

**NOVEMBER 2024**

**TISHREI-CHESHVAN, 5785**

*Upcoming Services  
with Rabbi Kushner*

*Fri. Nov 1, 7:30pm followed  
by birthday oneg for  
Sharon Offman-Meyers &  
Sat Nov 2, 9:30am*

*Fri Dec 13, 7:30pm &  
Sat Dec 14, 9:30am*



**This year, we are unable to host a Hanukkah party because the holiday occurs Dec 25–Jan 2, a major vacation time.**

**January 2025: No services  
February 2025: No services**

**HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY**

**Celebrate the 90th birthday  
of Sharon Offman-Meyers on  
Game Day at SOJ:  
Wed. Nov 13, 12 to 2pm.  
Let Shirley or David know if  
you're available.**

**Board Meeting:  
Mon. Nov 18, 6:30pm  
Board Meetings are held  
the 3rd Monday of the  
month via Zoom.**



**SONS OF JACOB  
SYNAGOGUE**



**Rosh Hashanah 2024**

John McCormick took this group photo of Naomi McCormick, Dawn Mollenkopf, Judy Finkelstein, Henry Maidan, Leo Feldman, Laura Praglin, Ken Atkinson, Bobbi Kazenelson, David Duke, Marc Kagan, Michael & Carla Fanelli, Ted & Renee Lederman, Sarah & Danny Stokes, David Lederman, Aaron Fratrick, Arthur Ratute, Sharon Offman-Meyers, & Rabbi Ora & David Schnitzer.

**This year, we had the best  
attendance at our High  
Holidays that we have had in  
the past five years.**





# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

*Sharon Offman-Meyers*

Sons of Jacob Synagogue is celebrating the 90th birthday of Sharon Offman-Meyers the entire month of November. Born in Waterloo on November 12, 1934, Sharon's grandfather, David Feldman, was one of the organizers of our synagogue. Sharon has been an active member of SOJ her entire life. Sharon met Sally Fish at age five, and they remain best friends. In 1950, Sharon was in the last class to be confirmed in the original synagogue building on 5th Street.



Sharon Offman-Meyers  
September 2024

*We invite SOJ members and friends to celebrate Sharon's birthday in three ways:*

- Attend a special oneg honoring Sharon following Rabbi Kushner's Friday, November 1, 7:30pm Shabbat services.
- Celebrate the 90th birthday of Sharon Offman-Meyers on Game Day at SOJ: Wed. Nov 13, 12 to 2pm. Let Shirley or David know if you're available.
- SOJ is sponsoring a birthday card shower for Sharon. Send your card to: Sharon Offman-Meyers, 217 Rosebud Ave, Waterloo IA 50701.



**Honoring American Judaism and  
Standing with Israel**  
**By David Lederman, President,  
Sons of Jacob Synagogue**  
*Kol Nidre speech, October 11, 2024*

Good Yuntif.

As we enter this holy night of remembrance, I want to reflect on our history as a synagogue and as a small, vibrant Jewish community.

I feel humbled when I remember the remarkable accomplishments of those who came before me, the long line of distinguished leaders since Jacob Cohn served as our first president after Sons of Jacob was founded in 1905.

I am grateful that several of our past presidents, many of whom have served multiple terms, have been able to join us during Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur this year.

Thank you past presidents Dr. Ted Lederman, Henry Maidan, Bobbi Kazenelson, Sarah Stokes, and Dr. Judy Finkelstein, for your long-term devotion to our synagogue and innovative leadership. You are my mentors.

This has been an extremely painful year for Jews.

*Kol Nidre speech, continued on the next page*

## **Honoring American Judaism and Standing with Israel continued**

Our High Holidays are taking place a year after one of the grimmest anniversaries in Jewish history, the October 7, 2023 day during which thousands of Hamas terrorists invaded Israel, massacring almost 1,200 people and kidnapping 250 more in a barbarous attack that has sparked a year of war on multiple fronts.

Our community stands with Israel and the families who have been affected by the taking of hostages and war.

The last year also saw the largest recorded number of antisemitic incidents in the US since the Anti-Defamation League began keeping track in 1979.

We at Sons of Jacob abhor antisemitism and stand up for freedom of religion.

More than ever, we support the right of Jews everywhere to practice our faith, defend our rights, and to live free and in peace.

As practicing Jews, we understand where we come from.

While growing up, we learned that Jews have had a long history of facing prejudice, of not always being welcomed or accepted.

This has inspired many of us to do the opposite, to help others and to be kind and welcoming.

*Kol Nidre speech, continued on the next page*



## **Honoring American Judaism and Standing with Israel continued**

As Jewish people, we come from many places and have diverse backgrounds. We have faced many challenges on our journey to becoming a free people with our own land, Israel.

