itself never closes. We must respond and act together as one united Jewish Louisville embracing our Jewish values of *bikur holim*, caring for the sick, *gemilut chasidim*, acts of loving kindness, *areyvut*, community mindedness and *yetziratiut*, creativity.

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We will need your help as we reimagine and proceed. Please, when you are called upon for support, we ask you to give generously. Thank you for making the community stronger.



YOUR GIFT TO FEDERATION POWERS IT ALL. DONATE ONLINE AT [JEWISHLouisville.org/donate](https://www.jewishlouisville.org/donate)

For additional information please contact Stacy Gordon-Funk at [SGordon-Funk@jewishlouisville.org](mailto:SGordon-Funk@jewishlouisville.org) or (502) 238-2755.



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OF LOUISVILLE



# NEWS

## JFCS celebrates 15 years of new Americans at MOSAIC Awards

By staff and releases

A whiskey distiller, a chef, an entrepreneur, a public school official and, most notably, the president of the University of Louisville will be this year's recipients of the MOSAIC Awards.

They will be feted at a ceremony Thursday, May 14, at the Louisville Marriott Downtown.

This year will mark the 15th year of the MOSAICs, a project of the Jewish Family & Career Services, that recognizes new or first-generation immigrants and refugees who have made an impact in their fields and the community.

This year's honorees "reflect the spirit and mission of JFCS – to help build connections that strengthen individuals and communities, while honoring the undeniable humanity of each and every person in our community," JFCS Chief Executive Officer Deb Frock said in a prepared statement.

The honorees are:



**Neeli Bendapudi** (India), president of the University of Louisville. Previously the provost and executive vice chancellor at the University of Kansas, and a professor of business,

Bendapudi has had research published in the Journal of Academic Medicine, Harvard Business Review and Journal of Marketing. She also has been featured in The New York Times and on CNBC, CNN, MSNBC, WebMD and Fox News.



**Di Tran** (Vietnam), an entrepreneur and professor. While a computer engineer at Humana, Tran opened several nail salons in partnership with his family. Through these businesses, he sponsored

people from across the world to come to Louisville, find employment, and earn American citizenship. He now owns six nail salons and is the owner and proprietor of the Louisville Beauty Academy, which has trained more than 260 students since 2016. A part-time computer science professor at Sullivan University and founder of the Louisville Institute of Technology, Tran is currently running for the Kentucky Senate from District 37.

**Berta Weyenberg** (Cuba), English as a Second Language Intake Center coordinator for the Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS). Weyenberg's work provides guidance for multicultural families



on topics ranging from school choices and college orientations to diverse services available across the state. She has mentored hundreds of students, preparing them for new educational experiences and promising careers. She also engages with the JCPS Hispanic community, managing Spanish-language social media for the district. She has volunteered with several non-profit organizations in Louisville.



**Kaveh Zamanian** (Iran) a clinical psychologist and certified psychoanalyst for 20 years before starting Rabbit Hole Distillery in 2012. Zamanian has created his own recipes for the Rabbit Hole

brand, which has been profiled in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Forbes*, *Whisky Advocate*, and *Beverage Dynamics*. Through his distillery, Zamanian has created jobs at his state-of-the-art, sustainable rickshaws in Jefferson and Henry Counties and has created a monthly student loan reimbursement program for his employees. He sits on the board of the Louisville Film Society.

Bapion Ziba (Burkina Faso), owner of Ziba's Bistro in the Logan Street Market. Living by the mantra "Food is everything," Ziba offers traditional West African cuisine at his bistro, which also features European and American dishes inspired by his life. He attended culinary school in France and worked there as a chef for nine years. While helping to launch restaurants in Lyon and Toulouse, and in Casablanca, Morocco, he advocated for the rights of kitchen staff. In Louisville, he donates food to refugee families, supports the local Burkinabé community and helps immigrants from Burkina Faso find employment. He also stays involved with his native village, Tiaré, by purchasing pumps and irrigation equipment for farmers and by mentoring other aspiring chefs.

This year's ceremony will begin with a cocktail reception at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner and the awards program from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Sponsorship opportunities ranging from \$2,000 to \$20,000 are available. Single tickets are \$175. Contact [mosaic@jfcslouisville.org](mailto:mosaic@jfcslouisville.org) for more information.

All proceeds from the event will support the programs and services JFCS provides, including the Navigate Enterprise Center and workforce development efforts, which give new Americans the skills and tools they need to succeed.

## Joel Chasnoff brings American-Israeli humor to the 'Ville

By Lee Chottiner  
++Community Editor

As he wrapped up his Purim performance at Temple Shalom, American-Israeli comedian Joel Chasnoff asked the 114 people in the audience if they had any questions.

Among the standard fare – where are you from originally? (Evanston, Illinois) How long have you lived in Israel? (3½ years) – came this: Tell us an Israeli joke.

Chasnoff wrestled with that one, reluctant to reply.

"Israeli humor is very dark," he warned the crowd, "and I would really bring the room down if I told my favorite Israeli joke."

But the audience persisted, so Chasnoff obliged:

"The army officer lines up his troops and he says, 'Everyone here whose mother is still living take one step forward. Uh, uh, Moshe; not so fast.'"

Just a sprinkling of laughs.

"I didn't say it was funny!" Chasnoff protested, in a line that got more laughs than the joke. "That's an Israeli joke! They're dark, they're sick, but look what they (Israelis) live through. They're surrounded."

Fortunately, the rest of Chasnoff's act was hilarious, which is probably why he's in such demand. He's made 55 trips back to the U.S. since moving to Israel. He's also performed in nine countries

and he's become a staple of late night TV in his adopted land.

Chasnoff, a comedian/writer (he authored *The 188th Crybaby Brigade*, a comedic memoir of his time in the Israeli army) was in Louisville the weekend of March 8 for Purim appearances at The Temple and Temple Shalom.

(His performance at The Temple was done during the Shabbat service. "It's not something I do often," he said, "but more and more, it's a way temples are using to get people into the building.")

For the tall, slim comic with a shock of white hair, Louisville is a touchstone. He performed his first paid gig here at the Comedy Caravan.

"I always enjoy it when I come to Louisville," he said, "quintessential Midwestern behavior, which I love."

Chasnoff's humor is personal, recounting going to a Solomon Shechter school in Skokie, playing center on an Orthodox basketball team, and struggling to sell Passover candy to his non-Jewish neighbors.

He also poked fun at overnight camps: Why do they have such wimpy names like Goldman Union instead of something cool, like Camp Bear's Growl? And why was he stuck with knitting afghans and yarmulkes?

His humor gets progressively richer, more honest, each time he performs it, he said.

"The longer you do it and the more experiences you have; it becomes more



Comedian Joel Chasnoff

meaningful. I also learn from more shows what really touches audiences and what is more superficial."

Returning to the subject of Israeli comedy, Chasnoff said Israelis actually have a good sense of humor, although what makes an American audience laugh wouldn't do it for them.

And they make for tougher crowds.

"Israelis are a much more cynical people; you have to prove you deserve to be there performing," Chasnoff said. "A crowd like this tonight, people come [and] they genuinely want to have a good

time and are rooting for you. Whereas Israelis are a little bit more, 'What does this guy got? Who does he think he is?' It's just a cultural difference."

Also, Israeli humor is not always reflected in their art, especially in movies.

"They do need more comedies," he said. "They're steeped in these heavy dramas that explore deep Holocaust-related issues, which is important, but they do need more comedies."

Married with three children, one of whom is already in the army, Chasnoff and his wife decided in 2015 to do something unforgettable while they still could: They took their kids out of school and spent a year traveling around the world – 14 countries in all.

They saw the must-sees – Taj Mahal, Machu Picchu, etc. – but what they remember most are the overnight bus rides, getting trapped in rainstorms, stays in youth hostels, "things you wouldn't expect."

"Really it was the family moments together I'll remember more," Chasnoff said.

Though he loves coming home to the states, he's noticed that the crowds he draws here aren't getting any younger.

"I don't get many people in their 30s for sure, and even 40s," Chasnoff lamented. "I think it's more 50s and 60s. They seem to be the ones who care. It means something to them to go to a synagogue or Federation event. Younger audiences generally don't seem to be as attached to it."



# NEWS

## 'Eye-opening' experience

### Louisville Metro official tours Israel with American 'opinion leaders'

By Lee Chottiner  
Community Editor

Before he left for Israel, much of what Kendall Boyd knew about the country came from Jimmy Carter's controversial book, *Palestine: Peace, not Apartheid*.

"He brought to my attention a lot of how this conflict came about," Boyd said of Carter's book. "There are so many complexities to the Israeli state."

But this trip was different, he said.

Boyd came face-to-face with Israel: the multicultural society, how it struggles with refugee migration and the influence of high-tech innovation on the country.

"My mind was wide open on expectations," he said. "I intentionally didn't really go deep into the agenda; I wanted to let things kind of flow to me."

Boyd, executive director of the Louisville Metro Human Relations Commission, joined Matt Goldberg, director of the Jewish Community Relations Council, on a seven-day mission to the western Galilee from Feb. 16 to 24, sponsored by Partnership2Together. He was one of 11 non-Jewish officials from U.S. cities who participated in the mission.

