



March 2019

# The Menorah

Temple Emanuel ~ 600 Lake Hollingsworth Dr.

Lakeland FL 33803 ~ 863-682-8616



## Rabbi's Message

Modern society has markedly turned toward individualism and materialism. Judaism on the other hand continues to promote a sense of community and spiritualism. We believe that there is a positive benefit to belonging to a prayer community.

There is an old Hasidic teaching that demonstrates the Jewish position that religion is generally, first and foremost a search for the self.

A Hasid came to visit his Rebbe. The Rebbe asked the Hasid: "why have you come here?" "The Hasid replied "I've come to find God" The Rebbe, with a twinkle in his eye, responded: "For that you didn't have to come here, since God, whose Glory fills the entire earth, can be found everywhere in the world". Surprised by the Rebbe's reaction to his statement, the Hasid asked "then why did the people come here?" To which the Rebbe answered quietly: "people come here to find themselves."

We find ourselves in communing with others, and then we can reach out and enter into a relationship with God as well. Prayer is a means of establishing a better understanding of our potential to make this a better world. This service is not supposed to be for entertainment rather it is meant to be a starting place to attain a sense of intimacy with our Creator and our community.

I invite you to join me at Shabbat services in order to gain a better sense of self and hopefully enter into a more intimate relationship with God.

For while it is true that God can be found everywhere, we need to dedicate time and space to looking for God within ourselves and others.

Rabbi David Goldstein

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Mah Jongg**

Most Mondays @ 1 pm

### **Talmud Class 7 pm**

3/6, 13, 27, 4/3

### **Trivia Fun**

3/10 4 pm

### **Megillah Reading**

3/20 6 pm

### **Shabbat Away**

3/22

### **Book Club**

4/9 11 am

### **2nd Seder**

4/20 6:30 pm

### **Yom Hashoah**

5/1 7 pm

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



**SUNDAY  
SCHOOL  
NEWS FROM  
Lori  
Dougherty  
and all the  
School teach-  
ers**

Sunday school has been very busy!

As a school we took a field trip to Florida Southern College for Tu B'Shevat. We had a walk through their

gardens and planted seeds. We also celebrated the life of Ela Deniz Friedman and planted a tree in her memory.

In Dr. Cat Eskin's Preschool class they have made baby Torahs and candy arks. Cat mixes her teaching with great crafts and the kids love it.

In Ms. Myrna's 1st grade class the kids are working in their workbooks, a child's bible and lessons from the Torah. Each week they do an art or craft relating to their lesson.

In Ms. Jodie's 4th grade class they are learning about Jacob and Joseph and the 12 tribes of Israel. They are learning how each tribe is a family and everyone has special roles and traditions. Jodie is relating it to everyone's specific family and what makes their family Jewish and their traditions. Jodie really brings together the history and modern day.

In Rabbi's class they are exploring the books of Judaism, the understanding of G-d as creator. They are exploring why they celebrate holidays, their themes and the lessons they teach. We welcome Miriam Pridgen who is currently co-teaching with the rabbi and plans on taking over the class in the near future.

In Hebrew school on Sundays, Ms. Lizandra is teaching the Preschool class Aleph Bet. The grade one children are completing their vowels and beginning to read elementary words and sentences. The Bet class taught by Ms. Lizandra is learning the Friday night service in conjunction with translating the words of the appropriate holy days.

In Mr. Daniel's Hebrew class, they are learning the core prayers of the Friday night service which includes the Shema and associated blessings. They are also learning Hebrew roots to improve the understanding and comprehension of the text during services.

Weekday Hebrew is being taught Sheri Hewson and she is teaching Friday night service.

Moving forward we have the Purim celebration on March 17th and Passover coming where the kids will have a Mock Seder service. The last day of classes is May 19th.



## More on ELA'S TREE

A magnolia planted in front of Temple Emanuel by Sunday school students joins an international forest of trees dedicated to the memory of Ela Deniz, granddaughter of synagogue members Barry Friedman and Sharon Hodges and daughter of Laurel Friedman, who was an active USY member here in the late 1990s.

The family was represented at the Jan. 20 tree planting by Amelia Hart, Laurel's sister.

The idea for Ela's Forest grew organically after the tragic death of Ela in early December. She had just turned three years old on Thanksgiving Day.

The first trees were planted by friends and colleagues of Laurel's from graduate school and an international group of academic moms. It was a recognition of Ela's love of the outdoors: trees, flowers, animals, and rain puddles to stomp in.

The forest grew as more people wanted to place living tributes to Ela that will keep her memory alive for years to come. Ela's Forest now includes trees on four continents; several trees in Israel were donated by Temple Emanuel members.

