



Jewish Community News

The Publication of the Jewish Federation of the Desert

www.jfedps.org

Adar II/Nissan 5785 - April 2025

Danny Labin Welcomed As New Federation CEO



Danny Labin

Chief Executive Officer
Jewish Federation
of the Desert

As we prepare to celebrate Passover and commemorate forty years of wandering in the desert, it's a pleasure to introduce myself and to share how more than a decade of living in Israel has led me to this Desert!

The history of the Jewish people has been marked by a perennial longing to build and sustain community. This yearning for collective belonging has been at the heart of our existence for thousands of years and has been felt with renewed urgency since the events of October 7, 2023. Building community has been at the heart of my Jewish journey, both professionally and personally. It is my honor to begin on April 1st as the Chief Executive Officer of the Jewish Federation of the Desert and to bring to you my commitment to creating meaningful Jewish communal experiences that build inclusive Jewish identity.

My experience has time and again proven to me that Federation represents the single most powerful way of ensuring that Jewish communities continue to thrive at home and around the world, especially in challenging times. Yet for all of Federation's power to deliver impact in unparalleled ways, an understanding of the organization is often more opaque than it deserves to be. In my previous role with Federation in Israel, I oversaw the allocation of more than 50 million dollars raised by Federations in the US and Canada for crisis and emergency-response programming, and I witnessed how those dollars directly impact lives. As a collective Federation system, it

is truly astonishing to consider how more than 850 million dollars has been raised since October 7th to support the unprecedented healing and resilience needs of individuals and communities in Israel.

Here in the Desert, Federation works to build community every day, working with partners to deliver critical social services, to provide Jewish education to people of all ages, and to support Jewish students on area campuses to combat antisemitism. I look forward to working with our existing implementing partners and grantees, to expanding the breadth and depth of our impact, and to making sure that our community is aware of Federation's magnitude. As part of our collective sense of community, each one of us should share in the sense of pride that we are literally changing lives here in the Desert and around the globe. Working openly together to address

our challenges and sharing together in our collective successes are among my commitments to you as the leader of our Federation.

For many years of my career, I was with Sesame Workshop, the nonprofit organization that produces Sesame Street around the world. In addition to producing the Israeli Sesame Street in Hebrew, one of the projects that has been a source of enduring pride to me is Shalom Sesame. Shalom Sesame is a version of Sesame Street that promotes Jewish identity, diverse connections to Israel and Hebrew-language learning for American families. As the Executive Director of Shalom Sesame, I was responsible for ensuring that the initiative delivered on its mandate: to promote a vision of Jewish community based on the values of acceptance, inclusion and belonging for families of every type, of all backgrounds and of

any level of observance, grounded in mutual respect, shared responsibility and an actionable commitment to Tikkun Olam, repairing our world. While the realities of our Desert community are unique and hardly comparable to a children's television program, it is this same mandate, rooted in inclusive belonging, that I dedicate myself to bringing to our Desert community.

It is a true privilege to assume the leadership of our Federation community, and I plan to take an active role as a member of the community in many ways. Thank you for the warm welcome that my husband Yehuda and I have already received here. In our brief time here thus far, we have met so many committed individuals and have already made new friends. I am looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible in this community that we have all reached, the Desert! Chag Pesach Sameach!

Community Yom Ha Shoa Commemoration

Remember

Honoring our Local Holocaust survivors

Thursday April 24, 2025
Temple Sinai, 2:00-4:00 pm

Little Boy, I Know Your Name
A Second-Generation Memoir from Inherited Holocaust Trauma
by Mitchell Raff

Keynote Speaker
Mitchell Raff

Little Boy, I Know Your Name is a second-Generation memoir from inherited holocaust trauma, and it is an intensely personal examination of how he survived being the child of survivors.

Musical trio:
Lenny Smith, Cindy Brogan & Becky Long

Special Anne Frank monologue
by Norma Zuckerman

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Table of Contents

Vol. 52 • No. 9

Community Calendar	17-18
Federation	1, 2, 24
Annual Financial Report	10-11
Jewish Book Council	4
Major Gifts	8-9
Have A Nosh	22
PJ Library	22
School Listing	23
Simchas & Classifieds	23
Temples	17
Tributes	16

Community Yom HaShoah Observance Thursday, April 24



Members of the Jewish community, led by Rabbi Joseph Hurwitz and Rina Hurwitz (center behind banner), down Palm Canyon Drive

Yom HaShoah has been publicly observed in our desert community since the mid 1980's, after community activist Sue Schwartz came to the Jewish Federation and Women's Division Directors, Nat Bent and Assia Tucker, urging recognition of the Holocaust survivors in our community and a more public observance of Yom HaShoah. Working with Rabbi Joseph Hurwitz of Temple Isaiah, the result was the Jewish community gathering in the Bank of America parking lot at the corner of Tahquitz Canyon and Palm Canyon, and then walking with banners, signs and flags from Tahquitz to Alejo Drive, and three blocks up Alejo to Temple Isaiah, where a service remembering the Holocaust was held.

This program continued until Joe Brandt and Earl Greif built the Holocaust Memorial in Palm Desert Civic Park, at which time the observance moved to the Civic Center amphitheater. Pictures from its earliest years at that location show the same concentration camp signs that were carried in the march down Palm Canyon Drive in Palm Springs for those many years. It only moved indoors when, after several years in a row, the weather was either too hot or too cold to comfortably sit through the community observance, which became an issue for all who attended and, even more so, for our community's survivors, who were aging.

The observance initially moved to the auditorium of Eisenhower Medical Center for several years, and more recently the auditorium on the University of California Riverside Palm Desert Campus. After UCR did not protect its Jewish students after October 7 the Jewish Federation cancelled its long-term relationship with UCR and has moved the observance to Temple Sinai, where it will take place on Thursday, April 24th.



(l-r) Rabbi JB Sacks, Talia Lizemer-Hawley, Stephanie Ross, Linda Carmi, Leslie Pepper and Dr. Gary Levin

This year's Yom HaShoah committee is being co-chaired by Dr. Gary Levin and Stephanie Ross, joined by Linda Carmi, Talia Lizemer-Hawley, Rabbi J.B. Sacks of Beth Shalom, and Federation staff liaison Leslie Pepper, Director of Women's Philanthropy and Community Engagement

Focus on Community's Survivors
An ambitious and exciting project is being undertaken for Yom HaShoah. Our survivors are being videoed to capture their stories, which will be featured at the April 24 Yom HaShoah event. Among our community's survivors participating include (l-r) Rose Peppin, Ruth Lindeman, Ellie Grasse, Goldie Jacoby and Rickie Taras.



(l-r) Rose Peppin, Ruth Lindeman, Ellie Grasse, Goldie Jacoby and Rickie Taras.

GUEST SPEAKER

Mitchell Raff

A second-generation Holocaust survivor who grew up in Los Angeles. As a child, he was kidnapped and taken to Israel where he lived for a year and a half before the private investigator hired by his family located him. This led to a lifelong connection with the Jewish homeland, and as a young man, he returned to Israel to serve in the Israeli Defense Force.

A former business owner, Mitchell now resides in Southern California and is the owner and director of an outreach charity, Clothing the Homeless.

Little Boy, I Know Your Name: A Second-Generation Memoir from Inherited Holocaust Trauma is his first book, and it is an intensely personal examination of how he survived being the child of survivors.

In his unflinchingly honest memoir, Mitchell Raff candidly recounts his journey to overcome generational trauma and break free from decades of addiction. With raw vulnerability, he lays bare his destructive coping mechanisms and the far-reaching consequences they wrought on his life and on those around him.

2 • JCN • April 2025 • Adar II/Nissan 5785 • www.jfedps.com

Palm Desert Charter Middle School Hosts Goldie Jacoby, a Holocaust Survivor

By Talia Lizemer-Hawley

Palm Springs's resident Goldie Jacoby is a child Holocaust survivor. She was born in Katowice, Poland in 1937. Hitler's invasion changed her life forever.

1942 - Goldie is 5 years old. The Jews of her town were ordered to assemble. Goldie witnessed the Gestapo's brutal killings: babies thrown against the cement wall; her grandparents beaten to death. Goldie and her family went into hiding. A kind-hearted Christian farmer, risking his and his family's lives, provided them with a hiding place, a small pigsty, 5 x 5 feet, and meager food rations. There they hid, 10 individuals in total. They sat, with no room to stand, no bathing, their hair and bodies infested with lice, constantly hungry and thirsty, silent, whispering only in emergencies, and cold.

Goldie's mother, in an effort to cheer



her daughter, sewed an apron out of her torn dress, to "celebrate" her 6th



birthday. Today, 82 years later, that apron is still cherished by Goldie.

The family hid in this pigsty for almost 3 years. When finally liberated by the Red Army none of them could walk properly, as their legs were atrophied.

Following their liberation, Goldie's family were taken in by American soldiers and placed in a Displaced Persons' Camp. Three years later they received visas and immigrated to the United States. Goldie married a Holocaust survivor and together they raised two daughters.

On Thursday, February 13, 2025, Goldie shared her gripping survival story with Palm Desert Charter Middle School 8th grade students, who had studied the Holocaust with their teachers but could now better understand the horrors of those terrible years, hearing it from one who had lived it.

Sacred Heart Middle School Hosts Holocaust Survivor Rickie Taras

By Talia Lizemer-Hawley

Coachella Valley resident Rickie Taras captivated an audience while sharing her incredible Holocaust story with Sacred Heart Middle School students and staff on Wednesday, January 22nd, 2025.

Belgium, Rickie's birth country, was conquered by Nazi Germany on May of 1940. Rickie, an only child, was one-and-a-half years old at the time. Following the invasion, the Germans instituted anti-Jewish laws and ordinances restricting civil rights, confiscating businesses & properties, and banning certain professions. Rickie's father, a furrier, was allowed to continue his profession, providing warm fur coats to German soldiers. His career required some



traveling between Antwerp and Brussels. On one occasion Rickie joined her father. Upon their return they discovered that her mother had gone missing. Years later Rickie learned that on that day, her mother was arrested, transported to Auschwitz Concentration Camp, and murdered.

One night Rickie and her father were



awoken by loud knocks on their door. Juden Raus (Jews Out). Her father, carrying Rickie out, saw the trucks where Jews were being rounded up. Instead of boarding them, he decided to continue walking, slowly disappearing from German view. They managed to escape and hide in a friend's residence.

Unable to protect his child any longer, Rickie's father gave her to righteous individuals who refused to cooperate with the Nazi regime and cared for Rickie. Belgium was liberated by Allied forces in September 1944. Rickie, now six-years-old, reunited with her father. A few years later, they migrated to Montreal, Canada. Rickie and her father were the only two individuals in her extended family that survived the Holocaust.

These students are the last generation to be able to hear firsthand about the Holocaust. Hopefully this experience with Rickie Taras will provide them with tools to fight hate and discrimination and be advocates for social justice and peace.

Mayor Declares Paterson, NJ, 'the Capital of Palestine in the US'

By Vered Weiss, World Israel News

The mayor of Paterson, New Jersey, Andre Sayegh, declared the city to be the "capital of Palestine in the U.S." at a ceremony marking the beginning of Ramadan. Sayegh also stated that the city was one of the four holiest in the world, after Jerusalem, Mecca, and Medina. He referred to Paterson as "The Mecca of New Jersey."

Andre Sayegh was born in New Jersey to a Syrian mother and a Lebanese father. The city's Muslim presence is evident through its many Palestinian flags and signs in Arabic. Paterson enforces Islamic

policies, such as closing schools on Muslim holidays, serving halal food in public schools, and broadcasting the Adhan (Muslim call to prayer) on loudspeakers throughout the city.

The main street in the city was also renamed "Palestine Way," and the city government actively promotes anti-Israel BDS legislation.

The Hilal lighting ceremony, where



Andre Sayegh,
Mayor of Paterson
New Jersey

Sayegh made these remarks, was supported by the Palestinian American Community Center (PACC) and the Islamic Center of Passaic County (ICPC), two organizations that have faced criticism for anti-Israel rhetoric.

Last spring, a poll showed that half of American Muslims supported Hamas's attacks against Israel. The survey, conducted by the Pew Research Center among 12,693 respondents, found that 49% of American Muslims believe Hamas's reasons for fighting against the Jewish state are valid. In

contrast, just 18% of American Muslims believe Israel is justified in its fight against Hamas. Twenty-one percent of American Muslims said the October 7th invasion of Israel and massacre of Jews were acceptable, compared to 5% or less among all other religious groups surveyed.

Americans, as a whole, were far more likely to say Israel's reasons for fighting were legitimate, compared to Hamas, with 58% of all respondents saying the Jewish state's war on Hamas is valid, compared to 15% who disagreed.



In Person Event: Susan Blumberg-Kason Wednesday, May 7 – 3 PM

Author of "Bernadine's Shanghai Salon, The Story of the Doyenne of Old China"

Bernadine Szold Fritz arrived in Shanghai in 1929 to marry her fourth husband. Only thirty-three years old, she found herself in a time and place like no other. Political intrigue and scandal lurked on every street corner. Art Deco cinemas showed the latest Hollywood flicks, while dancehall owners and jazz musicians turned Shanghai into Asia's top nightlife destination.

Yet from the night of their wedding, Bernadine's new husband did not live up to his promises. Instead of feeling sorry for herself or leaving Shanghai, Bernadine decided to make a place for herself. Like other Jewish women before her, she started a salon in her home, drawing famous names from the world of politics, the arts, and the intelligentsia. And when Hollywood stars Anna May Wong, Charlie Chaplin, and Claudette Colbert passed through Shanghai, Bernadine organized gatherings to

introduce them to their Shanghai contemporaries.