"It was like I was experiencing Israel for the first time with him," Goldberg said of his trip with Boyd. "He got to see Israel in all its complexities, real personal encounters with all different kinds of Israelis, and an understanding of the unique security challenges that Israel faces."

Sharon Chait, director of Partnership2Gether, said the idea for the trip, which was financed by Israelis, not Americans, came last year after Israeli leaders visiting Indianapolis and Omaha were troubled by BDS (Boycott Divestment Sanctions) efforts to delegitimize their country in the eyes of American "opinion leaders."

"They came back to Israel and realized the best way to help is to bring non-Jewish community opinion leaders [to Israel]," Chait said. "It was really meant to support Jewish federations that suffer from anti-Semitism and BDS, and they felt this is how to do it."

Boyd, who oversees the city agency that addresses and investigates cases of bigotry, bias and discrimination, found his Israel experience "eye-opening."

He visited a hospital that treats wounded Syrians from the civil war across the border (and whose chief physician is an Arab-Christian).

He toured state-of-art manufacturing facilities in Akko.

He met Arab Israelis, who talked openly about being a minority in the Jewish state.

Boyd quoted one Israeli Arab who explained how he struck a balance in his life. "He said, 'I'm Arabic and I'm not Jewish. As long as I remain one or both it will technically never be equal in Israel. We can disagree on everything, but I must wake up the next day and work next to my Jewish counterparts.'"

Chait said P2G wanted the group to hear

from Arab Israelis.

"We said from the beginning we're not going to hold anything back," she said. "We're going to put all this stuff on the table. Ask tough questions, don't worry how we feel."

Alongside multicultural issues, Chait said P2G wanted to show the visitors the progress of Israel has made as a start-up nation and high-tech power.

The group toured one manufacturing plant that produces the camera pill, a vitamin-size wireless camera that can be swallowed, taking thousands of pictures as it travels through the digestive tract.

And it visited the Museum of Innovation in Tel Aviv, where Boyd saw a prototype for a device that creates drinking water from moisture in the air.

"Who doesn't know a country on this earth that needs that?" Boyd asked. "Here in the United States, the people in Flint could use something like that."

What resonated most with him were his meetings with Ethiopian Jews and what he learned about African migrants to Israel. He said there were important parallels between the refugee issues there and in the United States.

"What benefit do we get by rounding people up and sending them back to where they came from?" "What's the cost analysis there once you do that and get rid of them? What's the win there? Who wins there? Nobody," said Boyd, who is black.



Kendall Boyd, pictured in the Galilee.

The story is the same in Israel.

Boyd said he asked people he met how Israelis perceive African Americans. "Ironically, they didn't have a lot of questions about who I was. Everyone I talked to was open minded, free and clear of racism and not judging people by the way they looked."

While he learned a lot on the trip, Boyd also taught a thing or two to his hosts.

He introduced the term "implicit bias," which he said is not well known there. It refers to judgments of individuals based on stereotypes, rather than getting to know people as individuals.

Finally, in Jerusalem, a holy city to three religions, Boyd said their differences seemed to disappear on the Sabbath.

"All the things that separate us in the world, in that one moment, like when we were all at the Western Wall, all that disappears," he said. "I never saw that happen before."

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## COMMUNITY

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For more information, call 502-459-0660, fax 502-238-2724, e-mail [jcl@jewishlouisville.org](mailto:jcl@jewishlouisville.org) or check out the website [www.jewishlouisville.org](http://www.jewishlouisville.org).

POSTMASTER – Send address changes to **Community**, 3600 Dutchmans Lane, Louisville, KY 40205-3216.

### COMMUNITY DEADLINES

Deadlines for the next two issues of **Community** for copy and ads are: April 14 for publication on April 24 and May 20 for publication on May 27.

**Community** publishes Newsmakers and Around Town items at no charge. Items must be submitted in writing. Please include your name and a daytime telephone number where you can be contacted in the event that questions arise. **Community** reserves the right to edit all submissions to conform to style and length requirements.

### ADVERTISING INFORMATION

To advertise, please contact our sales representative at 502-418-5845 or e-mail [communityadvertising@jewishlouisville.org](mailto:communityadvertising@jewishlouisville.org).

The appearance of advertising in **Community** does not represent a kashruth endorsement.

### EDITORIAL POLICY

**Community** accepts letters to the editor for publication. All letters must be of interest to the Jewish community or in response to an item published in the paper. They must be no longer than 300 words in length and signed. Name, address and daytime phone number must be included for verification purposes only.

**Community** reserves the right to refuse to publish any letter, to edit for brevity while preserving the meaning, and to limit the number of letters published in any edition.

Email your comments to: **Community**,

Letters to the editor, Lee Chottiner, at

[lchottiner@jewishlouisville.org](mailto:lchottiner@jewishlouisville.org).

To submit items to Newsmakers, Around Town or Lifecycle, please email them to [newspapercolumns@jewishlouisville.org](mailto:newspapercolumns@jewishlouisville.org).

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## FORUM

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## Why synagogues matter: It's the support



### Human Resources

Lee Chottiner

My father used to love telling this story:

He was a boy, probably no more than 10, sitting in a cheder class at his synagogue in Clairton, Pennsylvania. The rabbi, an old man sitting in a wicker chair, was teaching, but his attention was split as he eyed another boy named Freddy Weinstock, who clearly did not want to be there.

Freddy eyed the door and the rabbi eyed Freddy, my father would say.

Suddenly, Freddy bolted for the door as the rabbi jumped to his feet, grabbed his wicker chair and threw it at Freddy! The furniture just missed the boy as he disappeared, his desperate dash for freedom made good.

It was the Great Depression. Times were tough and the rabbi, who also acted as the community shochet, led a meager life. So even though he threw a chair at a child, I think Dad forgave him for his reprehensible conduct. Besides, Freddy got away.

Still, it's fair to say that in the 80-some years since that incident, the rabbinate – and synagogues – have changed.

Most rabbis have college degrees in addition to their smicha (ordination). They have more life experience. (Many are on their second careers). Perhaps most significantly, they're a gender-

diverse group. (Women are ordained now, even in Modern Orthodox circles).

But one thing hasn't changed: the work rabbis – and cantors – do through their synagogues. It's always community-related, and often done during times of crisis.

Rabbis and cantors have served their congregations during times of war, depression, unforgettable acts of terror (think 9-11 or Tree of Life). The synagogues they serve have opened their doors to people in need – financially, spiritually, pretty much any way you can imagine.

Few times in history has that been truer than today.

The coronavirus has closed our physical synagogues, but it has not closed the idea of the synagogue, which is as meaningful now as ever.

All over Jewish Louisville, rabbis and cantors are using the internet, video-taping messages of support, streaming services, zooming classes and attending conferences.

Their congregants are doing the same, posting memes, videos and jpegs to their synagogues' social media, sharing with their fellow worshippers how they are getting on during this massive quarantine, each leaning on the others for support. At my own synagogue, members proudly posted to its Facebook page pictures of challahs they prepared for Shabbat – a virtual motzi, if you will.

I have a unique vantage point for all these interactions. As the spouse of a rabbi, I get to watch my wife plan, engage and interact cleric to congregants. I see the efforts to create a camp atmosphere or virtual Hebrew school for the kids, spiritual messages

and gritudes passed back and forth in the comment sections, the genuine appreciation that rabbis, cantors and congregants express for each other.

There's a word for all that: family.

In recent years, we have watched the decline of organized religion. Synagogues (and churches) and have seen significant declines in people walking through the doors. Many wonder what the future holds for synagogues as more Jews count them out of their lives.

Then this terrible pandemic happens.

No one wants a contagious virus to overtake the globe, leaving thousands infected, sick and dying. We are afraid of the future, uncertain of what will happen next.

Sometimes, though, it takes a crisis to make a community realize what it is missing. Perhaps this pandemic could be the wake-up call the world needs to realize the positive role religion can play.

In a recent interview, Cantor Sharon Hordes said, "This shows when you are part of a synagogue community, we fall all over ourselves to make sure you're OK. This is what it (the synagogue) is for ... this is why you invest in a community."

Not that the synagogue model should be static. Like everything, it must evolve to serve the people where they are, even if where we are is someplace none of us ever imagined.

"Religion in a time of crisis is a comforting thing," Hordes said. "Membership in a time of crisis is a comforting thing."

(Lee Chottiner is the editor of the Jewish Louisville Community.)



# FORUM

## The hungry most at risk during the coronavirus scare



JCRC Scene

Matt Goldberg

Our community has been changed drastically in the last few weeks by the coronavirus pandemic. What was once normal behavior in Louisville has been turned on its head.

People are working from home, “non-essential” businesses are closed, and supermarket shelves are getting bare.

Of course, it is those less fortunate who are suffering most during the pandemic. The economic impact of this pe-

riod is still playing out, but poverty will be exacerbated with an uncertain end.

The countless people who regularly have too little to eat are of special concern. Grade school children, college kids of limited means and women will be affected in greater numbers than the general population.

Jewish Louisville has always played a role in this area. The Hunger Walk was created in part by Rabbi Herbert Waller after hearing of the death in Louisville of Bobby Ellis, a nine-year-old boy who died of starvation.

More recently, this community has shown its support for Dare to Care, the local Food Bank, by supporting the Hunger Walk and Jewish Family & Career Services’ Meyer Food Pantry, which are affiliated. Jewish Louisville has participated in the Food Stamp Challenge, lobbying on behalf of expanded federal and state

benefits for hunger-related programs.

