



Carnegie Shul Chatter

January 3, 2019



This issue of the Chatter has a bit of a “home team” flavor, but I hope you will not hold that against me because the stories deserve to be reported regardless of that.

The Case of the Disappearing Chanukkah Candles

First, let’s start with *The Case of the Disappearing Chanukkah Candles*, the first in a series of children’s books featuring “The 5 Star Detectives” and written by the Carnegie Shul’s own, Ellen Roteman.

The book, which was released in November by Menucha Publishing, is about five Jewish siblings, Shimmy Stern and his four younger siblings (“stern” means “star” in Yiddish, hence the 5 star detectives). The kids team up to solve a mystery: how are Chanukah candles disappearing from the home of their neighbor Mrs. Rabinovitz?

The book is Ellen’s first novel for children, but prior to having it

Tikun Olam: Repair the World

When I was a kid, I didn’t know much about Tikun Olam, but I did know about Community Service.

My dad was commander of East Boros Post 718 of the Jewish War Veterans and they were really big on community service. They had polio shot clinics, flu shot clinics, parties for kids at the St. Anthony’s School for Exceptional Children, programs for vets at the VA hospitals, brotherhood week programs, and much more.

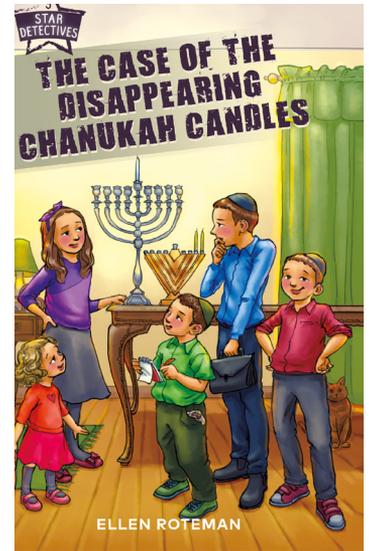
B’Nai Brith was a big thing back then, with many community service projects. And there was Hadassah, a women’s organization that was also known for its community service work, including the Hadassah Hospital in Israel.

There were more Jewish service organizations, like Mizra-chi, ORT, and others. Some are still going strong. Some, sadly, are on the decline. But there are still so many opportunities to help others and to make this world a better place to live.

Volunteering is a great way to, “pass it forward.” When you do, you receive more than you ever thought possible in return.

published, she had a distinguished career as a writer, editor and marketing professional, working for the *Jewish Chronicle*, the Jewish Community Center, Hillel Academy, *Shady Avenue Magazine* and, finally, serving as Marketing Director for the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh. She won several awards for her writing and strategic marketing, receiving first place recognition from the American Jewish Press Association (Simon Rockower Awards), the Jewish Community Centers Association and Women in Communications. She has also been recognized by the International Association of Business Communicators.

Inspired by the dynamics in her own family growing up, Ellen set out to create “real and relatable” characters in a setting that is rich in Jewish values. “Jewish books for children in traditional families have characters that are meant to be role models,” she said. They’re well behaved and they aspire to perform mitzvahs and always do the right thing. Of course, we want kids to do great things Jewishly. But in some books, these characters are just a little too perfect. And, if readers can’t relate to the characters — if the bar is set too high — kids might feel inadequate. Maybe even like it’s not worth trying — because no one can attain perfection.”



She continued, “I wanted to create characters that kids can relate to. They aspire to do good things, but they don’t always succeed. And they don’t always get along with each other. The siblings in my book don’t always agree, sometimes they squabble. But they know they need to work together to solve the mystery, so there’s compromise and sharing of ideas. They learn to listen to each other. And they learn that it’s better to join forces than go it alone.”

Ellen wanted to make the book humorous and fun — not just filled with lessons. “The kids are quirky. One tells bad jokes, and several are included in the book. Another is always snacking from a little bag in his pocket and writes ridiculous things in a little notebook he carries around to record clues, which also adds humor,” she said.

“I hope the book is as much fun to read as it was to write,” she concluded.

In my unbiased opinion, this is a book your young relatives will thoroughly enjoy — any time of the year. *The Case of the Disappearing Chanukah Candles* is available on line at www.menuchapublishers.com (easiest to find it if you search by author or in the “new books” section) or at Pinksers Judaica, on Murray Avenue in Squirrel Hill (call ahead, 412-421-3033, to be sure it’s in stock). And, if you’re a shul member living in Pittsburgh, Ellen will be happy to sign your copy

Volunteering



When you spend your winters living in Florida, it sometimes takes a while for all of your mail to reach you. In fact, our print editions of the *Jewish Chronicle* often get here weeks after you receive them in Pittsburgh.

