



Desert Jewish News

The Publication of Jewish Federation of the Desert

www.jfedps.org

Elul - Tishrei 5786
September 2026

L'Shanah Tovah

Wishing All a Sweet New Year!



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If Not Now, Then When?



Danny Labin

Chief Executive Officer,
Jewish Federation
of the Desert

The price of gas continues to go up. And up and up. But that's not all. The coffee we once paid a couple bucks for is now a dollar or two more. If we stop to do the math, we suddenly realize that we're sometimes paying double what we paid just a few years ago. The menu item prices can be so high that it often feels wiser not to look at them lest one lose one's appetite altogether. Across the board, in just about every sector, the amount of money required for that same good or service continues to rise. That is, in every sector but one: nonprofits.

According to the most recent Giving USA Foundation report, in the nonprofit sector, which comprises the universe of charities, foundations and social enterprises that benefit the public good, we are seeing donations stay at the same level. This is not specific to the Desert; it's a nationwide trend and one with serious consequences. As the costs of goods and services go up, the donations that nonprofit organizations, such as Jewish Federation of the Desert, raise can fund less. It's a simple equation. The same donations for programming that now costs more means those donations can make less programming possible. Fewer participants, fewer activities, less impact.

The issue is further compounded for Jewish communal organizations, like Jewish Federation of the Desert, which in recent years has needed to add security to most everything we do. The need for increased security in the face of exponentially rising and sometimes lethal antisemitic attacks, is a hard fact we all are grappling with. No matter one's opinion as to the cause or the remedy, there's no disputing the toll it takes. This year, despite the economic situation, Jewish Federation of the Desert will be investing an additional \$100,000 in security to keep our organizations and community secure. This is hardly an insignificant amount but there is no question that we will pay it.

So where does this bring us, Jewish Federation of the Desert, with funds that

can bring about less and can deliver less good as time passes. As we have redoubled our commitment to security, so too have we remained steadfast in our dedication to ensuring that three dozen partners in the Coachella Valley, in Israel and around the world receive as much support from us as they can. In the fiscal year that just ended, our Federation funded more organizations and programs than in the past. We have found ways to focus our funding and to engage with other community partners in innovative ways that magnify our impact. But at a certain point, that simple but inexorable mathematical equation must be faced, and it poses a serious concern.

As a new Jewish year begins, and as Jewish Federation of the Desert prepares to kick off our 2026-2027 Campaign Season, these questions are paramount in my mind. The reassuring news is that, in the relatively brief but meaningful time that I have been in the Desert, I have repeatedly witnessed how much this community cares. This is a Jewish

community that uniquely weaves together a tapestry of rich Jewish experiences from across the country – and across the globe. Our Desert Jewish community cares about our history and about our future. We know that our role today is to do what we can to secure a Jewish future. And so as we rub our eyes incredulously as we watch the gas pump display numbers that not long ago seemed unfathomable, we also know that the complex reality we live in today is not something that will disappear by rubbing our eyes. Our collective action for the future is necessary today.

As we usher in this new year, 5787, the ancient words of our great sage Hillel ring as true as ever: *If I am not for myself, who will be for me. If I am only for myself, what am I? And if not now, then when?*

This is the time for us to come together in the name of our Jewish future. The price of that may seem high. But the price of our not doing that will be much, much higher.

Shanah Tovah!



Jewish Federation
OF THE DESERT



PJ Library
Bringing Jewish stories home



welcoming the Jewish
New Year
Ice Cream Social!





**A sweet celebration for
young Jewish families!**

Join the Jewish Federation for an afternoon
of ice cream, new friends, and festive fun as
we celebrate Rosh Hashanah together!

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6
3:00-4:30 PM

Jewish Federation of the Desert
69-710 Hwy. 111, Rancho Mirage

Reserve your family's spot by contacting
Leslie.pepper@jfedps.org • 760-324-4737

We can't wait to celebrate a sweet New Year with you!

**L'Shanah Tovah!**

Project underwritten by a grant from**Irene W. & Gary C.
Anderson Children's Foundation**

A Season of Solidarity

Recent Israel Festivities Brought the Desert Community Together

By Halle Kohn-Levine, Executive Office Manager, Jewish Federation of the Desert

This past spring, Jewish Federation of the Desert's commitment to Israel took center stage across a season of programming that drew hundreds of community members together in celebration, generosity, and support. From a Yom HaAtzmaut ambulance dedication to a moving portrait exhibition benefiting a hospital on Israel's front lines, the desert community showed up again and again for the people of Israel.

The season opened on April 28, when JFED celebrated Yom HaAtzmaut, Israel's 78th birthday, with the dedication of an ambulance for Magen David Adom in Israel — a gift from JFED supporter and local philanthropist Bryan Isaacs. More than 100 community members gathered at the Federation Building for a ribbon-cutting ceremony, where Rabbi Kenneth Emert led a prayer for the people of the State of Israel.

The ambulance, now bound for Israel, honors Bryan's two daughters and two granddaughters, continuing his family's legacy of Tzedakah. Debbie Dolgin, West Coast Regional Director of Magen David Adom, joined the celebration, and Israeli-American comedian Benji Lovitt brought laughter to the day with a routine in honor of Yom HaAtzmaut. Guests signed cards of support and solidarity that were sent to Israel alongside the vehicle — a tangible reminder that the desert community's care would travel with it.

The spirit of solidarity continued on June 8, when the Federation hosted "Heroes of Truth, Portraits of Courage," a portrait exhibition by Israeli-American photographer Limor Garfinkle. The afternoon featured Rachel Heisler, Executive Director of American Friends of Soroka Medical Center, who spoke about the Iranian missile that struck the hospital last summer and the remarkable fortitude of Soroka's staff as rebuilding efforts continue. Through JFED's recent Israel Emergency Campaign, the Federation provided special emergency funding



JFED board members, supporters, family and friends gathered for the ribbon-cutting ceremony marking the ambulance donation.



Debbie Dolgin, West Coast Regional Director of Magen David Adom, JFED CEO Danny Labin and Bryan Isaacs.



Photos from Limor Garfinkle's "Heroes of Truth, Portraits of Courage."



Israeli-American comedian Benji Lovitt delivered a hilarious routine for the attendees celebrating Yom HaAtzmaut.



L to R: Limor Garfinkle, Debbie Orgen, Rachel Heisler, JFED Board Member Wendy Brooks and CEO Danny Labin.



Student volunteers at Magen David Adom in Israel display a board of handwritten thank-you cards received from members of our desert community during ambulance dedication at JFED.

to Soroka following the significant damage the hospital sustained — supporting its recovery, providing mental health resources for its staff, and standing with the people of southern Israel.

Taken together, this spring's

events reflect the heart of Jewish Federation of the Desert's mission: to connect our community to Israel and to one another, in moments of solemnity and of celebration alike. Whether through a life-saving ambulance, cards of comfort, shared

laughter, or emergency support for a hospital serving the Negev, the desert community answered the call — demonstrating once again our solidarity with Israel is not a single moment, but an ongoing commitment.

Federation Partners with Desert Community Kitchen to Reduce Food Insecurity

By Leslie Pepper, Director of Community Engagement and Women's Philanthropy, Jewish Federation of the Desert

Last year Women's Philanthropy of Jewish Federation made the newly formed Desert Community Kitchen of Chabad of Palm Springs our community project initiative that we will work with on throughout the year, both financially and through volunteering to

prepare nutritious Kosher meals for members in need throughout our community.

Desert Community Kitchen by the Numbers: Since its inception a year ago, there have been 4,600+ cookies baked, 3,020+ meals prepared and over 550+ hours of

volunteerism.

If you know someone in need who can benefit from a home-cooked meal or would like to volunteer with Jewish Federation of the Desert, please email leslie.pepper@jfedps.org.



Leslie Pepper, Dr. Gary Levin, Halle Kohn-Levine, Stephanie Ross and Bebsabe Morrison



Stephanie Ross



Halle Kohn-Levine and Dr. Gary Levin



Leslie Pepper

DESERT JEWISH NEWS

A Publication of
Jewish Federation of the Desert
VOL. 54, No. 2

EDITORIAL

Miriam H. Bent, Editor
Bailey Communications,
Layout & Design
Chief Executive Officer
Danny Labin

DJN STATEMENT

The Desert Jewish 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 DJN seeks to serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas and opinions in the Jewish community.

The DJN is published monthly, ten months a year by Jewish Federation of the Desert, 69-710 Highway 111, Rancho Mirage, CA 92270, 760-324-4737, fax 760-324-3154.

ARTICLES & ADVERTISING

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The DJN is not responsible if ads violate applicable laws and the advertiser will indemnify, hold harmless and defend the DJN from all claims made by government agencies and consumers for any reason based on ads carried in the DJN.



AHAVAT ACHIM Sun City Jewish Services

High Holy Day Services 5787 - 2026

Conducted by Rabbi Dr. Kenneth A. Emert & Cantorial Soloist Ezra Yaron
Accompanist Bruce Magnum



Selichot	Saturday, September 5	7:15 PM	Oasis Room • Sunset View Clubhouse
Erev Rosh Hashanah	Friday, September 11	7:15 PM	Sierra Ballroom, Mountain View Clubhouse
1 st day Rosh Hashanah	Saturday, September 12	10:00 AM	Sierra Ballroom, Mountain View Clubhouse
2 nd day Rosh Hashanah	Sunday, September 13	10:00 AM	Sierra Ballroom, Mountain View Clubhouse
Kol Nidre /Yom Kippur	Sunday, September 20	7:00 PM	Sierra Ballroom, Mountain View Clubhouse
Yom Kippur AM/Yizkor	Monday, September 21	10:00 AM	Sierra Ballroom, Mountain View Clubhouse
Yom Kippur PM/Neilah	Monday, September 21	5-7 PM	Sierra Ballroom, Mountain View Clubhouse
Break-the-Fast	Monday, September 21	7:15 PM	Mountain View Clubhouse

For more information please contact Nadine Brinhendler, President: 707-332-3047



Holiday Greetings

See Page 22.

Man Charged with Hate Crimes for Manhattan Central Synagogue Attack

By Will Bredderman, *Jewish Insider*

New York City authorities have leveled hate crimes charges against a Bronx man arrested on Friday evening, August 14 for attacking a woman and a guard during Shabbat services at Central Synagogue in Manhattan — marking the latest in a wave of antisemitic incidents targeting the world's largest Jewish community outside Israel.

NYPD Commissioner Jessica Tisch revealed that 46-year-old Larry Montes will be prosecuted for assault and criminal mischief as hate crimes, "among other charges," after police arrested him for striking a woman, damaging property and head-butting a member of the Reform synagogue's security detail.

Video from the Upper East Side synagogue's livestream captured the terrified reaction as a man, whom police have identified as Montes, burst screaming into Friday night Shabbat services before a guard forced him from the premises.

It was during his exit that Montes

became physically violent, though victims experienced only minor injuries.

"I'm relieved that no one was seriously injured. Those who were hurt were evaluated at the scene and are doing well. There are no known additional threats at this time, and additional NYPD resources have been deployed to the synagogue," Tisch posted, noting her personal connection to the congregation. "Central Synagogue is where I grew up. In joy and in sorrow, it has always been a place of comfort and peace. What happened there tonight is deeply painful. A place of worship should never be a crime scene."

Mayor Zohran Mamdani offered his own condolences and assurances following the assault.

"I can only imagine the pain and fear an attack like this, during Shabbat services, causes for the congregation and for Jewish New Yorkers across our city," he wrote in a post on X. "Every New Yorker must be able to observe their religion without fear of

violence. This despicable act has no place in our city, and our administration will do everything in our power to keep Jewish New Yorkers safe."

The arrest comes just weeks after Central Synagogue Rabbi Angela Buchdahl publicly castigated the mayor over a viral video released on his official social media channels denouncing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as a "war criminal." Buchdahl warned that singling out the Jewish state as "uniquely monstrous" put Jewish New Yorkers in danger.

"You say you want to keep the Jews of New York City safe. But safety is not just about providing extra protection at parades and synagogues. Safety is about creating a climate in which Jews do not need to feel maligned or indicted by the city's leaders, where we do not need to feel

there is a bullseye on our backs," Buchdahl wrote. "You cannot claim to protect Jews while using the power of your office to make Jewish identity morally tainted and imperiled."

Mamdani, whose anti-Israel activism helped propel him to prominence on the left, faced near-identical calls from a roundtable of rabbis he invited to City Hall on 4 days earlier. Among the groups represented at the event was the Union for Reform Judaism, which responded to the attack on Friday by encouraging Congress to pass the bipartisan Jewish American Security Act, and highlighting the funding the legislation would provide for enhanced security at synagogues.

"Jewish spiritual practice includes study, prayer and yes, action. Let us double down on all three," URJ said in a statement.



HAR-EL GALEN PRESENTS

THE SECOND ANNUAL SUKKOT EVENT

More Than Lunch...More Than a Movie...An Afternoon You Won't Forget!

Saturday, September 26 - 12 Noon
Hot Dogs ■ Snacks ■ Friends

Then settle in for a short video and a lively conversation that just might just leave you thinking differently.