Despite the uncertainty in our country, we need to act to address this fast-growing problem.

One answer, and the Jewish Federation of Louisville is taking a leading role here, is direct service. We are delivering tens of meals daily to seniors who cannot get out to The JCC or anywhere else due to their being in a high-risk population.

Another answer is increasing support for Dare to Care. Its needs have soared dramatically since the onset of the coronavirus. Surplus food from grocery stores, which normally is donated to the food bank, no longer is. Dare to Care needs more help than ever.

People can show support by volunteering at the food bank, which surely needs helpers, or by going to [daretocare.org](http://daretocare.org) for more information.

Of course, the best way to address this issue is by supporting legislation meant to alleviate hunger. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the most effective way to address hunger on a mass scale and it can be particularly effective during a crisis. Unfortunately, SNAP is facing the threat of funding cuts, something JCRC has fought against for years. In all of my conversations with our congressional leadership, SNAP is always the first thing I mention. That’s how vital it is.

We are certain that the coronavirus crisis is temporary; we will eventually return to normalcy. But we are in this together for an indefinite period of time, so we need to support and advocate for those who need it – now more than ever.

*(Matt Goldberg is the director of the Jewish Community Relations Council.)*

## Letters to the Editor

### Think before voting

While the Feb. 28 Community article on Dan Grossberg, “Daniel Grossberg makes run for state representative,” was not a political endorsement, the article certainly did, and without any merit, promote his candidacy to the Jewish community.

No political race can ever be about electing just any Jew so he/she can be “at the table,” but must be about who is the best person to represent and fight for the values that this Jewish community holds dear.

Louisville native Tom Burch, the current Kentucky representative for District 30, has long championed human rights, women’s rights, children’s

rights and senior rights. He is recognized by his peers, by local community organizations, and by his constituents, for his legislation that improves the health, safety and welfare of all these groups in Kentucky.

So I urge every Jew in this city, be extremely careful who you support, be it [with] your money as well as your vote.

Honi Marleen Goldman  
Louisville

### Booker’s AIPAC speech lauded

I am a sophomore at the University of Louisville. I study communication and Jewish studies and I currently

serve as president of our Hillel.

Thanks to the generous funding provided by the Jewish Federation of Louisville and the Cincinnati Jewish Teen Collective, I attended the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) Policy Conference in Washington this past February.

The conference consisted of a multitude of speakers at general sessions and smaller breakouts. I couldn’t possibly summarize all of the speakers I heard, but I would like to share a quote from one of my favorites, U.S. Sen. Cory Booker (D-N.J.):

“I’ve long advocated for a two-state solution. Because it is the only pathway to a lasting peace.... We stand for Israel’s safety, security and right to exist as a Jewish state.... We must

also stand for the human dignity, the human rights, the safety, and the self-determination of the Palestinian people.... The love of neighbors, it’s a Jewish value that said Goodman and Cheney and Black and White and Christian and Jewish, This value is why they died together in Mississippi. These are Jewish values.”

This is the epitome of my AIPAC. We may not agree, but we must bring everyone to the table for these discussions, not just those we align ourselves with. Remembering that we are all people and embracing those around you with the principles of *tikun olam* and *pikuach nefesh* in your heart.

Eowyn “Wyn” Garfinkle Plymesser  
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## FORUM

## Orthodox sociologist: Social distancing to take a toll on Orthodox community



Guest  
Columnist

Samuel Heilman

NEW ROCHELLE, N.Y. – Recalling the culture of the Eastern European shtetl in their famous book of the same name, Mark Zborowski and Elizabeth Herzog wrote that for Jews, “Life is with people.”

This is certainly true in a world governed by Jewish values and tradition. At every stage of life, Jews come to be together with other Jews – and no community today exemplifies this so much as the Orthodox.

Three times a day, seven days a week, Orthodox men are required to gather in a minyan, 10 or more men and often children who come together for prayer in a synagogue or elsewhere. On Shabbatot, women may come, too. People often gather in small groups to recite tehillim (psalms) for the sick or listen to inspirational lectures from rabbis and other motivational Jewish speakers.

When a child is born, the announcement and name are given at the congregation. Circumcision requires a congregation as well as an operation. When a boy comes of age, it is marked in the synagogue by a Torah reading. And in some places, the bat mitzvah is being celebrated as well.

Marriage requires two unrelated eye-witnesses and a minyan, and hundreds more typically come to celebrate. Death demands one drop whatever private affairs one has and attend the funeral, console the bereaved and sustain the mourners at the shiva house. And, of course, Kaddish should not be recited alone.

It takes a village to be Jewish – even in the city.

While the nature of Jewish life has changed dramatically over time, these values and norms remain essential for the Orthodox, even into the 21st century.

For many of them, the idea that one can fully be Jewish without expressing it in the company and physical presence of other Jews is unthinkable. Text study is a foundation of Orthodox life, and this study takes place in a room filled with the vocal study of many others. In yeshivas and synagogues, even what passes as so-called solitary study is really learning with chavrusa (study partners) or two hunched together head to head over the sacred text.

Among Hasidim, it is even more intensely unimaginable to be alone, for the Hasid not only needs to be with other Hasidim but also gathered at the table or side of their rebbe, who serves as an intermediary between them and the Almighty. The sight of a sea of black and white parting when the rebbe enters to share a festive meal with them or surrounding him when he dances is the very image of Hasidism. It is unimaginable to these Jews that coming together could be prohibited or dangerous. Connection is the fabric of Jewish life and congregating is a spiritual and religious expression.

But there is another side to this sense of closeness and community among the more insular haredi Orthodox. That is the widespread feeling that they march to a different drummer because they and their internal authorities know better. Their leaders answer to God, and the Almighty’s rules, which are not subject to easy change, must surpass all others.

Add to this the fact that many haredim and insular Orthodox have traditionally been suspicious of outside governmental authorities, a distrust embedded in their collective experience in Europe. (These days, with the less-than-complete honesty in Washington, that might not be so wrong.) Perhaps this explains, if it does not excuse, the haredi neighborhoods in which the COVID-19 infection has now exploded, a consequence of people continuing to gather long past the time they should have dispersed.

This lingering distrust of outside officials among some makes leadership within the community itself even more important. While some Hasidic groups, such as the Satmar, originally came out strongly against school closures (in spite of the fact that the move-



Orthodox Jews find social distancing particularly hard to adapt to, sociologist Samuel Heilman says.

ment’s rebbe, Aharon Teitelbaum, had himself been tested for the virus) – and Rabbi Chaim Kanievisky stated a few days ago that closing the yeshivas is more dangerous than the coronavirus, since yeshivas actually protect against it (presumably because Torah study guarantees life) other authorities have subsequently taken a more aggressive approach to stopping community spread.

The Moetzes Gedolei Torah of America, major halachic decisors for haredi Judaism in the United States, are now suggesting that Rabbi Kanievisky was completely and dangerously wrong. And last Friday, the rabbis of the Crown Heights Beis Din closed all schools in Crown Heights and banned even outdoor minyans – two days before New York Mayor Bill DeBlasio made the same call for the city’s public schools, but after many other private Jewish schools in the city had closed. Alas, the doors at 770 Eastern Parkway, Chabad’s international headquarters, were very late in closing – maybe too late.

Many Orthodox rabbis and community leaders (the Modern Orthodox ones earlier than the haredi ones) are now ringing the alarm about the danger of the coronavirus, but unfortunately, even now not everyone is listening – and in such an interconnected community, a small number of people eschewing health guidelines will have serious consequences.

That’s why the coronavirus pandemic is so challenging. It’s hard for all of us in the Orthodox world to separate from one another – in a world in which community itself is sacred, the consequences of pulling apart may be devastating.

Social distancing, while life-saving and essential, will take its toll on the community. For those who use such technologies, Zoom meetings, FaceTime, WhatsApp, Telegram and even simple phone calls will soften the blow. But for a religion so wrapped up in communal life, that feels that the physical closeness with others is critical to feeling a spiritual connection to the community and thus to God, the religious dangers of the quarantine are significant.

Time will tell how significant. On the Sabbath, of which the writer Ahad Ha’am famously said, “More than Jews have kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath has kept the Jews,” we Orthodox now find ourselves all alone, unable to connect with the virtual tools available the rest of the week because the rabbis have told us they are prohibited. During that regular high point of the week, we are now closed in our homes. As I told a reporter at the Forward, “How do you feel yourself to be part of something greater when you’re all alone?”

The Jewish people have survived anti-Semitism, persecution, pogroms and the Holocaust. Orthodox Jews, who often took the brunt of these tragedies because they stand out so visibly, have, too. The threat that now faces us is no less frightening. To survive, we will require flexibility and adaptation – and a rabbinate ready to rethink what halachah allows.

(Samuel Heilman is a professor of sociology at Queens College and holds the Proshansky Chair of Jewish Studies at the Graduate Center of CUNY.)

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## ISRAEL

## Israel grapples with constitutional crisis during pandemic

By Ben Sales  
JTA

Besides the coronavirus, Israel has another crisis on its hands. It's inside the government.

After Israel's latest election earlier this month – its third in a year – Benny Gantz and his center-left coalition seem closer than ever to garnering enough support to oust Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, despite another close vote (not to mention an array of obstacles).

