

# Federation Focus

Spring 2022

Vol.12 Issue 3

Federation Focus is published four times a year by the Jewish Federation of Central California.  
"All Jews are responsible for one another." (Talmud:Shavuot 39a)



## *March is Women's History Month.*

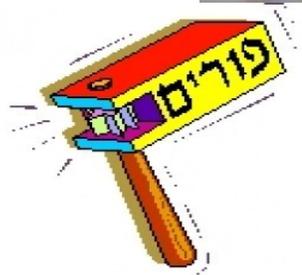


From Miriam to Golda Meir to Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Jewish women have made history in many ways. You may know who Gertrude Berg is, but do you know the story of Judith Kaplan? Read about them both on page 4.



## **March 17 is Purim.**

*See Purim story and  
recipe for  
Hamantaschen  
on page 6*



**March 17 is St. Patrick's Day.** He was a British man who lived in the fourth century. There's a myth he banished the snakes from Ireland, but there were never any snakes to begin with, The snakes represent pagans.



The FOCUS

is on

Roberta Bavin

Page 5



## Message from the Director

I hope everyone is staying safe, healthy and enjoying the really nice weather we have been having. There are times the Fresno weather just can't be beat, like 80 degrees in February!

member our community is counting on you. Here's how to do it :

- ◆ call the office at 559 432-2162
- ◆ email me at [fedfresno@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fedfresno@sbcglobal.net)
- ◆ Click on link from emails you receive each Friday.
- ◆ Send in back cover

We hope you will be able to join us at our Annual Israel Independence Celebration on May 15. More information will be available in our emails that are sent out every Friday. If you are not receiving them, please visit our website to sign up for them.

**Website:** <https://jewishfederationcentralcalifornia.org>

If you have any trouble, please call me.

Our 2022 Campaign has begun. While we support and are part of the Jewish Federation of North America and have always supported worldwide Jewry and Israel, our local Federation has increasingly focused on local needs and local programs.

We support needy Jewish families in our area, community concerts, Annual Israel Independence Day Celebration, cemetery maintenance and provide camps to Jewish youngsters. We also support celebrations of Jewish events in conjunction with other local religious institutions. Two very significant allocations (see page 9) are Jewish Family Services and the Fresno State Jewish Studies Scholarship Program.

Many thanks to those who have made their pledge already and hope we will hear from the rest of you soon. , Re-

As well as pledges, we gratefully accept donations in remembrance or honor and notify the appropriate associates or families. We also accept advertisements that will be included in our Focus publications. The cost is \$100 annually. We hope you will consider placing an ad and we encourage all of our community to support our advertisers.

We have two additional ways to help with our fundraising. One is through Amazon Smiles; the next time you order from Amazon please go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and select Jewish Federation of Central California under the supporting icon at top of page. The other is through Car Donations; if you have a vehicle to donate, please use the information below and select Jewish Federation of Central California to receive your donation.

<http://www.cardonatingiseasy.org/> 866-985-GIVE (866-985-4483)

Don't forget to visit us at;  
[www.facebook.com/jewishfederationcentralcalifornia](https://www.facebook.com/jewishfederationcentralcalifornia)

If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to call or email me.

*Stay safe and healthy.*

*Phyllis*

## Our Mission

The mission of the Jewish Federation of Central California is to build and strengthen the Jewish community locally, overseas and in Israel, by

- ◆ *Raising funds and allocating them to identified Jewish community needs and priorities at home and abroad*
- ◆ *Providing education and cultural programs to promote community awareness of the Federation and its mission*
- ◆ *Listening to a broad spectrum of opinions from throughout the community to assure all Jewish voices are heard*
- ◆ *Evaluating efforts to ensure that Federation human and fiscal resources are used most effectively.*

## Spring Donations

**Car Donation**  
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**Jewish Family Services**  
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**In memory of Carl David Wilkes**  
Ryan Wilkes

**In honor of Alvin Green's Retirement** Sharon  
**Sharon Green**

**In honor of Murray Farber's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday**  
Andrea and Rodrigo De Zubiria

**In honor of Stan and Fran Ziegler's 60<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary**  
Jim and Judy Ganulin  
Phyllis Farrow  
Lee and Jeri Horwitz  
Larry and Carol Miller



Hello from the Fresno Jewish Day School. We are enjoying this beautiful weather and gearing up for our Purim celebration. We will be having a canned food drive to help our neighbors at the soup kitchen. Please keep an eye out on the blast for more details if you would like to participate. We still have a few spots available in our play-based, outdoor Jewish Preschool. For more information, check out our website: [fresnojewishdayschool.org](http://fresnojewishdayschool.org) or call 559-447-1984.

