In Pursuit of Religious Freedom
Power in Unity
There is Hope
From the Editor

What’s Nu? News Briefs by Brian E. Brouse

In Anticipation of Yom HaShoah—A Man Worthy of Honor and Remembrance by Rabbi Charles P. Sherman

April Community Events

In Pursuit of Religious Freedom by Drew Diamond

Power in Unity by Connie Hammond

Norway for the Jewish Traveler or Lox Anyone? by Louis Davidson

Smart Conversation at The Synagogue

Mazels

Mizel Jewish Community Day School—A Tulsa Gem by Lillian Hellman

Close to Evil in Tulsa

Haym Salomon: Financier of the American Revolution by Phil Goldfarb

There is Hope by Mickel Yantz

Butterflies

Smile a Bit

Joseph excitedly tells his mother he’s fallen in love and that he is going to get married.

He says, “Just for fun, Mama, I’m going to bring over three women and you try and guess which one I’m going to marry.” The mother agrees.

The next day, he brings three beautiful women into the house, sits them down on the couch and they chat for a while.

He then says, “Okay, Mama, guess which one am I going to marry?”

Mama says immediately, “The one on the right.”

“—that’s amazing, Mama. You’re right. How did you know?”

Mama replies: “I don’t like her.”

The world is theirs to explore.

THE ADVENTURE BEGINS AT HOLLAND HALL.
“To what purpose April, do you return, again?”
So begins a poem entitled “Spring” by my all-time favorite poet, Edna St. Vincent Millay. Although the poem takes an unexpected turn to cynicism, questioning the purpose of life and the inevitability of death, I couldn’t get that first line out of my mind as I sat to write this month’s column.

This year April brings with it the return of one of the major festivals of the Jewish calendar with the coming of Passover. Every year from the 15 to 22 of Nissan, we commemorate our ancestor’s freedom from slavery in Egypt. Although at times the preparation for Passover and ridding my home of chametz seems daunting, I have to admit that it does appeal to the obsessive cleaning part of me. There’s always something that speaks of a fresh start when I’ve completed that deep clean that the holiday entails. But the additional dietary restrictions of Passover, prove to be more of a challenge for me. The first two nights of the festival with their Seders are one thing, but it’s the intermediate days that confound me. I am not only a very picky eater, but I am also cursed with food allergies. Needless to say none of my friends are fond of dining with me during this time. When they suggest one restaurant and then another, and are told I can’t eat there in rapid succession, it always ends with an exasperated query of, “Well, what can you eat?”

My dietary struggles aside, Passover tends to be one of my favorite times of the year. I like the tradition and order that comes with the Seder, whether it’s the first night at home or the second night at the congregational Seder. I like the feeling of connectedness that I experience when I think of Jews all over the world sharing the same symbolic meal at the same time that I am. I like the message of freedom that permeates the Exodus story. There’s something so comforting to me about returning to the familiar rituals and melodies associated with the holiday. To me, April definitely has a purpose in returning this year – the return of one of my favorite holidays.

Chag Sameach,
Melissa

What’s Nu? News Briefs

At the end of January, the Israeli government passed legislation legalizing the establishment of egalitarian prayer at the Kotel. After several years of negotiations, an egalitarian and pluralistic prayer section will be built adjacent to the existing sections. This section will be managed by the Israeli government, the Reform and Conservative movements in Israel and Women of the Wall. The announcement has brought praise and condemnation by various groups.

Jewish World News reports that the U.S.’s main organization of Reform rabbis accused Israel Tourism Minister Yariv Levin of bias against their movement, after the minister made disparaging remarks about the supposed assimilation among Reform Jews. CCAR said Levin had broken his obligation as a cabinet minister to support the religious practices of all Israelis.

FedWorld reports that participation in JCC Krakow’s Ride for the Living, their signature 55-mile ride from Auschwitz to Krakow is booming. Last year, 85 cyclists raised $150,000 for Holocaust survivors at the center which is supported by the Joint Distribution Center. The third annual ride is scheduled for June 2-5.

