



The Menorah

March 2021

Temple Emanuel ~ 600 Lake Hollingsworth Dr.
Lakeland FL 33803 ~ 863-682-8616



Rabbi's Message

Every year right after Purim I start to prepare for Passover, looking over the pantry seeing how much has to be removed or consumed before the first Seder. And I start looking over my favorite Passover Hagaddot to discover new ways to tell the story of our exodus from Egypt. The challenge is to improve upon my storytelling techniques, to find new questions and meanings behind the old rituals. Why do we tell the same story year after year? Why does the youngest or even eldest ask the same four questions? Is there really a deeper meaning and purpose to eating Matzah and Maror together? The components of the Seder require the participants to be opened minded and willing to explore new spiritual paths. Every person present should strive to make their words and actions into a response to the question, why is the snake different?

Rabbi's Message continues on Page 6

President's Message

Dear Friends,

We are three months into 2021, and there has been a lot of renovation activity around the Temple. At our January Congregation Meeting, I reported that the board had approved a contract with Rodda Construction to complete the renovation of the sanctuary.



Rodda began immediately removing the old plaster ceiling which allowed us access to the air conditioning ducts, lighting and sound. We found the need to make additional repairs and upgrades due to deterioration over the years. We currently are in the process of completing these repairs. After the ceiling is replaced we will have considerable work to complete with painting, re-installing the lighting and sound speakers, completing woodworking repairs, refurbishing the wooden walls, replacing the carpeting, and re-installing the seats.

In addition, we are in the process of having the wiring completed for our electronic access control and camera monitoring system. We are waiting for the equipment which has been experiencing shipping delays. As soon as the equipment arrives, installation will begin.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Adult Education with Rabbi Goldstein continues every Weds eve at 7 pm via Zoom

B'nai Brith Meeting 3/21

**Passover Seders
3/27 & 28**

Book Club 5/6

Visit our [website calendar](#) & our [Facebook page](#) for details on all events!

President's Message Continued from Page 1

Our goal is to have the sanctuary and other renovations completed so that we are ready to reopen for the High Holy Days. This of course can only happen if the pandemic statistics decrease significantly allowing us to safely gather together again. In the interim, with the renovation work continuing and pandemic concerns so prevalent, we will maintain our programming and services via zoom. We are planning to hold first and second night Passover Seders virtually via zoom. Please check your email for the links to register for the Seders. After registering, you will receive the link to join the Seders.

After Passover we will begin preparations for our High Holy Day services. We have extended an offer to Cantor Paul Goldstein to be our cantor for 2021, and he accepted. Cantor Paul, Cynthia, and Jason look forward to returning and celebrating the holidays with our Temple Emanuel family. Last year the board made a commitment to Cantor Goldstein that we would bring him back in 2021 and the board voted to honor the commitment.

The Ritual Committee will begin full steam ahead working on the Book of Remembrance, assigning honors and other tasks. When contacted, please give generously from your heart, accepting the honors and placing names in the Book of Remembrance.

Everyone please remain safe and healthy, as the current statistics regarding COVID-19 are still quite concerning. Wear your mask and get the vaccines when they become available to you. With all of us remaining vigilant, we will beat the pandemic and soon return to a state of relative normalcy. It may not be exactly as it was prior to closing our building, but we will all be happy to return and once again greet our Temple family and friends in person.

Allen Shane, President Temple Emanuel



These pictures depict the Sanctuary during the demolition phase with scaffolding, lifts and the ceiling being removed.

ANNOUNCEMENT AND SAVE THE DATE

MAZEL TOV!

Sheri & Jonathan are engaged and we are all invited to their wedding! Save the date, 8/1/2021. The ceremony will be via zoom and Rabbi Goldstein will be one of the officiants! More details to follow.



**CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES
FROM YOUR TEMPLE EMANUEL FAMILY!
Y'ALL LOOK SO HAPPY AND WE ARE THRILLED FOR YOU!**

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL NEWS by Sheri Hewson

Zoom/Hebrew school is going very well. The 5th and 6th graders are reading and singing well and should be able to take over the Kabbalat Shabbat Service any week now. The 3d grade class is nearly finished with learning their letters and vowels. They are working on special rules and exceptions and can already read a bit from the siddur!

Last month, we had a lovely Tu Bishvat Seder that included the entire Hebrew School. It was so wonderful to see everyone all together again!! I hope we can plan another event with all the families again very soon! Thank you to all the parents, teachers, and students for making that event so special and successful.

About the Archives

By Cat. Eskin

The Other First Family: The Nissenbergs

For so many years, I have fostered an image of the Wolfsons: a pioneering Jewish family, living as the lone Jewish family in the frontier-like Lakeland in the 1910s. I knew, from some of the stories told by Willy Wolfson, that they weren't alone. Wil told a particularly poignant story about being lifted in his father's arms on a Friday evening, having fallen asleep with a passel of other Jewish children after an evening of Sabbath prayers, food and fun. Those nights were a means of staying in touch with their roots; apart from his mother Frances' lighting of the candles, those events were the sum total of his religious practice as a small child. Willy's children—and his sister—always said that Willy was a spiritual man. He may not have been able to navigate a Hebrew prayer book, but Wil was the face of Lakeland Judaism in our city for generations.

