

Reflecting on our Jewish Federation ... Amid the Pandemic

Excerpts from CEO Bruce Landgarten's Report Presented at the Annual Meeting

Each year I've come before you to share the state of Federation ... to report an overview of our innovations and hard work. I talk about what we've learned, as an organization and as a community. In 2020, we learned a lot – we learned how to wear masks, how to participate in a religious service through our computer, and, although sometimes we forget ... we learned how to mute and unmute ourselves on Zoom. We learned what we NEED to live and what we CAN live without.

Here's what I learned: That through it all, and through whatever is to come, we are still here, together. We are still a community. We may not be in each other's homes yet; we've missed being in our sanctuaries and around holiday tables, but we are here, together. We have struggled and sacrificed, but we've also become more intentional and more generous - to ourselves and each other.



Co-Board Chairs Roberta Nyman and Jackie Cohen



New Board members Carol Fragen and Michelle Coneybear



The Pandemic has profoundly impacted our country and our community ... transforming the scope of human service delivery. None of us ever could have imagined what we've been through – and are still going through. But even for the unimaginable year that was 2020, Federation was ready, just by doing the things we do year in and year out. And together, with our agencies and Temples, we have seen our community through.

With the changes on our Board, I need to say how I've valued and

appreciated Roberta Nyman's leadership journey and her history which has taken her through diverse areas of our community and Federation. Many of you, like me, have known the rewards of working with her and I especially have relied on her input. We welcome Jackie Cohen, as Board Co-chair alongside Roberta, and I look forward to our work and what we can accomplish together. We've also deepened our leadership bench with the addition of Carol Fragen and Michele Coneybear as new board members.

Thank you to Phil Glass for his leadership of both the Finance and Allocations committee. And thanks to Lori, Ron, Gary, Bernard, Bobbi,

Jackie, Stephanie, Arnie and Roberta for your committee participation and thank you in advance as we head into another season. And I want to thank outgoing Board member Bernard Reiter for his devotion and genuine interest engaging in our work - for his sensitive leadership and wise decision making, who regularly grappled with top level issues that emerge.

The impact of this pandemic will not go away anytime soon - and most believe things will never go back to what we considered "normal." This includes our Jewish communal institutions, of whom will be impacted by lower donations, fewer members, less enrollment, etc.. As our community plans to re-open in the near future, we must take a long, hard look at what transformation may look like in the Jewish community. It will take years before the world feels

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We Rose to the 'Virtual' Challenge ... Did You Take Advantage?

When COVID-19 hit us in the spring of 2020, the Jewish Federation fortunately had held most of its events, leaving us with the single decision to cancel our Yom HaShoah program. Our major fundraisers had been held; our year's planned cultural events were behind us. We had a moment to assess our next moves. As Jews, we were faced with having to rethink our observances of Passover seders ... and we hunkered down in collective fear of this deadly

pandemic, staying isolated.

Our Federation's first response was to assess the emergency needs of our community, and we joined with both Jewish and general community resources to assure the flow of basic necessities. We also realized that this pandemic was not going away anytime soon, and we needed to find ways to reach out to our increasingly isolated constituency; to offer meaningful programming via the internet.

Our May 2020 issue of the Jewish Community News included four pages of "Curated Links and Opportunities" as part of our effort to help our Jewish community stay connected Jewishly and to each other during the pandemic, which included hundreds of resources to check out. Did you?

In August Jewish Federation put together an online program with seven of our local rabbis, offering nine

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everyone
counts
can we count on you?

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The Impact of Federation



**Roberta
Nyman**

Jewish Federation
Board Chair

As I am finishing up the second year of my term as Chair of the Jewish Federation of Palm Springs, I am thinking about how, some 20 years ago, this Federation influenced Allan and me to become involved here in the desert.



Ethiopian elders in Kiryat Malachi

It was during our mission to Israel in 1998, led by Steve and Barbara Platt. A visit to Kiriyat Malachi was scheduled, where we met with Ethiopians who endured unbelievable trauma to be able to reach a safe area where Israel could rescue them and bring them to Israel, their home. We were proud of the fact that our FEDERATION had built not only a community center for the town but also a

library and much other help. Today Israel is undertaking the mission to bring remaining Ethiopians to Israel to reunite with their families. We have since interacted with the next generation of Ethiopians who have become leaders and have become a vital part of Israel.

A second experience: Through funding, our Federation gave seed money to start the construction of Givot Bar, a community in the Negev. Today the town is flourishing. Over the years we have visited the community and 'kvelled' in its growth.

Your Federation has made an impact on the lives of many Israelis. Allan and



Roberta, joined by Celia Norian, visit pre-school in Givot Bar.

I are thankful for the opportunity to have been involved as donors for more than 30 years.

The following statement has really impacted both of us:

What if there was one place to meet the needs of Jews and non-Jews,

young and old, wherever they live? One place inspired by bold, often daring pursuits of social justice and human rights? By rich traditions of



Roberta and Allan Nyman visiting Givot Bar

advocacy, education, responsibility and tzedakah? What if there was one place where you could make the difference? Where you could help repair the world? One place where you could make the connection to Jewish values, Jewish people, and Jewish communities all over the world? There is. FEDERATION.

Federation is the one place that is always there when we need protection or a helping hand ... and where participation by all of us is vital for those who need the help today. Thank you to all who have supported Federation over the years. If this has not been your experience, there is no time like today to begin.

Roberta Nyman

**VIRTUAL
MEGA
CHALLAH
Holiday
BAKE**

Exciting news! The VIRTUAL Mega-Challah Bake has been moved to
SUNDAY, AUGUST 29th
from 2-4 PM and will be a
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Information/early registration
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Identifying Challenges and Opportunities



Bruce Landgarten

Jewish Federation
Chief Executive
Officer

Now and then I'm asked how hard it is to be always asking people for money. To a large extent, we are not just a fundraising organization. Over the years, we have transformed our Federation into the one organization in our community that identifies our greatest challenges and our greatest opportunities. We do so successfully with impact and tangible results. We raise money to do vital work, and when we have the opportunity to tell our story, the asking is the easiest part of my job. There is no other organization that impacts as many Jews in our community, in Israel, and overseas.

Encouraging Jewish philanthropy and ensuring effective philanthropic investments remain a core function of Federation, we aspire to be the best way at having a meaningful impact in the community. We do so through our annual campaign, and through directed and targeted funding opportunities. Yes, fundraising is a means to an end, but this area is still a very important offering in our community and one where we offer many tailored/curated options, from legacy giving to giving circles to individual philanthropic investments.

Only Federation has this wide-angle

lens approach to the community – with the ability to understand the strengths of our services, the needs and costs associated with meeting these needs, and how we can make the greatest impact. We do this work every day - We debate - We listen - We negotiate - We promote the ideal of a community. It is counter-cultural in this day in age, but it's extraordinary.

Federations have always been about strengthening Jewish community, but as demands and challenges have shifted, we needed to change as well. Many Federations have been struggling with this. Our Federation is a community problem solver, addressing issues where there are gaps or needs in our community.

We've shifted how we do business and are more focused to how we operate as a business. Which means clarifying and understanding the business we are in—what we are selling, who are our customers, who are our investors? Fundraising, which in many Federations is the tail that wags the dog, is instead a means to an end...not the end in and of itself. Volunteers and professionals are a means to an end, delivering on our mission.

Our Jewish community has evolved significantly in the past couple decades, where the key question today isn't what the community wants, but the nature and integrity of the Jewish community itself. Of course, each area has a lot more background and thinking which can be unpacked, but as we are approaching the

summer months, we think about on what we've become so far, and where we have yet to go.

We've recognized that we must find allies in the fight against hate. Though it begins with Jews, ultimately

**FEDERATION FISCAL
YEAR ENDS JUNE 30**

**Have you made your
pledge for this year?**

We're in a time of unprecedented crisis that demands an unprecedented response. Your gift will enable the Jewish Federation of the Desert to continue to stand on the front lines of Covid-19 to meet the growing needs of our community. Help us serve those who are counting on us most right now.

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Office - 760-324-4737 - or go
online to www.jfedps.org.

**YOU CAN MAKE
A DIFFERENCE.**

it threatens us all. We address the dangers of anti-Semitism, racism, bullying and all levels of intolerance. Our objective is to promote resistance to prejudice and advocate respect for every human being and at the same time, confront all forms of prejudice and discrimination in our world today. When issues occur, we are often called and take the

lead. We seek opportunities to make connections and have an impact.

The programming we've enabled in our community has been well received. We recognize a need, set this as a goal, and continue to deliver. It's not up to any one agency or organization. We are leaning on our respective strengths. That's the power of the collective, the strength of living in a Jewish community like ours.

I'm grateful for the generosity and participation of donors during this pandemic—the number of people standing with us and saying, "Hineni," (Here I am) when they are needed most, the people who recognize that Federation serves as an accelerant, igniting meaningful change. It's a both/and formula that works, not an either/or.

