Have a Sweet New Year!

- New Executive Director for Federation and Foundation
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- New Rabbi for B’nai Zion
  pages 5 and 12
- New school year
  page 10
This time of year brings much excitement and opportunity; an opportunity to begin again, start fresh and be a new entity. I am grateful to serve as president of the JFED of Greater El Paso; it is both an honor and a privilege. We are fortunate to live in a safe place—more or less free from anti-Semitism and terror. The recent occurrences of the vandalism at our sacred burial grounds is a reminder of what can happen.

This summer, I was fortunate to travel as one of four El Paso delegates as part of the 129 Federation professional and lay leaders on an extraordinary FRD leadership mission to Berlin and Budapest. This was an opportunity to experience first hand how and where our overseas dollars are being invested in strengthening and laying foundations for strong and vibrant Jewish communities throughout the world. Our involvement and dollars are being used to build strong and vibrant Jewish communities. For many of us, we traveled with heavy hearts, conflicted to visit cities with a horrible past. For my family and the other delegates, it was indeed personal.

My father, Sidney Elias Keut, was born in Siegburt Cibulski in Wilhelmshaven, Germany in 1921. His family flourished until life dramatically changed in 1933. He rarely spoke about his past, but we knew he was named for the man who sponsored his family of 3 and his uncle to immigrate to Shreveport in 1939. He is and has always been an extremely optimistic person not only surviving his own personal history, but taking care of a sick wife, while nurturing three kids. We learned from our parents early on that being kind and true to others was the key to a good life. He always found time to volunteer at our Temple, the Federation and other non-profit boards. My first experience with the Jewish Federation was traveling with him on a JFNA Mission to Israel in 1986 where my Jewish identity was sparked. Mentors and role models matter.

A few years ago, I let him know Randy and I were going to Germany with our children, Ryan and Jenny. I was nervous to tell him, but I wanted an address or a clue about his past. I visited him before leaving and little did I know that he would give me an old leather portfolio full of yellowed documents in German and a large white dress box containing full of yellowed documents in German. Learning about the 250,000 Jews living in Germany and 110,000 living in Hamburg was truly remarkable. This is something one doesn’t expect and certainly not my dad. I could not wait to tell him that because of the significant work of The Jewish Agency, The Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and World ORT we are able to witness strong and vibrant Jewish communities throughout the world. Our involvement and dollars matter.

I encourage each and every one of you to honor your legacy, your own Jewish story and pay it forward. May you all have a sweet, happy and healthy New Year. L’Shanah Tovah tikatein Vitcheateinu!

Janet Wechter
President 2018-2020
Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso

Mentors and role models matter.
This past summer many of us were mesmerized, fixated and fascinated by the ordeal of the 12 Thai soccer team boys and their coach trapped by rising flood waters for days and weeks deep inside a cave in northern Thailand. We were glued to our screens and hoped and prayed for their wellbeing and their safe return. The frenetic energy that engulfed the rescue site was quite remarkable. Thousands of people came from far and wide to pray, to cook, to report, to sell their wares and, most importantly, to support the rescue effort in any and every way they could.

I read an article by Rabbi Yosef Vogel who remarked that, when questioned about why this event drew so much international and local interest as well as media attention, one of the divers who was interviewed talked about the fact that everyone shared a profound sense of “common purpose” in seeing the return of these thirteen trapped individuals.

These words resonated strongly with me especially given this polarized world where so many of us are greatly at odds with one another. Things have become ugly. Very ugly. TV, the internet and social media are strewn with disdain and vitriolic diatribes for those who don’t share our opinions. Thankfully, the collaborative effort to save the 12 boys and their coach paid off – although sadly, a seasoned diver sacrificed his life in the endeavor – and the euphoria surrounding their rescue engulfed us.

My time in El Paso since my arrival in late June has been warm and most welcoming. (With the summer heat it was sometimes a little too warm but I understand it does get better!) This is a community filled with history, passion and pride. I am learning a lot each day and with every encounter. There is much to boast about.

As we approach the New Year we have no way of knowing what awaits us around the corner. No way of telling how long we will live in this world. On this day and indeed every day we would do well to remind ourselves of the gift of life. Every moment must count. We have no time to waste. What is our sense of “common purpose” here in El Paso?

The start of a new Jewish year is a time of opportunity for us all where we relive our beginning and reflect on how we can make a fresh start. It is if we are put back in the Garden of Eden with all our choices and challenges laid out before us so we can decide how to respond to them. Let us hope that this New Year be full of hope and promise and that we, too, continue to find our sense of “common purpose”: Giving and working beyond ourselves for the greater good of El Paso, Israel and the Jewish world. Let us also remember that the ball is in our court. We cannot just go through the motions once a year on Rosh Hashanah. We need to stand before God, and before ourselves and strive to achieve this “common purpose” – every single day.

Starting today,

Robert French
Executive Director
Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso
Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso

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Dori Fenenbock on JFNA
Strategic Review Task Force

Some of the biggest challenges facing the Federations system today—such as the changing patterns of engagement or shifting philanthropic trends—demand a national organization that is sharply focused on well-defined priorities. Federations need a JFNA that is nimble, creative in leveraging all of its resources and can help federations of all sizes effectively navigate today’s dynamic philanthropic waters. The BridgeSPAN Group, an organization that JFNA has engaged to facilitate this review, is the nonprofit arm of Bain Consulting. They have extensive experience working with national networks like JFNA such as the YMCA Worldwide, the Boys and Girls Club of America and the United Way.

JFNA has created a task force to guide the Strategic Review, with the assistance of the BridgeSPAN team. The task force is composed of lay and professional leaders from all city sizes including the Chair of the Small Federation Trustees, Dori Fenenbock of El Paso.

The goal is to present recommendations to the Federations and the Board by the end of January. We look forward to this collective effort and reporting on our outcomes and next steps very soon.

