



COS MEN'S CLUB NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2021

COS Men's Club Super Bowl Fundraiser

The annual Super Bowl Raffle Fundraiser was held on Sunday, February 7th, to coincide with Super Bowl LV, held in Tampa Bay between the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the Kansas City Chiefs. 87 congregants participated in the fundraiser. Thanks to Richard Schwartz and Andy Rosen for organizing this successful event.

As well as the victorious Tampa Bay Bucs, there were many winners of the fundraiser raffle prizes. Here is a list of the winners:

Hara Foundation	Gordon Levin	Louis Stern
Ryan Lefkowitz	Nina Oppenheim	Eric Schwartz
Allen Saft	Bob Gamson	Andrew Krupitsky
Ron Shader	Aaron Gorovitz	Barry LaBoda
Ed Postal	Stuart Leventhal	Andy Rosen
Jordan Adomo	Rich Mayer	Youth Fund
Stuart Kimball	Ellis Schauder	
Paul Finer	Anthony Lightman	

Men's Club Shabbat postponed

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the COS Men's Club Board of Directors voted to postpone the Men's Club Shabbat, planned for March 20, 2021. We are hopeful to schedule the Men's Club Shabbat for late summer, 2021.

UPCOMING MEN'S CLUB EVENTS

—
SUNDAY,
MARCH 7, 2021
AT 8:30 AM COS
PEDALERS BIKE
RIDE

—
THURSDAY,
MARCH 4, 2021 &
SUNDAY,
MARCH 7, 2021
BR'UT
TRAINING
(VIRTUAL)

—
SUNDAY,
APRIL 11, 2021
AT 8:30 AM COS
PEDALERS BIKE
RIDE

FOLLOW US ON
FACEBOOK
@CONGREGATION
OHEV SHALOM
MEN'S CLUB

B'ri'ut program to address substance use disorders in the community

(reprinted from The Heritage Florida Jewish News issue dated February 19, 2021)

One death from substance abuse is one too many. The Central Florida Jewish community has had to bear many heartbreaking losses because of this devastating disease. Nationally, suspected overdose submissions to the Overdose Mapping Application Program in 2020 showed increases of 11.4 percent for fatal overdoses and 18.6 percent for nonfatal overdoses during 2020. Regardless of how a substance abuse disorder is initiated, help is desperately needed for those affected, as well as their families. But where does one turn for help?

The Central Florida Jewish community leaders are aware of this problem and are stepping up to address the need to be able to reach out to anyone suffering from substance abuse — to bring it out in the open, free from stigma, so that help can be provided.

A community-wide program, called B'ri'ut (Hebrew for acceptance), developed by many leaders of the community in partnership with the Synagogue Men's Clubs, the Jewish Federation of Greater Orlando, The Roth Family JCC, Jewish Family Services, Victoria's Voice Foundation and the Osteen family has been mobilized to address this problem and help families overcome the stigma and embarrassment that often prevents people from seeking help.

The objective of B'ri'ut is to provide a forum for discussion, dissemination of information and provide support to our community to help prevent substance use disorders, provide support groups for those in need, and provide reference information for those looking for support.

To help bring this problem "out into the open," and remove the communal stigma, the program's goal is to encourage the community to better understand substance abuse and to more openly discuss substance use disorder issues, thereby reduce the stigma and embarrassment that may be felt by many in our community. Included in the formation of this program are rabbis, cantors, educators, and executive directors from 14 local Jewish organizations that have recognized a need for this type of program and are committed to get this started now.

The approach involves two initial presentations: The first will be a half-day presentation on Thursday, **March 4** that will involve the "Front Line" personnel (those who have contact with members of their organization, congregants, etc.). Certified trainers will provide orientation and education on how to recognize substance use disorders, and how treatment works. The intent of this presentation is not to have anyone become fluent in being a mental health care provider, but to enable them to answer basic questions about treatment should anyone ask them.

The main presentation is scheduled for Sunday, **March 7** and is designed for agency and organization leaders and workers who are likely to come into contact with people who may be having problems with substance use disorders. During this training they will be taught how to help motivate individuals struggling with Substance Abuse disorders to take action to reach out and receive help. This workshop, led by certified trainers, will be teaching a technique called Motivational Interviewing. This is not psychotherapy; it is a means of helping individuals to make the decision to move toward health and recovery.

Attendees of the Motivational Interviewing training will also have access to several months of follow-up in order to answer any questions and assist them with any issues that have arisen. Consistent with COVID protocols, these meetings will be smaller, more streamlined, more hands-on and a totally virtual training experience for our community partners. Community partners will also be receiving a resource manual to help their members and customers find helpful organizations and treatment programs for Substance Use Disorders.

The next to last B'ri'ut initiative will be the establishment of MASH ("Mutual Aid Self-Help" – aka "support") groups for Jewish individuals experiencing problems with substance use disorders. MASH groups have been in existence for many years. However, most are dependent on religious teachings from other denominations, which can make it uncomfortable for Jewish participants.

