

Crescent City Jewish News™

# SOURCE

2014-2015 / 5775



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Annual Guide to Jewish Living in New Orleans and North Shore

# 5775

## Our song goes on...



Alan Smason

Last year we published our first SOURCE, an annual guide to Jewish living in New Orleans and the North Shore. We received numerous compliments throughout New Orleans. In July we were honored by the Press Club of New Orleans with a nationally-judged first place award for our article and timeline of Jewish New Orleans. Thanks to the research of local archivist Irwin Lachoff, we were able to tell “our story.”

This year we take a musical spin as we highlight the incredible and sometimes unsung contributions of many locals from our local Jewish community who helped to firmly establish jazz music across America and the world.

Our purpose in creating the Crescent City Jewish News was for local Jewish journalists to take ownership and record our local history so it would not be lost – which would be a travesty to our New Orleans ancestry.

Our current world appears very reminiscent of other challenging times in Jewish history. Today it is even more

important that we publish accurate information about the tremendous contributions that the Jewish leaders have contributed to our city. Not only has the Jewish community thrived, but it has always been part of our ethical upbringing to help right the wrongs of discrimination and tyranny and to seek justice. Many members of our Jewish community took unpopular stances together, especially when we worked to strike down the Jim Crow laws and discrimination wherever we found it. Other times it was the courageous stand of one individual as in the case of Jewish philanthropist Edgar Stern, who turned down an invitation to join the prestigious Boston Club because of a policy that restricted Jewish membership.

As we begin the new year of 5775, we are thankful for many positive outcomes that have developed in New Orleans, especially now that we are at year nine since recovery from the flooding associated with Hurricane Katrina. This summer Mayor Mitch Landrieu accepted the “most livable city in the nation award” at the U.S. Conference of Mayors held in

Dallas. New Orleans won this award because of the 20-30% drop in homicides since the program, “NOLA for Life” was instituted in 2012.

Another positive for our city was this past April when Forbes announced that New Orleans tied with San Antonio as the number one “brainpower city.” Our city won because of its increased job growth market and our lower cost of living expenses. Also, we’ve attracted new companies here including General Electric, Gameloft of Paris and satellite communications company Globalstar on the North Shore. The last reason cited by Forbes was that New Orleans has double the national average for college graduates living in the city. We wonder what Ignatius J. Reilly might think now about our “confederacy of dunces?”

Again, our thanks for our local community’s continued support. We hope you enjoy our SOURCE, your annual free gift from the Crescent City Jewish News.

L’Shana Tovah. Who dat say they gonna beat them Saints? Geaux Tigers! Roll Wave!





# TABLE OF CONTENTS



Jewish New Orleans **4**

Candlelighting Times **6**

Listings **7**

Holidays **22**

Nola Entertainment **24**

Mardi Gras **26**

Valerie Sassafras **27**

Jewish Day Schools **29**

Satchmo and the Star **31**

Jews and Jazz **34**

**CRESCENT CITY JEWISH NEWS**

Editorial & Advertising Offices

3810 Nashville Avenue

New Orleans, LA 70125

Editorial Contact:

[editor@ccjn.net](mailto:editor@ccjn.net)

Advertising Contact:

[advertising@ccjn.net](mailto:advertising@ccjn.net)

# New Orleans Jewish History

BY ARLENE S. WIEDER



Judah Touro (Courtesy LA State Museum)

The first documentation of Jewish settlers living in the French colony of Louisiana was in 1759. According to the historic document recorded by the “Commissaire Ordonnateur” of the French colony, only six Jews lived in the area. The purpose for identifying these individuals was for the local French government to enforce the law called the “Le Code Noir” or “black code.” This law prohibited Jewish families from maintaining residences for longer than three months, but was never enforced in the Louisiana colony while it was under French rule.

After France became a signatory to the Treaty of Fontainebleau, the Louisiana colony became part of Spain. The Spanish government decided to enforce the long ignored law. Monetary acquisition seemed to be the primary motivation, rather than anti-Semitism. By enforcing the code, the local government was able to expropriate acquisitions that were held by Jews. The affluent Monsanto family was expelled in 1769 and all their acquisitions were confiscated. The family fled to Pensacola, which was under British rule, but within one year the family was allowed to return.

After the expulsion and eventual return of Jews under American law, it took several decades before the

Jewish community finally chartered its first synagogue, called Congregation Gates of Mercy. The credit behind the establishment of this institution is given to a New York merchant, who had moved to New Orleans, Jacob Solis.

Solis was appalled by the lack of “Jewishness” in the city. More specifically, he was frustrated there was no available matzoh supply during the period of Passover. Another historical account suggested Solis was also irritated because there was no place to worship in New Orleans for the Jewish High Holidays. Regardless of his motivation, all sources concur that Solis spearheaded the movement that successfully established Gates of Mercy, which was chartered in 1828.

Most of the earliest Jewish families in New Orleans were interfaith unions. The predominantly Jewish males found themselves lacking sufficient numbers of Jewish ladies. Traditional Jewish laws were largely ignored in order that their spouses and progeny would gain acceptance and be considered part of an extended Jewish community. These early compromises seemed a necessity for the survival of the first New Orleans Jewish families. Acceptance was crucial for these families so they could attend services together and be buried in the Jewish cemetery. These early families were culturally Jewish, but not very religious.

Judah Touro, who fought with Andrew Jackson at the Battle of New Orleans, is credited with making the most impact on the New Orleans community in the 19th century. Commonly referred to as the first significant Jewish philanthropist in the United States, Touro purchased an Episcopal church and paid to remodel and convert the church into a synagogue. A few years later he established Touro Infirmary, a charity hospital supported by the local Hebrew Benevolent Association. When Touro died in 1854, his will included money to numerous New Orleans causes and other Jewish institutions around the country.

Congregation Gates of Prayer organized in 1850 as Shaarei Tefilah. The first members of this congregation were Jews that were escaping from the European unrest. The members of Gates of Prayer began as a traditionally Orthodox synagogue. As the congregation grew in size, strict observance was emphasized less. Finally by 1905, the Gates of Prayer congregation



Rohr Chabad Jewish Student Center at Tulane



formally acknowledged their alliance with the Reform movement. Presently, Congregation Gates of Prayer has the distinction of being the only Reform congregation located in Metairie. Its spiritual leader is Rabbi Robert Loewy.

In 1870 Temple Sinai was founded. It has the largest congregational membership of any Jewish institution in the state of Louisiana. Originally situated in what is today the Central Business District, Temple Sinai relocated to its current campus in the University section in 1926 and is led by Rabbi Ed Paul Cohn.

The current Touro Synagogue was formed in 1881. This congregation was the result of a merger between the earliest New Orleans synagogues, Gates of Mercy and Dispensed of Judah. Its unique domed sanctuary on St. Charles Avenue was built by famed architect Emile Weil in 1909 and the congregation is currently led by the first woman senior rabbi of a major New Orleans synagogue, Rabbi Alexis Berk.

Between the last quarter of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries many small and unpretentious prayer societies were formed from the newly-arrived Eastern European immigrants. Many of these Jews that settled in New Orleans were escaping persecution and were largely of Ashkenazic background. Congregation Beth Israel, founded in 1904 emerged from some of these early groups. When it was located at its original Carondelet Street location near the heavily-Jewish corridor along Dryades Street, it was the largest Orthodox congregation in the South. The congregation moved to a new location in Lakeview in 1970, which was destroyed by floodwaters associated with Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Congregation Beth Israel relocated next to Gates of Prayer in Metairie, where it met for several years. Rabbi Gabriel Greenberg is the current rabbi for the newest house of worship in the area.

Congregation Anshe Sfarad was erected in 1925 at its present Carondelet Street location. Anshe Sfarad is now the only non-Chabad Orthodox institution still located in Orleans Parish and its spiritual leader is Rabbi David Polsky.

The Conservative movement

did not appear in the community until the middle of the 20th century. Congregation Tikvat Shalom, initially the Conservative Congregation of New Orleans, emerged from a splinter group of Chevra Thilim congregants that wanted mixed sitting. The controversial concept at that time became a nationally-watched court case of Katz vs. Singerman. The case eventually was heard by the Louisiana Supreme Court, which ruled in favor of mixed seating for the Orthodox congregation. Chevra Thilim fell victim to the Jewish flight of the 1970s out of Orleans Parish. As the congregation grew older, it found its members were becoming less observant. Eventually, the Orthodox synagogue affiliated with the Conservative movement. More than 40 years after the initial split, the two congregations merged in 1999 and formed Shir Chadash Conservative Congregation in Metairie. Rabbi Ethan Linden is the current spiritual leader.

The last Jewish movement to arrive in the greater New Orleans area was Chabad-Lubavitch of Louisiana. Dispatched by the venerated Rabbi Mendel Schneerson, the first shluchim (emissaries), Rabbi Zelig and Bluma Rivkin, arrived in 1975. The mission of Chabad is to bring the spiritual and material needs to different communities and hopefully preserve a future Jewish life. The movement has grown to have eight shluchim couples, many of whom are the Rivkins' offspring. They proved many different educational, social and religious programs and activities. Both the Btresh Family Chabad Center, run by Rabbi Mendel Rivkin, and the Rohr Chabad Jewish Student Center at Tulane University, administered by Rabbi Yochanan Rivkin, are located next door to one another on Freret Street in the University section. In 1990, the Gerson Katz Chabad Center was built and dedicated to serve the needs of the Jewish community of Metairie. Its spiritual leader is Rabbi Yossie Nemes.

In 1996 the Northshore Jewish Congregation (NJC) was chartered with 40 original members from the Mandeville area. In less than ten years they had purchased a 10,000 square foot building and had grown to become a congregation of almost



Anshe Sfarad (Orthodox, 1925)



Temple Sinai, (Reform, 1926)



Gerson Katz Chabad Center (Metairie)

100 family units. They currently offer weekly lay-led services and have contracted Rabbi Deborah Zecher to lead the congregation during the High Holidays and to perform services over the course of the next year once a month. In addition, NJC offers a religious school and follows the Union of Reform Judaism's "Chai" curriculum.

Reflecting on the more than 200 years of Jewish living in the Greater New Orleans Jewish community including the North Shore, our community enters the year 5775 with pride as we boast of having four area Reform congregations, one Conservative, two Orthodox and three Chabad Centers.

# CANDLELIGHTING TIMES

## SEPTEMBER

05 Starts 7:00 Ends 7:53    19 Starts 6:43 Ends 7:35  
12 Starts 6:52 Ends 7:44    26 Starts 6:34 Ends 7:26

## MARCH

06 Starts 5:45 Ends 6:39    20 Starts 6:54 Ends 7:48  
13 Starts 6:49 Ends 7:43    27 Starts 6:58 Ends 7:52

## OCTOBER

03 Yom Kippur Starts 6:25 Ends 7:19    24 Starts 6:02 Ends 6:56  
10 Starts 6:17 Ends 7:10    31 Starts 5:56 Ends 6:50  
17 Starts 6:10 Ends 7:02

## APRIL

03 Starts 7:02 Ends 7:57    17 Starts 7:11 Ends 8:06  
10 Starts 7:07 Ends 8:01    24 Starts 7:15 Ends 8:11

## NOVEMBER

07 Starts 4:51 Ends 5:45    21 Starts 4:44 Ends 5:40  
14 Starts 4:47 Ends 5:42    28 Starts 4:43 Ends 5:39

## MAY

01 Starts 7:20 Ends 8:16    22 Starts 7:33 Ends 8:32  
08 Starts 7:24 Ends 8:21    29 Starts 7:37 Ends 8:36  
15 Starts 7:29 Ends 8:27

## DECEMBER

05 Starts 4:42 Ends 5:39    19 Starts 4:46 Ends 5:44  
12 Starts 4:44 Ends 5:41    26 Starts 4:50 Ends 5:47

## JUNE

05 Starts 7:41 Ends 8:40    19 Starts 7:46 Ends 8:45  
12 Starts 7:44 Ends 8:43    26 Starts 7:47 Ends 8:46

## JANUARY

02 Starts 4:55 Ends 5:52    23 Starts 5:12 Ends 6:08  
09 Starts 5:00 Ends 5:57    30 Starts 5:18 Ends 6:14  
16 Starts 5:06 Ends 6:03

## JULY

03 Starts 7:47 Ends 8:46    24 Starts 7:41 Ends 8:38  
10 Starts 7:47 Ends 8:45    31 Starts 7:37 Ends 8:32  
17 Starts 7:44 Ends 8:42

## FEBRUARY

06 Starts 5:24 Ends 6:19    20 Starts 5:35 Ends 6:30  
13 Starts 5:30 Ends 6:25    27 Starts 5:40 Ends 6:34

## AUGUST

07 Starts 7:31 Ends 8:26    21 Starts 7:18 Ends 8:11  
14 Starts 7:25 Ends 8:19    28 Starts 7:10 Ends 8:03



## ARTS & CULTURE

### \*(JEWISH)

#### **\*GOLDRING/WOLDENBERG INSTITUTE OF SOUTHERN JEWISH LIFE & MUSEUM OF THE SOUTHERN JEWISH EXPERIENCE**

4915 I-55 North Suite 100A  
Jackson, MS 39236  
Phone: 601-362-6357  
Email: mschwartz@isjl.org  
Website: <http://www.isjl.org>  
Contact: Macy B. Hart, President  
Founded as the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience in 1986, the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish communities, documents and preserves the rich history of the Southern Jewish experience, and promotes a Jewish cultural presence throughout a 13-state region.