Jerry Silverman
President and CEO
Jewish Federations of North America
(excerpted from statement)

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These We Honor with Our Tributes

Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso

To: Janet Wechter in honor of your installation as president of our Federation
From: Ezra and Elisa Cappell
From: Shari and Stuart Schwartz
To: Etan Lavi in honor of your service as president of our Federation
From: Shari and Stuart Schwartz
To: Leslie and Robert Beckoff in honor of Jordan’s engagement to David Firner
From: Linda and Keith Myres
From: Sue Bendalin
To: Jane Rozen with best wishes for a complete and speedy recovery
From: Janet and Randy Wechter
To: Danny and Dina Hamicha with thanks for your in-kind donation of a frame for the Federation office
From: Janet and Randy Wechter
To: Jamie Flores with congratulations on being named executive director for the Holocaust Museum
From: Janet and Randy Wechter
To: Miriam Spitz Domnitz with best wishes for a complete and speedy recovery
From: Janet and Randy Wechter
To: Cindy and David Metrikin in memory of her mother Annette
From: Janet and Randy Wechter
Camp Kadima Memorial Scholarship Fund in Memory of Leona Goldfarb and Minna Frank
To: Robin Gold and family in memory of her beloved mother and the children’s grandmother
Helen Berman
From: The Bayer Family
From: Sue Bendalin
From: Carmen Berunda
From: Rena Cook
From: Maggie Copeland
From: Pono Corver
From: Jessica Caverns
From: Lori M. Golden
From: Bobby Goldfarb
From: Francesca Gutierrez
From: Martha Gutierrez
From: Anoma Knapp
From: Audrey and Etan Lavi
From: Carmen and Tom Lichlyter
From: Diane McKnight
From: Lisa and TJ Mitchell
From: Maggie Moody
From: Tom Murphy
From: The Radcliff Family
From: Darío Sáucedo
From: Kelley Scott

Thank you for your generosity to the Jewish Federation. To donate in memory or in honor of someone, please mail your check to the Federation at 7110 North Mesa, El Paso, Texas 79912, or email sbendalin@jfedelpaso.org.
IT ALL STARTS WITH YOU    You make everything we do possible

Finding and searching: A New Year meditation

Torah.
And Your search for us?
You find us in the bending of the knee,
in the rigor of study,
in the honesty of commerce,
through a good heart,
through decency,
in respect, true fellowship,
compassion and love,
through truth and peace,
in the No that is really No,
and the Yes that is really Yes.
Blessed are You, Eternal One who teaches Torah to Your people Israel.

The conversations about this prayer offered new insights for me.
First, this reading presents two different “vantage points.” The first is the perspective of humanity trying to discover God, and the second is God seeking us. Martin Buber wrote about the human-divine encounter in terms of a mutual relationship (“I-Thou”). Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel believed that God looks to us for partnership. God, who is inherently present in creation, needs us to be God’s hands, eyes, and heart amid the give and take of human community.

Second, the prayer specifies that God and godliness are present when we perform good deeds, when we study, and when our actions reflect humility, love, decency, honesty, and peace. This prayer calls to mind a teaching in Pirkei Avot, which Rabbi Shmuly Yanklowitz (in a new book) translates in this way: “Treat God’s will as if it were your will, so that God will treat your will as if it were God’s will.” Rabbi Yanklowitz explained, “The pertinent question is: can we attune ourselves to the whispers of the Divine? It never hurts to try...Rabban Gamliel suggests so right here in this mishnah...Humbling ourselves to see the biggest possible perspective...is our mandate.”

Third, the “No” and “Yes” statement can relate to standing up for what we believe and resisting undue pressure to give up our values. The times we say “no” or “yes” may change over time, depending upon our experiences. Sometimes we might say “yes” to compromise, especially when it leads to peace.

During these High Holy Days of 5779, may we remember that we are seeking and being sought by an Eternal Presence. This is the essence of who we are and who we can be.

Rabbi Larry Karol
Temple Beth-El

Alone with G-d

Yom Kippur is the holiest day of the year - the day on which we are closest to G-d and to the quintessence of our own souls.

In the course of Yom Kippur there are five prayer services: Maariv, with its solemn Kol Nidrei service; Schacharit - the morning prayer, followed by the yizkor memorial service; Musaf, with a detailed account of the Yom Kippur Temple service; Minchah, the afternoon prayer with the reading of the Book of Jonah; and in conclusion, Neilah, the “closing of the gate” service.

The Maggid of Koznitz would say: “Why would anyone want to eat on Yom Kippur?” This spiritual man felt the holiness of the day so powerfully that eating was out of the question for him. He was lifted way above the realm of the mundane and totally absorbed in the spiritual.

Obviously, his experience was far more elevated than that of most of us. However, we can all certainly relate to the idea. Haven’t we all heard of scientists and mathematicians who were so absorbed in their work that eating and sleeping were out of the question?

So too, on Yom Kippur, we are involved in something more stimulating than a problem in science or math. It is the most sacred day of the year, when the High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies in the Holy Temple, experiencing a direct bond with G-d. There was nothing else there but him and G-d’s revealed presence.

In microcosm, this state of connection is experienced by every Jew on Yom Kippur. This is the heart of the Neilah service. Neilah means “locked.” During Neilah, every person is “locked in,” alone with G-d.

Will we consciously feel this? At the core of our being, beyond the “I” with which we carry on our ordinary daily experience, each of us possesses a soul that is “an actual part of G-d.” On Yom Kippur, the nature of the day causes this spiritual core to be revealed, pushing it into our conscious experience.

That’s why we recite confessional prayers on Yom Kippur; it’s like a couple making up. If they’ve felt distance and separation, and then come together again, they’ll look at each other and say, “We’re sorry and promise to change their conduct in the future.

What’s our spiritual prayers are about on Yom Kippur; coming closer to G-d, saying, “We’re sorry because we caused Him pain, promising that in the year to come, we will try to do better.”

Yom Kippur is not an isolated spiritual event. Although it is unique in its holiness, the intent is that the uplifting influence of Yom Kippur should inspire and permeate our conduct throughout the year. On Yom Kippur, we need to think of what happens afterwards, how to make the spiritual feelings of that day enable us to live better and more fulfilled lives in the year to come.

May the New Year bring blessings of abundance and peace upon the Jewish Nation and all of mankind.

Rabbi Yisrael Greenberg
Chabad Lubavitch

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Introspection within community

The new Rabbi arrived in town and on his first Yom Kippur announced that everyone in the congregation will die. Hearing these words, the congregation grew silent and reflected on this painful truth. But one man in the front started laughing.