But now the speaker of the Knesset is refusing to allow the customary election for his replacement, even ignoring a Supreme Court order that it be done by Wednesday. The speaker, Yuli Edelstein, a member of Netanyahu's right-wing Likud party, resigned Wednesday rather than accede to the order. The resignation does not take effect for 48 hours, which means that a vote on a new speaker cannot be held until next week.

The Supreme Court and Edelstein opponents say he is undermining Israeli democracy because he is suspending parliamentary procedures to stay in power. Edelstein and his allies say he is protecting democracy by refusing to subordinate the legislative branch to the judicial branch.

How did Israel get to this point? How is it going to be resolved? What does this have to do with the coronavirus? Read on:

#### Who is the speaker of the Knesset and why should I care?

It's Israel's version of the speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives: It's the speaker presides over the law-making body and manages its agenda. The speaker holds great power to set the direction of the nation's legislative branch, including which laws are voted on.

One difference from the U.S.: Israel's government is formed from a Knesset majority, and the parliament also elects the speaker, so its speaker almost always comes from the same party as the prime minister. It's quite rare, in other words, to have a Trump-Pelosi situation.

Edelstein has served in the role since 2013 and is among the most popular members of Likud, as well as a Netanyahu ally. He has been in the Knesset since the mid-1990s after moving to Israel in 1987 from the Soviet Union, where he had been imprisoned for three years for being a leading Zionist activist.

#### Didn't Israel just have an election?

Yes — the March vote was the third in less than a year. That's the problem.

Elections in Israel typically produce a clear winner who assembles a governing coalition from a Knesset majority. That majority then elects the speaker.

But the balloting in March, and in April and September last year, did not produce a clear winner. Going back to April, it looked like Likud was going to remain in power, so Edelstein ran as speaker unopposed and won.



Yuli Edelstein

Since then, the Knesset has been deadlocked, but Edelstein has remained in the role, absent a clear successor.

What's changed now is that the Knesset has a slim anti-Netanyahu (and hence anti-Edelstein) majority led by the centrist Gantz. That majority is really fragmented and has yet to form a government. But the anti-Netanyahu camp still wants to put one of its own members in the speaker's job immediately, so that it can begin to pass laws.

#### So why don't they just vote him out?

Because first, Edelstein has to call the vote for his own successor. And he isn't doing that.

#### Is he allowed to do that?

Edelstein asserts that he's following the law and Israel's political norms. The law says that elections for speaker are supposed to come by the time a coalition government is formed. Beyond that, he says that he gets to decide when to hold the election for speaker.

In other words, no majority coalition, no speaker election.

Edelstein also says that he's delaying the election in order to pressure Likud and Gantz's Blue and White into forming a unity government — one that is formed together by the country's two largest parties.

Last week, Edelstein took the unusual step of suspending Knesset for five days. He said he was doing so to force negotiations toward a unity government.

"I have done, and am doing, everything so that a unity government will form and a fourth round of elections will be prevented," he wrote on Facebook. "The election of a speaker for the 23rd Knesset at this time, before a government is formed, will completely foreclose any chance of a broad unity government forming."

But Edelstein's methods have sparked a fierce backlash. Blue and White has accused him and Netanyahu of an undemocratic power grab.

"Across the globe, parliaments con-

tinue to function even in countries with thousands of infected people," Gantz tweeted on March 18. "Here, Edelstein and Netanyahu decided to just burn the rulebook and erase Israeli

democracy. We won't let that happen."

Is Blue and White trying to stop Edelstein?

#### Yes. The party basically said, "We'll see you in court."

Blue and White, along with other political parties, petitioned the Supreme Court to weigh in on the issue. The court ruled against Edelstein, issuing a unanimous decision on Monday that he must hold elections for his own position by Wednesday while accusing him of harming Israel's democracy.

Edelstein's refusal to allow the vote "undermines the foundations of the democratic system," Chief Justice Esther Hayut wrote in the decision. "It significantly hurts the Knesset's standing as an independent authority as well as the transfer of power."

So, will Edelstein hold the vote?

He doesn't seem like he's backing down. In a Facebook post Monday night, the speaker sounded defiant.

"I told the Supreme Court this evening — I won't agree to an ultimatum!" he wrote. "The authority to set the Knesset's agenda and the order of its discussions is given to the speaker of the Knesset."

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# THE J CENTERPIECE

## MOVING DAY



### Coronavirus slows – doesn't stop – new Community Garden's growth

By Lee Chottiner  
Community Editor

One Sunday morning in February, shortly after Tu B'Shevat, Alayna Altman, accompanied by dozens of students from LBSY and The Temple, and parents and volunteers from the Muhammad Ali Center, began moving the Community Garden from the back of The J campus, site of the future JCC, to its new home on the grounds of Anshei Sfard.

They lifted the raised garden beds, walked them across the parking lot and carefully set them down on their new locations.

Discarded benches were rescued from the construction bays and set up around the garden, along with new seating made from reclaimed wood and colorful signs made by kids.

Fences and compost bins, also made from made with lumber from flipped houses, were erected around the site.

And bricks, donated by Altman's parents, were assembled to create the structure of a terraced herb spiral garden, which will enable the growing of plants that require different levels of sun and drainage.

"In one structure, you're able to create different climate zones," Altman said.

It was a good day's work, but it won't be completed until the threat from the coronavirus subsides.

global pandemic, The J has temporarily closed. Activities from all departments are migrating online.

The Community Garden is no exception.

"The coronavirus affects everything," said Altman, director of JOFEE (Jewish Outdoor, Food, Farming & Environmental), "from the amount of volunteers I can engage, to the capacity of what we can grow."

It will also curtail all the activities she had planned to hold in the garden once it was moved, constructed and planted.

The Guidance for Growers gardening class, which she had planned to hold with an experienced farmer, is postponed until further notice. There is, however, an e-course that will be available for students.

Altman is limiting garden volunteers to two to three at a time – not 10 – since they are sharing tools.

"I am hoping we can see this pandemic as an opportunity to stay safe, reset and embrace gradual improvements, Altman said. "The garden may not be what I previously hoped, but we're still moving in the right direction."

Meanwhile, Altman still has big plans for the garden, which she sees as something far more than a space that produces food.

"I guess I'm hoping to create a space that is dynamic in its function, that has more feeling of exploration as part of its design, and that can be used for events and education – along with growing food."

With the help of a \$3,000 grant from Whole Foods, Altman plans to develop a garden that is part experimental (the herbal spiral), part handicapped accessible (one of the raised beds is double-stacked,

enabling older and handicapped gardeners to sit on it), educational (Guidance for Growers and cooking classes inside the Anshei Sfard building, using produce from the plots) and just plain welcoming.

"I want it to feel inviting, that you come and sit there, and get out your sketch book and draw some plants growing."

Being next to the Anshei Sfard building is an opportunity, Altman said. Not only does she plan to erect rain barrels to collect water from the roof (one is already up), but she plans to feed on the enthusiasm of J campers, who will meet there this summer.

"Campers will see this all the time," she said. "Camp and JOFEE, in some ways, are spatially consolidating in this one spot; there's going to be a lot more foot traffic going through this garden."

The garden also reflects JOFEE's efforts to recycle. The amount of reclaimed it and other JOFEE activities have used since Sukkot totals more than 1,000 board feet.

Altman hopes to get campers and religious school students involved in the camp through classes and art projects. She suggested they could make multilingual signs in English, Hebrew and possibly Arabic – akin to signage found in Israel.

"It would be a great opportunity for the Hebrew School kids to practice their Hebrew," she said.

Mostly, she hopes the garden, and its related classes and activities, will encourage people to start gardens at home.

"There are many different ways to garden; there's no right way to do it," Altman said. "You can do it with raised beds; you can do it directly on the lawn; you can do it in pots and containers. There are many different ways to learn to grow. It's about finding the way that's exciting to you."

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onset of  
the







Volunteers from across the community, including several from the religious schools, helped move the Community Garden in February to its new home on the grounds of Anshei Sfard. (photos by Alayna Altman)





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# CORONAVIRUS

## Jewish Louisvillian returns early from Mongolia amid coronavirus crisis

By Lee Chottiner  
Community Editor

Last August, Siera Rayne Hanks departed Louisville, bound for the adventure of a lifetime.

The recipient of a Fulbright English teaching assistantship, Hanks, a Jewish Louisvillian and Centre College graduate, expected to spend the next 10 months teaching English at Ider University in the land of Genghis Khan, the Silk Road and cashmere wool.

But things didn't quite work out that way.

Mongolia shares a 2,880-mile border with China, the original epicenter of the coronavirus.

Even though the Mongolian government closed its border, banned flights from South Korea, stopped the Trans-Siberian Railroad and called off school until March 30 (at least), it wasn't enough to halt the spread of the virus. Its first confirmed case was reported March 10. Fulbright had already urged its participants to leave the country.

"Mongolia has been quarantined for about two months now," she said.

After a grueling 20 hours of air travel, with layovers in Istanbul and Chicago, she arrived back in Louisville late on March 12 and voluntarily went into a 14-day period of self-quarantine and "social distancing."

She is not symptomatic.

"I was super grateful to be able to live in Mongolia," Hanks said. "I was devastated that I was not able to finish my service, but you can't control virus; that's something I don't have any control over."