#### **LE PETIT THEATRE DU VIEUX CARRE**

616 St. Peter Street  
New Orleans, LA 70116  
Website: [www.lepetittheatre.com](http://www.lepetittheatre.com)  
Email: [info@lepetittheatre.com](mailto:info@lepetittheatre.com)  
Phone: 504-522-2031  
Founded in 1916, Le Petit Théâtre du Vieux Carré is one of the nation's oldest community-based theaters. In the early 1960s Le Petit built a playhouse in the French Quarter. The 2014-15 season tickets began with "Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike" and future productions will include "Peter and the Starcatcher," "Jesus Christ Superstar" and culminates with "Dinner With Friends."

#### **\*LIMMUDFEST NEW ORLEANS**

Website: [www.limmudnola.org](http://www.limmudnola.org)  
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Vice-Chair: Jakob Rosenzweig  
This biennial festival is held to celebrate the Jewish New Orleans community, its culture, arts and history. Classes and programs are developed to make learners of all participants during this two-day event.  
NEXT LIMMUDFEST NEW ORLEANS:  
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Fax: 201-363-9241  
Email: [mail@shalomtv.com](mailto:mail@shalomtv.com)  
Website: [www.shalomtv.com](http://www.shalomtv.com)  
CEO: Rabbi Mark S. Golub  
Shalom TV is America's Jewish Television network covering the panorama of Jewish life. It is led by a team of Jewish and television professionals. The programs reflect and address the diversity and pluralism of the Jewish experience. The service does not represent any specific movement or organization in the Jewish community.

#### **WYES TV**

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Website: [www.wyes.org](http://www.wyes.org)  
For over 55 years, WYES is a PBS member station serving New Orleans & the Mississippi Gulf Coast. The station is dedicated to inform, teach, illuminate, entertain and inspire our community.

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### \*(KOSHER)

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LA. Kashrut Committee.

# ZACHOR "Remember" New Orleans

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Contact JEF at 504.524.4559 to contribute

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EVENT HALL**

4004 W. Esplanade Avenue  
Metairie, LA 70002  
Contact: Rabbi David Posternock  
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Phone: 504-454-5080  
Fax: 504-883-8010  
Website: www.bethisraelnola.com

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Phone: 504-835-2341  
Website: [www.tharpsontheimerfh.com](http://www.tharpsontheimerfh.com)  
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Phone: 504-866-5371  
Lakeview: 905 Harrison Avenue  
Phone: 504-872-0931  
Website: [www.youngsdrycleaning.com](http://www.youngsdrycleaning.com)  
This 3rd generation local cleaners offers complete laundry and dry cleaning services using the strict standards passed down to family members since 1940. Services include: gown preservation, alterations, clothing restoration, and rug & drapes cleaned. FREE PICK-UP & DELIVERY. Keep your clothes looking YOUNG'S!

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**\*(JEWISH)**

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6500 Magazine Street  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
Website: [www.auduboninstitute.org](http://www.auduboninstitute.org)  
The staff at the Audubon Nature Institute offers summer day camps and special camps at holiday times and school breaks for students in K-4th grades. These camps offer unique activities like zoo hikes, hands-on science activities, animal shows, feedings and Audubon "Zoo Keepers" talks. SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION OPENS ON 3/12/15.



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## \*BLUE STAR CAMPS (R)

179 Blue Star Way  
Hendersonville, NC 28739  
Phone: 828-692-3591  
Website: [www.bluestarcamps.com](http://www.bluestarcamps.com)  
Email: [info@bluestarcamps.com](mailto:info@bluestarcamps.com)  
For over 60 years the Popkin family has been innovative in Jewish camping experiences. The picturesque camp for children ages 6 – 16 years is located in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Daily activities include creative arts and various outdoor sports.

## \*CAMP BARNEY MEDINTZ (R) (JCC ATLANTA)

4165 Highway 129 N  
Cleveland, GA 30528  
Website: [www.campbarney.org](http://www.campbarney.org)  
Phone: 706-865-2715

## \*CAMP JUDAEA (R)

48 Camp Judaea Ln.  
Hendersonville, NC 28792  
Website: [www.campjudaea.org](http://www.campjudaea.org)  
828-685-8841

## \*HENRY S. JACOBS CAMP (R)

PO Box 327/3863 Morrison Rd.  
Utica, MS 39175  
Website: [www.jacobs.urjcamps.org](http://www.jacobs.urjcamps.org)  
Phone: 601-885-6042

## COMMUNITY RESOURCE

### AMERICAN FRIENDS OF MAGEN DAVID ADOM (SE REGION)

1900 NW Corporate Blvd, Suite W-310  
Boca Raton, FL 33431  
Toll-Free: 800-626-0046  
Phone: 561-288-5658  
Phone: 954-457-9766  
Fax: 954-457-7705  
Email: [southeast@afmda.org](mailto:southeast@afmda.org)  
Website: [www.afmda.org](http://www.afmda.org)  
Magen David Adom (MDA) provides a rapid and skilled emergency medical response, including disaster, ambulance, and blood services to Israel. MDA has 123 Emergency Medical Stations and 11 dispatch stations strategically located throughout Israel.

### ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE

(South-Central Region)  
3747 West Esplanade Avenue  
Metairie, LA 70002  
Phone: 504-780-5602  
Fax: 504-780-5640  
Website: <http://neworleans.adl.org>  
Allison Padilla-Goodman, Director  
Email: [agoodman@adl.org](mailto:agoodman@adl.org)  
Created over fifty years ago, the South Central office of the ADL is dedicated to combating anti-Semitism and all forms of hatred and bigotry. The organization investigates, exposes extremism, and advocates for civil rights and religious freedom.

## ARZA

633 Third Ave., 7th Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
Phone: 212-650-4280  
Fax: 212-650-4289  
Email: [ARZA@ARZA.org](mailto:ARZA@ARZA.org)  
Rabbi Joshua Weinberg, President  
ARZA is the largest supporter of the Israel Movement for Reform, Progressive Judaism (IMPJ) and the Israel Religious Action Center (IRAC). As the Zionist wing of the Reform Movement, ARZA assists in bringing Reform Jews to Israel with pre- and post-trip programming, and educational materials for Reform congregations.

## AVODAH: THE JEWISH SERVICE CORPS- NEW ORLEANS

7733 Maple Street  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
Phone: 504-861-1067  
Email: [avodahneworleans@avodah.net](mailto:avodahneworleans@avodah.net)  
Website: [www.avodah.net/new-orleans](http://www.avodah.net/new-orleans)  
New Orleans Director: Dani Levine  
AVODAH strengthens the Jewish Community's fight against the causes and Effects of poverty in the United States, by engaging participants in service and community building that inspire them to become lifelong leaders for social change whose work for justice is rooted in and nourished by Jewish values.



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4141 West Esplanade Avenue  
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Website: [www.jewishlouisiana.com](http://www.jewishlouisiana.com)  
Phone: 504-861-7578

Contact: Rabbi Yossie & Chanie Nemes

Directed by Rabbi Yossie and Chanie Nemes, Chabad Center aptly serves the needs of the suburban New Orleans Jewish community. Since our new building dedication (1999) in memory of Gerson Katz, the center has provided expanded programming and activities.

**CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF LOUISIANA**

7037 Freret Street  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
Phone: 504-302-1830  
Website: [www.jewishlouisiana.com](http://www.jewishlouisiana.com)

Directed by: Rabbi Zelig and Bluma Rivkin

Emails:  
[mendel@chabadneworleans.com](mailto:mendel@chabadneworleans.com)  
[bluma@chabadneworleans.com](mailto:bluma@chabadneworleans.com)

Chabad of Louisiana headquarters, serves as a Synagogue as well as a center for adult education, children's programs and Jewish social events. Information about our many programs and activities is accessible throughout the website.



**FIDF (FRIENDS OF THE ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCE)**

FIDF Southeast Region  
Atlanta, GA  
Phone: 678-250-9030  
Website: [www.fidf.org](http://www.fidf.org)  
Email: [Southeast@fidf.org](mailto:Southeast@fidf.org)  
Executive Director: Seth Baron  
FIDF (Friends of the Israeli Defense Force) was established in 1981 by a group of Holocaust survivors to provide and support educational, social, cultural, and recreational programs and facilities for the heroic men and women of the IDF. FIDF has more than 120,000 supporters, and 15 regional offices.



**HADASSAH**

(Women's Zionist Organization of America)  
New Orleans Chapter  
Contact: Ilana Reisin, President  
Email: [ilanareisin@gmail.com](mailto:ilanareisin@gmail.com)  
Website: [Hadassah.org/neworleans](http://Hadassah.org/neworleans)  
Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America (HWZOA) is a voluntary non-profit organization. With more Than 330,000 members, it is dedicated to the ideas of Judaism, Zionism, American democracy, healing, teaching and medical research. Hadassah enhances the health of people worldwide through its support of medical care and research at the Hadassah Medical Organization (HMO) in Jerusalem.

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Email: [Atlanta@israelbonds.com](mailto:Atlanta@israelbonds.com)  
Israel Bonds (Development Corporation for Israel) was established in 1951, Israel Bonds serves as a broker/dealer and underwriter for securities issued by the Israeli government. In 2013 the United States domestic sales exceeded \$1.12 billion.



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## JEWISH CHILDREN'S REGIONAL SERVICE

(South-Central Region)  
3500 N Causeway Blvd. # Ste 1120  
Metairie, LA 70002  
Mailing Address: P.O. # 7368  
Metairie, LA 70010  
Phone: 504-828-6334  
Toll Free: 800-729-5277  
Website: [www.jcrs.org](http://www.jcrs.org)  
Director: Ned Goldberg, ACSW/LCSW  
Email: [ned@jcrs.org](mailto:ned@jcrs.org)

Founded in 1855, JCRS is the oldest Jewish children's agency in the U.S. It serves across 7 regional states (AL, AR, LA, MS, OK, TN, and TX) for the neediest and most challenged Jewish children from infancy through college. Jewish Camp scholarships and low interest college loans available.



## THE JEWISH ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION OF LOUISIANA

615 Baronne Street  
Suite 150  
New Orleans, LA 70113  
Phone: 504-524-4559  
Fax: 504-524-4259  
Director: Sandra K. Levy  
Email: [sandy@jefno.org](mailto:sandy@jefno.org)  
Website: [www.jefno.org](http://www.jefno.org)

The Jewish Endowment Foundation of Louisiana began in 1967 by Jewish leaders of New Orleans. The organization established a repository for reserved funds. These funds are a source for as yet undreamed-of projects to nurture an enduring and vibrant Jewish New Orleans.

## JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE

(3 Locations)  
Main Office: 3330 W. Esplanade Ave,  
Suite 600  
Metairie, LA 70002  
Phone: 504-832-8475  
Uptown: 1426 Amelia St.  
New Orleans, LA 70115  
Phone: 504-831-8475  
North Shore: 1403 N. Causeway Blvd.  
Mandeville, LA 70471  
Website: [www.jfsneworleans.org](http://www.jfsneworleans.org)  
Director: Michael Steiner  
Email: [michael@jfsneworleans.org](mailto:michael@jfsneworleans.org)  
Founded in 1948, Jewish Family Service has provided skilled counseling services, support groups, prevention programs and senior services. JFS is the exclusive representative for Phillips' Lifeline service, a monitored medical alert system.

## JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER NEW ORLEANS

3747 West Esplanade Avenue  
Metairie, LA 70002  
Phone: 504-780-5600  
Executive Director: Michael Weil  
Website: [www.jewishnola.com](http://www.jewishnola.com)  
Since 1913, the Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans has served as the central coordinating body for the Jewish community. Its mission is to build and sustain a vibrant Greater New Orleans Jewish community and to assure the continuity of the Jewish people in America, Israel and the Diaspora.



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## JEWISH WAR VETERANS, JULES LAZARD POST 580

Contact: Judge Sol Gothard, Commander  
3663 Behrman Pl.  
New Orleans, LA 70114  
Phone: 504-887-3570  
Email: judgesol@cox.net

www.crescentcityjewishnews.com/community-organizations/jewish-war-veterans-jules-lazard-post-580/  
Our post is dedicated to continue the connection between the military, local Veterans, New Orleans and our Jewish community. Annual Veterans Day and Memorial Day events honor our brethren of blessed memory and those living. We participate annually in the Community Holocaust Memorial program held at the Jewish Community Center.

## NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN (NCJW)

New Orleans Section  
6221 S. Claiborne Avenue  
New Orleans, LA 70125  
Phone: 504-861-7788  
Fax: 504-861-0044  
Email: ncjw@bellsouth.net  
Website: www.ncjwneworleans.org  
President: June Leopold

For over one century, NCJW has been at the forefront of social change. Inspired by Jewish values, NCJW courageously takes a progressive stance on issues as child welfare, women's rights and reproductive freedom. Numerous volunteer and advocacy opportunities available.

## EDUCATION PRESCHOOL – HIGH SCHOOL/

\*(JEWISH)



## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN HIGH SCHOOL

2001 Leon C. Simon Drive  
New Orleans, LA 70122  
Phone: 504-286-2600  
Admissions Director: Lynn Jenkins  
Email: ljenkins@bfhsla.org  
Website: www.bfhsla.org

Since its founding in 1957,

Benjamin Franklin High School has remained the most outstanding school in the area attracting the best and the brightest students. Consistently ranked as a "top public high school in the nation" by U.S News and World Report, Newsweek, and Business Week, Franklin has received the highest School Performance Score in Louisiana, making it the #1 public school in the state, year after year. Franklin is repeatedly named a National Blue Ribbon School, producing Presidential and National Merit Scholars annually.