A map of Ela's Forest can be found at [bit.ly/elasforest](https://bit.ly/elasforest).

The map includes 10 trees in Lakeland, seven of them overlooking the playground in Dobbins Park, Ela's favorite place in Lakeland after her grandparents' house. A soon-to-be installed bench donated by Laurel will be shaded by four Hong Kong orchid trees planted for Ela near the playground.

Anybody who plants a tree in Ela's memory, whether it's in a back yard or donated to a park or national forest, can get it placed on the map by sending an email to [bifriedman@gmail.com](mailto:bifriedman@gmail.com) with the name of the donor, location, type of tree, and a photo if possible.

The family is grateful for the many expressions of condolence and the kindnesses shared by friends at Temple Emanuel and the entire Lakeland community.



## “In the Beginning....” About the Archives by Cat. Eskin

As children, we often play a game called “whisper down the lane” (or, when I was a child, what we called “telephone”). The mechanics of the game are simple: placed in a line, the child at the front is instructed to whisper a short story or message to the child immediately behind him or her; from there, the children listen carefully (or not so carefully) to their peer and then repeat it to the next child with as much accuracy as they can muster. As anyone who has played the game knows, the message often changes substantially by the time the last child hears it. In fact, the longer the line, the more likely that the resulting story will be a reflection of both the imagination and/or poor memory skills of the children on line. History, I’m afraid, has far more in common with “whisper down the lane” than science.

With that in mind, I’d like to dispel some of the more fanciful legends that float around about our Temple and Polk

County Jewish history. We’ll begin, as most stories of Lakeland Jewry do, with Cyrus (Schneur) Wolfson. According to his children, Cy first arrived in Lakeland in late 1909. His trip here was a detour after he successfully collected an overdue account in Ocala (he was employed by a suit manufacturer at the time). Years later, Cy would rhapsodize about the crystal clear water in Lakes Mirror, Wire and Morton. As friendly as he found the people, Wolfson was not able to return to Lakeland until 1910. He had helped bring over relatives from Lithuania (both parents, two sisters, two brothers and a cousin) and so was obliged to borrow money to move and set up a shop on Kentucky Avenue in downtown Lakeland. To drum up business during the early years, he would make a circuit of the area (Lakeland, Mulberry, Auburndale and Loughman\*) in a buggy. Cy lived

in a boarding house when he wasn’t selling his goods. Once he felt confident that he could make his business work, Wolfson returned to New York to marry a bride (Frances Palestine) and bring her back to Lakeland (late 1912, early 1913). Frances would return to New York to have their first child in September of 1913, but the rest of their children were born in Lakeland (1914, 1917 and 1926).

I should note that I have heard about another Jewish man who may well have been in Polk County before the Wolfsons. According to oral evidence, he lived for some time in Bartow; married to a Gentile woman, he was not practicing Judaism (though he was identified by most observers as “the Jew”). In contrast, the Wolfsons of Lakeland did not hide their religious background. Still, Cy was not particularly religious; he was more interested in growing his business and family than organizing a house of worship.



\*Loughman was a town settled around 1883 which is now just a census designated location. It is in the northeast corner of Polk County, near Osceola County.

Continued on Page 5



Besides, the Jewish numbers were small—the Racz, Moskovitz and Schneider families also arrived in the area in the later 1910s. As Frances (nee Palestine) Wolfson added more children to her household, she made sure they knew something of their heritage. All of the children remember her melodious voice as she blessed the candles in their home on Success Avenue. Willy Wolfson recalled a few Friday evenings of singing prayers and sharing food with other Jewish families, and also of being oh-so-gently lifted from a passel of sleeping children. (These evenings likely date from 1919-1922.)

. The Florida Land Boom was in full swing by the mid-1920s and more Jewish residents arrived—Estroff, Roth, Meyer, Levy, Boyer, Blate and Tonkel. The drive to establish businesses was often foremost in the minds of these new residents. Like the Wolfsons, they were a combination of natives (born in the US) and recent immigrants coming from port cities in the North and towns in the South. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, northern and central Florida were sometimes called “South Georgia” because of both the large number of residents who were originally from the state of Georgia and the ways that Polk’s culture was aligned with American Southern traditions. As far as I have been able to verify, the very first *bris* in Lakeland did not take place until 1925 (Selig Estroff). That the Jewish residents were spending time together is evidenced by pictures (at right, from around 1929 or 1930) and a simple perusal of the City Directory (which indicates that many of the Jewish businesses were located close to one another). After a dip in persistence during the Florida Land Bust and the start of the Great Depression, Jewish numbers began to hold steady.