Free Admission

Donations are welcome and will benefit those less fortunate in our Valley.

SPECIAL GUEST: SCOTT MAURO
Executive Producer, a Winner of the 2026 Tony Award-Winning Production of "Death of a Salesman"

Scott's resume is almost impossible to read without taking a breath...
14 Broadway Shows ■ 20 Television Specials ■ 41 Live Events
■ 13 Virtual Events ■ 14 Television Commercials & Video Press Kits

Seriously...can you read that in one breath?
If not, wait until you hear what Scott has to say.

MODERATOR: DANNY LABIN
CEO, Jewish Federation of the Desert

Before heading the Jewish Federation, Danny spent nearly two decades with Sesame Workshop in Israel, helping bring educational programming to children around the world. His accomplishments include:

- Producing "Rechov Sumsum," Israel's beloved version of Sesame Street.
- Executive Producing Shalom Sesame, inspiring Jewish families across North America.
- Building bridges through education, media, and community.

Yes, Danny speaks Hebrew. No, you don't have to.
He'll be speaking in English—With just enough California charm.

RSVP TODAY razpd@aol.com. The event is held in a gated community. The address and gate code will be sent after your RSVP is confirmed.

 **HAR-EL**
A Passion for Study and Working in the Jewish Tradition
Member, Union for Reform Judaism
Est. 2004

 **Jewish Federation OF THE DESERT**



Dear Friends,

I am so proud of what we accomplished together last year as a community, and I am hopeful that we will continue to come together as LGBTQ+ Jews to celebrate, learn, and connect in new ways! Jewish Federation of the Desert is honored to carry on the Shalom Group's legacy of community building, and I'd like to extend a hug of gratitude to Bill Amplo for his many years of commitment.

Federation will be convening a meeting on Wednesday, September 9th at 4 pm for everyone interested in having some form of leadership role (dreaming big, planning the details, making things happen!) in the future. The only requirement is having a sense of dedication to what the inclusiveness of the LGBTQ+ Jewish community of the Desert can be!

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH ~ 4 PM
Jewish Federation of the Desert
69710 Highway 111, Rancho Mirage 92270

Looking forward to doing great things,


Danny Labin, CEO,
Jewish Federation of the Desert

PS: The September 9th meeting will be hybrid. Participation in-person at the Federation is welcome, and a Zoom option will also be available. In either case, advance registration is required by emailing info@jfedps.org or calling Federation at (760) 324-4737. And please feel free to reach out to me directly with any questions: danny.labin@jfedps.org.

State Probe Finds California District Didn't Do Enough When Student Said to Teacher of Jewish Peer, 'They Deserved the Holocaust'

By Aaron Bandler, Jewish News Syndicate

A San Francisco Bay Area school district didn't do enough to respond to an incident, in which a student told a teacher of his Jewish peer that "they deserved the Holocaust," the California Department of Education found in a report dated June 9.

On Feb. 3, "Student B" made an antisemitic comment to an AP statistics teacher at Westmont High School, in Campbell, Calif., about "Student A," with whom the teacher was speaking. "Don't talk to that Jew. That's why the Holocaust happened. I'm glad it happened," the student said, according to a report from the Campbell Union High School District whose six schools have 8,600 students in

the greater San Jose area, and from the high school.

A complaint to the district, which was filed on February 4 and supplemented a week later, alleged that the teacher "pointed at Student A, smiled and laughed and took no remedial action." "In this class, students regularly make derogatory remarks directed at various protected characteristics," and the "teacher takes no remedial action in response," the district stated in its report. The state education department stated that it found that the district's conclusion that the "teacher maintained a discriminatory classroom environment is consistent with law."

Lilac Kibel told JNS that her son, Yoav, called her that day "shaking" from the incident. Yoav was "very disappointed" and "humiliated" and told the teacher, "'Seriously, this is how you're going to deal with this?'" Kibel told JNS. "The teacher just shrugs." When she and her son met with the principal, the latter was "a little bit dismissive," Kibel said.

He told Kibel and her son that the district was investigating and, as such, it was out of his hands, she told JNS. She said that she started crying and shaking and told the principal that her family fled Spain 500 years ago due to the Inquisition. "I'm sitting here in 2026, my son just had an antisemitic event and there's nothing that you can do?" she said that she told the principal. After pleading with him, the principal told her that he would get back to her in a few days, Kibel told JNS.

The family was later told that Yoav could study AP statistics at a nearby high school, according to Kibel. The district verified that and the principal "facilitated" the offer, because the offending teacher was the only one offering instruction in AP statistics at the school, the state education department found in its report.

"This is his senior year. He needs to start introducing himself to new students, new environment," Kibel told JNS. "He did sports, so he misses all the events for the sports in his last year." "Instead of graduating with his good taste after four years of hard labor and work, he needs to be the one that everybody talks about him and asking about what really happened in that class," she said.

It was once taboo to question whether Jews deserved the Holocaust. "Is it a legitimate question now—we are debating if it's something that should happen or shouldn't happen?" Kibel told JNS. "Yoav, at this point, told me, 'I just want to disappear. I don't want to be in this scenario. I didn't choose it. Why me?'"

The district launched an investigation, and Kibel said that her family received the results in May. The district's findings, which JNS viewed, stated that the teacher denied having heard the antisemitic

remark and said that he didn't point and laugh at Yoav.

The investigator didn't find the teacher's explanation credible. It was "more likely than not" that he heard the offending comments and laughed, per the district's April 24 report.

The district found that the way that the teacher handled the situation had nothing to do with the student's Jewish background. The teacher "maintained a classroom environment in which students used inappropriate language" that "often occurred without any intervention."

The district found that the teacher "failed to properly maintain the classroom environment, including failing to provide a welcoming classroom free from discrimination and/or harassment, in violation of district policy" and that the district will be "taking appropriate action to address these findings."

Kibel told JNS that despite the district's findings about the teacher, it found that "the principal was OK, the superintendent was OK, the system worked perfectly fine." The teacher is still teaching at the school, she told JNS. "As far as I know, nothing happened to the teacher," she said. "He's going to let this thing happen for our children to come. For the next generations."

An appeal was filed with the state's education department about the district's findings.

The department determined that the district's response was insufficient, and it required the district to provide training to all teachers at the school about maintaining a classroom free from discrimination by Sept. 1.

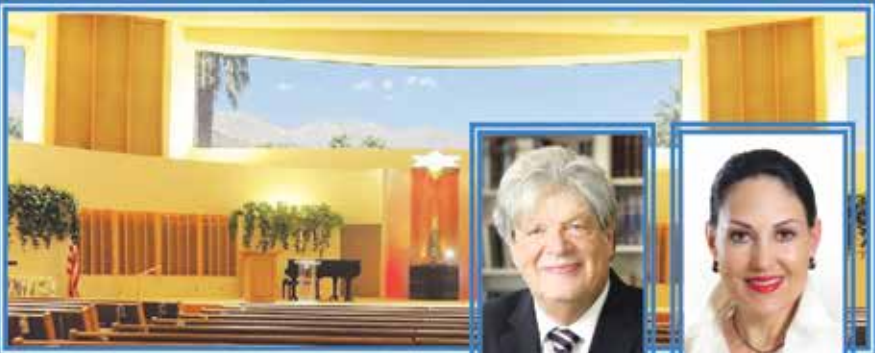
The training must have "particular emphases on antisemitism and addressing inappropriate peer conduct" and provide messaging throughout the school on how students can report instances of discriminatory classroom environments to administrators, per the department's ruling.

"We got a letter from the superintendent that instead of doing whatever the state asked them to do in the beginning of September, they're going to do it in the middle of

continued on next page

TEMPLE ISAIAH WELCOMES YOU!

2026 HIGH HOLIDAYS 5787





Rabbi Marc Rubenstein

Cantorial Soloist • World Renowned

Svetlana Portnyansky



David Bent: Ba'al Shacharit/Torah/Shofar; Joel Baker: Pianist

TEMPLE ISAIAH INVITES YOU TO THEIR WARM, WELCOMING AND INSPIRING HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES

Erev Rosh Hashanah • Friday, September 11 • 6:30 pm
First day Rosh Hashanah • Saturday, September 12 • 9:30 am
Second day Rosh Hashanah • Sunday, September 13 • 9:30 am
Kol Nidre • Sunday, September 20 • 6:30 pm

YOM KIPPUR • MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21
Morning service • 9:30 am Study with Rabbi • Noon
Mincha • 4:30 pm Yizkor • 5:15 pm Neilah • 6:00 pm
Havdalah • 7:00 pm – FOLLOWED BY FESTIVE BREAK THE FAST

332 WEST ALEJO ROAD, PALM SPRINGS, CA 92262

INFORMATION/TICKETS/MEMBERSHIP: 760-325-2281
Armed security will be present at all services.





NOTICE RE: EARLY DEADLINE FOR OCTOBER 2026 DESERT JEWISH NEWS

Since this year's High Holidays coincide with our normal publication dates, we have an early deadline for submissions and advertising. Please note that you will have to submit all materials to Miriam Bent, DJN Editor, by NOON on Thursday, September 3 to have your materials included in the October paper. Thank you for your cooperation.

continued from page 6

September, sometime on Sept. 15," Kibel told JNS. "They're already trying to push back," she said.

After Yoav graduated, he told his mother that "I don't feel like California is a safe place for Jewish people anymore. I don't want to be here," Kibel told JNS. He left a week after graduation to study at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Kibel believes that her son has experienced post-traumatic stress symptoms. "Every time we talk about it, he just gets irritated. He gets annoyed," Kibel told JNS. "It's painful for him to talk about it." "I feel that I lost my son," she said. "I don't know when he's going to come back here and live here in California."

Tali Klima, spokeswoman for the Bay Area Jewish Coalition, told JNS that "when students engage in hate-motivated speech or behavior, educators have a responsibility to respond with clarity, compassion and accountability." "In this case, not only did the teacher fail to do so, but the school's lack of meaningful action compounded the harm," she said. "The student showed remarkable courage by trying to resolve the situation collaboratively but was dismissed by the very adults who were supposed to protect him," she said.

"No student should have to fight to be taken seriously after being victimized at school," Klima said. Jada Chiu, communications and community engagement coordinator for the district,

told JNS that "the district addresses instructional matters individually through established policies and processes." "Our official finding serves as the district's

complete response on this matter, and we have no further details to add," she said.



How Sweet It Is!

Ice Cream Social at Temple Sinai welcoming new and prospective congregants, and Religious School families.

Sunday, August 30 at 3:00 PM

Take this opportunity to meet Rabbi David Novak and the rest of this warm and welcoming community.

Temple Sinai
73251 Hovley Lane West
Palm Desert, CA 92260
www.templesinaipd.org 760-568-9699

Temple Sinai Palm Desert ~ High Holy Days 5787

Where Jewish Life Blooms in the Desert

Rabbi David Novak and Cantorial Soloist Wayne Abravanel

Erev Rosh Hashanah

Friday, September 11

7:00 PM

Oneg following

Rosh Hashanah Morning

Saturday, September 12

10:00 AM

ASL INTERPRETER WILL BE PRESENT FOR EREV ROSH HASHANAH, KOL NIDRE, AND YIZKOR/NEILAH SERVICES.

Erev Yom Kippur/Kol Nidre

Sunday, September 20

7:00 PM

Yom Kippur Day:

Monday, September 21

10:00 AM

Healing Service During the Break

Afternoon Service/Yizkor: 4:00 PM.

Break-the-Fast following (Reservations Required)



TEMPLE SINAI

To inquire about High Holy Day tickets (\$150-\$250) or membership, please email Barry Klein at administrator@templesinaipd.org

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INTERNATIONAL
March
OF THE LIVING

THE MARCH OF THE LIVING

JOIN JEWISH FEDERATION OF THE DESERT TO MARCH IN 2027

THE DESERT'S FIRST COMMUNITY MISSION • POLAND • MAY 3–9, 2027



The March of the Living brings together participants from more than 52 countries and regions around the world. It is the world's largest Jewish educational program for teens and adults, offering a profound opportunity to honor the memory of the Holocaust while celebrating the resilience and continuity of the Jewish people.

In 2027, a mission from the Desert will march alongside participants from across the globe—a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to forge meaningful connections and share moments of remembrance, reflection, hope, and joy that create lifelong friendships and an enduring sense of Jewish unity.



**SAVE THE
DATE!**

Jewish Federation and the Tolerance Education Center are excited to begin planning our first-ever March of the Living Mission, **May 3-9, 2027**. The program begins at the main Auschwitz “Arbeit Mach Frei” Gate and it concludes at the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp. The weeklong program includes guided visits to Kraków, Auschwitz and Birkenau, Warsaw and Majdanek in Poland.

Poland: May 3-9, 2027 | **Optional Israel Add-On:** May 9/10-13, 2027

Participants will also have the opportunity to extend their journey with an optional add-on to Israel to celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel Independence Day)—a powerful way to continue from remembering our past to celebrating the strength and future of the Jewish people.

Stay tuned for additional details, itinerary information, and registration opportunities. We hope you'll join us for this unforgettable and life-changing experience.