We are the front line for responding to a crisis. Whether following natural disasters or addressing a different type of crisis- the pandemic. Of course, there is more that we do, as Federation now delivers vital services and outcomes in our community. We should be proud of how far we have come. And we still have further to go.

I do not know when the next crisis, the next emergency, the next opportunity is coming. But I know who will respond. And I hope you'll stand with us when it happens. In gratitude,

Bruce Landgarten
CEO



**Order your Rosh Hashana Greetings Today!
See Back Page For Details.**

In Holocaust Day Speech Antony Blinken Recalls Past State Department Obstruction of Bids to Save Jews

By Ron Kampeas, JTA

Holocaust Remembrance Day commemorations are by their nature calls for accountability for atrocities past and present.

Antony Blinken, the U.S. Secretary of State, used the occasion to take his own department to task for its neglect of Jews during the Nazi era, and to call for action on behalf of the persecuted today.

Blinken, delivering the keynote address at the event organized by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, savaged the World War II-era assistant secretary of state, Breckinridge Long, for blocking the entry into the United States of Jews fleeing Nazi Europe, and for lying to Congress about it.

"He had immense power to help those being persecuted," Blinken said at the event, this year presented virtually because of the coronavirus. "Yet as the Nazis began to systematically round up and execute Jews, Long made



Antony Blinken, U.S. Secretary of State

it harder and harder for Jews to be granted refuge in the United States." Long notoriously also suppressed information from sources overseas describing the Nazi genocide.

Blinken, who has said he was shaped by the story of his stepfather's Holocaust survival, said Long's failures were a lesson for U.S. policymakers today, pointing both to attacks on minorities in the United States and the need to speak out for those oppressed abroad.

Blinken's spokesman Ned Price, alerting reporters to the speech, made explicit the connection between the

Holocaust and the current day. "We remember not only what happened, but also how it was allowed to happen," he said. "We remember to look at the institutions and societies we are part of and to understand better what they do and what they did not do."

Also delivering remarks for Holocaust Remembrance Day was Jill Biden, the first lady, who recorded a video address for the Jewish Federations of North America.

Biden in her remarks focused on assistance for elderly Holocaust survivors, praising Jewish Federations for its programs funded in part by the federal government under an initiative launched by President Joe Biden when he was vice president.

"Today 80,000 survivors live here in the United States and far too many wrestle with trauma and poverty," she said.

In Austrian anti-Semitism Study, 31% of Respondents Made Biased Statements. "It's a Huge Improvement."

By Cnaan Liphshiz, JTA

In a survey of anti-Semitic attitudes in Austria, 31% of the 2,000 respondents agreed with statements that the poll's authors said exemplified anti-Jewish biases — a significant drop in that sentiment from a similar study in 2018.

The Austrian government commissioned the survey from the Institute for Empirical Social Studies and presented the results in March 2021.

In the 2018 study, 46% of respondents agreed with the statements on anti-Semitic biases and 49% responded in ways that suggested the absence of anti-Semitic

bias, Wolfgang Sobotka, president of the National Council of Austria, the lower house of the country's parliament, said at a news conference in Vienna.

The survey, titled "Austria — Antisemitism 2020 study — results analysis," included statements such as "Jews today try to take advantage of the fact that they were victims during the Nazi era" (28% agreed) and "Jews have too much influence in Austria" (11%).

The findings of the government-funded surveys showed a significantly higher prevalence of anti-Semitism

than previous polling by the Anti-Defamation League. In its 2014 and 2019 surveys in Austria for the Global 100 Index, the prevalence of anti-Semitic opinions was 28% and 20% respectively.

In the ADL index, Austria was among the countries with the highest prevalence of anti-Semitic attitudes in Western Europe. Its index rating was higher than the regional rate of 24% and much higher than in countries with low rates of anti-Semitism, such as the Netherlands (5%) and the United Kingdom (8%). The ADL rating for the United States was 9%.

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EDITORIAL

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JCN STATEMENT

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

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Lawyers for Gunman of Pittsburgh Synagogue Massacre Maneuver to Avoid Death Penalty

By Ben Cohen, *The Algemeiner*

Lawyers acting for Robert Bowers, the neo-Nazi gunman who murdered 11 worshipers at Pittsburgh's Tree of Life Synagogue, have requested access to prosecutors' files on their client's online activities prior to the massacre in October 2018, as part of their wider strategy to avoid his execution.

In a motion filed the beginning of April, Bowers' lawyers wrote that the evidence must be turned over to them under discovery rules.

"Federal courts have consistently recognized, and capital juries have consistently found, that the government's awareness of the potential for a person to commit violence, and the government's capacity to avert violence, are mitigating circumstances of a capital offense," the motion said.

At his first court appearance in February 2019, Pittsburgh resident Bowers pleaded not guilty to the

63 charges brought against him. In October 2020, his lawyers shifted

tack, beginning efforts for a plea bargain — so far rejected by the government — that would result in Bowers spending the rest of his life in prison, but also avoiding the death penalty sought by the Justice Department.

His lawyers cited the prosecution's reliance on Bowers' activity on social media platforms such as Gab to demonstrate "aggravating factors" necessary for the death sentence to be passed. These include proving that Bowers attacked the synagogue following significant planning and premeditation, that he was motivated by religious animus based on expressions of hate and



Robert Bowers

contempt toward Jews, and that he chose the synagogue for the shooting with the intent to instill fear in the Jewish community.

In the motion the defense wrote: "It is plain from the government's filings that it has reviewed Mr. Bowers' online activity, at least on Gab.com. What is not plain, and what the government has declined to provide in response to Mr. Bowers' discovery requests, is whether the government was aware of his online activity prior to the shootings, as well as his exposure to the comments of others suggesting or promoting violence or expressing antisemitic comments on Gab.com."

[Gab is an English-language social media website known for its far-right user base. The site has been widely described as a "safe haven" for extremists including neo-Nazis, white supremacists, and the alt-right. The site was launched in 2017 and

claimed to have almost 1,000,000 registered user accounts by July 2019].

Specifically, the defense is asking whether Bowers or any other user on Gab was monitored or identified in 2018 as a person who posed a threat of mobilizing to violence. It also wants to clarify whether "any federal program or law enforcement agency investigating white supremacy or online radicalization identified him before the synagogue shooting as a threat to the Jewish community in Pittsburgh," Pennsylvania news outlet TribLive reported.

On the morning of the October 27, 2018 attack — the deadliest anti-Semitic assault in the entire history of the American Jewish community — Bowers took to Gab to declare: "I can't sit by and watch my people get slaughtered. Screw your optics, I'm going in."

Jewish World War II Refugee Leaves Fortune to French Village that Saved Him

By Josh Plank, *World Israel News*

Eric Schwam, a Jew who fled Austria during World War II, has left his fortune to the French village of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, whose residents hid Schwam and his family from persecution.

Schwam passed away on December 25 at the age of 90, bequeathing an undisclosed amount of money to the remote community in southeast France.

"It's a large amount for the village," said Mayor Jean-Michel Eyraud. He said Schwam asked that the money be used for educational and youth initiatives, particularly scholarships.

Eyraud declined to specify the

amount since the will was still being sorted out, but the previous mayor, who had met with Schwam and his wife twice to discuss the gift, said it was around 2 million euros (\$2.4 million).

Schwam and his family arrived in Le Chambon-sur-Lignon in 1943. They were hidden in a school throughout the war and remained in the village until 1950.

According to the Yad Vashem Holocaust Remembrance Center, the inhabitants of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon protected 3,000 to 5,000 Jews from the Nazis between 1941 and 1944.

The rescue activities were initiated and led by the town's Protestant pastor, Andre Trocme, and his wife Magda.

The villagers hid Jews in their homes and public institutions, provided them with forged ID and ration cards, and even helped some over the border to safety in Switzerland.

According to Yad Vashem, the villagers rejected any labeling of their behavior as heroic, saying, "Things had to be done, and we happened to be there to do them. It was the most natural thing in the world to help these people."

After the round-up and deportation of Jews in Paris in 1942, Trocme said, "The Christian Church should drop to its knees and beg pardon of God for its present incapacity and cowardice."

Daniel Trocme, the pastor's cousin, operated a children's home in Le Chambon-sur-Lignon where he rescued many Jewish children until he was captured. He died in a Nazi concentration camp.

The Trocmes were among about 40 residents of the village to be designated as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem.

Reflecting, continued from page 1
as it did on March 1, 2020.

Our immediate future will include prolonged social distancing, mask wearing in public, and most likely limited size in-person gatherings. And none of this takes into consideration some of the financial struggles ahead. What will this "new normal" mean for High Holiday services? What will this mean for those who rely on galas and other in person events as primary fundraisers? And how do our Jewish organizations re-open their buildings with staff and constituents feeling safe?