In 1932, a group calling itself the Jewish Alliance of Lakeland purchased a property at the corner of Patterson Street and New York Avenue in Dixieland. By 1933, the Ladies Auxiliary advertised the formation of a Religious



School in the local paper. The signers of the Alliance’s original “Constitution and Articles” (from 1934) were a combination of business owners and clerks, strawberry buyers and auto mechanics. The earliest minutes for the Ladies Auxiliary mention card nights, donations to local causes (e.g., the children’s ward at the hospital), fundraising events and both Jewish and Gentile supporters. The next phase of Jewish life in Lakeland had begun and there were more and more people to be part of it: the Rabins, Millers, Silbersteins, Singers, Seligs, Wolfs and more. (Picture at left dates from

the mid-1930s, Pennsylvania Avenue in Dixieland.)

Lakeland had a Jewish community before it had a brick-and-mortar minyan. The community celebrated births and mourned deaths, sharing the challenges and triumphs of building a new cultural and spiritual home for themselves and their children. The whispers we hear are part of our desire to recreate that legacy. They may not always be historically “accurate,” but they are part of how we claim ownership of our past and pave the way for the future.

*Chag Sameach! Happy Purim!*

*Monthly Profile:* Amy and Bill Blocher are long time members of Temple Emanuel. They have 5 children between them and are about to celebrate their 20th wedding anniversary! Mazel tov! To help Amy and Bill celebrate, their kids got together and gave them one of the tickets to go to Israel and they can't thank them enough! Amy and Bill have graciously shared with us the following recap of their travels on their first trip to Israel.

Read more member profiles at: <https://templeemanuellakeland.com/member-profiles/>

## **Amy and Bill's Trip to Israel**

The curbs along the streets of Israeli cities are color coded. Blue and white means free parking at night but you better either be gone by 8 in the morning or having a parking sticker showing you paid for the right.

Red and white means no parking. Ever. Unless, of course, you park on the sidewalk. Even if there isn't room and your car hangs over into the street a bit.

These are a couple of the things you can learn on a visit to Israel if you decide to see the country as it is and not concentrate on its ancient history and the ruins.

We stayed in Airbnbs in Jerusalem, Kiryat Shmona and Tel Aviv. Because they cost a third of what a hotel would, we were able to stay two weeks, and to see Israel from a resident's perspective not so much as a tourist.

We flew Al Italia to Rome and then connected to a flight to Ben Gurion. While we are not given to believing in stereotypes, the Italian airline sort of lived up to one – the seats would not recline and there were other minor problems. But the planes worked just fine, which was the major point. Our return flight was to be on Air France. Another stereotype confirmed. Don't ask.

When we landed, Amy was disappointed about not getting a stamp in her passport, just a card. The customs agent offered to draw her one in Crayon, but she declined.

Our first mistake was in renting a car the way we did, right at the airport for the entire time we were there. What can we say: We didn't know about the parking. We also discovered the recommendation we received from several people to use Waze to find our way around had one problem – it was in Hebrew. Neither of us know enough Hebrew for that to be of any use. We also, at that point, had not gotten Google maps working yet. Another myth that was quickly exploded was that everyone speaks English. Perhaps that is true for people on tours, but not if you go off on your own into the neighborhoods. In the end, that was not a problem and actually added to the fun of the trip.

While electronics failed us on the evening we arrived, we had a map and headed off for Jerusalem. Fortunately, the road signs are in Hebrew, Arabic and ENGLISH. We got there. And that is when things got interesting. Jerusalem is filled with one-way streets that meander in all kinds of different directions, with cars parked on both sides, reducing the road to a narrow lane. And at times they ended abruptly, with no warning. As we were backing out of one of those streets, we had to wonder how the residents got out in the morning since there was no way to turn around and they were all pointed in the wrong direction. We never found out.



We would still probably be wandering around Jerusalem looking for the Airbnb, but we contacted the guy we were renting from who figured out where we were. He came to meet us and led us back. That is when we found out about the parking. After he explained the problem to us, he told us his wife would take us to a place we could park the car for free. The next morning, she took us to a street nearby that, for some reason, the city authorities had neglected to paint the curb. An unpainted curb meant unrestricted parking. We left the car there for the five days we were in Jerusalem. Walking and the occasional cab got us to where we wanted to go.



The only two sites we were sure we wanted to visit were the Western Wall and the Old City, and Yad Vashem. We spent the better part of two days at the Western Wall, praying, walking the Old City wall, going underneath the Western Wall, and just wandering around. We spent a day and a half at Yad Vashem. Both were spiritual, moving and emotional experiences. While Bill was sitting on a bench waiting for Amy, he got to overhear a Christian minister holding forth with some observations about the wall and how Orthodox women and men dress differently, and saying he could pick them out of the crowds.