ONLY 36 SPOTS AVAILABLE | APPLICATIONS OPEN MID-SEPTEMBER 2026

Contact Leslie Pepper for more information at Leslie.Pepper@JFEDPS.org or (760) 324-4737



Netanyahu Blasts Mamdani Over Threat

By United with Israel Staff

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office sharply criticized New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani after he suggested his administration is exploring whether it has the legal authority to arrest the Israeli leader if he visits New York for the UN General Assembly in September.

Speaking on "The Interview," a New York Times podcast, Mamdani said he believes Netanyahu "belongs in The Hague" and confirmed his administration is consulting the city's Law Department about whether the mayor can direct the NYPD to detain a visiting foreign leader based on the

International Criminal Court's arrest warrant.

In response, the Prime Minister's Office dismissed the ICC as a "kangaroo court" with no jurisdiction over either Israel or the United States. It said the warrant against Netanyahu was issued by former ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan in an attempt to divert attention from sexual misconduct allegations against him.

The statement also defended Israel's conduct in the war against Hamas, saying the country has taken unprecedented measures to minimize civilian casualties

while fighting "a genocidal terrorist organization" that uses civilians as human shields.

Turning directly to Mamdani, Netanyahu's office said the mayor should "focus on fixing the damage his policies have caused New York" instead of attacking "the leader of the Jewish state and the only democracy in the Middle East."

Meanwhile, the New York Post reported that Republican New York City Councilwoman Inna Vernikov sent a letter to Secretary of State Marco Rubio urging the federal government to intervene. Vernikov

argued that Mamdani's threat to arrest Netanyahu "must bear consequences" and asked the State Department to determine whether such an action would violate U.S. law and warrant federal prosecution.

The proposal has drawn widespread criticism from U.S. and Israeli officials, who argue that any attempt by New York City to arrest a visiting foreign head of government would be legally impossible because the United States is not a party to the ICC and federal law and diplomatic immunity supersede any local authority.

Important Message from Desert Outreach Synagogue Re: Location of Services

By Rabbi Dr. Jules King

I want to share an important update regarding Desert Outreach Synagogue's home for the High Holy Days and beyond.

As many of you know, we had planned to relocate our services to the University of California, Riverside Palm Desert campus. Unfortunately, we were recently informed that a new statewide university policy no longer permits armed security officers on campus.

After careful consultation with our leadership, Board of Directors, and security professionals, we unanimously concluded that the safety and security of our congregation must remain our highest priority. As a result, we have canceled our agreement with UCR.

I am pleased to announce that all High Holy Day and regular Shabbat services will continue to be held at the Unitarian Universalist Church. As always, trained

armed security officers will continue to be present at all services, reflecting our unwavering commitment to the safety and security of our congregation.

As we prepare for the High Holy Days, we do so with confidence, gratitude, and excitement. We invite you to join us for a meaningful and inspiring season of worship and community. Please note updated ad in the paper, which includes an announcement regarding a special High Holy Day opportunity for visitors and first-time guests.

Thank you for your trust, generosity, and steadfast support over the past ten years. Because of you, Desert Outreach Synagogue continues to grow as a vibrant, resilient, and welcoming Jewish community. I look forward with great optimism to all we will accomplish together in the years ahead.

Nauru Opens Embassy in Jerusalem

By United with Israel Staff

The Pacific island nation of Nauru announced July 22 that it will open an embassy in Jerusalem, becoming the 10th country to establish an embassy in Israel's capital. The decision follows a meeting last month between Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar and Nauru's Vice President and Foreign Minister Lionel Aingimea. It also

comes less than a week after Sa'ar announced a similar agreement with Colombia's incoming foreign minister to move that country's embassy to Jerusalem.

"Thank you, Nauru!" Sa'ar wrote on X, thanking President David Adeang and Aingimea for the Cabinet's decision.

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5787 ✪ 2026

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Friday, September 11, 6:30PM

**FIRST DAY ROSH HASHANAH**
Saturday, September 12, 10:00AM

**SECOND DAY ROSH HASHANAH BRUNCH**
Sunday, September 13th
Call or email for RSVP and location.

**KOL NIDRE**
Sunday, September 20th, 6:30PM

**YOM KIPPUR**
Monday, September 21, 10:00AM
Morning Service

**YIZKOR: 5:30PM**
NEILAH (CLOSING SERVICE): 6:00PM

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*May the New Year
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The Shofar Still Sounds: From Concern to Our Commitment

By Rabbi Dr. Jules King, Desert Outreach Synagogue

There is no denying that we approach this High Holy Day season carrying more than our Machzorim. Most, if not all of us will arrive with heavy hearts. We have witnessed a disturbing rise in antisemitism across our nation and around the world. Hatred of our people and Israel is rampant. Jewish students are increasingly made to feel unwelcome on college campuses. Jewish institutions continue to strengthen security. Too many of us have become accustomed to reading headlines that remind us hatred has not disappeared.

It would be easy to allow fear to become the loudest voice in the room.

But every year, before any rabbi delivers a sermon, before the choir sings, before we begin the familiar prayers of the season, another voice breaks through the silence.

The shofar.

That ancient call has echoed through every chapter of Jewish history. It sounded as our ancestors journeyed through the wilderness. It called prophets and kings to awaken their hearts. It was heard in times of joy and in times of exile, after

destruction and during renewal. It has accompanied our people through centuries of uncertainty, persecution, and remarkable resilience.

The shofar has never waited for perfect circumstances to be heard. Neither should we.

The High Holy Days remind us that Judaism has never been sustained simply because our ancestors survived difficult times. Judaism has endured because generation after generation chose to remain committed—to God, to Torah, to one another, and to the sacred responsibility of building Jewish life. That same choice belongs to us.

Our response to today's antisemitism cannot be limited to concern alone. Concern is understandable, but commitment is transformational. The strongest answer to hatred is not to become smaller or quieter. It is to become stronger, more visible, more connected, and more engaged as Jews.

Connect to a synagogue. Bring your children and grandchildren. Invite

someone who has been away for a while. Learn something new about our tradition. Volunteer. Support Jewish organizations. Reach out to a neighbor who may be feeling isolated. Every act that strengthens Jewish life is an act of hope. Every mitzvah becomes a quiet but unmistakable declaration that our future will not be determined by those who hate us, but by those who love being Jewish.

This High Holy Day season, as the shofar calls us to awaken our souls, may it also awaken our commitment. Let it remind us that we are heirs to an extraordinary story - a people who have faced unimaginable challenges and yet never surrendered their faith, their hope, or their identity.

The Book of Life is opened each Rosh Hashanah, but the next chapter of Jewish life will be written not only by our prayers, but by our presence, our generosity, our courage, and our willingness to show up for one another.

DESERT COMMUNITY KITCHEN



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Note: All services will continue at the Unitarian Church



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By Ailin Vilches Arquello, The Algemeiner

Amid growing efforts by some governments to isolate Israel internationally, Greece has moved decisively in the opposite direction, approving a landmark \$4 billion air defense agreement that underscores Jerusalem's growing importance as a strategic security partner for Europe.

Greece's National Security Council, known as KYSEA, on July 23, 2026, approved procurement contracts for a multi-layered air and missile defense network built around technology from two of Israel's largest defense companies, Rafael Advanced Defense Systems and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI).

The system, named "Achilles Shield," is designed to defend Greece against ballistic missiles, aircraft and drones. Greek Defense Minister Nikos Dendias said it would become fully operational within 35 months and that Greek companies would manufacture at least 25 percent of the network.

Worth up to 3.5 billion euros, or approximately \$4 billion, the project is expected to combine three principal Israeli systems: Rafael's David's Sling for higher-tier missile defense, IAI's Barak MX for medium- and long-range aerial threats, and Rafael's Spyder system for shorter-range protection.

David's Sling, jointly developed by Rafael and the United States, is designed to intercept tactical ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, aircraft and medium- to long-range rockets.

The Barak MX system provides a flexible layer of protection against threats including fighter aircraft, helicopters, drones, cruise missiles and incoming projectiles. Its family of interceptors has published ranges of approximately 35, 70 and 150 kilometers, allowing individual batteries to respond to different types of threats within a unified command network.

Spyder adds mobile, shorter-range protection against aircraft, helicopters, drones and other low-altitude threats. Together, the three systems would give Greece an integrated defensive network capable of identifying and engaging threats at different distances and altitudes.

The initial deployment is expected to focus on strategically sensitive areas, particularly the northeastern region of

Thrace and islands in the eastern Aegean Sea near Turkey. Additional purchases could eventually extend the network across more of the country.

Greece has spent years relying partly on aging Russian-made S-300, TOR and OSA systems, alongside American Patriot batteries. Maintenance and support for the Russian systems have become increasingly difficult, while advances in Turkish missile, rocket and drone capabilities have intensified pressure on Athens to modernize.

Although Greece and Turkey are both NATO members, they remain divided over maritime boundaries, airspace, territorial waters and energy resources in the eastern Mediterranean. Greece spends nearly 3.5 percent of its gross domestic product on defense, among the highest proportions in the alliance.

Achilles Shield forms part of a broader Greek plan to spend approximately 28 billion euros on military modernization through 2036. Athens is also moving to acquire as many as 40 US-made F-35 fighter jets and new naval frigates from France and Italy.

The agreement builds on years of expanding defense cooperation between Greece and Israel. The two countries operate an Israeli-run air training center in southern Greece, conduct regular joint military exercises and cooperate on cybersecurity, surveillance and counter-drone technology.

Greece has also purchased 36 Israeli-made PULS rocket artillery systems in a separate agreement worth roughly \$750 million. The weapons will help protect Greece's northeastern border and its islands in the Aegean Sea.

At its headline value, the Achilles Shield procurement exceeds Israel's previous record defense export agreement: the approximately \$3.5 billion sale of IAI's Arrow 3 missile defense system to Germany in 2023.

The benefits of the Greek project will be divided among multiple Israeli and Greek companies, but its scale still represents a historic achievement for Israel's defense sector and reflects the growing European demand for battle-tested Israeli air defense technology.

Israel's defense exports reached a

record \$19.2 billion in 2025, an increase of nearly 30 percent over the previous year. Government-to-government agreements accounted for approximately \$10 billion, or more than half of the total.

Beyond its economic importance, the Greek agreement carries considerable diplomatic and strategic weight for Israel.

While several European governments have sought to restrict military cooperation with the Jewish state, Athens is entrusting a central part of its national defense architecture to Israeli technology. Maintaining the network will require

years of training, upgrades, replacement interceptors and technical cooperation, potentially linking the two countries' security establishments for decades.

The deal therefore represents more than a major arms sale. By helping protect Greek cities, military bases, islands and critical infrastructure, Israel is becoming increasingly embedded in the defense of NATO's southeastern flank — strengthening its position as an indispensable security partner even as its diplomatic opponents seek to push it further into isolation.



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SHOFAR BY THE LAKE OUTDOOR SERVICE ----- 5:45 PM

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SEPTEMBER 20-21, 2026

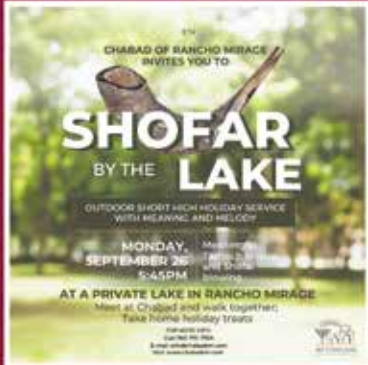
KOL NIDREI ----- 6:20 PM
YIZKOR MEMORIAL SERVICE ----- 11:45 AM
NEILAH/CLOSING SERVICE & SHOFAR ----- 6:15 PM

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Federal Judge Dismisses Lawsuit Challenging California Law Addressing Jew-Hatred in K-12 Schools

By Aaron Bandler, Jewish New Syndicate

A federal judge dismissed with prejudice a lawsuit against AB 715, California's law aimed at combating antisemitism in K-12 schools, on July 27, barring the plaintiffs from bringing the same claims again.

The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee filed the lawsuit in November on behalf of parents, teachers and students in California, as well as Los Angeles Educators for Palestine, alleging that the law violates the First Amendment.

Antisemitism Prevention Coordinator

AB 715, which took effect in January, creates an antisemitism prevention coordinator within the state's Office of Civil Rights and establishes requirements for addressing discrimination in schools.

Noël Wise, a judge in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, denied the plaintiffs' request for a preliminary injunction that would have blocked enforcement of the law while the case proceeded. In a December 31 ruling, Wise said the plaintiffs "have failed to demonstrate that their classroom speech

is protected by the First Amendment" and therefore "failed to allege an adequate First Amendment violation."

Wise also stated that the plaintiffs made "inconsistent" arguments by claiming

"This final dismissal now allows California to fully focus on implementing essential safety measures for Jewish students."

the law was vague in its definition of antisemitism while objecting to the inclusion of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition.

In the July 27 ruling dismissing the case Wise wrote that the plaintiffs' opposition to the motion to dismiss repeated "several arguments that the court has already considered and dispatched" and did not provide a compelling reason for the court to revisit its previous findings.

