



THE SHPIEL

APRIL 2022 | ADAR II / NISSAN 5782



All meetings are held in the Chapel Center unless otherwise noted.

SLJC April 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4 1:30 pm: Devorah Hadassah Out to Lunch	5 6:30 pm: Men's Club Meeting	6	7	8 7 pm: Shabbat Service	9
10 11 am: JWV Meeting (Cottonwood Country Club)	11 10 am: Sisterhood Card Party (Cottonwood San Tan Ballroom)	12	13 1:30 pm: Devorah Literary Ladies	14 4 pm: SLJC Board of Directors Meeting	15 EREV PASSOVER 7 pm: View Service (YouTube)	16 PASSOVER
17 PASSOVER	18 PASSOVER	19 PASSOVER 11:30 am: Sisterhood Board Meeting	20 PASSOVER 11 am-1 pm: Devorah Hadassah Food Collection for JFCS (Sites TBA) 11 am: Devorah Hadassah General Meeting (Zoom)	21 PASSOVER	22 PASSOVER	23
24	25	26	27 YOM HASHOAH	28	29	30

HIGHLIGHTS

- 3 From the Clergy
- 5 President's Message
- 10 Contributions
- 11 Donation Form
- 13 Celebrations
- 13 Yahrzeits

- President, Shelly Henden (480) 895-8851
- Membership, Marilyn Koss (480) 940-1916
- Rabbi Irwin Wiener, D.D. (623) 640-5913
- Cantor, Ronda Polesky (480) 247-8408
- Music Director, Lana Oyer (602) 524-5936
- Graphics, Mike Milgroom (480) 802-7990

To submit to *The Shpiel* or for more information, contact Geri Gould at (480) 305-0123, or gerijim@hotmail.com.



As Time Goes By

Thankfully, we are once again gathering to celebrate and commemorate milestones in our lives. So many things happened to us during the last two years. There certainly was sadness but there was also gladness. However, we

seem to dwell on the misery and misfortune that occurs and forget too often the beautiful happenings that make us appreciate life.

Some of us concentrate on our ailments and forget how glorious the next day can be, requiring us to have a combination of faith and determination. It is easy to become disillusioned and feel as though the world is crashing down on us. And, at times, it probably is. But those moments soon disappear, and we find that a new day dawns and we are-able-to move on to the next moment in our lives.

As time goes by, we tend to focus on the past because we, somehow cannot envision a future. Day after day the same routine and day after day we see our circle of friends vanish. It is more difficult, at this stage in our lives, to make new friends.

It reminded me of us! There are some in our community who want desperately to hold onto the traditions of the past and still breathe the air of modernity. There are those who want only to journey into the realm of that which is proven. And there are those who want to abandon belief and substitute it with a faithless morality.

The question you may ask is what are we celebrating and what are we commemorating? Because we are so fond of labels, we call them traditions. Broken down they are the sum-total of what we have learned, and what we accept or reject. However, I would suggest that we grow by experimenting and we hold onto the past through the recitation of prayers and rituals that remind us who we are.

On the one hand there are those who believe in strict adherence, derived from that which is written together with how it is interpreted. Finally, there are those who believe that customs and traditions that are thrown into the mix convince us of the rightness of what is believed. However, when we stir the pot out comes a mix of many faiths and beliefs.

On the other hand, I find that the primary issue is comfortability. If we are not satisfied with our observance, to whatever extent, then it stands to reason that we will not follow through with understanding what we do or do not do to reach spiritual fulfillment. This requires experimentation. To experiment, however, requires a commitment to spiritual growth.

To me the essence of what religious observance signifies is defined by our actions. Words alone do not make us pious or worthy of divine consideration. Deeds that accompany the words are the necessary ingredients for a successful, fruitful life. When we do for others, we in turn do for ourselves. This is the cycle of connection and love that makes us acceptable in the eyes of God.

May we all be blessed with the beauty of life filled with satisfaction and contentment. May God continue to grant us good health and long life, but most of all, quality of life so that all that was created will bring us joy and happiness with all our memories of the past, but with an eye to our future.