When Bernadine's salon could not accommodate all who wanted to attend, she founded the International Arts Theater to produce avant-garde plays, ballets, lectures, and visual arts exhibits, often pushing audiences beyond their comfort zones. As civil war brewed and World War II soon followed, Bernadine's devotion to the arts and the people of Shanghai brought joy to the city just before it would change forever.

Meet the Jewish salon host in 1930s



Shanghai who brought together Chinese and expats around the arts as civil war erupted and World War II loomed on the horizon.

Susan Blumberg-Kason is the author of Bernadine's Shanghai Salon: The Story of the Doyenne of Old China (Post Hill Press, 2023), a 2023 Zibby Awards finalist for Best Book for the History Lover. She is also the author of Good Chinese Wife: A Love Affair with China Gone Wrong (Sourcebooks, 2014) and the forthcoming When Friends Come From Afar: The Remarkable Story of Bernie Wong and Chicago's Chinese American Service League (University of Illinois Press, 2024).

The program is being held at the Jewish Federation Office. There is no cost, but reservations required by contacting Leslie Pepper at Leslie.pepper@jfedps.org or calling 760-324-4737.

Dutch Parliament Conditions Palestinian NGO Funding on Recognition of Israel

By Ailin Vilches Arguello, *The Algemeiner*

The Dutch Parliament passed a resolution on January 28 to make funding for Palestinian NGOs depend on their recognition of Israel's right to exist.

The Dutch House of Representatives passed a resolution by a margin of 70-67 requiring greater transparency from NGOs, including detailed information about board members and funded projects, while ensuring that subsidized organizations align with the Netherlands' foreign policy, including recognition of the state of Israel.

The motion also addresses terror ties, citing the Netherlands' decision to halt subsidies to the Ramallah-based Union of Agricultural Work Committee (UAWC) following a terror attack by employees with ties to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), an internationally designated terrorist organization.

Last year, Dutch lawmakers discovered that the previous government had continued funding a terror-linked NGO, despite knowing they had subsidized the salaries of two Palestinians convicted in the 2019 murder of a 17-year-old Israeli girl.

These two Palestinians were members

of the PFLP, while also being employed by the UAWC, which has received over 20 million euros in funding from the Dutch government over the past decade.

In 2020, the government suspended funding to the UAWC pending an investigation into the 2019 bombing.

This week's resolution also came two months after a violent attack in Amsterdam against visiting Israeli soccer fans by a mob of rioters, many of them Muslim.

Olga Deutsch, vice president of NGO Monitor, an independent Jerusalem-based research organization, explained that the lack of vetting and oversight mechanisms has allowed billions of euros to be diverted to antisemitic, anti-Israel, and terror-affiliated organizations.

"The need to change these practices became even more salient following the Hamas massacre of Oct. 7, 2023," she told the Algemeiner.

Deutsch pointed out that the Dutch government supported numerous organizations that misused aid

continued on next page

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EDITORIAL

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Danny Labin

JCN STATEMENT

The Jewish Community News seeks to provide news and feature material of special interest to its readership, and to create a heightened sense of Jewish identity through the dissemination of information about people, events and issues at home and abroad. The JCN seeks to serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas and opinions in the Jewish community.

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Sabra Hadassah of the Desert Hosts JPAC Exec Bocarsly in Program Open to Community

Event Held at the Jewish Federation Offices April 8

By Eileen Packer, Hadassah Advocacy Chair

Sabra Hadassah of the Desert invites you to join in learning about the work of JPAC, **Jewish Public Affairs Committee of California**, the organization that is the voice of California's Jewish community at our State Capitol. JPAC's Executive Director, David Bocarsly, will be speaking at the Jewish Federation Offices on Tuesday, April 8th at 11:00 am. Doors will open at 10:30 am and light refreshments will be served.

Building relationships with public officials at all levels of government is essential to advancing the strengthening of US-Israel relationships and, specifically for Hadassah, promoting its core values which include advancing women's and public health and combating antisemitism.

JPAC is the umbrella organization, comprised of California's leading Jewish

community organizations, that advocates each May in Sacramento on behalf of the Jewish community's concerns and broadly shared values. These member organizations, including Hadassah, collectively serve hundreds of thousands of Californians of all backgrounds and represent the interests of California's 1.2 million Jews, making them the largest single-state coalition of Jewish organizations in the nation.

These important issues include



David Bocarsly, Executive Director of JPAC, Jewish Public Affairs Committee of California

the safety and security of the Jewish community and religious institutions, supporting Holocaust Survivors, sustaining services and programs to assist our most vulnerable Jewish populations (survivors of domestic violence human trafficking and others), maintaining a strong California-Israel relationship, and combating antisemitism & hate.

On February 24, 2025, David Bocarsly shared with Hadassah's Regional Board that JPAC had **"just introduced AB 1468, a landmark bill to ensure that ethnic studies is taught appropriately in our schools – free from factually inaccurate and antisemitic content.** This effort is being led by Assemblymembers **Rick Chavez Zbur**, (representing a newly drawn district which includes Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Westwood Village, and Santa

Monica) and **Dawn Addis** (California's Central Coast) and Senator **Josh Becker** (representing San Mateo), backed by a powerful coalition of **31 diverse lawmakers** (more than one-quarter of the entire legislature) standing in support as co-authors."

Bocarsly continued, "Last year, we paused an ethnic studies bill so that we could engage key stakeholders and craft a comprehensive approach – one that ensures ethnic studies is done right for Jewish students and all communities. Now, we're back with a stronger, more holistic solution. We won't sugarcoat it: **this will be a fight.** Those pushing to inject harmful content into our classrooms are loud. **We need to be louder. The fight starts today.**"



StandWithUs International Conference in LA Draws 650, Biggest Attendance Yet

By Izzy Salant, Jewish News Syndicate

When StandWithUs founder and CEO Roz Rothstein founded the pro-Israel nonprofit more than two decades ago, she never could have imagined the organization it is today.

"A reporter asked me: Did you know 23, 24 years ago this is what it would become?" she said. "No, we just knew something had to be done."

Rothstein spoke as she addressed 650 college and high school students, faculty and staff from around the world who gathered at the Hilton Los Angeles Airport for the StandWithUs International Conference from Feb. 27 to March 2. Attendees represented the United States, Canada, Israel, the United Kingdom, Australia and even the Congo.

Rothstein told JNS that this year's conference was the largest it has ever

been, filling the venue. The event featured the largest attendance in StandWithUs conference history and cost an estimated \$1 million to hold, Rothstein said, adding that "it's worth it."

Being together "is nourishing for them in this moment," she told JNS. "They're facing so much hostility. They need to be in this room. They need to be at this conference."

Attending locally was Rabbi Steven Rosenberg, who is one of seven rabbis throughout the United States serving on the Board of Directors of 'RabbisUnited', the rabbinical arm of StandWithUs.

For over a decade, StandWithUs has consistently received the highest possible ratings from Charity Navigator and GuideStar and is ranked among the top 3% of charities in the country.



Participants of the StandWithUs International Conference in Los Angeles from February 27 to March 2, 2025

continued from previous page

funds, with a large portion being directed toward political warfare against Israel and the global Jewish community.

This "endangers the safety of global Jewish communities ... as it radicalizes discourse, spreads fear, and promotes narratives that translate into attacks against Jews," she added.

Last year, NGO Monitor presented a report to the Dutch Parliament warning that foreign aid to Palestinian organizations was being misused for terrorism and

radicalism.

NGO Monitor revealed that from 2021 to 2027, Dutch government grantees included NGOs involved in anti-Israel campaigns.

These included Al Mezan, which engages in legal action against Israel and has ties to PFLP and Hamas; the Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR), which collaborates with terror groups such as Hamas, PFLP, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ); and Oxfam-Novib, which, along with other organizations, sued the Netherlands

in 2023 to stop arms exports to Israel.

Deutsch emphasized that the latest resolution is crucial as global discussions unfold about Gaza's future post-ceasefire, urging the international community to rethink and restructure aid distribution.

"The donor community must ensure that aid is not diverted to Hamas and other terror organizations, as was the case before Oct. 7," she said.

During this legislative session, the Dutch Parliament also adopted a motion urging the government to support Gaza

reconstruction plans and fundraising efforts.

However, lawmakers rejected several proposals related to Israel and the Palestinians, including one to tighten labeling and tariff enforcement on Israeli settlements. They also denied motions to link Dutch aid for Gaza's reconstruction to Dutch companies and restrict it to civilian infrastructure, as well as to provide January funding to UNRWA, the controversial UN agency for Palestinian refugees that has come under fire for several links to Hamas.

Israel Begins Leadership of International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

By David Swindle, *The Algemeiner*

On March 3, 2025, Israel assumed the presidency of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), an intergovernmental organization comprising dozens of countries dedicated to combating antisemitism and promoting Holocaust research and education.

Dani Dayan — chairman of Yad Vashem, Israel's national memorial to the Holocaust in Jerusalem — will represent the Jewish state as chair of IHRA.

"We are at a crossroads of generations, and the responsibility of preserving the memory and sharing the stories of the Holocaust will soon rest solely on our shoulders. The voices of victims and survivors demand that we honor their legacy by standing firm against Holocaust denial, distortion, and hatred," Dayan said in a statement. "In a world

witnessing a dramatic rise in antisemitism and grappling with the challenges and opportunities of emerging technologies, our obligation to historical truth has never been more critical."

Israel's presidency of IHRA began on March 3 and will run through February 2026.

"The antisemitism that resulted in the Holocaust has not been eradicated from the world. On the contrary, over the past year and a half, we have witnessed it intensifying dramatically, targeting both the Jewish people and the Jewish state," Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar added in his own statement, referring



Dani Dayan, Yad Vashem Chairman to Chair IHRA



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio welcomes Israel as IHRA Chair

to the historic surge in antisemitic incidents around the world since Hamas's Oct. 7, 2023, invasion of southern Israel.

"The new antisemites attack Israel's right to exist and its right to defend itself," Sa'ar continued. "It is our duty not only to remember the Holocaust but also to ensure the existence of the Jewish state, which serves as the guarantee of Jewish continuity for generations to come, while also preserving and passing on the memory of the Holocaust to future generations."

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio welcomed Israel as the new president of IHRA.

"Today the United States warmly welcomes the start of Israel's year-long presidency of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), which is committed to supporting accurate Holocaust commemoration, education, and research," Rubio said in a press statement. "We also congratulate the United Kingdom on its completion of a highly successful presidency."

Rubio added, "The United States will partner with Israel during its IHRA presidency to defend the memory and historical fact of the Holocaust and fight the toxic spread of Holocaust denial and distortion and all other forms of antisemitism."

The top American diplomat warned of an aggressive US response to the ongoing rise in antisemitism.

"Holocaust distortion, a shocking form of antisemitism, has proliferated and the poison of antisemitism continues to spread," Rubio said. "We see it in violent attacks on Jews, defacement of Holocaust memorials, and dangerous rhetoric in universities and international

organizations. President Trump and I have made the United States' position unmistakably clear: the United States will confront antisemitism with determination and resolve."

Israel will be taking over IHRA's presidency from the United Kingdom, which headed the organization for the past year with Lord Eric Pickles serving as chair.

"The aim was to bring out the best in the IHRA, engender confidence in difficult times, and, above all, strengthen the organization," Pickles said at a handover ceremony in Jerusalem. "Those of us who attended the poignant 80th anniversary ceremony at Auschwitz-Birkenau in January know that we will never see the like again."

Pickles added that "10 years from now, at the 90th anniversary, it is unlikely there will be Holocaust survivors to speak. We are now the custodians of their memory. We must remember and tell the truth."

Recent Legislative Efforts Regarding the IHRA Antisemitism Definition

IHRA adopted a "working definition" of antisemitism in 2016. Since then, the definition has been widely accepted by Jewish groups and lawmakers across the political spectrum, and it is now used by hundreds of governing institutions, including the US State Department, European Union, and United Nations. Dozens of US states have also formally adopted it through law or executive action.

In recent months, several additional measures have been taken to expand the definition's usage.

Last month, for example, Australia's 39 universities announced that the IHRA working definition of antisemitism would be used in assessing antisemitism on campus. The country has seen a string of antisemitic crimes which authorities suspect foreign actors of masterminding.

On Feb. 20, US Sens. Katie Britt (R-AL), Tim Scott (R-SC), and Jacky Rosen (D-NV) introduced the Antisemitism Awareness Act to implement the definition in the US Department of Education.

"We cannot allow antisemitism to fester in our schools, on our college campuses,

continued on page 7

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Let all who are hungry for a beautiful Passover experience come join us for an evening of friendship & community.

Azerbaijan, Israel Discuss Regional Developments as Bilateral Ties Grow Stronger

By Ailin Vilches Arguello, *The Algemeiner*

A senior Azerbaijani official met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem in late February to discuss bilateral ties and regional developments, underscoring Azerbaijan's growing role as a strategic player in the evolving Middle East.

The high-level meeting between Hikmet Hajiyev, assistant to the President of Azerbaijan, and Netanyahu took place amid strengthening ties between the Jewish state and the predominantly Shi'ite Muslim country.

"Mr. Hajiyev conveyed the greetings of President Ilham Aliyev to Prime Minister Netanyahu," the Azerbaijani Embassy in Tel Aviv said in a statement, adding that both sides discussed expanding bilateral cooperation and addressed key developments in the region.

