

Inspiration.
Innovation.
Imagination.



Jewish Federation
OF GREATER CHARLOTTE



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Sue's Book Shelf

By Sue Littauer



Shortly before the publication of his second novel *Saving Sophie*, Ron Balson visited Charlotte as a guest of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte. A Chicago attorney, Ron explained that his first novel – international bestseller *Once We Were Brothers* – was rejected by all publishers. After self-publishing the book and distributing copies to family and friends, *Once We Were Brothers* sold over 100,000 copies by word of mouth before St. Martin's Press acquired the rights. Now Ron's highly anticipated fifth novel *The Girl From Berlin* is scheduled for publication later this month.

Catherine Lockhart, a Chicago attorney, and Liam Taggart, a top-notch investigator, team up in each of Balson's novels to untangle the mysteries surrounding their clients' cases. In *The Girl From Berlin*, we find Liam and Catherine in Tuscany after agreeing to help an old friend whose elderly aunt is being evicted from her property. The only clues to this case are lodged in an old manuscript handwritten in German about the life of an extraordinary young female violin-

ist during World War II. How are the lives of "the girl from Berlin" and the elderly Italian landowner connected?

The Girl From Berlin is a fast-paced novel that will keep you reading into the wee hours. If you haven't read Ron Balson's previous books, you're in for a treat! The first four bestsellers - *Once We Were Brothers*, *Saving Sophie*, *Karolina's Twins* and *The Trust* – can all be found at the Center for Jewish Education.

Talented novelist Jenna Blum, author of *Those Who Save Us*, will speak in Charlotte on Sunday, October 21 at 7 PM in the Lerner Center. She was the guest speaker at the Jewish Federation's Spring Lecture in 2008, and returns on behalf of the CJE to talk about her new novel *The Lost Family*.

The Lost Family is the story of chef and restaurateur Peter Rashkin whose first wife and twin daughters perished in the Holocaust. Peter's current family – his much younger wife, troubled daughter and well-meaning elderly relatives - form the backdrop of this new novel.

These two novels of historical fiction have a common theme –



"survivor syndrome." In *The Girl From Berlin*, Ron Balson writes about "survivor syndrome" when he says, "Often, people who have endured... horrors suppress the memories and push them to the back of their consciousness. They have to get on with their lives, so they do not allow those painful memories to the surface. Children of survivors often talk about a psychological disconnect. Their parents don't discuss those years with the family. It's the elephant in the room, but the door stays closed." In our two novels, Peter Rashkin's inability to talk about his "lost family" negatively influenced all those around him. And as we read about the lives of Ava Baumgarten and her family in Berlin, who are maneuvering through the horrors of Nazi Europe, we learn of selfless sacrifices that had far reaching effects on the next generation.

Survivor syndrome isn't limited to those who survived the Holocaust. Be on hand for our CJE Book Club on Wednesday, November 14th when we discuss *Faithful* by Alice Hoffman about a teenaged driver who survived a horrific accident only to experience years of psychological trauma. ☆

Check out what's happening this month at the CJE ?

CJE CALENDAR: OCTOBER 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
The Center for Jewish Education (CJE) enhances community engagement, promotes lifelong Jewish learning, and creates pathways to Jewish identity. LIBRARY HOURS: Monday - Thursday, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm; Friday, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm; and Sunday, 9:00 am - 2:00 pm					
	1 Library Closed Today!	2 Library Closed Today!	3 Once Upon a Storytime 1:15 PM Levine-Sklut Judaic Library	4	5 PJ Library Baby Storytime 11:00 AM Levine-Sklut Judaic Library
7	8	9	10 Once Upon a Storytime 1:15 PM Levine-Sklut Judaic Library	11	12 PJ Library Baby Storytime 11:00 AM Levine-Sklut Judaic Library
14 PJ Library at the Farm 10:00 AM Darby Acres Farm	15	16	17 Once Upon a Storytime 1:15 PM Levine-Sklut Judaic Library	18	19 PJ Library Baby Storytime 11:00 AM Levine-Sklut Judaic Library
21 On the Same Page, Chapter 1 Jenna Blum 7:00 pm Sam Lerner Center	22	23	24 Once Upon a Storytime 1:15 PM Levine-Sklut Judaic Library	25	26 PJ Library Baby Storytime 11:00 AM Levine-Sklut Judaic Library

Join the Bubbie Brigade!



Interested in keeping active and helping children and their families? PJ Library has the perfect volunteer opportunity for you. We need help at our monthly PJ Library family events.

Bubbies may be asked to help with arts and crafts, registration, set up and even some organization. Our flexible schedule meets your availability. Please say you'll join our Bubbie Brigade.

For more information call Debby Block 704-944-6780. ☆



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Keith Greenspon
Advisor

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