## \*JCC NURSERY SCHOOL

5342 St Charles Avenue  
New Orleans, LA 70115  
Phone: 504-897-0143  
Director: Adrienne Shulman  
Email: Adrienne@nojcc.org  
The JCC Nursery School keeps its teacher-to-student ratios small, with tailored classroom activities to meet the social, emotional, intellectual and physical needs of each child. These scheduled preschool classes met either three or five days each week during the school year. The school has limited spaces with an annual waiting list.

## \*JEWISH COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL (JCDS)

3747 West Esplanade Avenue  
Metairie, LA 70002  
Phone: 504-887-4091  
Website: www.jcdsnola.org  
Head of School: Sharon Pollin, M.Ed.  
Email: office@jcds.org  
The mission of the Jewish Community Day School is to instill a love of learning, invigorated by academic excellence. JCDS is a nurturing environment that is grounded in Jewish tradition. This year the school is offering a variety of events for parents and early childhood aged children. Hot kosher lunches are available. For 2015-16 JCDS plans to expand with a pre-k and kindergarten class.

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# LISTINGS

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Metairie, LA 70002  
Phone: 504-885-4339  
Email: [nursery@gatesofprayer.org](mailto:nursery@gatesofprayer.org)  
Director: Melainie Blitz

## LUSHER CHARTER SCHOOL (K-12)

Lower School Campus:  
7315 Willow Street  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
Phone: 504-862-5110  
Upper School/Alcee Fortier Campus:  
5624 Freret Street  
New Orleans, LA 70115  
Phone: 504-304-3960  
Lusher is a K-12 school chartered by Advocates for Arts Based Education, which govern the school. The curriculum implements cutting-edge reforms in arts-based education while integrating the latest developments in brain research. Lusher incorporates a research based systematic approach to literacy and numeracy instruction. The school is in partnership with Tulane University.



TORAH ACADEMY

## \*TORAH ACADEMY

5210 West Esplanade Avenue  
Metairie, LA 70006  
Phone: 504-456-6429  
Website: [www.torahacademy.com](http://www.torahacademy.com)  
Executive Director: Rabbi M. Kerendian  
Email: [info@torahacademy.com](mailto:info@torahacademy.com)  
Torah Academy provides a student centered community that provides a rich Jewish tradition for life-long academic and personal success. Educational programs are offered for children from 2 years of age through 8th grade. Each child is guided and nurtured to fulfill their highest potential.



THE VOICE OF NEW ORLEANS' JEWISH COMMUNITY

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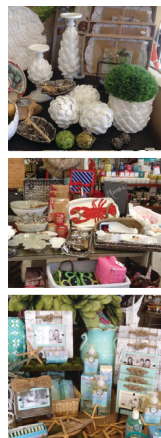
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3747 W. Esplanade Ave.  
Phone: 504-887-5158  
Website: [www.nojcc.org](http://www.nojcc.org)  
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Metairie, LA 70002  
Contact: Jane Levine  
Email: [jane@jfsneworleans.org](mailto:jane@jfsneworleans.org)  
Phone: 504-831-8475 ext: 128  
Jewish Family service is the exclusive representative for Phillips Lifeline service, a monitored medical alert system. JFS provides installation, product servicing and courtesy visitations. The AutoAlert button is 100% waterproof. No long term contracts are required. System is maintained and tested monthly.

### NEW ORLEANS PEOPLE PROGRAM

(2 locations)  
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New Orleans, LA 70122  
Phone: 504-284-7678  
Westbank Campus: 6201 Stratford Place  
New Orleans, LA 70131  
Phone: 504-394-5433  
Website: [www.peopleprogram.org](http://www.peopleprogram.org)  
Educational activities for individuals age 50 and older for creative thinking and lifelong learning. Over 100 classes offered on varied topics in the field of art, dance, fitness, language, technology and more. The People Program helps one stay mentally and physically active. Don't let age stop the learning process.

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New Orleans, LA 70126  
Website: [www.aplaceformom.com/community/rejuvenating-concepts-inc-144155](http://www.aplaceformom.com/community/rejuvenating-concepts-inc-144155)  
Phone: 866-344-4946  
For 13 years, Rejuvenating Concepts, Inc. has been serving individuals in the greater New Orleans area. We provide personal care services in the privacy of the consumer's home. Our company is state licensed and we hire certified nursing assistants that have ongoing training and are required to pass a background check.



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### KREWE DU JIEUX

[www.krewedujieux.com](http://www.krewedujieux.com)  
KREWE DU JIEUX is a sub-krewe of the Krewe Delusion's unique walking parade. Krewe Delusion keeps its annual theme a secret until the actual day of the parade. This parade immediately follows the Krewe du Vieux in the French Quarter. 2015 date: Saturday, January 31st.

### KREWE DU MISHIGAS

[www.krewedumishigas.com](http://www.krewedumishigas.com)  
Krewe du Mishigas is the 1st Jewish Satirical Parading Organization, founded In 1996. is a sub-krewe of the Krewe du Vieux, which is known for wild satire, adult themes, and political comedy, as well as for showcasing some of the best brass and jazz bands in New Orleans. 2015 date: Saturday, January 31st.

### MARDI GRAS MITZVA MAKERS

Chairman: Dr. Hilton Title  
Phone: 504-957-5310.  
Indoor parade of "merry makers" who bring annual Mardi Gras cheer to designated Touro Infirmary patients and seniors residing at the Malta House.



# LISTINGS

## MUSIC



### PANORAMA JAZZ BAND

Website: [www.panoramajazzband.com](http://www.panoramajazzband.com)

Contact: Ben Schenck

Email: [panoramanola@gmail.com](mailto:panoramanola@gmail.com)

New Orleans Jazz, Brass and KLEZMER BAND.

2015 marks our 20th year serving greater New Orleans and the Jewish community.

## RELIGIOUS LIFE

### CEMETERIES

**Historic Note:** The first Jewish cemetery in the Greater New Orleans area was located at 2400 Saratoga Street (Corner of Saratoga And Jackson Avenue). It was used from 1828 – 1872. In 1957 under the supervision of the New Orleans Rabbinic Council, the remains of these early Jewish settlers were removed and reinterred at Hebrew Rest Cemetery.

#### AHAVA SHALOM (ORTHODOX)

4400 Elysian Fields Avenue

New Orleans, LA

Contact: 504-837-0770

#### ANSHE SFARD SYNAGOGUE (ORTHODOX)

4400 Elysian Fields Avenue

New Orleans, LA

Contact: 504-919-3569

#### CHEVRA THILIM CEMETERY ASSOCIATION (CONSERVATIVE)

4800 Block of Canal Street

New Orleans, LA

Contact: 504-841-0554

5000 Iberville Street

New Orleans, LA

Contact: 504-841-0554

#### CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL (ORTHODOX)

4444 Elysian Fields Avenue

New Orleans, LA

Contact: 504-523-1155

#### CONGREGATION GATES OF PRAYER (REFORM)

1412 Joseph Street

New Orleans, LA

Contact: 504-885-2600

#### HEBREW REST CEMETERIES 1, 2, 3

2100 Pelopidas at Frenchman

New Orleans, LA

Contact: 504-861-3693

#### JEWISH BURIAL RITES

4321 Frenchman Street

New Orleans, LA

Contact: 504-833-0043

#### NORTHSHORE JEWISH CONGREGATION (REFORM)

2260 West 21st Street

Covington, LA

Contact: 985-951-7976

#### SHIR CHADASH/TIKVAT SHALOM CEMETERY (CONSERVATIVE)

Jefferson Memorial Gardens

11316 River Rd.

St. Rose, LA

Contact: 504-455-4707

#### TOURO SYNAGOGUE AND TEMPLE SINAI (REFORM)

4737 Canal Street (corner- N. Anthony St.)

New Orleans, LA

Contact: 504-861-3693

## CLERGY & RITUAL SERVICES



#### CANTOR SAMUEL KRUSH

Phone: 504-391-8292

Cell: 504-228-5071

Email: [neworleanscantor@yahoo.com](mailto:neworleanscantor@yahoo.com)

com

Serving as High Holiday Cantor at

Woldenberg Living Centre. Cantor

Krush is LOUISIANA LI-

CENSED to officiate local and destination weddings. Will design the ceremony that you desire!

#### GREATER NEW ORLEANS RABBINICAL COUNCIL

President: Rabbi Ethan Linden

Email: [rabbis@shirchadash.org](mailto:rabbis@shirchadash.org)

#### KITCHEN KASHERING SERVICE

Rabbi Mendel Rivkin

504-866-5164

#### MIKVAH CHAYA MUSHKA AT RINGGER WOMEN'S ENRICHMENT CENTER

7033 Freret Street

New Orleans, LA 70118

Contact: Rivka Kehaty (504-931-4029)

Bluma Rivkin (347-564-6525)

Email: [mikvah@chabadneworleans.com](mailto:mikvah@chabadneworleans.com)

#### MOHEL

Rabbi Mendel Ceitlin

Phone: 347-351-6476

Email: [mohelnola@gmail.com](mailto:mohelnola@gmail.com)

## GENERATIONS

#### JEWCY

##### Jewish Crescent City Youth

C/o Congregation Temple Sinai

6227 Saint Charles Avenue

New Orleans, LA 70118

Director of Youth

Engagement: Ivy Cohen

Phone: 504-912-5515

Email: [jewccy@gmail.com](mailto:jewccy@gmail.com)

President: Jordan Miller

JewCCY is the Reform youth group for all New Orleans and Metairie high schoolers. It is the local chapter of NFTY (North American Federation of Temple Youth.) We are affiliated with Congregation Temple Sinai, Congregation Gates of Prayer and Touro Synagogue; however, any Jewish high school student can attend our events.

#### JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER (Senior Adult Programming)

5342 St Charles Ave.

Phone: 504-897-0143

Website: [www.nojcc.org](http://www.nojcc.org)

Director: Rachel Ruth

Email: [Rachel@nojcc.org](mailto:Rachel@nojcc.org)

The Jewish Community Center offers a variety of programs and activities that address the social, cultural and physical needs of community members 65 and older. Interesting day excursions, Morris Bart Sr. Lecture Series and game clubs are some of the specific programming available. Additional fees for participants that are not JCC members.

#### JEWISH GENEALOGY SOCIETY OF NEW ORLEANS

P.O. Box 7811

Metairie, LA 70010

Phone: 504-836-2720

Website: [www.jewishgen.org/jgsno/index/htm](http://www.jewishgen.org/jgsno/index/htm)

The Jewish Genealogical Society (JGS) of New Orleans is a non-profit organization for those who desire to research their Jewish roots in Louisiana and worldwide. Our purpose is to bring members together to share information and ideas, and to periodically present programs which will assist with such research, providing members with a broad base of knowledge regarding resources and research skills.

#### JNOLA

3747 West Esplanade Avenue

Metairie, LA 70002

Phone: 504-780-5612

JNOLA Manager & Newcomers

Coordinator: Miranda Larsen

Website: [www.jnola.com](http://www.jnola.com)

JNOLA serves the Jewish Next Gen community in New Orleans (ages 21-45) through a variety of programming including social engagement, professional networking, enriching and educational opportunities, leadership development, and tikkun olam (repairing the world/social action).



## MOISHE HOUSE

(Located in the Marigny district of New Orleans)  
FB: [www.facebook.com/mhnlola](http://www.facebook.com/mhnlola)  
Email: [moishe.house.nola@gmail.com](mailto:moishe.house.nola@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.moishehouse.org](http://www.moishehouse.org)  
Regional Director: Jaycee Greenblatt  
Email: [jaycee@moishehouse.org](mailto:jaycee@moishehouse.org)  
Moishe House New Orleans is a welcoming, inclusive home-based community. The purpose of the group is to provide a meaningful space for young Jewish adults in their 20's to share, explore and engage in social justice, community involvement and Jewish leadership.

## FUNERAL HOMES & BURIAL SERVICES

### JEWISH BURIAL SOCIETY OF GREATER NEW ORLEANS (CHEVRA KADISHA)

Contact: Sandy Lassen (CHAIR)  
Email: [sandy@shirchadash.org](mailto:sandy@shirchadash.org)  
Volunteers from several congregations are trained to properly prepare the body for traditional Jewish burials.

### LAKE LAWN METAIRIE FUNERAL HOME AND CEMETERIES

5100 Pontchartrain Boulevard  
New Orleans, LA 70124  
Phone: 504-486-6331  
Website: [www.dignitymemorial.com/lake-lawn-met-funeral-home](http://www.dignitymemorial.com/lake-lawn-met-funeral-home)

### THARP-SONTHEIMER-THARP

1600 N. Causeway Boulevard  
Metairie, LA 70001  
Email: [WeCare@tharpsontheimerfh.com](mailto:WeCare@tharpsontheimerfh.com)  
Phone: 504-835-2341  
Website: [www.tharpsontheimerfh.com](http://www.tharpsontheimerfh.com)  
Contact: Billy Henry, Funeral Director  
For 98 years we have served the needs of the Jewish community of New Orleans. We have the experience, knowledge and longevity to respectfully work with all local Rabbis and the Cheva Kadisha committee. We are available to assist your family through this entire life cycle process. Funerals & Cremations available.