State of the Florida Region FJMC Report



Dear FJMC Brothers

In case we've not met, my name is Blake Lenett and I'm the Florida Regional President for the FJMC. I live in Clearwater, FL with my wife and daughters. I've been a member of Congregation Beth Shalom for over 20 years. I've served as an officer on my synagogue board and as Men's Club President. I've also been working as an Engineer in the Aerospace profession for 35 years. Now that you know a little about me, I look forward to meeting all of you one day (hopefully in person).

I met Elliott Davis back when he was Regional President and never thought I'd be wearing his shoes. But here I am. I must admit that I find being Regional President in these unprecedented times of Covid-19 to be challenging and rewarding. The opportunity to work with like-minded people from around the Florida Region and see how they are engaging others in various locations and environments makes me feel positive about our future.

Each of you copes with the current situation in your own way. Many clubs have figured out how to use modern technology to create innovative programs to keep us involved. Programs like Men's Night In, Deli Night Drive-By, Virtual Craft Brewery Tour, Menorah Lighting Drive-by, and Virtual Tour of Israel are just a few of the ways we've adapted to the times. FJMC has also made it easier for you to stay connected from the comfort of your home through the use of Zoom webinars and programming. Please visit the FJMC website (www.fjmc.org) to keep up with everything FJMC has to offer.

New and creative programming ideas are popping up all the time. This year's World Wide Wrap was a virtual event where participants had the opportunity to participate in a learner's service or a traditional service followed by an egalitarian panel discussion. For the Yellow Candle Program, many clubs are offering curbside pickup to help get their candles out. Some clubs are even holding Men's Club Shabbat services via Zoom or Livestream. If you need help setting up an event, don't hesitate to contact me.

This year's Geffen Leadership Development Institute (LDI) Training Conference was held virtually and was a huge success. All of the attendees, including COS's Barry LaBoda, were identified as emerging leaders or regional leaders and spent the weekend davening together and learning about the characteristics of a good leaders and how to improve their leadership skills. How appropriate that LDI took place before Parshat Yitro which opens with Moshe's father-in-law teaching our greatest leader, Moshe how to delegate in order for him to become a more effective leader and not get "burnt out". This teaches us that one person cannot do all the work by themselves. We need to work as a team.

(continued on page 4)

Unfortunately, we won't be able to gather in person for this year's International Convention that was planned for Chicago. Instead, the 2021 FJMC Convention will be a virtual opportunity for all of us to "experience" various components of Convention without the travel and accommodation costs. You can now experience the comradery and ruach from the comfort of your home. I encourage every one of you to join me at Convention (June 6 - 13) where we will be honoring Florida's Ma'asim Tovim Award recipient, Dr. Moshe Adler. And don't forget to submit your applications for your Torch Awards and your Quality Club Award. If you need assistance with the application, please contact me.

As you all know, the mission of the FJMC is to involve Jewish Men in Jewish Life by building and strengthening Men's Clubs in the Conservative Movement. My goal is to fulfill this mission with your help. The most valuable thing the FJMC can offer the Florida Men's clubs are "ideas"... ideas on programming, membership, fund-raising, leadership and so much more. It's up to you and your club to take those ideas and run with them. Last year was a tough year, but together we will continue to fulfill our mission to the benefit the FJMC organization, the Florida Region, and every one of our Synagogues and Men's Clubs.

In Brotherhood,
 Blake Lenett
 Regional President
 FJMC Florida Region



SHARING LIGHT FOR REMEMBRANCE -YELLOW CANDLE PROGRAM



ANTI-SEMITISM IS PERVERSIVE

"The Yellow Candle is an outstanding way for us to help future generations to remember the Holocaust. Anti-Semitism is alive today. Let's not let history be repeated."

Irwin Harris of Tree of Life Synagogue
 Pittsburgh, PA and FJMC
 (both pictured at right)

In America, Yom HaShoah Remembrance Day is Thursday, April 8, 2021. The Candle is Yellow to remind us of the Yellow Star Jews were forced to wear to identify them as Jews and open them to ridicule and persecution. Men's Clubs and other organizations order the Candle through this program and distribute them to their membership with a short explanation of the program. On the night of Yom HaShoah the candles are lit in homes across the globe to shine a light of memory, a light of education, and a light that we will never forget. By participating in this program, you are helping to keep the memory of the Shoah alive and to remember what happens when good people do not stand up.