Azerbaijan's ties with Israel have long been significant, with the country serving as the Jewish state's most vital ally in the Caucasus and Central Asia for more than three decades, fostering a partnership that spans energy security, defense, and intelligence.

As of 2019, Azerbaijan supplied over



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev.

a third of the Jewish state's oil. Meanwhile, Baku has acquired advanced Israeli defense systems, including the "Barak MX" missile system and surveillance satellites, and remains a leading buyer of Israeli military hardware, which was crucial in its 2020 war with Armenia.

In early February Israel and Azerbaijan's state oil company, SOCAR, struck a major energy deal, marking one of the latest examples of Azerbaijan's growing influence in the Middle East.

Azerbaijan's strategic importance stems not only from its economic

influence in the region, but also from its role at the crossroads of a growing pro-Western bloc countering the regional ambitions of Iran, with which Azerbaijan shares a long border.

The Abraham Accords reshaped regional alliances during US President Donald Trump's first term, and his current administration could further this shift, with Azerbaijan – a country that shares hundreds of miles of border with Iran while maintaining strong ties with Israel and Turkey – playing a key role in balancing regional power blocs

and advancing Trump's goals for the Middle East.

According to Ze'ev Khanin, a professor of Eurasian geopolitics at Bar-Ilan University and a senior research fellow at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, Azerbaijan is a key part of strategic alliances that he calls "unclosed triangles," with Baku comprising the missing link.

"We are living in the world of so-called unclosed triangles, which is unlike what we had in the 19th century and 20th centuries – when the enemy of my enemy is my friend and the friend of my friend is also my friend," he recently told *The Algemeiner*.

One prominent example is the unclosed triangle of Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Israel. Despite strained ties between Turkey and Israel, Azerbaijan continues to use Turkey as a transit point for energy exports to Israel.

"The Turks didn't stop the stream of Azerbaijani energy through Turkey to Israel," Khanin said, adding that Ankara was eager to position itself as a transit hub for energy exports to Europe.

continued from page 6

or anywhere in our society. This legislation would give the Department of Education the tools to hold students and institutions accountable," Britt said at the time. "Any American educational institution authorizing, facilitating, or otherwise supporting pro-terrorism activities should lose every cent of federal funding and subsidization."

On Feb. 26, the Missouri House of Representatives Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee heard the case for a bill to use the IHRA definition at the state's schools.

Two weeks earlier, the Kansas House Committee on Education received a presentation on a bill to codify the definition for the state's schools.

On Feb. 3, the Nebraska Legislature Education Committee conducted a hearing for a bill also seeking to implement the IHRA definition in schools.

In late January, state representatives and community members met at the New Jersey statehouse to speak out in

support of a bill for the state to adopt the IHRA definition. The legislation's primary sponsor, Assemblyman Gary Schaer, said that "today we have an opportunity to do something truly profound — pass bipartisan legislation that will protect a religious minority."

To resolve two lawsuits, Harvard agreed to implement the IHRA definition and to release an annual report for the next five years documenting responses to violations of Title VI of the US Civil Rights Act of 1964.

In January, Oklahoma State Rep. John Waldron, a Democrat elected in Tulsa, put forward legislation to use the IHRA definition in the state's guide for employees assessing bigotry.

On Jan. 26, the student government of Rutgers University voted down a measure to embrace the definition.

Days earlier, Ireland announced its embrace of the IHRA definition, despite the Irish government's harsh criticism of Israel and amid a surge of antisemitism in the country.

In December 2024, a group of 24

Israeli colleges announced plans to use the IHRA definition.

TEMPLE ISIAH Jewish Community Center of Palm Springs **PASSOVER SEDER**



Join us for our Community Seder
Saturday, April 12, 2025 - 5:30 PM

Hilton Palm Springs
400 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs

Led by Rabbi Dr. Ken Emert
Cantorial Soloist Ezra Yaron
and Pianist Joel Baker

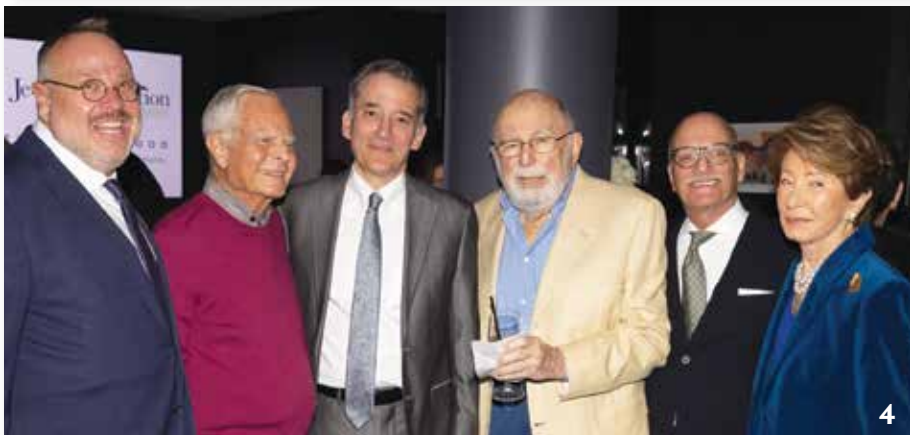
Festive Buffet Dinner
Adults: \$95 • Children under 10: \$45

Register online at templeisaiahps.com
or call Temple Isaiah at 760-325-2281
Deadline: Noon on Friday, April 4th

Unfortunately neither last minute reservations nor walk-ins can be accommodated.

Major Gifts Annual Celebration

February 26, 2025 - Keynote Speaker: Rabbi David Wolpe



1 Federation President Arnie Gillman*, New Chief Executive Officer Danny Labin, Board member Margie Kulp, Keynote Speaker Rabbi David Wolpe, and Co-event Chairs Carol Fragen & Bill Chunowitz*

2 Bob & Susie Diamond, Lori & Brad Fritz

3 David & Sarah Tsikman

4 Danny Labin, Jim Borax, Rabbi David Wolpe, Phil Glass, Arnie Gillman* & Roberta Holland

5 Lori Fritz with Frank Goldstein & Paul Clowers

6 Dr. Paul & Stephanie Ross

7 Carl & Joann Bianco

8 Ellen & Phil Glass

9 Susan & Arnie Gillman*, Danny Labin & Yehuda Gidron

10 Cathy & Larry Pitts*

11 Carol Fragen with Cathy & Larry Pitts*

12 Arnie Gillman*, Fed'n VP/Treasurer Ron Langus, Rabbi David Wolpe & Danny Labin

13 Heather & Bryan Kocen

14 Jackie* and Ed Cohen



15



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40

15 Karen Kales Lee, Ken & Barbara Lieberman
16 Katie & Scott Small
17 Margie Kulp & Carol Horwich Luber
18 Lisa & Phyllis Schahet
19 Rabbi David Wolpe, Barbara Federman & Jim Levitas
20 Ken Schoenfeld & Cydney Osterman
21 Marla Tanenbaum & Annette Lerner
22 Marnie Miller & Joe Noren

23 Milton & Nina Zale
24 Lori Fritz with Alan Gitlin
25 Pamla Abramson & Bill Hurwitz
26 Joanne & Bill Chunowitz*
27 Joel & Michalena Appell
28 Tammy & Carl Birnberg
29 Joanne & Myron Mintz
30 Ed & Jackie* Cohen, Alan Gitlin, Dr. Robert Jacobs, Stephanie & Dr. Paul Ross

31 Toni Victor & Barry Kaiman
32 Michael E. Foss & Bernard Reiter
33 Sherwyn Turbow & Marilyn Miller
34 Wendy Brooks & Harvey Marshak
35 Dennis & Nancy Ditlove
36 Gail Siegel
37 Fran Kaufman
38 Barbara Platt*
39 Jim Greenbaum*
40 Lyn Chernis

* Federation Presidents



StandWithUs Brings First Nations Speakers to Our Community

By Marcia Stein and Paula Klein



Dr. Ijlahlq Suugliina and Dr. Qaumaniq Suuqiina with hosts Marcia and Rick Stein



Suuqiinas with Melanie Garver



Standing: Paula Klein and Marcia Stein; seated: Rabbis David Novak and Andrew Bentley, and Pastors Chris Hushaw and Nate Conant



Rabbis Andrew Bentley and Steven Rosenberg

“We are here to deliver a message to the people of Israel. Stand firm and unite against threats and pressure.” These words and much more were messages from the first Nations People who were recently speakers at the home of Rick and Marcia Stein. Dr. Ijlahlq Suugliina of the Alaskan Inupiat and his wife, Dr. Qaumaniq Suuqiina of the Cherokee Nation, dressed royalty in full First Nations regalia and each of them spoke so eloquently as they told the stories of their lives and how they became so supportive of Israel and the world Jewish community.

They have spent the last three decades standing with Israel and teaching their people to stand with Israel and teaching their people to

stand with Israel as they recognize the many similarities in our perspective on life, noting that we are both indigenous people of our lands who have had to fight for any acknowledgement of our right, even to live. Especially since October 7th, they are more determined than ever to reach and support the Jewish people. Their message of love, help and support warmed the hearts of everyone who heard them speak, including a number of clergy, both Jewish and Christian.

The are available to speak at other Jewish or Christian venues as a gift to our communities. If interested in having them speak at your home or your organization, they can be reached as 208-790-2377.



Jewish Federation
OF THE DESERT

Income Statement

Fiscal Year Ending 06/30/24

Where our Dollars Come From

Annual Campaign	\$1,792,122
Tamarisk contributions (Federation Day)	\$109,490
Israel Emergency Fund “Sword of Iron”	\$406,110
Gain on Investments	\$119,553
General Contributions & other	\$54,214

Total Support & Revenues **\$2,481,489**

Where our Dollars Go

Local Allocations - Caring for the Vulnerable	\$303,894
Local Allocations - Community Inclusion & Engagement	\$212,400
Local Allocations - Jewish Education & Identity	\$187,500
Overseas Allocations - Israel & World Jewry	\$307,500
General and administrative	\$244,237
Fundraising Cost	\$245,593
Programs Cost	\$736,779

Total Allocations & Expenses **\$2,237,903**

Net Surplus (Due to Assets reclassification) \$243,586

Balance Sheet

Assets

Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$412,036
Pledges receivable, net	\$217,725
Investments	\$5,898,993
Other Assets	\$200,000
Federation Building & Property Net	\$1,388,315

Total Assets **\$8,117,069**

Liabilities & Net Assets

Allocations Payable	\$1,544,087
Deferred revenue	\$75,000

Total Liabilities **\$1,619,087**

Undesignated	\$2,854,836
Board Designated	\$1,294,569
With Donor Restrictions	\$2,348,577

Total Net Assets **\$6,497,982**

Total Liabilities & Net Assets **\$8,117,069**



From the
Jewish Federation

JEWISH FEDERATION OF THE DESERT ALLOCATIONS

Year End 6/30/24 For Distribution 2023/2024

Angel View - Jewish Resident Homes (Tamarisk)	\$10,000
Bikur Cholim - Mitzvah Mission & Programs	\$140,000
Jewish Family Service - Café Europa - Ner Tamid	\$25,000
Jewish Family Service - Mental Health Outpatient Treatment	\$35,000
Jewish Family Service - Senior Care Case Management	\$35,000
Jewish Family Service - Let's Do Lunch	\$5,000
Mizell Senior Center - Meals on Wheels	\$15,000
Temple Sinai - Mitzvah Food Delivery Project	\$7,500
The Joslyn Center - Meals on Wheels	\$7,500
The Joslyn Center - Let's Do Lunch	\$4,500
Jewish Federation of the Desert -Tzedakah & Burial Fund (Tamarisk)	\$5,000
Safehouse	\$7,500

Caring for the Vulnerable 26% \$297,000

Aleph Schoolhouse	\$10,000
Congregation Beth Shalom - Scholar in Residence Program	\$7,500
Congregation Har El	\$5,000
Inland and Desert Hillel Council - Ongoing Programs	\$85,000
Jewish Federation of the Desert - Jewish Community Outreach	\$20,000
Jewish Federation of the Desert - PJ Library	\$8,000
Jewish Federation of the Desert - Jewish Community Programs	\$20,000
Jewish Summer Camp Scholarships (Tamarisk)	\$5,000
Temple Isaiah - Palm Springs - Jewish Film Festival	\$22,000
Temple Isaiah - Palm Springs - Twice Blessed - LGBTQ Outreach	\$4,000
Temple Sinai - Palm Desert - Hebrew School Scholarships	\$10,000
Temple Sinai - Desert Keshet	\$2,000
Tolerance Education Center	\$11,000
Sun City Jewish Concert	\$3,500

Jewish Education & Engagement 19% \$213,000

ADL	\$20,000
Boys & Girls Club of Palm Springs - Culture Club	\$5,500
Inland and Desert Hillel - Israel Advocacy	\$6,000
Inland and Desert Hillel -Antisemitism & Antizionism, Interfaith	\$2,000
Inland and Desert Hillel -Training and Speakers	\$10,000
Jewish Federation of the Desert - Jewish Community Newspaper (JCN)	\$75,000
Jewish Federation of the Desert - Yom Hashoah	\$6,000
Jewish Federations of North America - National Dues	\$70,000
The Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) - Youth Futures, Eliat	\$30,000
Or Hamidbar - Interfaith Programming	\$2,500