*Sarah Page, Teacher/Director*



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## Gertrude Berg: A Jewish Pioneer in Media History

Gertrude Berg was a broadcast pioneer who was one of the first American women to produce, write and star in her own radio and television series, paving the way for other women writers, producers, and series creators.

Berg was born on October 3, 1899 as Tillie Edelstein in East Harlem, New York City. Her mother suffered from serious mental health issues after her young son died and was eventually committed to a psychiatric hospital for the rest of her life. Berg's father ran Fleischmann's, a resort in the Catskills. One of Berg's earliest jobs was running the resort's theater. She developed and performed skits and held theater workshops for the guests.



**Gertrude Berg, aka Molly Goldberg**

She developed a semi-autobiographical skit using characters based upon people she knew in her everyday life. NBC not only loved her story but also her performance. and in 1929 the studio aired *The Rise of the Goldbergs*. Berg played the matriarch of the family, Molly Goldberg. The show was centered around a Jewish family living in a tenement apartment in the Bronx. A common theme of the show was the conflict between old world traditions and new world assimilation. The show was very popular and had millions of fans.

Although the show was often light-hearted, Berg incorporated stories about Kristallnacht and Nazi Germany in order to teach listeners about the horrors of anti-Semitism and hate. She wrote more than 5,000 radio episodes and a Broadway adaptation of the series.

In 1949, the show transitioned to television. In 1951, Berg won the first ever Emmy Award for a Lead Actress in a Television Series for her work on the show. That same year, Philip Loeb, the actor who played the show's patriarch Jake Goldberg, was labelled a

communist and blacklisted. When Berg resisted demands that Loeb be fired the show was cancelled. For the next decade Berg made guest appearances on various television shows and worked in theater. In 1959 she won a Tony award for Best Actress for her performance in *A Majority of One*. The Jewish media pioneer died of heart failure at the age of 66 in 1966.

*Janner O'Brien*

Scholarship Recipient, Fresno State Jewish Studies



## A Milestone in Jewish Women's History

When Judith Kaplan became the first American girl to have a bat mitzvah ceremony on March 18, 1922, at the Society for the Advancement of Judaism, she had no idea that her actions would change Jewish communal life forever. But something unexpected happened along the way. As increasing numbers of girls ascended the bema, girls and women began to expect — even demand — access to ritual honors and synagogues leadership.

Judith's father was Mordecai Kaplan, founder of the Society, which remains as a synagogue in Manhattan and is affiliated with both the Conservative and Reconstructionist movements.

Bat mitzvah firsts were a catalyst for expanding all women's participation in Jewish life and paved the way for people of all genders to mark their coming-of-age in new and inclusive ways.



**Judith Kaplan, 1922**

## Federation Profiles: Roberta Bavin

**An introvert?** That’s how Roberta Bavin described herself to me, but nonetheless motivated and determined enough to spend most of her adult life volunteering to work with others.

Growing up in a conservative southern California community, she saw anti-Semitism and anti-Asian behavior in her mostly white high school. Her discomfiting observations eventually led her to join protests for human rights and women’s rights. Her upbringing also included time spent at Jewish summer camps which also supported safe places and equal rights for all.

Until CovId struck hard, Roberta, a pediatric nurse practitioner, volunteered to be an escort for clients at Planned Parenthood who were being verbally harassed “right to life” protesters. She and two other would take turns walking clients across the street and

*MARCH IS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH. ROBERTA HAS SPENT HER ADULT LIFE VOLUNTEERING FOR EQUAL RIGHTS.*

then back to their cars when they left. One teen-aged client told Roberta she had taken the bus to the clinic. When Roberta walked her to her somewhat distant stop, she was extremely grateful for this safety precaution. Roberta and others were harassed by protesters who called out that they were “nice Jewish women who were perpetuating the Holocaust.”



Before retiring about two years ago, Roberta worked with a private pediatric practice and before that for 23 years for the Clovis School District as a school nurse and nurse practitioner. Every summer for 28 years she worked at Camp Newman and its predecessors as a nurse at the health center.

She and her husband, a retired nurse anesthetist, volunteered recently with the Fresno County Health Department at the fairgrounds doing vaccinations. The Bavins have three grown children and three grandchildren, ages 18 months, 8, and 13.