She stated that the only new argument provided was that the law violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment because it establishes an antisemitism prevention coordinator under an office of civil rights while leaving coordinators for other protected classes to future legislation. Wise rejected that argument, writing that the law addresses antisemitism in a neutral manner and that the state's civil rights office established under the law is intended to address all forms of discrimination, not only antisemitism.

Wise also cited SB 48, a companion bill to AB 715, a companion measure signed into law that creates "additional coordinators tasked with rooting out different types of discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of race or religion," thus undermining the argument.

"The court's decision to dismiss the plaintiffs' claims with prejudice firmly establishes once again that the First Amendment does not grant teachers or students the right to dictate school curriculum—a responsibility that belongs solely to the state," Carly Gammill, director of legal policy at StandWithUs, told JNS.

"Amid an unprecedented rise in antisemitism, the ruling rightly validates the state's authority to direct resources toward protecting the Jewish community without it being considered discriminatory against other groups," Gammill said. "This final dismissal now allows California to fully focus on implementing essential safety measures for Jewish students."

David Bocarsly, CEO of Jewish California, stated that "this ruling affirms what we've said from the start: AB 715 is a critical and

constitutionally sound tool to address antisemitism in schools, alongside protections the legislature has extended to other forms of discrimination through companion legislation."

"This ruling, and the fact that the case has been dismissed with prejudice, affirms that AB 715 is a strong, legitimate approach to protecting Jewish students, and all students, against harassment and discrimination," the Jewish Community Relations Council Bay Area told JNS.

"The court has decisively rejected claims that AB 715 violates First Amendment rights or that it is in any way exclusionary," the group said. "We are grateful to Attorney General Rob Bonta and his office for their strong defense of the bill and commitment to protecting California students from antisemitism and discrimination. This clears the way for the law to move forward as intended."

Teresa Drenick, Northern California regional director of the American Jewish Committee, told JNS that Wise "correctly rejected the view that the First Amendment affords teachers in public schools the right to teach any way that they wish."

"The law does not now, nor has it ever, recognized such a First Amendment right for teachers," she said. "The court has twice rejected a legal challenge to AB 715. In both cases, the judge wrote extensive and detailed reasoning for her rulings, and it's now time for the law to be fully implemented with the governor's office appointing the requisite staff to the newly formed office of civil rights and the requisite coordinators to address antisemitism and other forms of bias."

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Families with Young Children
Sunday, September 13 | 2:00pm - 3:30pm
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Kol Nidre
Sunday, September 20 | 6:30 - 8:00pm
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House Passes \$1.15 Trillion Defense Bill Expanding Cooperation With Israel

Just six Democrats voted to back the defense bill, which expands military technology cooperation with Israel.

By World Israel News Staff

The House of Representatives narrowly approved a \$1.15 trillion defense policy bill that would significantly expand US-Israel weapons-development cooperation and provide \$750 million for joint missile defense, counter-drone, subterranean warfare and emerging-technology programs.

The fiscal 2027 National Defense Authorization Act passed 216-212, an unusually partisan result for legislation that has traditionally attracted broad support from both parties.

A total of 209 Republicans, six Democrats and one independent supported the measure. Seven Republicans and 205 Democrats voted against it, while three lawmakers did not vote.

The NDAA authorizes defense programs and establishes military policy but does not itself provide the money. Congress would still have to approve separate appropriations legislation before much of the authorized spending could be released.

At the center of the debate over Israel was Section 219, which would establish a US-Israel Defense Technology Cooperation Initiative inside the Pentagon.

The provision directs the defense secretary to appoint an "executive agent" responsible for coordinating and accelerating bilateral research, development, testing, evaluation and industrial cooperation.

The official would identify jointly



developed and Israeli-origin technologies that could be incorporated into US weapons programs, help move technology from research into procurement and promote joint ventures, licensing agreements and

US-based manufacturing partnerships with Israeli companies.

Areas covered by the initiative include counter-drone systems, anti-tunnel technology, missile and air defense, artificial intelligence, quantum computing, autonomous weapons, directed-energy systems, advanced sensors, cybersecurity, electronic warfare, biotechnology and military logistics.

Supporters said the measure would organize existing cooperation more efficiently and give American forces faster access to technologies developed by Israel through years of combat experience.

"Our national security depends on a ready, capable, and well-equipped fighting force," House Armed Services Committee Chairman Mike Rogers said after the vote.

AIPAC welcomed the provision as a step that would "help keep America safe and bolster our strategic capabilities."

The organization said the initiative would

give American troops an advantage in the technologies expected to shape future warfare while supporting US manufacturing and defense-sector employment.

Opponents from both parties argued that Section 219 would institutionalize the military partnership too deeply inside the Pentagon and make it more difficult for future presidents or Congresses to reduce cooperation with Israel.

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez described the provision as "an existential threat to American sovereignty and democracy" and claimed it would "merge parts of our military with the Israel Defense Forces."

Rep. Thomas Massie, a Kentucky Republican who has repeatedly opposed military assistance to Israel, said after the vote that Section 219 was a "betrayal of our sovereignty."

The House did not allow a floor vote on a Massie-backed proposal to remove Section 219 altogether.

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S'lihot

Saturday, September 5 S'lihot 7:30 pm

Rosh Hashanah

Saturday, September 12 First Day 9:00 am

Sunday, September 13 Second Day 9:00 am

Yom Kippur

Sunday, September 20 Kol Nidre 6:15 pm

Monday, September 21 Morning 9:00 am

Study Session 4:00 pm

Yizkor, Minhah, Martyrology 4:45 pm

Ne'ilah 6:30 pm

Sounding the Shofar 7:30 pm



Two Orthodox Jews Win in NYC Amid Flurry of Anti-Israel Progressive Victories

By Corey Walker, The Algemeiner

Two Orthodox Jewish Democrats secured primary victories in New York City legislative races this week, highlighting both the strength of Orthodox voting blocs in local elections and growing tensions surrounding antisemitism and Israel within the Democratic Party.

In Queens, Pesach Osina won the Democratic primary for State Assembly District 23 with roughly 60% of the vote, positioning himself as the frontrunner heading into the general election. In Brooklyn, Joey Cohen-Saban advanced

in Assembly District 45 after emerging victorious in a heavily Orthodox district.

Both candidates emphasized local issues and Jewish community concerns, such as fighting antisemitism and strengthening ties with Israel, while also offering pointed critiques of the modern Democratic Party's direction.

Following his victory, Osina said the Democratic Party has changed in ways that concern many longtime supporters. "It's not the party that we have grown up with," he said, while stressing that he still views the party as broadly aligned with

American and Jewish values.

He vowed to combat antisemitism from his post in Albany if elected to office, recounting one incident in his district in which a constituent walking along Mott Avenue had antisemitic slurs hurled at her, including being called a Nazi.

Osina ran in a Queens district with a large Orthodox population and focused his campaign on issues including cost of living, public safety, and recovery from severe weather impacts. His win all but assures him a seat in Albany unless a major upset occurs in November.

In Brooklyn, Cohen-Saban's campaign centered on a platform focused on neighborhood safety, education funding, and strengthening ties between New York State and Israel.

According to his campaign website, Saban has prioritized combating antisemitism, expanding hate crime

enforcement, and increasing security funding for houses of worship and community centers. He has also called for stronger support for yeshivas and nonpublic schools, arguing that all students should have access to adequate educational resources regardless of school system.

On public safety, Saban has advocated for expanded community policing, increased foot patrols, and policies aimed at reducing quality-of-life crimes. His platform also emphasizes opposition to what he describes as "irresponsible" housing and shelter placement policies, calling for more community input in development decisions.

Saban has also highlighted the importance of maintaining strong US-Israel relations, describing himself on his campaign website as a committed advocate for the alliance in Albany who will resist efforts to weaken it.

The back-to-back wins reflect the continued influence of Orthodox Jewish communities in select New York City districts, where turnout and local organizing often outweigh broader citywide trends.

They also underscore an internal divide within the Democratic Party, as candidates like Osina and Saban adopt a posture of running firmly on the Democratic ballot line while publicly expressing concerns about the party's evolving positions on cultural and foreign policy issues.

New York City has emerged as a battleground on issues related to the Israel-Palestine conflict, a dynamic underscored by the political rise of NYC Mayor Zohran Mamdani. In the same recent slate of Democratic primaries that saw several anti-Israel candidates win citywide, Osina and Saban's victories offered pro-Israel and Jewish communities a notable counterpoint, demonstrating that Orthodox-backed, pro-Israel candidates can still win decisively at the local level.

Both candidates will face general election contests in November, though their heavily Democratic districts make them strong favorites to win.

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Netherlands Bans Israeli Goods from Judea, Samaria and Golan, Threatening Violators with Jail

Although frequently described as an import ban, the decree reaches considerably further.

By World Israel News Staff

The Netherlands will prohibit trade in goods produced in Israeli communities in Judea, Samaria, and the Golan Heights beginning September 22, adopting one of Europe's most extensive national restrictions on commerce connected to the areas in question.

The temporary sanctions decree bans goods produced wholly or partly in Israeli communities included on a European Union postal-code list used to distinguish those areas from pre-1967 Israeli territory. It prohibits bringing the products into the Netherlands, purchasing or selling them directly or indirectly, arranging transactions involving them and attempting to circumvent the restrictions.

The measure was signed by King Willem-Alexander on July 13 and published in the Dutch official gazette on July 21. It is scheduled to enter force two months after publication and will expire after three years unless extended



Psagot winery, in Judea and Samaria, is one of the products The Netherlands will no longer label as "Made in Israel."

by legislation.

Although frequently described as an import ban, the decree reaches considerably further. It covers products containing materials or components obtained from the targeted communities and prevents

Dutch citizens and companies from buying the goods elsewhere in the EU. It also applies to brokers arranging transactions even when the products are destined for another EU country.

Dutch authorities said the combination of import, purchase and

sales restrictions was intended to close loopholes created by the EU's open internal borders, which could otherwise allow goods to enter through another member state before being sold in the Netherlands.

Transit shipments that merely pass through Dutch territory without entering the Dutch market will not be prohibited. The restrictions also do not constitute a general ban on products from Israel, and trade in goods produced within Israel's internationally recognized pre-1967 boundaries will remain legal.

The decree applies to Israeli communities in Judea and Samaria, including east Jerusalem, as well as the Golan Heights. Israel extended its sovereignty over east Jerusalem and the Golan, but the Netherlands and the European Union do not recognize those moves.



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Shabbat Schedule - September 2026

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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.

BEIT HAVERIM, Palm Springs

Rabbi Steven Rosenberg (rabbi@rosenberg@gmail.com) and Hazzan Dr. Sarah Sela. Where friends old and new gather Friday evenings at 6:30 pm for Shabbat services and festive Oneg gatherings. On Friday nights Shabbat services alternate between services and services/potluck dinners in members' homes and Shabbat mornings' nosh and drash/torah study online or in person at 10:30 am.

Beit Haverim has just arranged to hold their High Holiday services and some of their Friday night services in the clubhouse of Sun City Shadow Hills. For schedule of services, potluck Shabbat dinners, Shabbat morning programs and activities, check their website: beithaverimps.org, email beithaverimps@gmail.com or call 760-548-3908.

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(Member, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism) Rabbi Dr. JB Sacks (rabbi@congregationbethshalom.net); Ken Hailpern, Madrikh Ruhani/Spiritual Leader (ken@congregationbethshalom.net) 42600 Cook Street, Second Floor, Palm Desert, CA 92211. 760-200-3636. **Shabbat morning services** held every week at 9:30 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.

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332 West Alejo Road, Palm Springs, CA 92262, 760-325-2281 (Office open Tuesday-Thursday). Email: temple@templeisaiahps.com; Website: templeisaiahps.com. Shabbat services Friday evenings in either the Bochner sanctuary or Liberman Chapel at 6:30 pm, followed by Oneg. Torah services are on Shabbat mornings at 10:30 during season; Check website to confirm services and programming. 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.

TEMPLE SINAI, Palm Desert (Member, Union for Reform Judaism) Rabbi David Novak rabbi@templesinai.org. 73-251 Hovley Lane West, Palm Desert, CA 92260. www.templesinaipd.org 760-568-9699. Go to templesinaipd.org for access information. Shabbat services are in-person and online on Livestream at www.templesinaipd.org. Friday evening services 5:30 pm, preceded by pre-service Oneg at 5:00 pm. Saturday morning Torah study 8:45 am; Shabbat morning services 10 am. **Temple Sinai's Avi Levine Religious School open to children irrespective of parents' membership at Temple Sinai.** Contact Rabbi David Novak, for more information: educator@templesinaipd.org

BIKUR CHOLIM of Palm Springs

(Community Outreach). www.BikurCholimPS.com. Rabbi Yankel Kreiman, 760-325-8076.



Community Calendar of Programs - September 2026

Sunday, September 6

2:00 pm Tolerance Education

Center: Artist Talk – **Yael**

Atzmony "Tracing Oblivion-

Porcelain Maps Yael Atzmony is an Israeli ceramic artist, senior lecturer, and Head of the Department of Ceramic Design and Glass at Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem. Light refreshments served. RSVP: 760-625-6958.

Sunday, September 6

3:00-4:30 pm Jewish Federation of the Desert **PJ Library Rosh Hashanah Ice Cream Social** for

families and their young children. See ad page 2. RSVP to Leslie. pepper@jfedps.org or call 760-324-4737.