Ben Timley in the Texas Jewish Press reports that Matt Davis, 30, of Dallas has been chosen to help plan and lead JFNA’s National Young Leadership Cabinet’s mission to Israel July 4-10. The mission includes a diverse group of people ages 22-45 who will get to meet Israel’s leaders and experience their Federation’s impact in the lives of Israelis through exclusive tours, hands-on service projects and interactive site visits to Federation-funded programs.

At this year’s Oscars, the Hungarian Holocaust drama Son of Saul won the Academy Award for Best Foreign Film. Director Laszlo Nemes in his acceptance speech said, “Even in the darkest hours of mankind their might be a voice within us that allows us to remain human. That’s the hope of this film.”

—Compiled by Brian E. Brouse
In Anticipation of Yom HaShoah—A Man Worthy of Honor and Remembrance

by Rabbi Charles P. Sherman

Next month world Jewry will observe Yom HaShoah on May 5th, the 27th of Nisan. The full title of the day is Yom HaShoah U’gevurah—a Day of Remembrance for the Holocaust and Heroism.

Originally established in 1959 by the Knesset and signed into law by David ben Gurion, Yom HaShoah has become a near universal observance in the Jewish world and also by members of some Christian faith communities.

Once a year in our country the President honors some distinguished people with the Presidential Medal of Honor. Three years ago the list was especially impressive. Among the honorees were Madeline Albright, Bob Dylan, Shimon Peres, and a number of other people from the fields of politics, sports, and culture. One of those honored, in this case posthumously, was Jan Karski. I surely did not know that name, and I don’t think most people did, so let me share with you the story of Jan Karski.

A Polish Catholic, Karski grew up in Łodz and was both a member of the Polish Diplomatic Service and an officer in the Polish Army. He was captured by the Russians, but somehow escaped by leaping out of a train. He went to Warsaw and joined the Polish Resistance. Captured by the Nazis, again he somehow escaped by climbing out the window of the hospital room in which he was confined after the Nazis brutally tortured him.

Jan Karski heard about what was happening to the Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto, so he arranged to have himself smuggled into the Ghetto so he could find out for himself whether the reports of what was going on there were true or not. He was able to get into the Ghetto by posing as a Jew. When he got there, he saw the horrors that were taking place, he saw the Jews of Warsaw starving, and he saw them being loaded onto trains and sent to the death camps.

Jan Karski believed that if his fellow citizens of the world knew what was happening they would take action. So when he left the Ghetto, Karski flew to London and then to Washington in order to tell the leaders of the Western Governments what he had seen. He met with Anthony Eden in London, and then with Felix Frankfurter and Franklin Delano Roosevelt in America, and they rebuffed him. Either they did not believe him or they simply did not care.

I share the story of Jan Karski with our readers for several reasons. We need to remember the good people who tried to rescue Jews. If we do not, we may become bitter and背负 by hatred. If we do not, we may lose the ability to believe in the sanctity of humanity. We need to remember the Jan Karskis of the world for their sakes, because they deserve to be remembered, and for our sakes because we need to remember what they did.

Were there enough of them? Of course not. But each one of them should be precious to us, and each one of them should be remembered. Karski, indeed, was one of the heroes of the 20th century even though he failed in his mission. Therefore, we say of him, in anticipation of Yom HaShoah, what we say of all good people whom we remember in our tradition.

Zichrono livracha—may the memory of Jan Karski be a source of blessing to us and to all good people wherever they may be.
Jewish Federation of Tulsa

**Men’s Club** • Wed., Apr. 13 • Noon • A delicious lunch will be followed by our guest speakers, Mickey Katz and Ed Sherman, who will discuss their recent trip to Cuba. Cost of $6 per person.

