Happy Thanksgiving!
Up Close: Scott and Bonny Stevens

Scott and Bonny Stevens are familiar faces in El Paso’s Jewish community, they are among our area’s most active volunteers and leaders. Whether they are behind the scenes preparing delicious food for Temple Mount Sinai’s dinners and Oreg Shabbat or organizing a Seder dinner at a retirement community, the couple is quietly and humbly doing what they love: serving others.

Family is paramount to the couple, and they were very proud at grandson, Jonathan’s bar mitzvah last month at Temple Mount Sinai, where their son Nathan is a vice president on the board. Scott’s father was in the Air Force and they moved a lot; he rarely got to see his extended family so he treasures his time with family now. Maintaining family traditions is especially important to Bonny, whose grandfather came to the United States from Germany in 1912.

Through mutual friends, the couple met at a roller skating rink when Scott was stationed at Fort Bliss in 1974. After their 1977 wedding, they began a life of everchanging Army posts. Joshua was born to the United States from Germany in 1912.

“My mother and father both grew up in a Seder dinner at a retirement community, the couple is quietly and humbly doing what they love: serving others. At the age of 69, the Stevens’s family is truly about the community, from their work. They value the importance of upcoming Jewish holidays and community events. They value the importance of upcoming Jewish holidays and community events. Always looking out for others. As we move to sit around our Thanksgiving tables, let’s remember… because we come from everywhere, we all Come From Away.”

How do you manage to juggle your time and give so much to your community?

Scott and Bonny: We work as a team! Our abilities and capabilities complement each other and we both enjoy seeing old friends and families coming together to enjoy the events we help organize. We always have great community volunteers helping to make these events possible.

What message do you have for Jews in our area who are not involved in the Jewish community?

Scott and Bonny: Get involved! Do what you can. There is a great sense of joy in being involved in the Jewish community. You get to meet so interesting and good people. We have made friends with people that we have nothing in common with other than a desire to serve this community.

The Basics

How is MWV involved in the Jewish community?

What is your favorite Jewish tradition?

Who’s your favorite Jewish hero?

What’s your favorite Thanksgiving memory?

What do you value most in your family? 

Bonny: Crocheting, cooking, baking.

Scott: Wood working, camping, shooting.

What was the most meaningful thing you learned about your family?

Scott: My mom has a set of china that my dad gave her on their anniversary. When I was big enough to help, only my mom and I would unpack, wash, and set it on the table. Then after the meal, only my mom and I would clear the table, wash the china and put it back on the china cabinet.

What is your favorite memory?

Bonny: Having our families come together to enjoy a home-cooked meal, enjoying their company and sharing stories – the youngest to the oldest get to cook and share their recipes.

You are two well-known for being incredible volunteers. How do you manage to juggle your time and give so much to your community?

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What is your favorite memory?
“My 15 Grandmothers”
author coming to Las Cruces

Genie Milgrom, acclaimed author and genealogist, will share her remarkable story of finding her Crypto Jewish roots at Temple Beth-El on Sunday, November 17, at 7:00 p.m. All are invited to meet and learn from one of the field’s leading scholars who has served as both the president of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Miami and as president of the society for Crypto Judaic Studies.

Despite being raised in a Cuban family and educated a Roman Catholic, Genie was drawn to Judaism as an adult, and she became intrigued with tracing her own family history. In an unparalleled work of genealogy, she was able to document her family back 22 generations with unbroken matrilineal descent, to her true Jewish roots in 1409 pre-Inquisition Spain.

Through her book “My 15 Grandmothers” and her lectures around the globe, she has helped countless people connect with their roots. Her research into her family transformed her life, and now she shares a step-by-step guide that has led many others back in time to find their Crypto Jewish Roots.

The event is free although donations are welcome. The talk will be held at the temple at 3980 Sonoma Springs Avenue in Las Cruces; refreshments will be served.

TMS Mitzvah Corps: Oh, the places they go!

Seventh- and eighth-grade students at Temple Mount Sinai’s Floyd S. Fierman Religious School take the idea of tikkun olam to a new level with Mitzvah Corps. They work within the broader community to create connections, to learn, and to apply the Jewish concepts of tzedakah in a concrete way.

Thanks to a grant from the El Paso Jewish Community Foundation, they connect Jewish values with service-learning Action Days, pushing students to enrich as they explore areas of their community that might be new to them.

Field trips to places such as a local mosque help students understand that service is universal.

At the Borderland Rainbow Center, students assisted in organizing the food pantry as well as sorting through fresh produce. They learned that the center provides food and other services to everyone, regardless of citizenship, income, gender, or sexual orientation.

When visiting the Child Crisis Center of El Paso, an emergency shelter for children, the group arrived with toys, arts and crafts items, and gifts. While the group was timid at first, a shared love of video games, painting, robot, and bracelet making brought everyone together. There was plenty of time for reflection, with many in the group still musing weeks later about the connections made at the center, wondering what it might be like to call a crisis center home.