So, now is the time to contemplate what our community's transformation could look like...the

new platforms to deliver Jewish content (educational, religious, spiritual, cultural, emotional support, etc.). Our community's system of services is fueled in part by our campaign. There are economic realities- Formerly stable families are contacting us for the basics—housing, utilities, medicine and groceries. Food pantries need replenishing. And all this unfolds as our own Federation is impacted by attrition and an aging major donor base. Although we can't plug every hole...make no mistake, THIS Federation will not allow Jews to go hungry or be put out into the street. Many generous people trust and rely on us to do the right things in the right ways on their behalf,

effectively and efficiently, and with dignity for those we help.

We're proud of the hard-earned trust so many place in us. It is why this year we were able to mobilize, so that when the pandemic hit we could respond quickly, ably, with results. It is times like these that demonstrate how indispensable Federation is to the quality of life in our community. We're a Jewish community with human needs to meet for people who depend on us. We're committed to doing our part, but we can't meet those needs the way we used to. Competition for the dollar is becoming that much keener. And it is going to take more than engaging new donors.

In these changing times, we have

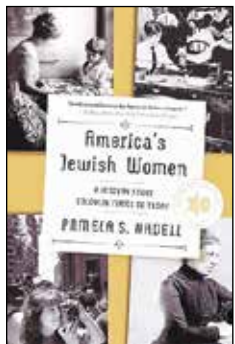
rethought the allocations process, favoring collaborative efforts bringing together the resources of partners within the Jewish community. Agencies must compete for grants based on needs that we decide are most pressing for the community. Central to our vision for the future, we take seriously the role of convener, coordinator, and instigator. Our efforts are working because we're walking a path to greater impact with more partners. We must draw on our experience as a reason to keep widening our circles of connection. This is a turning point. Let's use this opportunity not to turn inward but to continue reaching out and strengthening the ties we share.

We Rose, continued from page 1

sessions over five months, analyzing Arthur Green's book "Judaism's 10 Best Ideas." At the same time Women's Philanthropy developed its "Women's Cultural Alliance" and began offering fascinating programs online. The three September events: "Just Another Version of You," "Jewish Ethical Will Workshop" and "The Jewish Immigrant Journey." A major undertaking by the Alliance was the three-part program on "America's Jewish Women" in the Spring, with the first and third program featuring local facilitators Sussie Denebeim and Julie Bornstein, and the second program feeding into New York city's Temple Emanu-El program with the author of the book, Dr. Pamela Nadell.

We offered a mini-series with Rabbi Mark Borovitz from Beit T"shuvah in Los Angeles, discussing Judaism and sobriety. Available to everyone were such programs as two holiday cooking shows (Chanukah and Pesach) with Chef Michael Solomonov.

We sent you links to join the Israeli Consul General/Los Angeles Yom



Several of the virtual programs offered this past year

HaShoah program and the national observance of Yom Ha'Atzmaut.

We maintained our role in providing holiday foods for those struggling financially, with deliveries more challenging due to COVID, but achieved, nonetheless.

Our fundraising events have been very different this year, without

being together in person but joining together as special times at special programs. Highlights included Major Gifts donors spending an evening online with Jason Alexander. Lion Judah ladies had a special "visit" with Mayim Bialik.

Since those first months of isolation, we have offered a variety of

programming, and are pleased how many have taken advantage. Many of these events have been developed over several weeks and then advertised in the Jewish Community News. At the same time, we have seen the need to communicate more immediate events and issues, and those have been conveyed via weekly news bulletins on Mondays. Through these e-newsletters the Jewish Federation has educated, built community and engaged our constituents with thought-provoking topics. But there is the rub: These weekly briefings are reaching less than half our readership. The problem? We don't have your email addresses.

We are not talking about hundreds of emails filling your inbox. We definitely do not give out your email addresses. We are talking about a weekly news bulletin ... and we would love for it to be received by more of you. All you need to do is email us with your email address, sending it to reception@jfedps.org.

Iron Dome Simultaneously Intercepts Drones, Rockets in Hi-tech Leap

"These new capabilities provide the political echelon and defense establishment with the operational flexibility that is critical to our national security."

By Udi Shaham, *The Jerusalem Post*

After significant upgrades, Israel's famed Iron Dome missile-defense system successfully and simultaneously intercepted a barrage of rockets and drones in a recent round of tests.

The news comes as the IDF warns of a possible new confrontation with Hezbollah in Lebanon, where the Iranian-backed terrorist group is constantly working to improve its missile and drone capabilities.

The tests were completed in mid-March by the Defense Ministry and Rafael Advanced Defense Systems. They demonstrated a significant upgrade of Iron Dome's technological capabilities.

The Iron Dome was tested in a range of complex scenarios and successfully intercepted and destroyed targets simulating existing and emerging threats, including the simultaneous interception of multiple drones as well as a salvo of rockets and missiles.

This test took place in the South with the participation of IAF Air Defense Command. The new



Iron Dome intercepts UAVs, rockets barrage simultaneously in test

version of the Iron Dome system will be delivered to the IAF and the Navy for operational use and will strengthen Israel's multitiered missile-defense architecture.

The development of the Iron Dome is led by the Defense Ministry's Israel Missile Defense Organization (IMDO). The prime contractor for its development is Rafael Advanced Defense Systems.

The system's radar, which is capable of projecting where an incoming missile is going to land, is developed by ELTA, a subsidiary of Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI). The command and control system (BMC) is developed by mPrest.

"The technological capabilities

developed by defense industries, including the Iron Dome and the multitiered missile-defense array, are central to the defense of the State of Israel," Defense Minister Benny Gantz said.

"In the face of emerging and rapidly changing threats, these new capabilities provide the political echelon and defense establishment with the operational flexibility that is critical to our national security," he said. "I would like to thank the IMDO and Rafael engineering teams. Thanks to them, the citizens of Israel can sleep peacefully at night."

IMDO Director Moshe Patel said: "Thirty years after the First Gulf War, which led to the establishment of the Israel Missile Defense Organization, and 10 years after the Iron Dome's first operational interception, we have achieved a significant leap forward in the technological capabilities of the Iron Dome system.

"In the three test campaigns conducted in the last few months, the Iron Dome system

demonstrated outstanding capabilities against evolving threats, including successfully intercepting salvos of rockets and missiles, as well as intercepting multiple UAVs simultaneously.

"The new configuration of the Iron Dome system will be delivered to the IAF and Navy for operational use, and it will further strengthen the State of Israel's multitiered missile-defense array," Patel said.

Brig.-Gen. (ret.) Pini Yungman, general manager of Rafael's Air and Missile Defense Division, said: "Rafael and the IMDO have been continuously upgrading Iron Dome's capabilities over the last decade, constantly improving its technological and operational performance. Our forward-looking approach allows us to address projected threats that are emerging around us. The capabilities that were demonstrated in this last test will ensure additional protection to the State of Israel."

FBI Releases Ads in Yiddish and Hebrew to Encourage Reporting of Hate Crimes

April 9, 2021, *Jewish News Syndicate*

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has released hate-crime ads in Yiddish and Hebrew to expand its outreach to Jewish communities across America. The advertisements urge victims of hate crimes to report them to the FBI.

They say: "Did you know many hate crimes are not reported? The FBI wants to help, but we need to hear from you. If you believe you're the victim of or a witness to a hate crime, contact your local police

department, call 1-800-CALL-FBI, or go to tips.fbi.gov."

Rabbi Abraham Friedman, a police chaplain and community leader in New York, applauded the FBI for its Hebrew and Yiddish ads. He wrote on Twitter, "Kudos to the @NewYorkFBI for once again demonstrating what community outreach is all about, encouraging



Jewish hate-crime victims/witnesses to report what happened in the languages that are most familiar to them. Now that's what we call #culturalsensitivity."

In November, the FBI reported that more than 60 percent of religious-based hate crimes in 2019 targeted Jews—a 14 percent increase from 2018.

The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program defines a hate crime as "a committed criminal offense

which is motivated, in whole or in part, by the offender's bias(es) against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender or gender identity."

The top three bias-motivated offenses most frequently reported in the UCR Program's hate crime data set are destruction/damage/vandalism, intimidation and simple assault.

Israeli Organization Breaks World Record for Kidney Donations

By Yehuda Shlezinger, Jewish News Syndicate

Israel celebrated a special milestone on April 4, as the Matnat Chaim nonprofit organization, which encourages and facilitates living kidney donations, broke a world record by marking its 1,004th transplant in Israel. And that does not include voluntary altruistic kidney donations arranged through private channels.

Since Matnat Chaim, Hebrew for "Gift of Life," was founded in 2009, the number of kidney donations in Israel has quadrupled. The organization's data reveals that about two-thirds of the donors are men, a third are women and 40 percent of all donors are teachers or educators. The organization's



An Israeli boy receives a donor kidney.

work is estimated to have saved the state some 4 billion shekels (\$1.2 billion) by decreasing the need for treatments, hospitalization and medication for patients with kidney disease.