Curious, the Rabbi asked the man, “What’s so funny? Didn’t you hear what I said? Everyone in this congregation will die.”

The man smiled and said: “But I am not a member!”

The reality is, in a Jewish community like El Paso, we are all members and the High Holidays are a time when we think about the Book of Life. We spend a lot of time praying and asking God that we and our loved ones are inscribed in the Sefer Hadashan, the Book of Life. Our thoughts and actions around the High Holidays focus on reflection and change. We call upon ourselves to do what is necessary to weigh the balance of divine judgment in our favor for the coming year. This theme of divine judgment creates an appropriately somber tone for the season.

As serious a time as the High Holidays are for each of us individually, the theme of teshuvah, repentance and change is not presented within our tradition as a purely individual process. When we ask for forgiveness, we do so in the plural: “Forgive us!” When we request to be inscribed in the Book of Life we say “Katyaynu,” inscribe us. As much as the High Holiday period is about self-evaluation and reflection, our tradition structures the process of individual introspection within a communal framework. We are not alone! We are all members!

So the joke is clearly not on the Rabbi but on the person who does not see himself or herself as belonging. We all belong. As we stand before God on Yom Kippur, may our place within the sacred community of Israel allow us to support others as we journey together into a year of health, happiness and joy.

As the new Rabbi in town, I look forward to meeting you and getting to know you. I invite all of you to join me in prayer, study and conversation at B’nai Zion or anywhere in our community that welcomes open exploration of Judaism in 5779. Shanah Tovah! May this year be a year of blessing for you, your family and the entire Jewish people.

Rabbi Scott Rosenberg
Congregation B’nai Zion

Who we need to be to heal the world

How vast that chasm is between who we are and who we need to be. While we have our work cut out for us, at the same time we have the most powerful, most creative and most reliable Partner in the universe. Our world is broken in so many ways. The politics of hunger, homelessness and poverty are not new.

In ancient Israel, it was Amos who cried out: “Woe to those who turn justice into wormwood, who hurl righteousness to the ground... those who hate the arbiter, who detest those who are just, who unfairly tax the poor...who subvert the cause of the needy. Instead... hate evil and love good. Establish justice in the gate. I am not a member!”

It is said that the sound of the shofar is meant to awaken us from the malaise of the year that has passed. It’s a reminder that there is incredible work to be done, far more important than the efforts most us focus on during the mundane moments of every day. With the sound of the shofar, we are reminded of the higher ethical expectations our ancestors have passed along to us as our mission and vision for the world.

The High Holy Days are a time when we focus on reaching the core of who we are and submit to G-d’s kingship and vision for the world. We make it possible for the world to become more whole, when we bring ourselves closer to who we are meant to be. Judaism encourages us to see that our celebration of the New Year is intimately tied to what is possible. It’s an especially important thing to remember this year. In a world that is unendingly divided, may our sacred connection to each other and our mission to the world up.

The High Holy Days are a time where we turn to G-d with an eye toward the New Year. Our ancestors have passed along to us as our mission and vision for the world. Our relationship with G-d is a two-way street. On Pesach we celebrate G-d’s boundless love for us regardless of our spiritual status; we were redeemed from slavery despite our lack of merit. The direction is from above to below.

But Tishrei is from the bottom up. The holidays therein represent the human effort to reach for the divine. The thrill of the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah expresses our preparedness to submit to G-d’s kingship and behave accordingly. The atonement we achieve on Yom Kippur happens through our efforts to reach the core truth of our souls. During Sukkot we actively pursue an all-encompassing unity with every Jew and Simchat Torah marks the completion of a yearly cycle of Torah study.

Tishrei: Bottoms Up!

Authors know that the right title can propel their books to the top of the bestseller lists or render them unreadable. Seasoned journalists will tell you that constructing the perfect headline can spell the difference between winning a Pulitzer or having another collection of 2000 words floating around on the internet.

This is true about all languages, but the power of words in the Torah marks the completion of a yearly cycle of Torah study.

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Our Federation’s major campaign events are unique in our community. They bring together like-minded people who share similar interests and Jewish values for an evening of camaraderie, good food and education. We all like learning something we didn’t know before and appreciate a well-known speaker who keeps us engaged.

This fall our campaign events bring two of the most highly rated, most popular speakers around. If you would like to attend an event, please call Sue Bendalin at the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso at 915-842-9554. Reservations are appreciated a week before an event. Nowhere else will you have the chance to hear these kinds of speakers in our area with a circle of fellow Jews and other friends, both old and new!

The Maimonides Society Saturday, September 15
Dr. Irwin and Sue Goldstein “Sexual Health in the 21st Century”

When this event co-chairs, Dr. Jeffrey Spier and Dr. Lauren Eisenberg, were researching speakers for this gathering of doctors and other medical professionals, not surprisingly they knew a great deal about the big names in their own specialty: urology. They selected one of the field’s leaders, Dr. Irwin Goldstein, who along with his wife, are in demand to present the newest research in human sexuality and sexual health around the country. Dr. Goldstein, the director of sexual medicine at Alvarado Hospital, is editor-in-chief of “Sexual Medicine Reviews.” He is also a former editor of “The Journal of Sexual Medicine” with more than 350 publications to his name. While he specializes in such areas as diagnosis and treatment of sexual dysfunction in men and women, Sue Goldstein is a sexuality educator and clinical research manager at the San Diego Sexual Medicine clinic and research center.

Dr. Spier and Dee Dee Spier and Dr. Eisenberg and Adam Rosenfield invite members of the medical community to attend this year’s Maimonides Society event at 7:00 p.m., Saturday, September 15, at Lauren and Adam’s home at 4170 Honey Willow Way. To attend, please donate a minimum gift of $218 to the Federation. Participants will belong to the Maimonides Society, named after the 12th-century Torah scholar and physician Rabbi Moses Ben Marmon, and receive a continuing medical education (CME) credit.

The Cardozo Society Thursday, September 20
Dr. Paul Finkelman “Religion in American Law”

In a special partnership, the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso and the El Paso Holocaust Museum present one of the country’s top constitutional law experts, Dr. Paul Finkelman, president of Gratz College outside Philadelphia and author of more than 50 books and hundreds of articles. You may have seen him in Ken Burns’s documentary on Thomas Jefferson, read his pieces in the New York Times and USA Today or heard him on NPR, PBS or CNN.

