



Jewish Community News

The Publication of the Jewish Federation of the Desert

www.jfedps.org

Nissan-Tammuz-Av 5785 - Summer 2025

A Tikkun Olam Commitment



Danny Labin

Chief Executive Officer
Jewish Federation
of the Desert

I began my new position here as the CEO of the Jewish Federation of the Desert in April, which coincides with the allocations meetings and the critical decisions about how your donations will be distributed to organizations. The allocations process is led by the Federation Board who has met with all the organizations, has read copious written materials, and has experienced the impact that these organizations are making firsthand. As someone brand new to the Desert, I would like to bring to you my personal allocations principles, which also provide a window into the Jewish values that are of greatest significance to me and have served as the cornerstone

of my philanthropic leadership.

Kol Israel Aravim Ze L'Ze: This concept from the Talmud teaches that all Jews are inherently responsible for each other. The interconnectedness of the Jewish people and the mutual support within our community have helped to ensure the continuity of the Jewish people throughout history. This sense of shared obligation and the need for us to support other Jews is a significant tenet of Judaism that has guided the work of Federation for decades. Whether it was the Federation coming together in the 1980s and '90s to bring Soviet Jews and Ethiopian Jews to Israel, or much more recently, Federation providing humanitarian support to hundreds of thousands of Jews in Ukraine over the past few years, we know that our own survival as Jews has relied on an interconnection that lives as an integral part of our Jewish identity. The unprecedented support that the Jewish community in the US has shown for Israel since October 7th is testament to the deep bonds that unite us all as Jews and to the sense of responsibility that we

feel for the Jewish State especially during this most difficult time. In keeping with this value, Federation is committed to supporting the largest possible group of Jewish organizations in the Desert, as well as Jewish communities in Israel and in need overseas.

Tikkun Olam: I am also guided by the Jewish concept of tikkun olam, which means that we all share a responsibility to repair the world. This concept, unlike the previous one, relates more broadly and refers to the world in general. To me, this call for fixing the world gives the Jewish community an imperative to also look beyond the Jewish community. For Federation, the challenge is to see how concepts of the particular and the universal can live side-by-side, not contradicting but rather strengthening each other. As a genuine expression of tikkun olam, Federation allocations have always reflected a deep concern for the wider population here in the Desert. In other words, tikkun olam means we are not necessarily helping organizations in our own community because they are

Jewish, but because we are Jewish.

Lo Alecha Hamlacha Ligmor: The third Jewish value at the forefront of my thinking this allocations season also comes from the Talmud, and it is an important way to make sure that we know there will always be more need than we are able to address. While we don't need to feel that we can eradicate needs entirely, we are also required to do what we can to address them. Herein lies a critical balance that is reflected in the Federation's annual cycle of fund-raising and fund-allocating. We complete the cycle each year knowing that there will also be needs next year, some known today and some totally unpredictable at this moment. We know that, no matter how much we have contributed and done this year, there will be more to give and do next year.

Informed by these three distinct but complementary Jewish values, the Jewish Federation of the Desert will continue to make the greatest difference in the lives of as many people as possible, both near and far.

A Heartfelt Thank You



Arnie Gillman

Jewish Federation
Board President

This has been a challenging six months for our community, one that consumed my time and energies in ways I never anticipated when I assumed the presidency of our Jewish Federation in the summer of 2023. We were thriving as a Federation under the leadership of Alan Potash and proudly achieving our goals. And then Alan passed away on September 22, 2024, at the age of 64.

Our Federation operates with a very

small, efficient staff, without a 'deputy director' position, and everyone immediately stepped up to fill the gaps, but it quickly became apparent that the office needed additional assistance in overseeing its everyday operations, so I began coming in to help. Now, as I reflect on my time at the Federation as acting executive director, I am filled with immense gratitude for the incredible journey I've had and the many people who made this chapter of my life truly unforgettable. It's with a deep sense of appreciation that I write this message, to acknowledge the contributions of so many individuals who have played a pivotal role in making my experience at the Federation both wonderful and fulfilling. With Danny Labin as the new CEO, it's time for me to return to the role of Board President, as I'm looking

forward to continuing to serve for the next fiscal year.

To My Wife:

Your unwavering support has been my anchor throughout this journey. You've been by my side, through every high and low, offering encouragement and understanding. I simply couldn't have done it without you. Your patience, love, and belief in me have given me the strength to push through challenges and continue to strive for greater good. Thank you for being my constant source of strength, and for always believing in me, even when I doubted myself. I'm forever grateful to share this life with you.

To the Donors:

Your generosity has been nothing short of inspiring. The work we've been able

to accomplish together wouldn't have been possible without your support. Every dollar, every hour, every act of kindness has gone a long way in creating lasting impact, and for that, I am eternally grateful. Your contributions, whether large or small, have helped shape the Federation into what it is today and have touched countless lives in ways we will continue to see ripple throughout the community for years to come. Thank you for your faith in our mission and your commitment to making the Jewish world a better place.

To the Board Members:

Your leadership, vision, and unwavering commitment have been the cornerstone of everything we've achieved together. Your guidance,

continued on page 3

everyone
counts

can we count on you?

DONATE

Jewish Federation of the Desert
Annual Campaign

2025

2024-2025

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Jewish Federations
of North America

2025 LGBTQ+Pride Mission to Israel

June 8-12, 2025

Jewish Federation
OF THE DESERT

Join the Jewish Federations of North America on its 2025 LGBTQ+ Pride Mission to Israel. Join LGBTQ+ leaders from across North America as you forge lasting bonds with Israeli leaders, uplift Israel's LGBTQ+ community and strengthen the global LGBTQ+ Jewish community.

The mission will feature: Engaging with those directly impacted by October 7th, including LGBTQ+ Emergency Grant recipients; experiencing the resilience of Israel, its LGBTQ+ community firsthand and learn about the unique challenges facing the LGBTQ+ community in this new era of uncertainty.
ADD-ON OPTION: Participate in Jerusalem Pride on June 5th or Tel Aviv Pride June 13-14.

SUBSIDIZED RATES: \$750 (double occupancy per person) ~ \$1500 (single occupancy)
Airfare and airport transportation not included

ELIGIBILITY: LGBTQ+ Community Member 25 and Older.



LIMITED SPOTS AVAILABLE - SECURE YOUR PLACE TODAY! CONTACT LESLIE PEPPER, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:
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SECURITY DIRECTOR AND LAW ENFORCEMENT MISSIONS TO ISRAEL



The State of Israel Ministry of Diaspora Affairs, in partnership with the Jewish Federations of North America and the Secure Community Network, are offering week-long seminars in Israel for full-time professional Federation Security Directors and select law enforcement officials working with Federations. Participation in the Mission and all accompanying travel and related costs will be fully covered by the Ministry.
For more information about the program contact Leslie Pepper, Director of Community Engagement, at 760-324-4737 or Leslie.Pepper@jfedps.org.

"Survived to Tell" and "Be the Witness" Presentations
Coming to the Jewish Federation May 6

(Time to be determined) Jewish Federation presents a one-of-a-kind virtual presentation at the Jewish Federation Office: **Meta Quest 3 128GB, Breakthrough Mixed Reality Headset**, Powerful Performance **'Survived to Tell'** (STT) brings Israeli survivors to global audiences. These survivors share firsthand experiences of resilience, bravery, and hope, fostering a deep understanding of Israel's challenges and the personal stories behind its headlines. **'Be The Witness'** (BTW) complements STT by utilizing Virtual Reality (VR) to immerse audiences in significant events, including the October 7 events. Through BTW, participants are transported into key moments in Israel's story, offering a dynamic and empathetic view of life in Israel and fostering a sense of closeness and shared connections. Together, STT and BTW form a powerful narrative that educates, inspires, and connects participants, providing both a personal and collective view into Israel's reality.
RSVP: Leslie Pepper at 760-324-4737 or leslie.pepper@jfedps.org

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Arnie Gillman continued from page 1

support, and dedication to the mission of the Federation have made an indelible mark not only on my personal journey but on the success of the Federation itself. Thank you for always challenging me, encouraging me, and believing in our collective goals. Your counsel has been invaluable, and it has been a privilege to work alongside such a dedicated group of individuals who care deeply about the future of our community.

To the Staff:

Words cannot fully express my appreciation for the talented, hard-working, and passionate individuals who make up the Federation's team. Each of you has brought something unique to the table, and together, we've accomplished extraordinary things. From the countless hours of planning to the day-to-day work that keeps everything running smoothly, your dedication and professionalism have

been at the heart of our success. It has been an absolute honor to collaborate with you, learn from you, and watch you shine. Thank you for your tireless efforts and for creating a work environment that has been both inspiring and enriching.

To Everyone Who Made This Experience Special:

Whether you were a volunteer, a

colleague, a friend, or someone who simply shared a kind word or gesture, each of you has contributed to making my time at the Federation meaningful. You've all played a part in shaping my journey, and I carry with me the lessons, memories, and relationships that will last a lifetime.

As I move forward, I will always cherish the experiences and the people that

made my time here so rewarding. Thank you to each and every one of you for your support, encouragement, and for being part of this incredible journey. I'm truly grateful for the opportunity to have been part of such a remarkable organization, and I will carry the spirit of the Federation with me always.