And so it was that, just a couple days ago, I finally received the December 7 edition of the *Chronicle* that included the Volunteers of the Year from various organizations, and saw that I had been included as our Shul’s Volunteer of the Year for my work on the Chatter and for my work on our annual “Big Event” like this past year’s movie at the Hollywood Theater.

And though I am very proud to have been selected for this honor, I must say that our Shul exists because of the hard work by many dedicated volunteers, including, but not limited to our president, Larry Block, who davens much of our services every week and provides insightful Divrei Torah every week; Rick D'loss, who leads the Torah service every Sabbath and does so much to keep our building running; Irwin Norvich, who regularly davens Shacharis on Shabbos; our other officers and Board members, who give so much of their time to keep our Shul going, and last year's volunteer of the year, Burt Dodick.



Yes, the Carnegie Shul is all about volunteering. Please lend a hand when you can.

Volunteer Needed

Today I received a telephone call from a Mt. Lebanon man whose father, an 84 year old former Conservative cantor, will soon be residing with him after spending some time in a nursing home. The gentleman is interested in having people stop by his Mt. Lebanon home to visit with his father on occasion. This would be a real mitzvah. If you are interested, please let me know and I will put you in touch with him. Thank you.

Yahrzeit Plaques

Commemorate a loved one by dedicating a yahrzeit plaque in his or her memory at the Carnegie Shul. These beautiful plaques, mounted on the sanctuary walls, are lit on the loved one's yahrzeit, Yom Kippur, and days when Yizkor is recited. The names are also read aloud from the Bimah during services on the Sabbath of the yahrzeit and on Yom Kippur. To purchase a plaque, for only \$175, please email Mike Roteman at mrmike7777@yahoo.com.



Sponsor a Kiddush



Please consider sponsoring a Kiddush in honor or in memory of a loved one, for only \$36. Your sponsorship will be announced from the bimah and in the weekly Chatter. To sponsor a Kiddush, email mrmike7777@yahoo.com.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE SOUTH HILLS!



Generations Speaker Series

LYNNE RAVAS

MONDAY, JANUARY 7, 7PM

JCC SOUTH HILLS

345 KANE BLVD, PITTSBURGH, PA 15243

Lynne will share one child's experience in a Jewish orphanage in Germany during Kristallnacht.

Generations members are the next generation of speakers carrying on the stories of Holocaust victims and survivors. These events are free and open to the public, and also live-streamed online.

To learn more and register, visit:
southhillsjewishpittsburgh.org/generations

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**Jewish Federation
OF GREATER PITTSBURGH**

Funding for the Generations program generously provided by the Sylvia & Martin Snow Family Fund

Let me write this down... before I forget to tell you

Writing what we believe for the next generation

As we journey through life, values become all the more important to us. As we look at the next generation, we hope that they understand our values and live them out beyond our days. After three evenings of discussion and learning, you will be able to write your own legacy letter.

Led by Rabbi Ron Symons, JCC of Greater Pittsburgh

Thursdays • January 10, 17, 24
6:30-8:30 PM

JCC South Hills • 345 Kane Boulevard • 412-278-1975

\$30/person/JCC member for all 3 sessions, including dinner, wine and supplies

\$45/person/community

Space is limited. RSVP to Francine Cicco, fcicco@jccpgh.org or 412-446-4775.



**Carnegie Stage (Off the Wall Theater), in cooperation with
Classrooms Without Borders, presents**

Etty

A moving one-woman play set during the Holocaust

Adapted and performed by Susan Stein • Directed by Austin Pendleton

Etty Hillesum's life ended at Auschwitz when she was only 29 years old. In the play, drawn entirely from Hillesum's diaries and letters of 1941-1943, we meet a remarkable young Dutch woman: insightful, determined, poetic, sensual. Through the voice of actress Susan Stein, Hillesum speaks directly to her audience, frankly, and with compassion — even for the enemy. Seeking the meaning of her life — and all life — during the terror of Nazi occupation, Hillesum discovers a reality she calls God and opens herself to the power of being fully alive and present, bearing witness to the catastrophe unfolding around her. In her gentle yet forthright way, Hillesum asks us not to leave her at Auschwitz, but to let her have a "little bit of a say" in what she hopes will be a new world.



February 7, 7pm

February 8 & 9, 8pm

Carnegie Stage

25 W Main St. • Carnegie, PA 15106

For more information and tickets: <https://www.carnegiestage.com/etty-the-play>