## JUDAICA

### ART BY ANNA GIL

Website: [annagil.com](http://annagil.com)  
Phone: 504-233-4818  
Email: [algilart@gmail.com](mailto:algilart@gmail.com)  
Winner of the Golden Ghetto Award on Facebook in February, 2013.  
Anna Gil expresses her creativity through oil paint. She uses lines, patterns, sharp edges and large fields of color in her work. She is able to express her influences and inspirations through Hebrew words and the many layers of meaning in each letter.

### DASHKA ROTH CONTEMPORARY JEWELRY & JUDAICA

332 Chartres Street  
New Orleans, LA 70130  
Phone: 504-523-0805  
Website: [dashkaroth.com](http://dashkaroth.com)

## GATES OF PRAYER

### JUDAICA SHOP

4000 West Esplanade Avenue  
Metairie, LA 70002  
Phone: 504-885-2600  
Website: [www.gatesofprayer.org](http://www.gatesofprayer.org)  
Congregation Gates of Prayer Sisterhood Gift Shop carrying a full line of Judaica gift items for all occasions. Look for our annual CHANUKAH GIFT SHOW!

### NAGHI'S

633 Royal St.  
New Orleans, LA 70130  
Phone: 504-586-8373  
Naghi's has an extensive and Unique assortment of traditional to contemporary menorahs, mezuzahs, Kiddush cups and Shabbat candlesticks. Internationally recognized artist Anna Gil has numerous pieces of her artwork for sale. Additionally the store offers a large assortment of antique jewelry from their estate collection.

### SHIR CHADASH SISTERHOOD JUDAICA SHOP

3737 West Esplanade Avenue  
Metairie, LA 70002  
Phone: 504-889-1144  
Email: [shirchadash@shirchadash.org](mailto:shirchadash@shirchadash.org)  
All proceeds from this Judaica Shop go to support our religious school. Our tax free shop is open by appointment only. Prior to Chanukah we have posted daily hours (except Shabbat.) We offer a beautiful selection of tallim and kippot and welcome special orders. For more details contact the office. Closes at the end of 2014

### TOURO SISTERHOOD BOOK AND JUDAICA SHOP

4328 ST. Charles Avenue  
New Orleans, LA 70115  
Phone: 504-895-4843  
The Touro Judaica Shop carries a large selection of Ahava products, books, music and many Judaica selections for all special occasions. The shop is open when religious school is in session and by appointment. Visa and MasterCard accepted.

### YVONNE YUSPEH STRUG SISTERHOOD JUDAICA SHOP IN TEMPLE SINAI

6227 ST. Charles Avenue  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
Great selection of gifts for all occasions! Open Sundays during Religious School 9:00 am – 11:30 am and Wednesdays during mid-week Hebrew classes.

## SYNAGOGUES-ORTHODOX

### ANSHE SFARD SYNAGOGUE

2230 Carondelet Street  
New Orleans, LA 70130  
6221 S. Claiborne Avenue  
New Orleans, LA 70125  
Phone: 504-522-4714  
Rabbi: David Polsky  
Email: [rabbu@anshesfard.org](mailto:rabbu@anshesfard.org)  
Website: [www.anshesfard.org](http://www.anshesfard.org)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Congregation-Anshe-Sfard-of-New-Orleans/190270014373125>  
Twitter: @AnsheSfard  
Congregation President: Dr. Gary Remer  
Anshe Sfard is an orthodox congregation in the heart of

New Orleans that welcomes all who attend. It's beautiful and historic synagogue, built in 1926, is the last vestige of a time when its surrounding neighborhood was the center of Jewish life in New Orleans. Anshe Sfard, as the closest synagogue to downtown New Orleans, also serves the religious needs of countless tourists, conventioners, and volunteer groups.

### CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL

4004 W. Esplanade Avenue  
Metairie, LA 70002  
Phone: 504-454-5080  
Fax: 504-883-8010  
Website: [www.bethisraelnola.com](http://www.bethisraelnola.com)  
Rabbi: Gabe Greenberg  
Email: [rabbi@bethisraelnola.com](mailto:rabbi@bethisraelnola.com)  
Administrator: Rabbi David Posternock  
Email: [office@bethisraelnola.com](mailto:office@bethisraelnola.com)  
President: Alexander Barkoff  
Congregation Beth Israel is a Modern Orthodox Synagogue. We are proud of our multi-generational heritage and over 100 year presence in the Greater New Orleans area. Our mission is to create an accessible spiritual home, where all Jews, regardless of affiliation or background, are warmly embraced and welcomed into our greater family.

## SYNAGOGUES-CONSERVATIVE

### SHIR CHADASH CONSERVATIVE CONGREGATION

3737 West Esplanade Avenue  
Metairie, LA 70002  
Phone: 504-889-1144  
Email: [shirchadash@shirchadash.org](mailto:shirchadash@shirchadash.org)  
Website: [www.shirchadash.org](http://www.shirchadash.org)  
Rabbi: Ethan Linden  
Executive Director: Sandy Lassen  
President: Sanford Krilov  
As a traditional egalitarian synagogue, we are committed to giving all Jews an equal role in Jewish prayer. Shir Chadash was formed in 1999 by the union of Tikvat Shalom and Chevre Thilim. We are excited about the growth and potential of our synagogue and of the Jewish community of Greater New Orleans.

## SYNAGOGUES-REFORM

### CONGRGATION GATES OF PRAYER

4000 West Esplanade Avenue  
Metairie, LA 70002  
Phone: 504-885-2600  
Email: [office@gatesofprayer.org](mailto:office@gatesofprayer.org)  
Website: [www.gatesofprayer.org](http://www.gatesofprayer.org)  
Rabbi: Robert Loewy  
Executive Director: Darrah Caplan  
President: Michele Mohre Gelman  
As the only Reform Jewish congregation in Metairie, Gates of Prayer is dedicated to provide members with opportunities to find Kedusha through participation in worship services, life-cycle events, educational activities and social action programs that reflect our enduring commitment to Torah, Avodah and Gemilut.

## NORTHSHORE JEWISH CONGREGATION

1403 North Causeway Blvd  
Mandeville, LA 70471  
Phone: 985-951-7976  
Rabbi: Deborah Zecher (monthly)  
Website: [www.northshorejewish.org](http://www.northshorejewish.org)  
Email: [admin@northshorejewish.org](mailto:admin@northshorejewish.org)  
President: Michael Hertzog  
Email: [president@northshorejewish.org](mailto:president@northshorejewish.org)  
The Northshore Jewish Congregation (NJC) is a member of the Union of Reform Judaism. NJC is located on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain about 30 miles from downtown New Orleans in Mandeville. It is a warm and inviting community built on the fundamental and enduring principals of Reform Judaism.

## TEMPLE SINAI

6227 St. Charles Avenue  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
Phone: 504-861-3102  
Email: [Sinai@usa.net](mailto:Sinai@usa.net)  
Website: [www.templestinaino.org](http://www.templestinaino.org)  
Rabbi: Edward P. Cohn  
Executive Director: Ellen Rae Shalett  
President: Sheila Gold  
The members of Temple Sinai reaffirm our mission as an historic Reform Jewish house of worship, in the spirit of the Covenant that we made with God, to provide visionary leadership and opportunities in spiritual, educational, moral and social programs which strengthen and enrich the lives of our congregants and contribute to the community of Greater New Orleans.

## TOURO SYNAGOGUE

4238 St. Charles Avenue  
New Orleans, LA 70115  
Phone: 504-895-4843  
Fax: 504-897-0237  
Website: [www.tourosynagogue.com](http://www.tourosynagogue.com)  
Rabbi: Alexis D. Berk  
Rabbi Emeritus: David Goldstein  
Executive Director: Kerry Tapia  
Email: [execdir@tourosynagogue.com](mailto:execdir@tourosynagogue.com)  
President: Scott Silbert  
Touro Synagogue's mission stems from its traditional roots, but blends well with our mainstream Reform Jewish Philosophy which supports our emphasis on the love of Jewish living, a commitment to social justice, to Klal Yisrael and to Jewish practice founded in knowledge.

## UNIVERSITY LIFE

### ROHR CHABAD JEWISH STUDENT CENTER AT TULANE UNIVERSITY

7033 Freret Street  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
Director: Rabbi Yochanan Rivkin  
Website: [www.tulanechabad.org](http://www.tulanechabad.org)

### TULANE UNIVERSITY HILLEL (THE GOLDIE AND MORRIS MINTZ CENTER FOR JEWISH LIFE)

912 Broadway  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
Executive Director: Rabbi Yonah Schiller  
Email: [yonah@tulane.edu](mailto:yonah@tulane.edu)  
Website: [tulanehillel.org](http://tulanehillel.org)

## TULANE UNIVERSITY JEWISH FRATERNITIES & SORORITIES:

### ALPHA EPSILON PI FRATERNITY (TAU UPSILON CHAPTER)

7220 Zimple Street  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
President: Alex Gutwillig

### ALPHA EPSILON PHI SORORITY (EPSILON CHAPTER)

1134 Broadway  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
Website: <http://tulanealpha.chapterspot.com>  
President: Lissy Rabin

### SIGMA DELTA TAU SORORITY (ALPHA IOTA CHAPTER)

1013 Broadway  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
Website: <http://tulanesdt.chapterspot.com>  
President: Shelby Bourgeois

### ZETA BETA TAU FRATERNITY (SIGMA CHAPTER)

1006 Broadway  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
Website [www.tulanezbt.com](http://www.tulanezbt.com)  
\*CHARTERING CEREMONY--  
November 16th, 2014 @ 10 AM

## TULANE UNIVERSITY JEWISH STUDIES PROGRAM

7031 Freret Street  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
Phone: 504-865-5349  
Website: <http://tulane.edu/liberal-arts/jewish-studies>  
Email: [jewishstudies@tulane.edu](mailto:jewishstudies@tulane.edu)  
Dept. Chair: Dr. Brian Horowitz  
Jewish Studies represents an Interdisciplinary approach to the study of the Jews, their history, religion, language, thought, culture, literature, and music. The Tulane University Jewish Studies program was recently ranked 9th in the nation.



## THARP-SONTHEIMER-THARP

### FUNERAL HOME

SERVING THE NEW ORLEANS  
JEWISH COMMUNITY SINCE 1916.  
FUNERALS - CREMATIONS

1600 N. CAUSEWAY BLVD.  
METAIRIE, LOUISIANA 70001  
(504) 835-2341

[WWW.THARPSONTHEIMERFH.COM](http://WWW.THARPSONTHEIMERFH.COM)

## ESTATE JEWELRY | JUDAICA

# DIAMONDS

## OLD EUROPEAN CUT OR ROSE CUT




### NAGHI'S

637 CANAL ST. | 633 ROYAL ST. | 800 ROYAL ST. | 504-586-8373

# GEAUX BATON ROUGE

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

### **Jewish Federation of Greater Baton Rouge**

4845 Jamestown Suite, Suite 210  
Baton Rouge, LA 70808  
Ellen Sager, Executive Director  
EllenSager@jewishbr.org  
www.jewishbr.org  
Hours of Operation—  
M-F 9am – 2pm  
Closed Wednesdays

### **BETH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE**

9111 Jefferson Hwy  
Baton Rouge, LA 70809  
225-924-6773  
Thomas Gardner, Rabbi  
Bethshalom-admin@earthlink.net  
www.Bethshalomsynagogue.org.  
Beth Shalom Synagogue is a “family style” Reform congregation with a hamish, relaxed atmosphere. Our joy in expressing our Judaism is exponentially increased when shared with our congregational family. The essence of our shul family is truly the sum of the uniqueness and diversity of our members.

## SYNAGOGUES/ TEMPLES

### **CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL**

3354 Kleinert Avenue  
Baton Rouge, LA 70806  
225-343-0111  
Jordan Goldson, Rabbi  
office@bnaibr.org  
www.bnaibr.org  
Congregation B'nai Israel is celebrating 150 years as one of the oldest Reform congregations in the U.S. It is an active and vibrant temple with diverse membership and leadership.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD/ YOUTH GROUP

### **Alfred g. rayne learning center**

9111 Jefferson Hwy  
Baton Rouge, LA 70809  
225-924-6772  
Director: Dottie Smith  
Infant care through pre-kindergarten  
center emphasizing Judaism – customs  
and culture.

### **BATON ROUGE FEDERATION OF TEMPLE YOUTH (BARFTY)**

www.nfty.org/so/tygs/barfty  
Erica Lewis, President

## JEWISH LIFE AT LSU--

### **JEWISH STUDIES AT LSU:**

A minor degree is offered with courses and faculty from a variety of humanities and social science disciplines.  
Daniel A. Novak, director  
dnovak@lsu.edu

### **HILLEL AT LSU:**

Numerous activities for a small but active group of students. Planned activities include an on campus sukkah, in home Shabbat dinners, and Taglit-Birthright Israel affiliation. www.hillelatlsu.org

### **SIGMA ALPHA MU FRATERNITY:**

Epsilon Eta chapter was officially recognized by the LSU Inter-Fraternity Council in 2005. It prides itself on the character and diversity of its members. Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity LSU Box # 25415  
Baton Rouge., LA 70803  
www.lsusam.com  
Daniel Gershen, President  
Lsusam1@gmail.com

**9th Baton Rouge JEWISH  
Film Festival will be held  
January 14-18, 2015**

WWW.BRJFF.COM  
\*Films will be announced soon!