In loving memory of
Frances Horwich
whose warmth and strength touched us all. Her kindness knew no bounds, touching lives with gentle grace. We honor her life, cherishing the light she brought, a legacy of grace and compassion.
May her memory be a blessing, and may her story continue to inspire next generations to give with boldness and to love without condition.
In lieu of flowers, the family has asked her friends and supporters to give a tribute donation in her name to the Jewish Federation of the Desert, at www.JFEDPS.org.
Sincerely,
Jewish Federation of the Desert's Board Members and Staff

Jewish Federation Earns Prestigious 4-Star Rating from Charity Navigator

By Alberto Tejero, CFO, Jewish Federation of the Desert

In a significant milestone reflecting transparency, accountability, and impactful work, the Jewish Federation of the Desert has received a coveted 4 of 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, the nation's largest and most-utilized independent evaluator of nonprofit organizations.

This top rating places the Jewish Federation of the Desert among the most trusted and efficient charitable organizations in the country. Only a fraction of charities evaluated receive this distinction, which recognizes excellence in financial health, commitment to accountability, and governance.

A Trusted Leader in Community Support

For over 50 years, The Jewish Federation of the Desert has long been recognized for

its dedication to serving Jewish and non-Jewish communities locally and around the globe.

Earning a 4-star rating underscores the Federation's responsible stewardship of donor contributions and its ability to deliver on its mission effectively. According to Charity Navigator, organizations that earn this rating "exceed industry standards and outperform most charities in their cause."

A Message from Leadership

"We are honored to have earned this recognition," said Danny Labin, the new CEO of the Jewish Federation of the Desert. "This score validates the trust our donors place in us and reflects the tireless efforts of our staff, volunteers, and partners who work every day to build stronger, more

resilient communities."

Why It Matters

For donors, a 4-star rating offers an added layer of confidence when choosing where to give. With increasing demand for transparency and accountability in the nonprofit sector, Charity Navigator provides valuable tools for individuals to make informed philanthropic decisions.

This recognition comes at a time when the work of the Federation is more important than ever. Amid rising global antisemitism, humanitarian crises, and growing needs in our local community, the Jewish Federation of the Desert continues to mobilize resources swiftly and effectively to expand outreach, programs and partnerships.

For more information, please visit

jfedps.org or contact gloria.benavides@jfedps.org

Desert Hot Springs Woman Arrested for Threatening to Send Explosives to Chabad of Palm Springs

The Riverside County District Attorney filed a felony complaint on April 11 against Gohar Kagramanyan, charging her with violation of California Penal Code sections 422(a) and 422.6(a) - Criminal Threats and Hate Crimes. Due to the nature and severity of the threats, detectives obtained a bail enhancement,

and she is being held on \$500,000 bail at the Larry D. Smith Correctional Facility in Banning.

Palm Springs police arrested Kagramanyan, 36, in Desert Hot Springs on April 7 after being accused of threatening to send explosives to the Palm Springs Chabad.

The investigation started on April 3, when the threats were first made. According to the police, "The suspect... threatened to send explosives to the Palm Springs Chabad and expressed intent to kill the victim and others associated with the organization."



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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"

Bernardine 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, Bernardine's new husband did not live up to his promises. Instead of feeling sorry for herself or leaving Shanghai, Bernardine 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, Bernardine organized gatherings to

introduce them to their Shanghai contemporaries.

When Bernardine'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, Bernardine'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 Bernardine'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.

Culinary Traditions Preserved, Stories Never to be Forgotten

Join us Tuesday, May 13 at 3:00 PM for a virtual ZOOM presentation of June Hersh's book Food, Hope and Resilience.

This vital collection of survivor stories uplifts and inspires alongside recipes that nourish your soul. Read about daring partisans who fought in the woods, hidden children who sought comfort from strangers and those who endured unimaginable internment. For Holocaust survivors, food was a way to connect their lives before the war with the homes they created after. Their kitchens were



filled with the aromas of familiar foods like chicken soup and brisket while unfamiliar delights they adopted, like arroz con pollo and gnocchi, became part of their repertoire.

These are the recipes they share with you. Culinary icons such as

Michael Solomonov, Jonathan Waxman, Ina Garten and more contribute their own recipes as tribute to the remarkable survivor community. Author June Hersh gives readers a taste of history and a life-affirming message that honors the legacy of Holocaust survivors.

A portion of the proceeds from sales of this book will benefit organizations committed to Holocaust education.

RSVP for Zoom link to Leslie Pepper at 760-324-4737 or leslie.pepper@jfedps.org.

In total, 7,000 Hamas-led Palestinian terrorists killed 1,192 people, wounded more than 4,000 others, and kidnapped 251 hostages – 210 living and 41 dead bodies at time of their abduction – on Oct. 7, 2023, the largest single massacre of Jewish people since the Holocaust and the third overall deadliest terrorist attack in the world.



For a meaningful way to extend condolences, send wishes for recovery from illness or congratulations / thanks for a special occasion, there is no better way than to purchase a Tzedakah card.

Proceeds from the sale of the tribute cards benefit the TZEDAKAH FUND, which enables our Jewish Federation to respond to the emergency needs of Jews in our community. Call 760-324-4737 to order your cards, or go online to jfedps.org. Thank you.

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EDITORIAL

Miriam H. Bent, Editor
Bailey Communications,
Layout & Design
Chief Executive Officer
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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How Americans View Israel and the Israel-Hamas War at the Start of Trump's Second Term

Jewish Americans and White evangelical Protestants have mostly positive views of Israel

By Laura Silver, The Pew Report

As Americans look at the Middle East, fewer say the Israel-Hamas war is important to them personally – or important to U.S. national interests – than felt that way early last year, according to a new Pew Research Center survey.

In addition, the public's views of Israel have turned more negative over the past three years. More than half of U.S. adults (53%) now express an unfavorable opinion of Israel, up from 42% in March 2022 – before the Hamas attack of Oct. 7, 2023, and the ensuing Israeli invasion of the Gaza Strip. Americans' confidence in Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also remains relatively low (32%), according to the new survey. The survey was conducted March 24-30 – just before Netanyahu's most recent visit – among a nationally representative sample of 3,605 U.S. adults.

A slight majority of Americans (54%) say the Israel-Hamas war is either very or somewhat important to them personally. This is down from 65% who said the same in January 2024, a few months after the Hamas attack of Oct. 7, 2023.

Republicans and Democrats are about equally likely to describe the conflict as personally important. (In this analysis, all references to Republicans and Democrats include independents who lean toward each party.)

In both parties, people ages 50 and older are more likely than younger adults to say the conflict is important to them personally. But among Republicans, the gap between older and younger adults (18 percentage points) is wider than it is among Democrats (10 points). Younger Republicans are also considerably more likely than older Republicans to say they are not sure whether the war is important to them personally (17% and 7%, respectively).

Jewish Americans are particularly likely to say the conflict is important to them personally, with 93% saying this, including 74% who consider it very important.

Large shares of Muslims (68%) and White evangelical Protestants (66%) say the conflict is either very or somewhat important to them personally. Smaller shares of Catholics (56%) and religiously unaffiliated adults (47%) also say they *feel this way*.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited the United States on April 7 for the second time since President Donald Trump took office.

How important Americans say the Israel-Hamas war is to U.S. national interests

When asked how important the Israel-Hamas war is for America's national interests, similar patterns emerge:

- 66% of U.S. adults say the war is either very or somewhat important for U.S. national interests, down 9 points since last year.
- Republicans and Democrats are about equally likely to say the war is important for U.S. interests.
- Older Americans are generally more likely than younger adults to view the conflict as important to national interests.

Majorities in most religious groups large enough to analyze describe the conflict as important for America's interests, including 92% of Jewish Americans, 75% of White evangelical Christians and 66% of Muslim Americans.

Views of how Trump is handling relations with Israelis and Palestinians

Americans are about evenly divided over whether Trump is favoring the Israelis too much (31%) or striking the right balance between Israelis and Palestinians (29%). Only 3% say Trump is favoring the Palestinians too much, while another 37% are unsure. Jewish Americans are also divided on this question: 36% say Trump is favoring Israelis too much, while 43% say he's striking about the right balance. Just 2%

say he is favoring Palestinians too much. Another 17% are unsure. By comparison, in February 2024, when we asked about former President Joe Biden's approach, Jewish adults were less likely to say Biden was favoring Israelis too much (13% vs. 36% for Trump) and more likely to say he was favoring Palestinians too much (18% vs. 2% for Trump). Jewish Americans were about as likely to say Biden was striking the right balance as they are to say that about Trump (45% vs. 43%).

Seven-in-ten Muslim Americans say Trump is favoring Israelis too much, largely unchanged from the share who said Biden was favoring Israelis too much last February

A slight majority of Americans (53%) now express a somewhat or very unfavorable opinion of Israel. This marks an 11-point increase in unfavorable views since March 2022, when we last asked this question. The share of U.S. adults who voice very unfavorable views of Israel has roughly doubled over this period, from 10% in 2022 to 19% in 2025.

Democrats are much more likely to express unfavorable opinions of Israel than Republicans (69% vs. 37%).

In 2022, 53% of Democrats and 27% of Republicans had negative views of Israel. Younger and older Democrats alike have turned more negative toward Israel over this three-year period, but negative views among younger Democrats have grown

by 9 points, compared with a 23-point increase among older Democrats.

Among Republicans, much of the shift in attitudes has come among younger adults. Republicans under 50 are now about as likely to have a negative view of Israel as a positive one (50% vs. 48%). In 2022, they were much more likely to see Israel positively than negatively (63% vs. 35%).

Views of Israel also differ substantially among the U.S. religious groups that are large enough to analyze.

Muslims and the religiously unaffiliated – those who say they are atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular” – have particularly negative views of Israel (81% and 69% unfavorable).

White nonevangelical Protestants are about evenly divided in their opinions (50% unfavorable, 47% favorable).

Jewish Americans and White evangelical Protestants have mostly positive views of Israel. Around seven-in-ten in each group express a favorable opinion, including 42% of Jews and 36% of White evangelicals who express a very favorable opinion.

