

# *The Jewish* Post & Opinion • *National Edition*

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## ***Mi Shebeirach* – A Focus on Healing**

Photos by Alden Solovy  
(see About the Cover, p. 3)



# The passing of Elie Wiesel

**Eliezer "Elie" Wiesel, 87**, a survivor of Auschwitz and Buchenwald, was born Sept. 30, 1928 in Signet, Transylvania [now Romania] and died on July 2, 2016 at his home in Manhattan. He was the son of Sarah Feig and Shlomo Wiesel. He had three sisters Beatrice, Hilda and a younger one, Tzipora. Only the older two survived the war. He is survived by Marion Erster Rose Wiesel, his wife of 47 years, his son Shlomo Elisha Wiesel and a step-daughter Jennifer from his wife's first marriage.



*Below is part of Jennie Cohen's editorial from April 26, 2006 containing an excerpt of an interview with Wiesel done by Oprah Winfrey at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City on Sept. 8, 2000. Oprah had read his famous memoir, Night (1960) in 1993, and made it one of her book club selections in 2006. In it, Wiesel, the Nobel Peace Prize laureate, recounts his family's placement in the Auschwitz concentration camp. The book, one of 57 that he authored, has been translated into 30 languages.*

**Oprah:** There may be no better person than you to speak about living with gratitude. Despite all the tragedy you've witnessed, do you still have a place inside you for gratefulness?

**Elie Wiesel:** Absolutely. Right after the war, I went around telling people, "Thank you just for living, for being human." And to this day, the words that come most frequently from my lips are thank you. When a person doesn't have gratitude, something is missing in his or her humanity. A person can almost be defined by his or her attitude toward gratitude.

**O:** Does having seen the worst of humanity make you more grateful for ordinary occurrences?

**EW:** For me, every hour is grace. And I feel gratitude in my heart each time I can meet someone and look at his or her smile.

**O:** Did you ever hate your oppressors?

**EW:** I had anger but never hate. Before the war, I was too busy studying [the Bible and the Kabbalah] to hate. After the war, I thought, "What's the use? To hate would be to reduce myself."

In the last page of Winfrey's magazine "O," she does a column called, "What I Know for Sure." So she asked Wiesel what he knows for sure. His response:

"I have no doubt that evil can be fought."

"I have no doubt that indifference is no option."

"I have no doubt that fanaticism is dangerous."

## A leader who cared

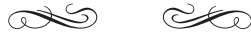
BY MICHAEL BLAIN

Elie Wiesel, child Holocaust Survivor, a giant amongst us, passed away July 2. I had the honor of meeting him several times, in this country, in Israel and in Poland.

He visited Indianapolis, Ind. many times, where we lived at the time. He had friends, Hart and Mark Hasten in Indianapolis, who built the Hasten Hebrew Academy and Wiesel visited the school many times, spending time with the students. He also put up a *mezuzah* on what was to have been the Holocaust Museum room. The Museum is now located in bigger premises in the school building. This Museum was dedicated by my family in memory of those killed in the Holocaust.



*Elie Wiesel (R) puts up a mezuzah on the Holocaust Museum room at Hasten Hebrew Academy of Indianapolis with Hart Hasten (one of the school's founders). (reprinted from Indiana Jewish Post & Opinion, Oct. 15, 1986.)*



"I have no doubt that the life of any person, *any person*, weighs more than all the books in the world on life."

"I have no doubt that we are here for a purpose."

"I have no doubt that the purpose is not only bringing God closer to his creation, but to bring his creatures close to one another."

"I have no doubt that the human being is human simply because he or she is human and we have no right to say that a poor person, because he or she is poor, is less valid to society than the person who is rich."

"I have no doubt that education is good for the soul, not only for the mind."

"I have no doubt that faith is only pure when it does not negate the faith of the other."

"I have no doubt that questions have their own magic, their own charm and their own immortality."

*May his memory forever be a blessing.*

**Photo Credit:** <http://www.chicagomag.com/Chicago-Magazine/C-Notes/November-2012/Elie-Wiesel-Gives-a-Few-More-Hints-on-His-Book-with-Barack-Obama/> ✨



*Michael Blain (L) with Elie Wiesel at the 40th anniversary of Auschwitz's liberation.*

We heard Wiesel speak in Indianapolis, in Bloomington, Ind., at Indiana University where he was a Hasten scholar, also in Jerusalem speaking to an Israel Bonds delegation. On the way to Poland, we were on at least one segment on the flight to Krakow. We chatted in Yiddish. He was the Paris correspondent for the Yiddish *Forverts* before he became the famous book writer in French. We discovered that we were both Yiddishists and we were both child Holocaust survivors born in 1928.

Wiesel was at Auschwitz with reporter Peter Jennings being interviewed for the 40th anniversary of Auschwitz's liberation. We joined the C.A.N.D.L.E.S. group of "Mengele twins" from the US and Israel to celebrate the 40th year of their liberation – the two groups kept running into each other.



*Elie Wiesel at Auschwitz with ABC News reporter Peter Jennings.*

Whenever we heard Wiesel speak it was always low key, never raising his voice, but his message was always loud and clear. Our nation lost a leader who cared, not only for his fellow Jews, but for human rights for all. He will be missed.

*Michael Blain of Beachwood, Ohio, is a child Holocaust survivor and a Korean War Veteran. He was Executive Director of Israel Bonds in Indianapolis for 33 years, returning to Cleveland after retiring. ✨ (See more about Wiesel on page 5.)*



# Editorial

I had been wondering what to write for this edition. The big news of late is the tragic shooting sprees in Orlando and Dallas. As horrible as those were, along with the killing of innocent black men by police and the truck attack in France, much more good is currently taking place in the world, but unfortunately that news does not yet make the headlines.

Also other times in history have been turbulent. Not that long ago in the 1960s we had widespread demonstrations against the Vietnam War, against racism and sexism, for example, and President John F. Kennedy, his brother Robert F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. were assassinated. Just before I started college the library at the university I was about to attend was set on fire by protesting students. But news then was not as immediately accessible to all parts of the world. Today with the use of computers, technical devices and the Internet, word travels fast.

Young people today may not realize the progress our society has made in being more accepting and understanding of the differences in others and treating people with more compassion. We still have a long way to go but we have made much improvement in a relatively short span – 70 years if one considers the end of World War II and the Holocaust, Civil Rights and the unfair treatment of African Americans, the Berlin wall coming down, the release of Soviet Jews from the former Soviet Union and the collapse of it, and the first female presumptive nominee for President of the United States.

After I thought about all this and then about the current conflicts, natural disasters, poverty and diseases prevalent in the world, I had wondered if anyone would agree with me that we have made progress. Then I received my brother's column for this issue (see page 5) and I felt reassured. We were both thinking the same thing. Even though we face many challenges, a lot of progress is taking place.

I did some research about the money that our readers raised in 1956 in order to buy a new ambulance for Magen David Adom (MDA), the Israeli equivalent of the Red Cross. My father first announced the goal of raising \$4,000 in our Oct. 19, 1956 edition. Every week, he would publish the names, location, and amount of those who donated. At the end of the article was the total amount raised and what was still needed. The donations came from all over the country and it wasn't just individuals, sometimes it was a Sunday school class or an entire synagogue. Even non-Jews contributed!

# About the Cover

**Flowers from Yom Haatzmaut hike 2016 – Har Bental and the Golan Trail in the Galilee, Israel**

Photos by Alden Solovy

A poet and liturgist, Solovy spreads joy and excitement for prayer. His work has been used by people of all faiths throughout the world, in private prayer and public ceremonies. He's written nearly 600 pieces of new liturgy, offering a fresh new Jewish voice, challenging the boundaries between poetry, meditation, personal growth and prayer. He's a teacher, a writing coach and an award-winning essayist and journalist. He also leads ManKind Project Israel.

Originally from Chicago, Alden has led writing workshops and has been scholar in residence in the United States, Europe and in Israel. He has authored two books *Jewish Prayers of Hope and Healing* and *Haggadah Companion: Meditations and Readings*. He'd love to come to your synagogue. For more information, check out his website: [www.tobendlight.com](http://www.tobendlight.com). Also join the To Bend Light Facebook page and follow To Bend Light on Twitter to get announcements about new prayers and stories posted. ✨



Alden Solovy

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In the Dec. 28, 1956 edition, the goal was reached but money kept coming so that by the end of this fundraising an additional \$1,000 was raised and used for another purpose by the organization. (See story on page 5 of the following link: <http://indiamond6.ulib.iupui.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/JPO/id/19781/rec/115>)

The June 14, 1957 edition has a thank you letter to the readers from MDA for getting them a new ambulance, equipped with every "modern medical facility".

Then I checked an online site "U.S. inflation calculator" and I found out that \$4,000 in 1956 is equivalent to \$35,328 today. In 1956 it took 70 days to raise this money. According to my brother, in 2016 it took only two days to raise more than ten times that amount or \$400,000.

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I then sent an email to American Friends of Magen David Adom (AFMDA) (see Editorial, page 5)



# Candidates' words, tone matter



BY RABBI SANDY E. SASSO

At the same time as we are celebrating 240 years since our nation's birth, we are about to elect the 45th president of the United States. Throughout our history we have known the pain and violence caused by racial, religious and gender stereotyping and discrimination.

Despite the difficulty in eradicating deeply held prejudices, there was a moment when the rules of civil discourse began to limit hate speech. We valued politeness, recognizing that certain beliefs were unacceptable in public discourse.

It was more than political correctness; it was an unwritten moral understanding. We knew that words reflected on our character and the character traits we strove for were generosity, courage, justice and compassion. We knew that words could hurt others, but we also knew they were a mirror that reflected on ourselves. And no one wanted to see the face of sexism, racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, xenophobia and homophobia looking back at them.

We taught our children to choose their words carefully. We told them that words could comfort, but they also could hurt. We stopped them when they shouted out in anger, "You're dumb; I hate you!" We banned name calling and "potty words" in our schools and our homes. We corrected our children when they made fun of or spoke negatively about those who were different than they. We did not tolerate bullying.

Today it appears that rudeness has overtaken politeness, incivility has overcome respect and vulgarity has triumphed over courtesy. We feel compelled to say whatever comes to mind, no matter how repulsive, how demeaning, or how intolerant. All filters have vanished. There is no longer a moral compass that tames our baser thoughts.

The fact that this rhetoric comes from political leaders is all the more distressing. Great public discourses were once models of elegance, reflecting exemplary grammar, good vocabulary and lofty ideals. We memorized those speeches in school. Think of Frederick Douglas, Abraham Lincoln, Susan B. Anthony, John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King. They inspired us to build community, made us willing to sacrifice and dream; to want to be better and nobler than we were.

Now political speeches are tearing us apart, pitting one group against another,

# Jewish America



BY HOWARD W. KARSH

## This world in which we live

I can still visualize the scenes of people in Asia trying to live their lives in foul toxic air. They were wearing nose protectors, and it made little difference what time it was in the morning, because this was one of those periods when you could not find the sun in the sky or breathe fresh air. I wondered how those people survived. It was not that many years ago, 2008, and the memory is still clear. I would have to review the papers of those dates to see what was happening in the rest of the world, but as I sit and write today, I cannot believe that it was a more confusing world than the one in which we are living.

There does not seem to be a single place that one can focus on where it does not seem to be unraveling. But I know there are some small places where you can begin to think there is a degree of sanity.



targeting the most vulnerable, blaming and humiliating others.

If words are mirrors that reflect upon ourselves, we should be ashamed. Recall those often repeated words spoken during this presidential campaign by a presumptive nominee — "moron," "loser," "imbecile," "crooked."

Remember in contrast these words: "Give me liberty or give me death." (Patrick Henry) "Give to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance (George Washington). "They that give up essential liberty to obtain temporary security deserve neither liberty nor security." (Benjamin Franklin) "Ask not what my country can do for me but what I can do for my country." (John F. Kennedy) "I have a dream." (Martin Luther King).

What has become of our grand tradition of oratory? What has happened to choosing our words carefully, to gracious, inspiring and thoughtful speech? Among other things, we need to measure our candidates by what they choose to say and decide what speech reflects the worst, and which, the best of who we are.

*Sasso is rabbi emeritus of Congregation Beth-El Zedeck and director of the Religion, Spirituality and the Arts Initiative at Butler University, both in Indianapolis, Ind. Reprinted with permission from the Indianapolis Star, June 22, 2016. ★*

We just came back from our annual family "Road Trip," and this year we stayed in Wisconsin and went to the Wyalusing State Park, three hours Northwest of Milwaukee on the Mississippi River just where that great river meets with the Wisconsin River.

There was no internet in the park. Some few could get periodic calls, but there was no data. Just that was one of the blessings of a family annual get-together, once we could put down our phones and talk to each other. We swam at a beach in the River, canoed on the River, and rediscovered what the night looked like when it was filled with stars. Without our phones we were temporarily cut off from the politics, United States and the world, and the nightly news with stories of death, destruction and cosmic events. I can tell you that I thought long and hard about staying on.