**Ladies Who Lunch** • Mon., Apr. 18 • Noon • Come enjoy pleasant conversation and great food at The Brotto in Seville, 1051 S. Yale. Each year pay for your own check. Please RSVP by 918.933.3662 or mprecott@jewsutulsa.org no later than Fri., Apr. 12.

**JewRock! A Night of Rock & Roll** • Sat., Apr. 16 • 7 p.m. • The 918-742-0712 • wildfork.com • Come see local Tulsa musicians perform their favorite hits from music’s Jewish icons through the lens of photojournalist Janet Macoska, including: Gene Simmons, Paul Stanley, and Mick Jagger. The evening’s performances will be followed by a delicious dinner buffet, beer and wine included. Full dinner buffet, wine and beer included. Free tour of the Museum will be available from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. The evening will begin at 7 p.m. and the program will begin at 7:30 p.m. Call 918.933.3873 or visit www.tulsagcc.org to reserve your spot on the floor at no charge. For more information, call 918.933.3873 or Jewish Rock at 918.933.3873.

**Jews Rock: A Night of Art, Feasting & Rock ’N Roll** • Sat., Apr. 16 • 5:30 p.m. • This event will feature a hors d’oeuvres dinner buffet, beer and wine included. Free tour of the Museum will be available from 4:30 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. The evening will begin at 5:15 p.m. and the program will begin at 5:30 p.m. Call 918.933.3873 or visit www.tulsagcc.org to reserve your spot on the floor at no charge. For more information, call 918.933.3873 or Jewish Rock at 918.933.3873.

**Sisterhood Women’s Seder** • Sun., Apr. 16 • 5:30 p.m. • Temple Israel Sisterhood will enjoy a special Women’s “Pre-Seder,” celebrate spring, and spiritually prepare for Passover. “This is not your traditional seder! We’ll still follow the Seder story through women’s eyes with songs, readings, family discourse and plenty of fun foods and drinks. All women and girls are welcome. $18/adult. Please RSVP by Apr. 6 to Peg Kishner or reservations@templateloca.com or contact Rabbi Karen for more information. Ladies, you won’t want to miss this unique experience! PJ Hadassah for Families with Young Children • Sat., Apr. 16 • 5:30 p.m. • We’ll end Shabbat together with songs, crafts, activities, a light dinner, bathroom story, and Hadassah blessings. This new experience is geared toward families with babies through early elementary school-age children and their parents or grandparents. Wear your pajamas for this fun family-friendly event! For more information and to RSVP, contact Jini Tulsa at jennifer@templameloca.com.

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In Pursuit of Religious Freedom

by Drew Diamond

Recently, an Oklahoma Senate panel, in a zealous effort to support religious freedom, passed a measure to let voters decide whether to repeal a section of the Oklahoma Constitution that was the basis for the court-ordered removal of the Ten Commandments monument from the Capitol grounds.

In this year of increasingly intense and vitriolic political rhetoric the role of religion in a free society has been pushed to the forefront of our national conversation. Here at home this conversation has centered on a passionate but ultimately misguided attempt to place a Ten Commandments monument on the grounds of our State Capitol. I would like to believe that the proponents of the Capitol grounds monument intend no disrespect towards Oklahoma’s Jewish community. Intended or not, the State’s argument before the Oklahoma Supreme Court in support of keeping the monument was disrespectful. The State’s position included the disingenuous insistence that the commandments and the two Stars of David engraved on the monument have no religious significance. The fact that it represents an important aspect in Jewish religious beliefs highlights why our Founding Fathers, the US Constitution and the Oklahoma Supreme Court are right in preserving the separation of church and state by preventing this monument from being on state property.

The posting of the Ten Commandments on government property undermines religious tolerance in America. The assertion by proponents that the Ten Commandments are values universally accepted by all Americans is fundamentally false. Not all Americans subscribe to religions that follow the Bible or the Ten Commandments. Millions of Americans follow religious traditions that draw from a variety of texts other than the Bible. There are even different biblical versions of the Ten Commandments. The posting of the Ten Commandments by the government on government property is an act of disrespect to the religious beliefs of a great many Americans.