According to the survey, which was conducted just prior to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's most recent visit, a slim majority of Americans (52%) have little or no confidence in Netanyahu to “do the right thing regarding world affairs,” while 32% voice confidence in him. This is largely unchanged since last year, though the share of Americans with little or no confidence in Netanyahu rose significantly between 2023 and 2024.

Republicans are significantly more upbeat about the Israeli leader's handling of global affairs than Democrats are (51% confident vs. 15%). Older Republicans are especially positive: Those ages 50 and older are about twice as likely as those under 50 to have confidence in Netanyahu (70% vs. 32%).

Among Democrats, majorities of both younger and older adults lack confidence in Israel's prime minister. (In both parties, younger people are less likely than older people to have heard of Netanyahu.)

Mike Huckabee Arrives in Israel to Take Up Ambassadorial Posting

By Etgar Lefkovits, JNS

Mike Huckabee arrived in Israel on April 17 to officially take up his position as the U.S. Ambassador to Israel. The former Arkansas governor landed in Israel toward the end of the week-long Passover holiday and ahead of Easter Sunday, after being confirmed by the U.S. Senate a week earlier.

The 69-year-old conservative evangelical pastor, TV host and two-time Republican

presidential candidate has visited the Holy Land scores of times and led thousands of participants on solidarity tours over the past half-century since his first trip to Israel right out of high school, just before the 1973 Yom



Kippur war.

A long-time champion of Israel's cause, he has been a staunch supporter of Israel's rights to the biblical heartland of Judea and Samaria, the relocation of the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem, and has worked to fight the BDS movement.

The U.S. Senate voted 53-46 last week to confirm Huckabee as U.S. ambassador to Israel, with Sen. John Fetterman (D-Pa.)

being the lone Democrat to back Huckabee for the high-profile posting amid the war in Gaza and regional turmoil.

The U.S. envoy told FOX News after his nomination was approved that the first thing he was going to do in Israel was take a prayer given to him by U.S. President Donald Trump in a recent meeting and place it in the Western Wall on behalf of the American people.

Israel's Iron Dome Gets Major Upgrade After Latest Round of Successful Tests

"This latest round of testing has validated new capabilities that will help us better protect Israel and its people," said IMDO Director Moshe Patel.

By Jerusalem Post Staff

Israel's Defense Ministry successfully completed a series of tests to improve the capabilities of its Iron Dome defense system, the ministry announced on March 23. The tests, conducted with the Israel Missile Defense Organization (IMDO) at the Directorate of Defense Research & Development (DDR&D) in collaboration with Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, focused on preparing the system for future threats, such as rockets, missiles, and drones.

Building on lessons learned from the current war, the tests simulated various potential future threats, further strengthening the Iron Dome's multi-layered defense system. The new capabilities demonstrated in these tests significantly improve the system's ability



to protect against evolving threats in the region, the ministry stated.

The Iron Dome is part of Israel's broader defense network, which also includes the Arrow and David's Sling missile defense systems. Together, these systems form a comprehensive shield against various missile and air threats. The recent tests confirm the system's enhanced ability to protect civilian populations and critical infrastructure under challenging conditions.

Continuous Improvements Amid Ongoing War

IMDO Director Moshe Patel emphasized

Left: Pro-Hamas Encampment on Columbia University Campus, April 22, 2024

the system's critical role during the war, noting, "Throughout this war, we've seen that the Iron Dome remains a critical asset even when facing intense barrages. The IMDO is continuously enhancing the system, even while operating under wartime conditions. This latest round of testing has validated new capabilities that will help us better protect Israel and its people."

Rafael CEO Yoav Tourgeman highlighted the success of the tests, stating, "Even after more than a decade of operational service, the Iron Dome continues to play a vital role in Israel's security. We are proud to report that this advanced test campaign was the largest and most significant conducted to date, successfully incorporating new capabilities to address future threats."

Severely Injured IDF Soldier Walks Again Thanks to Robotic Exoskeleton

By Shula Rosen, United With Israel

An IDF soldier who was severely wounded in Gaza after being shot in the back took his first steps in recovery thanks to robotic exoskeleton technology administered at Sheba Rehabilitation Hospital.

The young soldier, Daniel, had survived a life-threatening injury after a terrorist shot him in the back in Gaza. Although his life was spared, his mother was initially told that he would never walk again and that he would be permanently paralyzed from the neck down. However, after months of treatment at Sheba Rehabilitation Center in Tel Hashomer, near Tel Aviv, he is no longer paralyzed and can now walk thanks to Sheba's use of a cutting-edge robotic exoskeleton to support his every step.

"They didn't think I'd make it," he said. "Then they assumed I'd be in a vegetative



state. But now, I'm walking—just a few steps. The robot follows my lead—when I stop, it stops. I can move my legs in ways I never could before."

Sheba Rehabilitation Center has treated 2,000 soldiers since Hamas's invasion on

October 7, 2023, and thanks to expert care, 99.8% have survived. Sheba is one of the few places in the world that offers the Atalante X robotic exoskeleton developed by the French-American company Wandercraft.

"It's about more than just walking—it's about restoring quality of life," said Hanania Sharon, head of physiotherapy at Sheba's rehabilitation hospital. "This device mirrors the body's natural walking patterns. When a patient makes a move, the robot responds in real-time. It's not only rebuilding physical strength; it's reigniting motivation and hope."

The Atalante X is a cutting-edge robotic exoskeleton designed to replicate natural human walking. With 12 powered joints and sophisticated motion algorithms, it allows individuals with severe mobility challenges to stand and walk without needing support from their hands.

The soldier, who is no longer paralyzed, is now dreaming of an active life: "I'm already thinking ahead. To walking again. To finding a good job. To driving."

Former Hamas Hostage Noa Argamani Included in Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential People of 2025 List

By Shiryn Ghermezian, *The Algemeiner*

The 22nd annual list by TIME includes individuals from 32 countries. Argamani, 27, is mentioned on the list under the category of "leaders," which include US President Donald Trump, journalist and commentator Megyn Kelly, Venezuelan "Iron Lady" María Corina Machado, Argentina's President Javier Milei, Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa, Mexico's President Claudia Sheinbaum, and World Health Organization Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

Argamani said she is "deeply honored" to be included on the list but also "grateful that this recognition continues to shine a light on the hostage crisis and the horrific attacks of October 7th. It's a powerful reminder of the urgent need to keep speaking out."

The former Hamas hostage has traveled the world to speak with politicians, other leaders, and communities about her abduction and the grave need to take action to secure the release of the 59 people still being held hostage in Gaza. She said she is "humbled to serve as a voice for the hostages who remain in

captivity — those who can't speak for themselves."

Argamani was taken hostage by Hamas terrorists during their deadly rampage at the Nova music festival in Re'im, in southern Israel, on Oct. 7, 2023. She was held captive in the Gaza Strip by members of the internationally designated terrorist organization for eight months until she was rescued by the Israel Defense Forces during a heroic operation in June 2024. An only child, she was rescued in time to see her terminally ill mother before she died of brain cancer less than a month after returning home. Argamani's boyfriend Avinatan Or, is still in Hamas captivity and is one of 24 hostages whom Israel believes is still alive. Or recently turned 32, his second birthday in Gaza.

Argamani has become one of the most recognized faces of the hostages who were kidnapped on Oct. 7, 2023,



because of harrowing footage that went viral around the world showing her being taken by force into Gaza on the back of a motorcycle, while she pleads for her life and reaches her arm out desperately towards her boyfriend, as he is marched alongside her on foot.

TIME magazine pairs members of its TIME100 list with guest contributors who were chosen by the publication to write about them. Argamani was paired with former Second Gentleman of the United States Douglas Emhoff, who wrote about seeing the heart-wrenching footage of her being abducted.

"The video of Noa Argamani on Oct. 7, 2023, is forever seared into my soul," Emhoff wrote. "She was joyfully dancing with so many others at the Nova music festival when Hamas launched its brutal terrorist attack. As she was kidnapped into Gaza on a motorcycle, her harrowing expression became a symbol of the pain and trauma Jews worldwide, myself included, continue to feel."

Emhoff added that since Argamani's rescue by the IDF, "she has shown

extraordinary courage and humanity in speaking out for the remaining hostages."

"My wife Kamala Harris and I stand with Noa in fighting for the release of all the hostages. We cannot give up until every one of them is home," he noted. "Noa's advocacy has illuminated Hamas's extreme brutality, but more importantly, her bravery has embodied Jewish resilience and strength even in the worst moments. She is living proof to the world that, despite everything, 'we will dance again.'"

Argamani said that her life "changed forever" on Oct. 7, 2023.

"I spent 246 days as a hostage, stripped of freedom and control," she explained. "Since my rescue, I've made a promise to do everything in my power to bring the others home — including my love, my partner, Avinatan Or, who is still being held in the tunnels of Gaza. There are still 59 hostages in Gaza. Innocent people. They need us. We must not stop. Bring Them ALL Home. NOW."

ADL CEO Jonathan Greenblatt Named to Time Magazine's 2025 List

By Nicole Mutchnik, *Chair, ADL Board of Directors*

This prestigious TIME100 recognition is a powerful statement of the impact of ADL to combat how antisemitism has seeped into daily life in ways we never believed we would see again. Incidents of harassment and vandalism against Jews continue to rise; the ADL Center on Extremism recorded more than 10,000 antisemitic incidents in the year following Hamas' October 7, 2023 attack on Israel; students are still targeted on campus; people are being physically attacked; homes and businesses are defaced; and

Jews are outwardly discriminated against and excluded in their professional and student organizations.