Community Inclusion, Security & Addressing Antisemitism 20% \$227,000

Israel Guide Dog Center for the Blind - Guide Dog Training	\$7,500
Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) - Former Soviet Union (FSU) Camps	12,500
Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) - Ofek Mechinot	20,000
Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) - Nativ	12,000
Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) - Reuniting Ethiopian Families	\$16,000
Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) - Terror Victim Fund	\$25,000
Joint Distribution Committee (JDC)	\$150,000
Leket	\$5,000
Ramat HaNegev - Center for Children with Special Needs (CCSN) & Other	\$135,000
United Hatzalah	\$5,000
Zaka	\$15,000
DROR Israel Educational Centers - Support for High	\$5,000
Krembo Wings - Support for Branch in Yerucham	\$6,000

Israel, Overseas & World Jewry 36% \$414,000

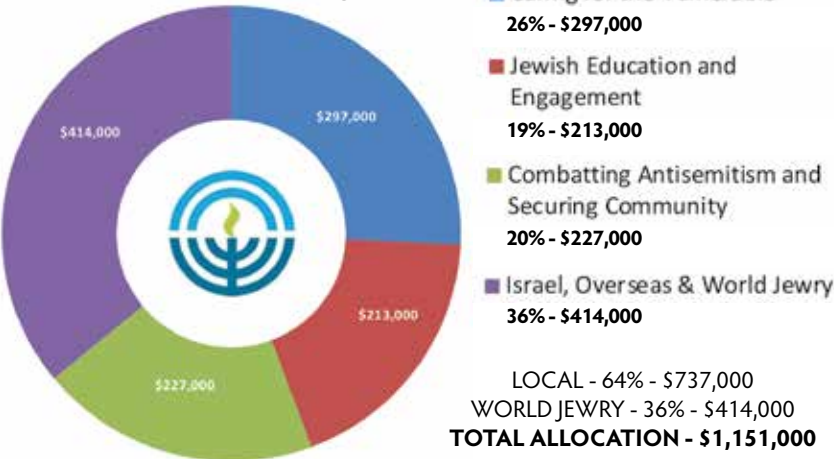
Total Allocations \$1,151,000

The Tzedakah Fund

The Tzedakah Fund was established by Helene Berman Seidenfeld in 2006 and since then the Jewish Federation has helped over 370 local families and individuals through our Tzedakah Fund Program, with an average of \$2,500 per recipient. We are grateful for all you have done, and continue to do, to support the Tzedakah Fund. Unfortunately, we receive more aid requests every year, due mainly to the increase in the cost of living and longer lifespan. Your support is more critical now than ever to continue helping the less fortunate members of our community.



Amount Percentage



Descendants Retrace Holocaust Survivors’ Treacherous, Covert Journey to Pre-State Israel

Children of Jews who secretly traveled to the Jewish homeland with the ‘Bricha’ movement, some of whom were born along the way, revisit the long route and uncover buried histories

By Bernard Dichek, The Times of Israel

Late one day in September, a group of 20 elderly Israelis, some in their 80s with walking canes, struggled down a hill toward the river that separates Poland from the Czech Republic.

The travelers were the children of Holocaust survivors who had been clandestinely led by Zionist emissaries between 1945 and 1948 across the sealed borders of Europe toward the emerging State of Israel.

This sporadic yet large-scale movement that came to be known as the Bricha, or Escape, brought more than 100,000 Jews to the Jewish homeland. Stealthily they made their way from Poland across Czechoslovakia, on to Austria, Germany and Italy, until they reached ships on the Mediterranean that tried to overcome the British blockade.

“You can’t take more than 10 kilos [22 lbs.] with you and get rid of anything that shows that you are not Greeks. You may be proud of the medals you earned in the Soviet Army but you have to decide — aliyah or medalya,” said the elderly Israelis’ leader, Moshe Feldman, using the Hebrew words for immigration to Israel and medals.

Feldman was repeating the instructions given to their parents, some of whom had served in the Soviet Army. Those instructions often included the rhyming Bricha slogan, aliyah or medalya — immigrate to Israel or keep your medals.

The parents of the group members, Feldman pointed out, were told by Bricha leaders that if border guards stopped them, they were to pretend they were Greeks on their way back to Greece.

In addition to the groups’ solidarity, something else characterized the Bricha ethos. Feldman described that quality as he stood with the Bricha descendants on the riverbank at the Polish-Czech border where a bridge had once collapsed. “It’s winter and they are traveling at night hoping to cross the border without being caught. Some have coats, others don’t. Suddenly they discover that the bridge has collapsed. The river current is torrential, and the water is freezing cold. Now what do they do?” Feldman continued, as the group reached



Members of the Bricha descendants group pose at the Bad Reichenhall army base, which was turned into a Jewish DP camp called Camp Tikwah.

the riverbank and stood under a modern concrete bridge. He described that quality as he stood with the Bricha descendants on the riverbank at the Polish-Czech border where a bridge had once collapsed.

“They were unstoppable determined. They had to cross that river that night or they would be caught. So they found a way to cut down trees. In a single night they built a new bridge,” he said.



Moshe Feldman leads a group down a hill to the river separating Poland from the Czech Republic. On the riverbank he tells them the dramatic story of how the Bricha managed to get survivors across the border.

The second-generation Holocaust survivors pondered the situation. The journey in the footsteps of their parents had given them many occasions for reflection. Their parents seldom talked about the years between the end of World War II in 1945 and the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. Those years were overshadowed by the events of the Holocaust. A common regret expressed by group members is not knowing more about their parents’ experiences. Many had nodded when Feldman reminisced about his own survivor father’s reticence.

““You weren’t there. You won’t understand. No point asking,’ was what he would say, in a staccato way,” recalled Feldman.

In the course of the 12-day bus trip organized by the Bricha Legacy Association, the group reenacted the journey their parents took over the course of months or even years. Many of these participants were born along the Bricha route and they were trying to piece together scraps of stories their parents told them along with their own childhood memories.

‘I have a mother!’

One of those memories was sparked for Abraham Meir when the group visited the Polish town of Wroclaw. At the site of a former Jewish orphanage for children who could not find their parents after the war, Meir suddenly remembered an incident that occurred at the Ben Shemen boarding school he attended in Israel during the 1950s. “One of my classmates suddenly came

running to us and yelled, ‘I found my mother! I have a mother!’” said Meir.

Separated during the war, it sometimes took the survivors years to find family members. Participant Haim Shalev recalled a similar anecdote at the site of one of the former displaced persons camps in Germany.

“My parents were separated when the war broke out, as my father was in the Soviet Union with the Red Army. He was wounded in 1941 and spent the rest of the war recuperating in Moscow without being able to contact his family,” said Shalev.

“When he returned to his hometown in Volyn [today Volynia in Ukraine], there was no sign of anyone. He headed for Germany, where he went from camp to camp searching for his wife. Finally, in 1946 he reached the Goldkopf DP camp. There he found his wife and her two sisters, both of whom had recently married. His own wife was about to do the same,” said Shalev, pointing out that his mother had not heard from her husband for six years. The happy ending to his parents’ reunion, he adds, was his birth at Goldkopf in 1947.

Revenge? Or immigration?

Fittingly, the trip’s leader, Feldman, a former high school history teacher, is the son of one of the early Bricha organizers. “When my father returned to Lublin [in Poland] after spending the war in Tashkent [in the former Soviet Union], there was no trace of his parents or brother,” Feldman told the group. When the then-22-year-old Rafael Feldman met with other survivors, Moshe Feldman said, not everyone thought that emigration to the Jewish homeland should be the first priority.

“There were those who wanted revenge against the Germans to come first,” Feldman said, referring to a plan by several dozen Holocaust survivors to poison the German water supply. “But in the end the plan was dismissed and they focused on getting the Jews to emigrate.”

Rafael Feldman sold his family’s home in Lublin and used the proceeds to pay for a building that became one of the initial Bricha headquarters. Together with emissaries from the kibbutzim, the Zionist youth movements, and the Jewish Agency, along with members of the Jewish Brigade (Jewish soldiers who had fought in the British Army) they focused on moving as many Jews as possible to pre-state Israel.



At the former Camp Tikwah site, Haim Shalev recalls the epic story of how his parents were reunited at a DP camp, September 2024.



Rafael Feldman (third person from right bottom, wearing white shirt and dark jacket, behind man with hat), father of tour leader Moshe Feldman, leading a group across the Krimmel mountain pass at the Austria-Italy border in the spring of 1946.

One factor in their favor was that the Polish government relocated many of the survivors to a single region, Lower Silesia, which had been part of Germany until 1945 and from where about 600,000 Germans were expelled.

“The new Polish government was eager to re-settle Lower Silesia with Poles, including Polish Jews,” explained historian Kamil Kijek, who teaches in the Jewish Studies Department at the University of Wroclaw.

Kijek pointed out that the government assisted Polish Jews in moving to Lower Silesia, including many of the approximately 250,000 Polish Jews who were repatriated from the Soviet Union where they had spent the war years, as well as large numbers of the estimated 50,000 Polish Jews who survived the death camps or hid within Poland itself. In Lower Silesia, they were given homes abandoned by the Germans. They also were provided with ample job opportunities because factories were largely unharmed during the war.

The clustering may have made it easier for the Bricha leaders to contact the survivors, but at the same time, Kijek pointed out, the relatively good conditions may also have discouraged them from leaving.

“None of them knows then what is going to happen next. They don’t know what the new Poland will be like for the Jews or if they will be allowed to reach the Yishuv [pre-state Israel],” he explained, noting that many of the survivors began to put down new roots in Poland, founding Jewish schools, Yiddish theaters and synagogues.

“That all changes in July 1946 when an eight-year-old Polish boy goes missing. He later tells his parents that Jews kidnapped him in order to make matzah from his blood,” said Kijek. “The story spreads and a pogrom ensues. Forty-two Jews are massacred. That and other pogroms which resulted in the murder of more than 1,500 Jews in Poland after the war convinced many survivors that they had to leave Poland.”

The Bricha then expanded its efforts and in subsequent months more than 90,000 Jews left Poland. Some managed to reach pre-state Israel without being stopped, but most spent considerable time in the DP camps set up by the US Army in American-Occupied Germany and Austria.

A visit to ‘Camp Hope’

During their odyssey, the Israeli group visited several places where German and Austrian individuals have impressively enshrined locations where the Jewish survivors sojourned. Among the landmarks: The Bad Reichenhall German Army base near Munich, where a large sign hanging from the main gate says “TIKWAH,” Hebrew for “hope” and the root word of the title of Israel’s national anthem, “Hatikvah.”



The Bad Reichenhall army base was turned into a Jewish DP camp called Camp Tikwah.

That sign was commissioned by Lt. Col. Thomas Nockelmann as a reminder that the base was called Camp Tikwah (Camp Hope) while serving as a Jewish DP camp. At the St. Ottilien Monastery, Father Cyril Shafer has lined the main walkway with photos depicting the monastery when it housed a hospital and camp for Jewish DPs.

In Austria, dramaturgy professor Christoph Lepschy has created a presentation about Camp Herzl, a DP camp that was situated on the campus of present-day Mozarteum University in Salzburg; and at the Austria-Italy border, hiking enthusiast Ernst Loeschner initiated the Alpine Peace Crossing, an annual hike commemorating the trail the Jewish survivors took across the Alps.

The Bricha was not able to bring all the Jews who wanted to leave out of Poland before the Iron Curtain came firmly down and Communist satellite countries firmly locked their borders. Among the approximately 100,000 Jews who remained in Poland in 1949 was the family of Galia Gavish.

“We didn’t manage to leave until 1952 when my family obtained a tourist visa to come to Israel,” recalled Gavish, who was eight years old at the time.

She said her decision to join the trip was triggered by flashback memories she experienced while watching “the horrific events on the news on October 7,” during

the Hamas-led massacre of 1,200 people in southern Israel, which also saw 251 kidnapped to the Gaza Strip. “I suddenly recalled the voices of Poles hurling insults at us during my childhood,” said Gavish, who vividly described an incident when Polish youths locked her inside a coal cellar while berating her with antisemitic insults. “Somehow I hoped that returning to the location where these things happened would relieve the trauma that I re-experienced after all these years.”

For Bella Dax, the journey was a chance to visit the area near the Czech border where she was born.

“My mother described in a memoir her joy in giving birth while the family was getting ready to leave with the Bricha,” said Dax. “They set out only eight days later, putting me in an old carriage that they bought along with a bowl to bathe me in.”

Shalev, who was three months old when his parents carried him across the Austria-Italy border in 1947, expressed satisfaction at being able to see with his own eyes the snow-capped Krimmel Alpine mountain pass.

“My parents said that they had to put me to sleep, with wine I think, to keep me quiet so that they wouldn’t get caught,” he recalled, adding that until making the journey he didn’t realize how his family history was connected to the Bricha story.

“1945: Not the End, Not the Beginning”

One effort to increase awareness about the Bricha movement will be underway in the spring of 2025 when an exhibit at the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews opens in Warsaw.

Titled “1945: Not the End, Not the Beginning,” the exhibit will present all aspects of Polish Jewish life in that era, said Kijek, who curated the project. Kijek hopes the exhibit will show what a complicated joint effort of all the different Jewish groups it was.



The Polin Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw

“There was no single mastermind. All the Zionist parties, the kibbutzim, the Revisionists, the Orthodox, Agudat Yisrael, the American JDC and the Jewish Brigade, they were all involved. Even Hasidic rabbis and Jewish communists shared a decisive sympathy for creating a Jewish state. There were rivalries and conflicts, but they all pulled together.”