The Fulbright program has placed all its grantees worldwide on "voluntary authorized leave" in response to the pandemic.

An experienced world traveler, Hanks, 23, who lived in the capital city of Ulaanbaatar, was impressed with the way Mongolians handled the coronavirus.

Clubs, bars and restaurants re-



Siera Rayne Hanks, pictured here clutching an eagle and posing with a husky in Terelj, Mongolia, returned early to Louisville from her teaching assistantship in that country due to the coronavirus pandemic. (photos provided by Hanks)

mained open when she left, but with curfews. ("Movie theaters were all the way closed," she said.)

Supermarkets strictly enforced their customers' use of hand sanitizer and masks.

Telescreens downtown projected public service announcements.

Businesses received special signs and pamphlets to give away, disseminating useful information and tips.

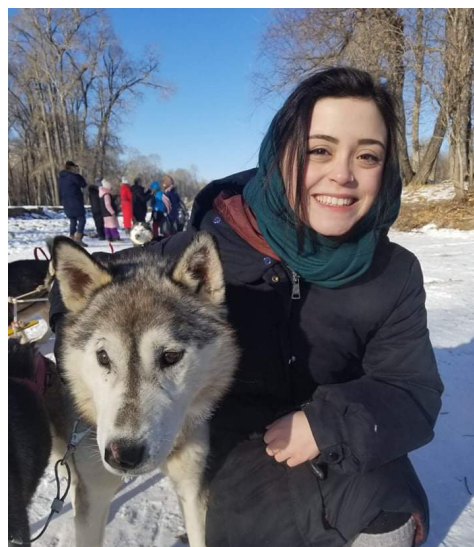
The government produced a special TV curriculum for kids.

And official celebrations of the Tsagaan Tsar, Mongolia's lunar new year and the biggest national holiday, were called off.

"As far as anything official happening, it has been shut down for many weeks because they responded very early," Hanks said, "but they didn't have their first case until March 10, so their prevention methods were effective."

A bat mitzvah and confirmand from Temple Shalom, Hanks sought out what Jewish life there is in Mongolia, but it wasn't much.

Centuries ago, Jewish traders trekked the Silk Road from Europe



and the Near East to China during the Pax Mongolica, a period of Mongolian-enforced peace and stability during the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

But while Jews built communities throughout Asia, there isn't one in Mongolia, "which makes it unique until this day," Hanks said.

Only a handful of Jews live there. The nearest organized Jewish presence is a Chabad house across the border in the Russian city of Irkutsk.

So Hanks created a little Jewish life of her own. At a holiday party for her Fulbright class, she baked her own challah and procured latkes from a Cuban restaurant in Ulaanbaatar.

The one Jewish presence she found was "Jewish Mongolia," a new Facebook page, which advertised a Chanukah candle-lighting party at a vegan restaurant.

She wanted to go, so she did.

"I show up and there's mainly these two older Israelis who are running it and a bunch of people from the Mongolian Baha'i Center," she recalled. There were Mongolians also who had worked or studied in Israel, "and a Mongolian guy who lived in North Dakota and wanted to network with Jews."

Vodka and falafel, sufganiyot and an Israeli liqueur were on the menu.

Hanks became friends with one of the Israelis, a 60-something-year-old man named Jacob, who held Shabbat dinners in his apartment. She said he had converted his living room into minyan space.

A chilling side to Hanks' stay in Mongolia was the omnipresence of the swastika.

Long before it was adopted by the Nazis, she said, the swastika was a Buddhist symbol representing change, balance and cycles of life. so it is frequently seen throughout east Asia.

"I've gotten used to them," Hanks said. "I've seen them in Asia for a while, but in Mongolia, they're really into the swastika."

Of course, nationalist groups in the country also use the swastika, masking their use of it with the symbol's religious meaning.

"They're kind of cheeky about it," she said, adding that anti-Semitism is not a serious problem in the country.

Hanks' Mongolian adventure wasn't her first in Asia. She has previously traveled in Japan, Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore, South Korea and Bhutan.

She didn't just teach English at the university. She also ran a human rights club for English speakers on behalf of Amnesty International Mongolia, and she performed outreach for the U.S. embassy, teaching English in western Mongolia near its border with Kazakhstan.

She traveled extensively around the country, also known as the Land of the Blue Sky, and hopes to return.

In fact, she would love to be back in July when Mongolia celebrates Nadaam, its summer festival. The athletes compete in the three so-called "manly sports" of horse racing, wrestling and archery. (These days, women have their own competitions, especially in archery.)

"It's like a huge festival for the whole country," she said. "I'd love to go back and see it."



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# CORONAVIRUS

## Shabbat Quarantini:

## Young adults, teens to keep connecting despite the coronavirus

By Lee Chottiner  
Community Editor

Young Jewish adults in Louisville refuse to let the coronavirus pandemic cramp their social life.

In fact, a group of them got together at 6 p.m., Friday, March 20, shortly before Shabbat, for a little cocktail party – virtually, of course.

The YAD Shabbat Quarantini Happy Hour, which will be held via Zoom, is the work of Sarah Baron, leadership & engagement manager for the Jewish Federation of Louisville.

“Young adults are feeling just as isolated as the rest of the community, if not more,” Baron said, “so this is a chance for the Jewish Federation to help facilitate opportunities for young adults to see each other and connect with people who might not be in someone’s immediate circle of friends.”



The YAD Shabbat Quarantini Happy Hour is a way for young adults to stay socially connected during the coronavirus pandemic.

Baron said future YAD activities will be posted on its Facebook page. She

has already posted Virtual Shabbat there from OneTable.

The Quarantini won’t be the only activity for young Jewish adults. Hillel students can connect to a Hillel International platform called Hillel@Home to access free webinars.

While young adults are connecting, so are young teens. BBYO members can go to a new platform called BBYO On Demand.

“Think BBYO meets Netflix,” said Becca Waller, Jewish teen & tween director at The J. “All local BBYO programs have moved online and will utilize this platform.”

She said the site is free and open to all.

More than 50 partners from all spectrums of the Jewish world, including non-Jewish organizations, are participating too.

## Louisville play about Heschel postponed, to be rescheduled

By Lee Chottiner  
Community Editor

Jewish Louisville will have to wait a little longer to see the world premiere of a play based on the life of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel.

The Bunbury-ShPIeL Identity Theatre Project, which has been staging a series of Jewish-themed plays for local audiences, has announced the postponement of its next production *Imagining Heschel*, due to the onset of the coronavirus. A new date for the premiere has not been set.

The play had been scheduled to premiere on April 13 at the Bunbury Theatre in the Henry Clay, downtown.

“We are so very disappointed,” the theatrical group said in a prepared statement. “We would have achieved our goal of building strong bridges across multiple segments of our com-



Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel

munity, bringing them together for culture, engagement, education and

inspiration.”

Five years in development, *Imagining Heschel* is based on a script by New York playwright and author Colin Greer. It has already enjoyed successful staged readings, which have included famed actors such as Richard Dreyfus.

A leading rabbi and theologian of the 20th century, Heschel is remembered for his active support of the civil rights movement, his opposition to the war in Vietnam and his support of and friendship with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

A Jewish representative to the Second Vatican Council, Heschel proved influential in the drafting the 1965 *Nostra Aetate* (In Our Time) document, which repudiates the Catholic Church’s age-old deicide charge against the Jews and reaffirming their covenant with

God.

A prolific writer who expressed himself in four different languages, Heschel also taught at Hebrew Union College and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

His influence on races and religions has endured since his death in 1972.

“Go to every prayer book in any synagogue – Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, Reconstructionist – [there are Heschel] quotes and prayers,” said David Chack, artistic director of the ShPIeL-Performing Identity. “And African Americans quote him all the time.”

Chack just returned from a conference in Connecticut. “Every room in the center had a quote from Heschel,” he said.

## JFCS helps clients cope with coronavirus stress through weekly call-in talk

By Lee Chottiner  
Community Editor

The coronavirus pandemic is driving people into information overload. They feel anxiety, stress and uncertainty caused by a deluge of news and announcements.

They need a place to get their questions answered and share their feelings – in other words, a therapeutic safety valve.

So the Jewish Family & Career Service (JFCS) will provide that place – every Monday at noon.

It’s a weekly call-in conversation called Strategies for Managing Un-

certain Times. The conversation will focus on tools to “de-stress, reduce loneliness during times of isolation and self-care,” according to a JFCS announcement.

“As we move forward, it will be important to have a place to check in, do some mutual problem-solving,” said Mauri Malka, JFCS senior director of programs, who is facilitating the call-in. “I see this as a platform for emotional support and practical tips as we move forward.”

Information overload leads to difficulty processing it new information, which, in turn, leads to anxiety, Malka said.

“I’ve had people say to me ‘I see such and such, and I can’t stop thinking about it,’” she said. “We’re living in our heads right now and when we do that, we dwell on things. It’s important to shut that off.”

Now in its second week, the call-in session comes at a time when the JFCS is becoming, for the time being, a remote service agency, its counselors and staffers reaching out to their clients via phone or online conferencing.

The call-in will also serve as a forum for sharing advice and tips to cope with the new reality.

“A lot of people work from home,” Malka said. “I always dreamed of

working from home. I didn’t know how difficult it was.”