It's hard to believe that something which had become rare is once again so commonplace.

In recognizing Greenblatt's leadership for the Time100 profile, Van Jones wrote: "In a moment that demands operational



excellence and moral clarity, Greenblatt delivers both."

The TIME100 is an iconic honor. Jonathan's inclusion speaks to the groundbreaking approach ADL has taken to tackle an insidious problem. Whether it's launching new innovations like the ADL Campus Antisemitism Report Card or our shareholder advocacy TOV ETF; collaborating with world-class researchers, Nobel laureates and global scholars; or leaning into time-tested tools of litigation, incident tracking and the Center on

Extremism; ADL is combating hate on multiple fronts and multiple channels. And while antisemitism brings no good news, today we feel heard in calling out bigotry, we feel seen in fighting discrimination and we feel renewed in our work to tackle extremism, conspiracy and hatred, always reliant upon the foundational civil rights and constitutional protections we in the U.S. are all entitled to. Caring for our communities, neighbors and dorm mates, regardless of religion, race or ethnicity is the true American exceptionalism.



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US Senate Votes Unanimously to Demand Toppling of Hamas

By World Israel News Staff

The U.S. Senate unanimously passed a bipartisan resolution demanding the toppling of the Hamas regime in the Gaza Strip and calling on the Trump administration to aggressively target Iranian funding of the Gaza terror group.

The resolution, passed by unanimous consent in the upper chamber of Congress Thursday evening, affirms that Hamas cannot retain any political or military control of the Gaza Strip. U.S. Senators Lindsey Graham (R-South Carolina), Richard Blumenthal (D-Connecticut), Tom Cotton (R-Arkansas), Jackie Rosen (D-Nevada), Katie Britt (R-Alabama) and John Fetterman (D-Pennsylvania), introduced the resolution.

“I am very pleased the entire U.S. Senate spoke with moral clarity when it comes to the barbaric terrorist organization called Hamas,” said Graham. “With one voice, the Senate said Hamas cannot be in charge of Gaza militarily or politically ever again. That is the right and only answer. I am very proud of my Senate colleagues.”

The bill's cosponsor, Senator Blumenthal, said the Islamist terror group Hamas is “anathema—to Palestinians and Israelis alike, indeed to all who live in the region.”

“Their barbarity and inhumanity is a terrorist scourge—demonstrated most tragically in the October 7 massacre—and a major barrier to peace and stability. Eliminating Hamas ought to be common ground as a paramount goal,” he said.

Arkansas Republican Sen. Tom Cotton called Hamas a “group of murderous terrorists with American and Israeli blood on their hands. The United States must back Israel to the hilt and help ensure Hamas isn't allowed to retain any political or military control in Gaza.”

In addition to calling for the removal of Hamas from power in Gaza – both as a military force and as the de facto civil government – the resolution urges President Donald Trump to use all economic and diplomatic tools available to halt the sources of funding for Hamas by Iran and all other sources of revenue. It also affirms U.S. support for Israel's right to self-defense against Hamas, Iran, and other Iranian proxies.

“On October 7th, Hamas terrorists murdered, raped, and kidnapped innocent civilians,” said Rosen. “In order to best ensure the safety and security of Israel, as well as the Palestinian people, Hamas cannot be allowed to remain in power in Gaza in any capacity. I'm proud to have helped introduce and pass this bipartisan resolution to support our democratic ally Israel and reaffirm the need to remove Hamas from power.”

“The threat of Hamas must be ended permanently,” said Senator Britt of Alabama. “Our support for Israel's right to defend herself is unwavering as they work to bring every single hostage home. Only through strength can we achieve lasting, sustainable peace.”

Pennsylvania Democrat John Fetterman reiterated his support for the remaining hostages held in the Gaza Strip.

“Hamas must be cut off from any grip on power,” he said. “I stand with Israel and remain committed to its right to defend itself against Hamas terrorists who threaten its sovereignty and its people. The devastation in Gaza is on Hamas—and they will be held accountable. I'm going to keep fighting for the release of every hostage and for real peace in the region.”

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Temple Sinai Celebrates 50 Years

Temple Sinai celebrated its 50th anniversary with a gala Saturday evening March 29th. Attending were an array of Sinai congregants along with local dignitaries and former Sinai Rabbis Yossi Liebowitz, Richard Zionts and

Andrew Bentley. The evening featured an impressive silent auction, dinner, and dancing.

"Our expectations for the evening were greatly exceeded," said Ann Miller, Gala

Chair. "It was wonderful having so many people enjoying themselves in celebration of our fiftieth anniversary. We expect to be here for many more years."



Glynn Miller, Temple Sinai President Nancy Singer, Bob Schwarz, Rabbi David Novak



Rabbi Andrew Bentley, Past Jewish Federation President Celia Norian, Jewish Federation Director of Community Engagement Leslie Pepper



Past Temple Sinai President Jack Olshansky and Mitzie Olshansky



Marcia and Rick Stein



Rabbis Yossi Liebowitz and David Novak



Past Jewish Federation President Bill Chunowitz and President, Jewish Family Service, Joanne Chunowitz



Gala Committee



Elaine Eldred and Susan Jaspan



Beth Bentley and Andrea Ready



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Sending tributes and memorials is a meaningful way to honor loved ones.

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- **Nancy and Dennis Ditlove**, Congratulations on your upcoming simcha of Jacob and Sydney, from Eunice Meister.
- **Phyllis Eisenberg**, In honor of your special birthday, from Sue Rappaport, and Sherry Schor.
- **Louise Escoe**, Happy special birthday from Loreen Jacobson.
- **Cindy Farber**, Wishing you a joyous birthday, from Margie Kulp.
- **Bernie and Barbara Fromm**, Happy Anniversary, We love you and are so proud of you, from Davida, Reid and all the kids.
- **Raymond Galante**, Happy 95th birthday from Loreen Jacobson, Albert and Cecille Silverman.
- **Arnie Gillman**, Happy birthday from Rabbi Yankel and Rochel Kreiman.
- **Sue and Arnie Gillman**, In much appreciation, from Linda and Howard Vogel.
- **Cass Graff-Radford**, Always thinking of you, from Loreen Jacobson, Margie and Stephen Kulp.
- **Jerry Halperin**, Happy 95th birthday with best wishes, from Jim Levitas and Barbara Federman.
- **Rosemary and Sandy Hertz**, So many thanks for a beautiful Passover dinner, from Carol and Jerry Katzman.
- **Joan Kerns**, Wishing you a happy special birthday, from Margot and Jerry Halperin.
- **Maxine and Joe Kirshenbaum**, Happy 60th anniversary. Sending you love and best wishes from Loreen Jacobson.
- **Danny Labin**, A hearty welcome as new CEO of the Jewish Federation, from Dr. Basil Guralnick Bernstein.
- **Jim Levitas**, In celebration of your birthday, from Barry Kaiman and Toni Victor.
- **Larry Pearce**, Another milestone Happy birthday from Wendy Hahn and Kent Whinnery, and Sherry Schor.
- **Jane and Larry Sherman**, Thank you for

another beautiful Shabbat dinner, from Margie and Stephen Kulp.

- **Jane and Larry Sherman**, Thank you for a beautiful seder, from Jack and Judy Feinberg, Cecille and Albert Silverman.
- **Jamie Siegel**, Thank you for a magical day with my brother and sister. You certainly represent the values of Tamarisk. Your warmth and kindness made up for a windy day, from Andrew Mars.
- **David and Rachel Sternberg**, Thank you for a beautiful party, from Margie and Stephen Kulp.
- **Dick Sukman**, Happy birthday from Barbara Platt.
- **Joan Weiss**, With love on your birthday, from Susan Mardell.

Refuah Shleimah Get Well:

- **Karen Lee**, Sending love and best wishes for a speedy recovery, from Gail and Bob Scadron.
- **Albert Silverman**, Wishing you a speedy recovery, from Raymond and Jeannette Galante, Loreen Jacobson, and Ruth and Mal Kaufman.
- **Toni Victor**, Wishing you a speedy recovery, from Rabbi Yankel and Rochel Kreiman.

Memorial Tributes Condolences Sent To:

- **Bill Amplo**, Our condolences in memory of Bill Snellenberger, from Rabbi Yankel and Rochel Kreiman.
- **Chuck Ansel**, In memory of your father, Marvin Ansel, from Justin and Robert Schneider.
- **Adam Bedell**, Our deepest condolences on the loss of your mother, Zaida Bedell, from Jackie and Ed Cohen.
- **Lisa Debevec**, In memory of your beloved son Kyle. My thoughts and prayers and my heart are with you, from Marnie Miller.
- **Ed and Rachel Gubman**, In memory of your dear sister Linda, from Leslie and Barry Usow.
- **Steven Halpern**, In memory of Ruth Halpern, from Amy, Jaime, Morgan and Abby Siegel.
- **Mrs. Glenn Heyman**, In memory of your beloved husband, Glenn, from Marnie Miller and Joe Noren.