Trump Administration Slashes \$400 Million in Funding for Columbia University

By Dion J. Pierre, *The Algemeiner*

The Trump administration has canceled \$400 million in funding to Columbia University as punishment for the school's failing to address campus antisemitism, executing an ultimatum delivered by US Education Secretary Linda McMahon the beginning of March.

As *The Algemeiner* has previously reported, Columbia University remains one of the most hostile campuses for Jews employed by or enrolled in an institution of higher education. Since Oct. 7, 2023, it has produced several indelible examples of campus antisemitism, including a student who proclaimed that Zionist Jews deserve to be murdered and are lucky he is not doing so himself, brutal gang-assaults on Jewish students, and administrative officials who, outraged at the notion that Jews organized to resist anti-Zionism, participated in a group chat in which each member took turns sharing antisemitic tropes that described Jews as privileged and grafting.

"Since Oct. 7, 2023, Jewish students have faced relentless violence, intimidation, and antisemitic harassment on their campuses — only to be ignored by those who are supposed to protect them," McMahon said in an announcement issued by the members of the Trump administration's Joint Task Force to Combat Antisemitism on Friday. "Universities must comply with all federal antidiscrimination laws if they are going to receive federal funding. For too long, Columbia has abandoned that obligation to Jewish students studying on its campus."

Leo Terrell, who leads the Department

of Justice's task force, added, "This is only the beginning. Canceling these taxpayer funds is our strongest signal yet that the federal government is not going to be party to an education institution like Columbia that does not protect Jewish students and staff."

Meanwhile, Columbia University has said, "We are reviewing the announcement from the federal agencies and pledge to work with the federal government to restore Columbia's federal funding. We take Columbia's legal obligations seriously and understand how serious this announcement is and are committed to combatting antisemitism and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our students, faculty, and staff."

US President Donald Trump has warned higher education institutions that failing to rein in anti-Zionist agitators could result in sustained injuries to their financial health.

As a candidate for president, he suggested taxing their lucrative endowment funds, some of which are valued at dollar amounts that equal or eclipse the entire gross domestic product (GDP) of dozens of small but prosperous countries across the world. For example, Harvard University — which recently settled a major antisemitism lawsuit it fought tooth and nail to discredit — is notably richer than the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Kingdom of Bahrain, and the oil-rich nation of Trinidad and Tobago.

On Tuesday, Trump threatened to suspend federal funding to any educational institution that refuses

to quell riotous demonstrations and discipline pro-Hamas agitators who foster anti-Jewish hatred.

"All federal funding will stop for any college, school, or university that allows illegal protests," Trump said in a statement posted on Truth Social, the social media platform he founded in 2022. "Agitators will be imprisoned/or permanently sent back to the country from which they came. American students will be permanently expelled or, depending on the crime, arrested."

He added, "No masks!"

Other prestigious schools have been accused of refusing to protect the civil rights of Jewish students.

In a recent "Campus Report Card" issued by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), no Ivy League institution — save Dartmouth College, whose "B" grade led the pack — earned better than a "C," a mark given to Brown University, Cornell University, Harvard University, and the University of Pennsylvania. Princeton University, Yale University, and Columbia University rated lowest, scoring "D" grades.

Harvard's receiving a "C" comes amid a period described by observers as a low point in its history. The institution, America's oldest and arguably most prestigious, recently settled a merged lawsuit in which two groups accused it of refusing to discipline an allegedly antisemitic professor and other perpetrators of anti-Jewish discrimination, hate speech, and harassment. For months, the university's legal counsel strove to dismiss the

complainant's charges, arguing that they lacked legal standing. Meanwhile, its highly reputed Law School saw its student government issue a resolution which accused Israel of genocide; its students quoted terrorists during an "Apartheid Week" event held in April; and dozens of its students and faculty participated in an illegal pro-Hamas encampment attended by members of a group that had shared an antisemitic cartoon.

Antisemitic outrages have continued into the 2024-2025 academic year. In November, Harvard's Office of the Chaplain and Religious and Spiritual Life was criticized by rising Jewish civil rights activist Shabbos Kestenbaum for omitting any mention of antisemitism from a statement precipitated by antisemitic behavior. The sharp words followed the office's response to a hateful demonstration on campus in which pro-Hamas students stood outside Harvard Hillel and called for it to be banned from campus.

Former Harvard University president Larry Summers said on March 3 that the administration's response to campus antisemitism remains unsatisfactory.

"Harvard continues its failure to effectively address antisemitism," Summers posted on the X/Twitter social media platform. "Despite [current Harvard president Alan Garber's] clear and strong personal moral commitment, he has lacked the will and/or leverage to effect the necessary large-scale change, and the Corporation has been ineffectual."

Jewish National Fund-USA Hosts Stand with Israel Luncheon in Palm Springs

On Tuesday, February 18, 2025, Jewish National Fund-USA hosted its annual Stand with Israel Luncheon at the Omni Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa to thank local partners (donors), as well as the organization's Legacy Society members who support the land and people of Israel through their long-term financial or estate plans.

The event's featured speaker was Colonel Richard Kemp, a decorated military leader with 30 years of experience fighting terrorism in some of the world's most dangerous conflict

zones and who is considered to be one of the most respected voices in global security. Kemp defends Israel at the U.N., in the media, to national parliaments and political leaders, and on university campuses to counter the deluge of lies and misinformation spread about Israel via news headlines and social media posts.

"This is not just Israel's war, it is also a war against the West and its democratic values," said Kemp. "Anyone who is in a position to do so has a duty to stand up and expose the lies."

Kemp's keynote speech focused on the Israel-Hamas war and how Israel is fighting a war on seven fronts, as well as the eighth front, the political warfare campaign against Israel; the deeply over-exaggerated casualty numbers provided by the Hamas-run Gaza Ministry of Health; how Hamas uses civilians as human shields; and how the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) has taken extraordinary measures to provide Gazans with humanitarian aid.

"No country ever (that I know of) in a war has taken such steps to deliver

humanitarian aid to its enemy population at the same time it's fighting a war in the same place. This is unheard of," added Kemp.

Attendees also heard from Jewish National Fund-USA's Director of Planned Giving, West Coast, Cynthia Hizami, Esq, who highlighted Jewish National Fund-USA's Build Together plan for Israel's South and its Reimagine plan for Israel's north, and how the organization is consistently meeting the changing needs of Israelis living

continued on next page

continued from previous page

on (and currently evacuated from) the Gaza and Lebanon borders. She also demonstrated the organization's Circle of Impact, whereby every project, initiative, and program supports job creation, community resilience, and economic development—key drivers of population growth in these frontier regions.

"Since that horrific day, October 7, and the weeks and months that followed, Jewish National Fund-USA raised over \$200 million for the land and people of Israel," said Hizami. "We helped evacuate over 70,000 people from Israel's north and south. We have set up firefighting and civil defense mechanisms, supported the Hostages and Missing Families Forum, created a special program for lone soldiers and their families, and helped with trauma therapy, medical issues, and safety issues. We built bomb shelters and provided necessities including housing, clothing, food, and so much more. While approximately 80% of the evacuees from the south have returned to their homes thanks to round-the-clock work that we



Colonel Richard Kemp with Rita and Bob Philip



Colonel Richard Kemp with David and Judy Braun

are doing in the Israel Envelope, we are also supporting tens of thousands of evacuees, mostly from the north, whose homes are still in or close to military



Colonel Richard Kemp with Zina Sherman



Barbara Platt, Leslie Pepper and Phyllis Einsenberg

zones near Lebanon and Syria."

Hizami also shared the many ways supporters of Israel can achieve their philanthropic goals while taking

advantage of existing U.S. tax laws, including charitable gift annuities, where individuals can receive a fixed income as high as 10.1%. She also discussed savvy ways people are utilizing Donor Advised Funds and IRAs, as well as traditional bequests.

To learn more about the many meaningful ways you can leave a legacy for Israel, call a Planned Giving specialist at 800.562.7526 or email plannedgiving@jnf.org.

Jewish National Fund-USA builds a strong, vibrant future for the land and people of Israel through bold initiatives and Zionist education. As a leading philanthropic movement, the organization supports critical environmental and nation-building activities in Israel's north and south as it develops new communities in the Negev and Galilee, connects the next generation to Israel, and creates infrastructure and programs that support ecology, people with disabilities, and heritage site preservation, all while running a fully accredited study abroad experience through its Alexander Muss High School in Israel. Learn more at jnf.org.



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- **William and Carol Kaplan**, Thank you for sharing the Oscars with us, from Dolly and Julian Levy.
- **Joe Kirshenbaum**, Happy, happy birthday, from Marnie Miller and Joe Noren.
- **Danny Labin**, To honor all you do in our community and around the world, from Geri Shaevel.
- **Jim Levitas**, In celebration of your birthday, from Barry Kaiman and Toni Victor.
- **Annette Lerner**, Happy birthday. Thank you for a lovely evening, from Jackie and Eddie Cohen.
- **Deenie Meyerson**, Thank you for a beautiful luncheon, from Mary Levine.
- **Deenie Meyerson**, Thank you for the wonderful friendship luncheon. It was my pleasure to be your guest, from Loreen Jacobson.

- **Celia Norian**, Wishing good health and many pleasures in your new residence, from Barbara Platt.
- **Celia Norian**, Mazel tov on your new home. Remember to have some fun along the way. Wishing you good health, from Geri Shaevel.
- **Leslie Pepper**, To honor all you do in our community and around the world, from Geri Shaevel.
- **Iris Smotrich**, In honor of your birthday, from Sandra Borns.
- **Mr. and Mrs. Richard Sukman**, Thank you for a wonderful evening, from Buddy and Libby Hoffman.
- **Dick Sukman**, Happy birthday. Enjoy your great celebration, from Loreen Jacobson.
- **Joan Weiss**, A donation to the L.A. Wildfire Fund was given in honor of your birthday by Bonnie Carmell and Judy Wallis.
- **Jean Willins**, Happy birthday and many more, from Margot and Jerry Halperin.

Refuah Shleimah Get Well:

- **Arthur Silverman**, Thinking of you and wishing

you a speedy recovery, from Ruth and Mal Kaufman.

- **Debra Star**, Here's to a speedy and forever recovery, from Wendy Hahn and Kent Whinnery.

Memorial Tributes Condolences Sent To:

- **Dick Braverman and Family**, In memory of your beloved wife, Phyllis, from Al and Fefe Passer.
- **Peggy Douglas and Family**, Deepest condolences. In memory of a dear friend, Roger Douglas, from Sherry Schor.
- **Karen Hudis and Family**, In memory of your mother, Joan Franzel, from Ellen and Mel Gold.
- **Adina Lawson**, In memory of Stephan Meyers, from Barry Kaiman and Toni Victor.
- **Schroyer Family**, In memory of your beloved mother Barbara, from Marnie Miller and Joe Noren.
- **Judith Siegel**, In memory of Robert Siegel, a good friend, from Sandy and David Silberstein.
- **Fran Vaisben**, In memory of Donald Shaevel, from Geri Shaevel.



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Shabbat Schedule - April 2025

BEIT HAVERIM, Palm Springs

Rabbi Steven Rosenberg (rabbisteven.rosenberg@gmail.com). Where friends old and new gather for Shabbat services and dinners (7:00 pm) at members' homes, creating community, joyful spirituality and insightful learning. Friday, April 4: Online service. Friday, April 11: Shabbat Service-and-potluck dinner. April 18 & 25: Shabbat Service and Oneg. Torah Study Shabbat mornings at 10:30 am: April 5 on-line; In person April 19 and 26. For information and to RSVP, please email beithaverim@gmail.com or call 760-766-3212. The Community Seder, conducted by Rabbi Steven Rosenberg and Hazan Dr. Sarah Sela, will be held the first Seder, Saturday, April 12 at J's in Palm Desert. For information and reservations. See ad page 6.

BETH SHALOM, Palm Desert

(Member, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism)
Rabbi Dr. JB Sacks (rabbi@congregationbethshalom.net); Ken Hailpern, Madrikh Ruhani (ken@congregationbethshalom.net)
42600 Cook Street, Second Floor, Palm Desert, CA 92211. 760-200-3636.
Shabbat Morning Services: 9:45 am, followed by light Kiddush lunch. Visitors welcome with valid identification. For information, email info@congregationbethshalom.net or call 760-200-3636. www.CongregationBethShalom.net
Pesach Services: Sunday, April 13: First day of Passover 9:45 am; Saturday, April 19: Seventh day of Passover, including Yizkor Memorial Service 9:45 am.

CHABAD OF PALM SPRINGS & DESERT COMMUNITIES

Rabbi Yonason Denebeim & Rabbi Arik Denebeim 250 East Palm Canyon Drive, Palm Springs, CA 92264 www.chabadpalmsprings.com 760-325-0774.
Shacharit services Monday-Friday at 7:30 am; Sundays at 8:00 am and Shabbat at 10:00 am. Evening services 10 minutes before sunset. Check website or call to confirm times.

CHABAD OF PALM DESERT

Rabbi Mendy Friedman. Located in south Palm Desert. Call for information and location: 760-969-2158; www.chabadpd.com. Shabbat morning services 10:00 am. Monthly Shabbat dinners.