It was true that there was a Walmart Super Center within 20 minutes and a Dollar Tree Store for anything we had forgotten, but mostly it was an opportunity to sit back and appreciate the minute. Although I have the honor of sharing with readers, I have never believed that anything I wrote or thought about was earth changing, I want to be relevant, and to be relevant, you have to immerse yourself in the media.

The world hadn't changed when we got back, and I found myself spending a lot of time trying to make sense out of the senseless.

Jennie Cohen has offered to show you the cover of my first novel, 13 years in the making, and driven finally by the absolute need to make it happen. I am pleased to tell you that it is available on Amazon or Barnes and Noble in print, and by the time you read this everywhere Ebooks are sold. The first copies were distributed to my large family, 5 married children, 47 grandchildren, a fourth of them are married, and nearly 60 great-grandchildren, some of whom still can't read, and others who need to wait for a Hebrew edition.



Friends and family are generally kind, but I am pleased at their comments and what they took away. It is at its heart about the power of friendship, and the strength of enabling one another. There is no violence, sex or bad language, because there was no need to pander, and the story didn't provide spaces for it. The book is currently out for reviews, and I am hoping that in the future Jennie will have some

(see Karsh, page 5)

# A life dedicated to the cause of memory

BY ALVIN H. ROSENFELD



Famed author Elie Wiesel, who died on July 2, traveled the world, and Bloomington, Ind., was on his itinerary more than once.

Universally known and respected as a Holocaust survivor, prolific writer, human rights activist and Nobel Laureate, Wiesel spoke at Indiana University (IU) at the invitation of the Borns Jewish Studies Program, each time to large and admiring audiences.

His first book, *Night*, which narrates the cataclysmic nature of his experiences in Auschwitz and Buchenwald, has long been assigned reading in courses at IU and has introduced hundreds of our students to the horrors of the Nazi persecution and mass murder of the Jews.

Following its initial publication, *Night* has been translated into 30 languages and circulated in millions of copies. Some 40 additional books followed.

More than any other single writer of the postwar years, Wiesel educated people all over the world to the absolute need not only to remember but to continually confront the unparalleled atrocity and moral anguish of the Holocaust.

President Obama rightly praised Elie Wiesel as “one of the great moral voices of our time, and in many ways, the conscience of the world... He raised his voice... against hatred, bigotry and intolerance in all its forms.”

My friendship with him dated back more than 40 years. We met often over the decades – at his home in New York City, in Boston, where he taught, and in Jerusalem, the city he loved above all others.

Our relationship was both deeply personal and also professional, marked, in the first instance, by mutual caring and respect and, in the second, by a devotion through teaching and writing to the cause of memory. As he put it, “to forget the dead would be akin to killing them a second time.” His entire life was dedicated to making sure such a double dying would never occur. It was my privilege to join him in that task.

In 1976, I helped organize the first academic conference on his writings, and in 1978 I published, with Irving Greenberg, *Confronting the Holocaust: The Impact of Elie Wiesel* (IU Press), the earliest critical study of his work.

In “Why I Write,” a personal essay that

## Chassidic Rabbi

BY RABBI BENZION COHEN

### Good news!

Today I am happy to share with you some good news. I consider myself fortunate to live in K’far Chabad, a Lubavitcher community here in Israel. Thank G-d we have lots of good news here. Most of the young people here get married in their early 20s and raise big families. We have lots of weddings and new babies being born.

However outside of K’far Chabad is a different world. Five days a week I leave K’far Chabad to visit the sick in a nearby hospital. There I sometimes see the news on TV. A lot of this news is bad news. However, recently I saw there some good news, that brought tears to my eyes. I want to share this good news with you.

Two years ago an Israeli soldier was seriously injured fighting Arab terrorists in the Gaza Strip. After two years of hospitalization and rehabilitation he is now ready to return to his home, to his wife and children. This is already good news, *Baruch HaShem*. However, because of his injuries and special needs, he can’t go home until they fix his house and make it bigger. A lot of people are trying to help. (More good news!) A contractor came and told them that the additions to the house and the changes inside would cost \$160,000.

Well, this was way beyond their means. Some charitable institutions were contacted, and they agreed to help. They went online

(see Benzion, page 7)

he contributed to this book, Wiesel noted that he wrote “to wrench the victims from oblivion. To help the dead vanquish death.” His role was to bear witness to the systematic dehumanization and destruction of life that he saw in the Nazi camps, and he remained faithful to it for the rest of his life.

He also worried that his words, however compelling, might, in the end, be futile, and that his hopes for a postwar world without fanaticism, hatred and war would not be realized. He and the other witnesses would speak, but, he feared, no one would listen. Were their efforts all in vain?

Late in his life, Wiesel witnessed something he never expected to see: the return of antisemitism on a global scale.

In my last conversation with him, and later in published interviews, he lamented: “I thought that the memory of the Holocaust would shame those boasting antisemitic opinions. I was wrong... Antisemitism still exists. It led to

## EDITORIAL

(continued from page 3)

asking how much a new ambulance would cost today. Director of Communications Erik Levis wrote back that there are two kinds that people can sponsor. A Basic Life Support Ambulance (BLS) costs \$100,000, and a Mobile Intensive Care Unit (MICU) – a more advanced ambulance with more sophisticated equipment, like a hospital on wheels – costs \$125,000.

Mr. Levis added, “MDA is not funded by the Israeli government, so every dollar from America goes a very long way toward helping save lives in Israel.” For more information, check out their website at [www.afmda.org](http://www.afmda.org).

My brother is correct when he writes that good things are happening. If at times we forget about the progress we have made, it is helpful to look at our history to recognize how far we have come.

Jennie Cohen, July 15, 2016 ✨

## KARSH

(continued from page 4)

time to read it and share her thoughts. We have a long history together, and I trust her honesty, integrity and knowledge of what she is reading.

Until next time, I will be trying to understand how we can be in an election where too many people disapprove of both candidates, and too many people are settling for the best of the not-best. I know from living through other elections that the most dire predictions will not cause the country to fail, and that should keep us intent on voting, but not suffering through the process.

*Karsh lives and writes in Milwaukee, Wisc., and can be reached at [hkarsh@gmail.com](mailto:hkarsh@gmail.com).* ✨

Auschwitz. Without antisemitism there would have been no Auschwitz.”

Since learning of Wiesel’s death, a number of my former IU students have written to me, expressing condolences.

For some, reading *Night* had life-changing impact. A few have even asked what they might now do. I tell them there is no better way to honor the memory of Elie Wiesel than to strenuously oppose resurgent antisemitism and all forms of bigotry, hatred and intolerance.

He would have asked no more from us and expected no less.

*Rosenfeld is director of the Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism; Irving M. Glazer Chair in Jewish Studies; professor of Jewish Studies and English at Indiana University. Reprinted with permission from The Herald Times, July 6, 2016. ✨*



# Seen on the Israel Scene

BY SYBIL KAPLAN  
PHOTOS BY BARRY A. KAPLAN



## Help Sobar have a home of its own

Several years ago, American-born Tracey Shipley, a creative therapist and addiction counselor with more than 25 years working with youth and their families, initiated the Sobar project. Thousands of teens and young adults come to Jerusalem city center looking for stimulation and social interaction. They end up on the streets smoking, drinking, taking drugs and more.



Tracey Shipley.

Sobar will provide a smoke and alcohol free environment for teens and young adults 16–24 years of age in downtown Jerusalem with exciting cultural activities, with an emphasis on music. Daytime workshops will provide structured programming. Performances, by and for youth, will take place in the evenings. Staff will be professional teachers, musicians, artists and peer counselors.

Recently, we attended an evening at a restaurant/bar, Jerusalem Port, on Hillel Street. Members of the Sobar band performed – Ada Setton, soloist, 19, in a pre-army program for artists in Jerusalem; Erel Klein, 16, high school student who



The Sobar Band.

also sings with the band; Jason Elter, 18, high school student who plays bass guitar; Martin Vojnac, 17, attends the Academy for the Arts and plays guitar; and Yair Harari, 21, doing *Sherut leumi*, service to the country, and plays drums and percussion.



Soudack and Rodberg performing songs of the 70s.

Featured entertainers were Russell Rodberg and Ruthie Soudack in a program in which they specialize, “Back to the 70s.” They met four years ago at a music festival and have been partners in music and in life since shortly after that. Rodberg is a graphic artist and musician who lives in the middle of the country. Soudack is a musician who came to Israel from Vancouver in 1987.

A few nights later, a benefit for Sobar was held at a popular sports bar and restaurant in downtown Jerusalem, Mike’s Place. A country band and the Sobar band entertained. The entrance fee was donated to the Sobar project along with a raffle offering great prizes for donations. For more information about Sobar, check out [www.sobarjerusalem.net](http://www.sobarjerusalem.net).

Currently, Shipley is raising the \$100,000 required to fund the renovations and equipment to rent a place for the Sobar Center. For more about making a donation, contact Shipley at [sobar-jerusalem@gmail.com](mailto:sobar-jerusalem@gmail.com).

### Do You Know the Origin of Your Wedding Rings?

Six and a half years ago October 2009, we had been in Israel a little over a year and decided to take a trip for a few days up north. We accidentally found an artists’ village in the Golan Heights called Ani’am. The first house was a very fine jeweler, Golan Gold, and we wandered in to browse, but he was waiting on others, so we left. Soon he came running out after us.

As we chatted with the New York man, he suddenly asked to see our wedding rings. He looked at Barry’s then asked us to come inside his workshop so he could examine both more closely. He then told us the initials of his father’s company (D.F.S., David Friedman sons), where he had apprenticed, were on the inside of both. They had made our rings.

We had seen the rings in a catalogue

and a sample which their salesman had sold to Tivol’s on the Kansas City, Missouri Country Club Plaza and Tivol’s then ordered the rings for us from Friedman in New York. Since we are about to celebrate our 25th anniversary, we decided we would pay him a visit again.

### Chol Hamoed Passover 2016

David, the grandfather of Joel Friedman, owner of Golan Gold, was born in a village in Hungary in 1885. In 1903 at the age of 15, he went and studied to be a jeweler in Budapest, apprenticed, and received his diploma in 1907. In 1912, he immigrated to the US. David Friedman and another man from Hungary named Kemeny started a wholesale jewelry business at 105 Fulton Street making heavy gold and platinum chains which they sold to Tiffany’s and Cartier.



Joel Friedman, third generation jeweler, owns Golan Gold.

David met a young woman and started a family in Brooklyn – Jack, Henry and Lester. After Kemeny died, David expanded the business. During World War II, all three sons were in the services and returned from the war unhurt. Lester was a bombardier officer in the Army air corps and flew out of the Marshall Islands 25 missions over Japan.

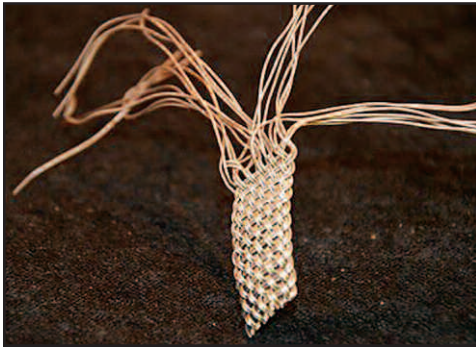
Lester and Henry went into the business with their father. Joel was born to Lester in 1951; he had an older brother, Matthew and a sister, Amy. David died in 1956.

“I, as a kid, would ride the subway from Queens to New York City to watch my father in his shop,” says Joel. In 1964, Joel had his *Bar Mitzvah* in Israel. “I fell in love with it.”

Meantime Joel grew up, traveled back and forth to Israel and learned to solder in his father’s shop. In the 1970s, Joel also came to Israel for a year as a volunteer. In the 1970s, his father started a new technique of braiding the gold for rings and when Joel returned, he learned the technique.

“I can make a ring out of 36 wires and you won’t be able to tell where it began and ended,” he relates. In 1981, at the age of 30, Joel made *aliyah* to Kibbutz Sha’ar Hagolan. In 1987, he married a woman of Iraqi descent whose family had come to Israel in the 1950s. He worked different

kinds of jobs but wasn't ready to become a jeweler.



*A braided gold wedding ring being crafted out of 36 wires.*

"Finally, my wife pushed me to do what I knew how to do best." With his brother, Matthew, a jewelry maker, who went on the road to sell, Joel adopted the wire and braided gold wire style. His father had used eight wires; he uses 36.

Between 1985 and the 1990s, while Joel and his family lived in Motse Ilit, Jerusalem, they started looking for a place to buy, and he sold the braided wedding rings to retail stores. Joel and his family finally ended up in Ani'am in the Golan "because it was the cheapest place to buy!" When the artists' village was created in 2006–2007, Joel opened up the retail store, Golan Gold.

His sons, ages 30, 26, and 23 will not be following in the tradition of the family, comments Friedman although one son is putting together a web site and he hopes to begin selling the rings on line.

Today, Joel is also making a Middle Eastern line of the braided wedding rings –making the wires light, thin and more intricate. Following Jewish law on marriage rings, in Israel, Joel braids the wire then lays it over a single band of gold.

The rings can be made in any size, silver or gold and can even be inlaid with stones and they still bear the DFS (David Friedman sons) on the inside. For more information, see the [www.golangold.com](http://www.golangold.com) website or call 04 699-9345.