In the first days of February, an email arrived that threatened to change the image of the Wolfson origin story forever: Marcia Jo Zerivitz, the founder of the Jewish Museum of Florida sent an inquiry to the Temple and Joan forwarded her email to me. After a brief introduction, she dropped a bombshell. "I know that you've been working on [the Jewish history of Lakeland] over the years, a fact reinforced when I read the piece from the ISJL [[entry](#) for Lakeland]. There is no mention of a Nissenberg family who claim to be the first Jews in Lakeland." *Sidebar: If you've never checked out the Institute for Southern Jewish Life's Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities, you must. For a long time, I argued at conferences and to whoever would listen that Florida needed to be part of the map. In just the last two years, they have added not just Florida, but Texas, too! I was consulted on the entry, though I did not write it.* Back to our topic: If the email was to be believed, Willy and his family were not alone in Lakeland for all those years before the influx in the mid-1920s. Towards the end of his life, Willy was not always so forthcoming about the others who might have been in town. And Zerivitz, the maven of all things Jewish history in Florida, sent me not just the remembrances of the family member with whom she was in contact; she sent pictures (see throughout). The images were labelled as purportedly from Lakeland, though I was immediately dubious of the chronology (and thus the dates) ascribed to them.



Wilfred, Jack and Herbert Wolfson, Munn Park, 1918.

Still, I needed to know. As I so often do when I want answers, I immediately went to my source for all things Lakeland: LuAnn Mims at the Lakeland History Room (at the Lakeland Public Library). She did not disappoint. The return email came back with hard evidence. I'm going to lay out the chronology, beginning with the earliest record she was able to recover: David, Jennie, Annie, Fanny and David's sister, Rebecca Nissenberg, are recorded in the 1910 Census, living in Chelsea City, MA. According to that document, Annie (Annette) was born in Russia (likely shortly before—or just after—her father left for America); she and her mother immigrated to Massachusetts in 1906, a year after David arrived in 1905 (Rebecca, 16, had recently arrived, 1910). Nearly 2-year-old Fanny (1 year, 11 months) was born in the US. About a week after the census data was collected (the document is dated April 23, 1910), Samuel was welcomed into the family (5/1/1910).

Continued on next page



David Nissenberg seated, c. 1905 or 1906, likely Boston (about 21 years old)

None of the Nissenbergs appear to have been English speakers in 1910. Yiddish was listed as their language on the form, and while David, who worked as a retail merchant in groceries, could read and write, wife Jennie could do neither. The family grew again when the youngest of their four children, Ida Ilene Nissenberg, was born on April 1, 1913 in Calgary (according to Ida's daughter). The family appears to have moved from Boston to Canada for a job opportunity, but they would not stay long.

The next document provided by Mims was David's application for naturalization papers, signed (in English) on the 24th of September 1917. He and his family were now residents of Lakeland, FL. David lists his occupation as a metal dealer. The 1917 Lakeland City Directory confirms his residence, putting he and Jennie (and, presumably, their growing family) at 104 Peachtree E. In 1918 he registered for the World War I draft in Bartow, this time as a self-employed junk dealer. The selective services document was the last from Mims—the family did not appear in the next available City Directory. But the email from Zerivitz had one more lead.

"8/21/1919, Florida Times-Union article, 'Burned to Death in Pressing Club; Gasoline Can Exploded'; death of D. Newsenberg (David

Nissenberg). The 1919 fire at the dry cleaning plant should be recorded somewhere." Yes, I thought. It should.

I am nothing if not resourceful when it comes to research. I suspected, and had those suspicions confirmed quickly, that the *Florida Times-Union* was never a Lakeland paper. When I found it in Jacksonville, FL, I hit a dead end on recovering the paper from 1919. When I couldn't find it in some of the databases owned by the College, I went to our Instructional Technology Librarian, Steven Wade; he checked with the College Archivist, Gerri Schaad. Schaad cried victory a day or so later. The results were both satisfying and sad. I have transcribed the article, which is difficult to read in the PDF:

BURNED TO DEATH IN PRESSING CLUB; GASOLINE CAN EXPLODED.

D. NEWSENBERG, AGED 36 YEARS, MET HORRIBLE DEATH YESTERDAY AFTER-NOON IN HIS ESTABLISHMENT AT FOREST STREET.

Literally Roasted to Death Before Passerby Could Drag His Body to Safety—Fire Department Responded to Alarm of Fire and Saved Building from Destruction.

D. Newsenberg, aged 36 years, was burned to death yesterday at 3 20 p. m., when gasoline exploded in his pressing club at 404 Forest street. The fire department responded an alarm of fire and saved the building from destruction.

Mr. Newsenberg recently purchased the establishment which is known as the Liberty Dry Cleaning Company. He had on hand a quantity of gasoline to be used in cleaning clothing, and he was at work when the gasoline in some manner ignited. An explosion followed which scattered burning gasoline in every direction.

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Rabbi's Message Continued from Page 1

The story we tell reconnects us to our ancestors. The text reinforces the Jewish values of caring about the poor and recognizing that no one is truly free until everyone is free.