Maybe then we will find fulfillment in Easter and Passover. 🥰



FRIENDS OF ISRAEL

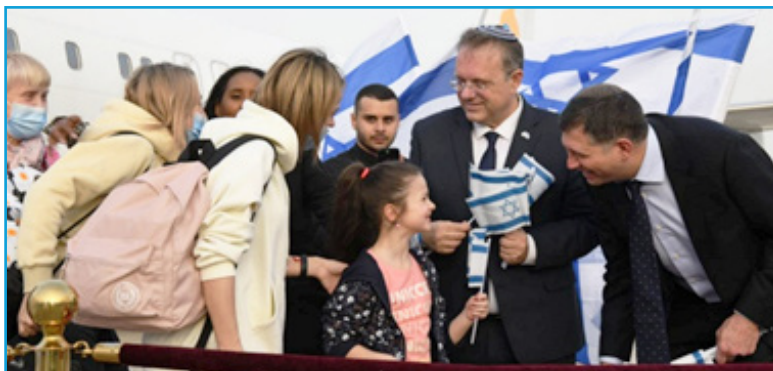
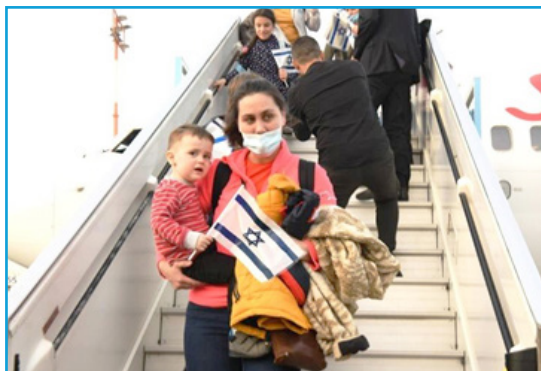
HUNDREDS OF UKRAINIAN REFUGEES HAVE LANDED IN ISRAEL. THOUSANDS MORE COULD FOLLOW.

300 Ukrainian Jews arrived in Israel as of March 6, 2022, with Russia invading the Ukraine to impose its will on this free and democratic state.

For those among us who are critical of Israel for whatever reason, this headline speaks volumes. Over the centuries, the Jewish peoples have been displaced from generation to generation, moving and moving over and over again just to survive and sustain our true identity. And now, since 1948, finally a safe haven, Israel, welcomes all Jews from any place in the world to live safely in the only democracy in the Middle East. This land is where Jews have lived continuously for centuries, sometimes in splendor and other times under difficult circumstances. But now the splendor has been again realized in the one place on earth that Jews can be guaranteed a safe haven.

Natan Sharansky, Soviet dissident and retired head of the Jewish Agency, recently said, "This week, I was reminded of those days when I saw thousands of people standing at the borders of Ukraine trying to escape. The world has changed. When I was a child, 'Jew' was an unfortunate designation. No one envied us. But **today** on the Ukrainian border, identifying as a Jew is a most fortunate circumstance. It describes those who have a place to go, where their family, an entire nation, is waiting for them on the other side."

Is Israel, like any other democracy, perfect? Maybe not. Critics, remember Israel is the only site on earth that Jews can rapidly, safely and freely flee when oppressed to the point that celebrating and living their Judaism is at risk.



ADULT EDUCATION

Upcoming Session: May 1, 1 p.m., Chapel Center

Pre-planning your end-of-life decisions is truly a gift you give to each other and your loved ones. By making your final decisions and arrangements now, before the need arises, you ensure peace of mind for yourself, and you know that your family will not have to make difficult decisions at a very trying time.

Pre-planning also removes the financial burden from your loved ones by locking in the price and avoiding potential increases at a later date. You also eliminate the possibility of emotional overspending at a very stressful and difficult time.

This is a topic that is often avoided yet is quite important. The presentation will be led by representatives from Mt. Sinai Cemetery and Sinai Mortuary. Refreshments will be served, so it is necessary to make a reservation by calling (520) 483-3042 (voicemail) or emailing adulted.siegel@gmail.com, indicating your name and the number of people attending.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SHELLY HENDEN



Making Our Community Stronger

I want to again thank Linda Brooks for arranging our past two fundraisers at Brooklyn V's and Floridino's, and a big thank you to those of you who supported these events. We are trying to get back to normal by offering these social gatherings as

well as making money for the Temple. Linda is planning more of these so watch the Shpiel and email blasts for future dates.

