

## Shalom Lake Norman Festival

Shalom Lake Norman returns for a third year, Sunday, September 18, from Noon-4 PM, at Ramsey Creek Park in Cornelius. The crowd of last year has been anxiously awaiting a repeat of the festival sponsored by



The Baal Shem Tones

the Jewish Council of Lake Norman. Much more has been added to this year's festival. More entertainment for both adults and children, which will require that you come early and stay till the end. More vendors and more food.

It's a day of fun for the entire family.

Featured entertainers this year: **The Baal Shem Tones, Helene & Michael Kates.** A Baal Shem Tones concert is more than great music; for many it is a spiritual event that stays with them for years. Helene and her husband Michael, the duo's producer, co-wrote most of their material, a tightly crafted style of pop-influenced Americana which has been described as "100% American and 100% Jewish," with a powerful spiritual punch that stands out.

**Batsheva** is a singer, songwriter, musician, and comedy writer. She sings in Ladino, Yiddish, Hebrew and English. She is an award winning songwriter

and has performed in Israel, Canada, Australia, and the United States. Her "Song of Remembrance" is part of the official archives of Yad Va-Shem. She is a classically trained musician, studying piano and cello at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. She accompanies herself in guitar. Batsheva holds a degree in Theater from York University in Toronto.

In addition to these great performers, there will be a fun children's area with performances, magic shows, and crafts. For the shopper, you must stroll through the shuk area. Vendors will be selling Judaica from specialty food to art.

Come hungry, because the food will be mouth watering, the caterer promises a Jewish gastronomical experience.

If you can't park at the park, off street parking is available with bus transportation provided.

Follow the signs and hosts will

be there to guide you.

Sunday, September 18  
Noon to 4 PM

Ramsey Creek Park, Cornelius

Please note: we are still seeking vendor for art, jewelry, and Judaica. For more information on vendors and general information on the festival, please go to [www.shalomlakenorman.com](http://www.shalomlakenorman.com). ☆

**Tisha B'Av  
begins at sundown  
August 8 and  
ends at sundown  
August 9.**

## Film Festival

(Continued from page 24)

val director. Jeff assumes this position from Jodi Werner-Greenwald who is stepping down after successfully leading the Festival for the last seven years. Jeff has been greatly involved in the Charlotte Jewish community in the past and looks forward to continuing the great work started by Jodi. Please join us in welcoming Jeff and thanking Jodi for a job well-done.

The Charlotte Jewish Film Festival is brought to you by the Levine JCC and the Charlotte Chapter of Hadassah, and is made possible, in part, with funding by the Arts & Science Council and the North Carolina Arts Council, an agency of the Department of Cultural Resources, and the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art. ☆

## Meshugah for Zumba

By Deborah Hirsch

Philadelphia (Jewish Exponent) — At age 54, Esther Goldberg has danced in front of 46,000 people at a sold-out Phillies game and behind a casino bar wearing little more than a see-through mesh shirt over a sparkly bra.

This is what Zumba can do to an otherwise mild-mannered masseuse and yoga instructor from Northeast Philadelphia.

If you haven't heard about Zumba yet, Goldberg and more than 500 other certified instructors located within 25 miles of Philadelphia's Center City will clamor to tell you how the Latin-inspired dance fitness phenomenon can not only get you in shape but truly change your life.

As Goldberg put it, "You never know where it will take you."

Sound a little cultish? It is.

I can say that because I, too, fell prey to the Zumba addiction and have been teaching it since February 2010.

Since there's nothing inherently Jewish about Zumba, I hadn't considered it newsworthy for the Jewish Exponent until a fellow instructor began ticking off names of members of the tribe among our ranks.

Her point was confirmed a few months later when I posted a query for Jewish instructors on our Philly Zumba Instructor Network Facebook group. Fifteen people responded, generating a string of more than 40 comments that included lots of "oys" and a suggestion to form a Jewish burlesque group.

Short of these anecdotes, there's no data to indicate whether Jews comprise an unusually high share of Zumba enthusiasts. But there's also no denying how much this fitness frenzy has reached into our local Jewish community.

Aside from Jews who have made Zumba part of their weekly routine, at least six area synagogues have added classes to their lineup of community programs. A few teachers have even given it a

Jewish twist, infusing Israeli music, Yiddish humor and their background in folk dancing to guide participants through the moves.

Although Zumba seems to be a relatively recent fad in the Northeast, it's been around in other parts of the country for years. A crowd of more than 6,000 instructors will mark its 10th anniversary at a sold-out convention this weekend in Orlando, FL.

The Levine JCC has been offering a Zumba class since 2007. Taught by Lyn Addy, who is a certified instructor, it has very loyal following.

Goldberg found Zumba, with its loud, quick, "out there" moves, a perfect counterbalance to the other forms of dance and yoga she'd been teaching since she was a teenager. What started as one class at Congregation Adath Jeshurun in Elkins Park, PA, quickly expanded to four, not counting the yoga she was already teaching there.