The experience provides us with an inspired script, leading to a deeper appreciation and connection to Judaism. The goal should be to engage everyone both in the story and its relevance to today. Ultimately the Seder should cause us to think about the possibilities of being a game changer and working towards Tikkun Olam, fixing the world.

This year once again we will be limited with regard to those in actual attendance, but we still gather together even if it is not in the way we have traditionally done. I am hopeful that this will be the last year we have to observe through zoom and as soon as possible we will once again be able to gather together in person. When we are able to do that we will once again celebrate freedom, not the same freedom as our ancestors celebrated, but freedom nevertheless.

We are all deeply concerned by this pandemic, we worry about health.... physical and spiritual, mental, emotional, financial, etc. Many are sheltering in place, our world has contracted. We need to strengthen ourselves as much as possible. Each word of comfort and consolation is helpful. We need to reach out as often as possible to relatives and friends, to those who may be feeling excessive isolation and loneliness. We pushback at the limitations of our freedom by trying to enlarge our lives to communicate with others.

Phone calls, emails, online interactions all help bring light into our lives. Our Sedarim this year will once again be different from most other Passovers. Take the time during the Seder this year to say a prayer for all the healthcare professionals and scientists who are working so diligently to combat the pandemic and restore our freedom. I pray that you will all be blessed with good health and for a speedy end to this worldwide plague.

I hope that despite all of the restrictions that we can all have a Happy Passover, and I suggest we end it a little differently, along with the words next year in Jerusalem let us add, next year in person once again.

Hag Sameach
Rabbi David Goldstein



B'NAI B'RITH NEWS

B'nai B'rith meetings will be via Zoom until further notice. If you are not on the B'nai B'rith email list and wish to be, email Bob Baum at rbaum428@gmail.com. Next meeting is 3/21/21.

THANK YOU

To Sharon Lakin: We have been enjoying Sharon's piano playing during Friday night Zoom services. If you haven't been joining us, please do, her music is wonderful and adds so much to our time together.

FSC Student Profile

Through My Lens: Harry Wlodawski

By Alex Bittinger



Harry was born in Legnica, Poland on May 28th, 1951. He has three siblings: Sam, Josef, and Baila, who is his twin! Harry and his family lived in Poland until 1957, when they moved to Israel. In 1960, when Harry was nine, he and his family moved to the United States.

Harry grew up in the suburbs of Memphis, where he attended Memphis Hebrew Academy and Oakhaven High School. He later attended Memphis State University and received a Bachelor of Business Administration in 1973. Harry's life changed forever when he met Marlene Safferstone in 1979 at a Jewish singles' night in Memphis. Four months after meeting, the couple were engaged. Harry and Marlene got married on September 16th, 1979. Nearly forty-two years later, they are still happily married with three children, Amy, Deena, and Jordan, and three grandkids.

Harry recently retired as a Plant Controller for AOC, a job he began when he and Marlene moved to Lakeland, Florida in 1985. Other than work, Harry spends his days enjoying his family and various hobbies including reading, cooking, and photography. Harry has always enjoyed autobiographies and historical novels. Last spring, for example, he was reading Eric Idle's *Always Look on the Bright Side of Life*. Harry often volunteers with Temple Emanuel and heads the food and drinks for our annual fundraiser and loves to cook at home. Lastly, Harry enjoys photography. He believes it's a way of stopping time. His portfolio is large and diverse (although his favorite subject is Marlene); he is a *very* talented photographer.

Harry is an intelligent, sweet, and kind-hearted human being who has an inspiring outlook on life. Stopping time and capturing moments is one of his undeniable talents and one which he graciously shares with everyone around him.



Monthly Profile: This month we feature Tammy Serebrin. Thanks Tammy for sharing your story with us! Read other profiles at: <https://templemanuellakeland.com/member-profiles/>

I was born on October 13, 1946 in Virginia Municipal Hospital in Virginia, Minnesota 2 weeks early. That is probably the last time I was ever early as many people I know (and love) can attest to. I am not proud of that. My parents named me Tamara Margo. (Tamara after my mother's mother and Margo after my father's mother (Margola). I was raised 5 miles away in Eveleth, Minnesota, then population about 7200 people, and which is located 100 miles from the Canadian border. My parents, Helen and Alfred Goldberg were both immigrants from Lithuania. My dad came to this country along with his cousin in 1919 at age 18. They were sponsored by their uncle who owned a department store in Eveleth.

My father left behind his parents and siblings, most of whom he never saw again. My mom came to the U.S. when she was around 10 years old with her family around the same time as my dad and located in Hibbing, Minnesota where they already had relatives living. The area of the towns I have mentioned along with several others was called the Mesabi Iron Range because of the vibrant open pit iron ore mining that took place in the area. It was a great place for immigrants from many countries to come to in the early 1900s because of the jobs that the mines provided and the opportunity for people who wished to own businesses.



LEFT: Tammy about age 2



RIGHT: Tammy and Grandpa Charles davening

My dad went to work for his uncle in his department store The Golden Rule. There were many Jewish businesses that established in the first decades of the 1900s along Eveleth's small main street as was the case in the other small iron ore mining towns along the Iron Range. There was even a kosher butcher into the 1950s. The Jewish community in Eveleth and the surrounding towns was very close knit and we knew and socialized with many of the Jewish families from Eveleth and the surrounding towns. My mother was a school teacher for about 10 years before she and my dad got married and she had to quit teaching when they did. It was a rule, for a number of interesting reasons, that women could not continue to teach when they got married.