And thank you to Rabbi Wiener, Reverend Armpriester and Murray Siegel, our adult education chairman, for a very informative seminar last month. It is very special to have two leaders of different religious backgrounds come together as one. I often say, "Why can't the world we are living in do the same in peace and harmony?"

As I write this article I just came home from our March service and I can't begin to tell you how wonderful it was to see so many of you in the Chapel. For those that couldn't be there in March I sincerely hope that you will join us for the April 8 service.

Now, I am going to once again get on my soap box. I will continue to ask you, as Rabbi Wiener and the presidents before me have done, to please consider stepping up to keep this congregation strong. Your Board of Directors cannot do everything. Please let me know when you are ready to help and become an even more important member of our community. I know that there are many of you with talent and time to help, so please contact me.

Please keep staying safe and pray for the people of Ukraine. Arnie and I want to wish you and your families a Happy Passover. See you on April 8. 🙏

DEVORAH HADASSAH

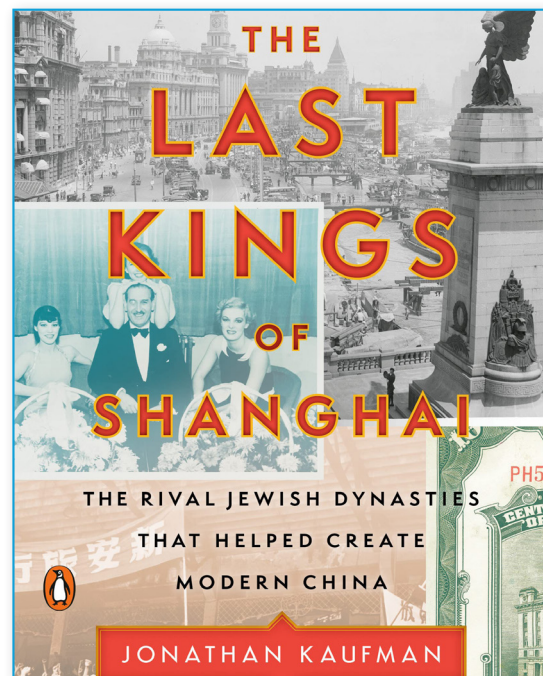
Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, is a volunteer organization that inspires a passion for and commitment to the land, the people, and the future of Israel. Devorah Hadassah is our chapter located in the Southeast Valley. For more information on attending our events, please contact Eliana Bar-Shalom at (860) 377-7126 or ebarshalom.eb@gmail.com.

Our next Out to Lunch will be held on **Monday, April 4 at 1:30 p.m.**

On **Wednesday, April 13 at 1:30 p.m.**, our book group, Literary Ladies, will meet via Zoom to discuss *The Last Kings of Shanghai*, by Jonathan Kaufman. Save the date for discussion of *The Light of Days*, by Judith Batalion, on **Wednesday, May 11.**

On the third Wednesday of each month we collect non-perishable food for JFCS (Jewish Family & Children's Services) in various communities in the East Valley between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Watch your electronic newsletter for more information on Chick Flicks, our movie group. The dates and movies vary each month, but include a discussion of a film via Zoom.





SLJC SISTERHOOD

Upcoming Sessions:

Monday, April 11, 10 am, Cottonwood Ballroom
and Tuesday, May 19, Chapel House

The Sun Lakes Jewish Congregation Sisterhood Card Party is back! We'll gather on Monday, April 11 in the Cottonwood Ballroom (new location) to play Mah Jongg, Bridge, Canasta, Scrabble and other fun games. There will be a delicious luncheon buffet, along with raffles, gift baskets, restaurant gift cards, and a bake sale. All proceeds go to local charities.

Save the date of Tuesday, May 19 for our paid-up membership luncheon at the congregation's Chapel House. If you haven't paid your dues for this year, please fill out the membership form below. The luncheon is free for members, but if you are bringing a guest, there is a \$15 charge. There will be a catered lunch, fun and games. For more information contact Carol at (480) 895-3168 or Janey at (480) 895-4815.