- **Libby and Buddy Hoffman**, In memory of Arnie Hoffman, from Cecille and Albert Silverman.
- **Family of Frances Horwich**, Frances was a grand lady. We will miss her, from Nancy and Dennis Ditlove, Sherry Schor, Milton and Nina Zale.
- **Barry Kaiman and Toni Victor**, Deepest sympathy on the loss of your brother, Paul, from Phil and Ellen Glass, Mary Levine and Alan Goldstein.
- **Sharon Kaplan**, In memory of Sanford Kaplan, on his yahrzeit, from Norma and Ted Nelson.
- **Margie Kulp**, Our sincerest condolences on the passing of your beloved mother Frances, from Nancy and Michael Basofin, Camille Cook and Siri Hutcheson, Susan Edelheit, Robin Fern, Judy and Ken Friednash, Loren and Howard Friend, Cora Ginsberg, Muriel and Ron Goldberg, Frank Goldstin and Paul Clowers, Margot and Jerry Halperin, Pat Hubbard, Scot and Lance Karp, Ruth and Mal Kaufman, Joan and Henry Kerns, Karen and Ron Krefman, Rabbi Yankel and Rochel Kreiman, Dolly and Julian Levy, Bertel Lewis, Carol Lewis, Terry Lind, Mark and Barbara Mehlman, Eunice Meister, Marnie Miller and Joe Noren, Gail Richards, Janet Ruchim, Dr. Paul and Stephanie Ross, Judy and Mark Schwartz, Jane and Larry Sherman, Amy and Jaime Siegel, Judith Sontag and Michael Pollak, Jay Spak, Wendy Hahn and Kent Whinnery.
- **Margie and Stephen Kulp**, In memory of your beloved mother Frances, from Kathi Balaban and Phil Schneider, Nancy Lawton Eisenberg, Jack and Judy Feinberg, Lori and Brad Fritz, Phil and Ellen Glass, Suzanne and Larry Gorlick, Marilyn Malkin, Valerie and Stan Piha, Lisa and Marc Roth, Sunny and John Sapiente, Gail and Bob Scadron, Katie and Scott Small.
- **Adina Lawson**, In memory of Stephan Meyers, from Barry Kaiman and Toni Victor.
- **Carol Horwich Luber**, Our sincerest condolences on the passing of your beloved mother Frances, from Kathi Balaban and Phil Schneider, Cora Ginsberg, Phil and Ellen Glass, Pat Hubbard, Joan and Henry Kerns, Rabbi Yankel and Rochel Kreiman, Marnie Miller and Joe Noren, Dr. Paul and Stephanie Ross, Gail and Bob Scadron.

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Tribute Card Donations Continued

Continued Sending tributes and memorials is a meaningful way to honor loved ones.

- **Carol Horwich Luber and Margie Kulp**, Our sincerest condolences on the passing of your beloved mother Frances, from Judy and Barbara Appelbaum, Myrna Bartelstein, Sheri and Jim Borax, Joanne and Bill Chunowitz, Barbara and Bernie Fromm, Bobby and Toni Garmisa, Shelli Goodman, Judy and Mel Hecktman, Sandy and Rosee Hertz, Terry Lubar, Renee Mayer, Larry and Cathy Pitts, Cecille and Albert Silverman, Leslie and Barry Usow.
- **Dr. and Mr. Eli Meltzer**, in memory of your beloved sister Karen, from Marnie Miller and Joe Noren.
- **The Schroyer Family**, In memory of your beloved mother Barbara from Ruth and Mal Kaufman, Marnie Miller and Joe Noren.
- **Barbara Segal**, In memory of your husband, Till, from Arnie and Sue Gillman, and Stuart Goldfine.
- **Judi Stein**, In memory of your mother, Joan Graf, from Arnie and Sue Gillman, and Audrey and Michael Hirsch.
- **Lori Thornberry**, Honoring the memory of your Dad, Melvin Ross Henry Schwimmer, from Kathy Rappaport.
- **Eran Vaisben**, In memory of Donald Shaevel, from Geri Shaevel.

OpEd: The Best Response When They Try to Scare Jewish Leaders? Make More of Them

When Jews run for office, they don't just fill a seat. They shift the atmosphere for the entire community.

By Jacki Karsh, Jewish News Syndicate

As Jewish families around the world sat down for their Passover seder, an armed man showed up at the Harrisburg home of Pennsylvania's Jewish governor, Josh Shapiro, with the intent to murder him and his family for "what he wants to do to Palestinian people."

It's tempting to let a story like this pass us by, as shocking as it is. The news cycle is relentless, and the threats against Jews have become so commonplace that they almost blur into one. But we must stop and take this in: Someone tried to burn alive an elected Jewish governor and his family on one of the most sacred nights of the Jewish calendar.

Despite the devastation to the governor's mansion and the horrifying reality of being targeted, Shapiro didn't cancel his second seder. Instead, he stood before the press and reaffirmed his faith. He showed up—publicly, proudly and defiantly—as a Jew.

Is there a response more Jewish than that? Hardly. But how should the rest of us respond? One idea: Produce more Jewish leaders like him. Shapiro reminded us what moral clarity looks like under fire. But he cannot and should not stand alone. His example should become a blueprint. We need to produce more Jewish leaders who are not only unafraid to say they're Jewish but who say it with pride, strength and responsibility. There are certainly incredible Jewish leaders at all levels of government right now, but maybe the answer to rising antisemitism is that even more Jews should be considering political runs.

What the antisemites want is simple: for us to disappear. To apologize for



Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro

our presence. To be silent. To hide. To blend in. To disavow who we are. To reject our heritage, our tradition, our nationhood. That is why the most powerful response is to step forward into leadership, into civic life, into visibility. Because leadership is protection, and participation yields meaningful action.

Jewish values—justice, education, family, tradition—are American values. They belong in city halls, zoning commissions, mayors' offices and on school boards. They are not just compatible with democracy; they are essential to it. This moment is a call to action.

A Jewish school-board member can challenge Jew-hatred in K-12 classrooms. A Jewish city council member can implement security protections for synagogues and Jewish day schools. A Jewish mayor can challenge universities that don't protect their Jewish students.

To be clear, not all leadership strengthens our community. We don't need more Jewish politicians who weaponize their identity to turn against their own people or who undermine the one Jewish state. We need leaders who speak for all of us, of tradition, of

unapologetic Jewish pride, and who are proud supporters of Israel.

We can't overlook the importance of Jewish leadership at a local level. Consider Beverly Hills, where, just weeks ago, Sharona Nazarian—the daughter of Iranian Jewish immigrants—was sworn in as mayor. Her inauguration ceremony began with Rabbi Nicole Guzik reciting the Shehecheyanu prayer, followed by Jewish schoolchildren singing Matisyahu's "One Day." Nazarian then took her oath with her hand placed on her grandfather's battered siddur that had been recovered from Iran after he was forced to flee from religious persecution. She even went further. In her mayoral address, she launched a local initiative titled "Never again is now" to safeguard the city's Jewish community from the rising tide of antisemitism.

Her leadership is more than symbolic. It's effective. After the Hamas-led terrorist attacks in southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, Beverly Hills, under Jewish leadership, was among the first cities to stand publicly with Israel and against hate. The city is now working to establish a permanent memorial for those who were murdered. That doesn't happen by chance. It happens because Jews are in the room, making decisions, shaping policy and leading.

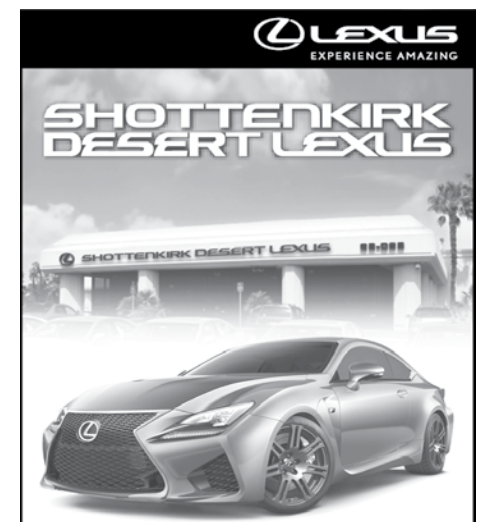
Imagine if more cities and counties had that kind of leadership to protect their Jewish communities. Imagine if more Jews followed her example into local office.

Jews are safest when we are seen out in the world as the change-makers we are. We are strongest when we are

engaged in the diverse ecosystem that surrounds us. And we are at our best when we lead—not in whispers but in full voice.

When Jews run for office, they don't just fill a seat. They shift the atmosphere for the entire community.

So, yes, celebrate our Jewish American leaders. But, above all, consider joining them. Run. Speak. Lead. Be the Jew who shows up—publicly, proudly and unapologetically.



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Archaeology Students Excavating Warsaw's Main Jewish Cemetery are Uncovering a Forgotten World

In a secluded burial ground blanketed with tragedy and neglect, a group of young people are revealing fragments of Poland's Jewish past.

By Shira Li Bartov, Jewish Telegraphic Agency

In the center of Poland's capital, a brick wall separates the humming traffic of Okopowa Street from a quiet wilderness filled with graves.

This is Warsaw's main Jewish cemetery and one of the largest in Europe, a sprawling forest of 83 acres and the final resting place of some 200,000 Jews. Since 1806, the cemetery has held generations of cultural luminaries, rabbis and political activists — from the writers S. An-ski and I.L. Peretz to Ludwik Zamenhof, who created the international language of Esperanto, to Mark Edelman, the last surviving leader of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

Some gravestones stand tall and pristine. But deeper into the cemetery, amid a tangle of maple, birch and acacia trees, more and more bend under the weight of time and neglect. Their inscriptions have faded and succumbed to ivy, leaving thousands of nameless stones in the thicket. An estimated 50,000 Jews who lie there have no stones at all — they were killed by hunger, disease or execution under the Nazis and consigned to two deep mass graves.

For decades after World War II, a long silence engulfed Poland's Jewish history and the atrocities committed there. Nine in 10 Polish Jews were killed, many survivors left the country, and those who stayed often concealed their Jewishness under the Soviet Union. With family chains severed and few left to remember the dead, the cemetery became a forest. A place that had no trees before the war grew about 8,000 of them, while falling leaves transformed into new layers of soil and further buried the dead.