Manship Theatre, Shaw Center  
for the Arts, 100 Lafayette, Baton  
Rouge, LA 70808.



# HOLIDAYS AT A GLANCE

## SHABBAT

Celebrated Fridays at sundown to commemorate G-d's day of rest after six days of creation. Traditions include lighting candles, drinking wine and eating challah (braided bread). Havdalah, the farewell ceremony to Shabbat, takes place upon the appearance of three stars in the Saturday night sky and is celebrated by lighting a braided candle.

## ROSH HASHANAH JEWISH NEW YEAR

Festive celebration during which individuals contemplate past, present and future actions. Traditional foods include round challah and apples with honey, symbolizing wholeness and sweetness for the new year. Commences the Ten Days of Awe, which culminate on Yom Kippur. 1-2 Tishrei

## YOM KIPPUR DAY OF ATONEMENT

Holiest day of the Jewish year. Through fasting and prayer, Jews reflect upon their relationships with other people and with G-d. Atoning for wrongdoings and failures to take the right actions. The sounding of the shofar (ram's horn) signals the end of the holiday. 10 Tishrei

## SUCCOT FESTIVAL OF BOOTHS

Commemorates the fulfillment of G-d's promise to bring the Israelites to the Promised Land after 40 years of wandering. Many people build a sukkah (booth), a temporary structure with a roof made of branches, modeled after the huts constructed in the desert. Also celebrated with shaking of the lulav (assemblage of palm, willow and myrtle branches) and etrog (a lemon-like fruit). 15-21 Tishrei

## SHEMINI ATZERET EIGHTH DAY OF ASSEMBLY

Celebrated the day after Sukkot and thus sometimes considered an extension of that holiday. Marks the first time tefillat geshem (prayer for rain) is recited during services, a practice that continues until Pesach. 22 Tishrei

## SIMCHAT TORAH REJOICING FOR THE TORAH

Celebrates the completion of the annual Torah-reading cycle. After finishing the last sentence of the chapter Devarim (Deuteronomy), the Torah is joyously paraded seven times around the synagogue. The new cycle begins immediately with a reading from Bereshit (Genesis). 23 Tishrei

## CHANUKAH FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

Eight-day holiday commemorating the Jewish victory over the Syrians and the miracle of the rededication of the Temple, when oil meant to last for one day burned for eight. Celebrated by lighting candles in a chanukiah (a nine-branched candelabrum), eating potato latkes, playing with dreidels (spinning tops) and giving money or gifts. 25 Kislev- 2 Tevet

## TU B'SHEVAT NEW YEAR OF TREES

Biblical in origin, a holiday that celebrates springtime renewal and growth. Traditions include eating fruit and planting trees. 15 Shevat

## PURIM FEAST OF LOTS

Joyous holiday commemorating the rescue of the Jews by Queen Esther and her uncle Mordecai from the evil Haman. Traditions include parties, dances, gift-giving and eating hamantaschen (3-cornered fruit filled pastries). Some also fast before Purim to remember the three-day fast Esther requested of the Jews of Persia. 14 Adar

## PASSOVER

Celebrates the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. At the seder (service and festive meal), the Haggadah (collection of texts and commentaries on the Exodus) is read and symbolic foods are eaten. In remembrance of the departure of the Israelites, who could not wait for their bread to rise before fleeing, matzoh (unleavened bread) is eaten for the eight days of Passover. 15-22 Nissan

## SEFIRAT HAOMER COUNTING OF THE OMER

Seven-week period that begins the second night of Pesach and ends at Shavuot. The 32 mourning days during this time commemorate the deaths of Rabbi Akiva's students. Traditionally weddings, festivities and haircuts are prohibited during this time. 16 Nissan- 5 Sivan

## YOM HASHOAH HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

Day chosen by the Israeli Knesset in 1951 to mourn the millions killed in the Holocaust. Often commemorated with speeches by survivors and the reading of names. In Israel, a siren's blast allows collective remembrance in a moment of silence. 27 Nissan



## YOM HAZIKARON MARTYR AND HEROES' MEMORIAL DAY

Day of remembrance for all who sacrificed themselves for the state of Israel. Public observances include the lighting of yahrzeit (memorial) candles, visiting graves and reciting psalms. In Israel, sirens blast once in the morning and then in the evening to begin Yom HaAtzmaut, Israel Independence Day. 4 Iyar

## YOM HAATZMAUT ISRAEL INDEPENDENCE DAY

On May 14, 1948, Israel was declared an independent state. Many Jews worldwide celebrate with parades, festivals and donations to Jewish charities. 5 Iyar

## LAG B'OMER THIRTY-THIRD DAY OF OMER

One-day suspension of the traditional mourning period during Sefirat HaOmer. On this day, a plague afflicting Rabbi Akiva's students ceased. Also commemorates Bar Kochba's recapture of Jerusalem from the Romans. Celebrated with picnics and nature outings. 18 Iyar

## SHAVUOT FESTIVAL OF WEEKS

Celebrated the day after Sefirat HaOmer ends to commemorate the giving of the Torah at Sinai and the spring harvest. Traditionally, Jews read the Ten Commandments and the Book of Ruth and eat dairy products. Religious school confirmation often takes place at this time. 6-7 Sivan

## FAST OF TAMMUZ

Fast from dawn until nightfall commemorating the day Moses broke the first Tablets of the Covenant because the Israelites made the Golden Calf. Also marks the beginning of the siege on Jerusalem before its destruction. Begins the Three Weeks, a mourning period ending at Tisha B'Av. 17 Tammuz.

## TISHA B'AV NINTH DAY OF AV

Day of fasting and mourning commemorating the destruction of the First and Second Temples, both of which took place on the ninth of Av. The Book of Lamentations is read, and some conduct services sitting on the floor. 9 Av

## TU B'AV

Coming after three weeks of sadness, Tu B'Av marks one of the happiest days on the Jewish calendar. In modern times it has become a day dedicated to love and in many ways a Jewish version of Valentine's Day. It is a day highly coveted for weddings. 15 Av

### JEWISH HOLIDAYS

|                         |                                                                               |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Rosh Hashana</b>     | Septmeber 25-26, 2014<br>Sept. 14-15                                          |
| <b>Yom Kippur</b>       | October 4, 2014<br>Oct 23, 2015                                               |
| <b>Succot</b>           | Oct 9-10, 2014   Oct 11-15, 2014<br>Sept 28 – 29, 2015   Sept 30- Oct 4, 2014 |
| <b>Shemini Atzeret</b>  | Oct 16, 2014<br>Oct 5, 2015                                                   |
| <b>Simchat Torah</b>    | Oct 17, 2014<br>Oct 6, 2015                                                   |
| <b>Chanukah</b>         | Dec 17-24, 2014<br>Dec 7- 14, 2015                                            |
| <b>Tu B Shevat</b>      | Feb 4, 2015                                                                   |
| <b>Purim</b>            | March 5, 2015                                                                 |
| <b>Passover</b>         | April 4-5,<br>April 6-9,   April 10-11, 2015                                  |
| <b>Yom HaShoah</b>      | April 16, 2015                                                                |
| <b>Yom HaZikaron</b>    | April 22, 2015                                                                |
| <b>Yom HaAtzmaut</b>    | April 23, 2015                                                                |
| <b>Lag B'Omer</b>       | May 7, 2015                                                                   |
| <b>Yom Yerushalayim</b> | May 17, 2015                                                                  |
| <b>Shavuot</b>          | May 24-25                                                                     |
| <b>Tisha B'Av</b>       | July 26, 2015                                                                 |
| <b>Tu B' Av</b>         | July 30, 2015                                                                 |





# Nola's That's Entertainment

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## MONTHLY LISTING OF NEW ORLEANS CELEBRATIONS

### 2014

#### OCTOBER

Oktoberfest (10/10-11, 10/17-18, 10/24-25)  
New Orleans Film Festival (10/16-23)  
Crescent City Blues & BBQ Festival (10/17-19)  
Mirliton Festival (10/25)  
Krewe of Boo Parade (10/30)  
Voodoo Music & arts Experience (10/31-11/2)

#### NOVEMBER

Treme Creole Gumbo Festival (11/8-9)  
Fringe Festival (11/19-23)  
Words and Music Festival (11/20-24)  
Oak Street Po-Boy Festival (11/23)  
Thanksgiving Day (11/27)  
Celebration in the Oaks (11/28-1/1/15)  
Bayou Classic (11/29)

#### DECEMBER

New Orleans Bowl (12/20)  
Celebration in the Oaks (12/1-1/1/15)  
New Orleans Bowl (12/20)  
Crescent City Countdown at Jackson Square (12/31)

### 2015

#### JANUARY:

Sugar Bowl (1/1)  
Twelfth Night Celebration (1/6)  
Commemoration of the Battle of New Orleans (1/9 and 1/11)  
Rock'n'Roll marathon (1/25)  
Parade Season Starts (1/31)

#### FEBRUARY:

Lundi Gras (2/16)  
Mardi Gras (2/17)

#### MARCH

Soul Fest (3/7-8)  
Buku Music and Art Project (3/20-21)  
New Orleans International Beer Festival (3/21)  
Fashion Week Nola (3/21-28)  
Congo Square New Rhythms Festival (3/21-22)  
Spring Fiesta (3/22 and 3/29)  
Tennessee Williams Festival (3/25-29)  
Foodfest (3/27-29)

#### APRIL

Freret Street Fest (4/4)  
Crescent City Classic (4/4)  
French Quarter Festival (4/9-12)  
Zurich Classic (4/23-26)  
New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival Weekend I (4/24-26)

#### MAY

New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival Weekend II (5/1-5/3)  
Zoo-To-Do (5/1)  
Mid City Bayou Boogaloo (5/17-19)  
New Orleans Wine and Food Experience (5/20-23)

#### JUNE

Creole Tomato Festival (6/6-7)  
Festivals (6/11-14)  
Cajun Zydeco Festival (6/20-21)

#### JULY

Essence Festival (7/2-5)  
Running of the Bulls (7/9-12)  
Tales of the Cocktail (7/15-19)

#### AUGUST

Satchmo SummerFest (7/31-8/2)  
Whitney White Linen Night (8/1)  
COOLinary New Orleans (8/1-8/31)  
Red Dress Run (8/8)  
Dirty Linen Night (8/8)

#### SEPTEMBER

Southern Decadence (9/2-7)  
We Live to Eat Restaurant Week (9/8-14)



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# 2015 MARDI GRAS SEASON

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### **JANUARY 6, 2015**

PHUNNY PHORTY PHELLOWS  
TWELFTH NIGHT CELEBRATION  
(OFFICIAL START OF THE CARNIVAL  
SEASON)

### **JANUARY 31, 2015**

KREWE DU VIEUX  
KREWE DELUSION

### **FEBRUARY 1, 2015**

KREWE OF LITTLE RASCALS

### **FEBRUARY 6, 2015**

KREWE OF CORK  
KREWE OF OSHUN  
KREWE OF CLEOPATRA  
KREWE OF ATHENA  
KREWE OF EXCALIBUR  
KREWE OF EVE (NORTH SHORE)

### **FEBRUARY 7, 2015**

THE MYSTIC KNIGHTS OF ADONIS  
KREWE OF PONCHARTRAIN  
KREWE OF CHOCTAW  
KREWE OF FRERET  
KNIGHTS OF SPARTA  
KREWE OF PYGMALION  
KREWE OF 'TIT REX  
KREWE OF CHEWBACCHUS  
KREWE OF CAESAR  
KREWE OF TITANS

### **FEBRUARY 8, 2015**

KREWE OF CARROLTON  
KREWE OF KING ARTHUR and MERLIN  
KREWE OF ALLA  
FEMME FATALE  
REWE OF BARKUS

### **FEBRUARY 11, 2015**

KREWE OF DRUIDS  
KREWE OF NYX

### **FEBRUARY 12, 2015**

KNIGHTS OF BABYLON  
KREWE OF MUSES  
KNIGHTS OF CHAOS

### **FEBRUARY 13, 2015**

KREWE OF HERMES  
KREWE D'ETAT  
KREWE OF MORPHEUS  
KREWE OF CENTURIONS  
KREWE OF ATHENA

### **FEBRUARY 14, 2015**

KREWE OF NOMTOC  
KREWE OF IRIS  
KREWE OF TUCKS  
KREWE OF ENDYMION  
KREWE OF ISIS

### **FEBRUARY 15, 2015**

KREWE OF OKEANOS  
KREWE OF MID-CITY  
KREWE OF THOTH  
KREWE OF BACCHUS  
KREWE OF NAPOLEON

### **FEBRUARY 16, 2015**

KREWE OF PROTEUS  
KREWE OF ORPHEUS

### **MARDI GRAS**

#### **FAT TUESDAY**

KREWE OF ZULU  
KREWE OF REX  
KREWE OF ELKS ORLEANS  
KREWE OF CRESCENT CITY  
KREWE OF GRELA

KREWE OF ARGUS  
KREWE OF JEFFERSON  
KREWE OF ELKS JEFFERSON  
KREWE OF LYRA (NORTH SHORE)



A photograph of Valerie Sassyfras, a woman with short, spiky brown hair and a headband, smiling and playing a washboard. She is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and a silver necklace. The background shows a window with a blue and white striped awning and a sign that says 'MELBA'S'.

