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Contributors



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Harry Samuels, author of “Beshert: True Stories of Connections” and “Crossroads Chance or Destiny,” is a graduate of Washington University. He has devoted many years to volunteerism in Memphis. He and his wife, Flora, have been married for 57 years and are the parents of Martin, William and the late David Samuels.



Lauren Taube is the engagement and data manager at Jewish Community Partners where she oversees PJ Library, Shalom Baby and the Newcomers initiative. As a Jewish educator, she has worked at Temple Israel, Facing History and Ourselves in Memphis, in addition to congregations throughout the country. She lives in Germantown, Tenn. with her husband, David, and their two young children.



Sarah VanderWalde is the endowment development manager at the Jewish Foundation of Memphis and is excited to be a part of planning and celebrating the Foundation’s 25th anniversary in 2020. A transplant to Memphis, Sarah is happy to call Memphis home with her husband and five children. She loves how welcoming and friendly everyone is down South!



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Provided by Suzi Weiss-Fischmann

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Jewish Scene is dedicated to creating awareness among the Jewish community; and promoting and supporting the religious, educational, social and fundraising efforts of Jewish agencies and organizations.

Dear Jewish Scene
Readers,

Every year I look forward to reading and sharing the heart-warming stories of tzedakah (charity) and tikkun olam (charitable giving) with which the Mid-South community is involved.

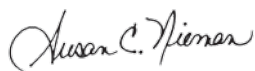
Organizations and synagogues carry out these and other acts of loving kindness throughout the year, but it is especially nice at this time of year, when we are giving thanks, to be reminded of the difference people are making in other's lives.

We hope these stories of inspiration will inspire others to create meaningful programs to help the most vulnerable and each other through good times and bad.

If you are an entrepreneur, a fashion enthusiast (especially nails), and love a good story about one lady with little money and a bundle of enthusiasm and determination, then you'll want to meet OPI co-founder and philanthropist Suzi Weiss-Fischmann at Memphis Jewish Federation's Woman's Impact Luncheon on January 16, 2020. Jewish Scene caught up with Suzi to take a sneak peek into what she has to say about women, business and philanthropy.

As we enter 2020, may your tummies be filled with holiday goodies, may your homes be filled with loving family and friends, and may you all have a happy and healthy holiday season.

Shalom!



Susan C. Nieman - Publisher/Editor



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The First Lady of Nails:

Suzi Weiss-Fischmann

I'm always looking for blue-toned nail polish to brighten my toes during my favorite days of the year – anytime it's above 75 degrees! I think I've just found my perfect match – 'Suzi Without a Paddle.' Now why couldn't I have thought of that?

If you ever wanted to meet the woman behind the ingenious names of your favorite nail lacquer color, then come meet Suzi Weiss-Fischmann, co-founder and brand ambassador of OPI Nails. Suzi will be the featured speaker at Memphis Jewish Federation's Women's Impact Luncheon on January 16, 2020.

Suzi recently released a memoir about how she persevered, alongside her longtime business partner, who happens to be her brother-in-law, to become known worldwide as the "First Lady of Nails."

"I'm Not Really a Waitress: How One Woman Took Over the Beauty Industry One Color at a Time," recounts her life beginning in communist Hungary, how Ondontorium Products Incorporated transitioned into OPI, and how a timid schoolgirl who arrived in the United States with little money and no English becomes a beauty industry game-changer.

Born in communist Hungary to Holocaust survivors, Suzi immigrated to Israel before settling in the U.S. She shares her Jewish journey believing that a human connection and ongoing education will help reverse rising anti-Semitism and hatred. She encourages her family to do the same by talking about her parents and their generation.

Suzi may have made a name for herself as "the First Lady of Nails," but she takes *tzedakah* (charitable

giving) and *tikkun olam* (repairing the world) just as seriously as she does her business.

I had the opportunity to chat with Suzi via email prior to her visit to Memphis.

Jewish Scene: I see that you've served on the board of directors of several organizations including The Abraham Joshua Heschel Day School, Jewish Women International and USC Shoah Foundation – the Institute for Visual. What drew you to these organizations?

Suzi Weiss-Fischmann: I'm very passionate about education. I've chosen to focus on providing scholarships and financial aid for students at schools my children have attended; for obvious reasons, these are closest to my heart.

JS: Do these organizations represent what you are most passionate about?