My parents married in 1942 and had my sister, Elaine in 1944. My sister is an accomplished pianist and piano teacher and lives in Highland Park, Illinois. I came along two years later. I only knew one grandparent, my mom's dad, Grandpa Charles, as my father's parents never came to this country and my mom's mom passed away before I was born. (I was named after her as were 3 of my cousins.) My Grandpa Charles lived with us for several years. I didn't have a lot of relatives in the area because my dad's siblings were still in Lithuania and some eventually emigrated to Israel, and my mom's siblings who were older than her lived in other parts of the U.S. so all of the Jewish families in Eveleth were like relatives to us as we were a close knit community.

We lived in a melting pot because there were so many other first generation Americans of different nationalities who lived in our town from places like Italy, Ireland, Yugoslavia, Finland, Poland etc. The town and area was very heavily populated with Catholics with 3 Catholic churches in just our small town alone. Many different languages were spoken (even by the time I was born) because the people from the "old country" often spoke their native languages amongst themselves, but learning English was widely encouraged. My dad, who as I said was 18 when he moved here and had graduated from high school in Lithuania, went to first grade through twelfth in one year just to learn the language. I picture my 6 foot tall handsome dad sitting in a first grade desk and still smile when I think of it.

My childhood was what I call a "white picket fence" life with loving parents, a dad who worked very hard at The Golden Rule, which he and his cousin eventually took over from their uncle. He worked hard and provided well for us while being active in the local Lions Club, synagogue and B'nai B'rith and occasionally found time to fish and golf in the summer and participate in the sport of curling in the winter. My mom was a "balaboosta" (Yiddish for perfect wife and mother) in every sense of the word. She was a great cook and homemaker and was a PTA mom, Girl Scout leader, volunteer at our synagogue and was a lifetime member of Hadassah. She made sure we had dance lessons, piano lessons, and that we went to whatever cultural events came through our little community. Education was above all the most important. We had great schools in our little town because they were supported by the mining companies and I felt I got a great education (although I was not always the A student my mom thought I should be because I found socializing much more fun). It was no small incident when I was suspended from school for a day for skipping study hall and leaving the school one day in high school and my mom had to go and talk to the principal.

I went to one of the two elementary schools in our town, and everyone went to the same Junior High and High School. I occasionally worked in my dad's department store during the holiday season and summers. I was a member of the Girl Scouts from the age of six through high school and 4H. My favorite extracurricular activities in high school were theatre and being the editor of my high school year book. The classes I enjoyed the most were theatre, journalism and English. Higher math and science were not my favorite subjects. I took Higher Algebra because I thought the teacher was cute but quit after 6 weeks and took typing instead. One of the best decisions I could have made! (The typing teacher wasn't so cute).

Our town was very sports oriented and everyone attended the high school football, basketball and hockey games. My town boasts being the birthplace and home of many Olympic and professional hockey players and the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame is located there.

Judaism was an important part of our life even though the community was very small. It wasn't unusual that I had only one other Jewish person in my class (who is still a close girlfriend to this day) all the way through school until a Jewish boy moved to Eveleth. He was my "boyfriend" until he moved away. Our small synagogue was run mostly by lay people but we "imported" student rabbis for the High Holidays. One of my favorite memories was going to a pond in town with one of the student rabbis to throw our sins away for Tashlich. I went to Sunday school and Hebrew school with the kids from my town and the town next to us. (The story goes that my mom, who was the Hebrew School teacher kicked me out of class because I was disruptive!).

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BOOK CLUB

The Temple Emanuel Book Club will be held via Zoom on Thursday, May 6th at 11am. Join us for a discussion about our selection: [Sold On A Monday](#) by Kristina McMorris.

Here is a preview:

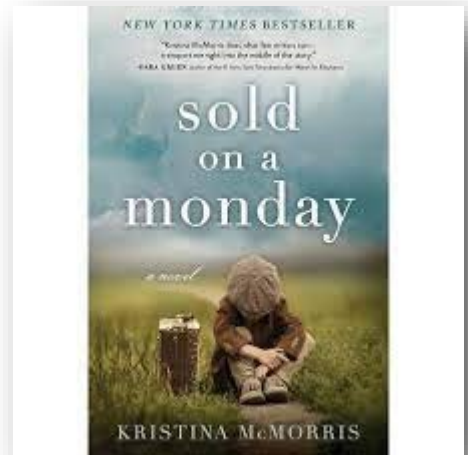
A NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

A USA TODAY BESTSELLER

A PUBLISHERS WEEKLY BESTSELLER

A NATIONAL INDIEBOUND BESTSELLER

An unforgettable historical fiction novel by Kristina McMorris, inspired by a stunning piece of history from Depression-Era America.



2 CHILDREN FOR SALE

The sign is a last resort. It sits on a farmhouse porch in 1931, but could be found anywhere in an era of breadlines, bank runs and broken dreams. It could have been written by any mother facing impossible choices.

For struggling reporter Ellis Reed, the gut-wrenching scene evokes memories of his family's dark past. He snaps a photograph of the children, not meant for publication. But when it leads to his big break, the consequences are more devastating than he ever imagined.