The COVID-19 pandemic led to an increase in the number of donations. Some weeks, the organization said, it oversaw five to nine kidney transplants a week. An especially large number of donations occurred when Matnat Chaim's founder, Rabbi Yeshayahu Heber, passed away after having contracted coronavirus.

Kidney recipient Kobi Oshrat told Israel Hayom that since he received the transplant, "life has been wonderful. The transplant was more successful than expected. My physical condition improved tremendously. I am back to being a young man. ... I engage in sports and generally function."

Oshrat's donor was Yoav Matityahu, and Oshrat says, "We have become a family. He and his

wife are wonderful people. Those who decide to donate a kidney are undeniably saving a life. And all of this is happening here, in Israel. It's amazing."

Culture Minister Yehiel Tropper, who donated a kidney more than a year ago, told Israel Hayom that he had not been nervous or afraid of the procedure.

"I spoke with the doctors beforehand, and they explained the process to me. I understood that the risk was minimal. It's true that it involves surgery, but the understanding that the kidney is highly likely to save a life trumps it all."

As for the record that Matnat Chaim broke, Tropper said, "It is one of Israel's greatest points of pride. Israel ranks first in the world in organ donations from live donors. We are a wonderful and extraordinary people."

Discussing the person who received his kidney, Tropper said, "I am in touch with Yair. He had his operation on his 60th birthday. We speak every Friday. We haven't skipped a single Friday, even when it was especially busy. Each time, it's inspirational, over and over again."

Born out of tragedy

Matnat Chaim was founded by

Rabbi Yeshayahu Heber. When he was a dialysis patient before receiving a kidney donation, he befriended a young man who died while waiting for a matching donor.

Determined that such a tragedy would not happen again, Heber began recruiting voluntary kidney donors from his own ultra-Orthodox (*haredi*) circles to match with potential recipients, subject to strict medical protocols.

Partly because of this focus, about 90 percent of the altruistic kidney donors in Israel are Orthodox or ultra-Orthodox.

In the past three years, Matnat Chaim has started using digital media to reach the secular population. Though the number is still small, the rate of non-religious donors has more than doubled in that time.

More than 95% of live transplants are successful. Some 80% of recipients survive for five years and approximately half survive for more than 25 years.

About two-thirds of altruistic donors in Israel are male; Singer says that's because Israeli doctors discourage women from donating until they are finished bearing children.

"We believe the distribution will even out in about a decade because there's half a generation of women between 25 and 40 interested in donating once they pass their childbearing years."

During 2020, despite the pandemic, Matnat Chaim saw a 30% increase in altruistic donations over 2019. Singer says that many people decided to give the gift of life in memory of Rabbi Heber, who died of Covid-19 in April 2020 at age 55.

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DESERT HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL



The Desert Holocaust Memorial is located in the Palm Desert Civic Center Park at San Pablo Avenue & Fred Waring Drive. Residents and visitors are encouraged to visit this moving memorial, a place of remembrance and monument of hope.

Bipartisan Group of Senators Urge Biden to Nominate anti-Semitism Envoy ASAP

By Jewish News Syndicate

A bipartisan group of senators on April 19 urged U.S. President Joe Biden to quickly nominate a candidate to serve as the U.S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism and confront rising anti-Semitism worldwide.

The senators, who make up the Senate Bipartisan Task Force on Combating Anti-Semitism, sent Biden a signed letter explaining the urgent need for the nomination. The letter was organized by Sens. Jacky Rosen (D-Nev.) and James Lankford (R-Okla.).

"Tragically, 76 years after the end of the Holocaust, anti-Semitism remains a serious and growing danger for Jews in Europe, the Middle East, the United States and elsewhere in the world," the letter stated. "According to

a study by the Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry, violent anti-Semitic attacks worldwide rose 18 percent in 2019, including at least 53 synagogues and 28 community centers and schools that were targeted."

Congress passed a bill at the end of last year that elevated the special envoy position to the rank of a presidentially appointed, Senate-confirmed ambassador who reports directly to the secretary of state. Former President Donald Trump signed the bill into law shortly before leaving office. It also requires the ambassador to be a person of "recognized distinction in the field of combating anti-Semitism," the letter states.

There have been several candidates rumored to be up



Sen. Jacky Rosen (D-Nev.).

for nomination, including former ADL head Abe Foxman, Holocaust historian Deborah Lipstadt, former National Council of Jewish Women CEO Nancy Kaufman and National Coalition Supporting Eurasian Jewry CEO Mark Levin. Kaufman, who is backed by far-left anti-Israel groups such as IfNotNow, has raised concerns over her stance on the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of anti-Semitism, which is opposed to codifying it into law.

It remains unclear what President

Biden's timeline is for filing the position. The position under Trump was left vacant for the first two years of his administration and eventually filled by Elan Carr in February 2019.

"Swiftly nominating a qualified ambassador to monitor and combat anti-Semitism will help ensure that the United States remains a leader in combating anti-Semitism internationally and will equip the State Department with a designated senior diplomat to engage foreign governments to track and respond to this growing scourge," the letter stated.

"We encourage you to move quickly on the nomination and look forward to working with you."

The letter was signed by 22 members of the task force.

Steven Spielberg Launches Foundation to Fund Jewish-themed Documentaries

By Gabe Friedman, JTA

Steven Spielberg has launched a film foundation called Jewish Story Partners to fund documentaries that "tell stories about a diverse spectrum of Jewish experiences, histories, and cultures."

It is funded by the Righteous Persons Foundation, which Spielberg and his actress wife Kate Capshaw founded after Spielberg's experience making "Schindler's List" in 1993. Two Jewish philanthropies — the Maimonides Fund and the Jim Joseph Foundation — also contributed funds. (Both organizations also help fund 70 Faces Media, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency's parent company.)

"We are especially proud to help establish this initiative — which will make visible a fuller range of Jewish

voices, identities, experiences, and perspectives — at a time when social divisions run painfully deep and mainstream depictions too often fail to reflect the Jewish community in all its complexity," Spielberg and Capshaw said in a statement April 15 announcing the foundation.

The organization, which starts with \$2 million, will soon announce its first round of grantees, who will receive \$500,000 in total this year. It is already taking applications for a second round of grants and says it hopes to ramp up its funding over time.

The project's director is Roberta Grossman, a filmmaker who has specialized in Jewish-themed documentaries. Caroline Libresco, a longtime Sundance Film Festival



Steven Spielberg and his wife Kate Capshaw

programmer, will be its artistic director. And "Friends" creator Marta Kauffman is a board member.

"I'm looking forward to helping create a stable and lasting funding organization that can fill the funding gap for independent filmmakers who want to tell a Jewish story,"

Kauffman said in a statement.

Spielberg's Righteous Persons Foundation has funded a range of Jewish initiatives beyond the film world, including the USC Shoah Foundation, which has created an archive of recorded Holocaust survivor testimonies.

Spielberg is also a recent recipient of the Genesis Prize, nicknamed the "Jewish Nobel," which is given to "extraordinary individuals for their outstanding professional achievement, contribution to humanity, and commitment to Jewish values." He said he will donate his \$1 million prize earnings along with \$1 million of his own to 10 different organizations fighting for racial and economic justice.

Israeli Breakthrough in the Battle Against Brain Cancer

By Yakir Benzion, United With Israel

Researchers at Tel Aviv University have discovered a fix to stop certain cells in the brain from helping spread cancerous growths, the university announced on April 11.

They focused on a problem that had frustrated scientists related to why the brain's immune system fails to fight the disease and instead encourages division and the spread of deadly glioblastoma cancer cells.

"We've been studying glioblastoma for the last decade. We are intrigued by the way that glioblastoma, a very aggressive brain cancer, progresses and advances so quickly in the brain while most treatments are actually useless," said Prof. Ronit Satchi-Fainaro, Director

of the Cancer Biology Research Center and the Head of the Cancer Research and Nanomedicine Laboratory at the university.

Glioblastoma is the deadliest type of cancer in the central nervous system, accounting for most malignant brain tumors. It is aggressive, invasive, and fast-growing, making it resistant to existing treatments, with patients dying within a year of the cancer's onset. Moreover, glioblastoma produces "cold tumors," which do not respond to immunotherapeutic attempts to activate the immune system against it.

"Five years ago, we decided to focus on the interactions between the glioblastoma cells and the resident cells in the microenvironment in the brain. We focused on microglia. These are the immune cells of the brain," she explained.

"To our surprise, we found that not only do the microglia cells do nothing to stop the cancer cells, they actually play a crucial and negative role by accelerating the division, spread and mobilization of glioblastoma cells," she said.



Satchi-Fainaro's team found that the brain secretes a protein called P-Selectin (SELP), which alters the brain's immune cells so that instead of inhibiting the spread of cancer cells, they do the opposite, enabling them to proliferate and penetrate brain tissues. They then searched for a way to inhibit the SELP protein so that the microglia do what they're supposed to do and block the spread of what is normally an incurable cancer.