Dr. Finkelman, who has been listed as one of the ten most-cited legal historians, has argued in front of the Supreme Court and been cited in four Supreme Court decisions. He’s taught at a variety of colleges and law schools, including at the University of Texas Law School.

After speaking at UTEP’s Constitution Day, Dr. Finkelman will be ready to meet and greet legal professionals starting at 5:00 p.m. Thursday, September 22, with his presentation beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the El Paso Museum of Art. This event is open to the general public; admission is $18. More than 60 lawyers in the Jewish Community will receive a personal invitation in the mail, along with supporters from the El Paso Holocaust lists.
JFNA Leadership Mission to Berlin and Budapest

In July three Federation volunteers – Janet Wechter, board president; Leslie Beckoff, campaign chair; Cindy Graff Cohen, campaign co-chair – and Robert French, our new executive director, traveled as delegates of The Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso to Berlin and Budapest on the Jewish Federation of North America’s FRD Leadership Mission. The trip was part Financial Resource Development training and part overview of how the Jewish Federation supports Jewish communities. They were among more than 120 other campaign chairs, leaders, and Federation professionals.

With deep gratitude for the Impact Grant from The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso and the JFNA subsidies that made our participation possible, we gained an unparalleled perspective on how the Federation serves the needs of Jews and Jewish communities in Germany and Hungary.

They took part in a historic “kippah walk” through Berlin that was organized by German college students. Joined by local Muslims, Jews, and others protesting Germany’s growing number of anti-Semitic incidents, the group of more than 150 people wore yarmulkes for the mile-and-a-half march. The route began near Checkpoint Charlie at one of the last still-standing sections of the Berlin Wall and wound through former East Berlin streets to the historic Gendarmenmarkt area.

Janet and Leslie brought a duffel bag full of art supplies for Camp Svarzuz, a summer camp for Jewish kids from Hungary, Germany, Israel, Russia, the United States and many other areas. The camp staff was thrilled to receive this treasure trove for their arts program.

Shirley Leonhardt retires

Shirley Leonhardt, our Federation’s wonderful and hard-working Controller, retired in August after five years of outstanding service to the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso. Her accounting skills, patience, and problem-solving skills will be much missed. Not only did she create more efficient systems and stay on top of each piece of our payables and receivables but she also took care of us in other ways with her kindness and cheerfulness. We will miss her in the office but look forward to seeing her around and at events in the future. Thank you, Shirley, for everything.

Annual meeting in June

More than 50 people attended our Federation’s Annual Meeting on June 6 on Randy and Janet Wechter’s patio. Speakers included Michael Novick, executive director of Strategic Development for the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), and Inna Lapidus-Kinbere, JCC Director in Riga, Latvia, pictured with Jeannie Lipson, right, longtime volunteer with Jewish programs.
Temple Beth-El President Ellen Torres and Jeff Brown, board secretary, took part in the congregation’s August orientation and training meeting with board of trustees members, committee chairs, the nominating committee, and others at the home of Ellen and Fred Torres. Conversations focused on the nature of leadership in Temple life and how board members can shape the vision and pursuits of the congregation.

In July, Temple Beth-El Las Cruces members and guests gathered for dessert, Havdalah, and a sing-along program, led by Rabbi Larry Karol. The event included songs from 1968, 50-year-old classics like “Sittin’ on the Dock of the Bay” and “Hey Jude,” along with two of Rabbi Karol’s original songs.
This summer, Jamie Frank traveled with his family to Israel where, as his Bar Mitzvah project, he donated 1,000 pairs of new Nike sneakers to needy children in Kiryat Bialik Karin Ruzkowski in the Haifa District. Jamie used money he received in honor of his Bar Mitzvah to purchase the sneakers he gave away. He told News Haifa and the Krayot that as a sports fan and an avid basketball player, he “thought that most children who could not afford it would be happy to get their sneakers in order to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle and feel equal among their friends.”

Mayor Eli Dukorsky presented Jamie with a Certificate of Appreciation for his generosity saying, “I thank Jamie for giving moments of joy and happiness to the children of our city.”

The event was covered by several Israeli newspapers including Yedioth Achronot, Israel’s largest newspaper.

Jamie Frank is surrounded by Israeli children carrying bags of shoe boxes to be distributed.

**Bat Mizvah project at Beth-El**

Hannah Saltman is a 15-year-old member at Temple Beth-El synagogue. As part of her bat mitzvah, she held a donation drive for the Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary in Las Cruces. She placed a bin and sign at Temple Beth-El and asked for donations that were on Safe Haven’s need list and monetary contributions.

“I am so thankful to members at Temple Beth-El who came out and gave so much to the donation drive for Safe Haven,” Hannah said. “Many members said they wanted to donate because they wanted to help and that they love animals like I do.”

“We were immensely grateful and encouraged by the hard work Hannah put into the project to help our dogs and cats,” said Tricia Quillen, volunteer coordinator for the animal shelter. “The official presentations were made at PetSmart in July as part of our monthly Adoption Event at the store.” On hand to receive the donations were Cass Walker, Sanctuary manager and Laura O’Connor, executive director.

**JTEP hosts fun party for teens**

In May, through the generosity of a grant provided by the Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso, Jewish teens, such as Elise Erlich, Charlie Tennen, and Emily Zinner (above), got together for a dinner and comedy night put together by Jewish Teens of El Paso (JTEP). Forty attendees represented 11 different area schools. There were opportunities for the kids to meet and mingle before the evening got under way. All were treated to a delicious dinner at Ardovino’s Desert Crossing before the private show began. Two comedians were brought in from the New York comedy circuit to perform just for this lucky group. The night was a great opportunity to get to know each other and enjoy a break from studying to laugh out loud!
J Center for Early Learning increases enrollment

The new Jewish year is almost here, but it's already a new school year and the second year of The J Center for Early Learning is off to an incredible start! On Sunday, August 12, we met our teachers and on Monday, August 13, school officially began. It was great to see old friends, to meet new ones and to get to enter our new classrooms.