Monday, September 7

1:30 pm Desert Community Kitchen **Rosh Hashanah Challah Bake** at Chabad of Palm Springs, 250 East Palm Canyon. Adults \$18; Children over 8: \$10. Everyone goes home with their own challah for the holidays. Information: info@desertck.com; Reservations: www.desertck.com. See ad page 12.

Thursday, September 24

9:30 am Doors open. Program begins at 10:00 am. **Sabra Hadassah** of the Desert

"Celebrity Kugel Bake-off." Held at Jewish Federation building in Rancho Mirage. Bring your best kugel ... celebrity judging. Come enjoy this delicious meeting! Members \$20; non-members \$25. RSVP to Debbie Orgen at debbie_orgen@hotmail.com or give a call 760-289-7987. Make check payable to HADASSAH & mail to: Hadassah - 38180 Del Webb Blvd. PMB# 315, Palm Desert, CA 92211.

Questions about kugels - contact Cindy Hailpern at cinhailpern@gmail.com.

Saturday, September 26

12 Noon. Congregation Har-El second annual **Sukkot**

Event: "More Than Lunch... More Than a Movie... An Afternoon with **Scott Mauro**", with Moderator: Jewish Federation CEO **Danny Labin**. No charge. RSVP required. Location and gate code given with reservation. RSVP to RAZP@aol.com. See ad page 5.



Tribute Card Donations

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

Honorarium Tributes In Appreciation For:

- **Tom Bernstein**, Happy birthday on your big and special day, from Cecile Silverman.
- **Peter Epstein**, Happy belated birthday and many more in the best of health, from Lilo and Leslie Cooper.
- **Arnie Gillman**, In recognition of your leadership as President of Jewish Federation of the Desert. You contributed to the greater good, from Allan and Roberta Nyman.
- **Lois Johnson**, Wishing you a Happy Birthday, from Nancy Ditlove.
- **Fran Kaufman**, Happy 85th birthday from Allan and Roberta Nyman.
- **Bryan Kocen**, Congratulations and mazel tov

on the marriage of your son, Dr. Samuel Kocen to your new daughter-in-law, Olivia, from Jewish Federation of the Desert.

- **Margie Kulp**, Congratulations on receiving the Kipnis-Wilson/Friedland Award representing Jewish Federation of the Desert, from Margot and Jerry Halperin.
- **Lisa Lefkowitz**, Happy birthday on your big and special day, from Cecile Silverman.
- **Marnie Miller and Joe Noren**, Congratulations on your special birthdays and your 20 wonderful years together, from Judith Sontag.
- **Police Chief Andy Mills** in honor of your commitment to service, inclusion and the safety and well-being of all Palm Springs residents and visitors. We thank you! from Jewish Federation of the Desert.

Refuah Shleimah Get Well:

- **Celia Norian**, Wishing you a speedy recovery, from Stephanie and Paul Ross.
- **Barbara Platt**, Hope you're feeling wonderful soon, from Cecile Silverman.
- **Scott Small**, We keep you in our prayers for a very speedy recovery, from Lilo and Leslie Cooper.

Memoriam Tributes Condolences Sent To:

- **Suzanne Feder**, Our deepest sympathy, from Lilo and Leslie Cooper, and Gloria Snyder.
- **Larry Novak**, In memory of Annette. We cherish the times we spent together, from Allan and Roberta Nyman.



L'Shanah Tovah from Jewish Federation Board of Directors

Palestinian Support for Hamas Falls, New Poll Shows

By Ailin Vilches Arguelo, The Algemeiner

As destruction from its war with Israel continues to reshape life in Gaza, Hamas is facing a growing reckoning among Palestinians, with support for the terrorist group falling sharply even as most still oppose its disarmament before Israel withdraws from the war-torn enclave, according to a new poll.

The Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, an independent Palestinian polling and research institute, released a survey on Wednesday showing a significant decline in support for Hamas, underscoring growing disillusionment with the ruling terrorist group as the war's devastation continues to impact life for Gazans.

Compared to 10 months ago, confidence in Hamas's ability to represent Palestinians has plunged from 41 percent to 28 percent, while more than 40 percent say neither Hamas nor its rival Fatah should lead, highlighting a widening political void and growing disillusionment with the Palestinian leadership.

In less than a year, Hamas has lost more than 10 percentage points in popular support, with the decline particularly stark in the West Bank, where backing has



Members of Hamas cracking down on Gazans.

fallen from 32 percent to 18 percent, while support in Gaza has dropped by eight percentage points to 33 percent.

Among the survey's most striking findings is that the shift away from Hamas has not translated into a clear embrace of the Palestinian Authority, with substantial numbers of Palestinians expressing disillusionment with both major movements and saying neither deserves to represent or lead them.

The findings come just months before November's planned parliamentary election, with widespread skepticism already casting doubt on whether Palestinians expect the vote to produce

a meaningful political change.

Only 49 percent of respondents expect the upcoming election to be held on schedule, while two-thirds doubt that it would be free and fair, pointing to deep distrust in the process.

When it comes to the war in Gaza, the devastation and mounting regional tensions also appear to be reshaping Palestinian attitudes toward armed struggle, with the poll showing a vast majority now favoring negotiations to end what they describe as Israeli occupation and pursue Palestinian statehood.

Compared with a year ago, Palestinian support for armed struggle as the most

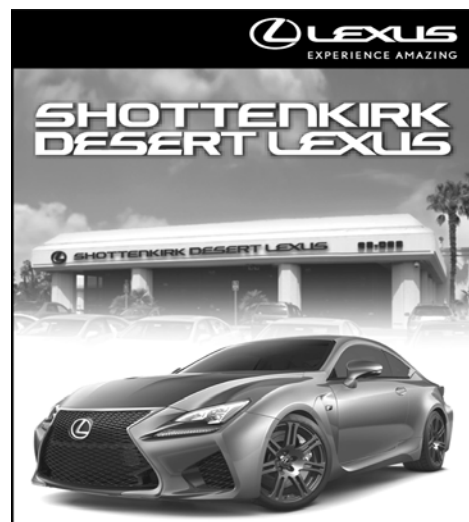
effective path to statehood has fallen from 41 percent to 27 percent, while support for negotiations has climbed from 36 percent to 44 percent, reaching its highest level in four years.

However, the shift toward negotiations does not signal a wholesale rejection of armed resistance or renewed confidence in peace, as 50 percent still believe armed resistance has been effective and nearly 60 percent say a two-state solution is no longer practical.

A majority of Palestinians also continue to reject Hamas disarming before a complete Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, with 72 percent opposing disarmament under those conditions and roughly the same share believing it would lead to renewed fighting rather than an Israeli withdrawal.

Most Palestinians also view the expansion of Israeli settlements as a threat to the prospects of a two-state solution, while expressing deep distrust in both Palestinian and Israeli leadership.

According to PCPSR's latest data, only 20 percent now believe Hamas won the war, down from roughly 40% 10 months earlier, while 60 percent say neither side emerged victorious, suggesting that the conflict has failed to produce a clear sense of political triumph even as Hamas's standing among Palestinians continues to weaken.



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Apple Pays \$150k to Settle Federal Antisemitism Lawsuit

By Grace Gilson Jewish Telegraphic Agency

Apple has agreed to pay \$150,000 to settle a federal lawsuit alleging that the company failed to accommodate a Jewish employee's observance of Shabbat and later fired him after he complained of religious discrimination.

The lawsuit, which was filed by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in September 2025, accused Apple of discriminating against Tyler Steele, a longtime employee of one of its stores in Reston, Virginia.

Steele converted to Judaism in the spring of 2023, and while his manager initially approved his request not to be scheduled on Fridays and Saturdays due to his observance of Shabbat, another manager that replaced the previous one later rescinded the accommodation.

According to the complaint, Steele's new manager, Anthony Dosch, denied his requests to have the days off in September

2023, allegedly telling him that month that he "could become a rules Nazi with regards to our policies."

Days after Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attacks on Israel, Dosch also warned Steele not to get into politics or debates about the conflict at work, and a month later issued him a misconduct warning claiming that Steele had body odor that violated the store's policies.

The EEOC alleged that Steele later complained to Apple officials in November 2023 about antisemitic behavior and the denial of his religious accommodation. Steele was fired from the store in January 2024, after reminding Dosch that he could not work on a Friday the following month for religious reasons.

"Employees should not have to violate their religious beliefs to keep their jobs or live in fear of retribution because they requested an accommodation," EEOC

Philadelphia Regional Attorney Debra Lawrence said in a statement at the time the lawsuit was filed.

In its lawsuit, the EEOC accused Apple of religious discrimination and retaliation in violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Apple and the EEOC unveiled the settlement in an Aug. 7 filing in federal court in Virginia, nearly a year after the initial complaint. The settlement is awaiting court approval.

Apple denied the allegations and did not admit wrongdoing as part of the settlement, which required the company to award Steele \$80,000 in back pay and \$70,000 in compensatory damages and interest.

Under the settlement, the company will also be required to update its religious accommodation policies and conduct training with some employees in its Virginia operations within 90 days.

After Deadliest Year in Decades for Diaspora Jews, Task Force Warns Hate is 'New Normal'

Group representing major Jewish communities urges governments to take action after 20 people were murdered in attacks in 2025; 23,000 antisemitic acts were recorded in 7 countries
By Zev Stub, The Times of Israel

Some 23,000 antisemitic incidents were recorded in 2025 in the seven largest Diaspora communities around the world, about 14 percent less than in 2024, according to a new report. However, the antisemitic attacks last year included the murder of 20 people, making it the deadliest year for Diaspora Jewry in more than 30 years, according to J7 Task Force, an organization representing major Jewish communities across seven nations.

The countries covered in the report — Argentina, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, the UK and the United States — comprise over 90% of global Jewry outside of Israel. J7, which was founded in July 2023 to combat rising antisemitism, reported the total number of antisemitic incidents was up 136% in these countries — including a 97% rise in violent incidents — compared to 2022, the year before Hamas launched its devastating invasion of Israel that sparked the Gaza war.

"Antisemitism in our seven countries is no longer a surge; it is our new normal," the organization said in a statement. "Governments must stop reacting after Jews are attacked and start acting before, with real security funding, stronger laws and social media platforms that enforce their own rules."

Fifteen Jews were murdered at a Hanukkah celebration on Bondi Beach in Sydney, two were killed at Heaton Park Synagogue in Manchester on Yom Kippur, two were killed at the Capital

Jewish Museum in Washington, DC, and one was killed in Boulder, Colorado.

The figure was the highest since 1994, when 85 people — including 67 Jews — were killed in the AMIA bombing in Argentina.

"No country can fight antisemitism alone, and this report shows exactly why," said Anti-Defamation League CEO and national director Jonathan Greenblatt, whose organization helped found the J7 Task Force. "This isn't just an American crisis; every single J7 country remains dramatically above pre-October 7 levels. Antisemitism transcends borders, and our response must do so too."

Last year, the number of antisemitic incidents rose 5% in the UK, 4% in Argentina, and about 1% in Germany compared to 2024, J7 said. The numbers decreased by 33% in the US, 20% in Australia, 16% in Canada and 16% in France, even as antisemitism became the "new normal," it added.

Germany documented 8,725 incidents in 2025, marking a 215% spike over five years. That represented the highest per capita rate in the world, with nearly 70 incidents per 1,000 Jewish residents, as attacks by both far-right groups and far-left anti-imperialist networks surged. Researchers also flagged an accelerating erosion of Holocaust memory and awareness, particularly among younger demographics.

In the United States, 6,274 incidents were recorded in 2025, an average of 17 per day. Though the total number

of recorded incidents fell 33% from 2024 as anti-Israel university campus encampments petered out, the number of violent incidents actually rose 4% to 203 during the year, the ADL has said.

The United Kingdom logged 3,700 incidents in 2025, a 64% increase over five years, according to data from the Community Security Trust. At a rate of 12 incidents per 1,000 Jews, that was one of the highest per-capita rates in Europe, J7 said.

Australia recorded 1,654 incidents in 2025, culminating in the horrific Bondi Beach attack, according to data from the Executive Council of Australian Jewry. That represented a 270% surge over five years, the largest increase of any of the seven nations surveyed.

In France, antisemitic incidents remained at a "persistently high level," the report said, with 1,320 recorded acts, or more than 3.5 antisemitic incidents per day. The hostile climate has led many French Jews to conceal signs of their identity and question their long-term future in the country, the report said.

In Canada, 788 antisemitic incidents were recorded, as Jewish residents were targeted in the vast majority of reported religious hate crimes, despite representing less than 1% of the national population, according to J7. Anti-Jewish hate crime in the country has increased 153% since 2020, the report noted.

In Argentina, 713 incidents were documented in 2025, 4% more than in 2024, the report said. Some 62%

of all incidents occurred online.

Ireland saw a surge in attacks between July 2025 and January 2026. During the period, 143 incidents were reported for the 2,200-person Jewish community, a rate of 65 incidents per 1,000 Jews. Despite the stark numbers, Ireland has yet to develop a meaningful governmental response, with no dedicated policy framework, national strategy or dedicated security funding for Jewish institutions currently in place, the task force said.