We are here tonight because of the wisdom and courage of those Jews who came before us and because we cherish Israel and our rights as American Jews.

Tonight, we are free to practice our Jewish faith and keep our covenant with God as the chosen people. Every year, we build on this commitment to our faith, history, and traditions.

This year, we have started several new traditions to become a more welcoming space for Cedar Valley Jews.

We have held three well-received, summer shabbat services at members' homes.

We have provided assistance to our seniors, including providing rides to services and socializing on game days.

Shirley Davis, our administrative assistant, reaches out to everyone with dedication and empathy. Shirley plays a key role in the oral history project.

We have welcomed five new synagogue members to Sons of Jacob since our last annual meeting.

*Kol Nidre speech, continued on the next page*

## **Honoring American Judaism and Standing with Israel continued**

We have celebrated local Jewish history by visiting the award-winning Cedar Falls exhibit on the famous Rosenthal vaudeville family and by attending additional programs on Lew Rosenthal's music and theatrical contributions.

We have heard first-hand from synagogue members, Sarah Cohen and Jacob Lederman, about their volunteer work in Israel since the October 7th Hamas terror attack and how all of us can help.

We are a resilient, creative, Jewish community with remarkably rich programming despite our small size!

We all work hard to make Sons of Jacob a special place we can all call home.

I am grateful to our capable Board of Directors: Laura Praglin, Ira Fratrick, Naomi McCormick, and Jacqui Herrick for your wise counsel and hard work.

I also want to thank the Long Term Planning Committee, chaired by Naomi McCormick, which includes Andrea Fratrick, Bobbi Kazenelson, Laura Praglin, Noah Levine, CEO of the Jewish Community Legacy Project, and most recently, David Duke as well as myself. This committee helps Sons of Jacob remain sustainable.

We are blessed to have Rabbi Rebecca Kushner lead our services most of the year and to have Rabbi Ora Schnitzer lead us in worship during the High Holidays and beyond.

*Kol Nidre speech, continued on the next page*

## **Honoring American Judaism and Standing with Israel continued**

Tonight, we also remember our loved ones of blessed memory who continue to have a positive impact on our lives as Jews and Americans. We build on their legacy.

Our journey is not over, and we will go into the new year together praying for the safe release of all remaining hostages, for an end to war, for increased security for our beloved Israel, and for lasting peace in the middle east and throughout the world.

Everyone, have a healthy and Happy New Year!!!

*David Lederman*





# *A Personal Garden of Eden*

*By Sarah Stokes*

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It started as a way to pass some time during the pandemic of 2020 when the world seemed to stand still. From there it grew into a labor of love and a hobby to fill my days as my children stretched their wings and began to fly away. First, a few containers of tomato plants, then a fruit tree here and there and before long a thriving garden that feeds us for many months of the year complete with chickens and bee hives.



The chickens were an especially exciting addition to the property. Not only do they provide us delicious protein in the way of daily eggs, but they are also surprisingly personable and make fun companions. Of course, they also enjoy the scraps from the garden and return the favor with nutrient rich fertilizer.



It is truly something special to see the entire cycle of life on the homestead and be a small part in facilitating that. It feels like I'm working hand in hand with Hashem himself.

*A Personal Garden of Eden continued on next page*

## *A Personal Garden of Eden continued*

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The most recent introduction to the hobby farm has been quite a learning experience. The bees joined us just last spring and have already provided us with more than six quarts of the most delicious honey you could ever taste. So, we are halfway to creating a land flowing with milk and honey! The bees have been a journey of learning that I expect to continue for many seasons to come. As I've watched these fascinating creatures it struck me how much they remind me of the Israelites.



- Bees are highly organized and cooperative. They work together for the benefit of the hive. The Israelites too, are often described as a united people. The Torah frequently emphasized the importance of unity, mutual responsibility and communal worship. There is no doubt that there is a strong bond within the people of Israel.



- Even though bees are given a bad rap, they are peaceful when left alone. However, they will fiercely defend their hive when threatened, using collective strength to repel attackers. I don't need to point out the ways in which the Israelites have been called on to defend their land and lives throughout time and place.

*A Personal Garden of Eden continued on next page*



## *A Personal Garden of Eden continued*

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- Bees are productive and life-giving. The honey they produce is a symbol of sweetness and abundance, but they also are crucial pollinators, giving life to plants, crops and in turn animals and humans. The Israelites too were intended to be a “light unto the nations” (Isaiah 49:6). Their productivity was not only in physical terms but also in terms of cultivating a just and moral society.
- My hive produced over 10 pounds of honey this summer. Did you know that to make just one pound of honey, a hive’s worker bees must fly 55,000 miles and visit around two million flowers? Just for one pound! So now you know what they mean when they say, “busy as a bee.” Bees are tireless workers. Their diligence and perseverance are essential to their survival and success. The Torah too emphasizes the importance of hard work. In Genesis Adam is told “in toil shalt thou eat...in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.” Like bees the Israelites survival as a people depended on their steadfastness.