But in the last few years, a new form of life has come to the cemetery. Young people stand in between the gravestones, chattering, laughing and digging with shovels.

It's a strange sight in a Jewish burial ground, where religious law says the dead must remain undisturbed in perpetuity. These newcomers are archaeology students from the University of Warsaw, who convinced Poland's Jewish authorities to let them work on restoring the cemetery's pre-war infrastructure — beneath the soil and debris piled over the untrodden paths to Jewish graves.



Gravestones under restoration at Warsaw's largest Jewish cemetery, September 2024.

It started in 2020, when students discovered that COVID-19 restrictions were shutting down archaeological sites around the world. Panicked over completing the digs required for them to graduate, they asked about working in their own city at the Okopowa Street cemetery. Soon they came head-to-head with the Rabbinical Commission for Cemeteries, which protects Jewish burial sites in Poland.

Witold Wrzosinski, the cemetery director and a member of Warsaw's small Jewish community, watched these negotiations.

"The rabbis obviously said, 'Go away, you're crazy — stupid idea, digging around in a Jewish cemetery,'" said Wrzosinski. "But they kept insisting."

The students wanted to prove that they could dig without breaking Jewish law. So they studied it, returning to the rabbis over and over to demonstrate that their excavations would not disrupt the original soil.

The rabbis were suspicious, said Wrzosinski. How could the students be trusted to differentiate between old and new earth? But eventually, they allowed a survey on a small patch of land in the cemetery, watched closely by Aleksander Schwarz from the Rabbinical Commission.



Much of the cemetery remains in disarray.

Schwarz had distinct credibility with Poland's Jewish leaders. A specialist in Jewish cemetery and burial law, he has served the commission for 25 years, mostly overseeing searches of unmarked graves in death camps like Sobibor and Belzec. Polish Chief Rabbi Michael Schudrich sent Schwarz to live for days at these camps, supervising archaeologists as they drew the historic borders of burial sites while ensuring that they met religious rules.

Before the project on Okopowa Street, Schwarz had never taught archaeologists to work in a Jewish cemetery. But he agreed to it. Over the past four years, with funding from Poland's Cultural Heritage Foundation, he has trained senior archaeologists and a rotating group of about 30 students. Everyone has to pass through his lectures and learn to dig under his eye, said Schwarz, who calls himself "a very demanding person."

He tempers the typical archaeologist's appetite to dig deep. Instead, he teaches them to interpret soil, a practice of care and imagination. The historical level of the cemetery lies only 20 to 30 centimeters below the surface. Students are never to disturb a grave — and if they happen on human remains, they must quickly block off the area and leave their discovery

untouched. One mistake here could prompt Schwarz to end the project.

"We have trained them not to pick up any bones," he said. "They work a bit like forensic technicians. If they find anything that is very shallow, a bone or a fragment of a bone, then they call me — or I'm already there — and the commission makes a decision about what happens."

The students were spurred by an early victory: They uncovered a cobblestone path from the cemetery's original layer. As far as Wrzosinski knows, no one in Warsaw remembered this path ever existing. Now it is an ordinary part of the place again, near the entrance, gently guiding visitors between the graves.

Gradually, the students were allowed to work in more and more sections of the cemetery. They found fallen, buried tombstones and the names of people buried there. Some of these records did not exist anywhere else, since the Nazis destroyed the pre-war cemetery archive and many Jewish birth, marriage and death certificates.

Some discoveries remain mysterious. Nineteenth-century gravestones that turned out to be half-buried had surprises waiting just below the surface, such as sculptures of squirrels and dragons that looked unfamiliar on Polish Jewish graves, said Wrzosinski. Rabbis are still interpreting whether they had any symbolic significance.

There were also remnants of war, like bullets and shells, bullet holes in gravestones and a pistol from the Warsaw Uprising that was typical of the Polish Underground. One day in July 2020, the students discovered an unexploded German mortar just seven centimeters below the surface. Police evacuated the cemetery and a bomb squad quickly removed it without any damage.

Kacper Konofał, a 23-year-old archaeology student working in the cemetery, is writing his bachelor's thesis about an uncovered collection of glass vessels, likely used for the ritual washing of bodies. For Konofał, the project has opened access to a world that only lived in vague stories from his childhood. His great-grandmother used to speak about

continued on next page

Exposed: Secret Playbook Behind Anti-Israel Campus Protests

The manual advises readers to create a cell, pick a target, and “take action” – a euphemistic term for criminal damage and vandalism.

By World Israel News Staff

A guide that teaches anti-Israel mobs how to cause chaos on campus was discovered online, according to a report in the New York Post.

“Palestine Action: The Underground Manual” lays out specific instructions and tips for anti-Israel activists seeking to disrupt normal operations at universities.

The 14-page guide is written by Palestine Action and is available on their website, though the anti-Israel group has now changed its name to Fields of Unity.

The manual advises readers to create a cell, pick a target, and “take action” – a euphemistic term for criminal damage and vandalism.

Among the tips included in the guide are “Face covering is key” and “CASH IS KING. When buying equipment, whether it’s spray paints or sledgehammers, don’t leave a paper (or digital) trail.”



The manual also provides prompts for anti-Israel mobs that are unsure of what messages to spray paint on campus.

“Fire extinguishers can be repurposed and refilled with blood-red paint, so when it’s sprayed it makes a big splash,”

the document reads.

“Some key slogans you can use are ‘Free Palestine’ and ‘War Criminals.’ ”

The existence of the manual contradicts Columbia University’s claim that the protests were a spontaneous, student-

led movement, a Jewish Columbia student said.

“A few weeks ago, someone came across this so-called ‘manual’ and forwarded it to me, and I started sending it out to everyone I knew because I wanted everyone to be aware of just how calculated and strategic and radical these people are,” the student told the Post.

Two former Columbia custodians recently filed a federal complaint against the university over an incident that saw them held captive and beaten by anti-Israel radicals who stormed the building where they were working.

The two men described a harrowing ordeal, which saw them physically assaulted in an unprovoked attack by an anti-Israel mob who also called them “Jew-lovers” and “Zionists” due to their affiliation with the university.

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her childhood friend, who was Jewish, and her father, who carried Jews to Sobibor in his cart on German orders.

“When I arrived there on the first day, it was something extraordinary — a calm, quiet, almost magical world behind the wall, in the center of a huge city,” said Konofal.

Wrzosinski also discovered this world as a student, long before becoming the cemetery’s director. Growing up as a secular Jew in Warsaw during the 1980s and ‘90s, he always knew he had family buried in the cemetery, but he never went there. Without a registry, there was no way to look for graves — and without knowing the Hebrew alphabet, there was no way to read them.

Wrzosinski made his way to studying Hebrew at the University of Warsaw. In 2006, near the end of his degree, he saw a job ad seeking someone to clean and index the cemetery. He began the ongoing endeavor to catalog every gravestone in an online database. So far, Wrzosinski and his colleagues have indexed 82,372 names and inscriptions.

He found pleasure in decoding the language of the stones, where Polish and Jewish life intertwined: Hebrew letters, written in Yiddish to spell Polish surnames. Then, in 2008, he found his great-great-grandfather.

As in many Jewish cemeteries in

regions ravaged by the Nazis, most of the cemetery in Warsaw remains in disarray.

Wrzosinski knew he would eventually see the graves of his ancestors, and he supposed it would be satisfying to know where they were. But the discovery changed him more than he expected.

“When I stepped on that stone and I cleaned it, and I realized that’s my ancestor, I felt something stronger, different,” said Wrzosinski. “Kind of a sense of belonging to this weird place — just an orphaned stone in a neglected forest, and it’s somehow mine. I needed to take a few deep breaths and stop for a moment.”

Now, Wrzosinski has found seven direct relatives to visit in the cemetery. He believes that his great-grandfather lies in one of the mass graves, although he cannot know for certain. Through his database and the efforts of the student archaeologists, he is gratified to watch other visitors experience the same moment of connection that he did.

Even during its long abandonment, the cemetery remained important for many who experienced the loneliness of being Jewish in postwar Poland. Patrycja Dołowy, a writer and artist who formerly headed Warsaw’s Jewish Community Center, grew up like Wrzosinski in Warsaw during the 1980s. Being Jewish was mostly an unspoken subject in her family, both publicly and at home.

But she saw the wildly overgrown cemetery as a “secret garden,” a refuge for Polish Jews that mirrored the obfuscated memory in their own homes. “Those stones, the matzevot, the names on them were covered by nature, not so visible — a little bit like in our memories, the names of our ancestors, and these gaps in our family histories,” said Dołowy.

Dołowy said her community was happy to see the archaeological restoration, of a

piece with other efforts to revive Jewish heritage across Poland. She also believes the wildlife that grew over the cemetery is inextricable from its story, even as the trees continue to battle against the graves.

“Nature heals what was so difficult, so unimaginable,” said Dołowy. “In my opinion, this overgrowth should be an important part of places like cemeteries. But there’s always a dilemma, because nature is also destroying the graves.”



What I Learned About American Jews While Collecting Judaica for LA Fire Victims

Donations to a Judaica drive told an American tale of resilience and mutual aid

By Rachel Stenhardt, JTA

While the L.A. wildfires were still smoldering in January, I sat down to write a personal reflection on what Judaica means to the heart of Jewish homes like the ones that had been consumed in the inferno. Before I had written the last sentence, I knew I wanted to try to help those families replace what they had lost.