CHABAD OF RANCHO MIRAGE:

Rabbi Shimon Posner & Rabbi Benny Lew.
www.chabadrm.com. Weekly Shabbat Services start at 10 am, followed by a sit-down lunch/kiddush. Check online for weekday and Friday schedule of services Text 760-770-7785 or e-mail: info@chabadrm.com to be added to our mailing list. All programs and events are updated on our website.
Ckids Hebrew School 10:00 AM - 12:30 PM on designated Sundays throughout the school year. Check our schedule online Info: chabadrm.com/ckids or Chaya Posner: chaya@chabadrm.com or 760-272-1923.

CHABAD OF SUN CITY PALM DESERT

Rabbi Yonason Denebeim.
Call 760-848-8250 or e-mail: info@chabadsuncity.com for information. Monthly Social Happy Hour. Holiday dinners and celebrations. Zoom Torah classes. Contact Rebbetzin Sussie Denebeim to receive weekly "Chabad in Sun City Newsletter" with listing of all services and activities: sussiedenebeim@gmail.com.

CHABAD OF LA QUINTA

Rabbi Moshe Katz
50620 Eisenhower Drive, Ste. G103, La Quinta, CA 92253. 760-709-2431. Email: chabadlaquinta@gmail.com.
Chabad LQ offers weekly Torah studies, home visitations, Kosher meals, Shabbat Services, Women's Circle, Youth activities, Holiday programs and more.

CONGREGATION HAR-EL, a Contemporary Reform Congregation (Member, Union for Reform Judaism), offering year-round services, Torah study, youth and adult classes and events. Membership open for residents and non-residents.

Rabbi Richard Zions, Ph.D.; Cantor Joseph Gole, D.Mus. harelurjpd@gmail.com 760-779-1691.
Website: harelurjpd.org.
Shabbat Eve ZOOM Services are conducted weekly at 5 PM. Rabbi Richard Zions shares a D'var Torah on a timely topic based on our timeless tradition. Cantor Joseph Gole provides inspiring melodies and insights from our Shabbat Eve liturgy. Attendees are encouraged to click on the Zoom presentation early for a conversation with clergy and congregants. Har-El welcomes visitors from out of state as well as those in California and the Coachella Valley. Rabbi Zions holds Torah Study on Zoom every Saturday morning at 11 AM. For a Zoom link, contact harelurjpd@gmail.com. Community Seder held first night of Pesach. Email harelurjpd@gmail.com for information.

DESERT OUTREACH SYNAGOGUE, Rancho Mirage

Rabbi Dr. Jules King; Rabbi Rachel Axelrad, Rabbi Chazzan Maseng and Sarah Lonsert, Cantorial Soloist. 760-449-0111. Mailing address: P.O. Box 982, Rancho Mirage, CA 92270.
Shabbat services held at 7:00 pm on the second Fridays at Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert in Rancho Mirage. On second Saturdays: 10:30-11:30 am Torah study on Zoom with Rabbi Axelrad. Check the calendar for updates.
Adult Education: Adult B'nai Mitzvah, Hebrew—Beginning and advanced, Introduction to Judaism, Adult Confirmation, Adult Learning. Contacts: rabbi@my-dos.org; www.my-dos.org

OR HAMIDBAR

Rabbi David Lazar rabbi@orhamidbar.org
In-person services each first Friday of the month and 3rd Shabbat morning. Online services all other Friday evenings and Shabbat mornings of the month. Kabbalat Shabbat Service - Fridays 6:30 pm; Shabbat prayer and study - Saturdays 10:30 am.
For more information of in-person services, upcoming classes and Zoom links, visit orhamidbar.org.



SUN CITY JEWISH SERVICES, Palm Desert

Rabbi Dr. Kenneth Emert and Cantorial Soloist Ezra Yaron. In person services in Speaker's Hall in the Sunset View Clubhouse (second clubhouse) in Sun City Palm Desert the first and third Fridays at 7:15 pm. Information: Nadine Brinhendler, 707- 332-3947.

TEMPLE HAR SHALOM, Idyllwild

www.templeharshalomidyllwild.org
Email: templeharshalomofidyllwild@gmail.com. Shabbat Candle Lighting on Fridays at 6:00 pm on Zoom. First Friday with Rabbi Malka Drucker; 2nd Friday with Rabbi Ilana Grinblat; 3rd Friday with Kerry Abram; 4th Friday with Rabbi Ilana Grinblat. Shabbat Book Study with Rabbi Malka Drucker on Zoom Saturdays 4:00-5:00 pm. Check our website for current info including Torah Study with Rabbi Ilana one Saturday morning per month. For more information and for Zoom link call 951-468-0004.

TEMPLE ISAIAH, Palm Springs

332 West Alejo Road, Palm Springs, CA 92262, 760-325-2281. Email: temple@templeisaiahps.com; Website: templeisaiahps.com.
Shabbat services Friday evenings in the Liberman Chapel at 6:30 pm followed by Oneg. Torah services are on Shabbat mornings at 10:30 followed by our kiddush. We will be having Shacharit/ Torah Service at least once a month on various Shabbat mornings, starting at 10:30 am. Check website to confirm services and programming. Services also streamed online. To access any activity, go to Temple Isaiah's website and click on link to desired service or program.
APRIL: Interim Associate Rabbis: Rabbi Dr. Kenneth Emert, Rabbi Jerry Cutler and Arava Talve. Cantorial Soloist: Ezra

Yaron. Check website for schedule. Community Seder led by Rabbi Ken Emert held the first night of Passover, April 12. See ad page 7.

TEMPLE SINAI, Palm Desert (Member, Union for Reform Judaism)
Rabbi David Novak rabbi@templesinai.org
73-251 Hovley Lane West, Palm Desert, CA 92260. www.templesinaipd.org 760-568-9699. Go to templesinaipd.org for access information. Shabbat services are

in-person and online on Livestream at www.templesinaipd.org. Friday evening services 5:30 pm, preceded by pre-service Oneg at 5:00 pm. Saturday morning Torah study 8:45 am; Shabbat morning services 10 am.

Temple Sinai's Avi Levine Religious School 9:30 - 12:00 AM on designated Sundays throughout the school year. Contact Talia Lizemer-Hawley, Community Educator, for more information, educator@

templesinaipd.org
Community Observance of Yom HaShoah will be held at Temple Sinai on Thursday, April 4

BIKUR CHOLIM

A project of Chabad of Palm Springs & Desert Communities (Community Outreach) www.BikurCholimPS.com Rabbi Yankel Kreiman - 760-325-8076, and Rabbi Mendy Kreiman - 760-567-6726.

Email (preferred)
Miriam Bent at
mhbentjcn@earthlink.net
or call
760-835-1022
to have your events
included in the
community calendar.



Community Calendar of Programs - April 2025

Sundays:

11:00-11:30 am Chabad of Palm Springs/Sun City **Tanya Teachings.** For men and women.

Tuesdays:

5:00-7:00 pm – Chabad of Rancho Mirage weekly BBQ. Check website for details. Note: **The BBQ will not be held during Pesach**, but Israeli Soldiers will be at the April 29 BBQ. Come for good food and exciting conversation.

7:00 pm – Chabad of Palm Springs/Sun City: Tanya, a class for women, with **Sussie Denebeim**. Call 760-848-8250

for more information.

7:00 pm A Women's Class on Zoom with Sussie Denebeim "Living With the Times." Call 760-848-8250 for more information.

Wednesdays:

11:00 am Or Hamidbar. **Rabbi David Lazar** class: The Book of Proverbs on Zoom. For Zoom link visit orhamidbar.org.

7:00 pm Chabad of Rancho Mirage Tanya Class led by **Rabbi Shimon Posner**. For men and women. Hosted each week in Rancho Mirage and also available on Zoom.

Wednesday, April 2

3:00 pm Har-El Books & Bordeaux Series: **Professor Steve Moyer, J.D.**, will lead discussion on Yonah Jeremy Bob and Ilan Evayatar's book **"Target Tehran,"** how Israel uses sabotage, assassination and cyberwar as well as diplomacy to oppose and undermine Iran's development of nuclear weapons. No charge but RSVP to mtziontsdpd@aol.com required. Location given when you RSVP.

Tuesday, April 8

10:30 am Sabra Hadassah of the Desert meeting at the Jewish Federation Building in Rancho Mirage. Program

open to community. **David Bocarsly**, Executive Director of **Jewish Public Affairs Committee of California**. Doors open 10:30 am for socializing and light refreshments. Program begins at 11 am. Cost: \$10. To RSVP call 818-687-9446. See article page 5.

Thursday, April 24

2:00-4:00 pm **Community Observance of Yom HaShoah**, Honoring our Local Holocaust Survivors. Held at Temple Sinai in Palm Desert. Keynote speaker: **Mitchell Raff**, Author of "Little Boy, I Know Your Name." See information on pages 1 and 2.

Left-Wing US Lawmakers Present New Bill to Implement Arms Embargo on Israel

By Corey Walker, The Algemeiner

A coalition of 13 progressive US lawmakers has submitted a joint resolution to halt current and future arms sales to Israel, citing what they described as excessive casualties incurred during the war in Gaza.

House Joint Resolution 68 (HJ Res.

68), sponsored by Rep. Pramila Jayapal (D-WA), was introduced to the House of Representatives on March 3. The legislation represents the latest attempt by lawmakers critical of Israel's war effort against the Palestinian terrorist group Hamas in Gaza to prevent the Jewish state from receiving American arms.

Several of the other lawmakers, all Democrats, who signed onto the bill — Reps. Ilhan Omar (D-MN), Rashida Tlaib (D-MI), Gregorio Casar (D-TX), Hank Johnson (D-GA), Summer Lee (D-PA), Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY), Marc Pocan (D-WI), Ayanna Pressley (D-MA), Delia Ramirez (D-IL), Nydia Velazquez (D-NY), and Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ) — possess an extensive history of lambasting Israel, falsely accusing the Jewish state of enacting a "genocide" in Gaza against Palestinians and maintaining "apartheid" in the West Bank.

The legislation calls for the US

government to ban the sale of high explosive projectiles and artillery shells to Israel. In addition, the bill would bar the US from providing Israel with technical and logistics support services.

In the 17 months following the Hamas-led Oct. 7, 2023, invasion of and massacre across southern Israel, Democratic lawmakers in Washington, DC have grown increasingly critical of the Jewish state. Democrats in Congress have oftentimes lambasted Israel for alleged indiscriminate bombing within Gaza, arguing such military tactics have resulted in excessive civilian deaths.

In December, 17 Democratic senators voted to implement a partial arms embargo against Israel. One of the bills, SJ Res. 111, was spearheaded by prominent Israel critic Sen. Bernie Sanders (D-VT), and would have banned the sale of tank cartridges to Israel. The Senate ultimately rejected the measure by a margin of

79-18. In addition, Sanders presented two other anti-Israel resolutions SJ Res. 113 and SJ Res. 115, which targeted sales of mortar rounds and precision-guided bombs. The Senate declined to advance these bills by a similar margin.

Israel says it has gone to unprecedented lengths to try and avoid civilian casualties in Hamas-ruled Gaza, noting its efforts to evacuate areas before it targets them and to warn residents of impending military operations with leaflets, text messages, and other forms of communication. However, Hamas has in many cases prevented people from leaving, according to the Israeli military.

Another challenge for Israel is Hamas's widely recognized military strategy of embedding its terrorists within Gaza's civilian population and commandeering civilian facilities like hospitals, schools, and mosques to run operations, direct attacks, and store weapons.

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Global Antisemitism Rose by 340% Study Shows

Among the key findings of the report was a massive increase in the number of antisemitic incidents across North America between 2022 and 2024, rising by 288% and peaking in April 2024.

By World Israel News

There was a 340% increase in the total number of antisemitic incidents reported worldwide in 2024 compared to 2022, and nearly a 100% increase compared to 2023, the World Zionist Organization and The Jewish Agency for Israel revealed in their annual report on the state of global antisemitism presented to Israeli President Isaac Herzog.

Following a year marked by extreme antisemitic incidents, the organizations presented the report in a special event held at the President's Residence in Jerusalem.

The report was submitted by the Chairman of the World Zionist Organization, Yaakov Hagoel, and the Chairman of The Jewish Agency, Maj. Gen. (Res.) Doron Almog, along with Dr. Raheli Baratz, Head of the Department for Combating Antisemitism and Community Resilience at the World Zionist Organization, and Yigal Palmor, Director of International Relations at The Jewish Agency.

The report highlights the primary trends in global antisemitism and compares the situation between 2022 and 2024.

The choice of 2022 as the methodological reference year was due to its status as a year without exceptional events affecting the level of global antisemitism, unlike 2023, which was significantly impacted by the events of October 7 and their aftermath.

The year 2024 emerged as a peak year for antisemitic incidents in most of the surveyed countries.

Among the key findings of the report were a massive increase in the number of antisemitic incidents across North America between 2022 and 2024, rising by 288% and peaking in April 2024.

The incidents included severe acts of violence, such as the murder of Dr. Ben Harouni in San Jose, California; attacks on synagogues; and violence in educational institutions.

The American political arena was also affected, with attacks on Jewish candidates from both parties and harassment at polling stations.

In Canada, the situation is even more severe, with a 562% increase in antisemitic incidents, a quarter of which were violent.

Significant increases in the number of reported antisemitic incidents were also found in Europe, with a 450% increase in Britain and a 350% increase in France.



'Death to Israel' graffitied on a wall at Stanford University.

A comprehensive public opinion survey showed that 64% of French people believe that Jews have reason to fear for their lives in the country.