# VALERIE SASSYFRAS: a musical phoenix emerges

August 22, 2014  
By ALAN SMASON,  
Exclusive to the CCJN

**O**n a cloudy and rain-threatened afternoon, Valerie Sassyfras is dancing behind a multi-colored scrim at Melba's, a St. Roch neighborhood daiquiris and fast food eatery. Trance-like, she is moving to a track of her own previously-recorded vocals, reaching out to a small audience eating fried food through her tightly-closed eyes. Above all else, she is joyous and full of song.

Sassyfras has few worries as she alternately plays the keyboard, accordion, washboard, mandolin and foot tambourine while harmonizing with her laid down vocal tracks.

She is singing and playing the musical score of her life and, while the audience members answer each song with polite applause, she is transfixed in both her music and song and transported to a state of nirvana.

Born an Orthodox Jew and reared along the formerly-dense Jewish enclave of Louisiana Avenue Parkway as a youth, Sassyfras, previously known as Valerie Solomon, is a unique product of a decades-long journey born of happiness and pain, which has led to her musical rebirth.

Married twice and now widowed, she has had to reinvent herself following the passing a year ago of her musical mentor and husband of 30 years, Johnny Donald.

Sassyfras waxes romantically about Donald and his profound influence upon her that took her from a classically-trained pianist to a Cajun, Zydeco, country and rhythm and blues performer.

Divorced from her first husband after seven years of Jewish marriage, Sassyfras found herself at an emotional crossroads, working at a shoe store where Donald was the manager. "He fell in love with me right away," she recalls. "But I didn't know that until the end of the marriage."

A divorcé as well, Donald, who hailed from Ft. Smith, Arkansas, eventually made a proposal of marriage, which she accepted.

An opening for a Cajun band at Mulate's Restaurant was the first opportunity for the couple. While neither had a lengthy association with that particular genre of music, Sassyfras was familiar with it largely through her former Catholic mother, who had converted to Judaism when she married and began her family.

They needed to do their homework. "We started buying all

Valerie Sassyfras plays washboard while singing and dancing at Melba's.  
(Photos by Alan Smason)



of the recordings and we went to the library and started listening to all of the old recordings,” Sassyfras remembers. The two learned about the music of Amédée Ardoin, a black Creole and Cajun fiddle player and high-pitched singer, who died as a result of a racially-motivated beating. They rehearsed the music of others like innovator Zachary Richard and D.L. Menard, whose “The Back Door” was a Cajun standard.

The gig at Mulate’s led to an appearance at the Kenner French Festival in the late 1980s as well as at other restaurant job sites like Masson’s Beach House. “Johnny named the band Sassyfras,” she says. “He said I was sassy; it just fit perfect. He was brilliant that way – he’d come up with things out of thin air.”

In an instant Valerie Solomon Gindi Donald became Valerie Sassyfras. At her husband’s insistence, she purchased the first of her accordions and taught herself to play.

A talented musician and a former owner of several small juke joints in Mississippi during his first marriage, Donald concentrated his considerable experience in hiring bands and the business of music into turning the group Sassyfras into a quality act. His wife was at the forefront.

After several years, the couple left New Orleans literally for greener pastures, moving first to Clinton, Arkansas. “That was our happiest time,” Sassyfras proclaims. “We owned two acres free and clear.”

Then, they moved to Music City U.S.A., Nashville, Tennessee. For a while, they opened and ran a bar not far from the famous Ryman Auditorium, the former home of the Grand Ole Opry. Drawn to the watering hole for Donald’s gumbo and other treats during late nights were many famous personalities including Tanya Tucker and Gatemouth Brown. The group Sassyfras changed its musical focus from Cajun to country. “Nobody was interested in Cajun,” she notes.

Because he knew the music game very well, Donald also

became a well-known sound designer for music shows and local musicians began to trust his instincts for equipment. Following the sale of their property in Tennessee, the musical couple moved to Hastings, Florida and opened a music equipment store and built a recording studio there.

Sassyfras concentrated on her music, while her jack-of-all-trades husband ran the music store and recorded local musicians. Then, tragedy struck in the form of a bicycling accident in which Donald was struck by a passing vehicle.

The accident crippled him and forced him down a seven-year-long road of corrective surgeries. As things got worse, the two elected to move back to a New Orleans suburb in 2011. No longer able to walk and in excruciating pain, he died a year ago in June, leaving behind his heartbroken wife.

Before he died and knowing she needed to be able to support herself, her husband had encouraged her to take a job playing during the day at the nearby Picadilly’s Cafeteria. Performing with a variety of instruments, Sassyfras began to play instrumental music there with the blessings of the management about three years ago.

She built up a solid base of fans including youngsters, who were mesmerized by her abilities and musical stylings of Cajun, Zydeco and popular tunes. Yet, she did not yet have the courage to begin to sing her own original tunes until after he died.

“I didn’t do clubs until Johnny passed away,” she admits. “My first club gig was in October at a Mid-City club.” Sassyfras began to sing songs like “Youth Is Wasted on the Young,” the risqué “Girls Night Out” in which she craves booze and men and “Roller Coaster” in which she accuses a lover of cheating. Coupled with her repertoire of Cajun and Zydeco tunes, she became a sensation wherever she played.

One of the most plaintive



Valerie Sassyfras dances and sings original songs.

of her songs is a ballad titled “On the Outside” in which she bemoans the loss of her real-life husband. “The originals, it’s like they’re your children,” she states. “Everything is done right out of my life.”

Suddenly, a whole new world of young adult fans has responded to her unusual vocals and creative playing coupled with her inventive dances.

One of her biggest fans, Sasha Masakowski, is famous herself, the acclaimed jazz vocalist and daughter of renowned jazz guitarist and educator Steve Masakowski. “Valerie is a gift!” she exclaims. “(She’s) A genuinely selfless, charming performer with the ability to command any stage as if it was her living room. The warmth of her spirit and purity of her heart are intoxicating; she is truly a diamond in the rough!”

A lot of the younger Maskowski’s contemporaries have been similarly charmed and impressed by her. Sassyfras performed as an opening act for Masakowski on one occasion and she considers her a good friend and “the most wonderful person.” As a direct result of this exposure, Valerie Sassyfras is now an instantly recognizable figure about town, particularly in the under-30 set.

“I think what myself and

other musicians are drawn to is her confidence and originality, combined with her remarkable perseverance,” Masakowski continues. “We can all learn to be more comfortable in our skin, to dance a little more, to learn to abandon any fear of putting ourselves in the spotlight no matter how vulnerable we might be.”

Aside from an occasional appearance at nearby Melba’s, Sassyfras can be seen performing from time to time at the Allways Lounge and Hi Ho Lounge across the street from one another on St. Claude Avenue, in Lakeview at the Homedale Inn and at Casa Gasa on Freret Street.

Her gigs have increased enough for her to have purchased a new synthesizer on which she samples her own voice and adds drums and percussion to her live performances.

“Being a multi-instrumentalist one-woman act complete with choreography and a repertoire of all original material is not easy task,” confides Masakowski. “But Valerie does it with the charm, style and youthful spirit that is simply...Sassyfras.”





# JEWISH DAY SCHOOLS

According to a recent study, New Orleans has the highest private school enrollment in the United States. This comes from an August, 2014 analysis by Trulia.com, the online residential real estate site for homebuyers. This means that New Orleans residents are more than double the national average of U.S. families who choose private education for their children.

For most of the Jewish families in the city, the only issue is *which* private school best fits their essential needs? Unlike non-Jewish families, current parents from even the most reform Jewish families expect their children to have enough Hebrew instruction for a Bar or Bat Mitzvah at 13. The issue of how to effectively balance their child's afterschool life is also an important reality. Jewish parents want their children to have the best of all worlds. How can this be achieved? The easiest way is to consider selecting Jewish day school education.

In the Greater New Orleans area there are two options to consider for a Jewish day school: either the Jewish Community Day School or Torah Academy, both located along West Esplanade Avenue in Metairie. Each school provides its own distinct uniqueness and both share many similar program elements in their curriculums. Also, because both schools are private, they share many of the common appealing elements found in other private school environments. These benefits include: 1) low student-to-teacher ratios 2) strong secular studies curriculum 3) high expectations of student performance 3) sense of community and belonging in a nurturing environment 4) strong sense of values and community service components and 5) presence of early second-language instruction.

Of course, everything comes with a price tag and despite all the numerous benefits mentioned above, could cost be considered a potential drawback? The reality is that the overall cost of private tuition versus that of public education will always be higher. However, if one evaluates the cost of private education and its effectiveness in later college acceptance, then the outcome is also apparent. Students educated in a private school environment have a better return on their investment when it comes to acceptance at what are generally considered the choicest of universities in the country. If tuition affordability is a concern for a family, then the option to enroll in a Jewish day school should be seriously favored for two other reasons. The tuition at Jewish day schools is substantially less than the tuition at other area private independent schools. Also, there are scholarship opportunities that are reserved for Jewish day students through the Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans and the Jewish Endowment Fund of Louisiana.

## TORAH ACADEMY

With a new state-of-the-art \$5.7 million dollar structure, Torah Academy has opened its new, glistening doors for the start of its fall term. With Rabbi Michael Kerendian in the role of head of school, Torah Academy has major plans for its 30-plus students. Kerendian, a native of Charlotte, North Carolina, is

FROM TOP  
Torah Academy Entrance

Playground of the Jewish Community Day School at the Goldring - Woldenberg Jewish Community Campus (photo A. Smason)

Front gate of entrance to JCDS at the Goldring - Woldenberg Jewish Community Campus

All photos by Alan Smason

himself a product of the Jewish day school there.

Rebuilding the school from the ground up following the destruction from flooding that was associated with Hurricane Katrina, may seem like a daunting task to others, but Kerendian looks at it differently.

"Being from the South, I'm used to a warm, small Southern Jewish community," he explains. "So, that was very appealing as well as the opportunity to rebuild the school and provide a much needed service, which is Orthodox education."

While many on the board of Torah Academy are associated with the Chabad Lubavitch movement, Kerendian is quick to point out that it is not, strictly speaking, a Chabad community day school or yeshiva.

"In the yeshivas there's less of a focus from my experience on the general studies," he explains. "In a Chabad community school often you still have, I believe, more directly Chabad-related courses and instruction time."

The Torah Academy curriculum centers about a traditional Jewish education with traditional values and understanding of the Torah and traditional texts. They are based on Common Core and employ Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) in their course work.

"What we are doing is structuring our curriculum in such a way that it is more of a mainstream Orthodox perspective," he continues. "In general I tend to stay away from terms like Orthodox because we are not affiliated with any specific group. We do have a belief in common with people that would label themselves as Orthodox or Modern Orthodox or Chabad."

Kerendian has overseen much of the construction at the school since his arrival in New Orleans from Chicago. He has worked with the Torah Academy Board of Trustees, Kollel of New Orleans that owned the

previous structure as well as with Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) and Jefferson Parish officials to get the building completed in time for the first term.

Montessori based, each Torah Academy class has a teacher's assistant and a teacher's aide, which Kerendian believes works especially well with several of their mixed age group classes.

#### JEWISH COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL

Formerly, the New Orleans Jewish Day School and, for a time, the Community Day School, The Jewish Community Day School (JCDS) underwent another name change in a quest to identify itself more prominently as a Jewish day school earlier this year. JCDS head of school Sharon Pollin believes the focus of the school has never been more fixed.

"One of the things that we say is that we help children and families create positive connections to the land, language and culture of the State of Israel," she states. "In terms of our mission statement, it is really is something we rely on it every day and in every aspect of what we do."

New this year is the school's use of the cutting edge technology of video conferencing to connect to Israel via Skype. A full-time Hebrew instructor in Israel reaches out to New Orleans 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students via the Internet and morning assemblies can be tied to a sister school in the Jewish state to allow parallel teaching of Hebrew songs and the like for both schools.

The curriculum at JCDS is also based on Common Core, but employs an arts component that differs from STEM. Because of this extra component, the program is called STEAM, for science, and technology interpreted through engineering and the arts and based in mathematical elements.

"In all that we do, we're not

doing just one thing," Pollin notes. "We're hoping to prepare children for the world they're going to be a part of using 21<sup>st</sup> century tools."

Aside from connecting to one another through digital tools, Pollin points to a key component of their curriculum that emphasizes traditional Jewish values like *tikun olam* ("healing the world").

"Those things start with text study and the literacies of Judaism," she explains what they inform their students. "We're not doing this only because it feels good to us, but that this is the foundation of our heritage and guides us (as) to (what we should) be thinking about."

JCDS is a part of the RAVSAK Jewish community day school network, which Pollin believes helps them in a variety of ways in terms of regular and ongoing support for their programs and their 30-plus students. "We're a small school and so we're nimble and flexible we are able to meet the need of all the students we enroll," she says. "Additionally, teachers will meet with students in afternoon or after school or hold summertime tutorial sessions to support learning."

Pollin also announced several specific new additions for JCDS this year. The first is the institution of Andy Adelman as the chef, who will be cooking daily hot kosher meals for the students from the on-site kitchen. Another is the institution of the Jewish Babies Club, which will meet once a month in the afternoons to be followed by a Kabalat Shabbat service for parents and toddlers. Special events later in the year will include a talk by children's author Eric Kimmell, whose work "A Horn for Louis" will be read at most religious schools throughout the area; a partnership with P.J. Learning Library; and an appearance by renowned Judaica artist Gary Rosenthal.

"New this year is the school's use of the cutting edge technology of video conferencing to connect to Israel via Skype."