Suzi: Yes, I strongly believe that education is one of the most important things we can provide for our children. No one can take it away from you once you have it, and with education comes so many other opportunities. I've also focused on Jewish organizations because of my own personal history. Both of my parents survived the Holocaust. I think it's so important to keep telling their stories, so it never happens again.

JS: Do you travel often to talk to Jewish philanthropic organization audiences?

Suzi: Yes, I do speak often to different Jewish audiences. My message is typically tailored depending on the audience; sometimes it's focused on philanthropy, other times it's focused on entrepreneurship or leadership. However, I always speak about *tzedakah*, which is a mainstay of my life. The act of helping others less fortunate is something I value greatly. My father always said, "you give, you get." Acts of generosity go out into the world and sow more

acts of generosity. Sometimes, you'll be the one bestowing that goodwill and other times you'll be the one receiving it. Whether you have the ability to give funds or time – or both! – contributing to your community is so important.

JS: What is the most important message we can send to the younger generation of women to empower them to be their best?

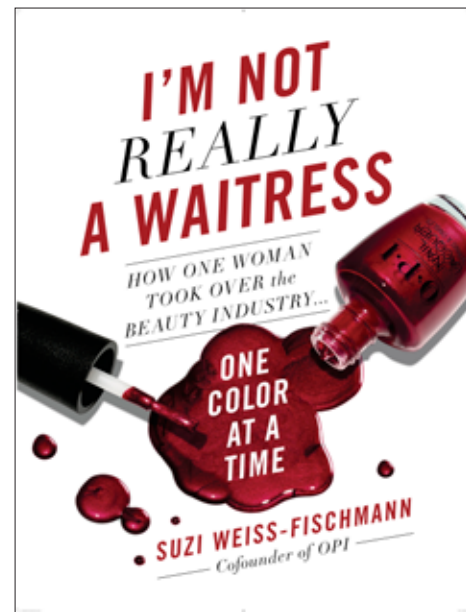
Suzi: Today, there's often an expectation placed on women in charge that they need to be cutthroat to be competitive, but that's not true. I've always found that being nice, being humble and listening to people has served me well. Instead of pushing others down to get to the top, collaborate. Focus on making real, meaningful, and authentic connections. These connections allow us to grow while also simultaneously anchoring us.

Also, there's no substitute for hard work. Patience is considered a virtue for a reason; it goes a long way in the world of business. Having patience in the workplace will lead to an open-minded approach to business and flexibility in decision-making. Building a business is slow work, and patience is necessary when it comes to nurturing relationships, overcoming the inevitable challenges, and staying committed to a long-term vision.

JS: I read that you were a nail biter. What did you do to break the nail-biting habit?

Suzi: I used to be a terrible nail biter. During my college years, you could find me on the NYC subway on test days with my nails completely destroyed. After becoming the face of OPI, that habit had to go. It was tough, but testing and wearing nail lacquer daily is what finally helped me to stop. Getting regular manicures is key.

JS: Do you think that your freedom to express yourself fashion-wise was



specific to being brought up first in communist Hungary? Do you feel this was an innate instinct or brought on because of everything that you saw going on around you in New York?

Suzi: Growing up in communist Hungary, my experience made me especially aware of the options and variety I experienced after immigrating to the US. I've always had a deep love of color, and that love manifested itself in self-expression through fashion, and later, through nails.

JS: You say in your book that you saved your paychecks until you had enough to buy special outfits. Was this the reason you got a job in the first place? Or did you just want to get out in the world? Or was it simply like you state in the book, money gave you powers and possibilities?

Suzi: Making money gave me choices and opportunities, and ultimately, the ability to control my own destiny. I've always been very independent and ready to work hard so that I don't have to rely on others.

JS: Was OPI the first nail color company to start naming polishes?

Suzi: Before OPI, nail lacquer wasn't

Continued on page 8 →

marketed to the average woman – it was marketed to nail technicians. Therefore, shades had very generic names like Pink No. 2 and Red No. 4. There wasn't a need to appeal to consumers with fun, memorable names because they weren't purchasing the nail color themselves. Our playful, humorous names changed all of that!

JS: What was the first nail color named?

Suzi: Our first color collection launched in 1989 with 30 shades – some of which are still available today – including Kyoto Pearl, OPI Red, Dutch Tulips, Malaga Wine, and Alpine Snow.

JS: What goes into the process of uniquely naming your colors?