Other countries in the Anglosphere beyond Britain, the U.S. and Canada also faced dramatic surges in antisemitism, with Australia recording a 387% increase in the number of incidents from 2022 to 2024, while South Africa recorded a 185% increase, with clear antisemitic expressions accompanied by calls for boycotts of Israel and anti-Israel propaganda.

The report noted that there may be underreporting in South Africa due to a lack of registration and reporting of incidents, and the actual number of antisemitic incidents is likely higher.

The former Soviet Union witnessed "a significant escalation in anti-Jewish and anti-Israel rhetoric," the report claimed, with a string of violent antisemitic attacks in Dagestan in June 2024.

In Lithuania, an openly antisemitic party won third place in the parliament and even received ministerial portfolios.

Iran continues to spread extreme antisemitic propaganda and deny Israel's right to exist, while Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the United Arab Emirates are taking a more pragmatic approach at the government level, "although public opinion does not necessarily align with the moderation displayed by their leaders."

The study warned of the spread of "new" antisemitism in Asia, with a "tsunami"

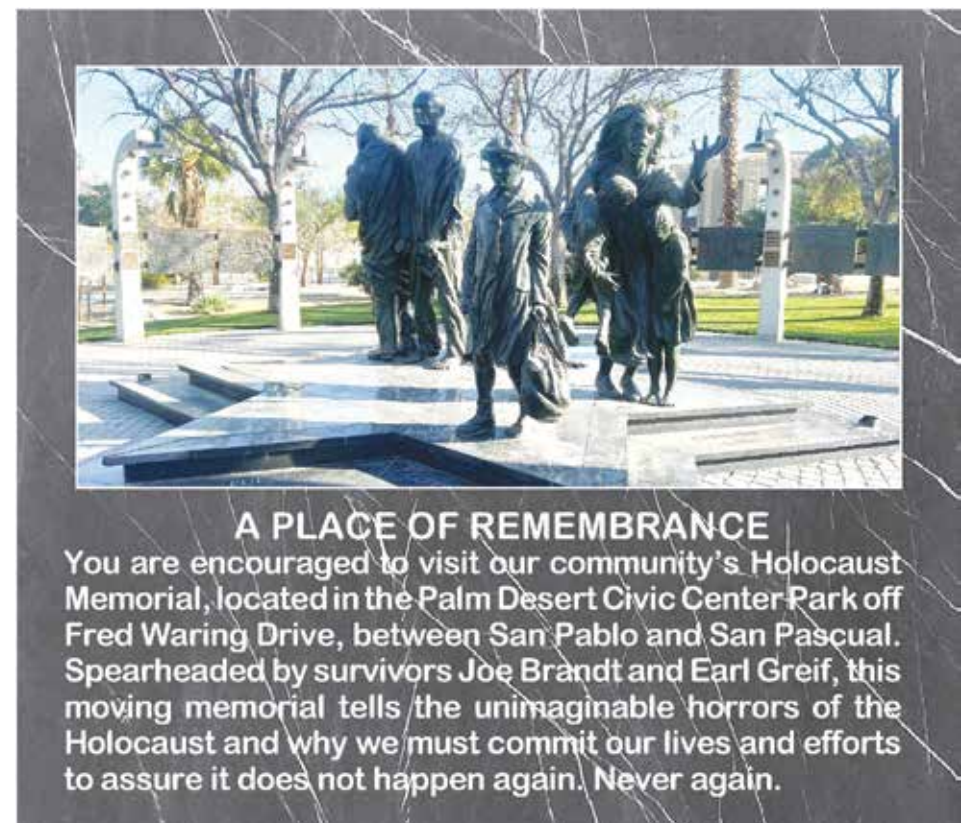
of antisemitic content, Holocaust denial, and conspiracy theories on Chinese social media, the Israeli embassy in Beijing said.

"The report indicates a serious increase in antisemitism worldwide," President Isaac Herzog said.

"Social networks have become central platforms for spreading hatred and antisemitism under the guise of freedom of expression. Calls to boycott Israel, especially when combined with ancient

and ugly hatred against the Jewish people, are rapidly degenerating into violent outbursts to the point of harming Jewish property, body, and soul."

"I emphasize again: the hatred of antisemitism never ends with Jews alone and is a threat to democracy and the entire free world. All governments of the world must act together to combat the phenomenon and educate for dialogue, tolerance, and mutual respect."



Two Australian Nurses Charged for Threatening to Kill Israeli Patients

By Ailin Vilches Arguello, *The Algemeiner*, **FOLLOW-UP FROM ARTICLE RUN IN THE MARCH JCN**

The two Australian nurses working at a hospital in Sydney has been charged with making threats after saying in comments caught on video that they would refuse to treat Israeli patients and instead kill them.

The latest legal step comes amid law enforcement's scramble to combat a wave of antisemitic incidents in recent months that Australia's spy chief has called his agency's top priority.

Initially the 26-year-old nurse, Sarah Abu Lebdeh, was arrested and charged with federal offenses, including threatening violence against a group and using a carriage service to threaten, menace, and harass, New South Wales (NSW) Police said in a statement. If convicted, she faces up to 22 years in prison.

The arrest follows an incident at Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital in Sydney, in which Abu Lebdeh and her fellow nurse, Ahmed Rashid Nadir, were seen in an online video posing as doctors and making inflammatory statements. The footage, which circulated widely, showed Lebdeh stating she would refuse to treat an Israeli patient and instead kill them, while Nadir used a throat-slitting gesture and claimed

to have already killed many.

Speaking to the Israeli reporter who recorded her, Lebdeh was filmed saying, "It's Palestine's country, not your country, you piece of s—t."

"One day your time will come, and you will die the most disgusting death," she added in a sentence riddled with obscenities.

After reviewing patient records, the hospital found no evidence that Lebdeh or Nadir had harmed patients. NSW's Health Minister Ryan Park confirmed that both nurses had been suspended and would be permanently barred from employment within the state's health system.

Several days later, on March 4th, Nadir was arrested and charged with using a communication system to threaten, menace or harass, and with possessing a prohibited drug.

Both Lebdeh and Nadir were released on bail and set to appear in court on March 19.

The incident is the latest in a surge of antisemitic acts across Australia since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza in October 2023, with Jewish institutions targeted in arson attacks and businesses defaced.

Law enforcement in Sydney and Melbourne, home to the majority of Australia's Jewish population, is actively investigating hate crimes, including the recent discovery of a trailer containing explosives and a list of potential Jewish targets.

In February Australia's foremost Muslim groups defended the nurses from what it called the "hypocrisy" of their critics. A prominent opposition politician called for defunding the Muslims groups that had defended the pair. In a Senate committee hearing Mike Burgess, the director-general of the Australian Security Intelligence Organization (ASIO), the country's domestic intelligence agency, said that antisemitism is now the agency's top priority, warning that semitic attacks across Australia could escalate, as extremists are increasingly self-radicalizing and "choose their own adventure" toward potential terrorist activity.

"Threats transitioned from harassment and intimidation to specific targeting of Jewish communities, places of worship, and prominent figures," he said. "I am concerned these attacks have not yet plateaued."

After Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, invasion of and massacre across southern Israel,

several Jewish sites in Australia have been relentlessly targeted with vandalism and even arson.

A recent report from the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ) found that antisemitism in Australia quadrupled to record levels following the outbreak of the Gaza war, with Australian Jews experiencing more than 2,000 antisemitic incidents between October 2023 and September 2024.

Burgess also described how narratives originally centered on "freeing Palestine" have expanded to include incitements to "kill the Jews."

During the Senate hearing, Burgess praised the "strong law enforcement responses," stating that the police "have done exceptionally well." However, he also addressed criticism over delays in arrests and responses to antisemitic incidents, saying investigations take time and are necessary to fully grasp the problem.

Jewish community leaders in Australia have attributed the sharp rise in antisemitic incidents triggered by Israel's 15-month war with Hamas in Gaza to inaction or hostility on the part of Australia's Labor-led government.

Mass Protests Outside BBC Headquarters Over Gaza "Documentary"

By Shiryn Ghermezian, *The Algemeiner*

Demonstrators gathered outside the London headquarters of the BBC on Thursday for a second week in a row to protest the corporation after it admitted to making "serious flaws" in its documentary about Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip.

The protest outside Broadcasting House was organized by Campaign Against Antisemitism (CAA) and took place following the BBC's acknowledgment that licensing fee payments for "Gaza: How to Survive a Warzone" were given to the family of a senior Hamas official. Protesters held placards that said, "BBC I Refuse to Fund Terrorists," and also signs that featured a masked face of a Hamas terrorist with a green ban across his forehead that said "BBC" in the center.

A spokesperson for CAA said the BBC "has allowed license fee money to go to the family of a Hamas terrorist in the production of what was essentially a Hamas propaganda film." The spokesperson also cited recent polling published by CAA, revealing that a majority of Brits support the call for an independent investigation into the BBC's actions.

"The BBC is trying to pretend that it is

business as usual while hoping to get away with an internal report, but the British public is having none of it and does not want the BBC to mark its own homework," the spokesperson added. "That is why we want the license fee to be suspended pending an independent investigation into this scandal and the wider issue of the BBC's glaring bias. It is unconscionable to force people to pay a license fee that pays for biased reporting and has now even been handed to the family of a terrorist."

British broadcaster and comedian Josh Howie – who is a presenter on GB News and "Headliners," the GB News late night show – spoke at last week's protest outside BBC headquarters and announced that he will no longer pay the BBC license fee. He gave a speech at the protest this week as well, and others who spoke on stage included Jewish actress Dame Maureen Lipman; Natalie Sanandaji, who survived the Nova music festival massacre on Oct. 7, 2023; and Mark Birbeck, founder of Our Fight UK, which is a group of mostly non-Jews who combat antisemitic sentiments in Britain.

Mere days after it debuted in late February,

the BBC pulled "Gaza: How to Survive a Warzone" from its iPlayer streaming platform after it was revealed that the film's narrator, Palestinian teenager Abdullah Al-Yazouri, is the son of Dr. Ayman Al-Yazouri, the deputy minister of agriculture in the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip. It was also discovered that the family is related to Hamas founder Ibrahim Al-Yazouri.

The BBC explained that it was not aware of Abdullah's ties to Hamas prior to filming the documentary. The corporation apologized and insisted that it asked Hoyo Films, the London-based independent production company that produced the documentary for the BBC, "a number of times" about "any potential connections [Abdullah] and his family might have with Hamas."

"Since transmission, they [Hoyo Films] have acknowledged that they knew that the boy's father was a deputy agriculture minister in the Hamas government; they have also acknowledged that they never told the BBC this fact," the BBC said. "It was then the BBC's own failing that we did not uncover that fact and the documentary was aired."

Hoyo Films told BBC it paid Abdullah's

family "a limited sum of money" for him narrating the film and deposited the money into his sister's bank account. The Telegraph revealed this week that the family of the senior Hamas official was paid close to £790 (\$856), which is equivalent to about a month's salary in Gaza. An organization of pro-Israel lawyers in the UK has demanded that counter-terrorism police investigate the BBC and two producers from Hoyo Films for possible terrorism offenses, such as funding terrorism in violation of the UK's Terrorism Act 2000.

On Tuesday, BBC Director-General Tim Davie and BBC Chair Dr Samir Shah spoke at a Culture, Media, and Sport Committee hearing in the UK Parliament about the scandal involving the documentary. "We will get to the bottom of this and take appropriate actions," Shah said. "There's a dagger to the heart of the BBC's claim to be impartial and to be trustworthy. We need to restore trust in the BBC." He also said that the "mechanics of the filmmaking itself" need to be investigated and that the BBC's investigation into the matter will confirm whether or not money paid for the documentary was ultimately given to Hamas.

UCLA Suspends SJP Members for Vandalizing Home of Jewish UC Regent

By Dion J. Pierre, The Algemeiner

The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) suspended both Students for Justice in Palestine and Graduate Students for Justice in Palestine following their vandalizing the home of a Jewish member of the Board of Regents, the governing body for the University of California system.

According to *The Daily Bruin*, in early

February roughly 50 of the groups' members amassed on the property of UC Regent Jay Sures and threatened that he must "divest now or pay." As part of the demonstration, the students imprinted their hands, which had been submerged in red paint to symbolize the spilling of blood, all over Sures' garage door and cordoned the area with

caution tape.

The behavior crossed the line, UCLA Chancellor Julio Frenk said in an email, portions of which were quoted by *The Bruin* and can be found online, sent to the entire student body.

"Rigorous, healthy dialogue is central to everything we do to advance knowledge," he explained. "What there

should never be room for is violence. No one should ever fear for their safety. Without the basic feeling of safety, humans cannot learn, teach, work, and live — much less thrive and flourish. This is true no matter what group you are a member of — or which identities you hold. There is no place for violence in our Bruin community."

Santa Ana, CA School District Pauses Ethnic Studies Curriculum to Settle Lawsuit

By Dion J. Pierre, The Algemeiner

The Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD) in California is pausing the implementation of an ethnic studies curriculum to settle a lawsuit brought by a cohort of Jewish civil rights groups which accused the educational program of containing antisemitic content.

As previously reported by *The Algemeiner*, the suit alleged that SAUSD gave students and parents virtually no notice of its ethnic studies plans and that secrecy was its intention, citing internal emails obtained through a Public Records Act request in which SAUSD officials discussed how to "address the Jewish question" and plans to avoid dialogue with the Jewish community by consulting outside groups for advice on the best path forward. Court documents also described a troubling incident in which members of the Jewish community were called antisemitic slurs, accused of racism, and followed to their cars after raising their concerns about the curricula during a school board meeting in May 2023.

