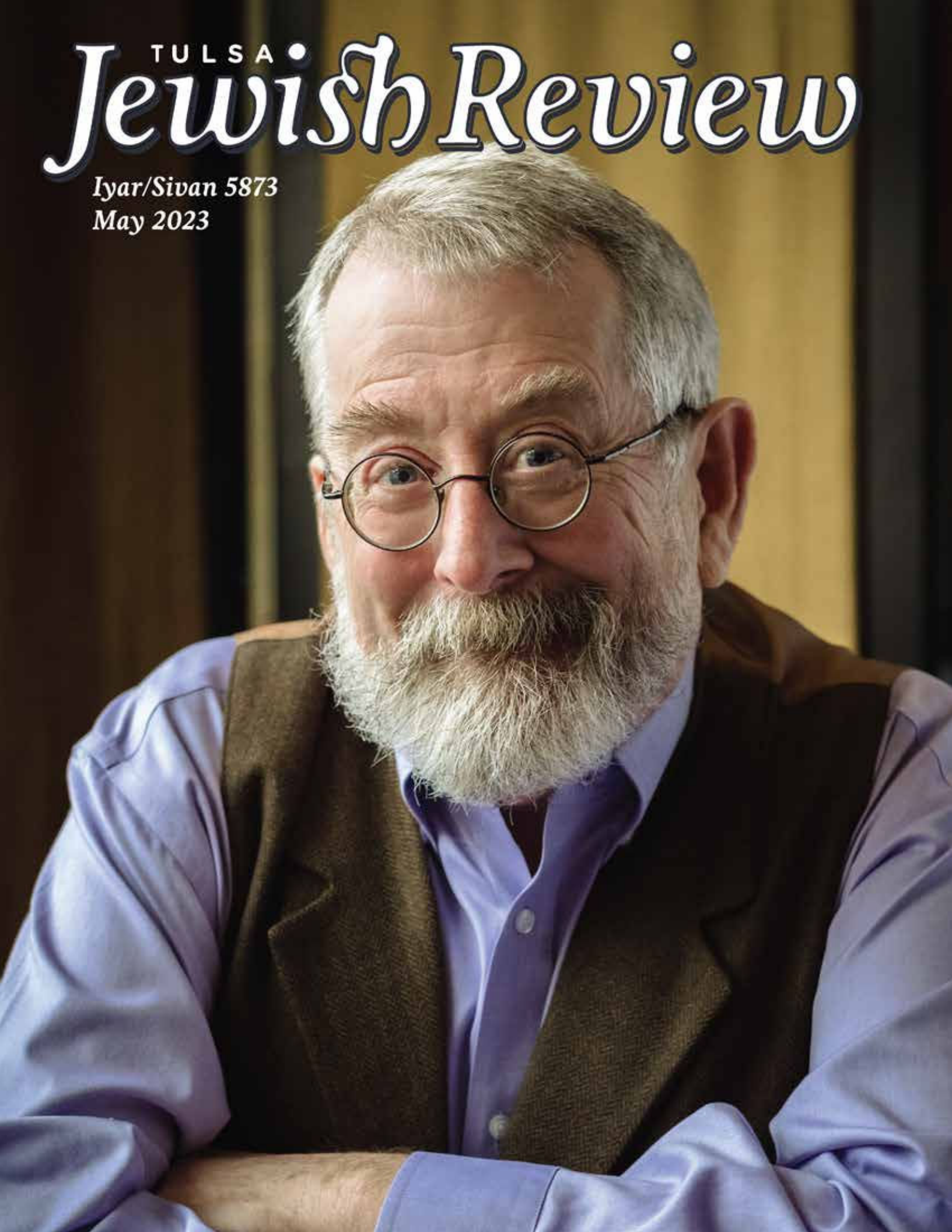
TULSA Jewish Review

Iyar/Sivan 5873
May 2023



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Iyar/Sivan 5783
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Rabbi Marc Boone Fitzerman
Photo by: Bhadri Verduzco

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CELEBRATE SIMCHAS!

Have a b'nai mitzvah, wedding announcement, milestone, or accomplishment to share with the community? Feature it in our "Commuity Corner" section of the Tulsa Jewish Review. Email Director of Communications, Sandy Sloan for submission requirements. sandy@jewishtulsa.org

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MAY CLOSINGS

Thursday May 25-

JFT and SMMJA close at 12:00PM

JCC close at 5:00PM

Friday May 26 –

ALL CLOSED

Monday, May 29 –

JFT and SMMJA Closed

JCC open 12:00 – 5:00PM

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

by Aida Nozick, Executive Director

Spring has sprung and with it comes my renewed commitment to better communication with our Tulsa Jewish Review community. I am looking forward to the many gatherings and events this month and hope to see all of you out enjoying the spring weather.

The cover of this month's TJR celebrates Rabbi Marc Fitzerman's contributions and leadership at Congregation B'nai Emunah and throughout the greater Tulsa community. For the past four decades, Rabbi Fitzerman has been the spiritual leader and teacher at CBE, however, his contributions extend to larger Tulsa community. Mazel Tov to Rabbi Fitzerman on his retirement, you have enriched so many lives, and I'm sure, will continue to during your retirement.

May is the designated month for celebrating Israel's 75th Anniversary, however, please be on the lookout for other programs/events celebrating Israel throughout the year. The festivities kick off with May 8, after our Yom Hazikaron remembrance, we honor Itzik Levin for his service in the Yom Kippur War 50 years ago. On May 15 as we welcome five former Shlichim back to Tulsa. The Shlichim (Israel emissary) program has continued at the Jewish Federation for the past 50 years, which is a milestone unto itself. We are fortunate to participate in this excellent program helping bring Israel to Tulsa. I hope you can join us Thursday, May 18 for an extraordinary new documentary that encapsulates contemporary perspectives on critical issues facing Israel today. Finally, on Sunday, May 21 is our Yom Ha'Azmaut Celebration. Yom Ha'Azmaut (Israel Independence Day) will include a celebration for the entire family, with Israeli food, vendors, games, and arts n crafts, followed by a concert with Israeli country superstar Omer Netzer.

Finally, the month ends with the JFT Annual Meeting on May 23 at noon. At the meeting we review 2022, say farewell to Board President Ed Sherman and usher in incoming Board President Jared Goldfarb. Over the past two years, since my arrival in Tulsa, Ed Sherman has been my trusty guide, helping me get acquainted with the Tulsa Jewish community. I am grateful for the wisdom, support, and leadership Ed has provided me during his tenure. I thank him for his service to our wonderful Jewish community.

Enjoy our Shavuot snack recipe on page 10. Who doesn't love celebrating wheat, fruit, and dairy! Chag Sameach! ■

UPCOMING EVENTS

Yom HaZikaron Ceremony and Dinner | Monday, May 8 6:30PM | Jewish Federation of Tulsa

Please join us at the flag pole outside the CSJCC for a short ceremony remembering soldiers and civilians who lost their lives during the struggle to defend the State of Israel, as well as remembering the victims of terror attacks. Following the ceremony, we will honor the 50th Anniversary of the Yom Kippur War and IDF soldier Itzik Levin inside the auditorium. Includes Israeli dinner, speakers, stories, and celebration.

Register at jewishtulsa.org/yomhazikaron

YJP Lag BaOmer Music Bingo | Thursday, May 11 | 6:30PM | Eerie Abbey Ales

Inviting our Jewish young adult community to join us to play some music bingo and enjoy a brew to celebrate the holiday! Since we have been counting the Omer - a biblical measure of barley that was brought as an offering to the Temple - each evening from the second night of Passover, what better way to mark the coming holiday than surrounded by friends, enjoying a barley beverage, and playing some music bingo? Snacks and apps provided!

Register at jewishtulsa.org/yjpbingo

Documentary Film: The Future of Israel and Its Defenders | Thursday, May 18 | 7:00PM

Through the lens of experts, military strategists, "start-up-Nation" leaders, journalists, and current and former political leaders, this film focuses on internal and external threats to the safety and security of the Jewish State. A behind-the-scenes look at peacemaking from the architects of the Abraham Accords and the challenge of peace with the Palestinians, the violent threat of antisemitism, Holocaust distortion, and its ideological assault on the Jewish State, and the path forward as Israel turns 75.

Register at jewishtulsa.org/israelfilm

Shalom Brunch with Shlichim | Friday, May 19 | 11:00AM

Join us for a welcome brunch with former Shlichim Yaakov Klein (1980-82), Anat Hacohen (1997-99), Yehuda Katz (1999–2003), Itai Lavi (2005-10), and Shiri Achiasef-West (2013-16). You will learn what the shlichim are doing now and the impact the Jewish Agency is making around the world. Brunch includes bagel, cream cheese, salad, fruit, and drinks.