The size of our preschool has nearly doubled since it opened a year ago and most of this growth has come from word of mouth—which says a lot about our incredible program and amazing teachers. And I'm proud to say I'll be joining that team this year as the new Judaics teacher. Although I've been working with tots for two full months and reunited with the preschool. Each of these two full months and reunited with the preschool. Each of these was the first time in ten years that the camp was held for grandchildren at Camp Shamayim. It was important to us to have had the privilege of experiencing immigrant summers as a kid! Days were filled with countless hours of fun in the sun, playing games, running outside and eating fudgesicles before they melted in the summer heat! El Paso parents brought those apples and honey to do with a new year. I have so many exciting things in store for this year as Morah Stacy. I look forward to celebrating old traditions and starting new ones as we continue the joyful Jewish learning that is The J's building legacy.

As has been the case for the past 43 years and this year is no exception, our teachers are committed to each individual student and family at the EPJA and they are extremely passionate about teaching. Their years and level of experience continues to meet the high academic bar that we set each and every year. Our teachers are aware of each student's academic level and work as a team both with the student and the other staff to develop an academic plan so that all students achieve their academic, social and religious growth at the highest levels.

Our teachers bring years of experience to our school:
• Ruth Zona, who teaches middle school language arts, has over 24 years of experience in the middle school classroom.
• Erika Orranua has taught kindergarten through sixth grade; she will be teaching our fourth and fifth grade general studies classes in addition to physical education/sports and will also be bringing a new theatre course to the EPJA this year.
• Teresa Thompson will be joining us again this year as our fourth to eighth grade math specialist. Teresa has over 31 years of educational experience with 17 years in the classroom, and the remainder in administration with the El Paso Independent School District.
• Donald Thompson is our fourth- to eighth-grade science specialist with over 33 years of teaching and administrative experience.
• Barbara Spellmiller is our third-grade teacher. She has over 20 years of classroom and administrative experience, teaching every age from preschool to eighth grade.

We are each honored to be continuing the special legacy of the EPJA, and invite the El Paso Jewish community to be a part of our special school year. We hope that you will join us throughout the year as we celebrate being Jewish in El Paso.

Cara Jones
Interim Director
El Paso Jewish Academy

J Center for Early Learning increases enrollment

The size of our preschool nearly doubled since it opened a year ago by combining the preschool tradition started by Judy Gordin: making a Shabbat tablecloth for our school. Each child put his or her own handprint at the edge of the cloth which united our entire preschool community. We’ll use it every Friday morning as we celebrate together in preparation for Shabbat. If you’d like to join us feel free to drop by at 9:45 a.m. in Zielonka Hall!

For Rash Hashanah we’ll be learning why our Challah is suddenly round and what apples and honey have to do with a new year. I have so many words. These are memories we will cherish always and I am so thankful to have Shamayim back for our community.

We'll use it every Friday morning as we celebrate together in preparation for Shabbat.
COMMUNITY

Congregation B’nai Zion teenager attends United Synagogue Youth convention

This year at my second Southwest United Synagogue Youth (SWUSY) regional convention, I had a wonderful time. At most conventions, we have our usual Shabbat and Rosh Hashanah services; however this one was different. The theme was “the Theatre,” but there were not many acting mixers and significantly less people. As a result, it was easier for SWUSY members to become closer and better friends with the people around them. I made new friends as well as became closer with previous ones. Since this was the last convention of the year, it was fun to listen to the senior speeches, and to wish them good luck as they start college in the fall.

A special moment for Regionals is during the recognition program. There are chapter and leadership awards given. This year was even more memorable with the renaming of the Advisor of the Year award to the Rachel B. Leon Advisor of the Year award. SWUSY did this to recognize Rachel for her significant contributions to the Region.

An excursion to the beach in Galveston was one of the highlights for me. This trip was the first time I had ever been on a beach and it was a great experience. Even though I was a little apprehensive on entering the ocean, soon enough I found myself knee deep in the salty water. It was brown and felt cool on my skin. While there, I hung out with friends and we swam for a bit until we had to go back to the hotel. This convention was interesting to say the least and I am excited for Leadership Training Institute!

Thank you to all who made this possible,

Julian Cohen
President
B’nai Zion United Synagogue Youth (BZUSY)

USY KICK OFF ACTIVITIES COMING YOUR WAY!

Why join USY OR KADIMA?

- Experience an authentic and dynamic Judaism
- Participate in fun and enriching Jewish programming
- Step away from social and academic pressures of high school
- Find a sense of belonging in a warm, inclusive community
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IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

BOARD MEMBER ELECTION: September 3rd, 2018
ACTIVITY PLANNING COMMITTEE: September, 9th, 2018

Details will be e-mailed, and advertised throughout.
Support your children/teenager to join this wonderful organization.

For more information Call or Text Consuelo Madero, USY Interim Advisor @ (915) 861-6265

Troop 613 Goes to Summer Camp!

Troop 613, which meets at Congregation B’nai Zion, went to Boy Scout Summer Camp at Fiesta Island, San Diego. After years of attending land-based summer camps in the Boy Scouts of America network, our troop decided to step out of its comfort zone and go to a sea-based one. With many to choose from, including two here in the great state of Texas, Troop 613 traveled to beautiful San Diego!

The boys earned a variety of merit badges, many of which were aquatics-based, such as Canoeing, Kayaking, Rowing, Motorboating, and Oceanography. In addition, they also acquired non-aquatic-based merit badges such as Search and Rescue, Theater, Crime Prevention and Fingerprinting to name a few! However, it wasn’t all work during camp.

Troop 613 also explored San Diego and sampled some local cuisine. The boys ate at the “Fish Shop,” an eatery specializing in freshly caught local bay fish. Thereafter, we saw vessels (including two aircraft carriers) and had dessert at the Cheesecake Factory before returning to Fiesta Island. So, you can have your cake and eat it too! It was a great summer trip for all!

Yirmi in Scouting,
Alan J. Cohen
Scoutmaster-Troop 613

Mitzvah Corps funded by The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso

It is with great pride and immense pleasure that we can announce that the Mitzvah Corps class at Temple Mount Sinai will be taking part in a Teen Philanthropy Project this school year. Founded last year, the Mitzvah Corps Class of seventh and eighth graders participated in a wide variety of service projects and “good deeds.”