"In many comparable countries, these are recognized public responsibilities," the report noted. "In Ireland, they continue to rely largely on the efforts of one of Europe's smallest Jewish communities."

The J7 Task Force called on national governments to not only throw money at security initiatives but also focus on aggressively prosecuting extremist networks, protecting civic rights at university campuses and workplaces and enforcing compliance with the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism.

Additionally, it called on social media platforms and AI developers to fix their algorithms so they stop allowing the spread of anti-Jewish conspiracies, doxxing or generation of hateful content. Finally, the report said, schools should rethink how they teach history and push back against online misinformation, especially as Holocaust education fades among younger people.

Israel's AI Ambitions

By Mark Ginsberg, The Times of Israel

Artificial intelligence is rapidly becoming one of the defining measures of national power. The countries that control advanced computing, AI models, semiconductors, robotics, data infrastructure and the talent required to develop them will enjoy significant economic and military advantages in the decades ahead. Israel wants to become one of the countries shaping it.

In 2026, Israel's National Artificial Intelligence Directorate has presented plans that include building infrastructure incorporating as many as 100,000

advanced AI processors, establishing a National AI Institute, developing an Israeli quantum computer and expanding the country's AI workforce and research capabilities.

For the United States, this ambition should be welcomed. A technologically stronger Israel could become an important extension of that ecosystem—a trusted center for AI research, cybersecurity, semiconductors, defense technology and advanced computing at precisely the moment Washington is competing to maintain its technological advantage over

China.

Israel's ambitions are significant because it is not starting from scratch. Approximately 2,300 operational AI companies in Israel, representing roughly one-quarter of the country's technology industry. More than 60% of Israeli software companies use AI technology in some form.

The same national program noted that Israel had previously ranked among the world's leaders in the number of AI startups created over the preceding decade.

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Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney "Appalled" by the Recent Antisemitic Attacks

By Shira Li Bartov, JTA

Locals lined up outside a Toronto bagel shop in a show of support after attacks on two outposts of the Jewish-owned chain, adding to a string of incidents facing Jewish businesses in the city. Two locations of Kiva's Bagel Bar, a fixture for Toronto Jews since it opened in 1979, were targeted late Saturday and early Sunday in late July, with gunfire hitting the windows of one storefront just an hour after another storefront was vandalized and its front glass shattered, according to the Toronto Police Service.

Police said their Hate Crime Unit was investigating, and they believed the same SUV may have been involved at both scenes. The bakeries were closed at the time and no injuries were reported.

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said he was "appalled" by the attacks. "Jewish Canadians should be able to live, work, and worship free from fear, intimidation, and hate," he said on

X on Monday. "Canada's government is absolute in our commitment to combatting the scourge of antisemitism."

Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow added on X that the incidents were "vile and unacceptable" and said she "will always stand with Toronto's Jewish community against antisemitism."

Residents flocked to Kiva's and sold out their bagels by 10:30 a.m. on Monday, according to the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, an advocacy arm of the Jewish Federations of Canada. Resident Adrian Rocca, the founder of a local real estate company, posted a photo on LinkedIn of his employees lined up outside.

CIJA said the Canadians rallying



Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney

around Kiva's sent a message that "there are a lot of good people ready to take a stand against hate, intimidation, and violence." The Jewish Telegraphic Agency reached out to Kiva's for comment.

As police searched for suspects in the bagel shop attacks, a gunman opened fire on the U.S. Consulate in Toronto early Monday morning, setting off a high-speed chase and a manhunt. Police have not confirmed any connection between the gunfire at the consulate and at Kiva's.

The shooting at the consulate marked the second in four months. Toronto police have arrested three people connected with the previous consulate attack, as well as several others accused of shooting at Jewish targets in the city in recent months. At a press conference last month, Police Chief Myron Demkiw identified a "broader pattern" between the shots fired at the consulate and at Toronto-area synagogues and Jewish

schools over the past year.

"What we are dealing with in this case and in other unrelated incidences, including shootings at synagogues and Jewish schools, is a recurring and similar modus operandi — and that is criminals for hire," said Demkiw. "Through encrypted messaging apps, young people are hired to carry out attacks against various targets, and in order to get paid, they're required to film their attacks."

Carney pledged to fight antisemitism through a new Ministerial Advisory Council on Rights, Equality, and Inclusion. In his speech at Toronto's Holy Blossom Synagogue, he said that the country was "failing Jewish Canadians." Two-thirds of Canada's religion-motivated hate crimes last year were directed at Jewish Canadians, who make up only 1% of the population, Carney said.

Italy Shuts Down 'Jew Hunting' Form Seeking to 'Map Zionist Tourism' After Uproar

Rome's antisemitism czar puts end to Google form that drew condemnation from government officials, including Senate leader who said 'profound antisemitism' was behind initiative

By Zev Stub, The Times of Israel

An anonymous online form asking people to report the locations of Jews and Israeli tourists in Italy has been taken down after government officials intervened, according to media reports.

The Google form, circulated on social media and messaging groups before it was removed, asked users to identify Jews, Israelis and people believed to have ties to Zionism at hotels, vacation rentals, businesses and other public places. Its purpose was to "map Zionist tourism" and "Zionist neo-colonization" in Italy, the form said.

It was removed following the intervention of Italy's commissioner for combating antisemitism, Gen. Pasquale Angelosanto.

Jewish leaders condemned the initiative, with Livia Ottolenghi, president of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities, calling the campaign a "new yellow star," reminiscent of Italy's 1938 fascist racial laws.

Walker Meghnagi, president of the



Jewish Community of Milan, warned that "hunting Jews" would encourage attacks by extremists. Government officials condemned the form as well.

Italian Senate President Ignazio La Russa called the form "an aberrant initiative, in open violation of fundamental human rights and the constitutional principles on which our nation is founded."

"Any form of profiling people based on their religious beliefs or their ties to Israel is neither acceptable nor justifiable. Behind all this lies a profound antisemitism that must be unanimously, firmly, and resolutely rejected. We cannot remain immobile in the face of such grave events that evoke the ghosts of the past. My deepest sympathy to the

Jewish Community," he said.

Dana, a resident of Bologna, told Israel's Channel 12 news: "Among other things, they want to mark shops, just as the Nazis did to us in 1933."

The incident comes as antisemitic attacks continue to rise in Italy. According to the Center of Contemporary Jewish Documentation, 963 incidents were recorded nationwide in 2025, including a sharp increase in physical assaults.

Over the past year in Italy, antisemitic incidents have included synagogue vandalism in Rome with Nazi slogans, physical assaults on Jewish individuals in Milan, and verbal harassment in Venice.

A survey last year found around 15% of Italians view attacks on Jews as "justifiable."

CDEC researchers warn that antisemitic discourse is becoming increasingly normalized in Italian society, shrinking the social spaces in which being Jewish is regarded as acceptable under constitutional protections.

Israel in the eye of the storm — But the economy tells a different story

The State of Israel sits at the center of the geopolitical turbulence, yet precisely at this juncture many of its macro indicators look better than those of quite a few countries far removed from it.

By Matan Shitrit, *The Jerusalem Post*

While the shock originating in the Middle East is pushing many economies worldwide toward higher inflation, higher interest rates and weaker growth, in Israel the macroeconomic picture is moving in the opposite direction — annual inflation has fallen to its lowest level in roughly five years, the shekel remains very strong, the risk premium has returned to the range that characterized it before the “Swords of Iron” war, the labor market remains tight at around full employment, and the policy rate has resumed its descent.

In the last column I published here, I assessed that the strong shekel, alongside the distinctive structure of Israel’s energy sector, would help contain the inflationary pressures arriving from abroad and allow the Bank of Israel to continue its rate-cutting cycle. Developments since then have reinforced that assessment — inflation continued to moderate, and in July the Bank of Israel cut the rate by 25 bps, to 3.50%. The Bank’s own forecast now embeds a continuation of the process, with an average rate of 3.0% in the second quarter of 2027 — that is, two further cuts over the coming year.

The strong shekel is not merely an expression of relative confidence in the Israeli economy; it is also an important economic factor in its own right. In a world where energy and commodity prices are once again being driven by the war in the Middle East, the appreciation of the domestic currency offsets part of the rise in import prices. In other words, some of the inflationary pressures arriving from abroad are absorbed by the exchange rate before they reach the Israeli consumer. The Bank

of Israel likewise notes that the shekel’s appreciation supports the moderation of the inflation environment.

Having mentioned USD/ILS, in recent months the Bank of Israel has also returned to purchasing foreign currency. In May it bought roughly USD 801 million, and in June roughly USD 1.03 billion. Relative to the large-scale purchase programs seen in the past, these are not dramatic volumes, and the Bank stresses that the purchases were made on a discretionary, ad hoc basis to preserve orderly market functioning. Even so, the mere return to the market is a reminder that the Bank has both the tools and the willingness to act when volatility turns abnormal.

Back to the rate decision: one of the things that stood out in the latest statement was the shift in tone on inflation risks. In previous statements the Bank emphasized that risks were tilted to the upside. This time it noted that there are factors liable to affect inflation in opposing directions. This may sound like a minor semantic change, but in central-bank language it carries a meaningful message — the balance of inflation risks has become more even.

The economic forecasts improved as well. The Bank of Israel raised its 2026 growth forecast from 3.8% to 4.0% and, at the same time, lowered its inflation forecast from 2.2% to 1.8%. Beyond the headline figure, the composition of the forecast is also constructive — exports excluding diamonds and startups are projected to grow 8% in 2026, as is fixed-asset investment. These are the components capable of supporting a recovery that does not rest solely on government consumption or on a technical

rebound after the war.

On the real side, too, the picture improved. The first quarter was admittedly hit by the confrontation with Iran, but the high-frequency indicators point to a recovery in activity through the second quarter. For example, the monthly State-of-the-Economy Index (Bank of Israel) rose 0.6% in June, following gains of 0.8% and 6.2% in May and April, respectively. With that, the index returned to a higher level than before “Rising Lion,” indicating that the negative output gap is narrowing.

The labor market remains tight, with unemployment around 3.0% and the number of job vacancies rising to 146 thousand — here too a high level relative to the period before “Rising Lion.” A further indication of continued economic recovery comes from tax revenues, which came in higher than expected in the first half of the year, leading the Bank of Israel to lower its 2026 deficit forecast from 5.3% to 4.9% of GDP. In June, the trailing 12-month deficit recorded a further decline, to 3.3% of GDP — so here, too, we are seeing upside

surprises.

So much for the positives. On the less favorable side, Israel is of course not immune to the war, and it still contends with a heavy security and fiscal cost. The 2026 deficit ceiling stands at 4.9%, and the debt-to-GDP ratio is expected to rise to 69%. For now, the deficit appears to be surprising favorably from month to month, partly on the back of revenue growth beyond expectations. That said, looking ahead, should we see a further increase in the defense budget, this could be perceived as less favorable in the eyes of investors — and even of the Bank of Israel.

As things stand, the data point to an economy under control. Anyone who views Israel solely through the security headlines is liable to miss a flexible, technology-intensive economy with credible economic institutions, a strong labor market and a financial system that continues to function even under stress. Bottom line: Israel is still in the eye of the storm, but it is entering the next phase from a far stronger position than it appears from the outside.

TZEDAKAH



FUND

For a meaningful way to say thank you for a special occasion, send wishes for recovery from illness or extend condolences, there is no better way to send your thoughts than to purchase a Tzedakah card from the Jewish Federation.

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.