Register at jewishtulsa.org/shalombrunch

UPCOMING EVENTS

Lunch Bunch with Former Shliach Yaakov Klein | Wednesday, May 24 | 12:00PM

Former Shaliach (1980-1982), Yaakov Klein, will be back in Tulsa for Emissary Alumni Week and will be our guest speaker for the lunch bunch series! His topic of conversation is Jewish humor and what it tells us.

Menu: Israeli food by Chef Itzik Levin, Chair of the Israel Committee.

Registration and lunch purchase is required by May 22.

Register at jewishtulsa.org/lbmay

Yom Ha'Atzmaut Celebration | Family Fun Fest | Sunday, Sunday, May 21 | 4:00PM

Celebrate Israel Independence Day with events for the entire family including arts & crafts, bouncy house, balloon-man, Israeli food and drinks, Israeli map room, Israeli short films, Israeli products for sale and more!

Food (falafel sandwiches and kosher hot dogs) and drinks (water and soda) available for purchase. The first 75 people who register will receive a free limited-edition Israel 75 t-shirt!

Register at jewishtulsa.org/familyfunfest

Omer Netzer— Live in Concert! | Sunday, May 21 | 6:00PM

Omer Netzer is Israel's biggest country music star. His smokin' hot guitar licks, combined with gritty vocals, soulful sound, and humble boyish charm is creating a buzz in his new home of Nashville. Expect an evening of country, rock, and blues mixed with captivating vocals and a commanding stage presence!

Please register in advance and sign up for childcare (if needed) at **jewishtulsa.org/concert**

SAVE THE DATES

Lunch Bunch | Wednesday, June 7

CSJCC Annual Trivia Night | Thursday, June 8

YJP Taco Tuesday | Tuesday, June 13

Please contact Director of Programs Isabella Silberg with any questions.
isilberg@jewishtulsa.org 918.495.1100

Go to **www.JewishTulsa.org/calendar** to view a full calendar of events.

SHLICHIM RETURN TO CELEBRATE YOM HA'ATZMAUT

by Chen Shoval, Israeli Emissary

On May 17, five former shlichim (Israeli Emissaries) will return to Tulsa to visit the community they called home for several years. It is exciting for me to witness what a special time this will be for them and their families. I feel grateful and privileged to be the Tulsa shlicha for the past three years and continue to be amazed at the willingness of the community to educate themselves and stay connected to Israel. I know there are times it isn't easy to be a supporter of Israel. Although the emissary program has seen significant changes over the past 50 years, it remaindes relevant to bringing Israeli culture and education to our community.

As I begin to onboard the next emissary beginning August 2023, I reflect on my time here. It is hard to think of leaving Tulsa after three years of calling it home, but there are benefits to changing emissaries every few years. Each brings their unique personality, experiences, and connections from Israel to Tulsa. This is the beautiful part about the shlichim program!

I'm happy to introduce to you five former shlichim who will visit Tulsa helping us celebrate 50 years of the emissary program. We invite you to participate in all of our events throughout Israeli Emissary Week! Say shalom at the welcome brunch on Friday, May 19th at 11:00AM, and come to our annual Yom Ha'Atzmaut Celebration on Sunday, May 21st starting at 4:00PM. We cannot wait to see you celebrating throughout the week!

Yaakov Klein 1980-1982:

I grew up as the son of Holocaust survivors, in a Zionist and religious home, and I studied in a religious high school yeshiva. And yet, in Tulsa, 7000 miles from Israel, I (re)discovered—to my astonishment!—my true Jewishness. It was the perspective and distance that Tulsa gave me: what it is to be Jewish when it is not at all obvious, as in Israel. Being in Tulsa forced me to think about my identity; what is the meaning of being Jewish? How do I express my Jewishness? What does "Jewish roots" mean?

I realized that being Jewish requires you to make a choice. Every day. When I was notified, that I would be sent to Tulsa, I asked, as most of my friends did, Oklahoma? Tulsa? Are there any Jews in Oklahoma? But I "found" there a Jewish community. And what a community! A vibrant, active, proud, well organized community. Not big in numbers, but big in spirit. The warmth of the people of this small community was incredible. The caring love, with which they welcomed me and my family to Tulsa touched me deeply. I found a community with deep commitment to Jewish life and strong ties with Israel. In constant dialogue with the non-Jewish community, with mutual respect and tolerance. In Tulsa, I understood the complexity of being Jewish in the US and in diaspora in general.

It's been four decades since I left Tulsa; but to this very day I carry precious big and small moments from that time in this special community. What I learned in Tulsa about Judaism and Jewish pluralism, I did not learn anywhere else. The unique and enriching experience in Tulsa taught me, among other things, to be less cynical and more connected to my core values.

Anat Hacohen 1997- 1999:

Looking back at the time we spent in Tulsa, here are some of my highlights as the emissary:

We brought Joel Singer, the "architect" of the Oslo accords to speak at TU and founded the annual "Rabin Chair" at the university. We had the first families going on "Kibbutz Family Adventure" to Israel, co-sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Tulsa and Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies. For Israel's 50th birthday, we had the Tulsa Philharmonic dedicate a concert sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Tulsa and nonprofit Up with Trees planted 50 trees! Working with the TU Arts department, we brought an Israeli arts professor to speak as TU and to the women forum of the Jewish community. We held a special concert of the "Sheba Children Choir" at the Greenwood Cultural Center, presented in partnership with the Tulsa black community.

I am proud of the video conferences we held with Mizel Jewish Community Day School (formerly the Heritage Academy) and our 2000 partnership school in Israel for Hanukkah and other occasions. At that time, the technology wasn't so common and simple like today, so it was a big deal! The program gained a lot of cover on the local TV news channels.

In all these projects I had huge help and support from (just to mention a few): Nancy Wolov, the Israel committee chair, and her husband Andy, who was the president of the Jewish Federation at the time (they both remain close personal friends); David Bernstein, Executive Director of JFT; Brina Reinstein, Campaign Director at JFT; Judy Miller, Director of Heritage Academy; Sara Sanditen, a pillar in the Tulsa community back then and many more.

There's no doubt in my mind that the emissary program had an enormous impact on my family's life. I was exposed to gender issues and to progressive Judaism

cultural experience and gained very good mastery of the English language.

Yehuda Katz 1999-2003:

The mission in Tulsa was perhaps the most significant crossroads in our lives. Before the mission, I worked for the Society for Protection Nature in Israel as an environmental educator. My wife, Hana, came up with the idea of going on a Zionist educational mission abroad. After a long selection process and an unforgettable admission interview by David Bernstein, we headed to Tulsa.

The truth is, we first had to open an atlas to understand where Tulsa, Oklahoma is located within the US. The plan was to go on a two-year mission. We stayed for 4 years. This experience gave us so much: a different, special angle to see Israel. Getting to know a fascinating and unknown world of American Jewry. Living in a different culture, a Christian world that loves Israel unconditionally. But above all, living in a warm, embracing, caring for Israel community and introducing another pan of Judaism that we were completely unfamiliar with. The Jewish institutions of Tulsa hosted us wonderfully and welcomed us like family members.

There were quite a few unforgettable professional and personal moments during the mission. The visit of the president of the Israeli Supreme Court, Aharon Barak, on the anniversary of the Rabin assassination memorial day, the Israeli Independence Day event of Israel's leading pantomime artists Hanoch Rosen. The exciting baby naming ceremony at Temple Israel of our youngest daughter Oren, who was born in Tulsa.

We will never forget the personal relationships that developed with many members of the community—friends for life. Whoever comes to stay in our house feels a bit of Oklahoma. Souvenirs from the mission, furniture, photos from Tulsa, and more. Our home is open to any community member from Tulsa who comes to visit Israel, whom we will happily host as part of our gratitude for what you have given us.

Itai Lavi 2005-2010:

We spent 5 great years in Tulsa. Tulsa became home for us. We made so many friends, many we are still in touch with to this day. We had many highlights including: Festival Israel each year, Israel's 60th birthday, meeting the Tulsa community through different programs, state programs with OKIE support, and hosting many visitors, speakers and delegations from Israel.

Camp Shalom was the best time of the year! And we loved attending the many events at Tempe Israel, Congregation B'nai Emunah, and Chabad.

For those of you that remember our children, Peleg is now 27. She is about to finish her 5th year studying medicine, and she is among the top of her class. There are already a few hospitals here who are begging her to come and work for them!

Yuval is 21 and in the second year in the army with one more to go. I can't describe her job, but I can say she is very successful and happy!

We still live in the kibbutz (Ruhama in the south). I am working for a security company, and as many of you know, involved in so many other things. I can't wait to see (and meet) many of you and give you a crushing, bones breaking hug. Miss you all!

Shiri Achiasaf-West 2013-2016:

A little less than 7 years ago, we landed back in Ben Gurion. Right away all I wanted was to turn back and catch the first flight out, back to Tulsa!