"People like to move their bodies but often feel like they can't dance since they didn't have training or they feel self-conscious," Goldberg said. With catchy music and repetitive steps, "Zumba eliminates that."

Because of the Jewish setting, Goldberg continued, it's easy to throw in "Hava Nagila" or other Jewish songs, talk about upcoming holidays or joke about how much everyone ate at Chanukah.

"My name is so Jewish, it's like I'm more comfortable fitting in," Goldberg explained. "It's like heimische. Especially if they are members of the synagogue, it's like, 'Wow, I can come to my synagogue and work out, it's here.'"

Growing up, instructor Donna Harris just wanted to dance on Broadway.

"My Jewish mother wouldn't hear of it," said Harris, 62.

So instead, she attended Temple University and became a teacher. After retiring in 2008, the "frustrated dancer" finally got her

chance to cut loose.

"While many of my friends went to Hadassah meetings, knitting circles and mah jongg games, I was Zumba-ing like there was no tomorrow," said Harris, of Northeast Philadelphia.

The best part, she said, was seeing the older population she targeted coming out of their shells during class.

"Whatever is going on in their lives," Harris said, "Zumba helps them deal with it."

She can relate to that. Instead of dwelling on ailments that threatened to slow her down — cervical cancer, depression, a non-malignant brain tumor, emphysema and severe hearing loss — she concentrated on dancing.

Darcy Silvers, a copywriter and instructor from Holland, PA, said she wouldn't be surprised if the fact that she grew up listening and dancing to Hebrew songs made her quicker to hop on the Zumba bandwagon. Plus, she said, the format is similar to Israeli dancing — both associate each part of a song with a unique movement.

"To me it's like perfect because I get paid to exercise," Silvers said, adding that it's also a great way for women approaching menopause like her to help stave off weight gain and other side effects that come with that stage of life.

Silvers, 52, incorporates Israeli music in all of her classes — including those at three Curves gyms — but she saves expressions like "No schleppers allowed!" and "Shake your tushies!" for her synagogue group. Around Chanukah last year, she choreographed a routine to the Yeshiva University a cappella group Maccabeats' "Candlelight."

As much as she loves Zumba, Silvers said, it troubles her that synagogues seem more interested in starting Zumba programs than Israeli folk dancing.

She's not the only avid folk dancer among the Philly Zumba clan. Silvers and another instructor, Beth Ladenheim, also 52, still frequent folk dancing almost

every week, and a handful of their fellow dancers attend Zumba classes, too.

In folk dancing, Ladenheim said, the choreography tends to be more intricate and less athletic. She wanted to sweat, and Zumba certainly made that happen.

"As someone who loves to dance but not exercise, it seemed like a god-send to me during a time when I was desperately trying to lose weight."

Though Zumba classes tend to attract mostly women, men are specifically banned from the sessions Ladenheim holds at Lower Merion Synagogue and Congregation Beth Hamedrosh, two Orthodox synagogues.

For Orthodox women who don't belong to coed gyms for modesty reasons, "they would never do this anywhere else," Ladenheim explained. "I kind of feel like I'm doing a service by going into the synagogue and giving them an opportunity to do something that everybody else is doing."

Student Beth Gottfried said the class probably played a role in her losing ten pounds since last fall. Aside from the fact that she can't attend other classes where men might show up, Gottfried, 52, said it was just convenient to have an option at her shul, where she could see friends and meet other Jewish women.

"There was no pressure to be perfect, you could mess up and nobody would judge you," she said.

Students point out that the synagogue classes tend to attract an over-40 crowd, which makes it less intimidating than a gym full of young, athletic exercisers. But there are plenty of younger Jews in the mix, too, like myself and 27-year-old Nicole MacDonald, an instructor from Willow Grove.



Lyn Addy teaches a Zumba class at the Levine JCC.

"Zumba doesn't judge based on age, weight, gender," MacDonald said. "It's for everyone."

Ellen Goldstein, regional director of BBYO in Charlotte, has been taking Zumba at the Levine JCC for three years. "Zumba combines exercise, great music, and dance," she says. "Zumba will make you sweat, put a smile on your face, and is a great stress reliever."

Kate Nolt, a fitness consultant seeking a doctorate in kinesiology at Temple University, said she expects interest in Zumba will eventually die down like other fitness trends. Still, she agreed with Goldberg, who insisted that "there's too many people who love it and instructors who love it" for it to disappear soon.

Zumba seems to have reached a new level of fun compared with other workouts, Nolt said.

"It really does touch to the core of a lot of people," Nolt said. "Some people may not go onto a dance floor at a bar mitzvah or even a wedding, but in Zumba they're in a room with a whole bunch of people exercising and it feels really good. They're dancing, but it doesn't even feel like a workout."

Not only does Zumba improve posture and figure, Ladenheim says, the social nature of it "leaves you feeling happy and wanting more movement instead of more cake."

Or, in my case, more movement and more cake. ☆

Amy Krakovitz contributed to this story.