Suzi: OPI naming meetings are top secret, but I can say that the process is very fun! There is a group of people at OPI who go behind closed doors to brainstorm hundreds of potential monikers for the new colors. We channel each other's creativity to come up with unique and interesting names for each shade. This group dynamic is very important to the creative process. We are able to tell which names get the biggest laughs, or which ones really resonate. We usually have too many names and have to narrow down the list. Everyone shares their funniest, most creative names for final voting! It is such a fun and interactive process and there is usually no shortage of opinions and thoughts.

Coming to the meeting prepared and with props really helps inspire us and keep our imaginations flowing. Food is a very important part of the OPI culture, so we always have things to eat that reflect the spirit of the collection for inspiration. Inspiration comes from food, music, fashion, film, art and pop culture. For destination-based collections, which are launched twice a year, the group will play upon unique,

interesting, or noteworthy elements from the country or city in question to come up with hundreds of names for consideration. It takes a full day to name a collection. The name for a single shade might happen very quickly, or it might be deliberated, shelved, and revisited throughout the course of the day.

Fun fact, every seasonal collection features a shade with my name, "Suzi."

JS: Why/How "I'm not really a waitress," for a nail color?

Suzi: In Los Angeles, "I'm not really a waitress – I'm an actress (or singer/model/artist)!" is a well-known mantra. The name exemplifies that we're more than just our job. It speaks to anyone laboring for a dream, offering a reminder that our goals are worth pursuing. This shade is more than just a color, but a form of self-expression.

JS: You started as a family business and grew into this international company with hundreds of employees. Does OPI maintain an intimate workplace and how?

Suzi: I can only speak to when the company was sold to Coty in 2010, but at that time, OPI had nearly 700 employees spread out on a seven-acre campus in North Hollywood. Our products were in 100+ countries – yet we still had an open-door policy, where any employee could come to us with a suggestion, complaint, idea, or request at any time.

After all, we started as a family business and as we grew, we knew we wanted to deliberately foster an environment filled with warmth, collegiality and a sense of fun. I personally wanted to look forward to work every day, and why wouldn't our employees feel the same? We wanted everyone to know they were valuable, and in return, many people made working at OPI their lifelong careers. At the end of the



day, your organization is only as good as its people. As we became more successful, we invested not only in our products and our marketing, but in our employees as well. We all cared about each other, and cared for each other, and as a business leader, that's what I'm most proud of when I look back at my career. 💎

Attendees at the Woman's Impact Luncheon on January 16, will receive a copy of Suzi's book, "I'm Not Really a Waitress: How One Woman Took Over the Beauty Industry."

CROSSROADS

Chance or Destiny?

By Harry Samuels

This collection of connection stories is a follow up to Harry's first book, Beshert, which Jewish Scene readers enjoyed years ago. I hope you enjoy them as much as I do.

All of us have the ability to experience the synchronicity that is often the result of reaching out to others. ~ Harry Samuels

THE BUTTERFLY

Thelma Waller Greenberg

Estelle Okeon enjoyed a reputation as a sweet, delightful lady. She was attracted to butterflies – often wearing butterfly pins and butterfly designs on her clothing. She told her daughter, Elaine Rosenberg, that butterflies reminded her of her own mother who spoke lovingly of the creatures. Whenever she saw a butterfly, Estelle had felt a connection.

Elaine attended a funeral last week in Memphis. It was held at the Baron Hirsch Cemetery where Estelle is buried. It was a beautiful, sunny day, and as Elaine walked past her mother's gravesite that quiet afternoon, she softly said, "Hello Mom." At that moment, a pretty butterfly landed on her shoulder. When people standing near Elaine noticed the butterfly, it flew away, but it returned three times, always landing on the same spot of her shoulder. ♦

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*B'nai Tzedek Participants*

B'nai Tzedek Participants Focus on Philanthropy and Volunteering

By Sarah VanderWalde

What would you do with \$10,000? How would you make a difference and strengthen the Memphis Jewish community? These were the questions posed to the conscientious members of B'nai Tzedek, the teen philanthropy program at the Jewish Foundation of Memphis. Founded in 2002 and named Outstanding Teen Foundation in 2005 by the Association of Fundraising Professionals Memphis Chapter, B'nai Tzedek teaches Jewish teens to become philanthropists.