The Mitzvah Corps program was developed to teach these newly-minted Jewish adults about the importance of community service in the Jewish tradition and the need to incorporate Jewish values into their lives. As they get older and busier, these young people will be likely to be more active and connected, both in the local community and the Jewish community.

This year’s philanthropy pilot project is a critical component of Temple Mount Sinai’s Campaign for Excellence in Youth Engagement. Our goal this year are to:

1. Enable teens to understand and act upon the core Jewish values of Tzedakah (just giving), Tikkan Olam (healing the world) and G’milut Hasadim (acts of loving-kindness) through the creation of a teen foundation.
2. Support healthy adolescent development by offering a safe environment, engaging activities, opportunities for leadership and relationships with trusted adults
3. Build a strong sense of community among teens
4. Help teens establish associations with non-profit organizations in our local community
5. Influence and create a new generation of Jewish philanthropists

Temple Mount Sinai received a generous grant from The Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso to run this innovative program. The enthusiastic young people involved in this project will be using Jewish values to evaluate and disburse grants that they develop to non-profit organizations who are striving to make our world better.

Iran Brown
Director of Congregational Learning and Engagement
Temple Mount Sinai

As pictured (left) Elijah Hagins, Aaron Charter, Julian Cohen, Noah Hagins.
B’nai Zion Welcomes Rabbi Rosenberg

Rabbi on August 1, 2018. Rabbi comes to El Paso from Penn Valley, Pennsylvania, where he served as Senior Rabbi at Har Zion Temple for the past five years.

“Rabbi Rosenberg has arrived in El Paso, filled with enthusiasm and ready to take on his role,” said Shane Lipson, board president. “In the short time he has been here, I have greatly enjoyed getting to know him and I hope the rest of the community will have the opportunity to spend time with him as well.”

Rabbi Rosenberg leads services every weekday morning and evening. His beautiful chanting and relevant Divrei Torah add new meaning to Shabbat celebrations. We invite you to meet and get to know Rabbi Rosenberg by joining us at any of our services or at one of the many upcoming Meet and Greet opportunities. Check your mail, weekly e-Blasts and the B’nai Zion website (congregationbnaizion.org) Calendar and Special Events sections for upcoming Meet and Greet event details.

“Since arriving in El Paso at the end of last month, the B’nai Zion community has extended a warm welcome to me,” remarked Rabbi Rosenberg. “I am enjoying meeting the members of the community and look forward to meeting all of you over the coming time. I look forward to getting to know you and sharing life and the joys of living as a Jew in this beautiful city with you. It is a privilege to serve you.”

As we turn the page to a new chapter in B’nai Zion’s history, we thank Rabbi Stephen A. Leon, Emeritus Rabbi, who has been our Rabbi for more than 35 years, for his dedication and commitment to B’nai Zion and for stepping up to again support B’nai Zion as Head Rabbi for the past year. We appreciate all he’s done for our synagogue, and look forward to his continued presence in our community, not only as Rabbi Emeritus, but also as a friend to so many of us.

Debra Pazos
Executive Director
Congregation B’nai Zion

Bea Weisz Memorial Scholarship 2018 recipients

Now in its 17th year, this scholarship award goes to worthy El Paso-area Jewish college students.

Andrew Fraker
2016 Coronado High School graduate
Attending Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas
Majoring in Agricultural Industries with a minor in Military Science
Class of 2020

Jacob Zenner
2018 Coronado High School graduate
Attending The University of Texas in Austin, Texas
Majoring in Business
Class of 2022

Eduardo Madero
2015 Coronado High School graduate
Attends University of North Texas in Denton, Texas
Double major in Accounting and Finance
Graduating in 2020

Renaye Feldt
2018 Coronado High School graduate
Attending Jefferson Community & Technical College, Louisville, Kentucky
Majoring in Criminal Justice
Graduating in 2020

Want to submit an ad? Email frontdesk@jfedelpaso.org or call Said Buhaya at 915-842-9554.

Want to help cover the cost of your Jewish Voice? Be a “Friend of The Voice” and send your donation to The Voice, Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso, 7110 North Mesa, El Paso, TX 79912. Thank you!

10% OFF Any Dry Clean Order

5151 Fairbanks
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7000 Westwind
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8002 N. Mesa
865 Resler
6205 Upper Valley Rd.
12420 Edgemere
6205 Upper Valley Rd.

3385 N. Yarbrough
1810 Trawood
12106 Montwood
1745 Lee Trevino
1580 George Dieter
8930 N. Loop
9900 Viscount
9109 Dyer
12420 Edgemere

12 I September 2018

IT ALL STARTS WITH YOU
You make everything we do possible
HIGH HOLIDAYS

High Holy Days Schedules 5779
For worship times for Simchat Torah, Sunday, September 30, and Sh’mini Atzerets, Monday, October 1, please visit each synagogue’s website.

Temple Beth-El
3980 Sonoma Springs Avenue, Las Cruces www.tbelc.org

Saturday, September 1
Selichot
Dessert, Study and Selichot Worship, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, September 9
Erev Rosh Hashanah
Evening Service, 8:00 p.m., Followed by Rosh Hashanah
Oneg, sponsored by Sisterhood
Monday, September 10
Rosh Hashanah
Family Service, 9:00 a.m.
Morning Service, 10:00 a.m.
Tashlich at Young Park an hour after conclusion of morning service
Tuesday, September 11
Rosh Hashanah, 2nd Day
Morning Service, 10:00 a.m.
Bagel Brunch, sponsored by Rabbi Larry and Rhonda
Karol and Religious Practices Committee
Sunday, September 16
Cemetery Service (Masonic Cemetery), 1:00 p.m.

Tuesday, September 18
Erev Yom Kippur
Kol Nidre/Evening Service, 8:00 p.m.

Wednesday, September 19
Yom Kippur
Family Service, 9:00 a.m.
Morning Service, 10:00 a.m.
A Time for Sharing with Rabbi Karol, 1:15 p.m.
Yizkor Reflections Session with Leora Zeitlin, 2:45 p.m.
Afternoon Service, 4:15 p.m.