I have no doubt that the Religious Liberty Clause set out in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution provided the foundation for the greatest advancement in religious freedom in human history. Even so, we are still plagued by religious conflict. An important counter to religious strife is for as many people as possible to have a clear understanding of the First Amendment and the exercise of freedom it supports. The Amendment is embodied in the first sixteen words of the Bill of Rights and reads, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” This constitutional separation is fundamental to the idea that we have no state mandated religion. This is about protecting our religious liberty. Oklahomans are overwhelmingly religious people who neither need nor desire the state to be designated as Christian, Muslim, Jewish or other religion.
Power in Unity

by Connie Hammond

T here is power in unity. As a participant in the recent Student Leadership Mission to Israel with the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), I had the privilege of embarking on a life-changing trip to Israel with top student advocates from universities across the United States. As the only student trip participant from Oklahoma, I had the distinct pleasure of representing both the state and the city of Tulsa, where I attend Oral Roberts University.

During this trip, I experienced two full weeks of Zionist education and advocacy training, equipping me to advocate for Israel on campus and worldwide. We traveled throughout the lovely land of Israel, including Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the Western Negev, Galilee, the Jordan Valley, and the Golan Heights. Israel is truly my favorite place on earth and I cherish every moment I spend there. During my time in Israel with ZOA, I gleaned much wisdom and knowledge from renowned experts in Israel, including members of the Knesset, businessmen, and historical experts. However, one of the many highlights of my ZOA Israel trip experience was building relationships with other student participants and growing together through the journey.

The beauty of people of different backgrounds uniting in support of the state of Israel and Zionism has proven to surpass the boundaries of differences between the trip participants. The profoundly diverse backgrounds of the participants in this winter’s ZOA Israel trip further support this fact, including nearly 40% Christian Zionists. On December 24, our group had the privilege to hear from Father Gabriel Naddaf, an Arab speaking, Aramean Greek Orthodox priest from Nazareth. As a non-Jewish member of the heartland of Israel, Father Gabriel is an outspoken supporter of Israel and the freedom of religion that is guaranteed within its borders.

As Father Gabriel Naddaf addressed our group, he emphasized the importance of “looking for the things that connect us together,” our moral obligation to support Israel. Passionate about supporting his home, the state of Israel, and the security forces that keep Israel safe, Father Naddaf has received several death threats from Arabs who are hostile to his message of support for Israel. Even with active death threats and hostility surrounding him within the Arab community, he boldly continues sharing his message of Zionism, recognizing Israel as the Jewish homeland that needs protection and support. Father Naddaf recognizes how crucial it is to establish, keep, and maintain unity for Israel because we, as Zionists, have the truth.

The Jewish state is the only place in the Middle East where protection is granted to Christians, including the freedom to worship and express themselves freely. Israel is the only country in the Middle East in which the Christian population is growing instead of shrinking because Israel is a radiant example of human rights protection and support. Father Naddaf recognizes the responsibility that accompanies this privilege.

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With nary a minyan assembled, and that's ten or twelve minutes at most and then windows, exaggerated eves and cornices was no actual sunset, services are held on sundown.

"With sundown, a healthy glow from the aquavit and comradery of our new best friends, we launched into a dinner that was an extravaganza of Jewish cooking enhanced by fish, both smoked and not, from the sparkling Scandinavian sea waters. Eventually, seated laden with lox and warmed with aquavit (a Norwegian version of vodka laden with lox and warmed with aquavit (a Norwegian version of vodka), we observed to our hostess identified culturally with Judaism but for the most part were less spiritually or ceremonially inclined. Yet, this group of secular Jews felt a strong bond for one another and wanted to continue their regular get-togethers. A pragmatist solution was reached. Jewish holidays and Shabbat became dinner parties with religious observance as an ad hoc lugnappé. Viola! The community was preserved.