Teens join B'nai Tzedek by donating \$250 of their bar or bat mitzvah money to the Jewish Foundation of Memphis. This money is used to establish a donor-advised fund in their name. A generous donor matches each teen's \$250 donation, so there is automatically \$500 in each fund, or more if the teen puts in more than \$250, of course. This money can be used towards any non-profit in the United States, and the teens choose where they would like to donate.

The \$10,000 is the second part of

the B'nai Tzedek program, in which a donor grants \$10,000 for the collective group of teens to allocate. Memphis Jewish non-profits are invited to submit grant proposals for this money. In 2019, 15 agencies submitted over \$43,000 in requests. The B'nai Tzedek group met several times to discuss how their funding could have the most impact on the local Jewish community. The teens learned more about diverse Jewish organizations in Memphis by visiting them all on a Sunday afternoon bus tour in February. After meeting with the organizations, they decided how to distribute their grant money – to programs at Baron Hirsch Congregation, Wendy and Avron B. Fogelman Jewish Family Service at the MJCC, Memphis Jewish Community Center, Memphis Jewish Federation, Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab, NCSY and Plough Towers. The granting cycle for 2020 will open in January.

A new component to the B'nai Tzedek includes hands-on volunteering. On November 10, 2019, several B'nai Tzedek members came to the

Memphis JCC to support young girls running the Girls on the Run 5k race. The teens held signs along the racecourse to encourage the girls to keep going. One teen even ran part of the race to motivate a young girl to keep jogging.

More volunteer opportunities are coming in 2020. In particular, planning has begun to coordinate with Rashki Osina, program manager and therapist, at Wendy and Avron B. Fogelman Jewish Family Service at the MJCC. Together, they hope to ensure the Kosher Food Pantry is stocked and other local Jewish needs are met.

"I love being a part of B'nai Tzedek," said Brooke Sanderson, a 7th grader at the Margolin Hebrew Academy. "Not only am I learning about how to give back with money, but it is also allowing me to volunteer. I had a great time helping out at the Girls on the Run race and can't wait to do more to help others in the community." 💡

Any teen who has become bar or bat mitzvah can join B'nai Tzedek at any time. Fill out the form online <https://jcpmemphis.org/teen-philanthropy> or contact the Jewish Foundation of Memphis at 901.374.0400 for more information and to sign up.



Memphis Jewish Federation leaders receive a B'nai Tzedek grant.



B'nai Tzedek volunteers Talya Mendelson, Brooke Sanderson and Morgan Schrier support the Girls on the Run 5k race on November 10, at the MJCC.

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A Thanksgiving Tradition

By Rabbi Akiva Males

Thanksgiving is a wonderful and obvious time to stop and say “Thank You” to some very important people whom we don’t often recognize – our local firefighters. After all, rather than spending Thanksgiving at home with family and friends, those hard-working heroes spend that day on duty keeping our neighborhood safe.

Sharing some Shul-made pies and “Thank You” cards with our local firefighters on Thanksgiving is a great way to express our appreciation. In 2016, Young Israel began this beautiful Thanksgiving tradition.

In the days leading up to the holiday, the children of our congregation – and beyond – gather to create appreciative cards and bake mouth-watering pumpkin and sweet potato pies. We then bring together many adults and children to say “Thank You” to our local firefighters at Fire Station 21 (located just next door to Kroger on S. Mendenhall Road) on Thanksgiving Day morning.

The children present their Shul-made pies, as well as their hand-crafted Thanksgiving cards to the very appreciative – and noticeably touched – firefighters. The firefighters gladly treat our group to a tour of their fire-station, let us to take a close look at their equipment, and allow the children to climb through some of their trucks. In 2018, the firefighters even presented each of the children with a red plastic Memphis Fire Department replica helmet. (That was a huge hit!)

Visiting – and thanking – our local firefighters on Thanksgiving Day helps the children (and adults) of our community gain a deeper appreciation of our local heroes. It also makes Thanksgiving so much more meaningful for all parties involved.

Young Israel thanks each of the participants – and the sponsors – of this annual heart-warming program. ♦





Young Israel of Memphis Shares Rosh Hashanah Care Packages with US Air Force Personnel

By Rabbi Akiva Males

Do you remember how great it felt to receive a care package from home when you were away at camp or school? What if you were an active-duty US Jewish serviceman/woman during the season of Yom Tovim (Jewish Holidays) – rather than a camper or student? Can you imagine how lonely it must feel to be away from family and friends during such a special time of the year? Now imagine how that Jewish man/woman in uniform would appreciate receiving a care package before Rosh Hashanah.