Sisterhood Membership Dues Form (July 1, 2021– June 30, 2022)

NOTE: We do not share information with anyone. For Sisterhood use only. Please print clearly.

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Birthday (month/day only): _____

Please send check for \$25, payable to SLJC Sisterhood, to Suzy Ziegler, 139 W. Briarwood Terrace, Phoenix, AZ 85045

SLJC SISTERHOOD RAFFLE

FOR OUR ANNUAL CARD PARTY ON APRIL 11TH, 2022

ONLY \$10.00 GIVES YOU A CHANCE TO WIN SOME
HARD "CASH"!

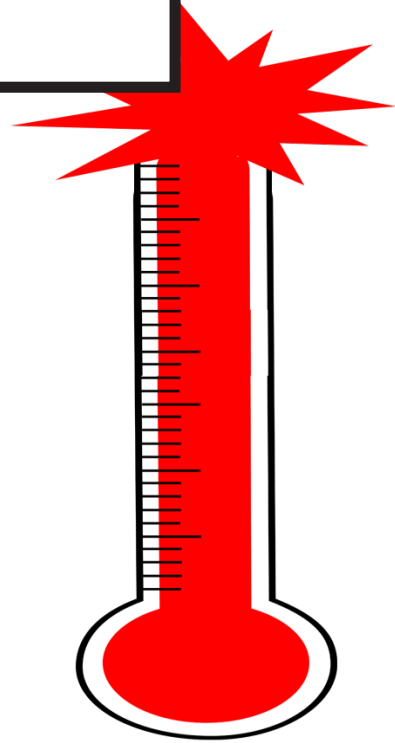
FIRST PRIZE = \$200.00

SECOND PRIZE = \$100.00

REMEMBER THAT ALL PROFITS ARE
DISTRIBUTED AMONG THE TEMPLE
AND VARIOUS LOCAL CHARITIES

THE RAFFLE DRAWING WILL BE HELD
DURING THE EVENT AND THE
PURCHASER NEED NOT BE PRESENT
TO WIN. *We will be happy to send
you additional raffle forms.*

**100 %
GOAL !**



Please make check (\$10.00 per entry) payable to **SLJC SISTERHOOD**.

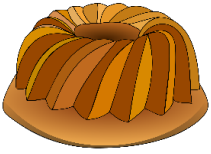
Completed form and check should be mailed to:

**Diane Silverman
9437 E. Rocky Lake Drive
Sun Lakes, AZ 85248**

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

**WE THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING SISTERHOOD AND THE MANY
CHARITIES THAT WILL BENEFIT FROM THE PROCEEDS.**



Sisterhood Card Party Pre and Post-Order Sale Form

Additional Variety of Baked Goods Available at Card Party

Name _____

Telephone Number _____

Please circle each item you would like to order and **indicate when you would like the item.**

		Quantity	Total Cost
<i>Baked by Marilyn Behr</i>			
• Chocolate Chip Kahlua Bundt Cake	\$15.00	_____	_____
• Cinnamon Streusel Bundt Cake	\$15.00	_____	_____
• Cinnamon Streusel Loaf	\$8.00	_____	_____
 <i>Baked by Janey Burnce</i>			
• Chocolate Chip Coffee Cake	\$15.00	_____	_____
 Cookies: <i>Baked by Marilyn Behr</i> \$15.00			
• Bucket of White Chocolate & Pecan Cookies		_____	_____
• Bucket of Russian Wedding Cookies		_____	_____
 • Challah: <i>Baked by Wende Levy</i>			
❖ One Large	\$18.00	_____	_____
❖ One Medium	\$12.00	_____	_____
 • Apple Pie			
• Sugar-free Apple Pie	\$15.00	_____	_____
• Pecan Pie	\$15.00	_____	_____
• Cherry Pie	\$15.00	_____	_____
<i>Baked by Susie Shapiro</i>			
 • Blueberry Bundt Cake			
	\$15.00	_____	_____
<i>Baked by Anita Kolikoff</i>			
			Total \$ _____

Return with check payable to SLJC Sisterhood.

Mail to: Barbara Reiss

24807 S. Lakestar Drive

Sun Lakes, AZ 85248

Be sure to place your request early, as our bakers have a limited number of orders they are able to fill.