Plaintiffs for the case included the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), StandWithUs, and the American Jewish Committee.

The settlement announced on Thursday calls for SAUSD to "cease instruction" of several ethnic studies courses until their contents are fully disclosed to and agreed on by the public. SAUSD will also ensure that any district-issued content regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is impartial and that teachers refrain from using the classroom as a soapbox for their personal views.

"Ethnic studies should never become a vehicle for sneaking dangerous, antisemitic materials into our schools. That is the law, plain and simple, and we're glad to have stopped this in Santa Ana schools," L. Rachel Lerman, the Brandeis Center's vice

chair, said in a statement. "Unfortunately, this dangerous and deceitful behavior is being attempted in other school districts as well. This should serve as a cautionary tale. We are watching those jurisdictions and will not hesitate to address similar violations of the law. School boards must operate in the light of day, and not 'under the radar' as SAUSD described its own conduct."

Antisemitism in K-12 schools has continued to surge, according to the ADL's latest data. In 2023, antisemitic incidents in US schools increased 135 percent, a figure which included a rise in vandalism and assault. The lawsuit against SAUSD was one of many filed against K-12 education institutions across the country in 2024 to address the problem.

In February 2024, the Brandeis Center filed a complaint alleging that the Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) in California has caused severe psychological trauma to Jewish students as young as eight years old and fostered a hostile learning environment.

The problem exploded after Hamas's massacre across southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, the suit charged. Since then, BUSD teachers have allegedly used their classrooms to promote antisemitic tropes about Israel, weaponizing disciplines such as art and history to convince unsuspecting minors that Israel is a "settler-colonial" apartheid state committing a genocide of Palestinians. While this took place, high-level BUSD officials allegedly ignored complaints about discrimination and tacitly approved hateful conduct even as it spread throughout the student body.

At Berkeley High School, for example, a history teacher allegedly forced students to explain why Israel is an apartheid state and screened an anti-Zionist documentary. The teacher sharply squelched dissent,

telling a Jewish student who raised concerns about the content of her lessons that only anti-Zionist narratives matter in her classroom and that any other which argues that Israel isn't an apartheid state is "laughable." Elsewhere in the school, an art teacher, whose name is redacted from the complaint for matters of privacy, displayed anti-Israel artworks in his classroom, one of which showed a fist punching through a Star of David.

A number of K-12 institutions that faced legal complaints chose to settle the cases brought against them.

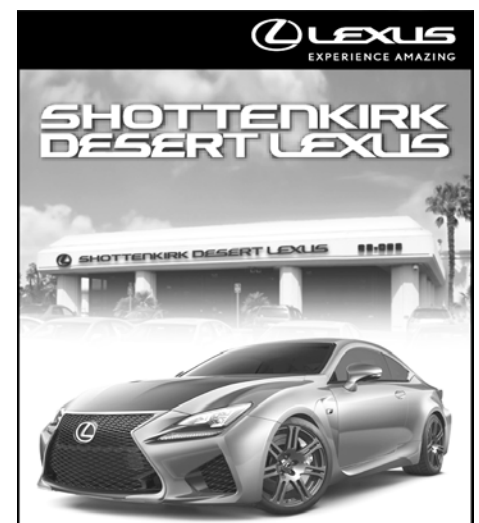
In June 2024, the Community School of Davidson, a charter school located in North Carolina, agreed to settle a complaint alleging that administrators failed to address a series of heinous antisemitic incidents in which a non-Jewish student, whose name is redacted from the public record, was called a "dirty Jew," told that "the oven is that way," and battered with other denigrating comments too vulgar for publication. The abuse, according to the complaint, filed by the Brandeis Center, began after the child wore an Israeli sports jersey.

That some month, the Clark County School District (CCSD) in Las Vegas, Nevada resolved a discrimination lawsuit which alleged that it failed to protect an autistic Jewish student from a heinous antisemitic incident in which someone scratched a swastika into his skin at school, an injury that was not discovered until he returned home.

The young man, who wears a kippah and is nonverbal, was assaulted in March 2023. In addition to being physically harmed, someone tore up a bag worn by his service dog. Because the school at which the incident took place, Ed W. Clark High School, had not installed surveillance cameras, there remains to this day little

information about when and where the incident took place.

Commenting on SAUSD's decision to respond to the concerns of Jewish parents and community leaders by enacting policies which will prevent antisemitic discrimination, StandWithUs chief executive officer Roz Rothstein added, "This lawsuit allowed us to uncover serious issues with the SAUSD's implementation of California's ethnic studies laws, leading to the critical results of ensuring that antisemitic material will no longer be included in these course and improving the district's process for adopting such future courses."



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Matzah Toppings from Around the World

When looking for interesting recipes to give you for Pesach, I found this collection of matzah toppings by Samantha Ferraro that has been in my computer since 2016 (!) ... and thought you would appreciate these creative toppings for your matzah during the post-Seder days of Pesach. Hag samayach Pesach! Wishing you wonderful seders with family and friends! MHB

BEFORE TOPPING MATZAH, PLACE MATZAH IN OVEN AT 350 DEGREES FOR ABOUT 10-12 MINUTES, TO GET IT A BIT MORE CRISPY AND DRY SO IT CAN HOLD THE TOPPINGS WELL.

ITALIAN: Spread matzah with a thin layer of marinara, ¼ cup chopped olives and 1 Tbsp capers and ¼ cup of shredded mozzarella. Bake at 350 degrees for 8-10 minutes, or until the cheese melts. Top with freshly torn basil.



FRENCH: Spread matzah with a thin layer of fig jam and top with sliced brie (about 3-4 pieces). Bake at 350 degrees for about 8-10 minutes until cheese is melted. In a separate bowl, toss together 1/2 cup of arugula and add a drizzle of olive oil, the juice of 1 lemon, and salt and pepper. Toss well and top salad onto matzah.



THAI: In a small bowl, whisk together ¼ cup coconut milk, 2 Tbsp red curry paste and ¼ cup almond butter and spread a thin layer onto matzo (you may have extra sauce). Then top with shredded carrots, sliced cabbage, green onions, cilantro, chopped roasted almonds, drizzle of sriracha and lime wedges.



MEXICAN: Huevos Rancheros Matzah: Spread a thin layer of roasted tomato salsa on the matzah and top with an over easy egg, dollop of tomatillo salsa, cilantro, sliced avocado and hot sauce.



MEDITERRANEAN: (Note: Tahini, and sesame seeds, are considered kitniyot and therefore not consumed by all Jews during the Passover holiday). Spread a thin layer of baba ghanoush and top with a hard boiled egg, sliced, sliced pickled jalapeños, chopped salad and herb tahini sauce.



HAWAIIAN: Peel and boil 1 purple sweet potato until tender. Once done, mash it well and add ¼ cup coconut milk and 1 tsp sugar and mix well. Spread mashed potato on matzah and top with chopped macadamia nuts and shredded coconut.



POTATO PIZZA FOR PASSOVER

4 medium Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled	½ cup matzo meal	2 Tbsp. crumbled goat cheese
½ tsp. salt	3 large eggs	Other toppings (peppers, olives, tomatoes, mushrooms, broccoli...)
1/4 teaspoon pepper	Olive oil	
1 tsp. Fresh chopped or jarred garlic (jarred preferable)	Tomato sauce	
	¾ cup shredded mozzarella	
	1/4 cup shredded cheddar	

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Put a few tablespoons oil in pan you are using (large heavy skillet is ideal) and place in oven so that it gets hot. Cut potatoes in chunks and put through food processor (or hand grate). Whisk eggs. Add salt, pepper and garlic. Add potatoes and combine with spatula or by hand. Add matzo meal and combine again. Once oil is heated to 400 degrees, reduce temperature to 375 degrees and spread the potato mixture in an even layer in pan, using offset spatula. Bake for 35 minutes until bottom and top are crispy, turning over midway (at about 15-20 minutes). If top isn't crispy enough, bake another 5-10 minutes. Add sauce and cheese and any toppings you want. Put back into oven for 4-5 minutes until cheese is melted and sauce/toppings are heated through. Carefully slide from pan onto serving platter and cut like you would cut a pizza.



Simchas

Mazel tov to **Rosalyn and Mark Weissmann** on the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson **Gavin Parker Weissmann**, son of **Lee and Arin Weissman**, on February 1st at Temple Judea in Tarzana, California. Celebrants included Gavin's other



Left: Gavin Parker Weissmann with his parents Lee and Arin at his Bar Mitzvah.

grandparents, **Allen and Sheri Tuchman** of Calabasas and very proud great aunt **Julie Bornstein** of Indian Wells ... **Rosalyn and Mark Weissmann** also had their own very special simcha, celebrating their 50th anniversary on March 23rd! Mazel tov Mazel tov ... Mazel tov to **Rabbi**

Shimon and Chaya Posner on the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson **Mendel Kesselman** on March 8. Blessings abound in the Kesselman family, with the birth of Mendel's youngest brother, **Levi**, in January. Share your Simchas with us. Email or call Miriam Bent (mhbentjcn@earthlink.net) or 760-835-1022.



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Sunday, April 13	2 nd Seder	after 7:54 pm
Friday, April 18	Pesach	6:36 pm
Friday, April 25	Shmini	6:42 pm



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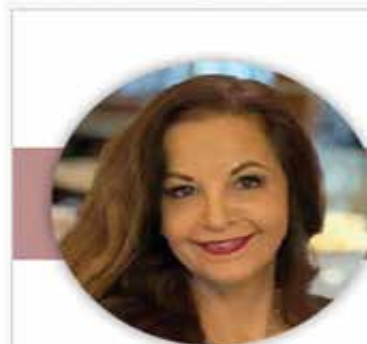
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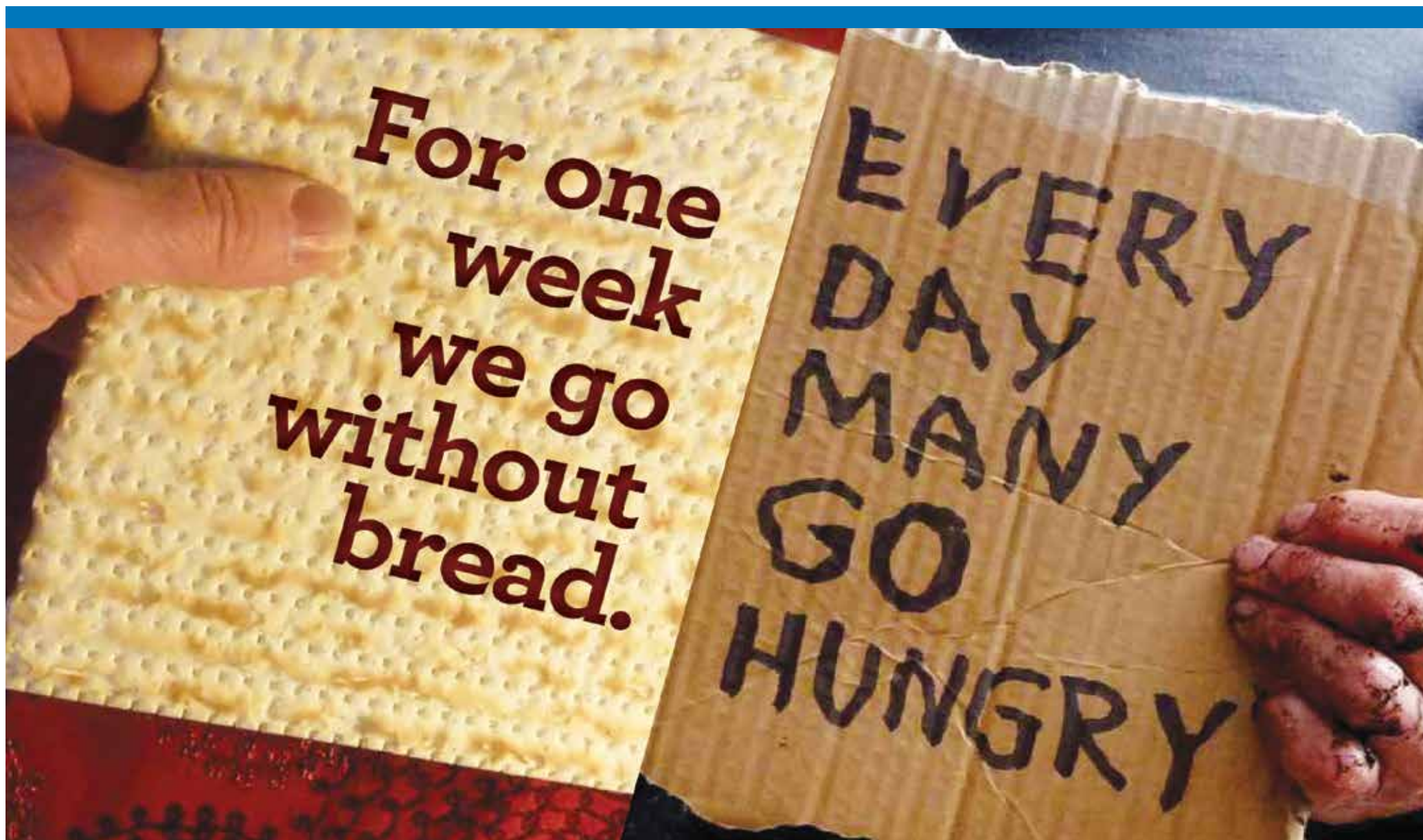
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