Aside from the pure joy of traveling to distant places, part of our interest in visiting the Trondheim synagogue was based on what we later learned was the mistaken impression that being only a couple of hundred miles—a mere snowball's throw—south of the Arctic Circle, it is the world's northernmost synagogue. In fact, the 1992 conversion of a single-family home into a synagogue in Fairbanks, Alaska is 19 miles further north—although it likely lacks lox and aquavit.

A thousand years ago King Olav den Hellige forbade anyone who was not Christian to live in Norway—no doubt a selfish effort to hog all the lox for his buddies. During the Spanish and Portuguese inquisitions, a few were given special permission to live in the frosty country. The numbers were extremely small until 1620 when King Christian IV welcomed Jews because he thought they would be helpful in his opposition to the clergy. Still, there have never been more than 2,100 Jews in Norway. In 1892 the country's first Jewish community was established in Oslo. It was followed 13 years later with the organization of the Jewish community of Trondheim and purchase of a synagogue building in that city. In 1925, a former railroad station was purchased and remodeled as the current synagogue to accommodate the growing Trondheim Jewish congregation.

In 1940, the Nazis occupied Norway. During the autumn of 1942, about 780 Norwegian Jews were deported to Auschwitz. The Norwegian resistance movement succeeded in smuggling about 900 Jews to relative safety across the border to neighboring Sweden; the remainder were either murdered, imprisoned or went into hiding.

In a park not far from the Trondheim synagogue, there is a statue memorializing Cissi Klein, a 13-year-old Norwegian girl who was a victim of the Holocaust. Cissi was arrested by the Nazis when they marched into her Trondheim school classroom. A few years later and more than their own families. Meanwhile, the same media fail to feature images of Jewish civilians who have been struck by bombs the Palestinians gratuitously lob into Israel. These remarks may seem a little out of place but when you've traveled to as many synagogues as we have, it is incredibly frustrating that to much of the media Jewish lives don't matter.

Considering its relatively low incidence of anti-Semitism, high per-capita income and high educational levels, Norway offers a fine homeland for its small Jewish population. Add gorgeous fjords, scenery aplenty, an abundance of palate-pleasing fresh fish as well as welcoming Jewish communities and it's pretty great for the Jewish tourist, too.

by LOUIS DAVIDSON

JEWISHTULSA.ORG JEWISHTULSA.ORG

Traveler or Lox Anyone?

Norway for the Jewish Traveler or Lox Anyone?

SHABBAT BEGINS AT sundown. But what do you do in Trondheim, Norway where there is no sundown in the summer? Our Norwegian hostess, Vera Komiasar, emailed, "It will be nice if you will arrive in the Synagogue about 5:30 p.m. and can join the service." This particular Shabbat service also happened to be Rosh Hashanah. When we arrived at the splendid blue synagogue, Vera explained that since there was no actual sunset, services are held on sundown.
O nce in a great while, an essential book goes beyond normal borders to set new parameters for public discussion. One of those books is Between the World and Me, the newest work by Ta-Nehisi Coates, a senior editor for The Atlantic magazine and an acute observer of culture in America.

Written in the form of a letter to his adolescent son, the book carefully and passionately describes what it is to be black in America in the era of Trayvon Martin and Eric Garner. Coates describes a world in which young black men of great promise and ambition must nevertheless learn to negotiate the dangers of the street and, at the same time, assert themselves against institutionalized racism. Coates reminds us that years after the era of Civil Rights, America remains a maze of impediments and frustrations to those who stand outside white majority culture. The book has been much honored since its publication and won the National Book Award in 2015.