Many of you are Zionists or at least care greatly for the land and the country of Israel. We, the shlichim, are busy educating, connecting, engaging, and bringing you emotionally or physically as close as we can to "the land." In the process, we live our lives, with our families, while developing a new routine and making new friends, expanding our social circle, areas of interest, likes, and dislikes. In short, we live our lives, but simply elsewhere. What most of you may not know, is that we also fall in love with your city, the people, the culture. We start buying the boots, the hats, listening to country music (which I personally always loved), going to the Rodeo, we explore your hiking trails, your history, and feel as if "this land is my land"(too…). Tulsa touched our heart like no other place ever has—until and since.

In our house in Sde Boker—which you are all more than welcome to visit and some already have—you can find a nice framed picture of the Circle Cinema, joined by a couple of illustrations of the Blue Dome and Philbrook Museum. Well, truth is that in fact, the first picture that welcomes you is of a herd of buffalos accompanied by the famous Indian statue.

Itamar (almost 20 and a future captain in the navy), Alona (11th grader in the environmental school in Sde Boker), Ben (always a chef) and myself (educator, trainer, and tour guide) would like to thank you once again for an unforgettable life experience which touched us as deep as you may never imagine. We cannot wait to come back! ■

Celebrate Israel 75!

All events held at the Charles Schusterman Jewish Community Center.
See May Upcoming Events pages 4–5 for more details.

MAY 8 — MONDAY, 6:30 PM, FREE

YOM HAZIKARON CEREMONY & DINNER HONORING ITZIK LEVIN

Honoring the 50th Anniversary of the Yom Kippur War and IDF soldier Itzik Levin

Includes Israeli dinner, speakers, stories, and celebration.

Please register in advance at: JewishTulsa.org/yomhazikaron

MAY 18 — THURSDAY, 7:00 PM, FREE

"THE FUTURE OF ISRAEL AND ITS DEFENDERS"

Documentary Film, 55 minutes
Includes complimentary popcorn and soda!

Sign up in advance at: JewishTulsa.org/israelfilm

MAY 19 — FRIDAY, 11:00 AM, FREE

SHALOM BRUNCH WITH SHLICHIM

Join us for a welcome brunch with former Shlichim.

And learn about the Jewish Agency. Brunch includes bagel, cream cheese, salad, fruit, and drinks.

Please RSVP at: JewishTulsa.org/shalombrunch.

MAY 21
SUNDAY, 4:00 – 7:30 PM, FREE
YOM HA'ATZMAUT CELEBRATION

CELEBRATE ISRAEL INDEPENDENCE DAY WITH EVENTS FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY!

4:00 – 6:00 PM

- Arts & crafts
- Bouncy house
- Balloon-man
- Israeli food and drinks
- Israeli map room
- Israeli short films

FOOD AND DRINKS AVAILABLE

- The first 75 people who register will receive a free limited-edition Israel 75 t-shirt
- $8 Falafel Meal
- $5 Kosher Hot Dog Meal

Please register in advance at: JewishTulsa.org/familyfunfest

6:00 – 7:30 PM OMER NETZER — IN CONCERT

Childcare provided!
Please register in advance and sign up for childcare (if needed) at:
JewishTulsa.org/concert

SHAVUOT SNACK

by Sarah Winkelman

Shavuot begins on May 25 at sundown and lasts through May 27 at sundown. The holiday of Shavuot celebrates the receiving of the Torah on Mount Sinai! It also marks the celebration of the wheat and first fruits harvest! It is custom to eat a large dairy meal and stay up all night studying Torah to celebrate this special holiday. For this occasion, I combine all of the edible symbols of Shavuot into one simple dish.

Ingredients:

- Sourdough bread - homemade is best!
- Burrata cheese
- Fresh peaches, sliced
- oil or butter

Optional toppings: salt, balsamic glaze, honey, basil leaves, mint leaves

Instructions:

1. Toast the sourdough bread while completing other steps.

2. Slice your peach into 1/4 inch slivers. On medium heat in a shallow skillet, heat your oil or butter. Carefully place the peach slices in the hot pan. Flip to lightly brown on both sides of the slices. Once they are cooked to your liking, take off and set aside.

3. Top the sourdough toast with burrata the roasted peach slices, and any additional toppings!

4. Enjoy this wheat, dairy, and fruit snack on Shavuot this year!

Israel is celebrating 75 years. Magen David Adom has been there for all of them.

Magen David Adom has been saving lives since 1930, some 18 years before Israel became a state. We take immense pride in being Israel's national emergency medical service and in supplying the blood and medical care for the soldiers who have ensured Israel's existence. Join us in celebrating Israel's 75th year of independence on Yom HaAtzma'ut.

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ISRAEL 75

Israel celebrates 75 years.
MDA has been there for every one.

afmda.org/give

UPCOMING EVENTS

Passport to Wellness | May Fitness Challenge

This month's fitness challenge focuses on your overall well-being. In celebration of Hannah and Benny's recent trip to Israel, you are challenged to embark on a wellness adventure! Spend the month collecting wellness destination stamps by completing each challenge on your wellness passport map.

Members who complete the entire passport challenge will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a travel accessories!

Wellness Series

Wellness Series: Dimensions of Wellness | Wednesday, May 31 | 10:15 AM | Dan Room

Join Laura Allen, Director of Community Outreach and Membership to learn about the Dimensions of Wellness with an open discussion on what wellness means to you. Laura will guide you through the dimensions of wellness and provide helpful insight into why these dimensions are vital to living a vibrant life. Please join us for an open discussion and how we can support one another through our wellness journey together at the CSJCC. Snacks provided!

Register at csjcc.org/wellness-may

Minute to Win It Game Day | Wendesday, May 31 | During All Fitness Classes

In celebration of Senior Health and Fitness Day on Wednesday, May 31st, we will be conducting Minute to Win It games in our fitness classes. There will be multiple games separated into stations and a round of games where participants will be separated into teams. No matter your age, it is always important to focus on your health, wellness, and fitness. It is also important to celebrate you and all you do, so you do not want to miss out on this fun theme day!

CSJCC Mini Try-Athlon | Save the Date | Sunday June 25

We are hosting our first mini triathlon at the CSJCC! Test your mental and physical abilities with an 8-minute swim, 20-minute stationery bike ride, and a 15-minute run. Registration includes a "Try-Athlon" t-shirt, and meal and pool party following the event at the JCC outdoor pool.

May Demo Days to prepare for the June Try-Athlon

Test your swim, bike, and run skills! Never participated in a triathlon? No problem. Come to our May Demo Days to get a feel for the sport and transitions.

CELEBRATING RABBI MARC BOONE FITZERMAN

by Dr. Jennifer L. Airey

When I ask congregants to share their thoughts on Rabbi Marc Boone Fitzerman, two themes emerge: he is a master at creating community, and he is really, really good at everything he does. As Elana Newman, past president of Congregation B'nai Emunah said to me, he can bake, he can write a book on ironing, he can teach Talmud while standing on one leg, and he can string words into some of the most moving sermons Tulsa has ever heard. Dr. Newman shared with me an email that her late mother, Bea, once sent to the Rabbi: "I want you to know you ruined my whole day! I was up almost all night reading your book on Ironing and when I finally did fall asleep, I kept chuckling in my sleep. As a result I was so tired that I played a lousy game of bridge. That made me so upset that now I have to seek solace from my Rabbi." This email encapsulates the affection and esteem in which this community holds Rabbi Fitzerman. He is teacher, spiritual leader, and social glue to Congregation B'nai Emunah and the Tulsa Jewish community more broadly.

When Rabbi Fitzerman arrived at Congregation B'nai Emunah in 1985, however, becoming the seventh Senior Rabbi in the Congregation's history, he found a very different institution than the one we know today. Rabbi Arthur Kahn, his predecessor, had been in Rabbi Fitzerman's words, "an open-minded Orthodox Rabbi"; the congregation was particularly traditionalist in its approach to gender and did not allow women to participate fully in the liturgical life of the Synagogue. Rabbi Fitzerman's subsequent enfranchisement of women, a cultural shift that occurred over the course of a decade, stands as one of his most important acts, transforming B'nai Emunah's way of life and permanently altering the religious lives of Tulsa's Jewish women and girls. The move to include women was initially contested by some members of the congregation, who looked at the newly-arrived Rabbi and his wife with suspicion and distrust. "Many of our congregants," Rabbi Fitzerman explains, "felt that I had been foisted upon them by an upstart group of non-traditionalists." Slowly and gradually, though, he shifted the culture with kindness and determination, and in 1988, Jenny Brouse made congregation history as the first woman called to the Torah during the High Holidays. Today, women are equal and vital participants in the religious life of B'nai Emunah, their presence no longer challenged or even remarked upon.

From his earliest days at B'nai Emunah, Rabbi Fitzerman began to establish the core characteristics and beliefs that would guide him throughout his thirty-eight year career: commitment to social justice activism, improved inclusivity, and faith in community. For Rabbi Fitzerman, the Synagogue is not just a place of worship, but a home and an extended family of believers where everyone has a voice.