Book of Remembrance

This is the time of year when we plan for our annual “**BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE**” in which we honor and memorialize our departed family members. Since there are many congregants who leave for the summer months, and will want to have a listing in the book, we ask that you fill out the form below and send it in as soon as possible.

A completed form, even if your information has not changed, must be included with your payment and be received no later than:

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2022

Return with your check payable to Sun Lakes Jewish Congregation to:

Susan & Michael Cohen, 9008 E. Stoney Vista Ct., Sun Lakes, AZ 85248 – questions call 895-4660

USE SEPARATE CHECK FOR MEMORIAL - DO NOT INCLUDE WITH OTHER CONGREGATIONAL DUES

NAMES WILL BE COUNTED, NOT LINES. EACH NAME ON A LINE WILL BE COUNTED INDIVIDUALLY.

Prices for the publication are as follows:

One quarter page	\$18.00	one to ten names
One half page	\$36.00	one to fifteen names
Full Page	\$72.00	one to twenty names

BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

PLEASE CHECK BOX THAT APPLIES TO YOUR MEMORIAL

- NO CHANGES IN PREVIOUS MEMORIAL.
- CORRECTIONS, DELETIONS OR ADDITIONS TO A PREVIOUS MEMORIAL.
MAKE CHANGES ON SEPARATE PAPER AND SEND WITH FORM.
THIS IS NOT CONSIDERED A NEW MEMORIAL.

- NEW MEMORIAL. PRINT NAMES ON SEPARATE PAPER & MAIL WITH FORM.
MONTH AND YEAR OF DEATH IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE.
THIS INFORMATION SHOULD BE INCLUDED WITH YOUR MEMBERSHIP FORM.

Amount Enclosed:

_____ \$18.00 [$\frac{1}{4}$ page] _____ \$36.00 [$\frac{1}{2}$ page] _____ \$72.00 [full page]

SIGN YOUR NAME[S] EXACTLY AS YOU WISH IT TO APPEAR IN YOUR MEMORIAL

By _____

Phone or email address: _____

SLJC Donation Form (please print clearly)

Please accept this contribution to the following fund, in honor/memory of:

Fund: Chapel Family Fund Flower Music Oneg Silverman Torah General

Yahrzeit Honoree: _____ Month _____

Please send card to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Donor: _____ Amt. of Check \$ _____

Address _____

Remit to: Alan Behr, 25803 Eastlake Dr., Sun Lakes, AZ 85248 (Minimum donation of \$10.00 please)

Minimum donation of \$10* please. Minimum contribution to the Flower Fund is \$50.

*Minimum donation of \$10 per person being remembered/honored.

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

To purchase a plaque for the non-member board at the sale price of \$36, please contact Wendy Goldstein at (480) 584-5909.

SLJC welcomes new member Suzanne Rosenthal, 10545 E. Cedar Waxwing, Sun Lakes, (602) 837-5233 or (818) 231-2326.

Please contact Shelly Henden if you are interested in or would be willing to be called on for an honor during services. She can be reached at arniebikes@gmail.com.

Unfortunately, the SLJC Community Seder scheduled for Saturday, April 16, has been cancelled due to lack of registrations.

SLJC extends its condolences to Mike Freed on the recent loss of his sister, Jill Gerstenfield, and his nephew, Gary Gerstenfield.

SLJC offers its condolences to the family of Peter Relyea, who died on February 22, 2022.

Please submit Bulletin Board posting requests to Geri Gould at gerijim@hotmail.com.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Sun Lakes Jewish Congregation gratefully acknowledges the following contributions made in honor or memory of a special person or event. If you would like to make a contribution, please use the donation form on the opposite page.