Congregation B’nai Emunah will address the issues Coates poses in a public conversation on Between the World and Me on Tuesday, May 3, at 7 p.m. The event will feature a panel presentation followed by round-table discussions designed to bring together citizens from all parts of the Tulsa community. Panelists will include Rev. Ray Owens, faculty and pastor of Metropolitan Baptist Church; Felicia Collins Correia, former Chief Executive Officer of YWCA Tulsa and DVIS/Call Rape; GT Bynum, Tulsa City Councilor for District 9; and Micah Cash, graduating senior at Booker T. Washington High School. The event is free and open to the public, and no advance reservations are necessary.

Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates was published in 2015. The book carefully and passionately describes what it is to be black in America in the era of Trayvon Martin and Eric Garner. Coates reminds us that years after the era of Civil Rights, America remains a maze of impediments and frustrations to those who stand outside white majority culture. The book has been much honored since its publication and won the National Book Award in 2015.
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18 Creek storyteller, Will Hill. He shared his the arts.

A T ulsa Gem Mizel Jewish Community Day School—A Tulsa Gem

by LILLIAN HELLMAN, DIRECTOR

W hat A Year this has been for Mizel students, and it’s not over yet! We have been so fortunate to be exposed to many exceptional speak-

ers and participate in many outstanding educational field trips. As a small school, flexibility is naturally built into our program, allowing our teachers more autonomy to be creative and experimental.

The Jewish and secular holidays and visiting speakers have been readily and eagerly incorporated into our students educational programming with great success. Exposure to unique cultural and scientific activities enhances both our curriculum and our students’ insight into the world.

We began the year with a beekeeper who taught all of our students about the process of producing honey. As a result, Rosh Hashanah’s custom of eating apples and honey took on a new and more significant meaning for our students and teachers. The younger children studied apples through stories, graphing, art and science, while the older ones expanded their thematic study to include highly detailed research projects about other insects.

A visit to the Geoscience Center “transported” our 2nd–4th graders to a prehistoric time. Dinosaurs, fossils, rocks and working with a scientist made this an exciting and inspiring field trip.

Our study of Native Americans came alive with the visit of Native Muscogee Creek storyteller, Will Hill. He shared his ancestors’ stories, exposing the children to the Muscogee language, enhanced by his incorporation of traditional flutes and drums. The older students followed up this unit with a visit to Woolaroc Museum where they could visualize the history of Native American peoples through the arts.

Close to Evil, in Tulsa

H ow does a Slovakian Jew become an Irish business-

man and national celebrity? You may well wonder. Tomi Reichental was born in a small village in the Topolcany region of Czechoslovakia in 1935. The rhythm of his rather typical childhood was interrupted when the gov-

ernment began to deport Slovakian Jews in 1942. As his family and friends began to disappear, Tomi’s world irrevocably changed. Along with his mother and his grandmother, Tomi was transported to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany in October 1944.

Bergen-Belsen is most notorious as the camp where Anne Frank died and the location where much of the now-familiar footage of the Holocaust was filmed. We have all seen photographs and films of Bergen-Belsen, whether or not we realize where those images were shot. When the British liberated the camp in April 1945, they discovered piles of emaciated bodies, often stacked five or six high, and a camp so disease-infested that they subsequently burned it to the ground. As a nine-year-old boy, Tomi had watched as his grandmother was tossed onto one of these piles of corpses. Understandably, he did not speak of it for over fifty years.

Fast forward to 2016, and Tomi is making up for lost time. His domestic and international speaking schedule would exhaust a man half his age. A cyclist, active grandfather and national spokesperson for Holocaust education, Tomi regularly visits schools in his adoptive country of Ireland and beyond. On May 5 at 7 p.m., Tomi will be the guest speaker at Tulsa’s 19th Annual Yom HaShoah commemora-

tion at Temple Israel.

If you want to find out about Tomi’s journey from stateless Jewish child survivor to Irish businessman and national treasure, please join us for a screening of a feature-length documen-

tary about Tomi titled ‘Til the Tenth Generation, which will be shown at the Circle Cinema, 10 S. Lewis Ave. on Sunday, April 17 at 2 p.m.