"SELP is a known protein that normally helps cells travel inside the body – especially white blood cells and endothelial cells that line the interior of blood vessels," explains Satchi-Fainaro. "The encounter between glioblastoma cells and microglia cells causes them to express SELP in large quantities. In the study, we were able to show that the overexpressed SELP helps the cancer cells travel and penetrate

the brain tissue."

"By inhibiting the secretion of this protein, we actually halted the progression of the glioblastoma in multiple models, in mice and in unique 3D models from brain tissues that has glioblastoma (taken) from patients," said Satchi-Fainaro.

The results of the study may have lifesaving therapeutic implications and by sheer coincidence, a clinical study is already being conducted to inhibit SELP for a different reason – treating pain associated with sickle cell anemia.

Satchi-Fainaro hopes that since that treatment appears to be showing that inhibiting SELP is proving safe in humans, positive results from that trial could pave the way for relatively rapid approval of a clinical trial repurposing the new treatment for glioblastoma.

"Unfortunately, glioblastoma patients need new treatments immediately. Our treatment may be the needed breakthrough in the battle against the most daunting cancer of all," she said.

65% Drop in Severe Asthma, Israeli Hospital Says it's the Masks

By Maayan Jaffe-Hoffman, *The Jerusalem Post*

Sheba Medical Center found a 65% decrease in the hospitalization of severe asthma patients and a 45% drop in the number of urgent visits to the hospital's emergency room by asthma sufferers in 2020 versus 2019.

Prof. Nancy Agmon-Levin, who conducted the study, told *The Jerusalem Post* that she believes "masks blocked infectious agents and definitely pollen."

Agmon-Levin is the head of

Sheba's Clinical Immunology, Angioedema and Allergy Unit. She said that she and her team were hearing comments from patients that they had a lot less allergies this year compared to previous years.

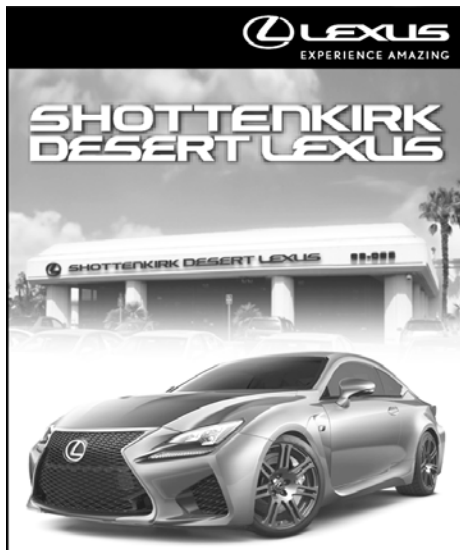
"We thought this is probably because of wearing masks, but thought about how we could prove the idea," she explained. "We checked the referrals to the emergency department due to asthma, of which 80% to 90% of all

asthma patients are due to allergies."

While there were such large decreases in asthma referrals, there was only around a 10% decrease in overall emergency department referrals during the same period.

Likewise, when looking at the first quarter of the year, pollution levels appear very similar to every other year, she said.

Allergies affect 30% of the Israeli population, according to the Health Ministry.



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Montreal Police Arrest Man in Connection with Desecration of Synagogue

By *Algemeiner Staff*

Canadian Jews expressed relief after police in Montreal arrested a man in connection with the desecration of a synagogue in the city last year.

In a statement on March 11, B'nai Brith Canada said it had been informed by Montreal police that the man, named as Patrice Belley-Gervais, was arrested and appeared in court. His next court date is set for April 30, and he is facing one charge

of breaking and entering.

After a lengthy closure due to COVID-19 restrictions, congregants entering the Congregation Sepharde Kol Yehouda in Côte Saint-Luc on May 27, 2020 found that the small institution had been ransacked, with some religious items, including Torah scrolls, dumped on the floor, and others stuffed into toilets.

"Some of these items are considered extremely sacred in



Desecrated Torah scrolls at the Congregation Sepharde Kol Yehouda Synagogue in Montreal

Judaism, to the extent that they are typically buried in a cemetery rather than disposed of in any

other manner," B'nai Brith noted. The organization's CEO, Michael Mostyn, expressed gratitude to the policy for making the arrest.

"We are thankful and relieved that a suspect has been arrested in connection with this deplorable incident," Mostyn said. "The wanton desecration of places of worship must carry consequences, regardless of motivation."

Sheri and Jim Borax Named JNF 2021 Tree of Life Award Recipients

Rancho Mirage residents Sheri and Jim Borax have been selected as the 2021 recipients of



Jim and Sheri Borax

Jewish National Fund-USA's (JNF-USA) prestigious Tree of Life™ Award for their exceptional contribution to the Jewish community and the land and people of Israel. The humanitarian award recognizes outstanding community involvement, professional leadership, and dedication to the cause of American-Israeli friendship with the devotion to peace and the security of human life.

"Sheri and Jim Borax are ardent Zionists who, through working in various national and local leadership positions within JNF-USA since the 2000s, have generously supported and influenced JNF-USA initiatives in Israel's north and south," said JNF-USA Palm Springs Director Donna Raider. "Among some of their major contributions, the Borax's donated two fire trucks and additional equipment to Israeli firefighters, as well as three much needed bomb shelters in the Gaza Envelope communities. However, perhaps their most passionate philanthropic investment goes toward

a cause that is very dear to their hearts: funding scholarships for students who attend JNF-USA's Alexander Muss High School in Israel — ensuring a prosperous education for the next generation of Jewish leaders."

The couple will be celebrated at a virtual award reception on Tuesday June 8, 2021 at 5:00 pm PT. The spectacular ceremony will feature an intimate dialogue with Emmy-award winning actor, director, producer, and best-selling author Henry Winkler and Academy-award winning actress, producer, and activist Marlee Matlin. Event co-chairs are Debbie Orgen and Nancy Singer.

In addition to the Borax's involvement with Jewish National Fund-USA, Sheri is a Lion of Judah with the Jewish Federation of the Desert and past chair of Women's Philanthropy. Jim is the creator and producer of Jim Borax's California Cabaret, an entertainment group featuring professional singers and dancers who perform unforgettable standards from the Great American Songbook. Many of its performances benefit a wide variety of nonprofit organizations.

The Borax's are both members of JNF-USA's national councils, including the Century Council, President's Society, King Solomon Society, and Gould Legacy Society. Sheri also


previously served as the Palm Springs Women for Israel Chair and currently serves as Co-President of JNF-USA Palm Springs Board of Directors.

"We are so blessed to have Sheri and Jim in our JNF-USA family. They are literally changing and saving lives through their generosity. Mazal Tov on this meaningful honor," said National

Campaign Director Sharon Joy.

If you are interested in attending the event and/or would like to make a gift toward a JNF-USA initiative in their honor, contact Donna Raider at draider@jnf.org or 760.864.6208 x-989. Registration for the event can also be made directly at jnf.org/treeoflifepalmsprings.

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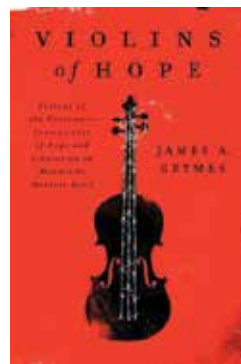
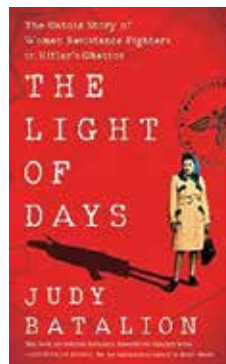
WOMEN'S CULTURAL ALLIANCE



Jewish Federation
OF THE DESERT

One of the most important stories of World War II, already optioned by Steven Spielberg for a major motion picture: a spectacular, searing history that brings to light the extraordinary accomplishments of brave Jewish women who became resistance fighters—a group of unknown heroes whose exploits have never been chronicled in full, until now.

Monday, May 10th will be a live conversation with the author of the new book (published April 6, 2021) about the unfathomable bravery of Jewish women in the Holocaust, "The Light Of Days," Judy Batalion in conversation with Catherine M.



Lewis, Ph.D. and Executive Director of History and Holocaust Education at Kennesaw State University, Atlanta. Batalion's book is available at Costco in Palm Desert, on Amazon or your favorite bookstore.

Monday, May 24th will explore in

The Untold Story of the Jewish Women Resistance Fighters in Hitler's Ghettos – Two Programs

Session 1: Monday, May 10th at 5:00 pm,

Session 2: Monday, May 24th at 5:30 pm.

more depth the brave Jewish women who became freedom fighters and whose stories are only now being told.

Origins of the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra

Monday, June 14th at 5:30 pm

Join the Women's Cultural Alliance for an evening of history and music on Monday, June 14th at 5:30 pm to see the "Origins of the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra". This moving video and discussion will fill you with pride and new information about the connection between artists in the Holocaust (with excerpts from

"Violins of Hope") and modern Israeli Philharmonic. Stay tuned for more details in our Federation e-Newsletter.

