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| * **MOUNTAIN SYNAGOGUE** | | Mailing Address: PO Box 504, Franklin, NC 28744  Email: [MountainSynagogue@gmail.com](mailto:MountainSynagogue@gmail.com)  Website: [www.MountainSynagogueWNC.com](http://www.MountainSynagogueWNC.com)  Phone: (828) 634-1312 |
|  | NOVEMBER 2023 | |
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| **Our Tree of Life**  Leaves are now available at $54 each (three times Chai) and large stones (only 11 available) that will be mounted at the base are $500 each, engraving included. Contact us for details:  [ms.treasurer79@gmail.com](mailto:ms.treasurer79@gmail.com) | | **NEXT SHABBAT SERVICE**  Saturday, November 18th at 10:00am (See below)  Services are held on the third Saturday of each month both in-person and on Zoom.  **For those members who prefer to attend via Zoom, please use the following link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87289809710>  A person smiling for the camera  Description automatically generated with low confidence  **Yosi Knight Our Spiritual Leader** |
| ***Please watch your email and our website for notices regarding dates and times of services, which will be conducted both in-person and live online via Zoom.*** | | |

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| **NOTICES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**   1. Have some news to share with our members? We want it all! Contact our newsletter editor, Harvey Morse at [harvey@probate.com](mailto:harvey@probate.com) 2. **Mi Shebeirach (Prayers for the** **ill)**   Ann Ferman  Wendy Newman  Jim Fierberg  Richie Aaron  Alan Escovitz  Benjamin Newman, MD  Connie Chesser   1. **Yahrzeit Donations** (Received by the 15th of the prior month)   Louis Oaken for his parents, Marilyn + Marvin Oaken,  Pearl Goldfarb for husband Burton Goldfarb and brother Ben Shermett, Karen Katz for husband Leo Katz  Harvey Morse for grandfather, Louis Altshuler Ed Pomerantz for father, Louis Pomerantz  Norma Schulman for father, Jack Yospin, and father-in-law, Sol Schulman  Michael + Bobbi Serra, Marcia Goldstein, Stephen Fertig, Laurie + Joel Edelson, Andrea + Howard Slutsky, John + Shari Rall,  **High Holiday Yizkor Donations** Andrea + Howard Slutsky Marilyn + Marvin Oaken Pearl Goldfarb John + Shari Rall Karen Katz Michael + Bobbi Serra Marcia Goldstein Stephen Fertig Laurie + Joel Edelson   1. **General Donations**   Don + Donna Gaber, Ronald Shnider,  Shayna Sinrich, Karen Katz, Charles Auster, Marty Rosenfeld + Donna Woods, Sima Gleckel + David Bryant,  Mark + Kristen Rabinowitz,  Norma Schulman, Carole + Jerry Bogage,  Marcia Goldstein, Laurie + Joel Edelson  Cira + Steve Newman Pearl Goldfarb   1. **Member Celebrations This Month**   ***Birthdays****:* Marcia Snyder, Cathy Friedman Nanette Henson, Mike Henson,  **CONTINUED NEXT PAGE** Hal Halpern, Lynne Halpern, Jay Sanders, Bobbi Serra, George Newman  ***Anniversaries:*** *Allen + Terri Baer* John + Shari Rall David + Elizabeth Goldstein   1. **Tree Of Life Leaf Purchases**   Leaves are $54, and Stones are $500 each.  [*Our Tree of Life is for celebrations, family or personal events of note, not memorials].* None   1. **Memorial Plaques**   Memorial plaques which are placed in our Social Hall are $50 per name for an engraved, permanent remembrance.  Elizabeth Hinckley for daughter Leah Breitstein Andrea + Howard Slutsky for Andrea’s mother, Lilian Felman + Howard’s father, Samuel Slutsky + his mother, Frances Slutsky   1. **New Members This Month** Ricky & Helene Siegel   **Interfaith Community Gathering** November 14th at 6:30pm Robert C. Carpenter Community Bldg 1288 Georgia Rd., Franklin, NC  **Please bring some non-perishable goods for those in need** |  | **PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**  Joel Edelson, President  **HATRED**  “When peace comes, we will perhaps in time be able to forgive the Arabs for killing our sons (and daughters), but it will be harder for us to forgive them for having forced us to kill their sons (and daughters). Peace will come when they (Arabs) will love their children more than they hate us.” Golda Meir, Third Prime Minister of Israel.  It’s very, very difficult to put into words the range of emotions one has gone through watching (from the comfort of our homes) the catastrophic events we have witnessed ongoing in Israel and Gaza. It is indescribable what it must have been was like to have lived through it there, in Israel, during these last 14 days. Brutality, fear, anger, horror, despair, anxiety, confusion, bewilderment, rage, and paranoia only begin to describe them.  Having never visited Israel, I do not have the same connection or bond that many who have lived or visited have. So many have a declared love of Israel, as a hope for a permanent homeland for the Jewish people. Love is indeed a powerful emotion.  However, from what I am reading, and witnessing, from all sides of this conflict, is a more powerful, and dangerous emotion. Hatred. Pure hatred.  How does one understand hatred? How does one negotiate with a people consumed by hatred? In my reading from psychmatters.co, Hatred is a form of neurosis, fixation and judgement that is harmful to you. If continued, it leads to conflicts in relationships and to bodily dis-ease. Research shows that hatred changes the chemistry in the brain as it stimulates the premotor cortex which is responsible for planning and execution of motion. This prepares us to act aggressively when feeling hateful, either to defend- or to attack.  The opposite of hatred is not love. It is mental and emotional detachment. Hatred attaches you to the thing or person you hate. Hatred is an intense repulsion that creates a mirror effect in that it attracts the person back to the thing hated in order to be repulsed by it over and over. Hatred is bitter-sweet as it inflates the ego and makes you feel very superior and self-righteous against the thing or one that is hated, only breeding further pain.  Sigmund Freud agreed in his treatise that he agrees that man has in him an active instinct for hatred and destruction, amenable to such stimulations. He believes in the existence of this instinct and has been recently at pains to study their manifestations.  When will we learn to not make war? Perhaps Gold Meir had the answer all along.    B’Shalom,  Joel  **SAFETY TEAM MEMBERS NEEDED** We are continually seeking additional members to join our synagogue Safety Team. Approved members will receive appropriate training and will be covered by our insurance policy. If you are interested in serving, please contact our Safety Director at: [harvey@probate.com](mailto:harvey@probate.com)  **HAVE A COMPUTER? DO YOU ENJOY WRITING? USE MICROSOFT WORD?** We are looking for a member who would like to assist with our monthly newsletter. Please contact Harvey Morse at [harvey@probate.com](mailto:harvey@probate.com) for details.  **MEMBERS MONTHLY SOCIAL EVENT!** Saturday November 11th at 5:00pm there will be a member’s dinner at: **Valley Café 7099 Highway 441 Dillard, GA 30537**  **RSVP REQUIRED** to George Bermanby November 9th  828-524-9463 or Email:[**jrbgib1994@frontier.com**](mailto:jrbgib1994@frontier.com)  **ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**  Our Annual Meeting and election of Officers  will take place after services on  Saturday, December 16th, 2023 |
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***Old Soldiers Never Die: Jewish Volunteers of All Ages Respond to the IDF’s Call to Arms***