### **An Artist Extraordinaire**

Last August, Anne Schneider, a promoter of Israeli artists, contacted us and asked me and my photographer-husband to see the first professional art exhibit of a young man she was promoting. Netanel Morhan, then 25 years old, had been given membership in the Jerusalem artists' Association, the youngest member ever accepted by them in their 50-year history. He was also to be part of a new members' exhibition.

When we went to see his works, all I could say was incredible! amazing! fantastic!

The five to eight feet wide by almost seven feet high paintings are part of a

series entitled "Beyond the Body," where Netanel awakens, remembers his dreams and examines them and captures on canvas inexplicable experiences that resemble "flying" or going beyond time and beyond the physical body.

On March 31, Netanel's works were showcased in a solo exhibition at Beit Hasid Artspace, a new venue for contemporary Jewish art, in a lovely old Templar house. (The Templars, who came to Palestine from Germany in the 19th century, were an ancient group of Christian Zionists and the first residents of Emek Refaim Street.)

The Beit Hasid Artspace is associated with the Jerusalem Biennale, founded and directed by Rami Ozeri, as a stage for professional artists who create and refer in their work to Jewish thought, spirit, tradition or experience.

Those attending this opening included Netanel's parents (his father is an American from Boston, his mother is Israeli), friends and passersby on Emek Refaim Street. Netanel was born in the US; his family returned to Israel when he was nine. He attended a high school for the arts and began doing paintings then of people floating over their bodies. After three years in the army and another year, he began his paintings, "Beyond the Body."



*Artist extraordinaire, Netanel Morhan, with Sybil.*

Having seen four of his series in August, I could not help but be awestruck by the creativity as he employs symbolism and metaphor as tangible acts of communication between the Creator and His creation. One cannot stand before any of these huge paintings without saying, "Wow!"

"The Call" shows a man on his stomach flying out of a rich house into a more mysterious world. "Height and Illusion" depicts, in front, a man sleeping on a couch; behind is an aquarium with another man's head and shoulder inside the aquarium and his feet in the air. "Awakening" presents a man on a mattress inside a glass elevator with New York skyscrapers behind.

"The Higher and the Lower Court" illustrates a long boardroom table and chairs with clouds reflected on the table and the Hudson River behind. "Breath" visualizes a floating in air man blowing a

### **BENZION**

*(continued from page 5)*

with a campaign to help this soldier and his family. In two days, they received donations totaling \$400,000!

Amazing! I know a little about campaigns to raise money for worthy causes. I have been reading *The Jewish Post & Opinion* for about 60 years. My father, Gabriel Cohen, of blessed memory, was the editor and publisher. He was almost always working on one of his many charity campaigns. For example in 1956 he started a campaign to raise \$4,000 to buy an ambulance for Magen David Adom. Every week he would write an article informing his readers of the donations received and how much more they needed to give to reach the goal. They would reach the goal, but this sometimes took months.

Sixty years ago, it took more than two months for *The Jewish Post* to raise \$4,000. Two weeks ago they raised online \$400,000 in just two days. What is happening to our world? Thank G-d, a lot of good things!

Our *rebbe* and spiritual leader, the *Lubavitcher Rebbe* told us that we are now in the beginning of a new era, the Messianic era. What does the *Torah* say will happen when *Moshiach* (the Messiah) will finally come? All of the Jewish people will return to our homeland, the land of Israel. Jerusalem and the Holy Temple will be rebuilt. *Moshiach* will lead us to bring the knowledge of G-d to all of the world, and bring an end to all war, to all evil and sickness. In their place will be good deeds and *Torah* learning.

Look around and see! In the last 60 years the Jewish population of Israel has grown 1,000 percent! Sixty years ago 600,000 Jews lived in Israel, and today there are more than six million. Jerusalem has also grown tremendously.

We believe that our *Rebbe* himself is our long awaited *Moshiach*, our redeemer. The *Rebbe* and his followers have helped many millions all over the world to know *HaShem* (G-d). Today's world has much less war, much less crime, and much more good deeds and *Torah* learning.

Each and every one of us can speed up the process of our redemption, by learning more *Torah* and doing more *Mitzvahs*. We want *Moshiach* now!

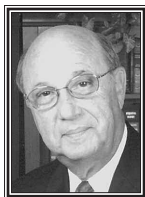
*Rabbi Cohen lives in K'far Chabad, Israel. He can be reached at [bzcohen@orange.net.il](mailto:bzcohen@orange.net.il). ✨*



balloon with a woman on a stone wall. "The Search" shows one man sleeping on a bed while another floats above him. "Night Attack" conveys a woman in bed  
(see Kaplan/Israel, page 11)



# Wiener's Wisdom



BY RABBI IRWIN WIENER, D.D.

## Who is left to speak?

In the early years of World War II, a German Protestant pastor, Martin Niemöller wrote some classic words that ring true today as they did then.

His essay, "First they came for...." caused a stir in Nazi Germany and eventually resulted in his incarceration in a concentration camp. To summarize these immortal words:

"First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out – because I was not a Socialist.

...Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out – because I was not a Jew.

...Then they came for me – and there was no one left to speak for me."

Today, we are witnessing Genocide of a magnitude not seen since then. And, in fact, this wholesale slaughter of the innocents includes Christians. As a Jew and a Rabbi, I am appalled that there seems to be no one left to speak out. Where are my fellow co-religionists? Where are the Christian pastors and ministers? Is the Christmas holiday the only time we emphasize "Peace on Earth, good will toward men?"

Silence indicates acceptance, and even more than that, complicity. Week after week, in many Houses of Worship, we hear, and learn, about the plight of refugees and the need for mercy. Where are the pleas for the victims of Genocide and the indiscriminate murder of men, women and children for no other reason than their beliefs?

This is not a time for guilt, or hand wringing. What this time represents is an opportunity to speak with one voice indicating our outrage for despicable inhumane conduct perpetrated by people distorting the view of religion and the understanding of our responsibility for one another.

Judaism, Christianity, and Islam remind us that we all stand before God in judgment to give account of ourselves. This is the essence of faith and understanding. We were created to be connected one to the other because together we survive. We may have different opinions as to how to reach the salvation promised to us, but in actuality, redemption comes with sincerity.

God exists in each of us. When God began to create there is no mention of God being created. God is, was, and always will be. If this is the premise upon

# Shabbat Shalom



BY RABBI JON ADLAND

*Pirke Avot 5:7: Ten times our ancestors in the wilderness tested the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is written (Numbers 14:22) "Who ... tested me these ten times and have not obeyed my voice."*

July 8, 2016, *Korach*  
Numbers 16:1–18:32, 2 *Tammuz* 5776

Tonight at services, for those who come, I want to spend a few minutes reflecting on Elie Wiesel. So many of us, including me, were touched by his words and writings. He stood up and spoke out against the world's atrocities urging all of us to find a better way to end our strife and conflicts. He had lived in the depths of hell in his lifetime only to rise from it and tell the world what it looked and felt like. He couldn't speak for the too many dead, but he could speak as a survivor and ask why and how did the *Shoah* even happen. Come tonight and share a thought or a memory about the life and legacy of someone whom we must not forget.

I wanted to use my weekly writing to talk more about Elie Wiesel, but the first words on NPR this morning at 6 a.m., were that 11 police officers and one civilian had been shot in downtown Dallas and five of the officers are dead. All of this happened at the end of a protest march against the most recent, but seemingly continuous and endless killing of black males by those who we look up to as officers of the law and protectors of our rights and freedoms. It seems I was writing this same column last summer or was it the summer before? It is hard to keep all of this straight.

I watched the video by Philando Castile's girlfriend as she live streamed through Facebook in real time what was happening right after Philando was shot. We see him in the seat next to hers with blood on his shirt. I wanted to turn the video off. I didn't want to watch it anymore,



which faith is built then how is it possible to have such regard without including concern for all of humanity? After all, were we not created in the image of God? Not some of us. All of us.

Who is left to speak? We are the inheritors of a world gone mad just a short time ago. It seems that history will be repeating itself as we bear witness to the annihilation of societies without regard for human

(see Wiener, page 9)

but I felt I needed to be a witness, if only by video, to what had happened. I read in the *NY Times* that his mother had told him, "Comply, comply, comply." He tried and it made no difference. Then I sought out the video I had heard about of the shooting of Alton Sterling in Baton Rouge. Nothing in it seemed to make any sense about why he was shot. But I've been asking this same question for the last few years and people in the African-American community have been asking it forever.

A few nights ago, Rabbi Spitzer and I went to see *The Free State of Jones*. Near the end of the movie, after the Civil War, hooded men start killing Black men in the South. No reasons for the murders were given and no authority was necessary to drag a Black man out of his home and lynch him. The South after the Civil War was a dangerous place for Blacks, but it seems that not much has changed in some places in this country. St. Louis, Baltimore, New York, Charleston, Baton Rouge, St. Paul are just part of a growing list. I don't want to become numb to this. I want to feel anger and sadness and I do, but I also feel powerless to know how to stop it.

Elie Wiesel said, "The opposite of love isn't hate, it is indifference." I don't want this to be how I see or react to things – indifferently. We, Jews, have been there. For a thousand years or more in Europe there was always the fear of a riot, a forced conversion, or of death. We are in a better place in this country, but we should never forget our past. We must use whatever means we have to find a way to make all lives matter, but we must start with BlackLivesMatter.

The murder of these five police officers must wake us up to the boiling liquid just beneath the surface. There is no justification for last night's ambush and murder. We must find a way to stop the killings of people who are just reaching for their driver's license. I don't want African-Americans to fear police, nor do I want police to be afraid of the citizens they are sworn to protect. I am pro-police and pro-black and pro-the rest of us. There is a better way and it is that path we must find and walk. Elie Wiesel would ask us, "How did this happen?" It is our responsibility to find an answer.

When you light your *Shabbat* candles this week, light one for the police officers who were murdered, their families and all who take an oath to uphold the law. Light the other candle for the victims such as Alton and Philando. May this be the last time I need to write these words.

Rabbi Adland has been a Reform rabbi for more than 30 years with pulpits in Lexington, Ky., Indianapolis, Ind., and currently at Temple Israel in Canton, Ohio. He may be reached at [j.adland@gmail.com](mailto:j.adland@gmail.com). ★



# ★ A FOCUS ON HEALING ★

## Book Excerpt

BY RACHEL NAOMI REMEN, M.D.

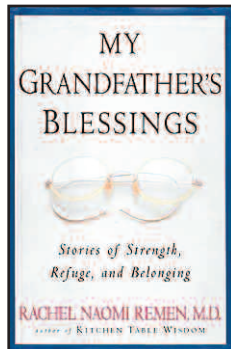


## The way through

*In My Grandfather's Blessings, Rachel Naomi Remen, M.D., a cancer physician and master storyteller, uses her luminous stories to remind us of the power of our kindness and the joy of being alive.*

*Dr. Remen's grandfather, an orthodox rabbi and scholar of the Kabbalah, saw life as a web of connection and knew that everyone belonged to him, and that he belonged to everyone. He taught her that blessing one another is what fills our emptiness, heals our loneliness, and connects us more deeply to life.*

*Life has given us many more blessings than we have allowed ourselves to receive. My Grandfather's Blessings is about how we can recognize and receive our blessings and bless the life in others. Serving others heals us. Through our service we will discover our own wholeness – and the way to restore hidden wholeness in the world.*



*An excerpt from My Grandfather's Blessings:*

Sometimes the very things that threaten our life may strengthen the life in us. Loss and crisis often activate the will to live. When this happens, we may grow larger than the obstacles that face us and free ourselves from problems that never go away by living beyond them. One of my patients, a young man with juvenile diabetes, was shown this way to freedom in the form of a dream.

David was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes two weeks after his seventeenth birthday. He responded to it with the rage of a trapped animal. Like an animal in a cage he flung himself against the limitations of his disease, refusing to hold to a diet, forgetting to take his insulin, using his diabetes to hurt himself over and over. Fearing for his life, his parents insisted he come into therapy. He was reluctant, but he obeyed them.

He had been in therapy for almost six months without making much progress when he had a dream, so intense that he

had not realized he had been asleep until he awoke. Something deep and unsuspected in him had pointed its finger and shown him the wisdom in his situation.

In his dream, he found himself sitting in an empty room without a ceiling, facing a small stone statue of the Buddha. David was not a spiritual young man, and he might not have recognized this statue except that the image is a part of our culture in California. Although he had seen many pictures of the Buddha, this statue was different. He was surprised to feel a kinship toward it, perhaps because this Buddha was a young man, not much older than himself.

He had experienced this unfamiliar sense of peace for a while when, without warning, a dagger was thrown from somewhere behind him. It buried itself deep in the Buddha's heart. David was profoundly shocked. He felt betrayed, overwhelmed with feelings of despair and anguish. From the depth of these feelings had emerged a single question: "Why is life like this?"

And then the statue had begun to grow, so slowly that at first he was not sure it was really happening. But so it was, and suddenly he knew beyond doubt that this was the Buddha's response to the knife.

The statue continued to grow, its face as peaceful as before. The knife did not change either. Gradually, it became a tiny black speck on the breast of the enormous smiling Buddha. Watching this, David felt something release him and found he could breathe deeply for the first time in a long time. He awoke with tears in his eyes.

