

# The Charlotte JEWISH news

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## From Commemoration to Celebration

In his book, "A Passion for a People," Avraham Infeld calls the post-Passover period linking the three major Israeli national commemoration days — Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Memorial Day), Yom Ha'zikaron (Israel Memorial Day), and Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel Independence Day) — the "Nine Days of We." The term echoes the traditional unit of time in Jewish tradition we call the "Days of Awe" (Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur). During this period, "we commemorate the Jewish people's collective transition, the fundamental shift from destruction and powerlessness to independence and sovereignty."

Yom HaShoah is a day commemorating an event that happened to one-third of the Jewish people but not to Israelis and not in the geographical territory of Israel. However, because it is something that happened to the Jewish people, as the nation-state of the Jewish people, Israel has the privilege of commemorating this experience as a majority with all the trappings of government

and national expression. Although the date was established by the Israeli government, it has become a day commemorated by Jewish communities and individuals worldwide.

Likewise, as Jews living outside of Israel, we should all engage with Yom Ha'zikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut to celebrate our collective connection to Israel, the national home of our people.

Israel's Independence Day, Yom Ha'atzmaut, is celebrated on the fifth day of the month of Iyar, which is the Hebrew date of the formal establishment of the State of Israel, when members of the "provisional government" read and signed a Declaration of Independence in Tel Aviv.

Yom Ha'atzmaut in Israel is always preceded by Yom Ha'zikaron, Israel's Memorial Day for the fallen soldiers. The message of linking these two days is clear: Israelis owe their independence — the very existence of the state — to the soldiers who sacrificed their lives for it.

For Jews around the world,



joining with Israelis commemorating Yom Ha'zikaron and celebrating Yom Ha'atzmaut has become a concrete link in the Jewish connection to the land of Israel.

"The declaration of a Jewish homeland is one of the greatest feats of our time and it is important to mark this historic day with a celebration," said Tair Giudice,

chief impact officer at the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte. "Amid the hardship and tragedy that has been brought on by this pandemic, we welcome a moment to share our love for Israel with our local community as well as our brothers and sisters from around the world."

We ask that you start the celebration now by sharing your

favorite thoughts, wishes and memories of Israel on social media. Post photos or videos on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter using the hashtag #IsraelToMe.

See page nine and back page for community event details.

## Honoring Our Survivors on Yom HaShoah Takes On a New Meaning During The Pandemic

By Talli Dippold  
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span Center for Peace and So-  
cial Justice

COVID-19 has changed many aspects of our daily lives over the past year. One group that has been severely affected is the global Holocaust survivor community. According to estimates by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, there are around 400,000 Holocaust survivors worldwide, and about 85,000 are in the United States.

Although the pandemic has made it easier for individuals to participate in a variety of programs from their homes, survivors are in a unique situation of feeling loss that can be mitigated by engaging in virtual programs. Many survivors cherish the opportunity to share their stories, which remains possible in the virtual age (with some technical assistance).

In a New York Times op-ed in January, Holocaust survivor Toby Levy shared his sentiment, "The way we have lived this year means I have lost many oppor-

tunities to lecture, to tell more people my story, to let them see me and know the Holocaust happened to a real person who stands in front of them today. It's important."

Many survivors are using the resilience and coping mechanisms they developed during the war years. Eva Fogelman, renowned psychologist, shared that society has much to learn from the attitude of survivors "During this pandemic, Holocaust survivors' resilience is

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