Little did I know that I was about to embark on a journey that would put my life on hold and turn my home into a makeshift distribution center, filled to the brim with boxes upon boxes of bubble-wrapped menorahs and seder plates sent from all over. I had managed to help start a Judaica collection and distribution team with some like-minded partners. A mere two months later, despite knowing next to nothing about organizing donation drives and mass volunteer efforts, our upstart team of volunteers succeeded in our mission: last month we distributed over 5,000 used and new Judaica items to more than 400 Jews impacted by the Palisades and Eaton fires. And we're not quite finished yet.

Along the way, I've gotten an up-close look at what fire-impacted L.A.-area Jews want, when it comes to Judaica, and which items their peers around the city and the country are willing to part with. We collected sizable donations of brand-new items from Judaica companies, but the bulk of donations came from hundreds of individual Jews and dozens of synagogue-run collection drives in Jewish communities from far-flung states.

We asked them for great-condition, display-worthy objects, used or new. What we got, however, was a breathtaking, kaleidoscopic array of relics spanning at least a century of American Jewry. Not all of it was in giftable condition, and we quickly developed discerning eyes for quality that paid off when we finally displayed our haul at distribution events.

Here's a look at some of what we gathered, and how it was received, by the numbers:

Roughly \$6,000: The amount spent just on shipping costs to Los Angeles by donors across the U.S. and Israel who collected items on our behalf. We received packages from places like Alaska, Montana, Maine and Texas, and



Kehillat Israel members Ava and Addison Rich, who lost their home in the Palisades Fire, wear matching tallitot at their B'nai Mitzvah, received during a Judaica donation drive.

a motherlode from the Washington, D.C. area.

Seven: The number of green brass mid-century "Made in Israel" oil jug-motif knickknacks collected, ranging in size from 3 inches to nearly 3 feet long. Many donees dig the vintage verdigris Israeli style, and we received it by the hundreds in the form of wall hangings, seder plates, Hanukkah menorahs and more.

224: Permanently stained challah covers we received and ultimately discarded (some were repurposed). These beautiful items are hard for Jews to throw away, and we presumed that our collection drive offered the satisfaction of imagining a possible future for them.

Four: Bottles of silver polish we used to return dozens of tarnished heirloom-quality candlesticks, kiddush cups and other once-prized possessions to dazzling glory.

20%: The proportion of all donated items that consisted of Hanukkah decor (platters, mugs banners, cookie jars, etc.). American Jews have over-invested in decorating for the Festival of Lights and were eager to offload. Interestingly, these items were not the most wished-for among our recipients.



Items donated to a Judaica drive staged for Los Angeles fire victims included shofars, seder plates and mezuzahs

19: Pieces of classic gold and cream floral ceramic Lenox Judaica received, including seder plates, menorahs, kiddush cups, candlesticks and mezuzahs. The style is iconic to many American Jews, and the seder plate is a replica of a 19th-century plate in the Jewish Museum in New York.

Six: Tissue boxes used by emotional recipients at our distribution events. Tears of joy, grief, nostalgia, astonishment and overwhelming gratitude.

One dozen: Precious silver Yeled Tov and Yalda Tovah baby cups with tiny handles.

Three: Priceless pure-silver mezuzahs made by Holocaust survivor and master silversmith Henryk Winograd (1917-2008), each donated from a family in a different state.

One pair: Of matching pink gossamer-silk tallitot, sourced from our collection in the nick of time for a set of Bat Mitzvah twins who had lost their home.

One: Bat mitzvah girl from Pennsylvania, who, as her "Mitzvah Project," rallied her community to collect four boxes' worth of items to ship to us.

At least four: Synagogue gift shops, nearly liquidated of inventory for our cause.

11: Stories shared with us by fire-impacted recipients about the vintage objects they found in our collection that matched specific family heirlooms and gifts from loved ones they lost to the flames (and in some cases, had already sifted through ash to find remnants of). Some were predictable: a standard-issue menorah, a popular seder plate design. Others less so: an intricately beaded blue-and-white mezuzah case, a miniature ceramic house with "Shalom" over the door, an artisanal hand-glazed

Havdalah set.

Six: Items that are likely over 100 years old, currently being examined by antiques experts because they should probably be in museum collections. These include an ornate Moroccan shofar, a patinated wrought iron etrog case, and the tzitzit of a German Jewish child who immigrated to the United States before World War I.

600+: Tote bags full of Judaica, filled and carried out of our distribution events by fire-affected families. Some people who lost their homes only took an item or two, while others loaded multiple bags in an attempt to bring a sense of Jewish normalcy to their environments. "I don't have a front door yet," one woman whispered to me at an event while she selected several mezuzahs. "But I will." An elderly man and a young boy — unrelated to each other but united in their loss — browsed, touched and sorted objects for hours on end. It helped.

Many fire victims confessed to me that they could've ordered brand new Judaica items to place on their mantels or in their display cabinets, but that there was something ineffable they could only get from the pre-owned objects we had laid out on dozens of tables in a synagogue social hall. Based on the thick stack of notes on my desk that accompanied many of the donations inside their bubble-wrapped boxes, that quality is the personal touch emanating from a Jewish home.

It's the little bit of hope and mazel imbued in each passed-on kiddush cup, from one Jewish family to another. It's the love and connection that keeps us bound as a people: usually gifting from one generation to the next, but sometimes from the next state, or even zip code, over.



Shabbat Schedule - Summer 2025

BEIT HAVERIM, Palm Springs

Rabbi Steven Rosenberg (rabbi@beithaverim.org). Where friends old and new gather for Shabbat services and dinners (7:00 pm) at members' homes, creating community, joyful spirituality and insightful learning. For schedule of services, potluck Shabbat dinners + Shabbat service schedule, and programs email beithaverim@gmail.com or call 760-766-3212. Website: beithaverim.org.

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 Sunday, June 1, Tikkun Leil Shavu'ot, 7:15 pm Monday, June 2, First Day of Shavu'ot, 9:45 am including Yizkor Memorial Service

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: Info@ChabadLQ.com; website: www.ChabadLQ.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.

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 (Tuesday-Thursday). 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 during season; on hiatus during summer. 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. Interim Associate Rabbis: Rabbi Rachel Axelrad, Rabbi Dr. Kenneth Emert, Rabbi Suzanne Singer. Cantorial Soloists: Ezra Yaron, Elliot Levine. Check website for schedule. Friday Kabbalat Shabbat service is broadcast on Facebook: www.facebook.com/templeisaiahpalmsprings.

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.templesinai.org 760-568-9699. Go to templesinai.org for access information. Shabbat services are in-person and online on Livestream at www.templesinai.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@templesinai.org

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.



Community Calendar of Programs - Summer 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 from Sukkot to Shavuot. Check website for details.

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.

Thursday, May 1

10:00 am – noon Sabra Hadassah. Opportunity to meet two incredible IDF soldiers visiting our community through outreach by the Jewish Agency for Israel. RSVP required. Call Debbie Orgen 760-289-7987.

Tuesday, May 6

Time TBD Jewish Federation Virtual presentations "Survived to Tell" and "Be the Witness." **RSVP:** Leslie Pepper at 760-324-4737 or leslie.pepper@jfedps.org. See page 2.

Tuesday, May 6, 13, 20, 27

7:00-8:30 pm Chabad of Rancho Mirage. Rabbi Benny Lew leads program "**Short Stories of Extraordinary Lives from Jewish History**." For more information and to register call 760-770-7785.

Wednesday, May 7

3:00 pm Jewish Federation/Jewish Book Council In-person program: Susan Blumberg-Kason speaks about her book "Bernardine's Shanghai Salon." Held at the Jewish Federation Office. See article page 4.

Wednesday, May 7

3:00 pm Har-El Books and Bordeaux Series: **Robert Schneeweiss** *The Life and Works of Ernest Hemingway*. Program presented on Zoom. No charge but RSVP required. Email mtziontspd@aol.com.

Thursday, May 8

5:45 pm Join Sabra Hadassah at Sun City Palm Desert, Sunset View Clubhouse, Oasis Room for Pizza & Salad dinner at 6 pm, followed by **Bingo**. \$30 members \$35 non-members, includes dinner, dessert, 1 package of cards. Contact Vivian Posen 818-687-9446 for more information and to RSVP.

Tuesday, May 13

3:00 pm Jewish Book Council Virtual Event: June Hersh ZOOM presentation of her book **Food, Hope and Resilience**. See article page 4.

HAR-EL SUMMER MOVIE SERIES

begins again: Year 5!
Optional no-Host Lunch 11:00 followed by Movie

Wednesday, May 14: "Driving Miss Daisy".

Discussion follows: 'The 1950's Antisemitism'. The Movie Series is Free * Suggested contribution \$10.00

No charge for the movie, popcorn and ice cream. To register email: mtziontspd@aol.com. Location and gate code will be sent with confirmation.

Wednesday, June 11: Har-El Summer Movie Series

Wednesday, July 9: Har-El Summer Movie Series

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

UK Parliament Group Publishes Landmark Report to Combat Oct. 7 Denial

By Nava Freiberg, The Times of Israel

The UK Parliament's Israel Friendship Group released a 318-page report that aims to establish an incontrovertible historical record of the October 7, 2023, Hamas-led atrocities in southern Israel.

"The purpose of commissioning our report has been to chronicle the events of 7 October with clarity and meticulous, fact-checking precision, to ensure it is never forgotten," says Lord Andrew Roberts, an influential historian who chaired the report.

The report gives a unique "catalog of events," providing an unprecedentedly comprehensive timeline of the massacre, a source familiar with the project tells The Times of Israel. It will be officially launched in the British parliament later today, The Times of Israel has learned.

Compiled by the UK-Israel All-Party Parliamentary Group based on research that began in January 2024,

the publication outlines the atrocities committed by the Hamas terror group against Israel on October 7 and 8, using survivor testimonies, open-source evidence, and interviews with relatives of hostages and victims, as well as expert analysis from government and security officials, first responders, and medical and military professionals in Israel and the UK.