Four American Questions: A Passover Message

By Alan Rusonik

A famous Jewish writer once developed his own version of the four questions asked at the Passover Seder Table. He called them the “Four American Questions” for Passover. His questions, which I have paraphrased, are as follows:

1. On all nights of the entire year we eat whatever we want to, steak and pork chops, both fish with horseradish and oysters...on this night of Passover, we eat only matzah and bitter herbs, and if we want to eat something not kosher for Passover, mother told us we can go to a restaurant...because in her house, she says, it's strictly kosher for Passover. We have suddenly been told to don our hats, we've been seated at the table, and we've been given prayerbooks and Haggadahs to look into. So we sit like dummies and look. What kind of comedy is this? What's the play called?
2. Why did mother send the cook away for all of Passover? Why are we so ashamed of our festival? Are we ashamed on having liberated ourselves from Egyptian exile and having become – instead of slaves - a nation?
3. Why did you send us to school to study only English forgetting to teach us Hebrew, the language in which the Bible is written, the tongue in which there is a rich and beautiful literature? Why have we learned the history of all nations, ancient and modern – but the history of one people we skipped – the history of our own Jewish people?
4. Why do we know when it's Christmas, when it's Presidents' Day, and Thanksgiving Day, but we don't know when it's Hanukkah, what Purim is, when it's Sukkot and what Passover is all about? Why do we know who the following were: Shakespeare, Edgar Allen Poe and Mark Twain, without knowing Yehuda Halevi, Chaim Nachman Bialik and others of our poets and writers? Why, why, why? Why, most of all, should I have to ask you questions?

These questions were not written today or even 20 years ago. They were penned by the famous Yiddish writer and playwright, Shalom Aliechem, (1859 – 1916), who moved to America in 1913. Yes, the same Shalom Aliechem who wrote the short stories about “Tevye the Milkman,” which became the basis for the hit Broadway musical and movie, “Fiddler on the Roof.” Although these questions were written over 100 years ago, they still have relevance today and still carry a poignant message.

The good news is that when reading Shalom Aliechem's questions, one would get the impression that Judaism would not survive another 100 years of assimilation and threats to our Jewish identity. We are all here to testify that the pending demise which Shalom Aliechem implies has not materialized. Yet, one has to still ask these same questions today, and wonder: will Judaism be able to survive the next 100 years? Perhaps we can ponder these questions and develop answers this year as we sit down for our own Passover Seder. Chag Kasher V'Sameach!

Men's Club Mensch

Michael Wheeler – COS Men's Club At Large Board Member



Things you may not know about me.

- I was born & raised in Chelsea, Mass and majored in Broadcasting at Emerson College, in Boston. I spent almost 50 years in media, including general manager positions in prominent radio stations in Boston and Providence.
- I worked for and with the Boston Celtics for over 25 years, including managing their sports/talk station, WEEI AM Boston, and setting up and managing their entire radio network of 60 New England stations.
- Estelle and I have travelled extensively. We have twice visited Israel, each time visiting some impressive ORT Technical schools. ORT is a very important organization to Israel and one we have strongly supported.
- Estelle & I have been on 39 cruises, including several visits to Europe by land, from Tahiti to St. Petersburg, Russia, and many destinations in between.
- We are blessed to have 3 married children and 2 grandchildren. They are all deeply devoted to each other and us.

Editor's questions:

Your involvement in the Men's Club and the synagogue is a true example of volunteerism. You are also involved in local organizations, including a circus. What made your experience with the Shriners Organization so rewarding?

Several years ago, I was asked by the Shriners Organization to assist them in procuring sponsors for disadvantaged and homeless children to attend their yearly circus. The first year we got all of the children sponsored by companies and individuals. As the years went by, we added Vietnam veterans and wounded warriors to the numbers. I was also instrumental in making tickets available to JFS. We maxed out at 18,000 children and adults, fully sponsored (truly a mitzvah) For the children, it was the best day of the year!!

(continued on Page 7)

As a long-standing member of the Men's Club, what do you see as the future for synagogue auxiliary organizations with the next generation of younger Jewish men & women?

I was president of the Men's Club at Congregation Temple Beth Am in Randolph, MA. Where I learned and understood what a supportive Men's Club can mean to a congregation and its religious school. I have brought this understanding to the COS Men's Club. Our Men's Club is one of the strongest in the Florida region, and with the addition of new board members, our club will continue to grow and provide necessary services to our synagogue and youth groups. Our future has never looked brighter.

COS Men's Club Leadership 2020-2021

Co-Presidents	Steven Herman & Elliott Davis
Treasurer	Andy Rosen
Secretary	Jerry Leibman
VP Programming	Jerry Leibman
VP Membership	Stuart Leventhal
VP Publicity	Michael Broniewski
VP Social Action	Bruce Hoffen
Immediate Past President	Neal Blaher
At-Large Board Member	Barry LaBoda
At-Large Board Member	Bart Neuman
At-Large Board Member	Richard Schwartz
At-Large Board Member	Michael Soll
At-Large Board Member	Mark Stone
At-Large Board Member	Jim Tinkoff
At-Large Board Member	Mike Wheeler
At-Large Board Member	Alan Zelt

COS Men's Club Newsletter Editor – Elliott Davis – elliottdavis613@gmail.com

For more information about membership, contact Stuart Leventhal sleventhal@interlachencfl.com

Congregation Ohev Shalom

613 Concourse Pkwy S.

Maitland, Florida 32751

(407)298-4650