If the inclusion of women in services is one of Rabbi Fitzerman's most important achievements, also of deep importance to the life of the Synagogue was his fundamental revolutionizing of services through the addition of instrumental music. Between 1998 and 2000, B'nai Emunah became one of the first Conservative congregations in the United States to transform its services musically, using instruments to create a "wall of sound" that deepens the experience of and engagement with the liturgy. It has been Rabbi Fitzerman's consistent aim to play with different forms of worship, some traditional, some experimental, in an effort to provide each congregant the fullest experience of their Jewish faith. The success of the Synagogue's experiment with music can be found in the joyous sounds of communal singing at holiday services, at annual events like Rise Up Singing, and in the successful albums released by Klay Kodesh, the Synagogue's resident music performance group.

A modernizer of synagogue traditions, Rabbi Fitzerman was born in Oak Park, Michigan, into a post-World War II, post-Holocaust world. The son of Ethel and William Fitzerman, a retail carpet salesman, Rabbi Fitzerman's commitment to a life of Jewish learning and practice was cemented by his formative adolescent experiences at Camp Ramah in Wisconsin, in whose immersive religious and intellectual environment he found a spiritual, scholarly, and political home. He writes, "The most interesting, mobilized people I knew came out of my life at Ramah. They were counter-cultural traditionalists and knew their way around subtle text study. In addition, they took faith and politics seriously. I wanted to be part of that world forever." Camp Ramah built in Fitzerman a commitment to Jewish community, intellectual exchange, and varied expressions of worship and faith, forming the values he would later put into practice at B'nai Emunah.

Rabbi Fitzerman eventually attended the University of Michigan before enrolling at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City. He lost two important mentors along the way, Rabbi Mordecai Halpern, his childhood Rabbi who died by suicide, and Rabbi Isaac Bonder, an influential leader at Camp Ramah, who died of cancer. He also experienced in Seminary many of the same sorts of tensions that would underpin his early years at B'nai Emunah, a conflict between traditional, often Eastern European seminary-educated professors and a younger generation of rabbinical students eager for a more expansive form of worship. He quickly emerged as a leader at Seminary, serving as gabbai of his Seminary synagogue, receiving a series of awards, and finally obtaining a job at Congregation Ohev Sholom in Kansas City, the most sought-after job in his graduating class.

Between leaving Seminary and beginning his career at Ohev Sholom, Rabbi Fitzerman met the love of his life and future wife, Alice Blue, another life-defining event. They were married during Rabbi Fitzerman's first year in Kansas City, and in June 1982, a year later, they had their first child, Micah. Their second child, Nina, would be born in 1987, when Rabbi Fitzerman had already taken up his job at B'nai Emunah. Alice, a fierce advocate for social justice and women's rights, initially unsettled members of B'nai's congregation as she chose not to change her last name, and maintained her own career. According to Rabbi Fitzerman, when he arrived in Tulsa, "Alice had been on a study tour of Nicaragua, and some were convinced that she was a communist sympathizer. Not only that, but she had her own last name and our children's last names were a hyphenated hybrid." Eventually, though, tensions receded as the Rabbi and his wife became more entrenched in the community, and as their kindness, wisdom, and commitment to faith and community became evidence. Rabbi Fitzerman's ability to negotiate conflict, listen to, absorb, and implement feedback, and debate without becoming angry have been foundational to his time at B'nai, and the community increasingly thrived under his leadership.

Even as Rabbi Fitzerman constructed an affective community in Tulsa, he also had a great hand in reshaping B'nai Emunah's physical space. Between 1998 and 2000, the Synagogue building underwent a complete renovation and reconstruction, forcing the congregation to relocate temporarily. All Souls Unitarian Church at 30th and Peoria opened its doors to B'nai, and this period of dislocation had a permanent impact both on the Congregation and on Rabbi Fitzerman's rabbinate. First, by physically removing the Congregation from its longstanding traditions, the temporary move created liturgical distance that allowed Rabbi Fitzerman the freedom to experiment with new forms of worship. Indeed, it was during this period that the inclusion of liturgical music in services first became a possibility. Secondly, this period created firm ties of friendship between B'nai Emunah and All Souls, and reinforced the benefits of interfaith cooperation. Since returning to 17th and Peoria, it has been another hallmark of Rabbi Fitzerman's approach to Jewish life that he has opened the Synagogue's doors to members of other faiths and to the broader Tulsa community. B'nai Emunah's pre-school has become one of the most sought-after pre-K placements in Tulsa, and the Synagogue now regularly hosts community events such as concerts, author talks, interfaith services, cultural celebrations, and many, many delicious meals. Members of the Congregation routinely serve their community and create interfaith ties, from the delivery of Christmas cookies to first responders to support for Tulsa's Muslim Community.

The Synagogue under Rabbi Fitzerman's leadership has also become a hub of social justice activism. B'nai Emunah's earliest congregants were immigrants from Varklan, a shtetl destroyed by the Nazis on August 4, 1941, and Rabbi Fitzerman honors that history through his "pro-social" commitment. From literacy training and ESL education to parent service programs, the Synagogue seeks to help the less fortunate of the Tulsa Community. The Altamont Bakery, employs formerly homeless citizens of Tulsa suffering from mental illness, teaching them to bake cookies that are sold all across Tulsa. "We are baking our way to a better world," Rabbi Fitzerman told Haaretz. The project has received national attention and awards for its novel approach to community intervention. Most recently, B'nai Emunah has opened its doors to refugees, working on resettlement services with Catholic Charities, a true merging of the Synagogue's interfaith, community building, and social justice goals. B'nai Emunah under Rabbi Fitzerman's leadership has become a pillar not only of the Jewish community, but of Tulsa more broadly, and it has had an impact on the many people who use its services and experience the warmth of its congregants.

Rabbi Fitzerman does not intent to slow down as he steps into what he is calling Life 2.0. Besides spending time with his grandchildren, he intends to devote himself to new projects and to remain a vital part of Jewish Tulsa. He is, for instance, an avid collector of amateur photographs, and in 2014, he curated an exhibition, "Unexpected: Vernacular Photography from the Collection of Marc Boone Fitzerman," for the Philbrook Museum. Rabbi Fitzerman has been a steadying presence at B'nai Emunah for thirty-eight years, nearly one third of the Congregation's history. His words have guided our lives, from his monthly columns in the Synagogue newsletter to his soaring sermons delivered during High Holidays. He has spoken to us in joy, in sorrow, and in anger, has been with us through all the life cycle events of wedding vows, baby blessings, bar mitzvahs, and funeral eulogies, and has always reminded us of our duty to justice and to one another. Speaking for myself, he made me want to be an active part of the Jewish community after years of feeling disaffected in a bigger city. On behalf of the entire community of B'nai Emunah, we send him our deepest thanks for his service bettering our lives, and wish him all the best on his next ventures. We are fortunate to have been shaped by his guidance, support, and care. ■

WELCOME SOFIA THORNBLAD, NEW DIRECTOR OF COLLECTIONS AND EXHIBITIONS

The Sherwin Miller Museum of Jewish Art is thrilled to welcome Sofia Thornblad as the new Director of Collections and Exhibitions. Sofia relocated to Tulsa from New Hampshire, where she served as the Executive Director for the Horatio Colony House Museum. As the museum's only employee, she wore many hats including all areas of museum operations. Perhaps most important, however, is her dedication to educating the public about the Holocaust and Jewish history.

Sofia received her bachelor's degree in Holocaust and Genocide Studies from Keene State College in 2017. This degree has set her on a lifelong path of research on the Holocaust and has given her a deep passion for educating others on this dark aspect of history. She has spent significant time in Europe at sites not only of the Holocaust, but of Jewish history.

Sofia went on to receive her master's degree in Museum Studies with her thesis focused on the Holocaust. While researching her thesis on child survivors, she interviewed several survivors of the Holocaust. She states, "It is my duty to carry their stories with me and share them with future generations."

She brings great enthusiasm for this position because it combines her two areas of expertise. Through art and artifacts, Sofia comments, "The Sherwin Miller Museum is able to bring these places to a diverse audience who may never be able to experience them first hand." Additionally, Sofia has acquired a huge following on TikTok dedicated to Holocaust education. Join The Sherwin Miller Museum of Jewish Art in welcoming Sofia to Tulsa at the opening reception of the Humans of Holocaust exhibition on June 15 at 6:00PM. ■

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

Greetings From Israel | May 8, 2023 - December 31, 2023

Take a trip with us to Israel! The best part is, you don't need to worry about packing any bags. The Sherwin Miller Museum of Jewish Art's new exhibition *Greetings From Israel* will showcase highlights from our collection by Israeli artists alongside beautiful depictions of the holy land.

On View in the Mezzanine Gallery, May 8, 2023- December 31, 2023.