Callers can use the weekly sessions to maintain mental health and well-being and develop a schedule to reflect those needs.

“Structure helps with our own mental health and well-being,” Malka said. “We need to look at what those things are to employ self-care. A lot of people are depending on us, so we all need to do what can to take care of ourselves.”

### Want to join?

To RSVP and receive call-in instructions, contact Jessica at 502-452-6341, x153.



# NEWS & NEWSMAKERS

## J-Serve teens pack food for needy kids

As Louisville shuts down over the coronavirus crisis, 15 BBYO teenagers did their part to make sure children in the Jefferson County Public Schools have food to eat.

The youths met Sunday, March 15, in the Anshei Sfard building at The J to pack for the young people and their

families.

The project, which was done for Blessings in a Backpack, a nationwide hunger relief effort for school children, yielded more than 700 bags of food for distribution to 37 emergency feeding sites set up by JCPS.

Currently, the schools are closed until April 6.

With the onset of the crisis, Blessings in a Backpack canceled its biggest fundraiser of the year, Pack the Sack, which brings together hundreds of people to help raise money to support the organization and the kids it serves. An estimated \$100,000 was

expected to be raised at that event to help Blessings finish the school year.

That made the J-Serve service day, which is held every year, even more crucial.

"This event was planned months ago," said Becca Waller, BBYO city director. At first, she said, it also included painting the building for Camp J, which will meet there this summer.

"We adapted our original plan to just packing bags due to the current needs in the community," Waller said.

Blessings will need donations to keep the food program going until the end of the term. Visit [blessingsina-backpack.org](http://blessingsina-backpack.org) for details.

## Jewish Film Festival sells out shows in 2020

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Louisville Jewish Film Festival drew 1,900 film buffs this year.

"We had five sold-out shows and many that were very close to sell-outs, meaning front row seats available," said Marsha Bornstein, its director.

## Golden joins TARC staff on interim basis

Matt Golden has been named in-house interim general counsel for the Transit Authority of River City (TARC).

"I am honored to be working ... through this interim process and to serve TARC which, in turn, serves so many," Golden said in a prepared statement.

As interim general counsel, he will be the point of contact for all TARC legal issues, supervising the agency's utilization of outside legal counsel.

Golden retired from the Jefferson County Attorney's Office in 2019 after more than two decades of public service. He served there as first assistant, a prosecutor, civil litigation defense attorney, tax director, civil division director and second assistant. He also acted as attorney and advisor to various governmental boards, commissions and elected officials throughout Louisville Metro.

Golden also belongs to the newly formed Louisville Region of the Muslim Jewish Advisory Council, which was publicly rolled out during a Dec. 8 ceremony at the Muhammad Ali Center.



BBYO teens packed food for hungry kids during a J-Serve project for Blessings in a Backpack at the Anshei Sfard building. (Community photos by Robbyn McClain)

## The Jewish Community of Louisville gratefully acknowledges donations to the following

### JCC SECOND CENTURY FUNDS

#### THE SIDNEY WINCHELL FAMILY FUND

In memory of William Klein  
Fran Winchell

## THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF LOUISVILLE ALSO GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES DONATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING

### SANDRA K. BERMAN SHALOM LOUISVILLE ENDOWMENT FUND

In honor of the special birthday of Leni Sweet  
Janice & Alan Glaubinger

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In Memory of Susan Kling

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### 2020 FEDERATION CAMPAIGN

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### JCC NEW BUILDING FUND

In Memory of William "Bill" Klein  
Ralph Green and Shellie Branson

Jim & Julie Ensign

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"There was no decision. Of course I am leaving a legacy gift to the JCC and Adath Jeshurun. The Louisville Jewish Community has helped me survive and thrive. The first time I witnessed a charitable act was at the JCC. My aunt, who worked at the JCC for 65 years, helped a man who showed up needing food and some fresh clothes. That clicked and I realized people can make a difference; I then understood why I always put coins in my blue tzedakah box and never went to Sunday School at AJ without some change to donate. There is no way that I could pass up giving tzedakah through a legacy gift for future generations in Jewish Louisville."

— Jaye Bittner

You too can create an endowment to preserve Jewish Louisville's programs and organizations that matter to you. Contact Jennifer Tuvlin at **502-238-2719** or [jtuvlin@jewishlouisville.org](mailto:jtuvlin@jewishlouisville.org) to endow your Jewish values.



# AROUND TOWN

## Adath Jeshurun

### Morning minyan services

Monday-Friday, 7:15 a.m.;

Sundays, 8:45 a.m.

To join online, go to <https://zoom.us/j/440670783>

To join by phone, dial 929-205-6099, enter meeting ID 440670783, then press the # sign.

### Afternoon minyan services

Daily, 5:45 p.m.

To join online, go to <https://zoom.us/j/764552443>

To join by phone, dial 929-205-6099, enter meeting ID 764552443, then press the # sign.

### New kabbalah course

Monday, April 13-June 22

livestreamed

Dr. Elliott Rosengarten will teach the 10-week course, based on the spiritual laws of the universe. The cost is \$150.

The April 13 class is free. Contact Rosengarten at [eyedoc1770@aol.com](mailto:eyedoc1770@aol.com).

## Anshei Sfard

### Rabbi's classes

Wednesdays, 7p.m.,

Thursdays, noon

Rabbi Simcha Snaid will continue to hold classes via Facebook and Zoom.

Contact Snaid at 912-702-2769 for details.

### Services suspended

Anshei Sfard is now closed until further notice. There will be no virtual services.

## Chabad of Kentucky

### Prayers

All public prayers have been postponed until further notice. Worshippers are encouraged to engage in "thoughtful private prayer." Call 502-459-1770 or go to [chabadky.com/Prayer](http://chabadky.com/Prayer) for details.

### Passover classes

Chabad will live-stream two pre-Passover classes at 7 p.m., Sunday, March 29 and April 5, on Facebook and Zoom. Call 502-459-1770 or go to [facebook.com/chabadky](http://facebook.com/chabadky).

### Passover

Chabad will ensure all those in need have the essentials to celebrate the holiday. For more information call 502-459-1770 or go to [chabadky.com/Passover](http://chabadky.com/Passover).

## Keneseth Israel

### Services, classes online

KI will host services and classes on Zoom until further notice. The link is <https://zoom.us/j/76637576>

Please check our website often for updates on when services and events will take place [www.kenesethisrael.com](http://www.kenesethisrael.com).

## The Temple

### Guest Scholar

Rabbi Dalia Marx will teach a pre-Pass-

over class, The Four Children: Biblically, Rabbinically & Graphically, 1 p.m., Sunday, March 2.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/2851046618456487/>

Join the Zoom meeting at <https://zoom.us/j/541579570>

Call in: 929-205-6099, meeting ID: 541 579 570

### Virtual Temple

Temple services will be held Friday night and Saturday morning via live stream on its YouTube page, [thetemplelouky.org/streaming](http://thetemplelouky.org/streaming). The following classes and programs can be accessed via Zoom video conferencing.

- Saturday morning Torah study: Rabbi David Ariel-Joel at [rabbidaj@gmail.com](mailto:rabbidaj@gmail.com);
- Monday night Basic Judaism class: Ariel-Joel at [rabbidaj@gmail.com](mailto:rabbidaj@gmail.com);
- Temple Scholars: [rabbidaj@gmail.com](mailto:rabbidaj@gmail.com) for Ariel-Joel; [benji@thetemplelouky.org](mailto:benji@thetemplelouky.org) for Rabbi Joe Rooks Rapport;
- Religious/Hebrew School, starting in April: email Sarah Harlan at [sarah@thetemplelouky.org](mailto:sarah@thetemplelouky.org).

### Passover

The Temple will provide take-home boxes with everything needed to participate from home: Seders are \$10 for each Temple member, \$20 for non-members. Seder programs will occur online (more details to come):

- First Night Seder, Wednesday, April 8;
- Second Night Seder, Thursday,

April 9;

- Young Adult Seder, Saturday, April 11;
- Rabbi Gaylia R. Rooks Women's Seder, Tuesday, April 14.
- Check [thetemplelouky.org/virtual](http://thetemplelouky.org/virtual) for schedule changes, additions, or cancellations.

### Volunteers

The Temple has organized volunteers to provide non-emergency support and assistance – food shopping, prescription pickups, etc. Go to [thetemplelouky.org/](http://thetemplelouky.org/) assistance to request non-emergency assistance. For rabbinic assistance, call The Temple at 502-423-1818 or email Craig Goldstein at [craig@thetemplelouky.org](mailto:craig@thetemplelouky.org).

## Temple Shalom

### Intro to Judaism

Rabbi Beth Jacowitz Chottiner continues to hold her Intro to Judaism class via Zoom. Contact her at [rabbibjc@templeshalomky.org](mailto:rabbibjc@templeshalomky.org) to access.

### Shabbat services

Until further notice, Friday night Shabbat services will be livestreamed at the Families of Temple Shalom Facebook page. Visit Families of Temple Shalom and request to join.

### Outreach

The membership committee is starting a phone tree to stay connected with members and offer support and assistance when needed. Call Judy Berzof at 502-645-2978 for details.