Yizkor and Neilah, 5:30 p.m.
Break-the-fast, 7:10 p.m., sponsored by Sisterhood
Sunday, September 23
Sukkah decorating, 4:00 p.m.
Erev Sukkot Service, 5:45 p.m.
Monday, September 24
Sukkot Morning Service, 10:00 a.m.
Followed by Kiddush
Child care provided during Morning Services from 9:45 a.m. on Rosh Hashanah

Congregation B’nai Zion
805 Cherry Hill Lane, El Paso, Texas
www.congregationbnaizion.org

Saturday, September 1
Selichot
Film, change of Torah covers, refreshments, 9:30 p.m.
Selichot service, midnight
Sunday, September 9
Erev Rosh Hashanah
Mincha/Ma’ariv, 6:30 p.m.
Candle lighting, 7:02 p.m.
Monday, September 10
Rosh Hashanah Day 1
Shachrit, 9:00 a.m.
Mincha/Tashlich/Ma’ariv, 6:30 p.m.
Candle lighting, 8:01 p.m.
Tuesday, September 11
Rosh Hashanah Day 2
Shachrit 9:00 a.m.
Mincha/Ma’ariv, 7:00 p.m.
Havdalah, 8:07 p.m.
Wednesday, September 12
Erev Yom Kippur
Musical Prelude/Mincha/Kol Nidre, 6:30 p.m.
Candle lighting, 6:50 p.m.

Erev Sukkot Service, 6:15 p.m.
Monday, September 24
Sukkot Day 1, Shachrit, 9:30 a.m.
Tuesday, September 25
Sukkot Day 2, Shachrit, 9:30 a.m.
Mincha/Ma’ariv Chol HaMoed Sukkot and Havdalah, 6:45 p.m.

Temple Mount Sinai
4408 North Stanton Street, El Paso
www.templemountsinai.com

Saturday, September 1
Selichot
Evening service and program, 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, September 9
Erev Rosh Hashanah
Evening service, 8:00 p.m.
Monday, September 10
Rosh Hashanah
Family Service, 9:00 a.m.
Morning Service, 10:30 a.m.
Sunday, September 16
Kevner Avot Memorial Service at TMS Cemetery, 5:30 p.m.
Followed by no-host dinner
Tuesday, September 18
Erev Yom Kippur
Kol Nidre/Evening Service, 8:00 p.m.
Wednesday, September 19
Yom Kippur
Family Service, 9:00 a.m.
Morning Service, 10:30 a.m.
Discussion and conversation, 1:30 p.m.
Reflection and study, 2:30 p.m.
Afternoon service, 3:30 p.m.
Yizkor, Memorial Service, 4:30 p.m.
N’ilah, Concluding Service, 5:30 p.m.
Break the Fast, 6:30 p.m.

Erev Sukkot Service, 6:15 p.m.
Monday, September 24
Sukkot Service, 10:30 a.m.
Friday, September 28
Kabbalat Shabbat and Sukkot Service, 6:15 p.m.

Chabad Lubavitch
6615 Westwind Drive, El Paso, Texas
www.chabadelpaso.com

Saturday, September 1
Selichot
Shabbat and Havdalah, 6:45 p.m.

Sunday, September 2
Erev Rosh Hashanah
Evening Service, 6:45 p.m.
Monday, September 10
Rosh Hashanah
Shachrit, 9:00 a.m.
Sofar Service, 11:30 a.m.
Mincha, 6:45 p.m.

Sukkot Service, 10:30 a.m.
Monday, September 24
Sukkot Service, 10:30 a.m.
Kabbalat Shabbat and Sukkot Service, 6:15 p.m.

“Sukkot Under the Stars” dinner prepared by Temple Brotherhood
DAILY MINYAN SERVICES

Temple Beth-El invites golfers to join Rabbi Scott Rosenberg and fellow worshippers for daily minyan services. From Monday to Friday, the Shacharit service takes place at 7:00 a.m. with the Ma’ariv service at 6:30 p.m., except for Friday nights when Kabbalat Shabbat services begin at 6:15 p.m.

September 15, Saturday

The Federation’s Maimonides Society for physicians and other medical professionals will host renowned scholar Dr. Paul Finkelman at a special event at the El Paso Holocaust Museum. Dr. Finkelman is an American legal historian and is an expert in the history of the Holocaust. Dr. Finkelman will receive funding from the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso to conduct 25 oral history interviews. These interviews provide the main basis for a play to be written by Wil Kilkoski, the head of NMSU’s Department of Theatre Arts. All characters in the play will have pseudonyms, and in some cases information from multiple interviews will be melded.

The play will include vignettes about Temple Beth-El’s members’ experiences that will help a general audience to understand more about the Temple, its history and its members. The play will be about one hour in length and will be followed by a Q&A panel discussion. The production is funded by the Jewish Agency for Israel. For information and to reserve your spot, call the Federation at 842-9554.

October 7, Sunday

Temple Beth-El will present an original play at 2:00 p.m. at the New Mexico State University’s Center for the Arts Theatre at the corner of Espina Street and University Avenue. Temple Beth-El received funding from the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso to conduct 25 oral history interviews. These interviews provide the main basis for a play to be written by Wil Kilkoski, the head of NMSU’s Department of Theatre Arts. All characters in the play will have pseudonyms, and in some cases information from multiple interviews will be melded.

The play will include vignettes about Temple Beth-El’s members’ experiences that will help a general audience to understand more about the Temple, its history and its members. The play will be about one hour in length and will be followed by a Q&A panel discussion. Since the production is funded by the Jewish Agency for Israel, admission is free and refreshments will be served.

This year’s Yom Hashir event, a half-day music festival, will include a variety of performing artists. During September, the program co-chairs are recruiting singers, bands, poets, dancers, actors and other performing artists to take part in the event. Contact alisonwestermann@gmail.com or kristinkimmelman@gmail.com to learn more soon.

October 14, Sunday

Hadassah El Paso will host a membership luncheon at noon at Coronado Country Club. For information, contact Cherylly Bider Liebmann at 832-0299.

October 17, Wednesday

The El Paso and Las Cruces delegation (see page 15) begins their one-week JFNA Mission Trip to Israel. The Mission Trip, which includes visits to landmarks and programs supported by the Jewish Agency (JAFI), concludes with the Jewish Federations of North America’s General Assembly runs from October 22 to 24. For information, please call Sue Bendalin at 842-9554 or email sbendalin@jfedelpaso.org. There are still spaces available, but don’t delay.