The rest of the time we spent in Jerusalem's neighborhoods, strolling around, eating in restaurants and just soaking up the atmosphere. At most of the places we ate, the tables were small – and everything came on the side, a manner of serving that overwhelmed the table when two people were ordering separately. And it took us a couple of times to figure out that “service” meant “tip” and that it did not show up on the bill. You had to tell the server to add a percentage when paying. Our apologies to the first couple of servers we accidentally shorted.

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Since we were in Airbnbs, we had to do some food shopping because not every meal was eaten out, especially on the Sabbath. The only supermarket we found was in Jerusalem where meat was sold along with everything else. But in Tel Aviv we never did find a supermarket – we may have just been in the wrong neighborhoods – and the grocery stores did not sell meat. That was sold in a separate butcher's shop. If we had to guess, we would have thought it would be the other way around. What confused us a

bit about the grocery stores were that the entrances were open and no wider than the fruit and vegetable stands. Then we walked into one to discover that it opened up in the back to a much larger space, stocked with all kinds of dairy and parve products.

But both the neighborhoods in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv reminded us in many ways of Brooklyn in New York City – business streets lined with small shops selling everything from produce to clothes to electronics, and restaurants offering a wide variety of food, except here it was cooked and served in the Israeli fashion.

One main difference between the two cities is that in Jerusalem we saw few dogs, but cats were all over the place. It was a feline infestation. But in Tel Aviv, we saw few cats, but dogs were everywhere. And we do mean everywhere – people stroll into stores and restaurants with the dogs in tow. We were the only ones apparently who were surprised.

When we were leaving Jerusalem to head north, Bill went to get the car, a 10-minute walk away. It took him another 45 minutes to get back. We knew the area well enough by then to navigate it on foot, but figuring out the web of one-way streets was another matter.

Eventually, we got on the road heading north using Google Maps on both our phones – sometimes one phone would work and sometimes the other. We have no explanation for that. Our destination was the Golan Winery on, you guessed it, the Golan Heights. The Rabbi suggested we stop there, saying it is an excellent winery. He was right. The wine is great. What also is great was the lamb prepared in the restaurant nearby. Amy claims it was the best lamb she has ever had – and she has had a lot of lamb.

We stayed in Kiryat Shmona, a small city in the north of Israel with the Golan and Syria to the east, and Lebanon to the north and west. It is beautiful up there with the nature areas and the mountains. We spent a day and a half, running around the countryside to such places as Tal Dan and strolling around the city.

On our way to Tel Aviv we stopped at Ein Hod at the Rabbi's suggestion. It was worth the side trip. Ein Hod is an artists' colony where the artists and their families live and sell their creations. Paintings in various media, sculptures, jewelry, clothes, etc., were displayed in small shops down winding streets, with the artists' homes scattered above and between the shops.



When we reached Tel Aviv and the neighborhood we were staying in, we quickly realized that the parking situation was identical to Jerusalem. We unloaded the car and took it back to the airport. Walking and taxis were much easier, even if the drivers didn't speak English. We figured it out. These translation apps on smart phones really do work. We spent the bulk of our time strolling around the city, down to the Mediterranean, where Amy got to dip her feet in for the first time, and in general just exploring the city. We went to Independence Hall and the Palmach Museum. We also went to a large



open-air market which bore an uncanny resemblance to International Market World in Auburndale.

We left Israel with a better understanding of the country and the society, having met a number of people we learned from. One evening in Tel Aviv, after we had finished dinner sitting on the patio of one of the ubiquitous cafes, we spent more than an hour visiting with a mom, who is a retired teacher, and her son, who is a history teacher, at the next table. That was a treat for Amy, who is a retired teacher.

The trip back was made interesting when we went to the airport only to discover that Air

France had lost our reservations for the 7:30 a.m. flight to Miami by way of Paris. We were sent to this guy sitting behind a counter with a glass enclosure who at first wasn't sure if we qualified for help until we showed him our confirmation documents. After standing there for about half an hour, he was able to book us onto a Lufthansa flight to Miami through Munich. It left at 7 a.m.

We made it to the gate on time.

On the plane, Amy mentioned to the flight attendant that she is gluten intolerant. The attendant asked her if she had let the airline know about that in advance. We then explained what happened. That lady went out of her way to make sure Amy was taken care of.

It seems that Germany and France still have some issues.