For the second year in a row, Young Israel (YI) of Memphis played a role in lifting the spirits of some of our country's brave Jewish troops, who were far away from a normal Yom Tov setting. Almost 10 years ago, I got to know Rabbi Shaul Rappeport who was then serving as an Orthodox rabbi in a small far-flung Pennsylvania community. Since then, Rabbi Rappeport has “switched pulpits,” and is now serving as a Chaplain in the US Air Force (USAF), stationed in San Antonio, Texas. After getting in touch with Captain (Rabbi) Rappeport, I confirmed that he would once again be more than happy to distribute Shanah Tovah

Care Packages to Jewish servicemen/women on Young Israel's behalf.

Just prior to Rosh Hashanah 5780/2019, in partnership with Memphis' own Ricki's Cookie Corner, YI sent Captain Rappeport 55 care packages of Ricki's signature cookies and Challah rolls (along with notes from YI) to distribute to Jewish servicemen/women before the holidays – an increase from the 30 packages, which YI sent in 2018. YI also sent a special gift of Challahs and a tin of cookies for Rabbi and Mrs. Rappeport and their children to enjoy over the Yom Tovim.

During a pre-Rosh Hashanah gathering, Rabbi Rappeport distributed all the care packages on YI's behalf to some very appreciative Jewish USAF personnel. In a subsequent email to me, Captain Rappeport wrote: “Attached are some pictures of smiling airmen enjoying the treats your congregation sent. More than the delicious treats, the fact that Jews in Memphis were thinking of airmen whom they do not know directly meant so much to these young recruits spending their first holiday away from home. On their



behalf – and mine as well – thank you so much!”

Young Israel of Memphis thanks Ricki's Cookie Corner (www.rickiscookies.com) and all the generous sponsors who brought this heart-warming project to fruition. 💙



Sarah Dufrechou and her husband



The group led by Rabbi Feivel Strauss meets at Temple Israel on the second Sunday each month.

Caregiver Café at Temple Israel Brings Comfort, Hope, and Peace to Caregivers

By Melinda Lejman

In 2014, Sarah Dufrechou's husband of five years had a massive stroke that left him in a nursing home he will never leave. Sarah was 30 years old, and any hope of a future together – dreams, plans, new homes, adventures – was shattered. Thrust into unfamiliar territory as a part-time nurse and full-time caretaker, she felt alone and isolated as guilt consumed any desire for her own self-care or healing.

"This is the life of a caretaker. It is a silent pain and loneliness and grief we carry," says Sarah, the Temple Israel member who helped create Caregiver Café, a support group for caregivers hosted by Temple. "We hide it from our friends and family. We feel a burden that we are not comfortable sharing. We take on more than we can handle. And all the while we think, 'How can I do this one more day?'"

Not satisfied to continue bearing the burden alone, Sarah reached out to Debbie Jackson, the chair of Temple Cares, an affiliate program of Temple Israel that offers services to members

and their families, such as rides to doctors' appointments and food when a loved one is sick.

Sarah understood her need to feel connected, not just to vent or complain about her situation. And she knew that a Jewishly focused group could offer something one may not find elsewhere.

"From this journey, I knew there were other silent witnesses on a similar path," says Sarah. "New mothers, spouses, parents, children – all caretakers in their own way who need a place to simply be without judgment, without expectations. To say, 'I, too, am suffering. I, too, need a gentle place to fall.'"

Caregiver Café aims to offer spiritual guidance from Torah as well as a sense of community. The service of caregiving can lead to feelings of isolation, and often, caregivers crave a space to simply be with others who understand their situation.

"To love another as oneself" requires us to care for ourselves as though

we too are worthy of love and care," says Rabbi Feivel Strauss, senior education Rabbi at Temple Israel and the lead clergy for Caregiver Café. "To the extent we nourish our 'self,' the better we can care for others. It is vital for caretakers to honor the holy work they do and to resolve together through community and friendship."

For Sarah and those who attend meetings, the idea is not to deny the pain and suffering, but rather to look for ways to leave stronger and more able to carry the weight. Sarah hopes that Caretaker Café can be a place where everyone is welcomed in safe space to share the burden of caregiving.