Roberta’s volunteerism also extends to other important areas of her life She has been a board member at Temple Beth Israel for over 20 years and currently is the secretary on the executive committee. In the absence of a permanent president she and other board members have taken on additional duties. She is also a member of the Religious Practices Committee, the Leadership Council of Sisterhood and the Covid Committee. Depending upon the vagaries of Covid the latter group hopes that TBI will be able to start Onegs again, especially as outdoor events become possible in warmer weather.

*“I wonder if I’m doing enough,” she says modestly.*

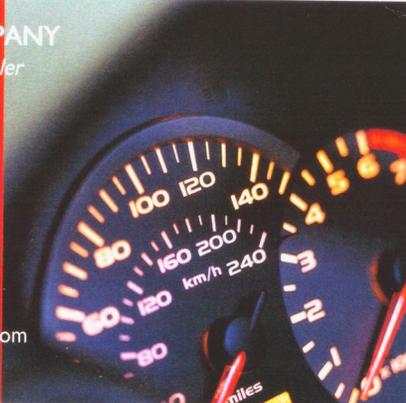
*—Francine M. Farber*

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## The Story of Purim

The story begins when King Ahasuerus commands his wife, Queen Vashti, to appear before him and his party guests. She refuses and, as a result, King Ahasuerus decides to find another queen. The most beautiful young women in the kingdom are brought before the king, and Esther, a young Jewish girl, is selected to be the new queen.

Not long after Esther becomes queen, Mordechai offends the grand vizier, Haman, by refusing to bow down to him. Haman decides to punish not only Mordechai but all Jews for this slight.. Haman then orders the king's officials to kill all the Jews — "young and old, women and children" —

After fasting for three days, Esther puts on her finest clothes and appears before the king. She tells him about Haman's plot.

The king is outraged that anyone would dare threaten his queen and when he asks who has done such a thing Esther declares that Haman is to blame. The king gives Esther the power to overturn Haman's orders.

Urged by Mordecai, Esther issues an edict giving Jews in every city the right to assemble and protect themselves against anyone who may try to harm them. When the appointed day arrives, the Jews defend themselves against their attackers, killing and destroying them. The three-cornered Hamantshen pastries are thought to resemble Haman's hat or pockets.

## RECIPE FOR HAMANTASHEN

### Ingredients

- 3 eggs
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup vegetable oil
- 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup orange juice
- 5  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 cup fruit preserves, any flavor

### Directions

- ◆ Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Grease cookie sheets.\
- ◆ In a large bowl, beat the eggs and sugar until lightly and fluffy. Stir in the oil, vanilla and orange juice
- ◆ Combine the flour and baking powder; stir into the batter to form a stiff dough. If dough is not stiff enough to roll out, stir in more flour.



## Chassidus Corner

What is your favorite prayer? Some answer the famous morning prayer "Modeh ani lefanecha- I offer thanks to you, living and eternal King, for you have restored my soul within me with mercy; your faithfulness is great".

Whatever your prayers are, they are changing the world for the good. The complexity of this world requires the many prayers in your Torah, siddur and Psalms. This is because bad thoughts are constantly trying to wreck our lives. This is where the concept of positivity comes into play.

Our Rebbe emphasized this positive thinking daily, because no matter what else is going on in your life, if you are alive you have something to be grateful for...but you need to take the time to recognize and appreciate this. To achieve this you need to literally review your life and goals daily, noting that a single negative word can impact the fear center of the brain, and the reverse is true.

Thus the more you use your positive brain circuits, the more powerful and alive they and you become. So now you know how to awaken the perception of Moshiach!

— *David ben Hirsch HaCohen*



- ◆ On a lightly floured surface, roll dough out to 1/4 inch in thickness. Cut into circles using a cookie cutter or the rim of a drinking glass.
- ◆ Place cookies 2 inches apart onto the prepared cookie sheets. Spoon about 2 teaspoons of preserves into the center of each one. Pinch the edges to form three corners.
- ◆ Bake for 12 to 15 minutes in the preheated oven, or until lightly browned.
- ◆ Allow cookies to cool for 1 minute on the cookie sheet before removing to wire racks to cool completely



**Jewish Family Services**

Shalom from Jewish Family Services!

We have been very busy over the last few months here at JFS. We have gotten multiple calls for information on apartment/home rentals, job opportunities, in-home care referrals, among others.

We are very thankful for your continued donations that enable us to give out SaveMart food gift cards to those in need.