## ***BAT MITZVAH of BRI TROHN***

The family of Bri Trohn is pleased to invite the congregation to Bri's Bat Mitzvah on Saturday evening, May 4 at 7:15 p.m. A reception will follow this Havdalah service Bat Mitzvah.

Bri is 15 years old, and attends All Saints Academy. She is an outstanding student, and a good athlete. She has been on the tennis, track, and soccer teams. She enjoys fishing, boating, and all outdoor activities. Here is a picture of Bri with her sister Courtney, at a concert in Orlando. She is looking forward to seeing you all at her Bat Mitzvah May 4th.



## JAKE ESTROFF Turning 13

Jake is a 7th grade student at Lakeland Montessori Middle School located in the Polk Museum of Art.

His favorite hobbies include playing video games, playing on his phone, fishing, and driving his parents and brother Max crazy.



Jake became certified in scuba diving this past summer and is anxiously waiting this summer to do more diving as well as attending Camp Blue Star for a month again in North Carolina.

He is especially looking forward to his birthday this year which is on May 18th and happens to also be the day of his bar-mitzvah.

Jake is known by his family and friends as a polite, happy, tall, nice, and extremely caring kid. His family can't wait until May 18th when he will become an extremely caring man!





## **Live Artfully... A Taste of Morocco Sponsors**

Thank you to the many generous sponsors for our annual Live Artfully Fundraiser. This year A Taste of Morocco was indeed delicious thanks to Harry and Marlene Wlodawski. We hope members and friends of Temple Emanuel will show their appreciation when they see these people or when utilizing any of the businesses listed below. Thanks also to Jodie and her team for another huge successful and fun event!

Alexsander and Galina Vugman

Aliancys

Annie & Victor Spiro

April & Jordan Eckert

Arlene & Gary Schwartz

Broadway Real Estate Services

Campbell, Trohn, Tamayo, Aranda Attorneys At Law

Citizens Bank & Trust

Core Wealth Advisors

CPS Investment Advisors

Doris & Robert Trohn

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Joan & Gerald Rabin

Joy & Dan Leviten

Karin & Gary Grossman

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Linda & Mark Miller

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Marvin Wyman

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Payne Air Conditioning & Heating Inc.

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Tammy & Ira Serebrin

Thais & Marcio Nunes

The Kid Coach

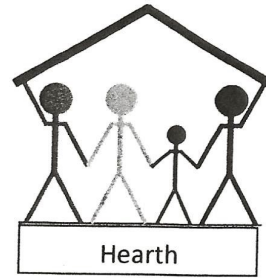
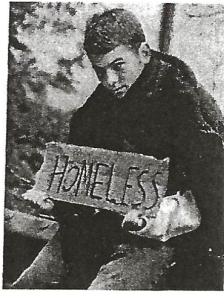
Trek Behavioral Services LLC



**See more pictures at: [temple-manuellakeland.com/photos/](http://temple-manuellakeland.com/photos/)**



**POLK COUNTY  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
STUDENTS FIRST



## **Homeless Graduating Seniors Against All Odds Celebration 2019 Adopt-a Senior Project**

Our celebration event involves graduating seniors who are homeless and are in the Polk County School system under the care of the Hearth Project. These seniors may not have family members to live with. Some live on their own, in shelters or with friends....they live the best way they can.

**They have worked hard and have achieved much in order to graduate on their own.**

The Sunshine Committee of the Polk County Schools Learning Support Division provide for the eight year their graduation gifts. This will not be an ordinary gift, but will be one to help them eat, live and survive day to day.

This year, due to the generosity of the **entire community** and many donations, we have already been able to purchase all of the personal hygiene items needed for our homeless seniors (such as shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste)! Our committee will fill a rolling duffle bag with a basic set of the recommended daily living items, so the students can have what they need as they move from place to place.

**\*We would like to ask the employees of Polk County Schools and the entire community to help us provide these graduating seniors who are homeless with the following needed items:**

- ***New Twin sheet sets preferably solid colors***
- ***Washcloths & Towels***
- ***Pocket size first aid kit***
- ***Pocket size sewing kit***
- ***Small pocket size flashlight w/batteries***
- ***Poncho***
- ***Pod Laundry detergent (Pods only- please)***
- ***Food/Restaurant gift cards in low denominations (\$5, \$10, \$15)***
- ***Monetary donations : Checks payable to Polk County Schools (\$125 provides everything including the rolling duffle bag)***

**Mail all donations to NEW ADDRESS:** Polk County Schools, Learning Support Division, Sunshine Committee  
1860 E. Gibbons Street, Bartow, Florida 33830

These items will help them get by, day to day, as they leave the school system and head out on their own. We want to send them off with hope and the knowledge that people in their community care about them.