To register for the May 10 and 24 two-part "Ghetto Girls" series and/or June 14 Israeli Philharmonic program, contact Leslie Pepper at Leslie.pepper@jfedps.org or call the office at 760-324-4737. Zoom links will be sent out to all registered as we get closer to the events.

Each session is complimentary. Please consider a contribution to enable us to continue our vital work in our outreach and assistance to Jewish's members of the Coachella Valley.

to serve them and some money for their causes. A JNF "blue box" was in all her extended family's homes. No matter how little they may have had, they felt the inherent obligation to help those with less.

Phyllis grew up in a culturally and religiously diverse neighborhood, across the street from the synagogue where she attended Hebrew School. She was one of seven girls in Madison's first Bat Mitzvah class in 1953. Her paternal grandfather was instrumental in forming the first "Chevrah Kaddisha" (Jewish Burial Society) in Madison. When the Catholic Church nearby was undergoing renovations, the priest and nuns approached Phyllis's grandfather and asked if the synagogue could be used for their parochial school during regular school hours, converting back to

the synagogue's Hebrew School afterwards. This relationship with the local Catholic Church continued for years and transmitted the importance of the Jewish and non-Jewish community working together.

As a teen Phyllis volunteered with the local Red Cross. However, she felt deeply that Jews must support our own causes, because the rest of the world would not. This translated into her involvement in all things Jewish her whole life. As a young woman she was active in Hadassah. For over 60 plus years has been involved with the Jewish Federations of Chicago and Palm Springs. She is a proud Lion of Judah in Chicago and an Out-of-Town Lion of Judah in the Desert. Her extensive charitable activities include supporting Israel Guide Dogs,

continued on page 13



WOMAN OF IMPACT

Women of Impact is a new initiative featuring a local woman, nominated by a community member, who is making an impact in our Jewish and secular community.

This month we are featuring Phyllis Eisenberg. With her extensive involvement in charitable activities in our desert it is amazing to realize she splits her time between our community and her home in Chicago (although the pandemic kept her in the desert this past year).

She is the proud grandmother of 5 and great grandmother of 5 with one more on the way! She grew up in a close-knit traditional Conservative Jewish family in Madison, Wisconsin, which instilled in her the value and

responsibility of making the world a better place through deeds of "tzedakah" and acts of loving kindness, "gemelut chasidim." Her earliest memories of taking care of community came from her maternal grandparents who lived next door and embodied these Jewish attributes in their daily lives.

Phyllis' earliest memories of her grandparents were how they always welcomed travelling rabbis raising money for Palestine and the Jewish community, even when their means were limited. There was always a meal



Phyllis Eisenberg

Oscar-nominated Filmmakers to Produce Documentary on French Nazi Hunters Serge and Beate Klarsfeld

By JTA

Two of the world's most famous Nazi hunters, Serge and Beate Klarsfeld, are getting the documentary treatment.

Alexander Nanau, a Romanian filmmaker whose documentary "Collective" is up for both best documentary and best foreign film at this year's Oscars, will executive produce a film about the Klarsfelds, who have exposed Nazis around the world for decades.

"It has been a huge privilege to have gained the trust and cooperation of Beate and Serge to document their extraordinary lives both past and present," co-director Mike Lerner said

in a statement April 19 to *The Hollywood Reporter*.

Lerner's 2011 documentary "Hell and Back Again" about a soldier with post-traumatic stress disorder was nominated for an Oscar in 2012.

The Klarsfelds have brought several prominent Nazis and French Vichy collaborators to justice, including the infamous Gestapo officer Klaus Barbie.



Serge and Beate Klarsfeld in Paris, 1978

continued from page 12

StandWithUs, Jewish Family Services and Jewish National Fund. She has also been involved in Israel Cancer Research, the Mensch Foundation, Temple Isaiah and Desert Outreach Synagogue to name a few.

In the general community this champion cheerleader has also given her energies and financial support to CVREP, The Steinway Society, Well in the Desert, The McCallum Theater, Ovarian Cancer Foundation, Palm Springs Unified School District for Arts in the Schools, Tools for Tomorrow, Pegasus Riding Academy and the Palm Springs Art Museum.

Phyllis was married to Marvin Eisenberg (z"l), who supported her in all of her charitable endeavors.

Phyllis has an infectious sense of humor and loves to make those around her laugh! She has been a "matchmaker" for many years and loves to bring people together for personal benefit and important causes. While she does not sit on

any boards, she has been honored for her dedication by many of these above-mentioned organizations. She graciously gives her time and her resources and rallies her sphere of influence to join her in her efforts.

This past season she has mobilized her friends to support buying sleeping bags for our homeless population through Well in the Desert and, through our Federation's effort, to collect blankets, warm clothing and coats for the Well. Phyllis is a consummate supporter of our Jewish community and secular community. Our community tips our hat to Phyllis, our Woman of Valor, and wish her "Od Mayah V"Esrim" (another 120 years in good health)!

To nominate a deserving woman in our community who you think makes a difference in our world, please contact Leslie Pepper at leslie.pepper@jfedps.org or at 760-324-4737.



While our PJ Families are socially isolating and enjoying family time during these very extraordinary circumstances, 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.



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PJ Library Grandparents.

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Yogurt as a Cure for Covid-19 and Crohn's Disease?

By Brian Blum, Israel 21c

Can yogurt cure Covid-19 and Crohn's disease? Researchers at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU) have identified molecules in kefir, a type of yogurt, that have the potential to combat pathogenic bacteria by blocking communication between cells.

This approach also holds promise for fighting antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

Yogurt is a fermented probiotic dairy drink made by inoculating milk with microorganism mixtures, particularly yeast and bacteria.

People have relied on the probiotics in yogurt for years to calm tummy troubles and balance the negative effects of antibiotics.

Probiotics are thought to boost immune system function as well.

This is the first time, however, that researchers have isolated molecules in yogurt that appear to mitigate "cytokine storms," the extreme immune response that's one of the main causes of death in Covid-19 patients.

The researchers began by observing that kefir-secreted molecules reduced the virulence of *vibrio cholerae*, which cause cholera. The kefir molecules interfered in the assembly of bacterial biofilms, which play a significant role in the disease's progression.

The molecules' applicability

to Covid-19 came as a surprise. The yogurt molecules not only eliminated the cytokine storm but also restored balance to the immune system.

"These results are notable, since this is the first demonstration that virulence of human pathogenic bacteria can be mitigated by molecules secreted in probiotic milk products, such as yogurt or kefir," said Prof. Raz Jelinek, vice president and dean for research & development at BGU.

"Our research illuminates for the first time a mechanism by which milk-fermented probiotics can protect against pathogenic infections and aid the immune system. Following

promising results in animal models, we look forward to administering these drug candidates to patients who are experiencing a cytokine storm due to Covid-19 infection, or people suffering from acute inflammatory bowel pathologies such as Crohn's disease."

Josh Peleg, CEO of BGN Technologies, the technology transfer company of BGU, added that "In a reality where antibiotic-resistant bacteria are becoming an imminent threat, the novel molecules discovered by BGU scientists pave a completely new path for fighting bacterial infections by disrupting cell-to-cell communications in pathogenic bacteria. Moreover, the dramatic anti-inflammatory activities of the molecules may open new avenues for therapeutics and scientifically proven probiotic food products."

BGN Technologies is setting up a biopharma company "for the further development and clinical examination" of the technology.