Image: circa 1958, present by friends of Brian E. Brouse in honor of his birthday.

Humans of The Holocaust | June 15, 2023 - December 2023

As the grandson of a Holocaust survivor, Erez Kaganovitz created *Humans of the Holocaust* project to tell the human story of Holocaust survivors, their children and Jews around the world who are affected by antisemitism today. The project tells the story of the Holocaust in a wholly unique way: through the medium of digital storytelling. With inspiration and optimism, H*umans of the Holocaust* offers a fresh perspective about the experiences of Holocaust survivors, showcasing individual stories of how the human spirit can overcome even the most inhumane circumstances.

Opening Reception - June 15, 2023 at 6:00PM

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FAREWELL MORAH CAROL ADAMS

by Sandy Sloan

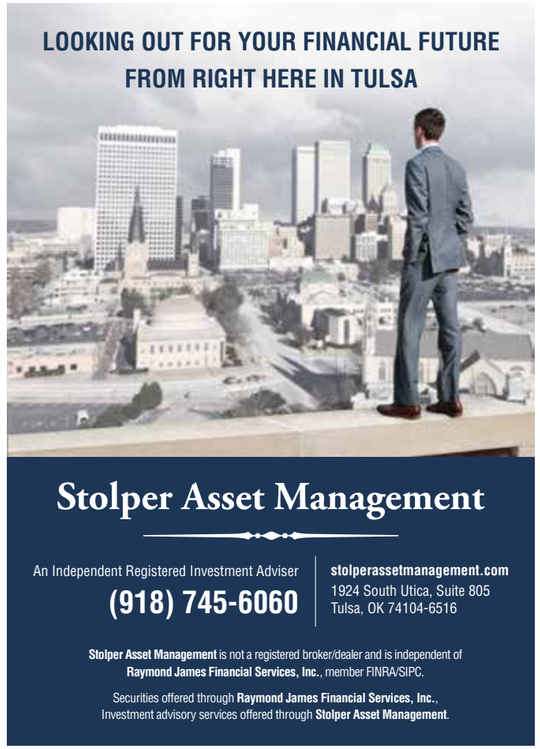
For the past 17 years, Carol Adams, aka Morah Adams, has made Mizel Jewish Community Day School her home. Involved in education for 56 years, as a teacher, librarian, interventionist, and more, Carol is retiring at the end of this school year.

Carol was born and raised in the area, attending elementary and high school in Jenks, before heading to Northeastern State College (now Northeastern State University) in Tahlequah to receive her bachelor's degree in education. Soon after graduating in 1957, she was asked by the superintendent of Jenks Public Schools to teach 5th grade for one semester, while the current teacher served our country. The following year, she was hired as a full-time 1st grade teacher. During this time, Carol decided to go back to school for her master's degree in education. She taught during the day and then either attended classes or studied at night. In 1972, Carol received her master's degree from Northeastern State College.

Carol spent the next 38 years at Jenks Public School and was honored Site Teacher of the Year in 1995. In 2006, Dr. Sandra Tilkin reached out to her about teaching at Heritage Academy, now Mizel JCDS. Carol gladly accepted the position and left Jenks Public School to begin the next phase of her career at Heritage Academy.

For the first ten years, she taught the Alef/Bet (1st/2nd grade) classes. Then, for five years, Carol was the part-time librarian and reading enrichment teacher. For the past two academic years, Carol has taught the same group of students, Alef/Bet and now Bet/Gimmel (2nd/3rd grade). "My best teaching experience has been working at Mizel JCDS," says Carol. "The small class size and getting to know my students and their families has been amazing!"

Carol and her husband of 55 years are looking forward to traveling, sightseeing, and spending more time with family. Mizel JCDS has some big shoes to fill! The entire staff and families at Mizel JCDS are very appreciative of Morah Carol, her time and dedication educating our kids, and wish her health and success in her retirement. She will be greatly missed and will always remain a valued treasure at our school! ■



Butterflies

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HISTORY OF THE STAR OF DAVID©

by Phil Goldfarb

The Star of David (Hebrew: מגן דוד, romanized: Magen David, lit.'Shield of David') is a generally recognized symbol of both Jewish identity and Judaism. Geometrically it is two equilateral triangles superimposed on each other, forming the shape of a hexagram.

The Star of David originated long before it was adopted by the Jewish faith and the Zionist movement as it appeared thousands of years ago in the cultures of the East. In the past, what we know today as the Star of David was a popular symbol in pagan traditions, as well as a decorative device used in first-century churches and even in Muslim culture. The hexagram, being a simple geometric construction, has been used in various motifs throughout human history, which were not exclusively religious. It appeared as a decorative motif in both 4th-century synagogues and Christian churches in the Galilee region.

Unlike the menorah, the Lion of Judah, the shofar and the lulav, the hexagram was not originally a uniquely Jewish symbol. The origins of the Star of David in Judaism are unclear; however, evidence suggests that the hexagram shape began to appear in ancient Jewish history as a decorative motif including an excavated seal in sixth century B.C.E. Its Hebrew name, Magen David and ancient Jewish texts suggests that the Jewish symbol originates from the shield of the ancient army led by King David when he went into battle and so the hexagram became known in popular legends as the "Shield of David."

There are several instances in the Torah, Tanakh, Talmud, and other traditional texts where the Magen David is mentioned as representing God's protection of David and the Jewish people, in fact, God is sometimes referred to as the "Shield of David" in Jewish prayer books. The hexagram adorns various early Tanakh manuscripts, such as the famous Leningrad Codex (1008 C.E.).

A hexagram has been noted on a Jewish tombstone in Taranto, Apulia in Southern Italy, which may date as early as the third century CE, while in Israel, there is a stone bearing a hexagram from the arch of the 3rd–4th century found on the Khirbet Shura synagogue in the Galilee.

The use of the hexagram in a Jewish context as a possibly meaningful symbol may occur as early as the 11th century, in the decoration of the carpet page of the famous Tanakh manuscript, the Leningrad Codex dated 1008. Similarly, the symbol illuminates a medieval Tanakh manuscript dated 1307 belonging to Rabbi Yosef bar Yehuda ben Marvas from Toledo, Spain.

The hexagram however only became widespread in Jewish magical texts and amulets (segulot) in the early Middle Ages. In the Middle Ages, the six-pointed star became more closely associated with Jewish mysticism and magic. Later legends connect this star symbol with a ring used by King Solomon to control evil spirits, also earning it the nickname the "Seal of Solomon" while Jewish mystics have utilized hexagrams that we now identify as the "Star of David" as symbols of protection, often inscribing them on the outside of mezuzot and on amulets.

The Star of David only became a distinctly Jewish symbol in 1354, when the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV granted the Jews of Prague the right to carry and display a red flag on certain occasions and they chose as their flag one with a large six-pointed star in its center. In fact, the Jewish quarter of Vienna was marked with a hexagram, to distinguish it from the rest of the city. Around this time, the star also became part of synagogue architecture both in Europe and in the Middle East and North Africa. The Star of David spread to other Jewish communities eventually reaching Eastern Europe.

In 1460, the Jews of Ofen (Buda, now part of Budapest, Hungary) received King Matthias Corvinus with a red flag on which were two Shields of David and two stars. In the first Hebrew prayer book, printed in Prague in 1512, a large hexagram appears on the cover as well as: "Each man beneath his flag according to the house of their fathers...and he will merit to bestow a bountiful gift on anyone who grasps the Shield of David."

In 1592, Mordechai Maizel was allowed to affix "a flag of King David, similar to that located on the Main Synagogue" on his synagogue in Prague. Following the Battle of Prague (1648), the Jews of Prague were again granted a flag, in recognition in their contribution to the city's defense. That flag showed a yellow hexagram on a red background, with a "Swedish star" placed in the center of the hexagram.

By the 17th century, there was a popular practice to put the Star of David on the outside of synagogues to identify them as Jewish houses of worship in much the same way that crosses identified Christian churches.

The symbol became representative of the worldwide Zionist community after it was chosen as the central symbol on a flag at the First Zionist Congress in 1897 which gave the symbol more international prominence. By the end of World War I, it had become an internationally accepted symbol for the Jewish people, being used on the gravestones of fallen Jewish soldiers.

For a negative denotation, A Star of David, often yellow, was used by the Nazis during the Holocaust to identify Jews and mark them for persecution. After the German invasion of Poland in 1939, there initially were different local decrees forcing Jews to wear distinct signs, primarily a yellow badge, in the form of a Star of David, on the left breast and on the back. If a Jew was found in public without the star, he could be severely punished. The requirement to wear the Star of David with the word Jude (German for Jew) was then extended to all Jews over the age of six in the Reich and in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (by a decree issued on September 1, 1941)

Others, however, wore the Star of David as a symbol of defiance against Nazi antisemitism, as in the case of United States Army private Hal Baumgarten, who wore a Star of David emblazoned on his back during the 1944 invasion of Normandy.