## Vaad releases Mikvah guidelines for pandemic

Responding to the coronavirus pandemic, The Louisville Vaad HaKashruth has issued a set of guidelines for use of the Louisville Mikvah:

- Anyone exhibiting any symptoms of illness, or is under mandatory quarantine, may not use the mikvah for any purpose (including tevillas keilim – the ritual immersion of cooking and food utensils).
- Symptoms that preclude use of the mikvah are sore throat, fever (including low-grade) or persistent dry cough.
- No men may use the mikvah at this time except for tevillas keilim.
- Every person who enters the mikvah should wash their hands with soap and water immediately.
- The Vaad will use higher levels of chlorine in the mikvah for the duration of the crisis.
- In addition, the Vaad will have the bathtub, toilet, countertops, floors and commons areas cleaned and wiped down with bleach and/or disinfectant every day after usage the evening before, which may leave a strong odor.
- To make this happen, the Vaad is

requiring women who want to use the mikvah at night to give at least three to five days advance notice. Failure to do so may mean the mikvah is not available for use at night because a cleaning could not be scheduled.

- The Vaad intends that no room be reused without disinfecting between clients. This will require the participation of both users and the mikvah attendant.
- The Vaad asks all women who use the mikvah to complete all preparations at home and to bring their own robes, towels and combs. The Vaad will not supply these items or other preparation supplies during the crisis. Failure to properly prepare at home may result in a delay in using the mikvah.
- Tevilas keilim will still be available during daytime, and only by advance appointment made at least three days beforehand by contacting Rabbi Simcha Snaid, administrator of the Vaad.

The Vaad consulted "halachic and medical authorities" before releasing the guidelines. Questions or concerns about them should be directed to Snaid at 912-704-2769.



## The Top Ten Things To Do If You Want To Sell Your House

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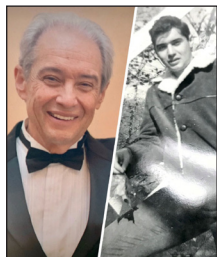
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# LIFECYCLE



## Ira Michael Felsen

Ira Michael Felsen died on Thursday, March 19, 2020. He was 78.

A native of Brooklyn, New York, Ira was born on Feb. 3, 1942, a son of the late Martin and Annie

Felsen. He graduated from City College and received his Ph.D. in chemical engineering from the University of Maryland.

Ira initially worked at the U.S. Naval Academy, where his work garnered two patents. Afterwards, he started I-Land Lamps, personally designing and manufacturing the lamps he sold.

He then went into the furniture business, owning a showroom for interior designers. Later, he became a national sales manager for Tropitone Patio Furniture and Telescope Casual Furniture. He retired following his diagnosis with Alzheimer's.

Ira was divorced once; his second wife, Loyola, passed away in 2003. He moved to Louisville in 2012, where he met and married Helen Friedman. They lovingly cared for each other, and she steadfastly remained by his side until the end.

Even as his Alzheimer's advanced and his memory declined, Ira always remembered – and he proudly told everyone he met – “I have five sons!”

Ira is survived by those five sons, Martin (Sarah Dunn), Michael, Liam, Josh and Brian (Allison); and five grandchildren, Taren, Abby, Zack, Ellie and Aubrey.

Funeral services in Louisville and an ash-scattering ceremony in the Shenandoah Mountains will both be held at a later date.

Expressions of sympathy may be made to The Temple, Congregation Adath Jeshurun, Alzheimer's Foundation of America or the charity of the donor's choice.

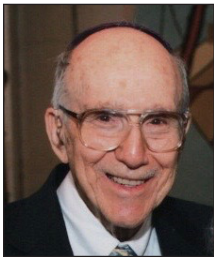


## Reva Gurevich

Reva Gurevich, 90, died Tuesday, Feb. 25, 2020, Louisville. Reva was a corporate attorney of more than 30 years and a member of The Temple.

She is survived by her husband, Isaak; her daughter, Inna Gurevich (Iosif Ocheretner); her son, Leonid Gurevich (Raisa); four grandchildren, Stan, Gary, Pavel and Alan; and one great-grandson, Nathan.

Funeral services were held Feb. 27 Herman Meyer & Son. Burial followed in The Temple Cemetery.



## William “Bill” Harris Klein

William “Bill” Harris Klein, 94, of Louisville, passed away on Tuesday, March 10, 2020.

Born in Atlanta, Ga., the son of the late Bessie Leifer and

Zelig Klein, Bill served in the Army during World War II. After graduating from the University of Kentucky pharmacy school, he worked at the Fort Knox pharmacy.

Bill then owned Klein Drugs at 4th and M streets for almost 50 years. He worked with his wife of 65 years, the late Myra Klein, at his side, finally closing the store in 2006. Following retirement, Bill volunteered at the VA pharmacy.

Bill was a devoted member of Keneseth Israel, AZO pharmaceutical fraternity and B'nai B'rith. He was an avid bowler and loved playing cards.

He never met a stranger, loved sharing stories and was a loving husband, father and grandfather (“poppy”).

In addition to his wife and parents, Bill was preceded in death by his step-father, Isidore Leifer; his step-brother, Charles Leifer; his step-sisters, Blanche Plank and Bertha Burgauer; and his daughter-in-law, Kim Klein.

He is survived by his sister, Sylvia Linder of St. Louis, Missouri; his son, Zell Klein, and his daughter, Sara (Howard) Wagner; both of Louisville; and his grandchildren, Adison Klein, and Talia, Elana and Yael Wagner.

Funeral services were held Thursday, March 12, at Herman Meyer & Son, Inc. Interment followed in Keneseth Israel Cemetery.

The family thanks all who cared for Bill, including JFCS HomeCare, Senior Helpers and Hosparus Health of Louisville. They are especially grateful to Adrienne Madden, Tina Marvin and the staff at Twinbrook assisted living.

Friends may share their sympathies by donating to Congregation Keneseth Israel and the Jewish Community Center, both of which played a significant role in his life.



## Susan Kling

Susan Bender Kling, 78, died peacefully on Sunday, March 1, 2020, at Episcopal Church Home in Louisville after a short battle with ALS.

A native of Columbus, Ohio, and a daughter of the late Israel and Sarah Si-

mon Bender, Susan was a highly respected career executive at Manpower, where her contributions were prized and greatly celebrated for more than 30 years.

Away from work, she was a valued member of Congregation Adath Jeshurun.

Susan met her husband of 54 years, Robert W. Kling, while attending Ohio State University.

She was a loving mother of four amazing daughters, and an adored grandmother of four grandchildren. Nothing made Susan happier than spending quality time with her four grandchildren.

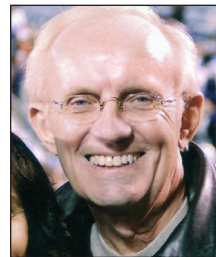
A most beautiful person and soul, she had a powerful positive charisma that affected those around her.

In addition to her parents and husband, she was preceded in death by a daughter, Andrea, and her siblings: Milton, Betty and Floyd.

She is lovingly remembered by her daughters, Julie Kling, Karen Shpilberg (Dr. Victor) and Tricia Siegwald (Stan); her grandchildren, Jacob and Andrea Shpilberg, Joshua Siegwald and Lucas Kling.

Services were held March 3 at Herman Meyer & Son. Burial followed in Adath Jeshurun Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, expressions of sympathy may be made to Congregation Adath Jeshurun or the donor's favorite charity



## Douglas A. Knoop

Douglas A. Knoop, 83, died Saturday, March 7, 2020. Born in Dayton, Ohio, on Aug. 23, 1936, a son of the late Andrew and Dorothy Knoop, Doug served in the military, then worked

at Ware (a boiler and chiller company) for many years as a top salesman and as director of sales and marketing.

As a young man, he was named to the National Rifle Team, which travelled throughout Europe for 10 weeks. He also enjoyed golf and working out at the gym.

An accomplished public speaker, Doug was president of his Advanced Toastmasters International club.

He and his wife of 28 years, Carol Diamond Knoop, who survives, made many friends through their love of dancing (Arthur Murray's, Jim Porter's, the Salsa Club and Kingfish on River Road).

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his sister Patricia (Pat) Knoop.

In addition to Carol; Doug is survived by three daughters, Amy Fischer (husband Thomas, children Matthew and Hannah Schenkel); Lori Hensley (sons Isaac and

Braden); Patti Miller (sons Samuel and Jacob) and his children by marriage, Jack Diamond (wife DeAnn, sons Jackson and Madison); Debra Reaguer (daughters Samantha and Taylor) and Jennifer Diamond.

A memorial service was held Sunday, March 15 at The Temple. Donations may be made to the American Cancer Society and to The Temple.



## Marianne Ruth Schneider Morguelan

Marianne Ruth Schneider Morguelan, 91, a lifetime Louisvillian, passed away on Sunday, March 8, 2020.

The youngest of three children to the late Carl and Esther Schneider, Marianne graduated from Atherton high school in 1946, then married at age 19 the love of her life, the late Lee Bert Morguelan. Together, they enjoyed 56 years of blissful marriage before his death 16 years ago.

She also was preceded in death by her siblings, Naomi Pressma and Arnold Schneider.

Marianne is survived by her two children, Debbie Morguelan Weinstein and James Morguelan; a son-in-law, David Weinstein; five grandchildren, Zachary Weinstein, Nathan Morguelan, Suzanne Weinstein, Jaclyn Morguelan Glass and Hillary Weinstein; and two great-grandchildren, William and Elaine Weinstein.