We thank you all,  
*Sunshine Committee, Polk County Schools, Learning Support Division*



## President's Message



It is hard to believe that we are well into 2019. The past few months around the Temple have been extremely busy. To begin, we have had a great turnout at our monthly Religious School Shabbat Services and Congregation dinners. I want to thank the families that have graciously agreed to sponsor the dinners and Onegs. Your generosity is greatly appreciated by all.

Next, we have our monthly Friday evening Shabbat Service Away. We have had good attendance at these services and received many positive comments. I would be remiss by not recognizing our members that have opened their homes and welcomed our Temple family for services: most recently Robin and Chris Sussingham and Irma Cole and Mark Scolnick.

We invite you to attend the next Shabbat Away on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, the location to be announced. We are looking for members to host our services in April, May and June. We supply everything including food and provide assistance with setup and cleanup.

Our Live Artfully: Taste of Morocco fundraiser was a great success this year. Everyone that attended really enjoyed themselves. Jodie Snyder and her committee did a wonderful job in planning and organizing the entire evening. I also want to thank all the volunteers that stepped up to assist Jodie and the committee. Without our Temple Members and community businesses that were very generous and sponsored the evening we would not have had a successful event. (See a list of sponsors elsewhere in this issue of The Menorah.)

Beginning March 6<sup>th</sup>, The Rabbi is teaching an adult education class on "Exploring the Talmud Through It's Stories". It will be held on Wednesday evenings through April 3<sup>rd</sup>. There is no charge for the class. I hope everyone will attend as the Rabbi presents select stories that will help us understand the human dimensions of the Talmud, with the goal of incorporating them into our own lives.

On Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm in Berkovitz Hall for Family Trivia. Join a team or bring your own and test your brain on some fun general knowledge Trivia. We will have 3 rounds and PRIZES! Snacks provided but we will pass a basket for donations to cover the cost. After trivia we will have an optional dinner out at a local restaurant. This is appropriate for teens and adults. RSVP to Irma Cole @ [irma-cole26@gmail.com](mailto:irma-cole26@gmail.com).

We also have a wonderful program planned for Yom Hashoah. We've invited Rose Rosenkranz, a child Holocaust survivor and the regional Director of March of The Living to tell her compelling story. The program will be held on May 1<sup>st</sup> at 7 pm in Berkovitz Hall. The program is free but we are accepting donations to provide scholarships for teens to attend March of the Living. See the flyer or our website and Facebook calendars for the link to donate.

Also, Mah Jongg and Book Club meet regularly at the Temple. As you can see, we have a lot going on at the Temple and I hope to see everyone at services, classes or one of our social events. There is something for everyone!!

Allen Shane, President



## **EXPLORING THE TALMUD THROUGH ITS STORIES**

*Classes with Rabbi David Goldstein*

*7 pm, Wednesdays*

*March 6, 13, 27, and April 3*

*No Charge - Board Room, Main Bldg*

Temple Emanuel  
600 Lake Hollingsworth Drive  
Lakeland FL 33803  
863-682-8616





**YOM HASHOAH  
SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER  
ROSE ROSENKRANZ**

**Wednesday May 1st 7 pm**

**Donations: Scholarships for teens to  
attend The March of The Living**

**To donate now go to: <https://bit.ly/2U18mbz>**

**Temple Emanuel  
600 Lake Hollingsworth Drive  
Lakeland FL 33803  
[www.templeemanuellakeland.com](http://www.templeemanuellakeland.com)**



## “He Contributed By Being a Good Person”: A Tribute to Jerry Leviten

By Cat. Eskin and Dan Leviten

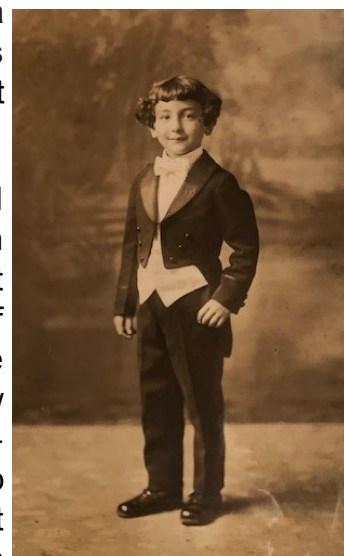


At the end of November, just as Hanukah began, the Temple community lost a long-time member and friend. Jerome “Jerry” Leviten, father of three boys, grandfather of five and great-grandfather of six, passed away peacefully at 101. He was a man who bridged centuries, who connected the old world and the new, who crossed the country and at least one ocean, who loved unconditionally and taught others about kindness by being a model of it. Jerry and his wife Frances, of blessed memory, moved to Lakeland in the mid-1980s to be closer to their son’s family and enjoy their retirement. From his second bar mitzvah with Rabbi Ben-Yehuda to his active participation

in the Temple’s social life, Jerry left his mark on everyone he met. More importantly, he left us all a bit better for having known him.