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## *A Personal Garden of Eden continued*

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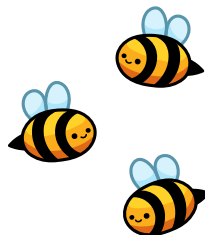
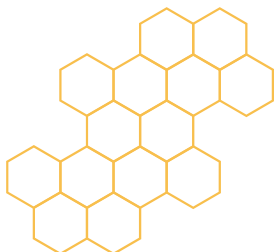
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The work has sometimes been grueling, but it's been a family affair. It wouldn't be nearly as beautiful or productive without the help of my husband, and even sometimes my kids! But for me it has certainly been worth every back-breaking minute of it. To be able to provide substance in the way of healthy, chemical free, nutrient dense food for my family and friends is one of my life's greatest pleasures. And while we've been banished from the original Garden of Eden, to spend time in my garden in the middle of summer, when everything is in full bloom and buzzing with life, does feel like my own personal Garden of Eden on earth.

I thank G-d for blessing me with a back that can bend, hands that can toil and a partnership with Him that can produce such pleasures.



*Sarah Stokes*



# TOVA RABA, SUSAN NASHIEL!



**Sons of Jacob thanks Susan Nashel for her generous donation which enabled us to purchase pulpit flowers for High Holidays services. The flowers were a wonderful welcome to the Jewish New Year, reminding us of the hope and joy that we can provide one another in the year to come.**



Bobbi Kazenelson & Rabbi Ora Schnitzer  
behind pulpit flowers

## *Words of Wisdom from Rabbi Kushner*



### **Entrances and Exits**



On my High Holiday bookshelf I was recently intrigued by the number of titles I found that mentioned "how to enter" the High Holy Days. Some focus on the spiritual preparation recommended during the month of Elul (that precedes Rosh ha Shanah). Others attempt to untangle the lengthy liturgy of Yom Kippur. I also discovered a couple of volumes that offer collections of High Holiday music, including the background and history of these beloved melodies. All of these suggest ways to prepare for the Days of Awe.

However, in my entire collection I couldn't find a single title that offered guidance on how to how we should live after this crucial holiday had passed. It made me wonder: if we enter at Rosh ha Shanah and exit after Yom Kippur without having tweaked anything in the pattern of our daily lives, which route might we have missed?

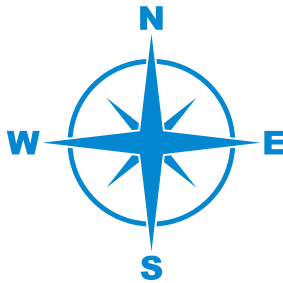


This new year has barely begun, and is as yet uncharted territory. Thus, after having taken the Exit after Yom Kippur, the road map is still murky. Where do we go, when we perhaps soon find ourselves in the same rut?

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## *Words of Wisdom from Rabbi Kushner continued*

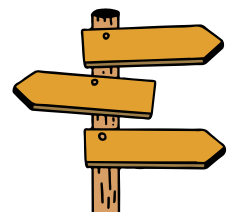
The Talmud teaches us that Adonai picks each one of us up "ba'asher hu sham," where we are at any given moment. We describe the Holy One with the poetic "ha-Makom," the Place. Wherever we are, no matter into which ditch we may have slid, Adonai shares our road with us. The Yom Kippur liturgy assures us of the promise: "I have forgiven you, according to your plea."



Reb Zalman z"l inspired me to think of Adonai as a dear friend sitting on the passenger seat beside me when I drive; a friend that both corrects and counsels, just as the High Holiday liturgy describes. I can always talk to this holy friend beside me: I can ask for directions, complain about detours, and perhaps even take time for prayer in a cul-de-sac. It comforts me, knowing that the way onward from Yom Kippur is no longer one I have to navigate alone. Happy Trails in the coming year!



*B'rachot,  
Rabbi Rebecca*







**November Shabbat Services  
with Rabbi Rebecca at  
Sons of Jacob Synagogue  
715 Progress Ave, Waterloo**

- **Fri, Nov 1, 7:30pm followed by birthday oneg for Sharon Offman-Meyers.**
- **Sat Nov 2, 9:30am followed by a light luncheon.**



RSVP by Monday , October 28, to let us know how many people from your family plan to attend each service or if you have any questions. Our email address is [soj.iowa.office@gmail.com](mailto:soj.iowa.office@gmail.com). You can reach Shirley Davis at the synagogue's office MWF 10-2 by calling 319 233-9448.