Inspired by an actual newspaper photograph that stunned the nation, *Sold on a Monday* is a powerful novel of love, redemption, and the unexpected paths that bring us home.

Kristina McMorris's poignant historical novel will capture fans of *Before We Were Yours* by Lisa Wingate and *The Lilac Girls* by Martha Hall Kelly and inspire any book club.

Make your purchase via this link to help Temple Emanuel earn money:

<https://smile.amazon.com/Sold-Monday-Novel-Kristina-McMorris/dp/1492663999>

WELCOME TO TEMPLE EMANUEL!

Temple Emanuel is happy to welcome the following new members to our Temple family. Please reach out to them and say 'hello'!

Korina Masters has rejoined Temple Emanuel. She is also a member of Temple Beth Shalom in Winter Haven. Korina is the mother of new member Beverly Masters and sister of long time Temple member Joan Greenbaum. Beverly has been enjoying our Zoom services for the past several months from her home in Merrimack, New Hampshire. She is the daughter of Korina Masters and the niece of Joan Greenbaum.

Allan and Bernice Sloman have recently moved to Lakeland from Somerset, New Jersey. Allan and Bernice are retired and are the parents of long time Temple member Scott Sloman.

RITUAL COMMITTEE by Amy Blocher

Hello everyone. We have not had in person events for roughly a year. We miss seeing all of you but thank goodness we have Zoom so we can see each other at services and other events online. We hope everyone is well. We are not sure how the High Holiday services will be, whether in-person or on Zoom, but we want to give you the dates.

Rosh Hashanah: Erev is Monday, September 6th, and runs through Wednesday, September 8th at sundown.

Yom Kippur: Kol Nidre is Wednesday, September 15th and the services for Yom Kippur day are Thursday, September 16th.

Erev Sukkot is Monday, September 20th, and ends Monday, September 27th.

More information will be sent out to all members closer to the Holidays.

The Ritual Committee wants to thank Rabbi Goldstein, Allen Shane, and Irma Cole for all their hard work in keeping our members in touch with the Temple. Shabbat services are going well, and by adding in Zoom events, we can see each other and visit online.

I will begin calling Temple members about including your names in the Book of Remembrance. If you haven't heard from me by mid-July and want to have your family names in the Book of Remembrance, please email amyqblocher@gmail.com, or call 863-619-7475.

Join your Temple Emanuel family for our 2021 Zoom Passover Seders!

First Seder: Saturday, March 27th at 7:00 p.m.
Second Seder : Sunday, March 28th at 6:15 p.m.
No charge to attend.

Please register for each Seder individually There is a different registration link for each Seder.

Saturday, March 27th at 7:00 p.m. Passover First Seder via Zoom

Register in advance for the **First Seder**:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZEkd-GrrDMpEtVikVcqEuox-adwx3C2KXwi>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the Seder.

Sunday, March 28th at 6:15 p.m. Passover Second Seder via Zoom

Register in advance for the **Second Seder**:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZMkdO-prTotH9NFD21ksKs-yfVtn2ueaokw>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the Seder.

Sunday, March 28th 10:30 am First Day Passover Service via zoom - The zoom link will be sent at a later date.



ABOUT THE ARCHIVES CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

The unfortunate man's clothing caught fire and he was overpowered by fumes before he could make his escape. Passerby attracted by the explosion and fire dragged him from the burning building but he was beyond human aid and died in a few minutes.

Answering an alarm, the fire department hastened to the scene and extinguished the fire, which gained headway and caused considerable damage.

Mr. Newsenberg was well known here. He resided at 1929 Laura street. He is survived by his wife and four small children, who were prostrated with grief when they learned of the terrible accident.

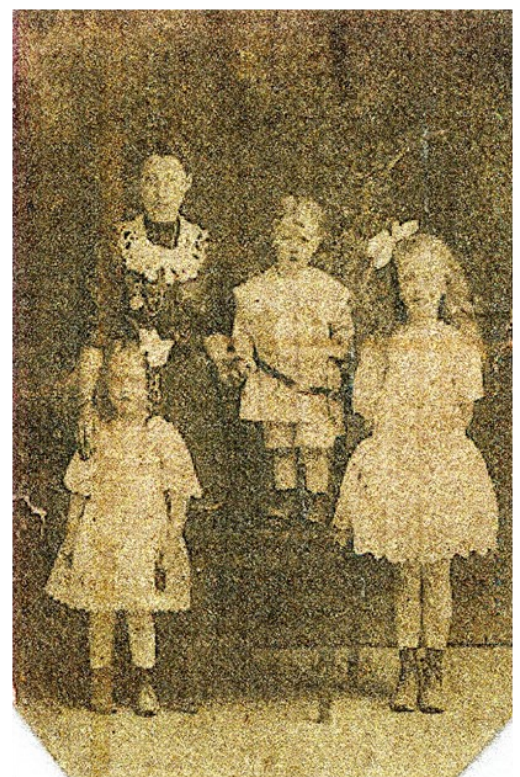
The body was taken to the establishment of Funeral Director Marcus Conant, corner of Laura and Union streets.

Mr. Conant stated last night that the arrangements had been made concerning the funeral and the information will be announced later.