Jerry was born in Brooklyn (Montauk Ave) in 1917. His parents, Harry and Ida Leviten, were from the old country, Russia, now the Ukraine and Romania. His parents learned English, though Jerry’s grandparents never did. While he didn’t converse in Yiddish with his own family, Jerry almost certainly spoke it as a child

Jerry, at right, was 5 years old when he posed for this portrait in 1922. He and his beloved brother, Irv, were famous for throwing around phrases in Yiddish. In his later years, Jerry would use increasingly complex Yiddish vocabulary that likely came from his childhood. While Jerry was a New Yorker, he spent part of his childhood in Philadelphia. He celebrated his bar mitzvah at Har Zion Temple in the Wynnefield section of the city. Jerry’s family lived in Overbrook, a few neighborhoods over from the Temple and the trip to cheder often involved planning and nerve. Younger brother Irv was a fighter, and while Jerry wouldn’t go looking for a fight, he didn’t back down from one either. The synagogue gauntlet involved crossing through different ethnic neighborhoods—most notably Italian and Irish—that dictated which side of the street was passable for outsiders. In order to get to lessons on time and thus avoid punishment, the brothers often had to leave early and risk punishment of a different kind!



As at our own bar mitzvot, Jerry was showered with candies after he completed his Haftorah. Unlike our own tradition, however, the candy which worshippers lobbed was hard and tree nuts were often among the treats. With the love only awarded by a younger brother to an elder, Irv binged his big brother with a walnut just before he had to give his speech (1930).

Jerry was proud of his heritage and his identity as a Jew. A case in point is a story from his early days serving during WWII. Jerry enlisted in the Army Air Force and was inducted at Fort Lewis, WA. On one of the first days of basic training, he overheard a fellow soldier claiming that “Jews don’t fight.” Jerry approached the man and quipped, “Oh, yeah? This one does.” Jerry won the fight, but he was quickly brought before his commanding officer—and this was only his second or third day on base! He was reassigned to another group on base and Jerry was never sorry that he stood up for his tribe.

Continued on page 17....



Jerry and Frances were married in 1942. The couple moved to Seattle, WA where Fran worked for Boeing while Jerry was in the Army. Her job was to inspect bomber wings—the same bombers her own husband would be aboard. Given her size, Fran was tasked with climbing INSIDE the wings to check their structural integrity. She was taking no chances with the safety of her husband and other American military men. At right, she points to Jerry's commission (1944).



Jerry raised his own family first in New Jersey, followed by Long Island (Suffolk County, 1956), and then to Wisconsin (1962, with a short stint in Michigan). A mechanical engineer, Jerry and wife Frances moved to Beloit, WI for a job at Beloit College. Son Dan remembers that he became a bar mitzvah (late November 1963) in the small synagogue—a converted church with wooden pews—less than a year after their arrival. Not only did the family from New York *kvell* about the small town, his bar mitzvah occurred only a week after President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas. (The picture at left, taken about a year af-

ter Dan's bar Mitzvah, includes Jerry, cousin Dan, Harry, Dr. Daniel, and Irv Leviten in Flatbush, 1964.) Jerry and Frances were planning to build a house when the job at Beloit ended and the family had to move to Michigan for two years. Their goal was to return to Wisconsin.

The move to Sheboygan stuck for the rest of Jerry's working life. The family lived across the street from the well-established synagogue. In spite of the distance from his brothers, Dan remembers returning regularly to celebrate family milestones (at right, Harry & Ida's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 1966; Ruth & Stanley, Frank & Jerry, Adele & Irv with their parents). Jerry's final professional position, at Lake-to-Lake Dairies, allowed him to break some ground professionally: he pioneered some environmental protection procedures in relation to water waste management. The Dairy was busy and as a head plant engineer, Jerry was both innovative and successful in the programs he designed; he even won a state award for plant engineering and was featured in the newspaper.



After retirement, Jerry and Fran moved directly to Lakeland and doted on their grandkids. Jerry was an active member at Temple Emanuel, lending a hand at the Sunday School, attending services regularly, and participating as a member of B'nai B'rith. The Levitens would also take their grandchildren on trips—most memorably, a trip to Washington, D.C. and then a train adventure across the country to visit more grandchildren (and the grandkids' cousins) in Seattle.