Temple Beth-El Board member Martha Roditti addresses current and immediate past board members at this year’s board orientation session.

Temple Beth-El congregants Susan Quinn, Ned Rubin and Sue Mazer spoke to the Machon middle and high school class about their confirmations in the congregations where they grew up.

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This year, as we celebrate our Jewish heritage, please take time to think about future generations. Your endowment to the Jewish Community Foundation helps ensure a healthy and vibrant Jewish culture in El Paso for generations to come.

For information on how you can start your own fund with us, please contact Robert French at 915-842-9554.
Cuisine, Culture and Community: First Jewish Heritage Dinner

“A true community event,” people said. “Enjoying seeing friends from ‘the other’ congregations.” “A feeling of unity.” These were all sentiments shared by many of the approximately 200 attendees from four regional congregations at the Republic of Georgia Jewish Heritage Dinner at Congregation B’nai Zion on September 13.

Rabbi Scott Rosen-berg of Congrega- tion B’nai Zion and Rabbi Ben Zeidman of Temple Mount Sinai led the joint Shabbat service, along with Carlos Gámez, Temple Mount Sinai music director. All enjoyed the soulful and meaningful worship service. Even the service’s d’var Torah was given jointly, with the rabbi connecting the parsha to a joint trip they took to Washington, DC.

Then it was time to enter the B’nai Zion social hall where the beautiful décor – maps and artwork on the walls and beautifully set tables with centerpieces – set the stage for an elegant yet heimishe meal. Everyone had a favorite dish in our sumptuous gour-met kosher dinner prepared by chef Mario Ochoa-Gurany and team: the beef shashlik, the cherry-herb sauce, the spicy walnut sauce, the walnut honey brittle, and such.

A brief dinner talk by Larry Lesser overviewed the history, language and cuisine of the Georgian Jewish community. But the bottom line, as echoed in Lesser’s talk, is that including the entire community makes a community stronger, more vibrant and resilient. Like our Jewish Federation of Greater El Paso president Janet Wechter’s mantra, we are indeed “Better Together.”

Many thanks to our committee of Laurie Davis, Rob-in Krasne, Mario Ochoa-Gurany and Judy Weigert, plus a host of volunteers and support staff who went above and beyond to make this amazing evening. We are especially grateful to the Jewish Community Foundation of El Paso for underwriting this amazing series.

Let us know on the “Jewish Heritage Dinners” Facebook page what cuisine you suggest for a future event. And join us in early spring as we explore our Jewish heritage through sampling the cuisine of exotic Morocco!

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!
BETTER TOGETHER 915-842-9554 | www.jewishelpaso.org

The Jewish Voice

NOVEMBER 9th, 2019
VETERANS’ DAY Shabbat
HONORDate our Veteer and those currently serving in the military
Shabbat services at 9:30 am followed by a Kiddush lunch in honor of our service men and women.
Congregation B’nai Zion
805 Cherry Hill Lane, 79912

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS
Celebrate the importance of animals to our world.
Bring your pets to our Blessing of the Animals
Sunday, November 3, at 9:30 am
Casa Blanca Gardens
805 Cherry Hill Lane
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Building Community, One LEGO @ a Time...

World’s Largest LEGO Menorah

Build a 13’ LEGO Menorah and then Light it! Food, Fun, and More

Sunday, December 8 @ 2:00pm
Don Haskins Rec Center
7400 High Ridge Dr.
El Paso, TX 79912

Recommended for ages 5 – seniors 65+
All ages can come and watch.
Registration required in advance by
Monday, December 2
$5 per person or $18 per family.
Proceeds benefit the
El Paso Children’s Hospital
Space is limited so register today.

Texas Windmills

Texas has more windmills than any other state in the US. Students will build LEGO windmills and learn about wind energy in the State of Texas.

Monday December 9 @ 9am –
Lincoln Middle School 6th grade
@ Franklin High School
(No sign-up for this event)

City of Jerusalem Ciudad de Jerusalén

LEGOS! Latkes! Photo Booth!
¡Bloques de LEGO, latkes, y cabina de fotos!

Build the Old City of Jerusalem out of
LEGOS and take a tour of the City
Build the wall around the city, all the
Gates, the Kotel, Church of the Holy
Sepulchre, and dozens of other buildings

Tuesday, December 10 @ 7:00 pm
Interfaith program @ Vino Nuevo Church
988 Kessler Dr., El Paso, TX 79907

Buses will depart Federation Office
at 7110 N. Mesa at 5:45 pm

Recommended for grades 3 – seniors 65+
All ages can come and watch.
Registration required in advance by
Monday, December 2
$5 per person or $18 per family.
Proceeds benefit the
El Paso Children’s Hospital
Space is limited so register today.
El espacio es limitado, así que
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Generously sponsored by Felicia Rubin in memory of Irving Rubin z’l
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