The story is clearly told in a manner designed to sell papers; the graphic nature of the tale may well be embellishment. But the sudden and devastating event casts the family's time in Lakeland into relief. That sojourn is remembered fondly by the descendants, even if those tragic events did not actually take place here. Ida's daughter is quoted as saying: "I have a few precious memories of my mother telling me about her life as a young girl in Lakeland. She and her sister Annette were indeed outside their fathers' dry cleaning factory as it was burning down, causing the death of their father." We can only hope that like the geographical error, the young girls (who would have been 6 and 11) were not actually there to see their father's last minutes.



Left: Clockwise from left: Samuel, Annette, Frances, Ida llene (Gillman), c 1914 or 1915.



Right: Nissenberg family (clockwise from left): Frances (Haffer), Jennie, Samuel, and Annette (Stark), c.1912

Archives Continued from page 12

Did Willy intentionally leave out the Nissenbergs? Doubtful. Wilfred Wolfson was born in Lakeland in February 1917; his older brothers would have been 3 and 4, too young to remember the Nissenberg children, who would have been 12, 9, 7 and 4 that year. The Wolfsons were still a few years from moving to their house on Success Avenue. Their home at 701 North Kentucky Avenue was under a half mile from the Nissenbergs. Did the women watch their children play in Munn Park (a half-way point between their homes)? Were the women sad to say goodbye in late 1918 or early 1919 when David moved the family to Jacksonville? Did Frances and Cy hear about David Nissenberg's death?

I don't believe that any of the Nissenberg images included here was actually taken in Lakeland. And while the Wolfsons were pioneers, they were not always alone.

*Nissenberg Photo Credits: From the Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU's Collections, originated by Founding Executive Director Marcia Jo Zerivitz. (The quality of images is low because they are derived from photocopies.)
Wolfson photos from Temple Emanuel Archive and Lakeland Public Library.*

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader-

It is my pleasure to present this newsletter to you every quarter. The process of putting it together is creative and I enjoy doing it, but I can use some help gathering content. Please let me know what else you would like included and if you have something you would like to share. The Menorah is meant to bring you interesting articles and news. A big thank you goes to those of you who have already shared profiles and other articles. If you would like to do a profile, please let me know! If you have a suggestion of who you would like to read about, let me know or maybe give that person a gentle nudge!

What else do you want to see in these pages and are you willing to provide any content?

- Movie reviews
- Games
- Things going on outside the Temple
- Restaurant reviews
- Israel news
- Recipes
- ??????

The deadline for the next Menorah is May 31, 2021.

Do you want to be our next profile?

Please send inquiries, info, articles, images, comments, etc. to irmacole26@gmail.com

Thanks-

Irma

Tammy Serebrin Profile Continued from Page 9

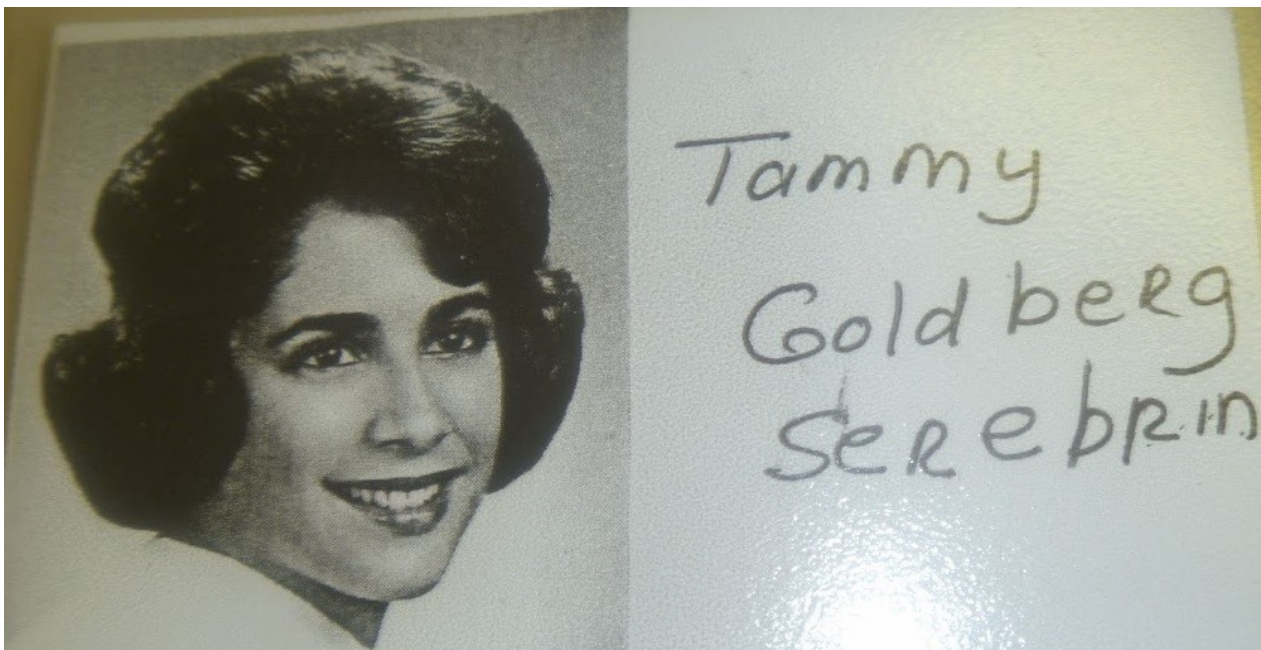
We always had big Seders at our house, of course observed the High Holidays, celebrated Chanukah and other Jewish holidays. My mom kept kosher for many years which was no small chore because after the kosher butcher died there was no kosher butcher in town so the food had to be imported from Duluth, 60 miles away, on the Greyhound bus. Even though it was such a small town and synagogue and none of the help my dad had in his store was Jewish, he closed the store for 2 days of Rosh Hashanah and for Yom Kippur and it would be unheard of for my sister and me and any other Jewish children to go to school on those days.