"There is no right way or better way or best way to be a caretaker," says Sarah. "Judaism acknowledges our humanness, and it also sees the divine spark within all of us."

Caregiver Café meets at Temple Israel on the second Sunday of each month at 10 a.m.

Visit timemphis.org for details. 



Memphis Jewish Federation's PJ Library Inspires Gratitude and Giving

By Lauren Luskey Taube

PJ Gives Back, a new initiative of Memphis Jewish Federation's PJ Library, is helping our community thrive by giving families the tools to create Jewish moments of gratitude and giving.

PJ Library explains that modeling charitable acts is a great way to teach your child the value of tzedakah, and studies have found that it leads to marked increases in children's self-esteem and feelings of empowerment.

Lauren Taube, PJ parent and engagement and data manager at Jewish Community Partners shares how the program hopes to influence our youngest generation of Jewish Memphians.

Tzedakah is a central value in Judaism. Federation is excited to share resources with parents that bring this value to life and encourage children in the community to help others.

Each PJ Library family program this year will bring *PJ Gives Back* to life by incorporating tzedakah-themed stories, tzedakah box crafts and opportunities to help others in the community. Children are encouraged to add coins to their tzedakah boxes from now until Federation's Super Sunday in February.

At Super Sunday, the PJ community will come together to see how their tzedakah can have a big impact the Memphis Jewish Community.

"Our family has made an effort over the last few years to really talk about giving back and what that means to us," said Mary Kanowitz, PJ parent and campaign cabinet member. "PJ Library has been one of our favorite connections to our community here in Memphis. My kids have been collecting their own tzedakah this year to not only give back to PJ, but to also support things like Jewish education, camp, and helping those

in need through the Federation. It is such a perfect teaching opportunity for supporting our Jewish values. I give to Federation for the same reasons and so much more. Federation brings the whole community together, and what better way to support that than by giving back!"

Created by The Harold Grinspoon Foundation (HGF), PJ Library is funded by local philanthropists Billie and Joe Pierce Family and Memphis Jewish Federation in partnership with HGF. This national program sends a free, age-appropriate, Jewish-themed book or music each month to children 6 months through 8 years old. Memphis is part of more than 250 participating communities across the globe.

PJ Library programs are open to all families in the Jewish community. Learn more at jcpmemphis.org/pjlibrary. ♦

Unknown Child Foundation Welcomes New Board Members

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By Susan C. Nieman



Jerry Ehrlich

A Holocaust Memorial in North Mississippi? One might wonder how such a project was imagined.

The spark was ignited during a Horn Lake Middle School classroom discussion between teachers Susan Powell and Melissa (Swartz) Wheeler whose passion for increasing awareness about the Holocaust energized their students who then embarked on the “Pennies Project.”

The Pennies Project was a simple concept: collect one and a half million pennies in memory of the 1.5 million Jewish children (out of the 1.6 million who lived in German-controlled territories) who perished during the Holocaust. The students wrote letters to actors, athletes and politicians and asked everyone they could think of for donations. The following year, a local homeschool group, Gen SC, joined them.

The owner of Peabody Place Mall gave the students permission to scoop up all the coins in the fountain. There was a contagious excitement as the number of pennies grew.

After three and a half years, students finally achieved their goal: 1.5 million pennies in remembrance of the children of the Holocaust. The completion of this special project led to the formation of the Unknown Child Foundation, Inc.,

(UCF) organized for the purpose of creating a children’s Holocaust memorial.

UCF commissioned Israeli artist Rick Wienecke to create the sculpture of the Unknown Child, and engaged architect Doug Thornton of Hernando, Miss., to design the Memorial. UCF looks forward to building the Memorial remembering the beloved children of the Holocaust and showcasing the over 8,000 pounds of pennies collected by students.

Several Memphis Holocaust survivors, families of survivors and others have stepped forward to help further the mission of the Foundation by speaking to groups or becoming more involved as board members.

“Ten years ago, the Pennies Project began with the students and a small group of (Christian) adults cheering them on,” said founder Diane McNeil. “The goal was to collect the Pennies and showcase them in an appropriate manner that would tell the story of both those who collected and those being remembered. It was to be a gift to the Memphis and Mid-South Jewish community. Jewish families were the ones who suffered, and the Christians involved wanted only to honor them. However, a couple of years ago, it became very apparent that this was much bigger than we were. We



Josh Lipman

invited the first Jewish member, who invited another, who invited another and another and soon there were four Jewish members of the Board. We didn't know how this Jewish/Christian group would fit together, but now, none of us would change a thing. They know our hearts and we know theirs. The goal is not about any individual on the Board – it is about 1.5 million children.”