Marianne was an avid cook who gained the admiration of everyone fortunate enough to attend one of her many dinner parties.

A self-taught decorator, she remodeled many of her girlfriends' homes for a fee of one nice lunch.

Marianne volunteered with the Jewish Federation; was president of the Adath Jeshurun sisterhood; and served on the Glenview condominiums HOA board. She was a fiercely competitive game player.

Marianne was “certainly the world's #1 wife, mom, grandmother (‘meme’), mother-in-law, auntie and friend,” according to her family.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, March 10, at Herman Meyer & Son, Inc. In lieu of flowers, donations should be made to the Alzheimer's Association (ALZ.org). The family appreciates the love and care Marianne received at The Barton House.

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# NEWS

## VIRTUAL

*Continued from page 1*

of personal contact – a handshake, a hug, a face-to-face chat – that came with walking into a synagogue. They fear older members of their congregations will become increasingly isolated. And they note that special events such as baby-namings, b'nai mitzvah and memorial services, are all to be rescheduled.

At the same time, something interesting is happening. Some synagogues are reporting a spike in viewers for their virtual services, crushing the numbers they normally got for walk-in worship.

At The Temple, for the March 13-14 Shabbat, the first weekend of the shutdown, the Friday night services drew 250 viewers at home (they normally get about 80 walk-ins). For Saturday, more than 60 people streamed a service that typically draws 15.

"Ironically, we have more people at services than for any Shabbat I remember," Rabbi David Ariel-Joel said.

They did have their Shir Chadash choir singing at the Friday service, which was streamed from the chapel.

On Saturday, a worshipper volunteered to be the aliyah for the Torah service. "Now we have people in line who want to do that," Ariel-Joel said.

The Temple isn't alone.

"We are definitely getting a larger number," said Cantor David Lipp of Adath Jeshurun, who has been streaming daily minyans with Rabbi Robert Slosberg on Zoom and Facebook Live.

He noted, though, that it took "a time or two for people to get used to it."

Temple Shalom and Keneseth Israel have similar experiences. Temple Shalom had 83 people view its first live-streamed Shabbat service, either in real time or the taped version.

Keneseth Israel, which also is live-streaming its daily minyans, has noticed people viewing the services who would not normally show up at the synagogue, Cantor Sharon Hordes said.

Spikes in virtual worshippers don't surprise Rabbi Dan Medwin, associate director of digital media for the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), the umbrella group for the Reform rabbinate.

"When the pandemic has finally passed," Medwin said, "it will be a different world."

How much so, he cautioned, is still hard to predict.

People who crave social contact will return to the synagogue, perhaps in higher numbers than before, Medwin said. But many models that rabbis and cantors are now using to connect digitally with their congregations will persist as worshippers become increasingly used to them.

"I am certain that people's comfort with technology will take a massive leap forward because of this," Medwin said. "I've already been in contact with countless rabbis who never considered live-streaming or using Visual T'fillah (prayer book on PowerPoint) previously and are now looking for help to get started."

In fact, the CCAR has posted prayer books online for free, enhancing the live-streamed service experience.

"Folks are hungering to be a part of a community," Medwin said. "Streaming services is an option – more so than other virtual gatherings – that can provide that sense of community."

While Hordes is concerned that the technology will be a "barrier" for older and less tech-savvy members, she has noticed worshippers warming to the idea of virtual services as a way to overcome social distancing.

"It's kind of nice," she said. "We're all reducing our social circles now, so after services we just sort of hung around online and chatted."

Lipp agreed.

"I think there's a real longing for connection and it's a blessing we have this technology," he said, "something I always saw as a mixed blessing as it kept us from direct contact which I felt we needed. Now it's all many have left to be safe."

The Internet aside, synagogues are adapting to help their members through the current crisis.

They are forming calling trees to connect with all their members, organizing volunteers to deliver groceries and prescriptions to those who cannot get out. Rabbis and cantors are making themselves as accessible as possible.

They are even finding ways to help people with different needs.

Rabbi Avrohom Litvin of Chabad of Kentucky said a man contacted to

him, needing a minyan to say Kaddish for a relative who just died. Since that was not possible, he asked the rabbi for guidance.

"He felt he was letting down the deceased by not saying Kaddish," Litvin said. "We decided that instead of saying Kaddish for his soul, he would do a different mitzvah."

In fact, his whole family did. One put on tefillin. Another pledged to light Shabbat candles. A third said Shema for the seven days of Shiva.

"I began to wonder if we could not use this period of isolation to focus on those mitzvos which are still available to us," Litvin said.

Litvin's story isn't unique. In the first week of the isolation, Ariel-Joel had one family that was forced to put off indefinitely a memorial service for a relative who just died. He also had a mother who just gave birth to a boy, but the hospital wouldn't let him attend the circumcision.

On the other side, rabbis and cantors, like most people still employed, are working from home, tutoring b'nai mitzvah only and attending board meetings while sharing the same space with their families.

It isn't easy.

Hordes recounted a recent moment when she needed a quiet place to tutor one of her bat mitzvah students, away from her husband and kids.

"I had to walk in to a walk-in closet, sit down on the floor and give a bat mitzvah lesson without being disturbed," she said.

## ENGAGEMENT

*Continued from page 1*

need the service.

"It's a very uncertain time for everyone," Stone said, "and I'm sure it's especially scary for those who can't get out or don't have a lot of contact with people."

Meals on Wheels is only delivering twice a week for now – one hot meal and two frozen ones – to limit the amount of contact with people. Volunteers are keeping their distance, avoiding going into homes or giving hugs. They call the practice "drive-by deliveries."

But these deliveries come with something extra: quarantine kits, which include adult-oriented coloring books and puzzles – all intended to keep seniors' minds occupied during their isolation.

"I like that we're able to offer this to them," Stone said. "At least, we can see them a couple times a week and know they're doing OK, and they can see us, giving them some sort of sense of security."

Keeping an eye on the seniors and making sure they're OK is an added benefit of the program.

"We actually had one of our members call [Friday] morning and she can't find toilet paper," Stone said. The team has been trying to find some for her.

Stone is also collecting donations for a pet food drive to enable seniors to keep their pets fed while they're un-

able to get to stores.

To contribute to the pet food drive, or to schedule a drive-by delivery, email Stone at TStone@JewishLouisville.org.

### Fitness

The JCC's fitness team is keeping members engaged via Facebook, said Susan Kwasny, senior director of health and wellness.

The page, Facebook.com/LouisvilleJCC, has fitness videos and tips so members and the public can keep up their exercise routines at home. There's also a Facebook group, Facebook.com/groups/jccloisvillefitness, dedicated specifically to fitness. Trainers Matt Shalenko and Kathleen Horn are posting videos of resourceful ways to exercise. One of them shows how to work out using a bottle of laundry detergent as a weight.

"We want our members to stay as active as possible," Kwasny said. "We want to be a conduit for that to be able to give them some information and help them stay active while they're away."

The goal of the fitness program is to help members avoid sedentary habits while they quarantine.

"We can motivate people within their homes to do sit-ups, to do squats, to do wall-sits, things of that nature," Kwasny said.

### Early Learning

While the Early Learning Center is closed, ELC families are a part of a closed Facebook group where the parents and kids can engage their teach-

ers and staff.

ELC Director Jessica Bush said each class is posting at least one video at the same time every day for parents and kids to access. Their content includes story time, songs and music.

Some teachers are doing their normal Circle Time routines, while the pre-kindergarten class is doing its Letter of the Week and Zoom meetings, where the kids can interact with each other.

The teachers are also using this downtime to further their own educations, Bush said. During the first week of the shutdown, instructors signed into a Zoom call with the JCC Association, learning about bibliotherapy and how to use books to create lesson plans.

Parents with special-needs children are getting calls from the ELC's special needs coordinator, helping them acclimate to being home all day with their kids.

For parents suddenly trying to work from home with young children, trying to homeschool them, Bush offered advice: "Try not to get overwhelmed or feel like they're not doing enough."

Being home, establishing routines, adjusting to the whole family being together all day is a heavy burden, Bush said. "They shouldn't compare themselves to other people and feel like they're not doing enough school, especially here at the beginning."

As time goes on, and routines become established, things will get easier for the kids.

"Children are the resilient ones,"

Bush said. "I'm more worried about the parents, to be honest."

### Arts and Ideas

Though plays have been postponed and programming has stopped in the building, the J Arts and Ideas Department wants to keep the arts a part of members' lives.

Frank Goodloe, CenterStage artistic director, said the staff will post videos on Facebook, Facebook.com/CenterStageJCC. The group is planning to have classes in improv, acting, and dance – "activities that parents can do with their kids," Goodloe said.

Other eclectic activities will be added, Goodloe said.

"We're hoping to get maybe some costume workshops, how and what you do when you want to be a costumer, and maybe even sing-alongs."

The team also plans to reach out to past performers, having them do videos with tips for preparing for sing-song sessions or monologues and other ways to become a better performer.

"We're all trying to keep the arts alive, keep people engaged, keep people busy so everyone's just not sitting at home, which is a lot harder," Goodloe said.

"Art, as I've always said, helps people escape, it takes you away from something whatever's going on.... That's why it's so important that at this time we really dive into the arts; it will take everyone away from what's going on in the world ... take everyone away, give them a chance to escape."





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