**(This article was written by our own member, John Stemple, who has passed his military physical and will be headed to Israel to join the IDF within the next two months!)**

In his April 19, 1951, farewell address to the U.S. Congress, General of the U.S. Army Douglas MacArthur stated the following: "Old soldiers never die - they just fade away." However, with regard to defending Israel, that is not necessarily true.

Media outlets have recently highlighted the call-up of Israel Defense Forces/IDF (צה"ל) First Sergeant/Rav Samal Rishon (רב-סמל ראשון) Ezra Yachin, a veteran of the 1948 War of Independence. Ezra lost the use of his right eye during Israel's 1948 War of Independence, but that negative experience has not diminished his glowing patriotism and love for the IDF and Israel. Shortly after the outbreak of the current conflagration, he told the German newspaper *Bild* the following: “Two days ago I received an order to be drafted from the reserves and immediately put on my uniform." Notably, a photograph of Ezra appeared in a Hananya Naftali Twitter post on October 10, 2023; in the image Yachin is attired in army fatigues and he holds a product of an American firearms company: a Colt M-4 carbine.

According to an Israel National News November 28, 2018, article (*Lehi fighter Ezra Yachin promoted in rank*: '*I enlisted for life'*) by Ido Ben Porat, Yachin was promoted earlier that day by IDF Chief Rabbi Brigadier General Eyal Krim with IDF Rabbinate Chief Rabbi Hagai Wlosky in attendance. Ezra's unwavering steadfastness and his more than 9,000 lectures since 1973 provided the justifications for the advancement.

Ezra Yachin is commonly referred to as "the IDF's oldest reservist." Yachin, who will certainly not see combat during the ongoing Operation Swords of Zion (colloquially known as the “Sukkot War”), is a role model and motivator. He said: “I talk to the soldiers; I encourage them and strengthen their morale." During a November 29, 2021, IDF interview titled *I fought in the Lehi*, Ezra expounded upon his personal undertakings: "I, as a faithful Jew, understand that I received from heaven the right to pass on to future generations the heritage of the people of Israel for generations to come. To tell them about the price we had to pay for this land. I tell my story in the army, in pre-military preparatory schools, and all over the country—wherever I am invited to."

One hears it said that "Once a soldier always a soldier." This is a true statement for many veterans, Ezra Yachin included. After receiving his רב-סמל ראשון chevrons, Yachin said, "[T]he first song I learned by heart was the Lehi anthem *Unknown Soldiers*. There we are told, 'We've all been conscripted for life, to be released from the ranks only by death.' I also enlisted for life in the Israel Defense Forces, and only with death will I be released. I enlisted - I'm in the ranks."