FAMILY FUND

In honor of Elaine Rudnick's
96 Birthday
by Jan & Chuck Rappaport

MUSIC FUND

In memory of Rena Dolins
by Leonard Dolins
In honor of Lana Oyer
Celebrating 30 years as
Choir Director
by Leonard Dolins

SILVERMAN CAMPAIGN

In memory of Sy Evans
by The SLJC Men's Club

Yahrzeit Fund

In memory of Geraldine
Goldman
by Ruth & Allen Lavin
In memory of Benjamin
Goldman
by Ruth & Allen Lavin
In memory of Gertrude Lavin
by Ruth & Allen Lavin
In memory of Irving Lavin
by Ruth & Allen Lavin
In memory of Louis Cohen
by Gail Dante
In memory of Gittel Nelson
by Gail Dante

In memory of Sheldon Biales
by Carol Biales

In memory of Ida Goldberg
by Carol Biales

In memory of Irwin Kolikoff
by Anita Kolikoff

In memory of Luddy Israel
by David Israel

In memory of Nathan
Codkind
by Ron Codkind

In memory of Samuel
Flaxman
by Jan Rappaport

In memory of Edward Fabert
by Owen & Carol Fabert

In memory of Joan Steinberg
by Sharon Becker

In memory of Janet Plotkin
by Roxanne Banta

In memory of Joseph
Blumenfeld
by Sandi & Rabbi Irwin Wiener

In memory of Hanan Sakulsky
by Shelly & Arnie Henden

In memory of Jerry Goodman
by Cyril Goodman

In memory of Isabel Levy
by Charles Gerson

In memory of Abraham
Gersten
by Shirley R. Gersten

In memory of Gary Karp
by Adele Karp

In memory of Sarah Feit
by Adele Karp

In memory of Clara Kaufman
by Alan & Marilyn Behr

In memory of Ann Behr
by Alan & Marilyn Behr

In memory of Gloria
Wishengrad
by Irwin & Judy Plafker

In memory of Gloria Israel
by Marc Israel

In memory of Esther
Schulman
by Ellin Lee Merritt

In memory of Harriet Sharff
by Geri & Jim Gould

In memory of Harriet Sharff
by Janey & Jeff Burnce

In memory of Louis Freedman
by Ruth A. Dolin

In memory of Sylvia Kubrin
by Susan & Stephen Kubrin

In memory of Harry
Kimmelman
by JoAnn Rubinstein

In memory of Isaac Levitan
by Roberta & Maishe Levitan

In memory of Sophie Cooper
by Roberta & Maishe Levitan

In memory of Stephen
Meltzer

by Elaine Meltzer

In memory of Siegfried Moses
by Elaine Meltzer

In memory of Robert Rossow
by SaraRuth Rossow

In memory of Sol Gerson
by Charles Gerson

In memory of Herman Brown
by Charles Gerson

In memory of Barney Meltzer
by Elaine Meltzer

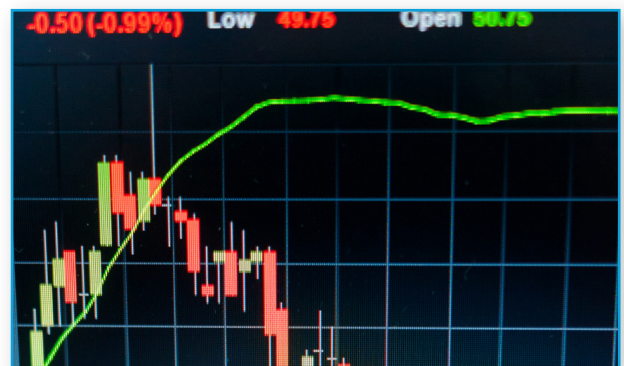
In memory of Jerome Kubrin
by Susan & Stephen Kubrin

SLJC MEN'S CLUB

Upcoming Meeting: Tuesday, April 5, 6:30 p.m.
Chapel Center

On Tuesday, April 5 the Men's Club will meet for a presentation by Sheldon Wilshinsky, retired financial planner. He is a new member of our congregation.

Social time will be from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m., and the presentation begins at 7:00 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. More details will be emailed to members. For further information, please contact Jeff at (480) 556-1284.



APRIL CELEBRATIONS

ANNIVERSARIES — *kol hakavod* — to a great year ahead together!

12 Chuck & Jan Rappaport
14 Harvey & Marilyn Fein

14 Roberta & Maishe Levitan

BIRTHDAYS — *mazel tov* — another year older and another year wiser!