Often when someone tells a dream, they find a deeper understanding of its meaning. As David told me his dream, he recognized the feelings he had when he first saw the dagger. The despair and anguish, and even the question "Why is life like this?" were the same feelings and questions that had come up for him in his doctor's office when he heard for the first time that he had diabetes. As he put it, "when this disease plunged into the heart of my life." But his response had been very different from the Buddha's.

David had seen this dream much as the opening of a door. When his doctors had told him that his disease was incurable, his response had been rage and despair. He had felt that the life in him had been stopped and there was no way to move forward. But in the most exquisite way possible, life had shown him something different. His dream offered him the hope of wholeness and suggested that, over time, he might grow in such a way that the wound of his illness might become a

## We always have a choice in how we respond

BY RABBI BRETT KRICHIVER



One day an old farmer was working in the field with his old sick horse. The farmer felt compassion for the horse and wanted to lift its burden. So he let the horse loose to go to the mountains to live out the rest of its life. His neighbors said, "How terrible. Now your only horse is gone. How unfortunate you are! You must be very sad." The farmer replied, "I don't know if it is good or bad, I only know that my horse needed to go."

Two days later the horse returned, followed by twelve new younger and

(see Krichiver, page Healing 3)

smaller and smaller part of the sum total of his life. That he might yet have a good life, even though it would not be an easy life. Nothing his doctors had told him had suggested this possibility.

Often people with chronic illness may become trapped and invalidated, not by the force of their disease but by the power of their beliefs about it. Disease is at various times brutal, lonely, constricting and terrifying. But the life in us may be stronger than all that and free us even from that which we must endure. Sometime someone dreams a dream for us all. I think of this as one of those dreams.

*Dr. Remen is Clinical Professor of Family and Community Medicine at UCSF School of Medicine and Founder and Director of the Institute for the Study of Health and Illness at Commonweal. She is one of the best-known of the early pioneers of Wholistic and Integrative Medicine. As a medical educator, therapist and teacher, she has enabled many thousands of physicians to practice medicine from the heart and thousands of patients to remember their power to heal. Her groundbreaking curriculum for medical students, The Healer's Art, is taught in 90 of America's medical schools and medical schools in 7 countries abroad. A master storyteller and observer of life, her bestselling books, Kitchen Table Wisdom and My Grandfather's Blessings, have sold more than a million copies and are translated into 23 languages. Dr. Remen has had Crohn's disease for more than 60 years and her work is a unique blend of the wisdom, strength and viewpoints of both doctor and patient. Website: [www.rachelremen.com](http://www.rachelremen.com). ★*



BY AMY HIRSHBERG LEDERMAN

## Finding strength after loss

I never really wanted to learn how to change the water filter underneath the kitchen sink or backwash the swimming pool. And I definitely wasn't interested in fixing the leaks in our drip irrigation system. But after my husband, Ray, died, I found that many of the jobs that had been allocated to him in our very amicable division of labor, now fell upon me.

During the first months after he died, I walked numbly through our storage room, dazed by grief and stunned by the cache of tools that he had accumulated over the course of our marriage without my knowing. Was this the result of his surreptitious trips to Home Depot or evidence of a home shopping network addiction? Sadly, I will never know.

Things fell apart the day I attempted to hang a picture half my size – by myself. I scanned the shelves in search of the leveler that I had seen Ray use for just such an occasion. As I reached up to grab it off the top shelf, it dislodged a box and watched as it fell after it rained down. From Tupperware containers filled with children's books I had saved for my own kids to camping gear covered in years of dust, they landed at my feet. I crumpled to the floor, surrounded by a lifetime of memories, and cried.

Months passed. The picture was hung, the water filter, replaced. Likewise, over the past year, my numbness has been replaced by multiple, often inconsistent feelings. Sometimes anger or frustration, other times joy and curiosity. And yes, there is loneliness, but that too is accompanied by a sense of freedom. I don't judge, I observe. Each feeling serves as a teacher and guide.

My greatest "fix-it" accomplishment came recently when I needed to disassemble our aging Jacuzzi in order to reconnect the water lines. Normally my relationship to the Jacuzzi is a simple one involving a bathing suit and a glass of wine. But this time I had to remove a panel which was within a few inches from the side of the house. I considered calling a handyman or the pool guy but there was a part of me that was determined to do it myself. I gave live birth, for heaven's sake. I could do this.

I didn't call the handy man but did the

## Memories of my father



BY RABBI HERBERT HOROWITZ

Our sages tell us: "*Ma'asei avot siman le'banim*" – The actions of the fathers act as an influence on their descendants. How true this is! Three times each day we recite in prayer, "*Elohei Avraham, Elohei Yitzchak, v'Elohei Yaakov*" – the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. This deep and abiding connection, and the transmission of a singular devotion to one God, resonates across the generations.

One of the most difficult of life's challenges is coping with the death of one's beloved family member and the subsequent mourning process. Do we ever stop mourning a loved one? Can we really heal from the loss?

This year marks the 50th *yahrzeit* (anniversary) of my father's *petira* (leaving this physical world). Looking back over a half century of *yahrzeits*, I will attempt to answer the questions I posed. The life of a person constitutes a veritable kaleidoscope of challenges: achievements and disappointments, moments of joy and moments of sadness, euphoria and frustrations, comedy and tragedy, witnessing



next best thing. I called a dear friend who patiently walked me through the process, literally one screw at a time. Yes, it took a half day and multiple trips to the storage room for tools to accomplish what another person might have been able to do in an hour. But I did it.

As I reconnected the side panel and filled the Jacuzzi with water, I felt a satisfaction that bordered on delight. But the real joy came later that night as I sat in the Jacuzzi, warmed by the water and a sense of empowerment. I had done it.

I glanced up at the stars, so perfectly placed in the clear night sky, and thought: "I can do this. I can do this."

It was then that I realized that I was no longer talking about the Jacuzzi or the water filter or any of the other tasks that seemed so daunting to me. I was talking about my life. My life without my husband. My life on my own.

*Amy Hirshberg Lederman is an author, Jewish educator, public speaker and attorney who lives in Tucson. Her columns in the AJP have won awards from the American Jewish Press Association, the Arizona Newspapers Association and the Arizona Press Club for excellence in commentary. Visit her website at amyhirshberglederman.com. Originally published in our Jan. 27, 2010 Healing section. ★*

life and death. As one of my colleagues once aptly sermonized, "It isn't the span of years that defines a person, it is the dash between ones birth and death that is of greatest consequence."

Nathan Horowitz (*Reb Natan ben Tzvi Elimelech, z"l*) was born in Raisha, Poland. His mother died in childbirth, and in 1921 when he was 13 his father sent him to live and learn at Yeshiva University High School on the lower east side of Manhattan. He excelled as a student in Talmud and Judaic studies.



N. Horowitz

His professor of *Talmudic* studies was the beloved scholar *Rav Moshe Aaron Poleyeff, z"l*, who singled my father out in his memoirs as his outstanding student. As an aside, I was fortunate to have the privilege of learning with Rabbi Poleyeff more than 40 years later at Yeshiva University.

Among my father's outstanding qualities was his steadfast morality, and his ethical beliefs and practices. The *Shulchan Aruch* (Code of Jewish Law) speaks to us about Jewish ritual requirements as well as ethical and business practices. This portion of the Code is known as *Choshen Mishpat* (the Breastplates of the Law). My father struggled, as so many did, to earn a living during the Great Depression. During World War II, he started a small manufacturing business which required material needed for the war effort. Rather than purchase goods on the black market, he closed his business for three years and barely made ends meet during that time. My father put into practice that balance between ritual and ethics that defines a truly believing and devoted Jew.

At the age of 47, my father suffered a severe heart attack. Recovered, but never regaining his former strength, he continued to maintain a life of spirituality and purpose. Subsequent health setbacks led to his untimely passing at the age of 58.

As the years passed, mourning for my father progressed through stages from being distraught as a 22 year old newlywed to the joy of perpetuating his name with the birth of my eldest son four years later. However, when my father's *yahrzeit* arrives, the deep sorrow of that first year after his death returns. The healing balm of consolation washes over me as I reflect upon my father's positive influence on my life, even to this day. His values are inculcated into my very being, his love for *Torah* and Judaism in the face of adversity warms my heart, and his moral and ethical values are a compass that continue to guide my life.

When I think of my father at the time of *yahrzeit* I am reminded of the words of the psalmist that can serve as a guidepost for

(see Horowitz, page Healing 4)



# Top Five Regrets of the Dying

BY BRONNIE WARE

**It's not too late to avoid these common regrets in life.**

For many years I worked in palliative care. My patients were those who had gone home to die. Some incredibly special times were shared. I was with them for the last three to twelve weeks of their lives.

People grow a lot when they are faced with their own mortality. I learned never to underestimate someone's capacity for growth. Some changes were phenomenal. Each experienced a variety of emotions, as expected: denial, fear, anger, remorse, more denial and eventually acceptance. Every single patient found their peace before they departed though, every one of them.

When questioned about any regrets they had or anything they would do differently, common themes surfaced again and again. Here are the most common five:

**1) I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.**

**2) I wish I didn't work so hard.** This came from every male patient that I nursed. They missed their children's youth and their partner's companionship. Women also spoke of this regret. But as most were from an older generation, many of the female patients had not been breadwinners. All of the men I nursed deeply regretted spending so much of their lives on the treadmill of a work existence.

By simplifying your lifestyle and making conscious choices along the way, it is possible to not need the income that you think you do. And by creating more space in your life, you become happier and more open to new opportunities, ones more suited to your new lifestyle.

**3) I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings.** Many people suppressed their feelings in order to keep peace with others. Many developed illnesses relating to the bitterness and resentment they carried as a result. As a result, they settled for a mediocre existence and never became who they were truly capable of becoming.

We cannot control the reactions of others. However, although people may initially react when you change the way

**KRICHIVER**

(continued from page Healing 1)

healthier horses which followed the old horse into the corral. The neighbors cried, "How fortunate you are! You must be very happy." Again the farmer replied, "I don't know if it is good or bad, I only know that I now have many horses."



you are by speaking honestly, in the end it raises the relationship to a whole new and healthier level. Either that or it releases the unhealthy relationship from your life. Either way, you win.

**4) I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.** Often they would not truly realize the full benefits of old friends until their dying weeks and it was not always possible to track them down. Many had become so caught up in their own lives that they had let golden friendships slip by over the years. There were many deep regrets about not giving friendships the time and effort that they deserved. Everyone misses their friends when they are dying.

It is common for anyone in a busy lifestyle to let friendships slip. But when you are faced with your approaching death, the physical details of life fall away. People do want to get their financial affairs in order if possible. But it is not money or status that holds the true importance for them. They want to get things in order more for the benefit of those they love. Usually though, they are too ill and weary to ever manage this task. It is all comes down to love and relationships in the end. That is all that remains in the final weeks, love and relationships.

**5) I wish that I had let myself be happier. This is a surprisingly common one.** Many did not realize until the end that happiness is a choice. They had stayed stuck in old patterns and habits. The so-called 'comfort' of familiarity overflowed into their emotions, as well as their physical lives. Fear of change had them pretending to others, and to their selves, that they were content. When deep within, they longed to laugh properly and have silliness in their life again.

When you are on your deathbed, what others think of you is a long way from your mind. How wonderful to be able to let go and smile again, long before you are dying.

Life is a choice. It is your life. Choose consciously, choose wisely, choose honestly. Choose happiness.

*As well as performing her own songs, Bronnie runs an online personal growth and songwriting course, writes a well-loved blog called Inspiration and Chai, including articles that have been translated into several languages, and is the author of the* (see Ware, page Healing 4)

The next day, the farmer's only son attempted to train the wild horses, when he was thrown to the ground and broke his leg. The neighbors shook their heads, "What a tragedy! You'll have to do all your work yourself. You must be very sad." The farmer said, "I don't know if it is good or bad, but my son has a broken leg now."

Several days later the Emperor's men arrived in the village to conscript all the young men into the army. The farmer's son was deemed unfit because of his broken leg. "How fortunate!" cried the neighbors, as their own sons were marched away, "You must be very happy."

The story does not end there, of course. Our tradition teaches us that both the blessing and curse are experienced together in life, and much depends on our perspective. Of course many of us struggle with terrible tragedies in life, but the message of this story is that we always have a choice in the way we respond.

I shared this story a few months ago at the funeral for my great uncle, Joe Koek. He was a loving, caring, funny and fun-loving partner to my Aunt Sheila for many years, and in many ways felt like a grandparent to me. He also was a survivor of the *Shoah*, the Holocaust. As a child, he was hidden from the Nazis in his native Holland, in much the same way that Anne Frank had been hidden. Joe's adopted family brought him to their farm, and one day while playing on a dolly he broke his leg and was sent to the hospital outside the village. The very next day the Nazis discovered the many Jews being sheltered in the village; every one of them was rounded up and shot. His broken leg had literally saved his life.