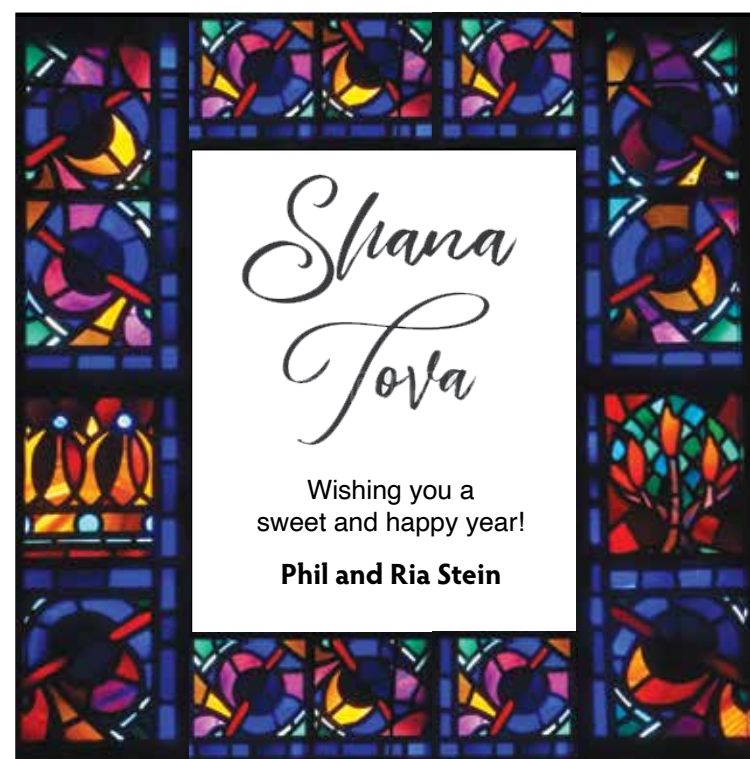
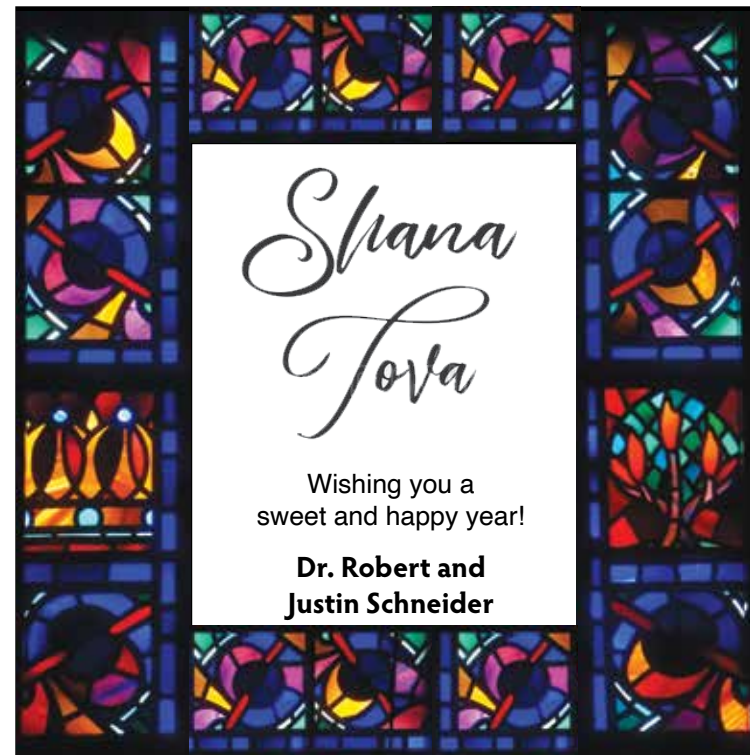
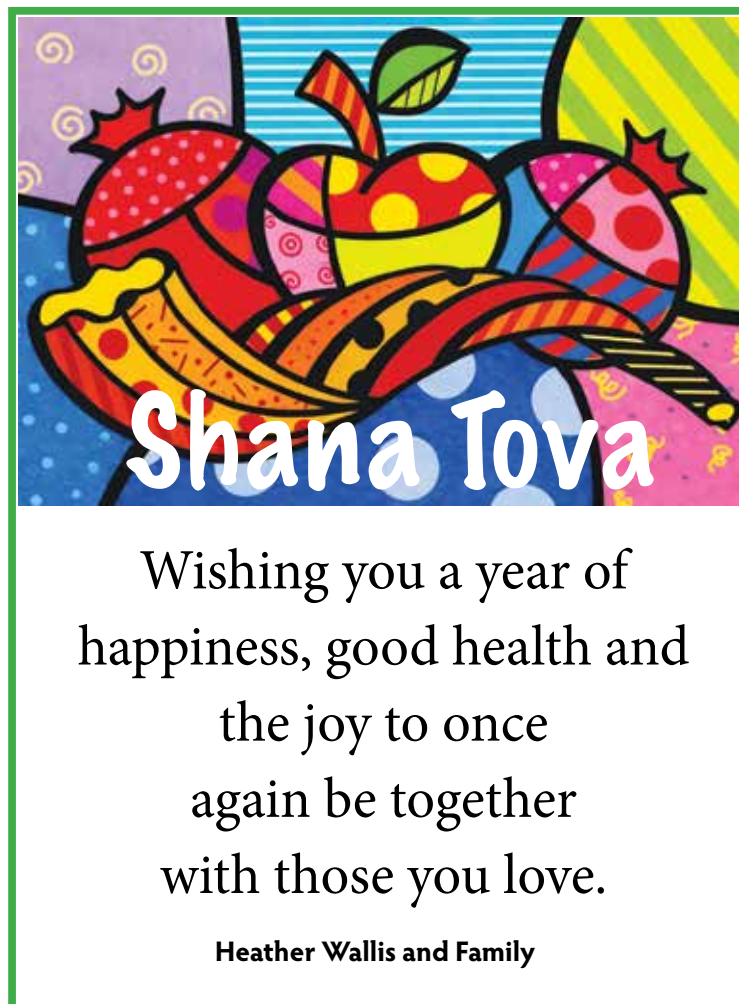
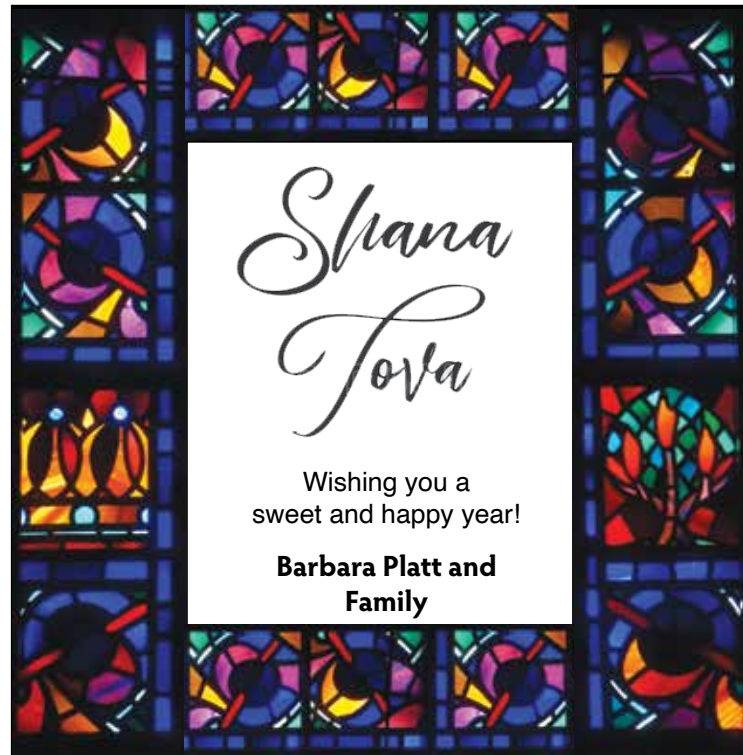
Call 760-324-4737 to order your cards, or go online to jfedps.org.



A PLACE OF REMEMBRANCE

You are encouraged to visit our community’s Holocaust Memorial, located in the Palm Desert Civic Center Park off Fred Waring Drive, between San Pablo and San Pascual. Spearheaded by survivors Joe Brandt and Earl Greif, this moving memorial tells the unimaginable horrors of the Holocaust and why we must commit our lives and efforts to assure it does not happen again. Never again.

L'Shanah Tovah Tikateivun Happy New Year





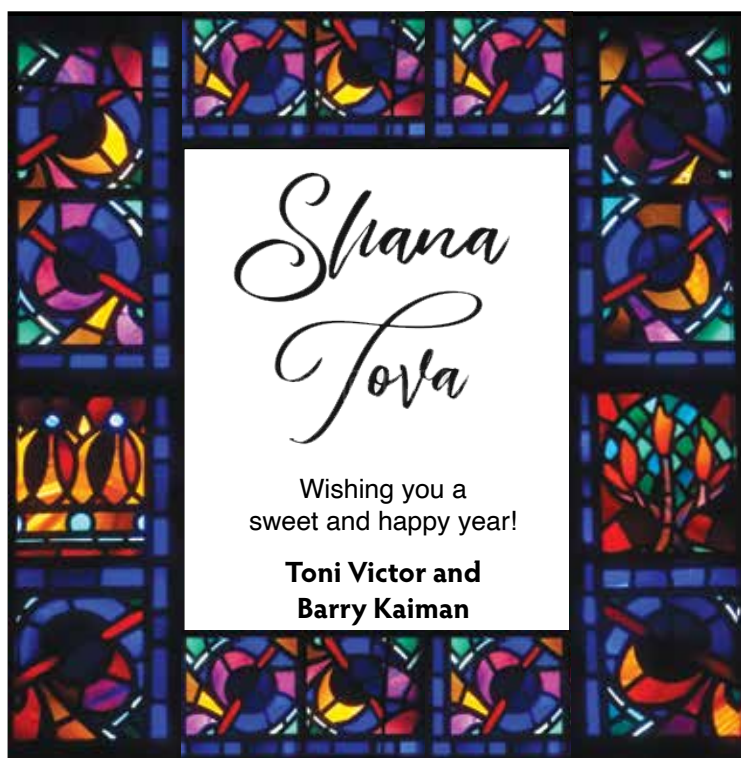
Wishing you a year of
happiness, good health and
the joy to once
again be together
with those you love.

It's good to be alive to celebrate another year!
Fern Miller



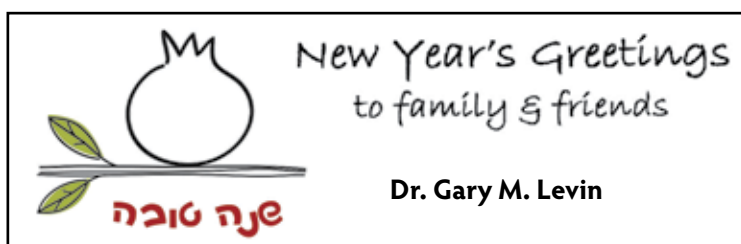
Wishing you a year of
happiness, good health and
the joy to once
again be together
with those you love.

Mark Krasne



Wishing you a
sweet and happy year!

Toni Victor and
Barry Kaiman

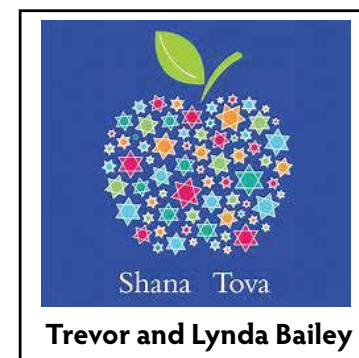
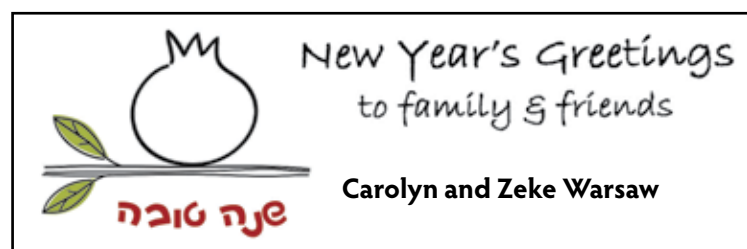
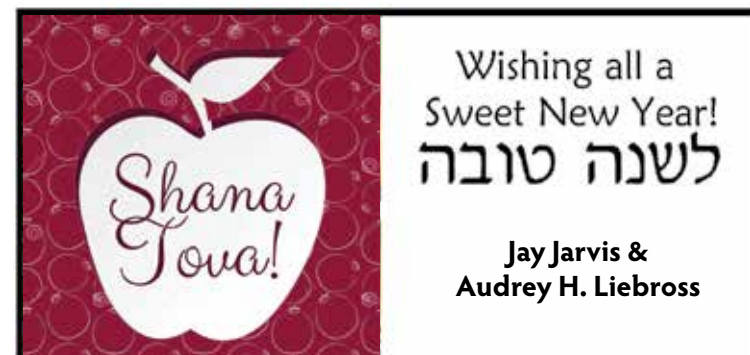
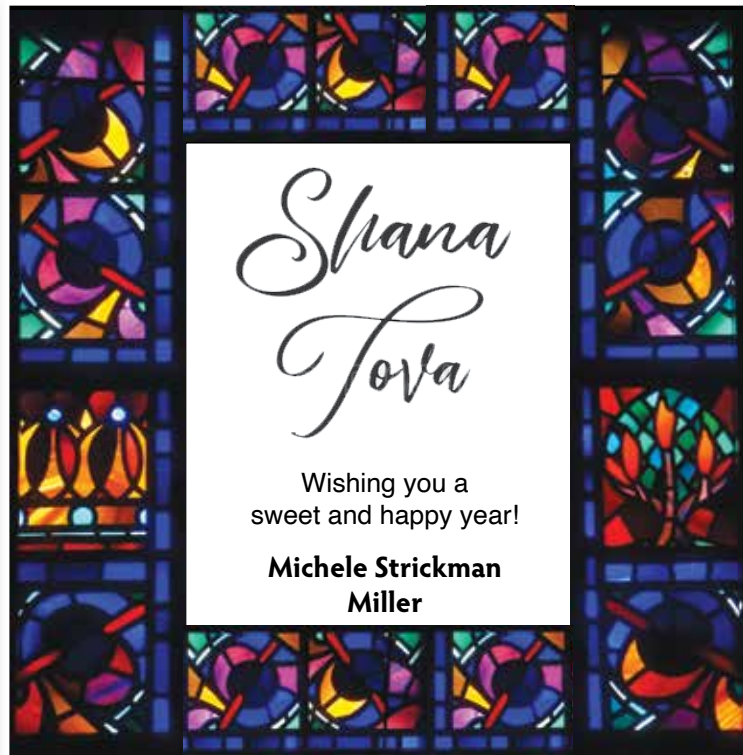


Dr. Gary M. Levin



Norma and Ted Nelson

L'Shanah Tovah Tikateivu Happy New Year



Join the Jewish Men's Outreach Group of the Desert—Where Friendships Begin

By Barry Fisher, Jewish Federation Board Secretary

Looking for a great way to meet new people, make lasting friendships, and become more involved in our local Jewish community? The Jewish Men's Outreach Group of the Desert (JMOGD) continues to grow and thrive, with more than 200 members, along with many wives and significant others who regularly participate in our social events and activities.