The flag of Israel, depicting a blue Star of David on a white background, between two horizontal blue stripes was adopted on October 28, 1948, five months after the country's establishment and has subsequently been known as the "Flag of Zion."

Today, the Star of David is incorporated into Jewish jewelry design, as a decorative symbol and it is also commonly found on Judaica objects, from Kiddush cups, to mezuzahs, kippot and engraved on coffins. There is even a guitar shaped like the Star of David! Many synagogues across the world incorporate the hexagram star motif into their architecture, logos, and more.

Phil Goldfarb is the President of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Tulsa and can be e-mailed at: phil.goldfarb@cox.net. ■

MIDRASHA TEENS VISIT D.C.

by Al Stone-Gebhardt

Each year I've attended the Midrasha Spring Break trip, I have felt a closer connection to my Jewish roots. This year, our Midrasha group traveled to Washington, D.C. Besides allowing small-town Jewish youth to get a feel for big city life, our trip to D.C. also provided opportunities to explore our identities as Jews. We examined our cultural history through a visit to the Holocaust museum, during which we learned how others view our past collective trauma. We also shared our individual stories as we lobbied our Oklahoma politicians on behalf of human dignity and human rights, two values that identify us as Jewish people. Personally, as a trans Jewish man, I felt a sense of safety, acceptance, and belonging within the progressive culture in D.C. Nearly all the bathrooms were gender-neutral, and in visiting Hillel at George Washington University, I felt a sense of community. We volunteered with Bread for the City, an organization that provides food, clothes, and resources to the unsheltered population in D.C., which again reminded me of our responsibility and privilege as Jews to help others.

Lobbying politicians with Midrasha was a new experience for me. I had never spoken to a lawmaker before, yet the opportunity provided me the courage to stand up and speak out on behalf of very important causes. I felt empowered and affirmed. I felt heard as a Jewish man and as a student. As a former debater, I was extremely excited for the opportunity to discuss my concerns about gun laws, abortion, and student safety.

Furthermore, as I am transitioning into my adult life, I am grateful for the opportunity to explore the world outside of Tulsa. The Midrasha trip provided me a chance to travel, to see another city, to get outside my comfort zone–the escape room was my favorite part!–and to become closer to my Jewish peers. While I've had the privilege to meet a Holocaust survivor, this was my first trivp to a Holocaust museum. My sibling and I found the experience extremely touching and powerful; particularly, the children's drawings. My family has connections to the Holocaust, and it reminded me of my roots and the resilience of the Jewish people. That was the most emotionally challenging experience, although I am extremely grateful that I was able to take part in it, especially as I'm old enough to understand the implications of the Holocaust.

Meanwhile, it wasn't just all Jewish culture and history. It was also a spring break trip. We went to a hockey game and saw the Capitals win, we went shopping in Georgetown, we visited the Smithsonian museums, ate locally and at food trucks, we interacted with city life, and took the Metro everywhere. We went to an escape room–which my team won–saw monuments, took a night-time trolly tour of famous spots in D.C., had the chance to decompress and discuss our mental health with our chaperones, had a scavenger hunt at the National Mall, and lived comfortably in a nice hotel for a week. I am very grateful for the experience, and I highly recommended going on this journey as a Jewish youth. ■

INNOVATIVE HOME-BASED PROGRAM FOR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS LAUNCHES IN TULSA

by Tara Levy, Young Jewish Professional

Moishe Pod Tulsa is a new Jewish space in the heart of Midtown Tulsa! The first of its kind in Oklahoma, Moishe (pronounced "moy-shuh") Pod Tulsa is powered by Moishe House, an international Jewish organization that supports peer-led Jewish young professional community. The Moishe House network spans 30+ countries and reaches more than 70,000+ unique young adults worldwide every year. Moishe Pod Tulsa is curated by volunteer house residents Tara Levy and Adam Weingarten. Tara and Adam are both Tulsa Tomorrow alumni from the March 2019 cohort.

Meet Adam:

Adam moved to Tulsa from New York shortly after his Tulsa Tomorrow trip in 2019. Adam is a Jewish educator, musician, and sound engineer who teaches music and physical education at Mizel Jewish Community Day School. He also teaches Hebrew school at Congregation B'nai Emunah. A lifelong musician, Adam is the drummer for the Tulsa-based band, The Giant Killers. He looks forward to sharing his love for music and Jewish life with other young professionals through building a welcoming community in Moishe Pod Tulsa.

MoishePod's first event - Shabbatluck (potluck Shabbat dinner)

Tara Levy and Adam Weingarten welcoming Jewish young adults into their home in Midtown Tulsa.

Meet Tara:

Tara grew up in South Florida and moved to Tulsa in March 2022 as a part of Tulsa Tomorrow and Tulsa Remote. Tara is a Jewish professional and experiential Jewish educator, who began her career in the Jewish community working in the Hillel at the University of Miami and later at the University of Michigan. She currently works for OneTable Shabbat Project, providing support to hundreds of Jewish young adults who host Shabbat dinners in their homes each week across the country. Tara is thrilled to bring her passion for inclusive and creative Jewish experiences to Moishe Pod Tulsa.

Moishe Pod Tulsa launched in March 2023 with a beautiful inaugural event that drew in more than 30 people aptly named "Shabbatluck," a potluck-style Shabbat dinner experience. Each month, Moishe Pod Tulsa will host 3-5 programs for Jewish Tulsans in their 20s and 30s. From Torah study sessions to jam sessions, Tara and Adam look forward to meeting and welcoming the Tulsa young professional Jewish community into their home.

Follow @MoishePodTulsa on Instagram to keep up with all of their house happenings!

Interested in learning more about Moishe Pod Tulsa or joining our mailing list? Email Tara and Adam at MoishePodTulsa@gmail.com. ■

MEET CLARK PLOST, DDS. YOUNG JEWISH PROFESSIONAL

by Phil Goldfarb

Clark Plost, DDS is a 3rd generation Tulsa health care professional. Born in Tulsa, he was a Bar Mitzvah at Temple Israel, graduated as valedictorian from Holland Hall and completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Texas at Austin. He went on to dental school at the University of Oklahoma where he graduated with the highest honors and was the president of his dental school class. Clark stayed at OU and completed an Advanced Education in General Dentistry (AEGD) residency program as Chief Resident where he received additional training in complex dental treatment planning, dental implants, advanced root canal treatment, cosmetic dentistry procedures, and surgical techniques. Clark moved back to Tulsa in October 2019 opened his own dental practice. He is a member of Congregation B'nai Emunah.

Health care runs in the family as Clark's grandfather was Dr. Robert Lubin who started his Internal Medicine and Cardiology practice in Tulsa in 1955, initially at the Utica Square Medical Building (where PF Chang's and Flemings is now located) after his service in the military. Without knowing, Dr Lubin's patients #3 and #4 in 1955 were Herbert and Phyllis Plost whose son Jerry would eventually become his son-in-law! Dr Lubin practiced for 45 years and passed away in June 2001.

Clark's father was Dr. Gerald "Jerry" Plost, also a native Tulsan who went to undergraduate school and medical school at the University of Oklahoma. He married Debra Lubin in 1976. Jerry completed his residency in internal medicine at the University of Texas at Houston followed by a fellowship in pulmonology at the University of Arizona and was board certified in critical care. Practicing at St John Medical Center from 1984-2009, Jerry was the head of the Intensive Care Unit where he was instrumental in establishing the St John ICU as one of the top five ICUs in the country. Ironically, Dr. Plost's first office was in the exact same building and the exact same office as his father-in-law, Dr Robert Lubin in Utica Square! Diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in June 2009, he fought a courageous battle and passed away in October 2010.

Dr. Clark Plost is always happy to care for new patients from the Jewish community at Plost Dental. ■

Nona Bloch Salomon's Food Drive

BBYO's Nona Bloch Salomon is hosting a canned food drive for our StandUP cause to support the Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma. This drive will last from April 1st until May 28th. Our goal is to raise at least 500 pounds of food! We hope you can support us in providing canned goods to those in need throughout our community.

Food You Can Donate:

- Peanut butter
- Canned soup
- Canned fruit
- Canned vegetables
- Canned stew
- Canned fish
- Canned beans
- Pasta (Whole grain is preferred
- Rice (Brown is preferred)

Drop-off Locations:

Temple Israel
2004 E 22nd Pl, Tulsa, OK 74114
Congregation B'nai Emunah
1719 S Owasso Ave, Tulsa, OK 74120
Jewish Federation of Tulsa
2021 E 71st St, Tulsa, OK 74136

Avery "Leaf" Morgan Radka Hammer daughter of Courtney Hammer and Stevan Woller, sister of Solomon, Sarah, Lyla, and Aliyana will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, May 6, at Congregation B'nai Emunah. Leaf is a 6th-grade student at Tulsa School of Science and Arts. where she thrives in drama classes and excels in art. Leaf's music interests include guitar and piano. When not at the mall with friends, she can be found reading, writing, and sewing with friends. Leaf attends Congregation B'nai Emunah ShulSchool and has been preparing for her Bat Mitzvah with Morah Alin Avitan, her lifelong Hebrew teacher and dear family friend. The community is invited to celebrate with Leaf and her family at 9:30 a.m. at Congregation B'nai Emunah or on Zoom.