I never knew this story until after my uncle had died. He chose to focus, everyday, on his many blessings and the good he could do in the world. He influenced countless others, and had been selected to represent Holocaust survivors by sharing his story before the United Nations General Assembly, a blessing he was unfortunately unable to experience. A broken leg might seem like a minor point in the story of one's life, but in truth we never know what lies ahead for us.

Visiting a congregant recently in the hospital, he called to mind the rabbinic phrase, "*Gam zu la tov* – this also is for the good." Having suffered a number of setbacks in his health, he still greeted me with a smile on his face and an outstretched hand. He said to me, "it could have been a lot worse, and who knows, maybe this too will lead to something good." May we learn to greet each day, the good and the bad, experiencing it as that kind of blessing.

*Rabbi Krichiver is senior rabbi of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation. ✪*



# Kabbalah of the Month



By MELINDA RIBNER

## Tammuz: Expect the unexpected

(July 6 – Aug. 4)

“From a secular perspective, many think of the summer as a carefree time, a time to travel, relax and have fun. According to *Kabbalah*, Tammuz is a hot and challenging month. The heat one experiences is not just physical but also emotional and spiritual. We need to be mindful of the emotional intensity of this month and it is important to be particularly sensitive to ourselves and others. Tammuz is still ultimately a good and wonderful month but only if we know how to use its intense energy constructively. When we do this, we grow through challenges in ways that may not be possible at any other period of the year.

“The astrological sign for Tammuz is Cancer. The Hebrew word for cancer is *sartan*, which means ‘Satan’, a name that reveals the difficulty of the tests of this month. The ruling body of Cancer is the moon. The moon is always changing, making Tammuz an emotional time with many ups and downs. One has to learn to ride the emotional rollercoaster of Tammuz.” From *Kabbalah Month by Month*.

How do we grow through our challenges and tests? How do we see God amidst all the turmoil? These are questions we must be mindful of during this month. According to this month, the fixing of this month is “seeing”. In the recent *Torah* portion *Shelach* we read about the spies. Upon seeing the inhabitants of the land of Israel, the spies, with the exception of two, report that “we were like grasshoppers in our eyes and so we were in the eyes of their eyes.” (Numbers 13:33). The ten spies only saw their fear projected. They did not see things as they really were. Most importantly, they forgot that the land had been promised to them by God. Ultimately, their fears were fulfilled. They never entered the land of Israel.

What we see reflects our thinking. During this month of Tammuz, we may be asked to see through appearances, and if it is necessary, internal and external structures will begin to break down to allow true seeing to occur. During this month of reversals, we may find that what we held as true is now seen as false. It is confusing, not always easy or comfortable. This month we need to breathe, meditate and

be open to see life more clearly and calmly.

Many times people can become upset about something that is not true. When we are upset or frustrated, we need to question our assumptions. Take a moment to review recent responses to events in your life. If you are upset about something or someone, might you be making assumptions that are not true?

What helps us to grow through challenge and difficulty? Faith and gratitude can help us to transform what seems bitter into something sweet.

If we believe in God, talk to and connect to God, if we meditate, we can find that place of peace and unconditional love within us even in the midst of chaos and strife. It is at those times that it becomes clear to us that we can grow through challenges and become happier and better people. Nevertheless, there may still be times when our vision is obstructed and we cannot see our way forward. At those times we have to simply let go of our resistance to life as life is showing up for us and get down on our knees (metaphorically, usually) to call out for divine assistance and faith.

Also sometimes try it literally. Get down on your knees and open yourself to God. It is one thing to stand before God, and another to be on your knees before God. I know that Jews do not usually do that. We Jews used to kneel before the Christians adopted this practice and then we stopped doing it so as to distinguish ourselves from them. If you have never gotten on your knees before God, either literally or metaphorically, you may not yet have opened yourself to receive divine love and compassion.

From either a kneeling, sitting or standing position, raise your arms up to the sky. Know that your hands and fingers are spiritual antennas. Focus on your breath, deepen your breath, and open your heart and body to receive God’s love. Imagine that your hands reach into heaven. And the top of your head opens to receive blessings from above. Hold your hands upwards as long as you can. Then very slowly, allow your arms to float downward, pausing several times as you return your hands to your sides.

I recently had an awesome experience of God’s healing that hopefully will inspire someone reading this. I was attending Sheng Zhen training program, a meditative form of movement like Chi Gung. Soon after my arrival to the program, I was afflicted by environmental sensitivities to the new renovation in the training room. I was even contemplating leaving the program for health reasons. My body ached. So exhausted, I was going to sleep at 7 p.m., unable to participate in the evening activities.

## HOROWITZ

(continued from page Healing 2)

all of us as we mourn and heal: “*Zamru l’Adonay chasidov, v’hodu l’zecher kadshoh.*” – Sing to the Lord you who are godly, and give thanks to His holy name. “*Ba’erev yalin bechi, v’laboker reenah.*” – Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.

Herbert Horowitz is Rabbi Emeritus of Shore Parkway Jewish Center, Brooklyn, NY. He is a popular lecturer and scholar-in-residence. He can be reached at [rabhh18@gmail.com](mailto:rabhh18@gmail.com). ✨



## WARE

(continued from page Healing 3)

full-length memoir, *The Top Five Regrets of the Dying*, recently released worldwide. Reprinted from Aish Hatorah Resources. *Aish is the place for everything you want to know about Judaism.* ✨



On the second or third day, I attended the morning meditation. The group was guided in a one hour, mostly silent meditation. During the meditation, I traveled high in my consciousness and experienced the following: GOD IS GREATER THAN ANY DISEASE, GOD IS GREATER THAN ANY AFFLICTION. I knew this to be the truth. It was not just an affirmation but a direct experience. And so it was, during this meditation, I was healed. My energy was restored and I was able to participate fully in the program, even in the evening activities. Anyone who is ill would benefit from this prayer/meditation.

During this month of Tammuz, let’s remember that meditation, prayer and doing good deeds is healing and transformational no matter what is taking place around us. In the *Ashrei* prayer, we say, “God is close to the brokenhearted and to those who are crushed in spirit, God saves.” God is always present, even when life seems challenging. It is we who need to call out and open ourselves to receive and give. Blessings for a transformational Tammuz.

Melinda Ribner L.C.S.W. is also the author of *Everyday Kabbalah*, *Kabbalah Month by Month* and *New Age Judaism*, and *The Secret Legacy of Biblical Women: Revealing the Divine Feminine*. Internationally known for her pioneering work in kabbalistic meditation and healing, she is also a spiritual psychotherapist and for more than 30 years has used kabbalistic wisdom as part of treatment. She offers a free newsletter on meditation, healing, kabbalistic energies of the months, holidays, and more. [www.kabbalahoftheheart.com](http://www.kabbalahoftheheart.com). ✨



# Yiddish for Everyday



BY HENYA CHAIET, z"l

## What my clever mother used to say

Yiddish speaking friends listen “up”, and let’s speak a little. Not a literary Yiddish, but a common every day one:

1) **Geh nisht mit shlechteh chaverim.** (Don’t associate with bad friends.)

2) **Ess ah bisseleh nor zaul daus zein epes goot.** (Eat a small amount, but be sure it is something special.)

3) **Zizeye nisht farnotisht.** (Don’t be a fanatic!)

4) **Vaus der mensch lehrent zich aus gait nisht farloren.** (Whatever a person learns never gets lost.)

5) **Ah mol iz besser ahz nieh shvaikt.** (Sometimes the best answer is none at all.)

6) **Ahz meh lehpt der lehpt mehn.** (If you live long enough everything will happen.)

7) **Der mensch dahf zach tzoo grayten tzoom shtarben, nor meh darf nisht varten. Ahz der malach ahmauvess haut dein kvitel vet err deer gehfinen.** (We should prepare ourselves for the inevitable death, but don’t sit around waiting for it to happen. When the angel of death has your ticket, he will find you wherever you are.)

8) **Ah zay vee meh lept ahzay shtarpt mehn.** (The way you live your life is the way you die.)

9) **Ahz meh kaucht shane, macht mehn ah bissel mere effshare veht imehtzer kumen.** (When you’re already cooking, cook a bit more – never can tell when someone might drop in.)



Henya Chaiet (l) with her mother, c. early 1960s.

10) **Ah mol iz besser ahz meh hert nisht ah zay goot.** [On her deafness] (Some things are better not heard.)

11) **Mitt ayn tauchess ken men nischt tansen auf tzoeh chasehness.** (Since you only have one behind, you can’t dance at

### Anna Helen (Chaiet) Feinn, 92,

passed away on May 13, 2016. She was born April 7, 1924 in Chicago where she grew up with her parents, four sisters and one brother. She lived in La Porte and Michigan City, Ind., from 1952 to 1978 and resided in Walnut Creek, Calif., from 1978 until the time of her passing.

She was very committed and loving to family, both her own and those related through marriage. She made no distinction. She was engaged in many volunteer organizations and as a nurse, gave generously of her time and caring to ease the suffering of others. She had numerous friends of different religions and races, and was able to enjoy close and meaningful relationships over many years with both people who were significantly younger as well as her contemporaries. She penned a Yiddish column for this newspaper under her Yiddish name, Henya Chaiet, from Oct. 2012 to Nov. 2014. (Reprint of her first two at the left.)

Mrs. Feinn is survived by one sister Fay Chaiet of Chicago, two children Naomi Feinn of Oakland, Calif., and Davia Feinn of Montreal, two grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and nieces and nephews. Her husband Dr. Harry Feinn predeceased her in 1978, as did her son Dr. Daniel Mark Feinn in 2000. A funeral service was held in Chicago on May 18.

two weddings at the same time.)

12) **Ahz meh vil dem mauzeit orentlich halten dahf menem in tzoeh tzoohsch palten.** (If you want to be fair, sometimes you have to divide the portions.)

13) **Ahz meh grate nischt aun erev Shabbas, haut men nischt auf Shabbas.** (If you don’t prepare ahead as in the case of Shabbas, on Shabbas it’s too late.)

14) **Far altz coomt ah-tzeit.** (Everything in its own time.)

15) **Farnem zich dee hent vet zein shtil dee kaup.** (Busy your hands and your head will be quiet.)

16) **Altz in aynem iz nischt tau by kaynem.** (In life, no one has it all.)

On the passing of our youngest sister who had been ill for many years, my mother comforted us with these words:

17) **Gaut vase vauserrr toot.** (G-d knows what’s best.)

18) **Gelt feart dos velt.** (Money rules the world.)

On marriage, mother had this advice for her five daughters when considering a husband:

19) **Cook nischt far shanekeit auder reichkeit, cook far menschlichkeit.** (Don’t look for beauty or riches, look for

## WIENER

(continued from page 8)

kindness, dignity, and mercy.

Who is left to speak? All of us collectively must raise our voices in utter disgust. We watch, we listen, and then time passes and we move on. Our Christian brothers and sisters are being sacrificed on the altar of indifference. Men, women, and children are murdered in their homes and on the streets where we all walk. Misguided people strap explosives on their frail bodies and deliver themselves to the misguided notion of salvation. This is not just about religious belief; it is also about the survival of humanity.

My heart cries for our Christian martyrs. All of us should scream from the rooftops – “This should not be happening!” And, while we are at it, perhaps we should also cry out about self-destruction. We are now witnessing acrimony by those attempting to persuade everyone to follow their concept of leadership. Religion has now become a litmus test for qualification. Ignorance of the Constitution is now accepted without question.

“Congress shall make no laws.....? How much more definitive does one have to be to understand its meaning? If laws cannot be designed to include religious belief, then how is it possible to use it to determine leadership capabilities?

Who is left to speak should involve our disgust for hatred, recriminations, and bigotry. After all, it takes all these elements of inexcusable behavior to create an atmosphere of mistrust, and xenophobia, and walls of alienation. Who is left to speak? Will it be you, or you, or you?

Rabbi Wiener is spiritual leader of the Sun Lakes Jewish Congregation near Phoenix, Ariz. He welcomes comments at [ravyitz@cox.net](mailto:ravyitz@cox.net). He is the author of two books: *Living With Faith*, and *The Passover Haggadah*. ✨



good character.)

In the spring when the trees and flowers started to blossom she would comment:

20) **Altz coomt tzuh rick fun erd nor der mensch nischt.** (Everything returns from the earth except man.)

Henya Chaiet was the Yiddish name for Mrs. A. Helen Feinn (see her obituary on page IN 8.) Born in 1924 ten days before Passover, her parents had come to America one year prior. They spoke only Yiddish at home so that is all she spoke until age five when she started kindergarten. She then learned English, but always loved Yiddish and spoke it whenever possible. A booklet was made with all of her columns including family photos. Please contact us if you would like to receive a copy of it. ✨

# Jewish Humor



BY AVI STEINFELD

## Goldberg for President

I am running along the path the Department of Parks and Recreation has been kind enough to shovel out for me. My doctor says I need to exercise. He says a lot of things. Like some other people I know. I am panting. Where's that ice cream truck that's always parked on this corner?

As I make a left turn, I notice a group of volunteers in bright red shirts handing out flyers to the people in the park. Their smiles seem so genuine. It seems like another candidate is campaigning to become president. I am always in the mood for a good laugh so I venture towards the pack. I decline the shiny button they offer me, but I take the water bottle, Hershey's bar (I have some calories to make up), and hand solution.