# SATCHMO AND THE *Star*

By ALAN SMASON



Photo of Louis Armstrong (Courtesy of  
Louis Armstrong House Museum)





Tilie (Ester) and Louis Karnofsky  
(Courtesy of Jacob Karno)

Perhaps there is no greater period of Jewish influence on jazz as when it first sprang up on the streets of New Orleans in neighborhoods before and after the heyday of ragtime. In particular, one area – the Third Ward – encompassing much of the present day Central Business District, would go on to prove to be especially noteworthy in the fostering and development of what we have come to know as jazz.

Tulane University's Hogan Jazz Archive curator and author Bruce Raeburn and writer and historian Jack Stewart have both researched the area extensively and reported its importance.

Largely settled by immigrants, the area attracted both laborers and skilled tradesmen. In particular the 400 block of South Rampart Street was home to a great many Jewish families, many of whom established trade as pawnshop owners or, as they were commonly called, loan offices.

Among the Jewish families who had businesses, according to Stewart, were the related families of the Fertels and the Finks; the Finks' in-laws, the Franks; the Pailets; the Itzkoviches and the Karnofskys.

This neighborhood was also home at that time to a young, impressionable Louis Armstrong.

While Louis Armstrong identified as a Baptist, it may surprise a great many music lovers to learn that the "goodwill ambassador to jazz" wore a Magen David, or Star of David, throughout most of his adult life. The background to this little-known tale makes for fascinating reading and is steeped in the culture of New Orleans.

Some modern historians like Stewart refer to this district as "Black Storyville" in an attempt to differentiate it from its white musical melting pot and more well-documented cousin as well as to distinguish it from the entirety of Back O'Town.

Situated in the present-day area near City Hall and Duncan Plaza, this was the African-American red-light district where brothels and music halls like the Funky Butt Hall sprang up. Buddy Bolden, the first acknowledged jazz star

reportedly played there, not far from Armstrong's modest home.

Abandoned by his father and with a mostly-absent mother, Armstrong was raised in large part by his grandmother. He longed for family at a time when children were not very protected.

Among his earliest of jobs, Armstrong toiled as a laborer with the Louis Karnofsky family of Jewish-Lithuanian peddlers. Part of his duties included getting up early and delivering "stone coal" from atop a delivery wagon with Louis's son, Morris. It was hard and dirty work, but the Karnofskys' work ethic impressed the youngster as he related in the biography "In His Own Words": "The Karnofsky boys were all fine young men, wonderful dispositions. The *whole* family had that *fine warmth* for all their Negro help," Armstrong wrote. "The Karnofskys would start getting ready for work at five o'clock in the morning and I was right there along with them."

Elsewhere he wrote: "Working for these fine people, I learned to be an early riser, just like them. I noticed they believed in being on the move. Up early every morning...making Hay while the Sun Shined."

From the way Jews were commonly mistreated by other whites, Armstrong had an intuition that blacks and Jews had similar prejudice to overcome and needed to stick together. "I had a long admiration for the Jewish people. Especially for their long time of courage, taking So Much Abuse for so long," he wrote.

It is well known that Armstrong embellished a story or two, even altering the actual August 4, 1901 date of his birth to coincide with the more patriotic date of the Fourth

of July, 1900. But the story of how he got his first cornet has remained constant.

"One day when I was on the wagon with Morris Kanofsky – we were on Rampart and Perdido Streets and we passed a Pawn Shop – which had in its Window an old tarnished beat up 'B' Flat Cornet," he wrote.

Stewart identified that shop as having been run by Jacob Fink.

Armstrong continued: "It only cost *Five* Dollars. Morris advanced me two dollars on my Salary. Then I put aside Fifty Cents each week from my small pay – finally the Coronet was Paid for in full. Boy was I a Happy Kid."

Although the dates when Armstrong secured that cornet are in dispute, he always had a special relationship and good memories of his time spent with the Karnofsky family.

They not only encouraged him to play, but to sing as well. According to Armstrong, Esther "Tilie" Karnofsky, Louis' wife, often sang songs such as Russian lullabies. "When I reached the age of Eleven I began to realize it was the Jewish family who instilled in me Singing from the heart," Armstrong recalled. "They encourage me to carry on."

At dinner time, Mrs. Karnofsky would invite the young boy to have dinner with the family and Armstrong claimed he developed a taste for Jewish food that continued many years later into his own home. In his book titled "Satchmo: The Genius of Louis Armstrong," author Gary Giddins quotes Armstrong as saying "I still eat their food, matzos, my wife Lucille keeps them in her breadbox." Obviously, the invitations to dine with the Karnofskys were extended during the week of Passover too.

Because of that relationship and support, Armstrong always felt a special attachment to his "Jewish family." He maintained his friendships with both Morris and another brother, Aleck, many years after he had moved



Tilie (Ester) Karnofsky (ca. 1936), who taught Louis Armstrong how to sing, published exclusively for the first time in the CCJN. (Courtesy of Jacob Karno)

permanently to Queens in New York.

Perhaps to remind him of his humble background and his halcyon days with his "Jewish family," the jazz star constantly wore that Magen David.

His longtime Jewish manager Joe Glaser claimed it was he who gave him that jewel. Glaser, a shady character from Chicago with convictions as a rapist, pedophile, racketeer and bootlegger, seems like an unlikely choice to manage "Satchmo."

But Glaser was someone in whom Armstrong could place his trust. "I always admired Mr. Glaser from the first day I started working for him," Armstrong recounted. "He just impressed me different than the other bosses I've worked for. He seemed to understand colored people so much."

With his ex-wife Lil Hardin suing him for support, previous managers clamoring for him to perform more dates and a financially disastrous European tour, Armstrong was looking to

make a change in management that would uncomplicate his life. Glaser, who took over as his manager at the beginning of February in 1935, quickly put Armstrong's finances in order, according to Joshua Berrett in his study "The Louis Armstrong Companion: Eight Decades of Commentary."

In a few months, Glaser had gotten creditors off Armstrong's back and had signed a lucrative recording deal with Decca Records and its American label founder Jack Kapp, yet another successful Jewish innovator.

Kapp's founding of the label the previous year with British banker and investor Edward Lewis resulted in their signing of Bing Crosby, perhaps the hottest crooner on the scene and on the verge of a lucrative movie career. Armstrong's signing followed several other notables including Al Jolson and New Orleans' own innovative Boswell Sisters.

Notwithstanding his past dealings, Glaser proved to be the right fit for Armstrong, who was the first major celebrity signed to his Associated Booking Corporation. At the time of Glaser's death in 1969, his sizable stable of performers included Barbra Streisand, Dave Brubeck, Pearl Bailey, the Rascals, Miriam Makeba, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Stan Kenton and Duke Ellington to name but a few.

As Armstrong was wont to do, he refuted Glaser's claim about the Magen David in a 1954 interview in which he said he was presented the gold necklace as a gift from friends Abe and Frances Donen. Donen a Los Angeles area (Baldwin Hills) jeweler friend inscribed it with "Best of Luck, Abe and Francis." On the front it was inscribed with his nickname "Pops." In that interview Armstrong asserted he never took it off.

The fact that he wore it daily is supported by additional photographic documentation on the few occasions when Armstrong did remove his shirt.

Several famous photos taken by noted photographers at recording sessions as well as the fledgling paparazzi of the day attest to this.

One of these was Austrian émigré Arthur Fellig (aka "Weegee"), whose father was a rabbi. A popular crime photographer in New York, Weegee's photographic essays "Naked City" and "Naked Hollywood" became best sellers.

Several of Weegee's photographs of a shirtless Armstrong wearing his Magen David in New Orleans when he may have been preparing to rule as King of Zulu in February of 1949 are found in a permanent exhibit at the International Center for Photography in New York. One snapped during a recording session of "Louis Armstrong Plays W. C. Handy" can be found at the Louis Armstrong House Museum in Queens.

Howsoever he obtained the Magen David, this Jewish connection to Louis Armstrong – the man jazz historians credit with the most profound influence on the development of jazz – cannot be understated. Jews figured prominently throughout his life and helped to fashion and direct his remarkable career from jazz's formative days on the cobblestone streets of New Orleans to its golden era, as it spread out nationwide and beyond.



Morris Karnofsky, the boy who advanced Satchmo the money for his first cornet, published exclusively for the first time in the CCJN. (Courtesy of Jacob Karno)



Louis Armstrong (ca. 1925), (Courtesy of the Hogan Jazz Archive, Tulane University)



# Jews and Jazz

Richard Hoffman.

GROTESQUE FANTASIE

By ALAN SMASON



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Gottschalk's Banjo composition used African rhythms. (Ralston Crawford Collection of New Orleans Jazz Photography, Courtesy of the Hogan Jazz Archive, Tulane University) to read "Gottschalk's "The Banjo" and his earlier "Bamboula" combined African rhythms with European sensibilities. (Ralston Crawford Collection of New Orleans Jazz Photography, Courtesy of the Hogan Jazz Archive, Tulane University)



While music historians generally agree that jazz music grew out of a confluence of European harmony and varying forms of music largely gleaned from the African-American experience including blue notes, improvisation and syncopation, little acknowledgment has been given to the influence of Jews in its development.

It turns out that *all* ethnic groups – Jews included – had a profound influence on each other in the birthing process of jazz. This is true for the Irish, Italian, German, East European, Chinese, Caribbean and Mexican communities; Jews were no less influential.

As to the earliest record of Jewish influence on jazz, scholars point back to a much earlier and simpler time. Louis Moreau Gottschalk, the son of a Jewish London banker and a Creole woman, was born in New Orleans in 1829 and is considered the first American-born composer and performer of note.

Hogan Jazz Archive curator Bruce Raeburn acknowledges Gottschalk's major African-Caribbean influence defined by the heavy percussion he heard as a youngster on Sunday afternoons in the many gatherings at Congo Square. Given the day off by their owners, these slaves drummed and danced to the native beats of their tribal traditions, encouraging each other to connect to their common heritage. Gottschalk's "Bamboula: Danse des négres" (Opus 2) is often seen as the definitive work of this genre and the first time that European sensibilities mixed with African rhythms.

Raeburn has also cited his work "The Banjo" (Opus 15), published in 1854, as exciting because of its incorporation for the first time of West African rhythms and techniques of playing. Gottschalk transcribed the sounds of the banjo playing he had heard as a youth to the European instrument of the piano. No other piece in the ante-bellum period demonstrated

the "up-picking" and "down strumming" Gottschalk captured and it became one of his most popular pieces.

The Ragtime era that followed Reconstruction in the Crescent City laid the basis for the origins of jazz. According to a number of scholars, the many immigrant families who lived in and around the South Rampart Street corridor – many of them Jewish – had a profound impact on its development.

In his book "The Empress of Steak and the Gorilla Man," author Randy Fertel, the great-grandson of pawnbrokers and real estate titans Sam and Julia Fertel, recounts many of the events that took place during this musically rich and historically important period, especially as it related to his grandmother, Annie Fertel.

According to her grandson, she grew up over the closed Fertel loan office at the corner of Perdido and South Rampart. This was just across the street from where the pre-teen Louis Armstrong, who lived in a rooming house a few blocks away, had been arrested for discharging a firearm in public. That charge led the youngster to being sent off for discipline at the Colored Waif's Home for Boys.

Following his re-integration into society a year and a half later, Armstrong made his way back to South Rampart Street and listened to early jazz innovators like Joe "King" Oliver and Kid Ory at nearby African-American lounges such as the Little Gem Saloon. Run by non-Jewish businessman Frank Douroux, the Little Gem Saloon expanded its original space to take over the office leased by Izzy Itzkovich's Eagle Loan Company. Douroux renamed the new space as the Eagle Saloon and eventually its name also extended to the remnants of Bolden's band, who hung out at the saloon.

Ironically, the Little Gem building became home to the David Paillet Loan Company from 1926 to 1949, before it became another important musical haunt, Pete's Blue Heaven Lounge, from whence



Historian and author Jack Stewart at a Jewish Music symposium. (Photo by Alan Smason)

jazz funerals for the Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club would begin and end.

Oliver was very familiar with Armstrong and took him on as a protégé, eventually giving him his biggest break by inviting him to work in Chicago with his "Creole Jazz Band" in 1921.

Meanwhile, the Jazz era had broken wide open following the release of the first jazz record by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band (ODJB) in 1917, featuring trumpet player Nick LaRocca. None of the ODJB members were Jewish, although LaRocca was replaced years later by Jewish frontman Henry "Hot Lips" Levine.

Jewish musicians of the era began to establish themselves as among the most talented and proficient of performers. Unlike a number of the jazz musicians who "faked" their way through songs, many of the Jewish performers actually read musical notation.

ODJB trombonist Edwin Edwards was quizzed in 1959 about his most memorable pre-ODJB jazz pairing and he cited an unusual group with whom he



Bruce Raeburn, Tulane University's Hogan Jazz Archive curator (Courtesy Hogan Jazz Archive)



Jewish New Orleans jazz figure John Wigginton Hyman, performed as Johnny Wiggs ((Courtesy of the Hogan Jazz Archive, Tulane University)

played. "...the best jazz band I... was connected with was, Achille Baquet, clarinet; Mike Caplan was the cornet player; Bob Stein was the drummer; Joe Wolfe, pianist; and myself on trombone." Baquet was crossing racial lines by playing with Edwards and the other three, all Jewish musicians, who "could read music, improvise and play jazz too."