One family's donation went to a client's need for clothing for possible job interviews. This client responded with **"Thank you so very much for thinking of us. JFS is absolutely awesome. The clothes are very much needed and appreciated. We are truly grateful"**.

We delivered a challah and container of matzah ball soup to a community member who had just had surgery. We received a thank you note stating **"it was just what was needed. The patient was in a lot of pain and had no appetite. Good old chicken soup always helps. Light and easy to go down, and somehow mentally soothing. So very much appreciated"**.

With your donations, we have been helping families with financial difficulties, health issues, car problems, and possibly becoming homeless. We received a wonderful text **"Once I am out of the woods, I, as always, would like to offer help in whatever capacity; I would be truly honored and happy to assist"**.

We are very thankful to be able to make a difference in so many people's lives. Here's a few suggestions on how you can also make a difference in someone's life.

- ◆ *A smile can do miracles - being friendly is a great way to brighten someone else's day.*
- ◆ *Being a good listener to someone is the best thing you can do for them.*
- ◆ *Helping others without expecting anything in return*
- ◆ *A simple thank you.*

Wishing you peace and good health during this special time of year. "Take time to smell the flowers" — unless you're allergic like me!

*Jeri Michner Horwitz*  
*JFS/Community Outreach Coordinator*

## Join Caring Calls!



**Have a Conversation  
Create a New Friendship  
& Change a Life!**

If you're interested and want more information, please send an email to Jeri Horwitz [jfsfederation@gmail.com](mailto:jfsfederation@gmail.com) or call her directly at (559) 281-1104. **You can change a life!**

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## What's in a



by Murray "Moishe" Farber

# Jewish

## Name?

As a journalist, I once interviewed actress Janet Leigh in a delightful conversation about Alfred Hitchcock and her shower scene in "Psycho." I withheld the temptation for the question my old friends in Brooklyn would have urged me to ask: "Would you have married Tony Curtis if he still had his original Bronx name—Bernie Schwartz?"

I thought of Janet and Bernie the other day when I listened to a webinar sponsored by the Judaic Studies program at Fairfield University, a Jesuit university where I was director of public relations before retiring. The speaker was Kirsten Fermaglich, author of "A Rosenberg by Any Other Name," a study of name change requests filed in New York City's Civil Court between 1887 and 2012. She discovered that 66 percent of the applications for name change were Jewish; 11 percent Slavic; and 8 percent Italian.

Significantly, she found that the changes were overwhelmingly voluntary. So, she destroys the old joke about the immigrant who arrives at Ellis Island and is asked his name. He replies in Yiddish "Shayn fergessen" ("I've already forgotten") and a disinterested examiner writes the name as "Sean Ferguson."

Never happened, she says. Just a myth because the examiners actually spent their times checking off arrivals' names against the ship's manifest and the new Americans entered New York with the same name they left Europe or elsewhere. Changes

were often made personally, years later and without going to court. Remember in the film "Hester Street," Yankel hastily Americanized himself by becoming Jake. In

מה שמך?  
kh m sh h m

... שמי  
y m sh

### Ma shmakh? Shmi...

What is your name?  
My name is ...

my family, when my older siblings arrived from Poland, an aunt turned my 10-year-old brother Zalman Zidduk into Sol, not even Solomon.

So why the changes? The petitions show frequently it was to get a better job. Citing real cases, Fermaglich, a history professor at Michigan State University, notes that stenographer Doris Saretzky became Doris Watson. Sometimes, it was for ease of spelling or pronunciation. In her family, some became simply "Ferm."

In the 1930s, there seems to have been a special push to change names out of fear of anti-Semitism which caused splits in families. Ironically, when some Jews tried to return to their original names, particularly

after World War II, offended family members were still bitter. Some names were just shortened. Judge Finkelstein's son became attorney Stein. More dramatically, some of my parents' landsleit went from Katzenellenbogen, a distinguished centuries-old European name that included rabbis, to Kacen in the U.S. Back in Connecticut, I heard of a family named Yomtov where the next generation became Holiday!

Although Prof. Fermaglich has concentrated on families in New York, she noted the prevalence of change in Israel where there is pressure to move away from Eastern European history and adapt Hebrew names. Hollywood has been a major influence in surnames becoming Anglicized for box office reasons, to appeal to a broader public, and to counter bias in various parts of the U.S.