Being President has a lot of perks. I then begin to dream. What would happen if I were elected President? Well, the first thing I would do is to tell my mother, of course. She would need to find my birth certificate.

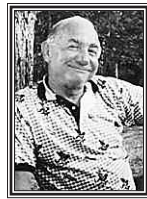
I can just hear her now.... "My son, the President. After he spilled that Postum coffee all over Ethel's wool sweater, I didn't think anything would become of him. What a mistake! He gets his brains from my side of the family, you know."

As President, I would remove the silent letter "b" from the word "Debt." We need to eliminate something. I would have a long talk with the Chef. Matza ball soup is a priority. I would talk to the Treasury Department about portraying my likeness as the face of the Three Dollar Bill.

The American people would put their trust in a President who would proclaim during inauguration, "I do solemnly affirm." No helicopters would be allowed to land on the front lawn while I'd be around. What good would such a large lawn do for me, anyways? I am not interested in paying higher property taxes. Convert it into condos, perhaps?

On second thought, it would be best to bring in a greens keeper from Scottsdale to convert the grounds to a championship 18-hole golf course. And exactly why is Camp David nestled in the woods of Maryland? I would move it to Miami Beach where it belongs. Every cabinet meeting would conclude with a game of Mah-Jongg. My wife would have a hay day redecorating the place. Think of

# Spoonful of Humor

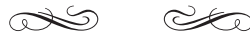


BY TED ROBERTS

## Bandit, scholar, son

Isaac, the *Tzadik* of Riegle, had just finished his supper of Kasha. Time to study. His favorite time of night. Total quiet of the woods, a full stomach, which allowed him to concentrate on *Torah*. And best of all, no insistent raps at the door, no visitors. And believe it, he had plenty out here in the woods – 4 versts [a Russian measure of distance equivalent to 3500 feet] from town. They had questions, disputes, divorces, convoluted legal complexities of *halachic* law, which demanded the wisdom of Solomon.

What did the law say if one partner stole money and the other partner, in revenge, seduced his wife? Who owed whom? What and when? And if the dishonest partner paid the debt – over time – what about the interest? (It's forbidden among Jews, you know. I mentioned this to my



magenta room, cyan room, terra cotta room (you see where this is going). Hey, if the table is set, I'm there.

What would I do with all of those rooms, you ask? I guess I could fill them with bookcases stuffed with my favorite comic books and Hogan's Heroes DVDs. I'm thinking of renting some place on Pennsylvania Avenue for my in-laws to stay. I would ensure a negotiation to stabilize the price of oil. I need those potato *latkes*.

"So Mr. President," the intrusive media reporter asks. "How do you plan on securing the borders?" "Borders *shmorders!*" I respond. "Let them all come in. Just make them attend synagogue once a year. We need to receive membership dues some way or another."

I would hire my friend, Morty, to be my advisor. He knows everything. He was the kid whose work everyone used to copy off of in school. I remember another friend, Steve, who was not the brightest bulb in the shop, getting caught after he copied his paper from Morty. When he denied the allegations, the teacher pointed to the top of his paper and asked, "So did you change your name as well?"

Yes, life really would be good if I were President. But getting there? Maybe I should focus more on running...

*Avi Steinfeld, a Chicago native, currently living in Brooklyn, N.Y., is a freelance humor writer with a master's degree in school psychology and can be contacted at avrahamsteinfeld@gmail.com. ★*

banker, Abe Cohen – "I'm a Presbyterian," he said – a second sin.)

Or what if the seduced wife fell in love with the victimized partner and demanded a divorce from her larcenous mate? Did it ever end? How could the world outside his cabin be so evilly complicated? Of women and money and fame they couldn't get enough. Why couldn't they be like sheep in the meadows that nibbled grass to stay alive and only came when the shepherd called?

But the *Tzadik* meditation over Baba 4 was interrupted – frightened is a better word – by a banging at the door. What could it be? Another question about Lev Rostous chickens who made breakfast, lunch, and supper on Shmuel Larons front yard garden. "Three drumsticks for a package of marigold seeds, rabbi? Isn't that fair? Or maybe a skillet of stewed chicken."

Before the *Tzadik* could formulate at least a tentative position, open burst the door and into the room came Chayim Brodsky – a man feared by all. Violence was his only talent and he exercised it often. The Rebbe wondered if it would be wiser to run out the back door or make a play for the poker. After all, in a district full of thieves, burglars, con men, and bandits Brodsky was most feared.

Hold it," shouted the renegade. "Relax, Rebbe. I mean no harm. Please sit with me and listen carefully."

They sat at the wooden table that served as supper table, reading table, and sometimes a rude pillow for the rebbe's head when sleep overcame him at his studies. The bandit chief talked first and he talked at length. He talked 'til the moon could be seen at the window as though she, too, wanted to listen. He talked of his child, a son, and a father's universal dream that the son should excel the father. "His destiny must not be corrupted by me." In short, Chayim Brodsky proposed a bargain. He would donate a large amount of money, many thousands of rubles, to charity if the rebbe would undertake the raising of the child, now two, in the study of *Torah*. A double *mitzvah*, expounded the highwayman. First think of the good you could do with the money. Secondly and closer to his heart, the child would be rescued from the corruption of the father.

How could such a pious one as the *Tzadik* of Riegle say no. The bargain was consummated. The child never knew. And the boy who was genetically blessed with genes of cunning, courage, leadership, and understanding – the same genes that make one a successful highwayman – flourished intellectually within the community. Meanwhile, he thought himself to be the *Tzadik's* son. His real father never showed his face.

He proved to be a perseverant, dedicated (see Roberts, page 11)



**KAPLAN/ISRAEL***(continued from page 7)*

by a lantern on a table with a floating woman holding a mirror above her. "For Children Only" reveals a woman in a pond with her head through the slats of a bed.

"Armageddon" shows a man on a bed with factory pieces around him. "Dreamers Thin Skyline" shows a man on a bed with miniature buildings around him and another man floating above. "A Creation from the Past" portrays a girl on a picture frame on a bed in the sky. "Exodus" shows a pool on a balcony, suspended off the side of a mountain, with a row of penguins of varying sizes walking on a ledge below. "Trust" shows a man on a bed in the air. For more information, contact Ms. Schneider, 054 681-0412.

*Sybil Kaplan is a foreign correspondent for North American Jewish newspapers, a book reviewer, compiler and editor of nine kosher cookbooks, restaurant feature writer for the Israeli website janglo.net, feature writer for the website itraveljerusalem.net and leader of the weekly walks in Jerusalem's produce market, Machaneh Yehudah. She lives in Jerusalem. ✨*

**ROBERTS***(continued from page 10)*

student. The same genes that made his father a leader of men, a skillful strategist, and an evasive target made his son a brilliant student. The age-old mystery, the only mystery: God's toleration of evil awed him every morning as he sat at the pine table with the rebbe. After all, talent has no heart, but its use poses ethical choices.

As the father pillaged and robbed, the son sought the revelations of *Torah* – the mystery of *Talmudic* truth hidden within its coils; and why justice was hostage to fate and fortune. Respect for him grew within the community. He was appointed head of the district Sanhedrin that administered justice to the Jewish community – a role much like his real father's, dispensing life or death – only now a highly formalized process that mingled G-d's *Torah* and man's mercy.

His reputation for fairness, his love of justice, his knowledge of *Talmudic* law was well known and he was a beacon of hope to those who came before the court. "Hatikvah" the hope they called him.

Of course, the inevitable day came. Before the court stood an aging highwayman – Chayim Brodsky, himself. At the high table sat he who was called *Hatikvah*. Before him stood a scarred and wrinkled bandit, now far too old for his profession, but still cruel, evil, cunning, and larcenous enough to make a living off violation of the two key commandments regarding theft and

# My Kosher Kitchen



REVIEWED BY SYBIL KAPLAN

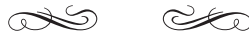
## Delicious cuisines of North Africa and Mediterranean Jews

*The New Mediterranean Jewish Table.* By Joyce Goldstein. University of California Press. \$39.95 hardcover. 472 pp. March 2016.

Joyce Goldstein was chef and owner of "Square One" restaurant in San Francisco; prior to that she was chef at "Chez Panisse Café." Today she is a cooking teacher, restaurant consultant and cookbook author. Her bibliography lists 60 cookbooks.



The introductory essays are very inform-



murder. He knew his judge well. But the judge saw only an over-the-hill criminal – far too old and dull-witted to get away with his earlier transgressions. Somehow, it was clear that he yearned for punishment, a form of redemption – the only penitence he could offer.

The case was clear. Many witnesses testified to his guilt. It was only a matter of sentencing. A simple decision made by the judge. He had been raised well.

But the old man said not a word. Something choked in his throat – the evil of his heart, said the onlookers – as he admitted his guilt and was sentenced to a lifetime of imprisonment by his son.

The man that stood before his judge was not recognizable as kin, but his curly, gray hair resembled that of the judge and his eyes, like the judge's, were bright beacons searching for something lost in a stormy world. The boy – now a man – on the bench was his only accomplishment. And from him came deliverance. With a rueful smile he accepted his punishment. He had given something back to the world.

*The humor of Ted, The Scribbler on the Roof, appears in newspapers around the US, on National Public Radio, and numerous web sites. Check out his Web site: www.wonderwordworks.com. Blogsite: www.scribblerontheroof.typepad.com. His collected works The Scribbler on The Roof can be bought at Amazon.com or lulu.com/content/127641. ✨*

ative – Jews in America, Mediterranean Jewish Communities, and Old World Food in a New World Kitchen. She reminds us that "not all Jewish cooking traditions come from Eastern Europe...[and the delicious and varied cuisines of North Africa and Mediterranean Jews] have been nearly unknown until recently." She also explains that *Sephardic* Jews were those who fled Spain and Portugal, but this does not include Jews who lived in Italy, the *Maghrebi* Jews in North Africa or the *Mizrachi* or Oriental Jews in the Muslim lands.

"This Mediterranean Jewish cookbook for the modern kitchen will build and expand on carefully selected recipes from many of my cookbooks." The recipes are from the cultures of the *Sepharads* (those expelled from the Iberian Peninsula), the *Maghrebi* (those from Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya and Egypt) and *Mizrachi* (Jews from Muslim lands since Biblical times).

After the explanation about *kosher* laws and the food of Jewish holidays, there are 11 cookbook chapters – appetizers, spread and salads (49 recipes), savory pastries (21), eggs and fritters (24), soups (29), rice, pasta and grains (31), vegetables (48), fish (46), poultry (23), meat (49), condiments and preserves (24) and desserts (51) – a whopping 395 recipes in all.

Each chapter has an explanatory essay. Each recipe has some explanation and its original name, in addition to list of ingredients and instructions. The publisher calls this "an authoritative guide...a treasury filled with vibrant, seasonal recipes...the story of how Jewish cooks successfully brought the local ingredients, techniques, and traditions of their new homelands into their kitchens."

Just reading the information after each recipe about its origins is a wonderful learning experience without even making the recipes which should be great fun for cooking enthusiasts, foodies, cookbook collectors and others who enjoy new tastes.

**Italian Purim Artichoke Soup****Crema Di Carciofi Ester***(Serves 6 to 8)*

juice of 1 lemon  
12 artichokes  
3 Tbsp. unsalted butter  
2 cloves minced garlic  
12 ounces russet potatoes, peeled and diced or 1/2 cup white rice  
3 cups vegetable broth plus more for thinning as needed  
salt and freshly ground black pepper  
chopped toasted hazel nuts  
or pine nuts or chopped fresh flat leaf parsley or mint for garnish  
milk or heavy cream as needed for thinning (optional)

**(see Kaplan/recipes, page 13)**

# Media Watch



BY RABBI ELLIOT B. GERTEL

## Broad City

Comedy Central's *Broad City* is trying to set some kind of record for scatological jokes by women, both in quantity and in outrageousness. The plays on words and body parts or body functions are predictable, unceasing, and relentless.

The show's principals, Abbi Jacobson and Ilana Glazer, are determined to apply such humor to Jewish life. In an episode called "The Matrix" (Feb. 18, 2015) they experimented with a "dog wedding" in which the "Jewish" pooch wears a *kippah*, but the question was whether the hooking up of the two gay dog owners (one of whom is the brother of one of the principal duo) would, after the wedding, qualify as "incest." Somehow, the episode's main issue – whether one can live safely without social media – literally fell by the way-side to this other question.

This season's two-part closer, about airplane preparations for a "Birthmark" (obvious play on "Birthright") tour of Israel, held nothing back, or in. The duo could not even use the term "cock pit" without sex jokes. So it is no surprise that they made an aspect of ritual circumcision a metaphor for sexual coupling. Brush up on Jewish rites and exploit them for dirty jokes?

A standing gag on this episode is the search for a tampon, which leads to terrorism jokes both with efforts to improvise that item, and with the desperate young woman's cry: "Any moment there's going to be an explosion and there will be blood everywhere."

There are gags about – and against – "Jewish continuity" slogans and policies. The two friends want to be seated next to each other, but are seated "according to match potential." Yes, I know that the common wisdom today is that talk of "Jewish continuity" and anti-Semitism is off-putting to Millennials, and that many will regard these jokes as a legitimate critique. Yet fighting anti-Semitism is extolled when one of our duo gloats about "keying" a Star of David upon the car of someone who called her a dirty Jew.