October 17-24

To celebrate Israel’s 70th anniversary, the Jewish Federation of North America is holding its General Assembly in Israel from October 17 through 24. Many special events, tours, and parties will be held in between workshops to help both lay leaders and professionals work more effectively with their own federations. For information and to register, please contact Sue Bendalin at 915-842-9554 or sbendalin@jfedelpaso.org.

October 21, Sunday

Temple Beth-El invites golfers to the Sixth Annual Matzo Ball Open at Picacho Hills Country Club. Registration will start at 11 a.m. at the clubhouse. Come enjoy a bowl of delicious matzo ball soup! The shotgun start tee-off will be at 12 noon. The format will be a four-person best ball team scramble, which means each player gets to take a shot from their team’s previous best shot. Your entry fee is $100 per person and includes cart, range balls, dinner (vegetarian option available), as well as a certificate for a complimentary round at Picacho Hills.

There will be a $10,000 putting contest, longest drive and closest-to-the-pin contests for both men and women. Raffle tickets will be sold throughout the tournament as well as mulligans and 50/50 tickets. Businesses and individuals are invited to donate a contribution to our raffle table or sponsor one of the 18 holes. Donors’ names will be displayed at a tee box and in the Temple Beth-El newsletter. Call 575-523-0913 for information.

November 8, Thursday

Temple Mount Sinai will host National Public Radio host and author Susan Stamberg at the Temple at 6:30 p.m. Well-known for her wit and insights, Stamberg is a popular speaker around the country. More information will be in the October Jewish Voice, but save the date now. All are welcome.

January 22, Tuesday

Next year’s Pacesetters party for those who donate $1800 or more in the 2019 campaign year will be held at the home of Dr. Steve and Wendy Lanski. At this kickoff event, attendees will enjoy meeting and hearing from Arielle Di-Porto, a leader in relocating families to Israel, and Mort Naiman, senior vice president of global philanthropy for the Jewish Agency for Israel.
More people from El Paso and Las Cruces than ever will attend next month’s General Assembly of the Jewish Federation of North America (JFNA) – and it’s no ordinary mission. While most annual gatherings of Federation leaders and supporters take place in the United States or Canada, in honor of two important anniversaries – Israel’s upcoming 70th anniversary and the Federation’s upcoming 80th anniversary – the 2018 JFNA General Assembly will convene in Tel Aviv.

When you see the following people around town over the next few weeks, be sure to wish them a wonderful time at the General Assembly, which runs from October 22 to 24, and also for the mission and Israel tour that begins on October 17. Our region will be well-represented!

• Dori Fenenbock, JFNA Executive Committee member
• Mark Fenenbock, Federation donor
• Robert French, Federation executive director
• Mark Gonzalez Herrell, Federation board member
• Monika Kimball, Federation board member
• Wendy Lanski, ElPasoConnect leader
• Ophra Leyser-Whalen, 2018 Young Leadership Award recipient
• Neal Rotendorf, Federation board member
• Eddie Trevizo, Federation donor
• Robert Trevizo, Federation donor
• Janet Wechter, Federation board president
• Randy Wechter, former board president

In addition, some mission participants will be joined by spouses and will be extending their trip to travel to other parts of the country and learn more about Israel. This weeklong mission to Israel combines history and sightseeing with valuable training workshops and some of the top speakers in JFNA and local experts’ presentations. The group will visit both landmarks such as the Roman ruins of Caesarea, the old city of Jerusalem, and Masada and sites off the beaten track, including an Arab-Israeli cultural center in Haifa and the nature preserve dedicated to Baron Edmond de Rothschild. Through walking tours, bike tours, and jeep rides, participants will gain insights into Israel’s history and culture as well as many of the Federation-funded activities throughout the country.

For the full itinerary, including the names of the luxury hotels booked each day, visit jewishelections.org or call our Federation office at 842-9554. The trip represents a unique opportunity to see Israel with behind-the-scenes access and memorable speakers and activities. Interested in joining the group? There’s still time to register. It will be a great opportunity to share a memorable trip with people from El Paso and Las Cruces. Contact Sue Bendalin at our Federation office at 842-9554 or email sbendalin@jfedelpaso.org for registration details.

Cindy Graff Cohen
Editor, The Jewish Voice

The Lions of Judah is an international sisterhood of women who care deeply about the future of Judaism and support their community Jewish Federations with annual gifts of $5,000 or more. These women play a vital role in promoting social justice, aiding the less fortunate, preserving human dignity and building Jewish identity. Many women contribute their time and leadership capabilities to demonstrate their dedication to the Jewish community; many women contribute their resources to make a difference in our world. The Lions of Judah set an exemplary standard of leadership and giving.

Within the Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso, we appreciate the generosity of the following women:

• Leslie Beckoff
• Dori Fenenbock
• Robin Furman
• Cindy Metrkin
• Hannah Meyers
• Elicia Rubin
• Ann Schaechner
• Rose Schecter
• Sara Shiloff
• Janet Wechter
• Sylvia Wechter

To learn more about the benefits of being a Lion of Judah, call Sue Bendalin at our Federation at 842-9554 or reach out to Leslie Beckoff, campaign chair, or Janet Wechter, board president.

More than 17,500 women belong to the Lions of Judah, each contributing at least $5,000 to their Federations each year. More than 3,600 women created a Lion of Judah Endowment, starting with a minimum annual donation of $25,000; these perpetual endowment funds add up to nearly $600 million.

Every two years, Lions of Judah gather for three phenomenal days of extraordinary learning, sharing and celebration. They get to network with other Jewish women from around the world, inspire one another and hear from the world’s leading speakers in the fields of religion, culture, art, business and politics.

The next Lion of Judah conference is January 13-15, 2019. Participants will enjoy the amenities of the Diplomat Beach Resort in Hollywood, Florida. Conference registration is $999 per person.

Cindy Graff Cohen
Editor, The Jewish Voice
Shana Tovahhhhhhh.

*Wish someone a sweet and productive new year by ensuring our community thrives all year long.*

When you create an endowment with the Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso, you can ensure that a strong Jewish culture and identity exist in El Paso for generations to come. For more information, or to establish a fund, please contact Robert Shiloff at 584-3942.

The Jewish Future is in your hands...will you be there? L’Dor V’Dor.