Baquet and Edwards became celebrated jazz stars, but not their Jewish partners. Raeburn has speculated that their ability to read music may have kept them in demand and employed in a number of other "legitimate" musical enterprises outside of the realm of jazz.

Indeed, Caplan was a highly regarded trumpeter and cornet player who played with society music orchestras and swing bands throughout the 1930s and 1940s, most notably that of Max Fink, the son of the original Rampart Street residents.

Also of note were the Korn brothers – trombonist Marcus and clarinetist Montague "Monty" Korn. The sons of a colorful German rabbi who took his family to Poland, England and Scotland before emigrating to the United States, the Korns had fallen into obscurity until their careers were more recently rediscovered. Marcus Korn played with Caplan in a number of orchestras during his career, according to Stewart.

One of the most important

of Jewish New Orleans jazz figures was John Wigginton Hyman, who performed under the colorful stage name of Johnny Wiggs. Born into a very influential Jewish family, his father, William Bryan Hyman, was a son of the chief justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court and related to U.S. presidential perennial hopeful William Jennings Bryan.

Originally a violinist, he allegedly switched to cornet after hearing King Oliver perform. Oliver and Bix Beiderbecke became two of his mentors, even after the family moved to Ocean Springs, Mississippi.

Early in his career in 1927, he performed with others in the group Johnny Hyman's Bayou Stompers. He became a music instructor and architectural drawing teacher for the Orleans Parish School Board and, while teaching, was known as "Professor Hyman." Fearful of recrimination from school board officials, he always used his stage name for all his appearances.

Among his contributions to the local jazz scene, Wiggs was responsible for composing and popularizing "Canal Street March," the official march of the City of New Orleans, and "King Zulu Parade."

In 1949, the very same year that Armstrong returned to the city of his birth to be King of the Zulu parade, Wiggs founded the New Orleans Jazz Club. That alone may have been enough to remember him as an important jazz figure, but as a music instructor at John McDonough No. 38 Elementary School, he met and encouraged a young would-be clarinetist named Pete Fountain, who would turn out to be one of the more important and well-known jazz artists of the latter half of the Twentieth Century.

Faded now to the dustbin of history, John Kornfeld was cited by Raeburn as yet another Jewish player, who may have indirectly sparked the career of another celebrated traditional jazz clarinetist: Louis Cottrell. Cottrell's father – also named

Louis, but who bore the appellation "Old Man" – was a friend of Kornfeld's. While the elder Cottrell could not afford music lessons, his buddy Kornfeld could, the younger Cottrell reminisced. Kornfeld would return from his instruction to share and teach his friend, Old Man, everything he had learned. The elder Cottrell became a professional musician and his famous son followed suit.

Another early Jewish jazz musician, Romanian-born Charles Fischbein, is noted as a rarity of the day: a violinist and a band leader who led several different groups during the 1920s and who ended up fronting several jazz orchestras at posh nightclubs like the during the era of Prohibition.

Fischbein was one of the more successful, but lesser known Jewish jazz musicians who played in various groups throughout the period of the 1920s and 1930s. Saxophonist David Winstein, who eventually became the head of the local American Federation of Musicians union, was another steady player who played jazz and society orchestra dates.

Drummer Godfrey Hirsch, who later became a mainstay with Louis Prima's band, started out as a pianist with the Gulf Coast Serenaders, while Gene Meyer was the stage name for Meyer Weinberg, yet another popular Jewish saxophonist.

These are just some of the regular Jewish players who benefited from the ability to read music and keep themselves pliant for whatever playing dates might pop up.

Jews have also distinguished themselves in the field of documenting the history of jazz through descriptive words and pictorial exposition.

Among the top photographers and cataloguers of jazz celebrities, three of the most prominent all lived and worked in New Orleans at one time or another: Al Rose, Herman Leonard and Jules Cahn.

Rose, who also wrote a highly regarded study of the Storyville district, shot photos of nearly



every major and minor jazz performer, oftentimes placing himself in the frame as his wife Diana took the shot.

Rose's "I Remember Jazz: Six Decades Among the Great Jazzmen" published in 1987 by LSU Press is a personal account dating back to the times he first visited New Orleans in the decade of the 1930s. An earlier work written in 1984 with Dr. Edmond Souchon titled "New Orleans Jazz: A Family Album" is also important because of its record of historical jazz places. Rose, who never denied his Jewish heritage, also never revealed his real name, now known to just a handful of family members and his attorney.

Leonard began his photographic career in the streets of New York and was responsible for capturing some of the most iconic photographs of performers during the bebop and cool jazz periods that stretched out from the 1940s and into the 1950s.

After snapping hundreds of important shots of performers like Dexter Gordon, Billie Holiday, Miles Davis, Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie and Duke Ellington, Leonard left New York's Greenwich Village in 1956 and moved to Paris, where he snapped photos of important French cabaret stars and later lived in Ibiza and London. Following an exhibit of his work at the Gallery for Fine Photography, he so fell in love with the New Orleans culture and new opportunities for work that he moved to the city in 1991. Leonard lived here until Hurricane Katrina related flooding destroyed his home.

Cahn, a member of a wealthy New Orleans Jewish family made a point of taking photographs of jazz performers at every opportunity he could. His massive collection of photographs comprises the bulk of The Historic New Orleans Collection's of prized jazz works.

Cahn began photographing "second line" jazz parades in the 1950s as a young man. He was extremely well regarded by local performers and had 15 years

experience at the time that the first New Orleans Jazz Festival, founded by Jewish promoter George Wein, started in 1970 at the former site of Congo Square adjacent to the New Orleans Municipal Auditorium.

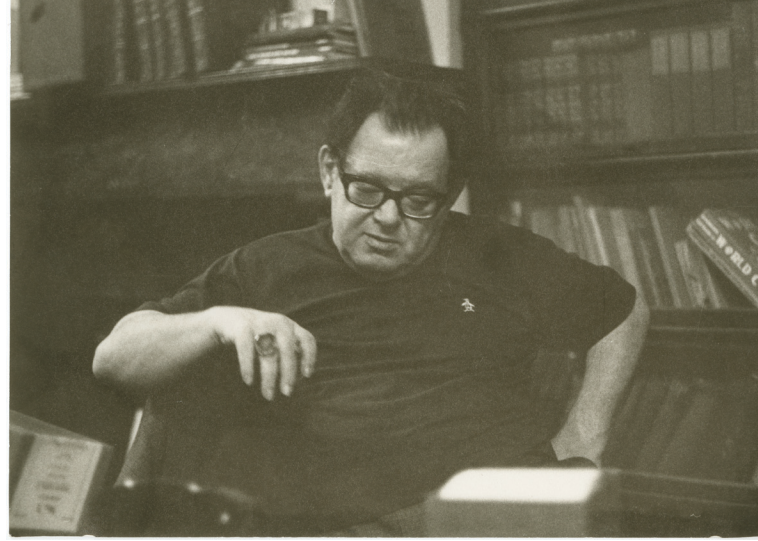
Until the time of his death in 1995, Cahn made every New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival he could and had access to all areas. Led by Dejan's Olympia Brass Band, Cahn's traditional jazz funeral was a major affair with participation by a number of parading organizations including the Young Men's Olympian Brass Band, Money Wasters and Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club organizations.

Cahn and Rose were close friends with two other important Jewish New Orleans families whose impact on the preservation of jazz is epic: the Borenstein and Jaffe families.

Were it not for Associated Artist Galleries run by Larry Borenstein, the likelihood that traditional jazz would have died out due to lack of interest and that many of the more famous performers whose names are a part of the lexicon would have faded into obscurity is not that hard a stretch.

Located at 726 St. Peter Street, Borenstein's gallery was a gathering place and cultural salon for jazz performers, visual artists and jazz enthusiasts. A native of Milwaukee, E. Lorenz Borenstein, reportedly a grand-nephew of Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky, was a streetwise salesman, stamp collector and art vendor, who arrived in New Orleans on the very night of the Japanese attack on the American fleet at Pearl Harbor, according to William Carter in his book "Preservation Hall."

At first Borenstein began to work as a salesman, selling and collecting stamps, coins and foreign currency. Following a disastrous devaluation of the British pound, he turned to art as a means to provide a stable income and moved into the gallery in 1952 next to the



Larry Borenstein, of art gallery fame.  
(Courtesy of the Hogan Jazz Archive, Tulane University)



The Jaffe family of Preservation Hall  
(Courtesy of Preservation Hall)

famous Pat O'Brien's bar.

Borenstein found that he needed to be open late at night as spillover from the bar resulted in significant art sales. A lover of jazz, Borenstein couldn't





Ben Jaffe (Courtesy of Preservation Hall)



Photographer and jazz historian Al Rose, kneeling, with Sandra Jaffe, Bob Greene, Johnny Wiggs, and "Papa" John Joseph in front of Preservation Hall, July of 1964. (Courtesy, Hogan Jazz Archive at Tulane University).

travel to listen to the musicians play at their usual haunts, so he encouraged "rehearsals" to be held at his place late at night. At first some white and black musicians would engage in jam sessions, but authorities and the local union both took a dim view of this.

Borenstein would supply beer and pass a kitty to reward the performers for their time.

Rose also recounts how Borenstein had one thing most jazz performers desired on a regular basis: a rest room. New Orleans at that time had segregated facilities. Finding a place to relieve themselves was tough enough, but there was not problem at the art gallery.

During the day, Borenstein would oftentimes offer a cool, refreshing glass of water as well. As Rose recounts about Lemon Nash in "I Remember Jazz," "He'd put his ukulele down, satisfy his immediate need, and then, to replay Larry's hospitality, he'd play and sing a tune."

A street player, Nash knew hundreds of pop tunes from the Twenties and would launch into song, hoping for a tip or to linger in a friendly clime. Eventually, he began to show up more regularly, according to Rose, and to bring along the likes of Kid Thomas, Harrison Verret, Noon Johnson and other jazz performers to help carry more than one tune.

Regardless of this simplistic explanation, "Mr. Larry's gallery," as players referred to it, did become a beacon for players and enthusiasts alike as George Lewis, "Sweet Emma" Barrett, Punch Miller, Billie and De De Pierce and dozens of others – started to drop by with more regularity.

Gallery visitors began to reward the ensembles with more generous gratuities and word spread of the now nightly jam sessions. Eventually Borenstein moved his art facility to an adjacent facility as the musicians moved in, but the enigmatic pegboard that decorated the walls and was used to hold up the

original artwork at the facility remained.

While Borenstein did have a temper, he was a very caring individual who would do all he could to help the downtrodden musicians who played at his gallery. He was soon joined by two young lovers of jazz, who took his original "rehearsals" and transformed them into a worldwide institution.

Allan and Sandra Jaffe had allegedly met in a record store admiring the stacks of old jazz recordings, had fallen in love, married and then took allowed their first love of jazz to move them to the Crescent City for a stopover. Making acquaintances with several performers they met, the two were drawn to Borenstein's gallery and never really left except to pack their possessions and move permanently here.

In the early days, Jaffe and his wife spent much of their time converting the gallery – a gift from Borenstein to the Jaffes into a "kitty hall," where musicians could play to their hearts' content in front of an audience and reap the benefits of remuneration. Allan Jaffe, a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania was a businessman who had a vision and his vision was renamed Preservation Hall.

Sandra Jaffe passed a basket around at night and the lines of patrons became even more steady. The crowds never diminished and the Jaffes made the upstairs their domicile, raising the roof with hot jazz and a son, Ben, in the process.

"I'm not sure what it was about the music specifically that drew them to New Orleans," relates their son. "But I do know there was something about the musicians and culture that resonated with them...they immediately felt that they were kindred spirits."

Many of the musicians began to regard the Jaffes as their own kin. Whenever one grew sick or needed a hand, the idealistic

couple paid medical bills and provided assistance, even taking care of burial costs in some cases.

Eventually, Jaffe became quite a prominent tuba player himself and he would sit in with the veteran players, learning techniques at the hands of the originators of the jazz art form. Allan Jaffe formed a tight knit group of players who, beginning in 1963, toured Japan and later embarked on numerous international trips, helping to bring sharp focus on the importance of the remaining musicians of the earlier era.

Under Allan Jaffe's direction, they recorded dozens of albums over the Columbia and Sony Music labels garnering even more worldwide attention.

The honeymoon ended when Allan Jaffe succumbed to the effects of cancer on March 10, 1987. He was only 51.

By then Sandra Jaffe had already taken over the operations and was preparing young Ben to eventually take over for his father. Like his father, he also became a proficient tubist and in more recent years has toured with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band as its leader.

The most recent Sony Music release is a definite departure for the group, whose ranks include a new generation of players like Clint Maedgen and Wendell Brunious. "That's It" is the first instance where the band has produced original music.

"In 2011 we celebrated Preservation Hall's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary," Ben Jaffe reported. "The new album celebrates the next 50."

The Jewish influence on jazz, as with other ethnic groups, is well documented. The legacy that Preservation Hall is ensuring with its new release and worldwide tours continues a long line of Jewish influence from jazz's earliest days. As long as the art form exists, Jews will, no doubt, be an integral part of its workings and an essential part of its mix.



# TO READ MORE ABOUT OTHER FAMOUS JEWS IN JAZZ

go to the Crescent City Jewish News website  
[www.crescentcityjewishnews.com](http://www.crescentcityjewishnews.com)



Irving Berlin and Al Jolson photo courtesy of National Museum of American Jewish History.

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