The Jewish men here seem rather stereotyped and ethically challenged, especially the group leader. The only Jewish male who gets some sympathy in the writing is a gay fellow who announces that he is looking for a nice Jewish girl so he can trick his parents into turning over

his trust fund. The Jewish women who "testify" during the introductions come across as unsympathetically as most of the men.

For some reason, the writers need to get into theology, such as the popular misconception that "Jews don't have heaven" (even if traditional Judaism has heaven – and hell) and need to describe Jesus as "like a Jew, but he's not Jewish."

Some media critics and commentators on American Jewish life have rhapsodized about how we should be proud that such "hip" humorists engage with Jewish words and concepts. At least one of these observers adds that it is now time that Jacobson and Glazer do so with more depth. One writer says of the two "Birthmark" episodes: "It was, quite possibly, the Jewiest hour ever aired on popular American television, with wordplay and quips that would delight all Hebrew school graduates and, quite possibly, no one else." But since the 1950s, there have been many hours or half-hours of television that were at least as "Jewy," and that offered far more than bathroom jokes. These artistic shows, like Buddy's adult bar mitzvah on "The Dick Van Dyke Show," or "The Craftsman" episode of "Little House on the Prairie," or the Yom Kippur episode of "Thirtysomething," achieved fine comedy and drama by explaining Jewish beliefs and practices of Judaism and affirming human dignity while pointing to human foibles.

I, for one, am not confident that *Broad City* can even attempt "depth." I wanted to like a 2016 episode, "Philadelphia," but couldn't.

Abbi returns home to clean out her room which her divorced father (played with warmth by Tony Danza) plans to turn into an infrared sauna. The visit begins with a Holocaust joke, with Abbi calling the room her "Holocaust museum" and then explaining to Ilana: "O, I meant museum. My family only went to Holocaust museums..."

Abbi discovers an envelope with \$900 she had raised for a school acquaintance, another young Jewish woman, who had been hit by a bus on a Saturday. ("Oh, Shabbat," empathizes Ilana.) Abbi feels guilty that she never gave her friend the money because it all happened in Abbi's senior year when she "got into mushrooms." But her best friend and occasional rebbe, Ilana, informs her, "If you give it back tonight, you can atone for this."

Yes, some funny things happen on the way to atonement, I'll grant. But most of the things are admittedly gross (as the accident survivor herself comments), especially a standing Jon Benet Ramsey doll joke. Though our duo just loves being greeted with "You, the Jews" and referring

to "Yiddish Mandarin," the punch-lines of the episode are far-removed from the theme of ("Jewish") atonement. Those punch-lines culminate in the unsympathetic depiction of – a Jewish male character, who had for a while been presented with some sympathy; and in the suggestion that the accident was the best way for a young Jewish woman to bypass physical "limitations" (of young Jewish womanhood?).

Yet commentators, young and old, just love the "Jewish language" of *Broad City*.

In a 2016 episode, "Rat Pack," a large food basket delivered in error inspires Ilana to reflect nostalgically about food baskets past in her Long Island home town: "They had shiva for days, literally" (suggesting that the duration of shiva may be contingent on the quantity of food baskets – playing with the seven days, or criticizing Long Island practices, or just playing in general?). Such "clever" use of "Jewish language" does not go far.

In another episode, while trying, at a bar, to impress a good-looking guy whom she perceives as a do-gooder, Abbi shares that on a high school trip to Costa Rica she saw rain forest trees being cut and "felt something." The young man asks, "Was it a Christian missionary trip?" She replies: "No, I'm not Christian. But I did plant 25 trees in front of my grandparents' house for my *mitzvot* for my *bat mitzvah* and since then I've tried to do stuff periodically." Later, Abbi confesses to Ilana, "I only planted three trees." (I expected her to add that she was never in Costa Rica.) But all is good and fair, deceptions notwithstanding, for the "moral" here is that neither Abbi nor the young man (in this case, not a Jewish man) were so honest, anyway. So *mitzvah* or *mitzvot* language is linked to deceptive pick-up lines – and then what?

Is such Hebrew word play or word recognition worth the fill of vulgarity that accompanies it, along with the easy, puerile laughs? My hope is that future generations will regard this show as more gross (a word used more than once by the writers to describe their own scenarios) than hip, so testifying to a revival of taste and dignity in American – and in American Jewish – life, and to a return to class and wit in television humor.

Rabbi Gertel has been spiritual leader of congregations in New Haven and Chicago. He is the author of two books, *What Jews Know About Salvation and Over the Top Judaism: Precedents and Trends in the Depiction of Jewish Beliefs and Observances in Film and Television*. He has been media critic for The National Jewish Post & Opinion since 1979. ✪





# Book Review

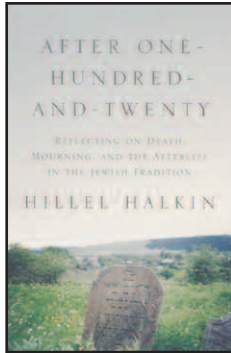


REVIEWED BY  
PROFESSOR ARNOLD AGES

## Source book for factual information

*After One Hundred and Twenty: Reflecting on Death, Mourning and the Afterlife in the Jewish Tradition.* By Hillel Halkin. Princeton University Press. 2016. 220 Pages.

When I first saw the title of this book by the prestigious author, writer and translator, Hillel Halkin I thought it was another valuable contribution to that growing genre of manuals directed at mourners eager to learn about the religious mechanics of observing Jewish rites according to traditional practices.



I was wrong, as Samuel Clemens says in one of his novels, mostly. The author is undoubtedly well informed about the facts of Jewish mourning practices and fills this volume with details regarding death, burial, *shiva* and *Kaddish* from the earliest days of Judaism to the customs practiced in modern day Israel.

Moreover, he personalizes his narrative by adducing his own experience in losing his parents, exploring the purchase of a burial plot for himself and his wife and referring to the pebble laying exercise on monuments as a recollection of the topography of *Eretz Yisrael*.

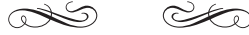
However, if one is looking for a volume that will console mourners during their *Kaddish* and yearlong recitations thereof; this is not the document for them. I personally would opt for Leon Wieseltier's *Kaddish* – which contains the richness of an historical survey with deep meditations on the way one should try to reconcile oneself to that which is beyond understanding.

The problem is that Halkin, an author I have long admired for his translations of Hebrew literature, his reconstruction of the life of Shmuel HaNagid and his biography of Jabotinsky, is, despite the distinguished lineage he inherited from his traditional parents, a determined secularist inspired by an existentialist suspicion of religious interpretations of death, the afterlife and memory.

## KAPLAN/RECIPES

(continued from page 11)

Have ready a large bowl of water to which you have added the lemon juice. Working with one artichoke at a time, trim the stem to 2 inches if it is tender, then peel away the dark green fibrous outer layer. If the stem is tough, trim it off flush with the bottom. Pull off and discard all of the leaves. Pare away the dark green areas



This stance, openly ventilated throughout this volume, does not affect the accuracy of the descriptions he provides of the various historical and contemporary Jewish understandings of the conundrums which surround the deceased. Halkin is a scholar who knows the classical Jewish sources as well as cognate literary discussions from the Mediterranean basin and Asia and shows how influences such as Zoroastrianism (from Persia) helped shaped Jewish views on the sancta of death and mourning.

In his survey he does provide fascinating vignettes of rabbinic ideas and practices based on Biblical texts and actual practices in *Eretz Yisrael* where people were entombed sarcophagi in caves (as in Beth She'arim). He also cites a text from the rabbis which deals with the thorny issue of a marriage interrupted by the death of a parent and the problem of celebrating a *simcha* under such circumstances.

One of the most illuminating comments made by Halkin clarifies a famous section of Ezekiel's "dry bones" resurrection scenario, which he claims originated in an ancient Jewish belief that in the Messianic era all the bones of the deceased will come to life, emerge from the grave and tumble willy nilly to *Eretz Yisrael*!

The author also has some very sage statements about the role of the "angel of death", the various views on the question of heaven and hell (and a kind of purgatory) with a lot of intimidating details about the levels of punishment and suffering imposed on the sinful. Halkin suggests that this view of the afterlife was generated in part by the Jewish experience in Italy where Dante's *Inferno* with its differing levels of suffering had some influence on Jewish perspectives.

All the information which Halkin disseminates in this modern tractate on death and mourning is admirable as a source book for factual information on collateral themes but it is vitiated by the author's cynicism and secularity as he reveals his own refusal to say *Kaddish* for his father and his primordial doubt about the whole human enterprise. This is not to challenge his right to do so but as Rav

(see Ages, page 14)

from the base. Cut the artichoke in half lengthwise and carefully remove the choke from each half with a small pointed spoon or a paring knife, then cut each half lengthwise into 1/4-inch slices and slip them into the lemon water. Melt the butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Drain the artichokes; add to the pan and sauté for a few minutes. Add the garlic, potatoes and about 1-1/2 cups of the broth or enough just to cover the artichokes. Cover the pan and simmer over medium heat until the artichokes are very tender and almost falling apart, 25 to 30 minutes. Remove from the heat and cool slightly. In batches, transfer to a food processor and puree until smooth, then return the puree to the saucepan. Add the remaining 1-1/2 cups broth and reheat, adding more broth if needed to achieve a consistency you like. You can also add a little cream or milk if you prefer a richer soup. Season with salt and pepper. To intensify the artichoke flavor, make the soup a few hours or a day ahead and reheat at serving time. Ladle into soup bowls and garnish with hazelnuts.

### Turkish Hazelnut Tea Cakes

#### *Gateaux des Noisettes*

(24 small cakes)

1 vanilla bean, cut into small pieces  
3/4 cup granulated sugar  
1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour  
2 tsp. baking powder  
1-1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon  
1/4 tsp. ground cloves  
1/4 tsp. salt  
1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper  
6 eggs  
1 cup plus 3 Tbsp. unsalted butter, room temperature  
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar  
grated zest of 2 lemons or  
1 lemon and 1 orange  
1-1/3 cups toasted, peeled and ground hazelnuts

Butter 24 muffin pan cups, dust with flour and tap out the excess. In a spice mill or food processor grind the vanilla bean with the sugar until the bean is ground to a powder. In a small bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, cinnamon, cloves, salt and pepper. In a separate bowl, beat together butter, confectioners' sugar and vanilla sugar until creamy and pale. Add eggs and lemon zest and beat until incorporated. Fold in nuts and flour mixture until combined. Spoon batter into muffin cups, 2/3 full. Let rest for 1 hour. Preheat oven to 400°F. Bake until a toothpick inserted into the center emerges dry, about 15 minutes. Remove from oven and turn on to racks. Let cool completely.

(see Kaplan's bio. page 11) ✨

# Book Review

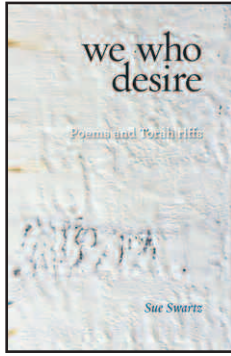


REVIEWED BY SHANA RITTER

## Writing to find truth

*We Who Desire: Poems and Torah Riffs.* By Sue Swartz. Ben Yehuda Press. 2016.

From "And These Are The Words"  
*This is the book of sayings and things, / what is made real by our telling.*



"Turn it and turn it for everything is in it. That is the Talmud, and those rabbis knew what they were talking about." *We Who Desire* by Sue Swartz is a response to the Torah through poetry that interweaves the mythic and the mundane from "Eden to Gaza, from Eve to Emma Goldman". What began as a writing practice, a structure the author invented to develop her craft, took hold of her resulting in 14 years of writing and revisions until she felt the work "began to respond adequately to the intensity of covenant, and the power of desire found in the text".

I've been in writing groups with Sue for many years and witnessed first hand the initial drafts and revisions of *We Who Desire*. One thing I know for sure is that Sue always tells the truth. Instead of a traditional book review I wanted to talk with Sue about writing this collection of poems.

**Ritter:** *How did you come to use the Torah as source material?*

**Swartz:** "What could be more natural, a weekly piece that called for questions and answers, that was based on inquiry and yet drew from a deep sense of yearning. The book is drenched in yearning but when I'm writing it's not so much yearning but rather the drive to pursue an answer, the hope of finding the truth."

**R:** *Did the notion of midrash come more from wanting to be part of a community or wanting clarification?*

**S:** "Somewhere in the midst of this process my father-in-law asked me if I'd rather be known as a poet or a 'midrashist'? and my answer constantly changes. I did this for myself but the result is that I am smack dab in the middle of a community."

Tone, form, setting and language vary throughout the book but every poem shares an exploration of what it means to believe, to simultaneously honor tradition

and seek to change it, to live in the secular and feel the sacred. Some writers are spurred by a need to express feelings or record experiences. Swartz is spurred by inquiry, the need to understand and then say something about it. But there is no sacrificing beauty in the pursuit of truth and meaning.

In "What the Day Cannot Contain" (Joseph dreams a dream...)