Ezra Yachin is most assuredly deserving of the praise and publicity he is receiving, but Ezra is hardly the only older individual to inspire IDF personnel. Thousands of senior citizens have served in support of Israel since 1948, the overwhelming majority having received little, if any, fanfare.

One of the many was a man from Louisiana named Lamon. He was a former U.S. Marine, Purple Heart recipient, and a devout pro-Israel Christian who was well into his seventies in late 1998. In August 1942 Lamon was attired in U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) fatigues. At the age of seventeen, this brave young man found himself on the bitterly contested island of Guadalcanal and fighting Imperial Japanese forces. It was during this critical Second World War campaign that Lamon was shot by an enemy combatant. However, on a December morning in 1998 he was wearing an IDF uniform and shaving well before sunup in the men's latrine at the IDF's Julis army base. A portable radio tuned to the British Broadcast Corporation's World News Service announced that the U.S. Air Force and Britain's Royal Air Force were commencing Operation Desert Fox, the bombing of Iraq. IDF bases went on alert. Unflappable, Lamon served throughout the conflict. He sought no notoriety and got none, until now, for his selfless contributions.

Why do they come? One morning in 2001 three volunteer soldiers, two from Tennessee and one from Ohio, were walking to the mess hall for breakfast. Unexpectedly, a voice rang out in perfect English. "Excuse me," said the young female Israeli soldier who was hurrying to intercept. "May I ask you a question?" she breathlessly inquired. When the trio stopped, the inquisitor rather pointedly continued, "What the [expletive] are you doing here? We Israelis have to perform military service, but you voluntarily spend your own money and vacation time to come here and serve with the army. Why?" The Americans answered, "Because Israel is the only democracy in this region, and additionally, as Jews, we must preserve Israel as an emergency retreat in the event that anti-Semitism makes life untenable in our home country."

Perhaps coincidentally, after the mid-day meal the base commander convened a meeting of personnel on the subject within the community room. The verbal exchanges were beneficial to all attendees, and the enlisted soldiers departed with a better understanding of how important a secure Israel is for the sake of international Jewry; they had also just garnered a new understanding of and appreciation for Eretz Yisrael.

Slightly more than two decades later, and within hours of Hamas' initial recent attacks, the IDF issued a mobilization of reservists for service. Hundreds of thousands of men and women throughout the country quickly answered their summons, as they had done during Operation Pillar of Defense/Pillar of Cloud in November of 2012.

Israel has a relatively small population and in wartime needs all the manpower it can obtain. Last month, on October 10, 2023, Steve Litwok, President of Volunteers for Israel (VFI), penned and circulated an urgent recruiting message. As a result, the organization is yet again seeing an uptick in volunteerism. Since 1983, Sar-El (שר-אל) or "service for Israel,” which was founded by the late Brigadier General/Dr. Aharon Davidi and administered by the IDF’s Logistics Corps, has welcomed those who are healthy enough, and mentally competent, to serve. These men and women support the IDF by providing labor, as did the British Army's Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps/Pioneer Corps during WWII. Accepted VFI applicants can serve the IDF, be placed in a hospital, or sometimes assist with an archaeological excavation.

In a video (*Why IDF needs Sar-El)* posted on the Sar-El website (Sar-El.com), officials relate their opinions about Sar-El. Major Einav Leket, military commander of the Sar-El unit, states, "What the volunteers represent is a bridge between the nations, the IDF, and Israel . . . and these volunteers help increase the competence and readiness of the IDF."

Within an article (*Sar-El might close its doors after decades bringing volunteers to Israel*) dated November 25, 2020, The Jerusalem Post journalist explains that Sar-El "offers logistical support to IDF soldiers on some 20-30 bases across the country. The nonprofit’s aim is to keep and reinforce the connection between Israel and the Jewish world, and many [younger] participants have in fact made aliyah (עֲלִיָה) and have been drafted into the IDF following their time with Sar-El." As alluded to in the title of an August 18, 2021, online posting (*Age is of no concern: Volunteering in Sar-El*), also by The Jerusalem Post, age is of no practical concern as all volunteers, after being vetted successfully, are released to Israel. Postings and duty assignments are made based upon IDF needs and the individual applicant’s physical health, mental acuity, etc. (Note that Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, who was Jewish by birth, served on active duty in the U.S. Navy until age 82.)

According to statements made by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu since October 19, 2023, the current conflict will probably continue for some time as various terrorist groups are engaged near Israel’s borders. At this juncture, it is known that at least one member of Mountain Synagogue will be journeying to Israel to temporarily serve in uniform.

However, all congregants can make a difference in other ways. How can you contribute? If you are unable to undertake a journey, could you donate to VFI and Magen David Adom (מגן דוד אדום), or buy Israel Bonds and purchase products made in Israel? Remember, Israel needs you and we need Israel.

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Author’s Notes: Those readers who wish to know more about Sar-El are referred to the Israeli website Sar-El.org and VFI (https://vfi-usa.org/) in New York, NY. VFI may also be contacted toll free via telephone at (866) 514-1948.

**PHOTO ON NEXT PAGE**

An old person in military uniform holding an object

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