More than 800 images of America's national parks by artist David Halpern recently became part of the archives of the National Park Service (NPS) History Collection at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. Halpern is a former Tulsa resident and now resides in Santa Fe. While in Tulsa, David served twice as president of the Sherwin Miller Museum of Jewish Art and served as a trustee from 1980 until moving to Santa Fe. David was instrumental in the construction of the SMMJA and his wife, Sue, helped raise funds for the Zarrow Campus expansion. David is a President Emeritus at The Sherwin Miller Museum of Jewish Art. Congratulations David!

Mazel Tov and well wishes to lifelong Tulsans, Rebekah Kantor and Travis Wunsch, on their recent wedding. They said their "I do's" on April 15, 2023 at the Philbrook Museum of Art surrounded by family and friends! Wishing you all the best in this new stage of your lives!

Tulsa Tomorrow transplant Elana Weinstein is an Idea Accelerator through Builders and Backers (www.buildersandbackers.com). She is launching CTOW: Counting the Omer Within, a 7-week (49 day) virtual journey beginning April 25 through May 25 (however, you can join at any time!). The focus is on transformation through creativity and spirituality to alleviate burnout and ignite your spark to create. For more information visit IG @tikkunelana.

THE SYNAGOGUE
CONGREGATION B'NAI EMUNAH

Celebrate Midrasha
Wednesday, May 10 • 6:30 p.m
It's the end of the school year, and we're celebrating! The community is invited to join us Wednesday, May 10, for the annual End of Year Celebration for Midrasha: the joint Jewish High School Supplemental program. We'll reflect on our year of learning and friendship, thank Teachers, and honor our graduating seniors. Our celebration will begin at 6:30 p.m. at Congregation B'nai Emunah with dinner, dessert, and fun! Please be in touch with Morah Sara at slevitt@bnaiemunah.com so we can plan for your participation.

ShulSchool: End of Year Bash
Sunday, May 14 • 9:00 a.m
Celebrate the last day of our Synagogue School programs and the kick-off to summer! It's been another wonderful year and we're ready to end the year with a bang. We'll gather our ShulSchool community offsite for a morning of fun, food, song, and gratitude. Parents and family members should plan to join their school children for the morning. Please check your weekly school communications for details in the coming weeks.

Lifelong Learners Wednesday, May 17 • 11:30 a.m.
Gathering in person for ongoing learning and exploration, ageless seniors from every corner of the community are invited to join Rabbi Kaiman at the Synagogue for lunch and rabbinic storytelling from the literature of our civilization. The sessions always begin at 11:30 a.m., and a bus leaves from Zarrow Pointe at 11:00 a.m. each time. No charge for transportation (you may, of course, come in your vehicle), and lunch from Queenie's will be provided. It's our pleasure to provide this service in cooperation with our fellow Jewish institution. Please reserve your spot by calling the Synagogue at 918-583-7121 or visiting our website.

Preschool Graduation
Thursday, May 18 • 10:00 a.m
We take great pride in the work of our preschool, B'nai Emunah Preschool. School Director Shelli Wright and her staff have created a vibrant learning environment that is looked upon as one of the premier learning institutions in the city. Members of the community are invited to attend a graduation ceremony at 10:00 a.m. for our students who will continue their education in kindergartens across Tulsa next year.

Booksmart: Burkhard Bilger and Dr. John Schumann
Thursday, May 18 • 7:00 p.m
In partnership with Magic City Books, the Synagogue is proud to welcome Oklahoma native and New Yorker staff writer Burkhard Bilger for an in-person event to celebrate his new memoir, Fatherland: A Memoir of War, Conscience, and Family Secrets on Thursday, May 18 at 7:00 pm. Burkhard Bilger will be joined in conversation by Tulsa Literary Coalition Board Member and President of the Synagogue, Dr. John Schumann, and following their conversation, will sign copies of his books. This free event will be held at Congregation B'nai Emunah. Please indicate your attendance at www.tulsagogue.com.

Shabbat for Everyone | Graduation Edition Friday, May 19 • 6:15 p.m Dinner • 7:00 p.m. Celebration
Don't let summer start without taking part in the Synagogue's school-end festivities. A special Shabbat service honors graduates, students, and faculty on the completion of another school year—services led by Klay Kodesh, our instrumental and vocal ensemble. We prepare a lovely Shabbat dinner so you can relax. A joyful and lively musical service will brighten your evening, lift your spirits and send you singing into a restful weekend. Additionally, we're glad to partner with the Jewish Federation of Tulsa to welcome former Tulsa Shlichim as part of the weekend-long anniversary celebrations. No reservation is needed for the service at 7:00 p.m. But please call or visit our website by Wednesday, May 24, to guarantee your place at the dinner table.

Shavu'ot Sustainability Dinner: On Leadership and Learning
Thursday, May 25 • 6:00 p.m.
We begin this harvest festival with a celebratory dinner featuring seasonal and sustainable foods connected to the central ideas of the holiday. Following dinner, we'll explore themes of sustainability and leadership as they are found in traditional Jewish texts. Optional study will continue into the evening. We'll also use this opportunity to formally install our new board leadership and honor outgoing lay leadership. Special tribute to Dr. John Schumann on the completion of his term as President of the congregation. Make your reservations by visiting us at tulsagogue.com.

Shavuot Yom Tov Services
Friday and Saturday, May 26 and 27 • 9:30 a.m.
As always, a full complement of Yom Tov services will take place throughout the holiday. Each morning will begin at 9:30 a.m. These services will include Torah readings tied to the season, messages associated with the holiday, and sweet treats at the conclusion. A Yizkor (Memorial) service will be added to our observance at 11:00 a.m. on May 27. As always, all our services are available for hybrid participation on Zoom (Meeting ID: 918 583 7121).

Afternoon/Evening Services Every Wednesday and Friday • 5:30 p.m.

Each week, we gather to experience traditional daily prayer and establish a quiet space for those mourning a loved one or observing the anniversary of a loss (yahrtzeit). All use these opportunities to recite a communal Mourner's Kaddish. Both gatherings take place in the Synagogue's Davis-Goodall Chapel, with full participation available both in-person and through the Synagogue Zoom Room. We ask that in-person attendees register in advance on our website. Friday gatherings always occur in the Synagogue Zoom Room at 918 583 7121.

Shabbat Morning Services Every Saturday • 9:30 a.m.

Each week, we convene on Saturday morning to sing the liturgy of the tradition, study the weekly Torah portion, and spend time amongst family and friends. All are welcome to participate in this experience in person or on Zoom. Members and friends can access the Synagogue Zoom Room at 918 583 7121.

Expressions of Thanks: A Weekend Celebrating Rabbi Marc Boone Fitzerman

Gratitude is a powerful catalyst for happiness. And who makes us happier and more grateful than the beloved Rabbi Marc Boone Fitzerman? In the first weekend of May, we join together to celebrate an esteemed and dedicated career of service to our congregation at Expressions of Thanks: A Weekend Celebrating Rabbi Marc Boone Fitzerman.

At 7:30 p.m. on Friday night, May 5, we invite the community to a Shabbat service in the sanctuary full of music and tributes. Pack your dancing shoes to seamlessly migrate from the service to the Oneg for dancing, schmoozing, and more cookies than you could ever imagine. The sweet sounds of Klay Kodesh, the swells of circle dances, and the warmth of decades of MBF memories will electrify the halls of the auditorium.

All are invited back to the Synagogue on Sunday, May 7, at 3:00 pm for a presentation of photographic images by Rabbi Fitzerman. At 4:00 p.m., we will commence FitzFest Sing-a-long, a spectacular musical program of both Jewish and secular favorites with sure-to-be entertaining anecdotes and rousing rounds of communal singing. A Sunday Supper modeled after Break Fast immediately follows the sing-a-long concert offering us all the opportunity to share our expressions of thanks to Rabbi Fitzerman.

The inclusive meal is open to the entire community. Rabbi Fitzerman's beloved Altamont Bakery cookies will be available for purchase.

Please indicate your attendance at www.tulsagogue.com/thank-you ■

TEMPLE ISRAEL
Est 1914

The World of the Rabbis: Talmud's Greatest Hits with Rabbi Weinstein on Zoom • Thurs., May 4, 11 & 18 • 2:00p.m.

The Talmud is the central text of Rabbinic Judaism. Compiled in the 6th century, it has served our Tradition as the primary source of Jewish Law, Theology, and the centerpiece of Jewish life until modernity. This course will expose the learner to some of the Talmud's more popular and unusual texts. RSVP to rsvp@templetulsa.com.