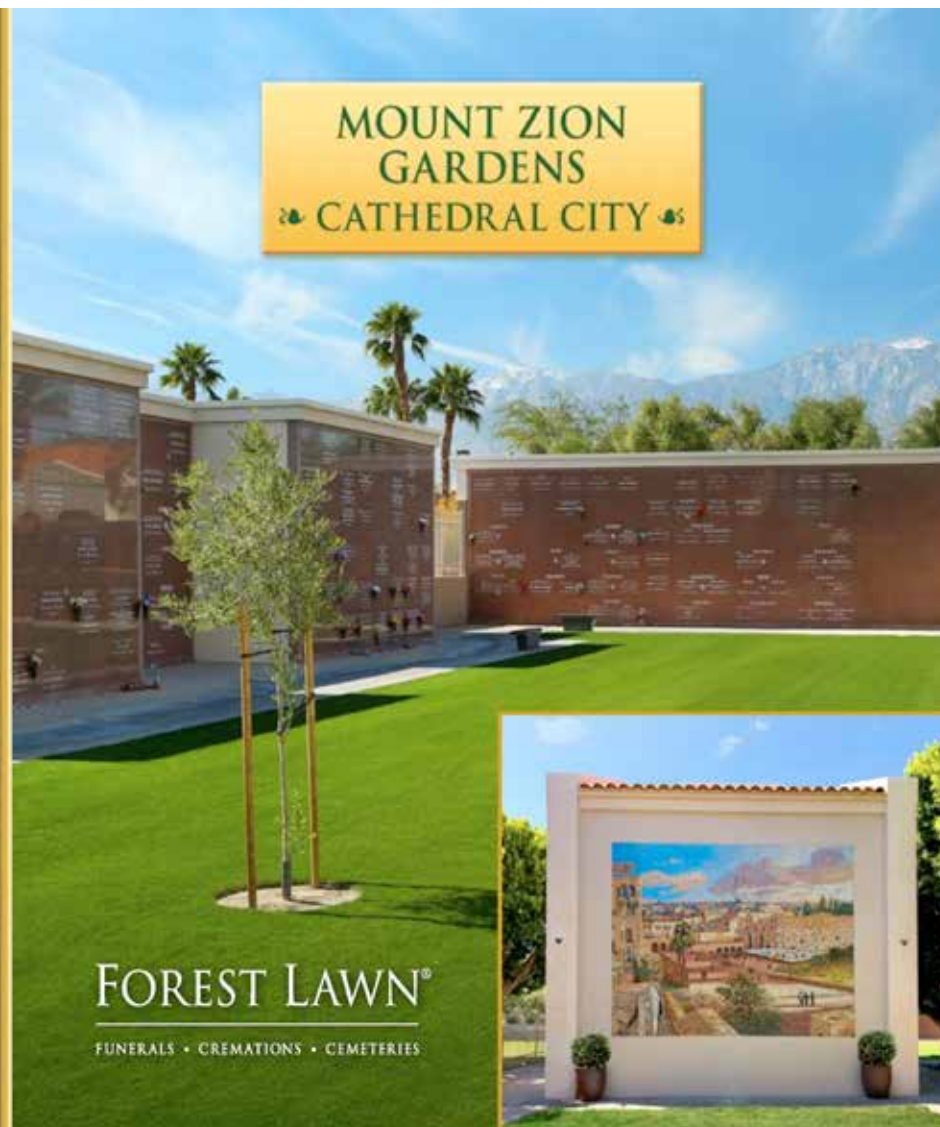
PhD student Orit Malka led the study, which was published in the journal *Microbiome*. Profs. Michael Meijler, Ariel Kushmaro and Ron Apte, all of BGU, participated.

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Honorarium Tributes In Appreciation For:

- **Rosee and Sandy Hertz**, Wishing a Happy Passover, from Margot and Jerry Halperin.
- **Sandy Hertz**, Happy birthday from Ginger and David Smerling, Norm and Sandy Wruble.
- **Dr. Michael and Carol Lovy**, Thank you for your warm Passover hospitality, from Ana Landau.
- **Marcia Milkis**, Happy birthday from Sherry and Howard Schor.
- **Larry Peerce**, Best wishes for your special birthday from Margot and Jerry Halperin, Sherry and Howard Schor.
- **Judy Wallis**, In honor of your special birthday, from Loreen Jacobson.
- **Lainie Weil**, In honor of your milestone birthday from Judy Cohn.

Refuah Shleimah Get Well:

- **Annette Pluss**: Wishing you a complete and

speedy recovery, from Marnie Miller and Joe Noren.

- **Alana Polacheck**, Wishing you a speedy recovery from Harold and Mimi Paley.

Memoriam Tributes Condolences Sent To:

- **Dr. Paul Biskar and Family**, Deepest sympathy on the loss of your beloved mother, from Nancy and Dennis Ditlove, Charlotte and Lester Morris, and Gail and Bob Scadron.
- **David and Lisa Conney and Family**, In memory of Marvin Conney, from Lita and Jerry Widran.
- **Lois Davidson and Family**, Heartfelt condolences to you and your family on the passing of your beloved husband, Tom, from Cora Ginsberg, Loreen Jacobson, and Sherry and Howard Schor.
- **Jim Eisenberg**, In memory of your beloved sister June, from Marnie Miller and Joe Noren
- **Sheila Goldberg and Family**, In memory of Joey, from Barbara and Robert Paget.
- **Nancy Glick and Family**, In memory of your beloved husband, father and grandfather

Larry, from Susan, Barry, Mitch and David Feinberg.

- **Wendy Goodfriend**, In memory of your beloved mother, from Jo Ellen and Gary Leifer.
- **Pearle Rae Levy and Family**, Heartfelt condolences to you and your family on the passing of your beloved husband, Mark, from Cora Ginsberg, Loreen Jacobson, and Sherry and Howard Schor.
- **Dr. and Mrs. Mark Maslan**, in memory of Ruthie Tivol, from Loreen Jacobson.
- **Lila Rauch**, My sincere condolences on the passing of your beloved brother Mark, from Cora Ginsberg.
- **Family of Ruthie Tivol**, In memory of Ruthie Tivol, my dear beautiful friend, from Loreen Jacobson.
- **Robin Torodor**, In memory of your beloved mother Judy, from Barbara and Alan Hartstein.
- **Marilee Upton-Spatz**, In memory of Pearl Upton, from Deborah Levin.
- **Judy Varadi and Family**, In memory of your beloved husband, father and grandfather Andrew Varadi, from Jerry and Lita Widran.

Israel Honors Muslim Nurse who Recited Hebrew Prayer for Dying Jewish Patient

By Abigail Klein Leichman, Israel 21c

Muslim male nurse Maher Ibrahim heads the nursing staff of Emek Medical Center's Covid-19 ward where severely ill and ventilated patients fight for their lives.

Ibrahim was on duty recently when a religious elderly Jewish patient was nearing his end.

Emek spokesman Larry Rich describes the poignant scene to illustrate how coexistence pervades daily life in Israel even if it doesn't always make headlines.

"The patient's family would not

make it in time for the inevitable farewell. Maher, trained in Jewish studies, applied his knowledge and deeply empathic spirit at that critical moment," Rich tells ISRAEL21c.

"In a phone call with the man's family, Maher the Muslim nurse recited aloud in Hebrew the Shema Yisrael prayer –Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the



Maher Ibrahim,
head nurse on Emek
Medical Center's
Covid ward

Lord is One.'

"His act of loving empathy, kindness and understanding went far beyond the norms of nursing and in that brilliant timeless moment, he personified the spirit of Emek and Israel," Rich says.

Ibrahim's action touched a national chord. He was invited to light one of 12 flames that ushered in this year's official 73rd Independence Day celebrations at Jerusalem's Mount Herzl.

This is an honor, Rich reminds us,

"bestowed upon those who represent the best within our society."

Emek Medical Center in Afula, in the historic Jezreel Valley, serves a patient base that is 50 percent Jewish and 50 percent Arab (including Muslims, Christians, Druze and Bedouins) as well as Circassians. The makeup of the staff reflects that diversity in a way that is quite common in Israeli hospitals.

"The living philosophy of Emek is coexistence through medicine," says Rich. "This is the hope of Israel."



Summer Shabbat Schedule, May-July

Due to the uncertainties from the COVID Pandemic and changing schedules as we reach the hot, summer months, we urge you to check online or call any temple or shul you are interested in attending to find out what is currently being offered. Check websites for Shavuot services. Also, Tisha B'Av falls on Saturday night July 17 through Sunday, July 18.

BETH SHALOM (Member, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism)
Ken Hailpern, Spiritual Leader
79-733 Country Club Drive,
Bermuda Dunes, CA 92203
www.congregationbethshalom.net
760-200-3636
Virtual Shabbat Morning Services:
10:00 am, Zoom link on website:
CongregationBethShalom.net
Any reopening updates will be posted on our website.
For information, email
BethShalom18@gmail.com or call
760-200-3636.

CHABAD OF PALM SPRINGS & DESERT COMMUNITIES
Rabbi Yonason Denebeim &
Rabbi Arik Denebeim
425 Avenida Ortega, Palm Springs,
CA 92264 www.chabadpalm Springs.com
760-325-0774
5:30 pm: Pre-Shabbat services
offered online Friday afternoons.
Check website for information.

CHABAD OF PALM DESERT
Rabbi Mendy Friedman
Call for information: 760-651-2424.
www.chabadpd.com 760-969-2153
/760-969-2158

CHABAD OF RANCHO MIRAGE
Rabbi Shimon Posner
72295 Via Marta, Rancho Mirage,
CA 92270. www.chabadm.com
760-770-7785
"Taste of Shul" available Fridays on
Zoom and Facebook live. Check
website or call for additional services
and classes being offered.

**CHABAD OF SUN CITY
PALM DESERT**


Rabbi Yonason Denebeim.
See Chabad of Palm Springs.

CONGREGATION HAR-EL
(Member, Union for Reform
Judaism)
Rabbi Richard Zions, Ph.D.; Cantor
Joseph Gole, D.Mus. harelurjpd@
gmail.com 760-779-1691.
New website: harelurjpd.org.
Zoom Shabbat Evening Services
5 pm with Rabbi Richard Zions,
Cantor Joseph Gole and a Guest
Cantor. Discussion with attendees
before and after the Shabbat
Services.
Summer Schedule: Service the last
Friday of each month at 5 pm
Saturday 11 am—Zoom Torah
Study with Discussion conducted
by Rabbi Zions. For Zoom invite
email harelurjpd@gmail.com.