Most recently Memphians Josh Lipman and Jerry Ehrlich joined the nine-member board – five Christian and four Jewish: Diane McNeil, Susan Powell, Michelle Thornton, Ken McNeil, Chris Powell, Peter Felsenthal and Marty Kelman.

“When Marty Kelman introduced me to the organization, I was completely unfamiliar with it,” said Josh. “Why did I get involved? There was something about the way the board looked at projects and opportunities. There’s a willingness to do more: to reach more people and teach more content. Though much of the focus is on the children who perished and the pennies memorial, the board has looked at its mission with a ‘broad scope’ and has a strong desire to ‘build’ programs with other partners.

Josh is a member of Lipman Holding International (LHI) and currently serves on the boards of Jewish Community Partners (Investment Committee), Dixon Gallery and Gardens (Visual Arts Committee), Temple

Israel Museum, and the Tennessee Holocaust Commission. He received his Bachelor of Arts at the University of Pennsylvania.

Jerry also learned about the Foundation through Marty. Jerry is a second-generation Holocaust survivor. His mother, Dicky Weile Ehrlich, survived nine camps, but lost both of her parents during WWII. Jerry recently retired from the Facing History and Ourselves board after nearly 20 years and has presented his Holocaust films, “Lives Restarted” and “Dicky’s Story” to classrooms and religious groups throughout the Memphis area.

As chairman/executive creative director at The Brand Squad, Jerry brings his energetic and creative energy to the board. For more than 30 years, he’s helped dozens of well-known companies develop marketing strategies and creative campaigns. He’s won numerous national creative awards including a coveted Emmy and heralded as CEO/President of the Year by the Memphis Advertising Federation.

A graduate of the University of Tennessee with a major in advertising, Jerry started his career with John Malmo Advertising in Memphis, moved to Nashville where he held advertising positions with publicly held companies before moving back to Memphis to start his own business, which eventually became ChandlerEhrlich and finally The Brand Squad in 2008.

In 2016, he partnered with filmmaker, Waheed AlQawasmi, as executive producer for the documentary, “Lives Restarted,” which follows 11 Holocaust survivors after being released from prison camps and eventually arriving in Memphis. The film was accepted into a variety of prestigious film festivals, won an international Telly award and now appears on Amazon Prime Video.

Jerry has served on numerous boards across the Mid-South. When not working, you’ll find him and his wife, Karen, boating at Pickwick Lake, fishing with his son, Parker, in Michigan or teaching tricks to his two Havanese pups who accompany him daily to the office. He also plays guitar and keyboards in a ‘70’s cover band as well as a nine-piece contemporary church worship band on Sunday mornings. ♦

For more information about Unknown Child Foundation, Inc. or to make a donation, call 901.355.5799 or visit www.unknownchild.org.



Anthony Morrison, Sandy Blockman and Charles Jalenak planning for the 25th Anniversary events.



JEWISH FOUNDATION OF MEMPHIS CELEBRATES 25 YEARS

By Sarah VanderWalde

The year 2020 promises exciting events, programs and other special occasions to celebrate Jewish Foundation of Memphis' 25th anniversary.

“Latkes & Vodka” in December 2019 is the first of many events during its 25th year. Chairing the year-long celebration are Charles Jalenak, financial advisor at Legacy Wealth, and Sandy Blockman, CPA at Watkins Uiberall. In addition to being members of the Foundation’s Professional Advisory Group, both men have long-term connections to the Jewish Foundation.

Sandy is one of the founding members of the Foundation. He remembers steering committee meetings held prior to 1995 in the old Harkavy law offices, where discussions began to create the Jewish Foundation of Memphis. When asked to be co-chair, Sandy was “humbled and honored to lead the committee and work alongside Charles. “I am grateful to have been there when the Foundation was created 25 years ago,” he said. “And I look forward to seeing what happens over the next 25 years.”

Charles Jalenak, Jewish Foundation board chair from 2018–2019, is excited to be a part of the 25th anniversary celebrations. “It’s meaningful to me as a past board chair, and I am looking forward to the entire year of events planned to celebrate the Foundation’s achievements,” said Charles.