Tomi’s talk on Yom HaShoah will be titled ‘Close to Evil’ and will focus on his journey towards reconciliation with one of his former captors, and his unusual bond with the granddaughter of a man who played a significant role in the murder of 35 members of his family.

The 2016 Yom HaShoah commemora-

tion will be presented by the Council for Holocaust Education and the Tulsa City-County Library (TCCL). The program is free and open to the public. Come early to secure a seat, enjoy the student artwork that will be on display, and browse the selection of books provided by the TCCL’s mobile library. Don’t forget your library card! After the commemoration, Tomi will sign copies of his memoir, I Was a Boy in Belsen, which will be on sale at the event for $15. For more information, call the Federation at 918.495.1100.
Haym Salomon: Financier of the American Revolution

by PHIL GOLDFARB

W

ithout Haym Salomon (birth name Chaim Salomon), a for- gotten Sephardic Jew in American history, all of us might be singing “God Save the Queen” and using British pounds instead of U.S. dollars! Haym Salomon (1740–1785) immi- grated to New York City in 1773 from the town of Lublin, Poland where he established himself as a financial broker for merchants engaged in overseas trade. He became the agent to the French consul, as well as the paymaster for the French forces in North America. (Remember the Marquis de Lafayette?) In 1781, he began working extensively with Robert Morris, the newly appointed superintendent of finance for Congress such as James Madison and James Wilson during their stay in Philadel- phia, giving direct loans to the government, personally supported numerous army offi- cers, various members of the Continental Congress such as James Madison and James Wilson during their stay in Philadel- pbia, gave direct loans to the government, and granted outright bequests to men he felt were unsung heroes of the Revolution who had become impoverished during the conflict.

Salomon was never repaid the money he personally gave for the Revo- lutionary War effort, and he died of tuberculosis in debt on January 6, 1785. His belongings were auctioned off to raise money for his funeral, and his body was buried in an unmarked grave in Philadelphia. It was only in 1822 when his remains were moved to the Old South Church in Boston.

Haym Salomon’s actions during the Revolutionary War, his contributions, and his character are often overlooked or little known today. However, his story is a testament to the importance of financial support during times of war and the impact it can have on the course of history. He was a true patriot who believed in the cause of America and worked tirelessly to ensure that it succeeded.

There is Hope

by MICHEL YANTZ, SMMA director of collections and exhibitions

Often times we go through our days getting work done and feeling good about what we have accom- plished as an individual and as an organization. Yet at other times, we get so focused that we forget to take a step back and see if we are truly making a difference in our community and meeting our mission. Other times, that reminder may come from an unlikely place.

The Sherwin Miller Museum of Jewish Art hosted State of Deception, The Power of Nazi Propaganda exhibition from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. from September 2015 through February 2016. We had thousands of people and Tulsa area school children come and take tours from our docents who educated them on the details of World War II and the power of symbols. I felt this exhibit was a success based on our visitor numbers and the amount of tours every week, but the most impactful moment came when the exhibit was already crated up and on its next location. We hired a few gentlemen from a temporary worker agency to help us pack up the exhibit and load those crates into two semi-trailers. I was chatting back and forth and asked me if I worked for the museum. I confirmed I did and then he started sharing his story with me. He knew it meant something, so he asked her, “Believe it or Not.”

“I used to be a part of a white supremacy group, and I didn’t even understand some of the things that were being done until I was actually shot and that made me start thinking about who I was and start asking questions. My girlfriend has already shared so much with me that I didn’t understand, and I think coming to see your museum together would really mean a lot to her and me.”

Four hours and two semi-trailers full of crates later, I handed him two passes for our museum. That excitement of a birthday wish came out of him as he told me of his plans to bring her back as soon as he could. Sometimes you need to take a step back to see how you’re doing because not all of your goals can be seen by others. Listening to him share this story, I got a warm feeling in my heart, and I knew I had done something good.

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