Zamru L'Shabbat in person, on Zoom & Facebook Live • Fri., May 5 • 6:00 p.m. •

Celebrate with Cantor Weinstein, Cantorial Soloist Jenny Labow, and Elijah's Minor Prophets, in person or online as we welcome in Shabbat with joyous songs! Arrive at 5:30 p.m. for a pre-oneg. RSVP to rsvp@templetulsa.com.

Shabbat Learning Through the Ages on Zoom • Sat., May 6 • 10:30 a.m. •

Borrowing from our Temple Israel monthly Shabbat morning experience, we will join to study and learn from one another. We will explore Torah and Traditional Rabbinical texts based on themes of this week's Parsha, Torah Reading. RSVP to rsvp@templetulsa.com.

ARZA Brotherhood Breakfast • Sun., May 7 • 10:00 a.m. •

A Chai Time in Israel What do you get when you add "the best" tour guide and driver to 16 Tulsans on a Temple Israel bus in Israel? Chai! Along with an Israeli-themed breakfast the Israel 2022 tour group will share pictures and stories of the "Chai Time" from Tamar to Tzvat and Tiberias to Tel Aviv. RSVP online, discounted for ARZA members..

Sociable Seniors Rembrandt to Monet Exhibit @ Philbrook Museum of Art • Sun., May 21 • 10:00 a.m. •

Our own Judy Benarrous and Sandi Tilkin will guide us through this exciting exhibit. After, we'll get together for visiting and food from the new Antoinette's 'Pop-up Café' at the museum. Salads, sandwiches, sweets and beverages will be available; each person pays for their own order. There is no charge to our group for entrance to the museum or exhibit! The group is limited to 30 people – RSVP a must by April 24, by contacting Jenny at 918-747-1309 or jenny@templetulsa.com. (Thanks for your cooperation!).

Sisterhood Shabbat in person, on Zoom & Facebook Live • Fri., May 12 • 7:30 p.m. •

Temple Israel Sisterhood invites you to their very special Shabbat service. The service will be followed by a delicious oneg. RSVP to rsvp@templetulsa.com.

Tikkun Leil Shavuot • Thurs., May 25 • 7:30 p.m. •

Join us for cheesecake and study!

Shabbat Service w/Torah in person, on Zoom & Facebook Live • Fri., May 26 • 7:30 p.m. •

Join the Temple Israel Clergy Team in person or online as we welcome in Shabbat with the chanting of Torah. RSVP to rsvp@templetulsa.com.

EAST MEETS WEST MUSIC FEST

by Rabbi Michael Weinstein

As a child, my grandmother, of blessed memory, always taught me, "April showers bring May flowers." During these weeks of counting the Omer, we count our days and make our days count, moving from freedom to revelation as we make our way to our Spring Harvest Festival of Shavuot.

May is upon us, and music is in the air. This month certainly brings a cadence and a rhythm. First, let us acknowledge and celebrate the notes which accent the four-decade career of Congregation B'nai Emunah's Rabbi Marc Boone Fitzerman. We congratulate him on his achievements and service to our Tulsa Jewish community. Rabbi, may you know only joy and gladness in your retirement.

The rhythm of spring brings gladness and joy upon all our hearts. At Temple Israel, we wish to invite you to come along as we continue to bloom with innovation. A year ago, we launched a new initiative, which was very well received. Our first East Meets West Music Fest was a fantastic success. A beautiful Shabbat afternoon brought the entire Tulsa midtown community to our lawn for live music, food trucks, vendors, and, of course, community. You may recall Nefesh Mountain's bluegrass headlined our stage, as several local Jewish and non-Jewish acts set the stage all afternoon.

Our music festival, by design, provides for creativity and innovation, with some flavors of justice and community. This year, our focus is on inclusivity. With a significant rise of antisemitism around the world and in many communities across America, Tulsa is blessed with a community who chooses to find joy and strength within our religious and cultural differences. It is in this spirit that we have named this concert celebration East Meets West Music Fest presents United We Stand.

United We Stand will feature music from the extraordinary talents of Tulsa's secular and religious communities, demonstrating and highlighting unity across the Tulsa community. The music festival will feature our own Cover Girls: Cantor Laurie Weinstein and our cantorial soloist Jenny Labow, who will perform a variety of Jewish music as well as popular cover tunes.

Scott Musick & Airtight will bring their original music featuring songs of unity. Scott Musick, the founder of The Call in the 80's and 90's, now performs his original music including his first solo album "Americana Gold," a harmonious blend of Americana, acoustic rock & country, presented by Scott's powerful talent. Enriching our festival, and the spirit of unity, we will enjoy the Boston Avenue United Methodist Church Choir, who will also perform songs of unity and love. The Jenny Labow Band, a very popular group in Tulsa who has been performing for many years together, will also sing music highlighting the unity of Tulsa's community.

To further enhance the theme, United We Stand will also feature the unique sound of steel drum band, Gratitude On, also performing songs of joy and unification. United We Stand is a multi-cultural celebration of Tulsa's tight-knit religious and secular communities. Be sure to mark your calendars for May 20th, 3pm to 7pm as we celebrate East Meets West Music Fest: United We Stand on Dorothy's Plaza and the east lawn here at Temple Israel! Food trucks will be present. Bring your lawn chairs and blankets; enjoy an afternoon of music and celebration!

Music certainly is in the air, my friends, as we move from strength to strength, honoring our past and embracing the unified innovation of our future. Let us make these days count as we step into spring. ■

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TULSA TOMORROW SPRING COHORT

by Rebekah Kantor-Wunsch, Executive Director

As Tulsa Tomorrow enters its sixth year, we're proud to say we have influenced the relocation of over 65 individuals to call Tulsa "home." Building on the momentum, we recently hosted our Spring 2023 cohort with 19 participants who visited from seven different states, including one family, couples, and singles. As always, our group trips prioritize the highest valued ticket items to help our candidates determine if Tulsa is right for them. With a curated and fun-filled itinerary for our visitors, we provided plenty of opportunities to our participants to have both cultural and community-driven experiences in Tulsa. Between museums, outdoor space, nights out and more, our most recent cohort certainly got a flavor for what their lives can look like in Tulsa.

Walking the streets of downtown, our networking event, and touring the Gathering Place are a few of the most inspiring activities we provided for the group. Learning about the history of Tulsa and visiting the park that put Tulsa on the map helped shape a positive opinion on the intentionality behind development in the city. Celebrating the synergy between Black and Jewish histories still feels raw, however Greenwood Rising "honors the legacy of Black Wall Street before and after the Tulsa Race Massacre." Capturing the relevance between the community future Tulsans will move to and the history of our people(s) sheds a positive light on the direction our city is going in. During everyone's free time, visitors had the opportunity to self-explore Guthrie Green, the Woody Guthrie Museum, and the surrounding amenities.

"Oil Capital of the World" seems like an old title Tulsans used to be familiar with, however one of our wealthiest oil pioneers left a mark in Tulsa that will always remain a luxury. The Philbrook Museum and its expansive gardens are definitely a sight to see. Many of our cohort participants spent the afternoon in the gardens and toured the artwork. For those with extra energy, we took a morning hike at Turkey Mountain while those who visited the Discovery Lab channeled their inner child (even with the kids we hosted).

It wouldn't be a true Tulsa Tomorrow Weekend without focusing on the Jewish community itself. One of the most exciting aspects of our weekends is involving our alumni who can speak to their own experiences transitioning to Tulsa. With several Tulsa Tomorrow-ans moving from larger metropolitans, it's relatable to our visitors to learn how others have found a more attainable lifestyle by moving here. Not only did we enjoy Havdalah outdoors in the spring weather, but we also had a meaningful Shabbat dinner at The Canopy. By bringing the outdoors in and celebrating Shabbat as a community, nothing says "Welcome to Tulsa" more than this! Shabbat was our largest dinner to date, and we have our own alumni to thank for making it intimate and bringing music to "the moments." To further introduce our candidates to the Jewish community, clergy from Temple Israel, B'nai Emunah, and Chabad provided their insight on their congregations and community involvement. The group toured inside The Sherwin Miller Museum of Jewish Art and received a brief overview of all the CSJCC and Jewish Federation of Tulsa has to offer. For the size of our community, our candidates were impressed by Tulsa's ability to support a Jewish life through all phases of the lifecycle.

As quickly as it happens, this weekend came and went in the blink of an eye. After only three days post-visit, Tulsa Tomorrow began facilitating the next steps for one of our visitors. Tulsa Tomorrow will continue to host individuals who choose to visit throughout the year, however the next cohort weekend will take place this fall. ■

Tulsa Tomorrow spring cohort participants visiting The Sherwin Miller Museum of Jewish Art

Jewish Federation of Tulsa
2021 East 71st Street
Tulsa, OK 74136