Did you know that Lenny Bruce was originally Leonard Schneider? Jacob Cohen became Rodney Dangerfield. Here are some other interesting switches: Woody Allen was Allen Koningsberg; Mel Brooks was Melvin Kaminsky; Charles Bronson was Charles Bruchinsky; Cyd Charisse was Tula Finkles; Bob Dylan was Robert Zimmerman; Lorne Green was Chaim Leibowitz; Jill St. John was Jill Oppenheimer; and the list goes on.

Now back to Janet Leigh. I found her so charming that I would like to think she would not have hesitated to marry a Bernie Schwartz, even though they later divorced.

## JFCC ALLOCATIONS 2022

### Israel Overseas

Jewish Federation North America	\$5,000
Jewish Distribution Committee	\$10,000
Magen David Adom	\$2,000
Akim Israel	\$2,000

### Local

Jewish Family Services	\$20,000
Israel Independence Day	\$3,500
Interest Free Loans	\$3,000
TBI Yom HaShoah	\$1,000
Jewish Community Relations Council	\$10,000
Camperships	\$2,500
TBI Cemetery	\$9,000
TBI Cemetery Water Project	\$12,400
Jewish Studies Program, Fresno State	\$5,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 85,400</b>

## ALLOCATION DESCRIPTIONS

**Jewish Federation of North America** Umbrella organization to help support and sustain worldwide Jewry

**Jewish Distribution Committee** The world's leading Jewish humanitarian organization that works to lift lives and strengthen communities, by providing life-saving care to those in desperate need.

**Magen David Adom** With Israel under attack, MDA provides first responders, vehicles, and training, as well as transportation to hospitals to save lives.

**Akim Israel** The Israeli national organization to help people with intellectual disabilities and their families, using legal, community, and self-advocacy.

**Jewish Family Services** Provides services and support for the Central Valley Jewish Community (Visalia to Merced) regardless of age, income, or synagogue affiliation, and to strengthen Jewish identity, build community, and fortify family life.

**Israel Independence Day** Yearly Yom Ha'atzmaut community celebration, marking the establishment of the modern state of Israel in 1948.

**Interest Free Loans** Promotes financial assistance to Jewish families in need by offering them a NO interest loan.

**Yom HaShoah** A day set aside for Jews to remember the Holocaust.

**Jewish Community Relations Council** Liaison between the Jewish community and our non-Jewish neighbors, engaging in dialogue and clarifying misunderstandings, as well as sponsoring pro-Israel speakers and arts events.

**Camperships** Provides financial assistance to Jewish students wishing to attend a Jewish camp.

**TBI Cemetery** Pays part of annual maintenance costs.

**TBI Cemetery Water Project** Pays part of the new water pump and pipes.

**Future Cemetery** Help start a fund to purchase a new cemetery for the Jewish community as TBI is running out of plots.

**Jewish Studies** Endows a Jewish studies scholarship fund for Fresno State students in the Jewish Studies Program who have completed at least two courses toward earning either the Jewish Studies Certificate or the Jewish Studies Minor.

## Visalia Voices

### Congregation B'nai David

[www.congregationbnaidavid.com](http://www.congregationbnaidavid.com)

559.732.3139

In the first few months of 2022, CBD was not able to have activities due to the most recent Covid surge. We were able to have a Hanukkah party in December and we enjoyed our latkes and sufganiyot. We had an ugly sweater contest and some art activities for the children.



Our Tu B'Shevat seder in January was postponed to February; we celebrated it on ZOOM with our Student Rabbi Aria. We are anticipating having our Purim celebration in March in person as well as our Passover seder in April if the Covid numbers continue to decrease. We are looking forward to getting together in person and are planning to have some new social activities.

If you are interested in attending services at CBD, please call us at (559) 732-3139. May we all stay healthy and look to being back together soon.

*Marsha Brooks-Smith*

**HAVE YOU MADE AND FULFILLED  
YOUR 2022 PLEDGE?**

*“When a person’s good deeds exceed his wisdom,  
his wisdom will be enduring.”*

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**Jewish Federations of North America** protects and enhances the well-being of Jews and Jewish communities in North America, Israel and around the world. We strive to realize our core values of *chesed* (caring and compassion), *Torah* (Jewish Learning), *tikkun olam* (repair of the world) and *tzedakah* (social justice). As the focus of the federations, JFNA acts upon these values through philanthropy, strategic initiatives, and collective leadership—in partnership with local communities, national and international agencies.

# PLEDGES FOR JFCC 2021

**This list will be updated when pledges for 2022 are complete. Be sure to send in yours now!**



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