1 Susan Tauber
4 Sheila Asroff
4 Rita L. Tanen
6 Sara Jo Deahl
7 Anita Kolikoff

8 Michael Milgroom
11 Susan Plambeck
17 David Israel
20 Elaine (Lainy) Sardina
22 Myron (Mike) Bernstein

25 Howard Weiner
27 Alan Behr
28 Jeffery Stein
30 Gina Caplan

APRIL YAHRZEITS

Zichronam livrachah — may their memories be a blessing.

Henrietta Behr
Kate Bender
Harry Bendick
Anna Bernstein
Joseph Blumenfeld
Estelle Brooks
Herman Brown
Nathan Codkind
Herman Cohen
Rae Cohen
Abraham Cooper
Sophie Cooper
Jack Dante
Rena Dolins
Edward Fabert
Sarah Feit
Joseph Fishman

Samuel Flaxman
Rose Freed
Louis Freedman
Pearl Freedman
Helen Garber
Sol Gerson
Abraham Gersten
Jack Gindick
Henri Glicenstein
Marcelle Glicenstein
Ed Gobel
Frieda Goldstein
Jerry Goodman
Harry A. Groban
Clara Haufman
Luddy Israel
Gloria Israel

Sol Kahn
Gary Karp
Harry Kimmelman
Irwin Kolikoff
Mildred Kopsenal
Jerome Kubrin
Sylvia Kubrin
Irving Lavin
Gertrude Lavin
Irving Levy
Isaac Levitan
Barney Meltzer
Stephen Meltzer
Siegfried Moses
Morris Nelson
Isidore Pinsly
Janet Plotkin

Morris Rocklin
Robert J. Rossow
Hanan Sakulsky
Bennit Scheck
Esther Schulman
Joseph Shagrin
Joseph Shagrin Jr.
Harriet Sharff
Meyer Solko
Joan Steinberg
Rosetta G.
Stemmens
Gloria Wishengrad
Freddie Williams

JEWISH WAR VETERANS COPPER STATE POST 619

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS LUNCHEON

Sunday, April 10, 11 am, Cottonwood Country Club

Jewish War Veterans Copper State Post 619 will hold its Installation of Officers' Luncheon on Sunday, April 10 at 11 a.m. in the Saguaro Room at Cottonwood Country Club in Sun Lakes. Unanimously re-elected are the following officers: Post Commander Chuck Wolin, Senior Vice Commander Owen Fabert, Junior Vice Commanders Bernie Lieberman and Elliott Reiss, and Judge Advocate Ron Siegal (who will conduct the installation). All other posts are appointed by the Post Commander after the installation.

The Pledge of Allegiance and The Star-Spangled Banner will be led by vocalist Laura Fial. [Rabbi Irwin Wiener, Sun Lakes Jewish Congregation](#), will be the guest speaker. His topic is *Memories Lost, Memories Remembered — The Importance of Remembering the Holocaust*.

Luncheon menu consists of an expanded salad bar with cake for dessert. Luncheon cost is \$20 per person. If you wish to have a table reserved for up to 8 people, please send one check with all names listed. Otherwise, you will be seated by the luncheon committee. Please make your check out to "JWV Post 619" and mail to Judy Wolin, 9006 E. Copper Dr, Sun Lakes, AZ 85248. **Deadline for response is Monday, April 4.**

"I feel proud of the accomplishments that our post has been able to do under such adverse conditions of COVID and having to conduct meetings using Zoom," notes Commander Chuck Wolin. "With only one outing for poppy donations and conducting an online auction for the first time, we have still been able to raise enough funds to make cash donations to some of our charities that will ultimately aid homeless and other needy veterans."

Commander Wolin's goal for his second year will be to get more of the post membership to realize the joy and satisfaction of giving a "Hands-Up" to those veterans in dire need of one, be it outings for poppy donations, passing out pizza at MANA House or flipping hamburgers at U.S. Vets. Wolin states, "By the end of the day, we go home exhilarated when we realize that we made a difference in the lives of those who made this a safer world."