The report determines that 7,000 individuals participated in the massacre and includes information on the nature and scale of the murders, including Hamas's youngest victim, a fetus shot in the womb, as well as its oldest victim, a 92-year-old Holocaust survivor killed in his safe room by a grenade.

The document corroborates a previous report by the United Nations Special Representative on Sexual Violence, confirming that sexual violence occurred at multiple attack sites on October 7.

Hamas and other groups committed "acts of rape, gang rape, forced mutilation, sexualized torture, forced nudity, and posting sexualized images of victims on social media without consent," says the report.

Introducing the document, Roberts likens the falsification of the events of October 7 to Holocaust denial, saying, "Hamas and its allies, both in the Middle East and equally shamefully in the West, have sought to deny the atrocities,

despite the ironic fact that much of the evidence for the massacres derives from film footage from cameras carried by the terrorists themselves."

British historian Niall Ferguson comments on the publication, saying, "Those who wish to understand the repulsive, pathological nature of antisemitism should read the report. Those who doubt the truly evil character of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad must read it."



For a meaningful way to extend condolences, send wishes for recovery from illness or congratulations / thanks for a special occasion, there is no better way than to purchase a Tzedakah card. Proceeds from the sale of the tribute cards benefit the TZEDAKAH FUND, which enables our Jewish Federation to respond to the emergency needs of Jews in our community. Call 760-324-4737 to order your cards, or go online to jfedps.org. Thank you.



Federation Campaign Donors

Thank you for your gift to the Jewish Federation of the Desert!

The Jewish Federation of the Desert and its beneficiary agencies thank our devoted and loyal donors who gave so generously to the 2024 Annual Campaign. Thank you for helping to secure the present and fortify the future with your support of our Campaign.

Federation's Annual Campaign fills a gap as our community's needs expand and our needy grow in number. We take seriously

our responsibility to ensure that needs are met whilst staying committed to creating a stronger, more vibrant Jewish community and strengthening our connection with Jews in Israel and around the world. Your generosity has breathed life into the words that define and guide our efforts: "Caring for the vulnerable, strengthening community." On behalf of those who cannot say thank

you themselves, thank you.

This list includes your generous donations to the "Swords of Iron" campaign where 100% of the funds went to Israel to help their staggering costs fighting Hamas since October 7, 2023.

Danny Labin, Chief Executive Officer
Arnie Gillman, President

We have endeavored to honor every special request that we received, including those individuals who wish not to be listed on the Honor Roll, and apologize in advance for any mistakes.



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HAVE A NOSH: If It's Shavuot, It's Dairy!

The traditional fare for Shavuot is dairy, so I looked over my selection of cheesecakes to pick a couple to give you. I have some wonderful, traditional' cheesecake recipes but these two super-easy, no-bake cheesecake recipes jumped out at me and they are a breeze to make and really good, so I'm sharing them with you! ...



In addition, I selected a cheesecake that requires baking but is really simple to put together and the lime is a refreshing contrast to the richness that characterizes cheesecake! Finally, it's been a few years since I gave you my mother's "cheese cake in a pie crust" recipe, which is not as rich as traditional cheesecakes, but a lovely recipe from her southern German roots, for which she was famous! Enjoy! Hag samayach Shavuot! MHB

NO-BAKE CHOCOLATE CHEESECAKE

1½ cups semi-sweet chocolate chips
11 oz. cream cheese (bar, not tub),
softened
½ cup sugar

¼ cup butter or margarine, softened
2 cups whipped non-dairy topping,
thawed
1 chocolate or graham cracker crust

Put chocolate chips in a small, microwave-safe bowl and microwave at 50% for 1 minute. Stir and, if needed, microwave at 15 second intervals until chips are just melted when stirred. Set aside to cool. Beat cream cheese, sugar and butter/margarine in a large bowl on medium speed of mixer until creamy. Gradually add melted chips, beating on low speed until blended. Fold in whipped top until blended, then spoon into crust. Refrigerate until firm.

NO-BAKE FUNFETTI CHEESECAKE

1 graham cracker crust
24 oz. (3 8-oz. pkg) cream cheese,
at room temperature
½ cup + 2 Tbsp. sugar
2 Tbsp. flour

2 tsp. vanilla extract
4 Tbsp. sprinkles, plus more for
topping
12 oz. Cool Whip

In a large bowl, mix cream cheese, sugar, flour and vanilla until smooth and well combined. Gently stir in 8 oz. Cool Whip and sprinkles. Our into crust, smoothing top. Refrigerate for 4-6 hours or until firm. Top with remaining sprinkles and Cool Whip. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

KEY LIME CHEESECAKE

½ cup sugar
2 8-oz. packages cream cheese, softened
¼ cup heavy whipping cream
½ teaspoon vanilla
2 Tablespoons fresh lime juice

1 teaspoon grated lime peel
2 eggs
1 graham cracker pie crust
1 cup thawed Cool Whip topping

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Beat cream cheese, whipping cream, sugar, lime peel, lime juice and vanilla with electric mixer on medium speed until well blended. Add eggs, one at a time; mix just until blended. Pour mixture evenly into graham cracker crust. Bake for 40 minutes or until the center is almost set. Cool. Refrigerate 4 hours or overnight. Top with whipped topping before serving.

LIL ZUCKER'S CHEESECAKE PIE

Crust:

1 cup flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ cup sugar
2 Tablespoons butter or margarine
Dash salt
1 egg

Filling:

6 oz. Philadelphia cream cheese
1 cup small curd cottage cheese
½ cup sugar
3 eggs, separated
Dash salt
1 rounded Tablespoon
cornstarch
1 teaspoon vanilla

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Combine ingredients for crust. Form a ball and chill briefly, then roll out on a floured board. Spray pie pan. Roll out dough into a circle and ease into pan. Prick bottom with fork.

Prepare filling by combining all ingredients but the egg whites. Mix well. Beat egg whites until stiff. Fold into batter. Pour into unbaked crust and bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes, or until golden brown. Option: Thinly slice a banana or other fruit and place in a single layer on top of the unbaked crust before pouring the filling over.



Simchas

What an charming picture! Mazel tov to proud grandma **Cheryl Scarlett** on the birth of her first grandchild, **Juliette Scarlett**, born to **Rachel** and **Evan Slote** on March 20th. Juliette has outgrown the challah by now, but we couldn't resist the picture! ... Mazel tov to **Dovid Pinson**, son of **Tani** and **Dina**



Left: Juliette Scarlett Slote Pinson, on being called to the torah for his Bar Mitzvah May 15. Mazel tov to the proud grandparents: **Rabbi Yonason** and **Sussie Denebeim**

and the many, many family members in our community and around the country ... Share your simchas with us! Email mhbentjcn@earthlink.net or call Miriam Bent at 760-835-1022.

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Friday, May 16	Emor	6:58 pm
Friday, May 23	Behar-Bechukotai	7:03 pm
Friday, May 30	Bamidbar	7:07 pm

JUNE

Sunday, June 1	Shavuot	7:09 pm
Monday, June 2	2 nd day Shavuot	after 8:35 pm
Friday, June 6	Naso	7:11 pm
Friday, June 13	Bahalotcho	7:14 pm
Friday, June 20	Shelach	7:16 pm
Friday, June 27	Korach	7:17 pm

JULY

Friday, July 1	Devarim	7:03 pm
Friday, July 8	Vo'etchanan	6:56 pm
Friday, July 15	Eikev	6:49 pm
Friday, July 22	Re-ah	6:40 pm
Friday, July 29	Softim	6:32 pm

NEED A NOTARY?

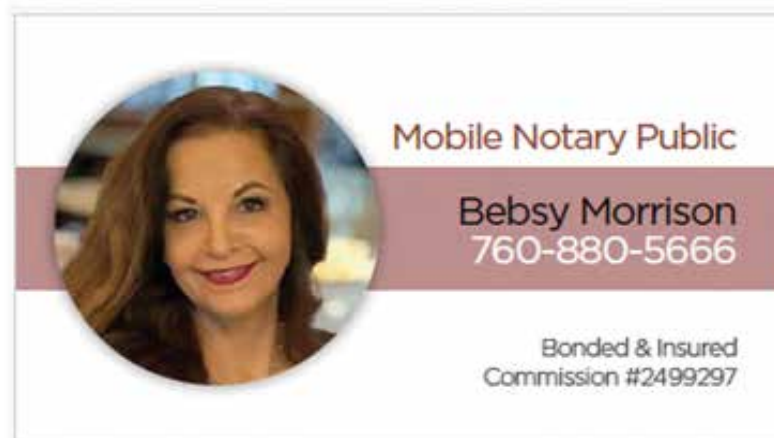
BEBSABE MORRISON

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(760) 324-4737

69-710 Highway 111 Rancho Mirage, CA 92270

***Jewish Federation donors, free of charge**



We Mourn the Passing of...

Garrett Estrin, Frances Horwich, Phillip Mulligan, Tillman Segal, and William "Bill" Snellenberger. Our deepest sympathies to their families and friends. May their memories endure as a blessing.



ברוך דיין האמת

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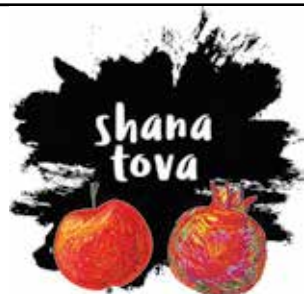
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to wish everyone a
Happy New Year!**



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**Deadline
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happiness, good health and
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with those you love.
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