**Enjoy a wildlife adventure  
with John McCormick from the comfort of  
Hartman Reserve Nature Center!**



**Pura Vida: Wildlife Adventures in Costa Rica**  
**John McCormick, Ph.D.**  
**November 10, 2024, 2pm**  
**Second Sunday Speaker Series**

**See the next page to learn more about this free program at  
Hartman Reserve Nature Center, 657 Reserve Drive, in Cedar Falls**



## **Pura Vida: Wildlife Adventures in Costa Rica**

**John McCormick, Ph.D.**

**November 10, 2024, 2pm**

**Second Sunday Speaker Series**



**CEDAR FALLS, IA - John McCormick is back at Hartman Reserve Nature Center as the next 2nd Sunday Speaker, November 10, at 2:00 PM in the Community Room. John will be sharing photos of his recent trip to Costa Rica, one of the most biodiverse countries in the world, with more than 250 species of mammals and over 920 species of birds. Remarkably, Costa Rica has protected 28% of its land in national parks, reserves, and wildlife refuges. It is also the only country in the world that generates more than 99% of its electricity from renewable sources. John McCormick and his wife, Naomi, saw only a fraction of the Costa Rican wildlife during their three-week visit. John could not resist taking over 5,000 photographs, but he somehow whittled it down to an hour's worth of his favorite images and the stories behind them. There is no cost to attend this program and no registration is required.**

**The main entrance for Hartman Reserve is at 657 Reserve Drive in Cedar Falls. Currently there is road construction on Timber Drive, so attendees will need to approach the entrance from the west via Edwards Avenue. The 2nd Sunday Speaker Series usually occurs on the 2nd Sunday of each month. Speakers present on topics related to nature and our environment.**

# BOOK CLUB

The book club meets monthly via Zoom. Here is our reading list for the year. Contact the SOJ Office if you are interested in joining.

- **September 18, 2024**

Looking backward: True stories from Chicago's Jewish past (2014). By Walter Roth. Academy Chicago Publishers.

- **October 16, 2024**

The Deadly Scrolls (Book 1 in The Jerusalem Mysteries) (2022). By Ellen Frankel. Wicked Son.

- **November 20, 2024**

To the End of the Land (2011). By David Grossman (translated by Jessica Cohen). Vintage International.

- **December 18, 2024**

Abomination (2022). By Ashley Goldberg. Vintage Australia.

- **January 15, 2025**

To & Fro (2024). By Leah Hager Cohen. Bellevue Literary Press.

- **February 19, 2025**

The Puttermesser papers: A novel (Vintage International) (2021). By Cynthia Ozick. Vintage.

- **March 19, 2025**

Into the arms of strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport (2000). By Mark Jonathan Harris & Deborah Oppenheimer (Editors). Bloomsbury USA.

- **April 16, 2025**

On Her Own: A Novel (2024). By Lihi Lapid (translated by Sondra Silverston). HarperVia.

- **May 21, 2025**

The Vixen: A Novel (2022). By Francine Prose. Harper Perennial.

- **June 18, 2025**

Welcome Home, Caroline Kline (2024). By Courtney Preiss. G.P. Putnam's Sons.



*We gratefully acknowledge the following contributions*

**Arthur Ratute in memory of his parents, Michael & Barbara Ratute.**

**Susan Nashel in memory of her mother, Frances Blindman.**

**Robert & Lisa Myers in memory of his mother, Barbara Myers**

**David Lederman in memory of his grandfather, Joseph Lederman**

## Y A H R Z E I T S

*The yahrzeits of these beloved, departed relatives listed below should be observed on the Friday and Saturday of the week listed.*

Nov 3rd - Nov 9th

**Tillie S. Kronheim**

**Kurt Wolf**

**Sidney Weissman**

**Frances Blindman**

**Charlotte Rosenthal**

Nov 10th - Nov 16th

**Ervin Myers**

**Ricka Wolf**

**Barbara Ratute Myers**

**Herschel Gellerman**

**Sam Shrago**

**Alex Margulis**

**Birl Maxwell**

**Henry Cutler**

**Nancy Unger**

**Lillie Westerman**

**Jacob Weissman**

**David Weinberg**



Yahrzeits are continued on next page.



# Yahrzeits

Continued

Nov 17th to Nov 23rd

**Maurice W. Cohn**  
**Bess Deutchman Cohn**  
**Joseph Lederman**  
**Mary Libby Margulis**  
**Rochel Nathanson**  
**Thelma Dorfman**  
**Louis Cecil Hurwich**

Nov 24th -Nov 30th

**Morris Feldman**  
**Meyer Sidney Lederman**  
**Samuel Goldberg**  
**Peshe Goildie**  
**Rabbi Sol Serber**  
**Sheva Sophia Katz**  
**Ida Levi**  
**Anne Krensky**