For questions about the luncheon, contact Judy Wolin at (480) 802-8521 or cjsunlakes@msn.com. To learn about JWV membership, contact Jr. Vice Commander Elliott Reiss at (480) 802-3281 or ElliottBarb@q.com



Department of the Southwest Wreath, December 7th Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day Ceremony, Phoenix, Arizona

Left to Right: Patron Ruth Kelter; Patron Judy Wolin; Lou Kelter, Phoenix, AZ, Department of the Southwest NEC; Alan Paley, National Commander; [Charles Wolin, Sun Lakes, AZ, Commander Post 619](#)



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Sun Lakes Jewish Congregation
P.O. Box 11479
Chandler, AZ 85248

The Shpiel | March 2022
Volume 5, Issue 3
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Passover: A Message of Renewal

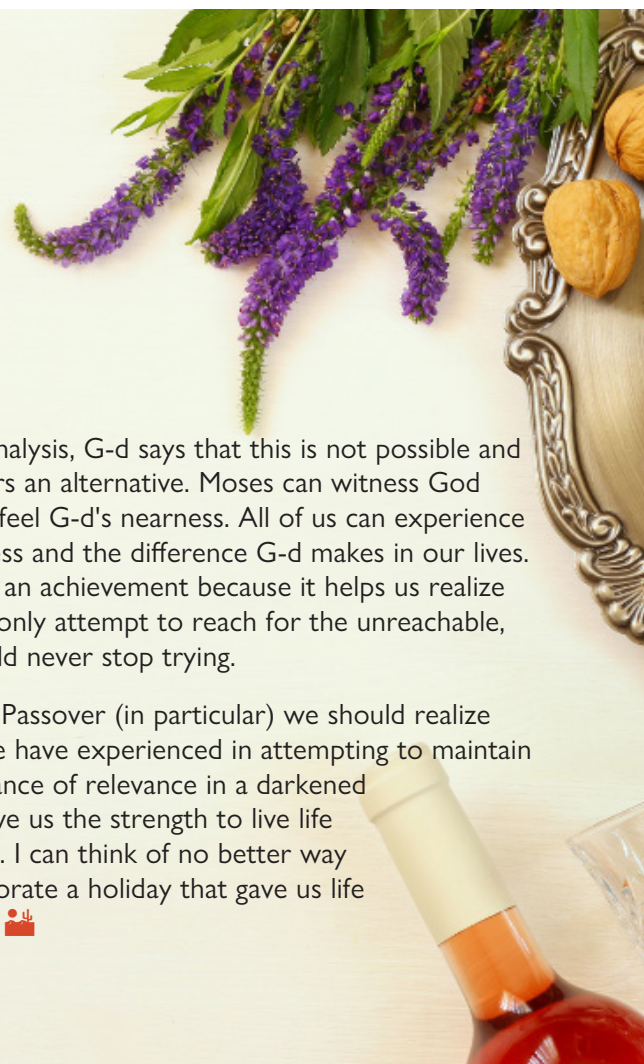
By Rabbi Irwin Wiener, D.D.

We are entering a period that illustrates renewal clearly and distinctly: Passover.

It is an event in history that gives us the ultimate expression of how steadfastness and faith can lead to redemption. However, it also teaches us that liberation can only be achieved when we are willing to take that first leap of faith through our own ability to collaborate with G-d in restoring our dignity.

This requires faith in ourselves. It is a primary ingredient in fulfilling the mission of independence and release. It is not enough to sit back and expect G-d to be the messenger and doer in our final renewal, but rather the combination of the two completes the process.

The Exodus reaches a thunderous climax at Mt. Sinai, and it is there that we begin to understand the partnership. Moses makes one request of G-d. Through all that has been accomplished and yet to be realized, Moses wants to be able to see the G-d that brought about these wonders, from deliverance to revelation. Moses, above all, has had the most intimate relationship with G-d that any human has experienced; still, to him, it was not enough. Moses wants more — to see, to touch, to feel.



In the final analysis, G-d says that this is not possible and yet G-d offers an alternative. Moses can witness God passing him, feel G-d's nearness. All of us can experience G-d's nearness and the difference G-d makes in our lives. This alone is an achievement because it helps us realize that we can only attempt to reach for the unreachable, but we should never stop trying.

Perhaps this Passover (in particular) we should realize that what we have experienced in attempting to maintain some semblance of relevance in a darkened world will give us the strength to live life to the fullest. I can think of no better way to commemorate a holiday that gave us life as a people. 🕯️