Jerry Leviten was the kind of man who never met a stranger, especially among children. His kindness was aided and abetted by his wisdom. He exhibited a genuine comradery with his fellow humans. The sparkle in his eye was matched by a mischievous grin that was both infectious and lasting. He will never be far from those he loved and he loved so many.



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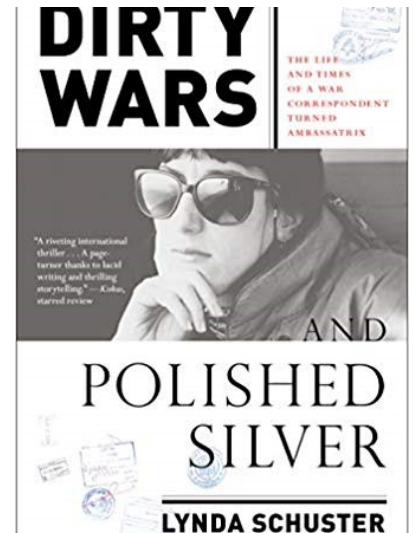




## **BOOK CLUB— by Jane Renz**

Our next Book Club meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 9, 2019 at 11 am in the Library of the Main Building. An optional lunch out will follow. Please join us! Our selection is: Dirty Wars and Polished Silver: The Life and Times of a War Correspondent Turned Ambassatrix

The author, Lynda Schuster, just completed a nationwide tour with the Jewish Book Council. She will be joining us via Skype for a book discussion.



<https://smile.amazon.com/Strange-Case-Dr-Couney-Mysterious/dp/0399175741>

## **CAN YOU HELP?**

Do you have a few hours to spare once in a while? Temple Emanuel can use your help with small projects like:

1. Delivering collected food donations to VISTE.
2. Stuffing Envelopes.
3. Setting up Tables and Chairs for Events.
4. Power Washing.
5. Odd Jobs and Maintenance.
6. Being a Greeter at Services.

Let us know when you are available. Contact [office@templeemanuellakeland.com](mailto:office@templeemanuellakeland.com)



Find and follow us on Facebook to keep up with the latest news and events.

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

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[www.templemanuelakeland.com](http://www.templemanuelakeland.com)

## Blast from the past...1959...Lakeland Ledger

### A Message from the Marketing Committee

We would like to share our High Holiday issue with the many members and friends who come to services by having that issue printed in color. As you can imagine, there is a cost to that.

Our plan to cover this expense is to invite members and friends to pay for business card size ads that will appear in the High Holiday printed issue, as well as the next 3 online issues and on our website. The cost will be \$100 for all 4 issues.

The contact person for this is project is Bonnie Odro. Please let her know of your interest. You can reach her at: [bonnie.odro@gmail.com](mailto:bonnie.odro@gmail.com)

Deadline for submissions for the High Holiday Menorah issue will be August 31<sup>st</sup>. Questions or business cards can be sent to [irmacole26@gmail.com](mailto:irmacole26@gmail.com)

Deadline for the next Menorah is May 31, 2019.

Please send info to [irmacole26@gmail.com](mailto:irmacole26@gmail.com)



# PASSOVER



*This year celebrate  
the Passover  
Second Seder with  
your Temple  
family and  
friends.*

*Enjoy a delicious  
and traditional  
community Seder  
complete with  
matzah, wine and  
a catered dinner.*

Join us for  
our Temple Emanuel

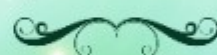
# Seder

Saturday, April 20

6:30 pm

in

Berkovitz Hall at  
Temple Emanuel



Cost:

Member Adults: \$45

Member Child: \$30

Member Family Max \$150

Non Member Adult \$55

Non Member Child \$40

NonMember Family Max \$190

RSVP and Pay

<https://templeemanuellakeland.com/events/passover-seder>  
863-682-8616 office@templeemanuellakeland.com



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*Fun day Sunday!*

**March 10TH at 4 pm**

**JOIN THE FUN & TEASE YOUR BRAIN!**

**Temple Emanuel  
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Donations for  
Snacks**



**RSVP to: [irmacole26@gmail.com](mailto:irmacole26@gmail.com)**

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# TEMPLE EMANUEL MEGILLAH READING AND PIZZA PARTY

ADULTS \$10 ~ KIDS FREE

<https://templeemanuellakeland.com/events/megillah-reading-pizza-party>

WEDNESDAY - MARCH 20TH

6 PM - PIZZA FROM MELLOW MUSHROOM, SALAD, AND  
DESSERTS

6:45 PM - MEGILLAH READING AND COSTUME CONTEST



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