I also belonged to B'nai B'rith Youth (BBYO) as a teenager. I spent many weekends with BBYO friends in Duluth (which had a much larger Jewish population) and went to Minneapolis for yearly conventions. For three weeks for many summers I attended Herzl Camp a Jewish Camp in Webster, Wisconsin.

Interesting note: My parents were friends with the Zimmerman family of Hibbing Minnesota near my hometown. The Zimmermans had two sons, David and Bobby. My parents were at Bobby's Bar Mitzvah and Mr. and Mrs. Zimmerman attended Ira's and my wedding. Bobby Zimmerman is now known to the world as singer, songwriter, author, Bob Dylan, regarded by some as the greatest songwriter of all time.

My appreciation for Judaism and the need to be involved and active was definitely instilled in me by my parents through their actions and beliefs. I know my dad closed the store during the High Holidays because it was the right thing to do and to also tell the outside world it was important for us to observe our holidays properly. Also, the way my parents participated in and helped maintain our synagogue and the Jewish organizations we had there was a huge influence on how I have been involved in Judaism and Jewish organizations as an adult.

I graduated from Eveleth Senior High School in 1964. I went to the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis where I was on the "5 year plan", meaning I couldn't figure out what I wanted to major in so it took me awhile. My mom wanted me to become a teacher, but I had no interest in that. I thought I would maybe major in speech pathology but realized after one semester of classes for that I remembered I did not care for math and science which was a major part of the curriculum. I finally ended up majoring in what was then called Radio and TV Broadcasting with a minor in Journalism. (Today that would be called Communications). I graduated in 1969 and went to work for an advertising agency and then a TV station in Minneapolis.



My junior year of college I was fixed up with a guy who had met my Jewish friend, Susan, with whom I grew up in Eveleth. This guy asked Susan if she had any friends she could fix him up with and so sometime in 1966 or 1967 I was introduced to a fellow University of Minnesota student (who was in the College of Business) from Minneapolis, Ira Serebrin. He came to pick me up at my dorm but before going down to meet him I sent a couple of my girl friends down to the lobby to see what he looked like and report back to me. I guess they thought he looked OK because we went on a date. I guess I thought he looked OK because 5 years later I married him and this year September 5 we will have been married 50 years.



Tammy at her wedding with her parents and sister Elaine 9/5/73

Ira graduated from college a year before me and went to work for Sperry Rand company for a year as a cost accountant in order to earn money to go to law school which he knew for a long time was his goal. That year he picked me up for a New Year's Eve date and proclaimed that this was the last winter he was ever going to spend in Minnesota and proceeded to apply for law schools only in warm weather climates. He was accepted to Florida State University's fifth law school class. He left for school in September 1970 and when he came home to Minneapolis, where I still was, for spring break in March 1971 he proposed to me and we were married in September 1971. I remember calling my parents very late at night to tell them I was engaged and I think they were happy for me, but not happy that I woke them up in the middle of the night to tell them!

When I moved to Tallahassee with Ira after we got married I went to work for a TV station in Tallahassee. I really hated leaving Minneapolis because I had friends there and Ira had lots of aunts, uncles and cousins I really liked who lived in Minneapolis, but Floridians we became. When he graduated law school in March of 1973 he was offered two jobs, one in Tallahassee and one at the State Attorney's Office in Bartow. I had no idea where or what kind of town Lakeland was but I knew it was further south than Tallahassee and Ira said if we were going to live in Florida we should live in Florida and not practically in Georgia.

He accepted the job in Bartow but first he had to pass the Bar Exam. We moved to Lakeland in May 1973 and rented a furnished apartment on Lime Street. He studied for the July Bar Exam and I looked for jobs ending up working at the Daily Highlander newspaper in Lake Wales. That fall before the High Holidays I called the synagogue to find out about joining and the first person I talked to on the phone when I called was Gerry Rabin, which was a lovely introduction to Temple Emanuel. Of course we joined and have been active members ever since.