JMOGD is much more than a men's organization. We are a welcoming community of friends who enjoy spending time together while supporting worthwhile causes throughout the Coachella Valley. Whether you are a full-time resident or a seasonal visitor, you'll find a warm and friendly group eager to welcome you.

This upcoming season promises to be one of our most exciting yet. We've planned a full calendar of events designed to bring people together for laughter, friendship, and memorable experiences. Among the highlights are our popular Happy Hours, an exciting Casino Night, a festive Chanukah Dinner, a lively Dinner Dance, and a Valentine's Brunch. Throughout the year, we also feature interesting guest speakers, educational presentations, discussion groups, and special outings that provide opportunities to learn, socialize, and have fun.

Giving back to the community remains

an important part of our mission. Our members proudly continue several longstanding charitable projects, including our annual Children's Book Drive, Holiday Toy Drive, and volunteer support for the FIND Food Bank, helping brighten the lives of children, families, and individuals in need throughout the Coachella Valley. Through our annual membership program, we also contribute financially to Jewish Federation of the Desert, supporting its vital work on behalf of our Jewish community.

Perhaps the greatest benefit of JMOGD is the friendships that naturally develop. Many of our members tell us they joined simply to meet a few new people and quickly discovered a community that feels like family. New members are warmly welcomed, introductions are easy, and before long you'll find yourself surrounded by people who share common interests, enjoy good conversation, and value Jewish life in the Coachella Valley.

If you're looking for friendship, engaging activities, meaningful community service, and a place to belong, we'd love to meet you. Whether you attend one event or become a regular participant, you'll discover why so many people consider JMOGD one of the friendliest and most active Jewish organizations in the desert.



How to Get Involved:

- Monthly Luncheons featuring outstanding guest speakers and great food.
- Monthly Discussion Group exploring current events, Jewish issues, and topics of community interest.
- Happy Hours and Social Gatherings throughout the year for couples, singles, and friends.
- Special Events including Casino Night, Chanukah Dinner, Dinner Dance, Valentine's Brunch, and other exciting activities.
- Community Projects, including our annual Children's Book Drive, Holiday Toy Drive, volunteer support for the FIND Food Bank, and our annual financial contribution to Jewish Federation of the Desert.
- Women of the JMOGD lunches.

Membership is open to men throughout the Coachella Valley. Wives, partners, and significant others are welcome at many of our social events. To learn more about membership and

upcoming events, visit JMOGD.ORG or email JMOGD2020@gmail.com.

Now is the perfect time to join as we kick off our new season of programs and events. We look forward to meeting you!



Reading PJ
library books
with our
children and
grandchildren

and teaching them to be “balabusts” in the kitchen have filled many of our homes. If you or your friends raising the next generation of Jewish children are interested in this free Jewish book and music program, please contact Leslie Pepper at leslie.pepper@jfedps.org or call 760-324-4737.



JEWISH BEDTIME STORIES and SONGS
A GIFT from Jewish Federation of the Desert
& The Harold Grinspoon Foundation

SIGN UP TODAY!
www.PJLIBRARY.org

The PJ Library program offers the gift of free high-quality Jewish books and music each month to children ages 6 months through 8 years. PJ Library books celebrate important aspects of Jewish culture, values and tradition, and become cherished bedtime stories. Sign up online at www.pjlibrary.org today. For more information about PJ Library programs in our community contact Leslie Pepper at leslie.pepper@jfedps.org or call 760-324-4737.



PJ Library Grandparents

PJ Library Grandparents,
Someone you love wants you to receive books and resources from PJ Library, so what happens now? Enroll and you should be receiving your first two PJ Library books in a few weeks, but you can access a ton of great resources on the PJ Library grandparent hub right now.
You can also browse the blog for activities, recipes, and more. Sign up as a PJ Library grandparent and you'll receive monthly emails with the latest and greatest resources and updates from PJ Library. Don't forget to fill out the grandparent welcome survey so we can learn more about you, and how you spend time with your grandkids to better inform the resources we share.



HAVE A NOSH:

One of the traditions of Rosh Hashanah is eating apples dipped in honey. On erev Rosh Hashanah, after blessing the candles, kiddush and motze, we add the blessing over fruit and eat apples dipped in honey ... wishing all gathered at your table to be blessed with a “good and sweet year.” Here are four desserts featuring apples that will enhance your holiday meal. Wishing you all a good and sweet year. MHB



YOM TOV APPLE CAKE

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 6 apples, (suggest McIntosh or Fuji) | 1 cup vegetable oil |
| 1 tablespoon cinnamon | 2 cups sugar |
| 5 tablespoons sugar | ¼ cup orange juice |
| 2 ¾ cups flour | 2½ teaspoons vanilla |
| 1 tablespoon baking powder | 4 eggs |
| 1 teaspoon salt | 1 cup walnuts, chopped (optional) |

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a tube pan. Peel, core and chop apples into chunks. Toss with cinnamon and sugar and set aside. Stir together flour, baking powder and salt in a large mixing bowl. In a separate bowl, whisk together oil, orange juice, sugar and vanilla. Mix wet ingredients into the dry ones, then add eggs, one at a time. Scrape down the bowl to ensure all ingredients are incorporated. Pour half of batter into prepared pan(s). Spread half of apples over it. Pour the remaining batter over the apples and arrange the remaining apples on top. Bake for about 1½ hours, or until a tester comes out clean. Cool completely before running knife between cake and pan, and unmolding onto a platter.

APPLE PUDDING CAKE

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 cup sugar | 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon |
| 1/4 cup Crisco | 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg |
| 1 egg, beaten | 1/4 teaspoon salt |
| 1 cup flour | 2-3 apples, grated |
| 1/2 teaspoon baking powder | 1/2 cup nuts, chopped (optional) |
| 1 teaspoon baking soda | |

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Combine sugar and Crisco. Stir in egg. Sift dry ingredients together and add. Combine into smooth batter. Add apples and nuts. Stir well. Bake in a 9" X 9" cake pan for 30 minutes. (It's a wonderful cake but do not double the recipe. I did it once and it was a disaster!)

APPLE BURST BUNDT CAKE

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| No-stick vegetable spray | 3 tsp. baking powder |
| 3 to 4 baking apples (about 3 cups), | 1/2 teaspt. salt |
| peeled, cored and sliced thin (1/8 inch). | 1 cup vegetable oil |
| 5 Tbsp. sugar, plus 2 cups sugar | 4 eggs |
| 1/8 teaspt. ginger | 1/4 cup orange juice |
| 1/8 teaspt. cloves | 1 Tbsp. vanilla extract |
| 3 cups flour | |

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.. Generously coat a 9-inch bundt pan with no-stick vegetable spray. In a bowl, combine apples with 5 tablespoons sugar, ginger and cloves until coated. Apples will appear muddy. Set aside. Into a large bowl, sift flour, remaining 1 cup sugar and baking powder. Add oil, eggs, orange juice and vanilla. Beat until smooth, for at least two minutes. Spoon 1/3 of the batter into the prepared bundt pan. Drain apples in a colander. Spread half the apples over batter, keeping apples away from sides of pan. Spoon another 1/3 of batter over apples. Spread remaining apples over batter and top second layer of apples with last batch of batter. Bake 15 minutes. Tent pan with aluminum foil and bake another hour, or until top of cake is firm and toothpick inserted inside returns clean. Cool completely before removing pan. (It's worth making a day ahead ... the cake tastes even better the next day).

DOUBLE APPLE BARS

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1/4 cup pareve margarine | 1 teaspoon cinnamon |
| ½ cup + 2 Tbsp. brown sugar | ½ teaspoon baking powder |
| 1 egg | ½ teaspoon baking soda |
| 1 cup of applesauce | 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves |
| 2 cups diced pared apple | 1½ cups chopped walnuts |
| 1½ cup flour | |

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Cream butter and half cup sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg, then applesauce (mixture will look curdled). Sift together flour, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda and cloves. Fold in apples and ½ cup walnuts. Spread evenly in greased 9" X 13" pan. In a small bowl, mixed remaining 1 cup walnuts and 2 tablespoons brown sugar; sprinkle over batter. Bake 35 minutes, until sides pull away and top is lightly browned. Cool on rack. Yield: 4 dozen squares.



Simchas

In their announcement of the birth of their newest grandson, **Rabbi Shimon** and **Chaya Posner** of Chabad of Rancho Mirage introduced the good news with the lovely wish that "May we be collectively blessed with joy in our families and share happy occasions together!" What a wonderful way to announce the birth of their grandson,

Menachem Mendel Dechter, son of **Rabbi Dovber** and **Chana'le (Posner) Dechter** born on July 29 in Phoenix, Arizona ... Mazel tov to **Ari** and **Sophia Kain** on the bar mitzvah of their son **Noah**, who was called to the Torah at Chabad of Rancho Mirage on Monday, August 10. Mazel to his grandmother **Kari Orli Bassal** who shared in the simcha ... **PJ Library** events are returning to the desert with Jewish Federation bringing Jewish educator **Marjorie Lander** on board

to facilitate programs for families with younger children. Did you know approximately 100 families in our community already receive free PJ Library books monthly for their children or grandchildren? See ad for the



Marjorie Lander

upcoming September 6 event on page 2...As we went to press we learned that the son of our new Federation President **Bryan Kocen** just got married. Mazel tov mazel tov to **Dr. Samuel Kocen** and his bride **Olivia**. We hope we will be able to include a photo of the newlyweds in next month's Simchas! ...Share your simchas with us. Email or call Miriam Bent at mhbentjcn@earthlink.net or call her at 760-835-1022.



Classifieds

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WRITER, EDITOR, PROOFREADER, COPYWRITER

... I have a 'whey' 'weigh' 'way' with words. Contact Tina Levine at prunehaven@protonmail.com or call or text 310-993-1668.

LISA SILVERMAN; Intuitive Designer with an eye for all things beautiful! Recently relocated from San Francisco to Sun City Palm Desert, Lisa will find your unique personal style and create the space you have been dreaming about. 650-401-8813; www.decoratorguru.com.

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE SUPPORTERS welcomed.

JFS has rewarding **volunteer opportunities** in its community programs and is now accepting applications for several positions. **Tribute cards** provide a unique way to celebrate a special occasion or honor a loved one, all while

supporting JFS programs. If you're interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities or supporting JFS through the purchase of tribute cards, please contact 760-325-4088 ext. 107.



Temple Sinai of Palm Desert is looking for a **RELIGIOUS SCHOOL EDUCATION DIRECTOR**. The position is part-time for 30 sessions from September-May, beginning September 20, 2026. Contact Rabbi David Novak at rabbi@templesinaipd.org for more information.

Community School

Aleph Schoolhouse

Director: Dina Pinson

73-550 Santa Rosa Way, Palm Desert

347-721-8782

Children 18 months through
Elementary School

Alephschoolhouse.org



Candle Lighting Times

Friday, September 4	6:25 pm	Shabbat Nitzavim-Vayelech
Friday, September 11	6:15 pm	Erev Rosh Hashanah
Saturday, September 12	After 7:34 pm	Second day Rosh Hashanah
Friday, September 18	6:05 pm	Shabbat Ha'atzinu
Sunday, September 20	6:02 pm	Kol Nidre
Friday, September 25	5:55 pm	Erev Sukkot



We Mourn the Passing of...

Howard Gold, Steven Jay Israelson, Harriet Lindsay, and Gerhard "Jerry" Moses. Our deepest sympathies to their families and friends. May their memories endure as a blessing.



ברוך דיין האמת

NEED A NOTARY?

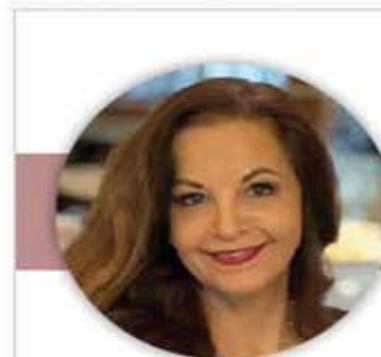
BEBSABE MORRISON

Bebsabe.morrison@jfedps.org

(760) 324-4737

69-710 Highway 111 Rancho Mirage, CA 92270

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Rancho Mirage, CA 92270
(760) 324-4737

WAKE UP TO A SOUND THAT CAN CHANGE LIVES.

This New Year, bring hope to people in despair. Nurture and sustain our Jewish community. Your gift to the Jewish Federation of the Desert makes it possible all year long. Mail your gift or contribute via our secure website: www.jfedps.org.



69-710 Highway 111,
Rancho Mirage, CA 92270
760-324-4737

**The Strength of a People.
The Power of Community.**