Sandy and Charles with the support of Foundation staff, Sheri Gadberry and Sarah VanderWalde, will recruit committee members to represent the Foundation’s nine partner agencies – Anshei Sphard-Beth El Emeth, Baron Hirsch Congregation, Beth Sholom Synagogue, Bornblum Jewish Community School, Margolin Hebrew Academy/Feinstone Yeshiva of the South, Memphis Jewish Community Center, Wendy and Avron B. Fogelman Jewish Family Service at the MJCC, Memphis Jewish Federation, Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab and Temple Israel.

“An Endowment is Forever,” the tagline used throughout the year at

all events, will focus on legacy giving to Jewish agencies, teen philanthropy through the B’nai Tzedek program, and networking and education through its Professional Advisory Group.

“When we consider the impact and accomplishments packed into these 25 years, it’s impressive and inspiring, but we didn’t do it alone,” said Laura Linder, CEO & president of Jewish Community Partners, which manages the Jewish Foundation of Memphis. “Every wonderful thing we’ve been a part of is only possible because of the generous people of Jewish Memphis who chose us to hold their philanthropic funds, and the talented professionals who choose to volunteer their expertise to our mission.

To learn more about the Foundation, its mission, and the flexible ways it can help reach philanthropic goals, visit www.jcpmemphis.org/foundation or email Sarah VanderWalde at svanderwalde@jcpmemphis.org.

HOT HOLIDAY FINDS

Gifts available in Memphis at
T Clifton Art Gallery, 2571 Broad Avenue



Fine art glass menorahs by Fay Miller. "Arken" menorah features Fay's modern style created by blown, sculpted glass. \$685



Joy Stember wine stoppers and honey spoons in pewter. Wine Stopper \$55. Honey Spoon features bronze bee \$49.



Michael Hudson's entwined candle holders are blown glass in a variety of brilliant colors. Great for Hanukkah, wedding, or anniversary gifts. \$134 pair.



Dreidels by Nachshon Peleg and Stavitt Allweis (Seeka). Dreidels are hand painted with acrylics and feature a variety of crystals and other found objects. \$96

Gifts available in Memphis at
Temple Israel Gift Shop, 1376 East Massey Road



Handmade giftware from ZPots designed exclusively for our Judaica shop, ranging in price from \$12 to \$240. Made in the USA.



We have many gifts for the mah jongg maven, such as this menorah (\$56.25) and crystal dreidel (\$50).



Assorted collectors' dreidels from various artists - Yair Emmanuel, Seeka, Gary Rosenthal, Blackthorn Forge - in prices ranging from \$16 to \$140.



Hand painted wooden Dreidel Menorah from Yair Emmanuel. The different sides of the dreidels form four beautiful pictures. Each dreidel can be removed and played with individually. Made in Israel. \$175.



Beth Sholom Sisterhood honored Myra Alperin with the Sisterhood's Woman of Valor Award. Myra and community shilichah, Meitav Menachem, demonstrated making a salmon entrée and Israeli desserts.



Beverly Kay, Marcia Menuskin, and Barbara Hellman



Meitav Menachem, Barbara Hellman, and Myra Alperin



Meitav Menachem making an Israeli dessert

Sukkah Hop



Lon and Samantha Alperin's sukkah was filled with desserts.



Josh Feinman, Danny Schaffzin, Charlie Belenky, Dan Unowsky



Meredith and Leslie Epstein hosted the second leg of the hop in their sukkah.



Dana and Sanford Shefsky hosted the first leg of the hop.



Janet and Paul Rubin with Mindy Lipson leading Havdallah



Open House and Ribbon Cutting for the Belz Family Foundations Rehabilitation Facility



TEMPLE ISRAEL

Rabbi Rick Jacobs September visit.



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Year end is a busy time for charitable giving. Whether you're supporting **Memphis Jewish Federation's** Annual Community Campaign or adding money to your Donor Advised Fund at the **Jewish Foundation of Memphis**, giving by December 31 will help you maximize your benefits.

Do you have appreciated stock that you've owned for more than a year? Consider donating them. You'll avoid capital gains tax, and may be eligible for a charitable deduction equal to the fair market value of the securities.

Other Ways to Give

There are many assets to consider when planning your charitable gifts. Our professional staff is available to assist you and your advisor in determining the best way for you to achieve your charitable goals. Call Sheri Gadberry at **901-767-7100** for more information.

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