*A woman for sale buys herself back. / Flesh adheres to bone, growing old, growing strong. / Nothing crumbles from neglect... Lovers stop keeping accounts. / The spark of revenge goes damp in our throats. / A man pulls a thread out of his glittering coat / and weaves it through our long abandoned wanting.*

**R:** *Is there a specific poem in the book that you are repeatedly drawn back to? Why?*

**S:** "The poem 'Belief' is about the limits and pleasures of keeping kosher, the struggle with ritual practice, wrestling with how much to believe. Doing something in the hope of finding the truth."

**R:** *What did you learn from writing this?*

**S:** "Never be satisfied with my first draft. Or second. My initial impulse or reaction to a text or a visual imagining is worth exploring, but it takes a while to drill down and figure out what that impulse is about. I have also learned to walk away from perfectly good poems if they are not in service to the larger story."

**R:** *How do you know if a poem is worth pursuing?*

**S:** "There comes a point where I feel one of two things – there's nothing I can do to make this better – it's not going work. Or it feels like there is something in the cavity of my chest. I don't know how to get there but I'm committed to follow it through however long it takes. At that point I ask if I am trying to solve the right problem. If I can find the right question the poem begins to work."

On The Mountain  
 (And God said come up to me –)  
 Forget the wind and the wait.  
 Forget your shivering.  
 Here is bonfire etched in stone,  
 Scroll of glowing sapphire.  
 Whirlpools and radiance.

*Shana Ritter is originally from New York but has lived in Bloomington, Ind., for a very long time. Her poetry and short stories have appeared in Lilith, Fifth Wednesday, Georgetown Review and others. Her chapbook, Stairs of Separation is available from Finishing Line Press. Shana is currently at work on a novel that takes place during the Diaspora from Spain in 1492. When not writing, or playing with grandchildren, Shana is the executive director of Foundation for Autism Resources. ★*

# Letter to the Editor

**Freedom of the Press** – The Post & Opinion encourages readers to send letters. All letters to the editor should be addressed to The Jewish Post & Opinion, 1427 W. 86th St. #228, Indianapolis, IN 46260, or by e-mail: [jpostopinion@gmail.com](mailto:jpostopinion@gmail.com).

Dear Editor:

I would like to thank you for your editorial on the importance of tzedakah and fundraising for an ambulance for Magen David Adam. I have some important information to add to what you and Rabbi Benzion Cohen wrote. I had received both columns in an email from American Friends of Magen David Adam (AFMDA) Director of Communications Erik Levis in Los Angeles (646-808-6314 or [elevis@afmda.org](mailto:elevis@afmda.org)).

Today, Magen David Adom employs two different ambulances in their fleet. The Life Support Ambulances are the work-horses of the fleet and can be sponsored for \$100,000. The Mobile Intensive Care Unit ambulance sponsorships are \$125,000 as these units carry more advanced life-saving equipment utilized for high trauma cases. If you will, they are "emergency rooms on wheels." And, both ambulances are built on a Chevy chassis at our ambulance supplier based in Elkhart, Indiana.

All ambulance sponsorships include the equipment and media supplies needed to be posted for service. Ambulances may be brought from Elkhart to our donors for local dedications if so desired. This year, Magen David Adom needs 100 new ambulances, 40 new medicycles (\$36,000 each), medical equipment replenishments, and so much more. MDA is not a government agency so your investment will make a huge difference in the lives of every Israeli, everyday. For more information, please contact me. (See photos on page 15.)

Sincerely, Cari Margulis Immerman, AFMDA Midwest Regional Director at 877-405-3913 or [Cimmerman@afmda.org](mailto:Cimmerman@afmda.org). ★



## AGES

(continued from page 13)

Salanter, of Mussar fame, once said "Everything you think does not have to be said; everything you say does not have to be written down and everything you write does not have to be published!"

Arnold Ages is "Distinguished Emeritus Professor" University of Waterloo (Ontario, Canada) and the "Scholar-in-Residence" at the Beth Tzedec Synagogue (Toronto, Canada). ★



**ZIMMERMAN***(continued from page 16)*

limited experience of Poland was confined to spending five weeks shooting in Lodz and Warsaw for *Who Will Write Our History*. That experience was 100% positive. The Polish crew was professional, dedicated, talented and hardworking."

Grossman continued, "The Polish actors were very talented and committed to the project. The commitment of the actors to helping tell the story of Emanuel Ringelblum and the *Oyneg Shabes* Archive was, perhaps, best exemplified by the way they threw themselves into learning lines of dialogue in Yiddish, working with a Yiddish coach not only to learn the lines, but the inflection and accents as well."

After a distinguished career creating films of both Jewish and non-Jewish themes, it was Grossman's love of Jewish history that inspired her to start doing more movies with Jewish subjects. "I've always had a strong Jewish identity – a secular Jewish identity. Jewish History is my religion. Making my [Jewish] films has increased my faith."

Reading Samuel Kassow's book, *Who Will Write Our History?* brought the *Oyneg Shabbat* archives to the filmmaker's attention. The most interesting part of the experience for her was meeting the scholars involved with the archives. "It is the best part of the work I do to have the honor to sit down with scholars and talk about subjects they are passionate about," she revealed.



*Dr. Emanuel Ringelblum (From <http://WhoWillWriteOurHistory.com/gallery.html>; used with permission) was a community organizer, activist, and historian in the Warsaw Ghetto.*

Dr. Ringelblum gathered together a group of intellectuals and community leaders to write and collect artifacts that would document the annihilation of the Jewish people. He wanted the gamut of religious and political perspectives represented by both men and women, young and old, and even children; capturing their stories in letters and diaries, photography, poetry, and art. Dr. Ringelblum wanted to record history as the people themselves experienced it.

The archives include, "texts written by men and women, orthodox Jews and free thinkers, philosophers and ordinary people, all of which reflect the diversity and vitality of Jewish society in the Warsaw Ghetto (from Yad Vashem's website)." As an historian, Dr. Ringelblum knew the importance of this work for the preservation of memory. "With Ringelblum's



*(See Letter to the Editor on page 14.)*

leadership and guidance, the members of *Oyneg Shabbat*, under unimaginably adverse conditions, provided the documentation and research of that tragic period as well [as] a repository of the spiritual heritage of the generations murdered with such cruelty."

An example of Dr. Ringelblum's writing can be found in a letter dated Jan. 6, 1944: "In an area of 28 sq. m. [33 1/2 square yards] are 38 people. There are 14 bunks on which 34 people sleep. That means three people on some of these very narrow bunks (the two of us and Yorek, our son, who sleeps at our feet). The remaining four people sleep on cots and stretchers placed between the beds...The food is not bad, but the overcrowding is hard to describe. In addition, there are lice and bedbugs ...only the first days are terrible, but afterwards everyone gets used to the conditions and there is even humor here."

When it became clear that extermination and not survival would be the fate of Warsaw's Jewry, the documents and artifacts of the *Oyneg Shabes* Archives were placed into milk cans and metal boxes (below) and buried in three different caches in the Warsaw Ghetto. Only two of the caches have been discovered.



*Metal boxes and milk cans containing part of the *Oyneg Shabes* Archives unearthed in Warsaw after the war (from the same link as the photo left; used with permission).*



A visionary like Dr. Ringelblum knew the importance of primary source documentation of the atrocities committed by the Nazis in the Warsaw Ghetto. A visionary like Samuel Kassow understood the importance of Dr. Ringelblum's work and wrote the book on which Roberta Grossman's film is based. Their combined vision ensures that the stories of the Warsaw Ghetto will be heard for generations.

Despite my sorrow at the passing of Elie Wiesel, z"l, Holocaust educators like me can rejoice through our tears. With books and documentaries like *Who Will Write Our History*, there is hope, indeed, that someday, the world can learn the lessons of the Holocaust. The answer to Elie Wiesel's searing question (see opening sentence) is a resounding, "Yes." The world can and must learn so that someday, the slogan "Never Again!" will become a reality for all people.

**Citations:** (Yad Vashem) <http://www.yad.vashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/ringelblum/overview.asp>

(Facebook) <http://www.facebook.com/whowillwriteourhistory/photos/a.1761313184092940.1073741828.1701010913456501/2012000432357546/?type=3&theater>

*Dr. Zimmerman is professor emerita at Notre Dame de Namur University (NDNU) in Belmont, Calif., where she continues to teach the Holocaust course. She can be reached at [mzimmerman@ndnu.edu](mailto:mzimmerman@ndnu.edu). ✨*

# Holocaust Educator



## The Jewish Post & Opinion

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Indianapolis, IN 46260

PRESORTED  
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BY MIRIAM L. ZIMMERMAN

### A treasure trove in the Warsaw Ghetto

“Will the world ever learn?” asked Elie Wiesel, in a speech enumerating post-Holocaust genocides and atrocities. A moving CNN tribute to the late Auschwitz survivor and Holocaust activist, who died on July 2, 2016, included excerpts from Wiesel’s speech, which admonished the world to learn from Holocaust history. The televised obituary included ample evidence that Nobel Laureate Wiesel gave voice to the Holocaust survivor experience and served as the conscience of the world.

Wiesel’s passing warns Holocaust educators that we are rapidly approaching a post-survivor world. For more than 20 years, as a Holocaust educator, I have seen intimately the power of survivor oral histories on students.

“If I had lived during the Holocaust, I would have saved Jews,” has been a leitmotif expressed by many students after hearing an Auschwitz survivor or a hidden child talk to class. I try not to overly emphasize how difficult it was to save Jews or point out that they would be putting their whole family at risk if discovered. Instead, I ask them, “In a world filled with injustice and hate, what is the moral equivalence *today* of saving Jews during the Holocaust?” In my experience, survivor stories, like nothing else, motivate students to become upstanders instead of bystanders.

How can Holocaust educators convey these stories when the survivor’s voices have faded? Who will record their stories when they are gone?



Documentary filmmaker Roberta Grossman (Photo credit: Anna Woch; used with permission.)

Documentary filmmaker Roberta Grossman took up this challenge. In her 2008 film, *Blessed Is the Match: The Life and Death of Hannah Senesh* (BITM), Ms. Grossman eloquently tells the story of Hungarian Holocaust resistance fighter Hannah Senesh. I had the privilege of seeing a clip of this film at a Yad Vashem conference on teaching the Holocaust while the documentary was in post-production. Yad Vashem is the Israeli insti-

tution dedicated to Holocaust education, memory, research, and commemoration.

From an assimilated Jewish family, Budapest-born Hannah Senesh (1921–1944) is famous for her poems, “Blessed Is the Match Consumed in Kindling Flame” and “Eli, Eli.” Because of anti-Semitism, Senesh immigrated to British Mandate Palestine in 1939. In 1943, she joined the British Army and volunteered to parachute into Europe to work with resistance fighters. Captured at the Hungarian border and despite months of torture by the Gestapo, she refused to reveal her mission or provide names or codes to her brutal captors. In 1944, she was executed at age 23 by firing squad. The movie, *Blessed Is the Match*, captured Senesh’s story with thoroughness, authenticity, and dignity.

A gifted documentarian, Grossman’s next film opened the 2013 San Francisco Jewish Film Festival in its world premiere. In *Hava Nagila (the Movie)*, she created the funniest documentary I have ever seen that was not about comedy. In an email, she answered my question, “How did you traverse the emotional divide between Hannah Senesh and *Hava Nagila* when you finished the former and embarked on the latter?”

“When I finished making BITM, my then 10-year-old daughter earnestly demanded, ‘Mommy, please make a happy film next time.’ *Hava Nagila* was my answer to her quite reasonable request.”

Returning to Holocaust history for the subject of her latest documentary, Grossman just completed five weeks shooting in Poland for *Who Will Write Our History*. The documentary is about the archive known as “*Oyneg Shabes* (Yiddish),” or “*Oneg Shabbat*” (Hebrew), meaning “joy of the Sabbath (English).” “*Oyneg Shabes*” became the code name of a secret group, which tended to meet on Saturdays in the

Warsaw Ghetto.

On May 11, 2016, Grossman posted from Poland a “Happy Yom Ha’Atzmaut” greeting on the film’s Facebook page: “Happy 68th birthday, Israel! What an honor to be posting this from the set of *Who Will Write Our History* in Poland, a place that lost 98% of its Jews (at least 3 million) in the Holocaust, just a few years before Israel became a state.

“Many of the surviving 2%, of course, made their way to Israel.

“We are working hard to make this documentary honoring the heroes of the *Oyneg Shabes* archive in the Warsaw Ghetto. They risked their lives to record the destruction of the biggest Jewish community of Europe. Then, when it appeared they wouldn’t survive, they buried what they wrote and collected so that we could tell their story – not from the point of view of their enemies, but in their own words.”

Grossman explained in her email what it was like to be in Poland at this time: “My

(see Zimmerman, page 15)



(L-R) Director Roberta Grossman with actors Karolina Gruszka (Judyta Ringelblum) and Piotr Gowacki (Dr. Emanuel Ringelblum) on limbo set of *Who Will Write Our History*, in Poland, May 2016. (Photo credit: Anna Woch; used with permission.) [Note: a “limbo” set is an area with no specific visual identification.]