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Tammy Serebrin Profile Continued from Page 15

Ira passed the Bar Exam on the first try and continued to work for the State Attorney's office for several years eventually opening up his own law practice in 1975 in the Marble Arcade Building in downtown Lakeland. I quit my job at the newspaper and became his secretary. In December 1976 I found out I was pregnant and gave birth to our first child, Benjamin Charles Serebrin, in July 1977. Not long after that both my parents and Ira's parents retired and moved to Lakeland so Benjamin had two sets of grandparents to spoil him. Five years later in August 1982 our second son Jonathan Scott Serebrin was born. They have brought us much joy and each of them has blessed us with special daughters-in-law (Rachel and Debbie) and grandchildren – Miriam age 9, Zachary age 5 – Rachel's and Ben's who live in Sunnyvale, California and Ellie age 6 and Hannah age 4 – Jon and Debbie's who live in Atlanta, Georgia. Ben, who graduated from Rice University and Stanford University, is a Computer Engineer with Amazon and Jon, who graduated from the University of Miami, is a Manager in Marketing at Home Depot Corporate Headquarters. Both of my boys had their Bar Mitzvahs at Temple Emanuel.



Ben and Rachel with Tammy and Ira at Jon and Debbie's wedding January 2011

My volunteer work has included being very active at Temple Emanuel (Board and Executive Board Member for many years), Polk County Chapter of Hadassah serving as co-President, Pied Piper Players/Lakeland Community Theatre since 1988, very active volunteer at all of my kids' schools, Lime Street Elementary, Carlton Palmore Elementary, Southwest Junior High, Lawton Chiles Middle School and Lakeland High School, Silver Garland Judge for the Ledger, member of Polk County Arts Alliance. I also for many years was a member of the statewide Florida Theatre Conference where I chaired the event when it was held in Lakeland for a number of years.

When Ben went off to Rice University in 1995 and Jon was in middle school I got a job at Pied Piper Players (now Lakeland Community Theatre), where I had been volunteering for 7 years, as Executive Director and truly enjoyed that as my favorite, most unusual and interesting job where I met many interesting and talented people and where my whole family became involved since my volunteer days there.



I established a yearly trip to New York City for people, as a fundraiser which I organized and helped lead for over 15 years. This afforded me the opportunity to see many, many theatrical events and see and tour many places in New York City which I cherished. I retired from that job in 2009 after 14 years. I spent my time after that still volunteering some at the theatre, continuing to be active at Temple Emanuel, freelancing by writing articles for various local magazines and writing the preview articles for the Ledger about all of the Polk County community theatre productions.

Jon, Ben, and Mom with long time co-worker and friend Paul Hughes, on a New York trip

My retirement was not to be permanent because in 2015 my husband's secretary of 33 years decided to retire and there was a job opening at the Law Office of Ira A. Serebrin. Thinking Ira would retire in a few years after that I volunteered to step in. Well, a few years have turned into five and here I sit at my desk in his office typing this biography and it doesn't look like he is retiring any time very soon. It has been somewhat of a blessing because with COVID this past year our travels particularly to see our children and grandchildren have been curtailed, which is something I/we did often. So I continue to work in our office, volunteer at Temple Emanuel and spend a lot of time on Zoom activities and face timing with our children and grandchildren.



Zachary, Ellie, Hannah and Miriam 2019

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Who has been the biggest influence in your life and why? That is hard because different people have had different influences on me throughout my life. My parents, especially my mother has been a major influence, even though I often have not followed her good advice, especially growing up. However, I am forever grateful that my parents moved to Lakeland. They influenced me so much on how to be a grandparent. My dad was a lovely man who people would describe as a gentleman, who I always went to first as a kid if I thought I was in trouble because he was calmer than my mom. Unfortunately he passed away in 1988 so my kids didn't get to know him as well as they knew my mom. My mom was a special woman who I try to emulate and who still has influence over me long after her passing. She was smart, witty, interesting, energetic, and adored my children who adored her right back. My kids each had the privilege and pleasure of being taken on a trip to Israel by her and I think that helped solidify their connection to Judaism. Another influencer in my life was Paul Hughes, my coworker and friend for 29 years. He was a giant of a man with great talent and we had a great friendship. He also adored my mother. My friends growing up were always an influence in my life and I still connect with many of them to this day. The wonderful friends I have made and kept through Temple Emanuel and through my Lakeland Community theatre days will always have a lasting impact on my life, as well.

What is one thing people would be surprised to learn about me? I already said I was suspended from school (for a day) and my mother kicked me out of Hebrew school class for being rowdy. It is no secret that I have lost and gained oodles of pounds in my lifetime. I guess people might be surprised to know that I used to be afraid to fly and did not travel out of this country until I was 50 because the thought of flying over the ocean petrified me, but thanks to my mom I did... and thanks to my many trips to New York and several trips to other countries and to fly to visit my kids wherever they were has pretty much cured me of that fear. Also, those who knew me before I was 36 knew I was a smoker... but I quit when I was pregnant with Jonathan.

What is your proudest moment? I think right now is my proudest moment seeing my sons in productive jobs they enjoy and being able to provide well for their families and seeing what wonderful husbands and parents they are.... And that they both care about Ira and me and reach out to help us with things as best they can from a distance... Also being a grandparent is the best thing on earth!

Looking back what is the best advice you would give your younger self? What are the most important lessons you have learned in life? I would tell my younger self to take better care of myself physically and to be more adventurous. My mom always used to tell me take care of your own back yard first, when I was out there helping other people and volunteering too much sometimes to the detriment of taking care of myself and I suppose that would have been a good idea... I am 74 years old... maybe it is not too late!



Tammy and Ira in 2014

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