**CONGREGATION SHALOM
BAYIT** (Reform)
Rabbi Kenneth Milhander, 1320 W.
Williams Ave., Banning, CA 92220.
Contact 951-392-5380.

**DESERT OUTREACH
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Rabbi Jules King; Cantor Lori
Reisman Patterson. 760-449-0111.
Mailing address: P.O. Box 982,
Rancho Mirage, CA 92270. www.
Desert-Outreach-Synagogue.com.
Virtual services held the second
Fridays at 7:00 pm on Zoom. For
link and password contact rabbi @
desert-outreach-synagogue.com.

OR HAMIDBAR
Rabbi David Lazar rabbi@
orhamidbar.org. Virtual Kabbalat
Services Fridays at 6:30 pm and



SHAVUOT 2021-5781

Erev Shavuot: Sunday, May 16, 2021
First Day Shavuot: Monday, May 17, 2021
Second Day Shavuot: Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Shabbat morning services at 10:30
am. For information email info@
orhamidbar.org.

SUN CITY JEWISH SERVICES
Rabbi Kenneth Emert; Cantor
Alan Scott. Virtual Services held
the first and third Fridays at 7:15
pm. Information: Contact Susan
Katzman, 760-641-0411 or email
SusanK92253gmail.com.

**TEMPLE HAR SHALOM,
Idyllwild**
(951) 468-0004.
www.templeharshalomidyllwild.org
Email: templeharshalomofidyllwild@
gmail.com.
Erev Shabbat Services via Zoom
the third Friday of each month
with Rabbi David Lazar at 6:00
pm and Shabbat teaching with
Rabbi Lazar the next morning
at 9:30 am. Every other Friday
of the month: Shabbat Candle
Lighting with Rabbi Emerita Malka
Drucker at 5:45 pm. Contact
templeharshalomofidyllwild@
gmail.com for Zoom Address.

TEMPLE ISAIAH
Rabbi Steven Rosenberg
332 West Alejo Road, Palm Springs,
CA 92262, 760-325-2281. www.
templeisaiahps.com.
To access any activity, go to Temple
Isaiah's website and click on link

to desired service or program.
Friday evening services accessed,
as above, on website or directly
on Facebook 'Temple Isaiah Palm
Springs' at 7:30 pm. Twice a
month we offer Shabbat Under
the Stars from our outside bima
will continue, weather permitting.
Check website. Outside service
also available on Facebook Live.
Shabbat morning Nosh and Drash
Virtual Torah Study Saturdays
at 10:00 am via Zoom. "Jewish
University" from 1:30-3 PM also on
Zoom. No charge. RSVP requested.

TEMPLE SINAI (Member, Union
for Reform Judaism)
Rabbi David Novak
73-251 Hovley Lane West,
Palm Desert, CA 92260. www.
templesinaipd.org 760-568-9699.
Go to templesinaipd.org for
access information. Friday evening
services 5:30 pm. Saturday
morning Torah study 8:45 am;
Shabbat morning services 10 am.

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



Community Calendar of Online Programs - Summer 2021

Email (preferred) Miriam Bent at mhbentjcn@earthlink.net or call 760-323-0255 to have your events included in the community calendar.

Mondays:

2:00 pm - Chabad of Palm Springs/
Sun City: Virtual class: The
Prayerbook, with Sussie Denebeim
7:30 pm - Chabad of Palm Springs/
Sun City: Virtual class: "The
Prophets: Stories that shaped our
history" with Rabbi Baruch (Boz)
Werdiger.

Tuesdays:

7:00 pm - Chabad of Palm Springs/
Sun City: Virtual class: "Insights for
Daily Living, from the Torah" with
Sussie Denebeim.

Wednesdays:

7:00 pm - Temple Isaiah Virtual
"Dynamic Discussions" with **Rabbi
Steven Rosenberg**. Attend by
going to website: templeisaiaphs.com
and click on link. Offered twice
a month. Check website for dates
and discussion topics/guests.

Thursdays:

3:30 pm - Chabad of Palm Springs
- Virtual class: "The Mystical
Parsha" with **Rabbi Baruch (Boz)
Werdiger**. RSVP to Boz Werdiger,
boz@chabadps.com, or
760-550-5793

7:00 pm - Chabad of Palm Springs/
Sun City: Virtual "Ask the Rabbi"
with **Rabbi Yonason Denebeim**.

Saturdays:

7:00 pm Havurah of the Desert:
Havdalah followed by film
and webinar discussions. For
information and Zoom link: [info@
havurahofthedesert.org](mailto:info@havurahofthedesert.org).

Sunday, May 2

7:00 pm Join Sabra Hadassah
of the Desert for a special
performance on Zoom of "**Matzo
Ball Diaries**," revealing secret
stories about food & home. A
must see for anyone who loves to
eat. \$36 per household. RSVP to
Treasurer Nancy Singer: 760-345-
7647.

Tuesday, May 4

3:00 pm Har-El presentation by
Rabbi Joshua Garroway, Professor
of Judaeo-Christian Studies HUC/
Los Angeles. "**The Apostle Paul:
A First Century Reform Jew?**"
This and following nine Har-El
Galen programs available to Har-
El members and guests. Email
harelurjpd@gmail.com for link.

Wednesday, May 5

3:30 pm Har-El Follow -Up Review
and Response by Rabbi Richard
Zionts, Ph.D., with discussion: "How
is it possible to view Paul or Saul of
Tarsus as a Reform Jew?"

Tuesday, May 11

3:00 pm Har-El presentation by
Prof. Reuven Firestone, Professor of
Medieval Judaism and Islam, HUC/
Los Angeles. "**The Qur'an and the
Jews.**"

Wednesday, May 12

3:30 pm Har-El Follow -Up Review
and Response by Rabbi Richard
Zionts, with discussion: "Judaism
and Islam Share Much in Common -
Why the Antagonism Today?"

Sunday, May 23

3:00 pm, Beth Shalom Afternoon
of "Unkosher" Adult Comedy
featuring **The Bible Players**.
Community welcome! Limited
spaces. \$28 per household. Zoom
registration on website:
CongregationBethShalom.net.
Information: (760) 200-3636.

Thursday, June 3

4:00-5:00 pm Sabra Hadassah
of the Desert virtual meeting
via Zoom. Program: Dr. Yossi
Sidikaro, Ophthalmologist,
Specialist in Adult Macular
Degeneration and other retinal
issues with a major practice in
Beverly Hills, CA. \$20. RSVP to
Treasurer Nancy Singer:
760-345-7647.

Tuesday, June 8

Noon Har-El presentation by
Jean Bloch Rosensaft, Director Dr.
Bernard Heller Museum, HUC/New
York. "**Chagall and the Bible.**"

Tuesday, June 8

5 pm JNF Tree of Life Virtual Gala
honoring Sheri and Jim Borax.
See ad page 11.

Wednesday, June 9

3:30 pm Har-El Follow -Up Review
and Response by Rabbi Richard
Zionts.

Tuesday, June 22

10:30 am Har-El presentation by
Dr. Marc Dolinger, Chair, Social
Responsibility, San Francisco State
University "**Jews, Whiteness,
Power and Privilege.**"

Wednesday, June 23

3:30 pm Har-El Follow -Up Review
and Response by Rabbi Richard
Zionts.

Wednesday, July 14

3:30 pm Rabbi Richard Zionts
presentation on "**Anti-Semitism in
Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.**"

Wednesday, July 28

3:30 pm Rabbi Richard Zionts
presentation on "**A Modern
Perspective on the anti-Semitism
in Shakespeare's Merchant of
Venice.**"



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We appreciate your support!

Life-Saving Israeli Tech Diagnoses Skin Cancer Immediately

By United With Israel / TPS

Israeli scientists at Tel Aviv University have developed a new optical technology that will enable an automatic and immediate melanoma diagnosis, saving many patients' lives.

This innovative technology, which is based on special optical fibers, can distinguish between a benign lesion on the skin and a malignant one, using a non-invasive, immediate, and automatic process in real-time. The technology can also distinguish between types of skin cancer, such as melanoma, a life-threatening type of cancer, and malignancies that are not as dangerous.

The technology was used successfully on about one hundred patients at a major hospital in Israel.

The new method was developed in the laboratory of Professor Abraham Katzir, from the Raymond and Beverly Sackler Faculty of Exact Sciences at Tel Aviv University. The diagnosis is rapid, non-invasive, and causes no pain to the patient.

Professor Katzir said that in the case of melanoma, immediate diagnosis can save lives. He explained that currently when a suspicious lesion is found on the skin, during a routine examination, it is removed in a minor surgical procedure and sent to a

laboratory for testing. A pathologist diagnoses the lesion and determines whether it is melanoma.

In most cases where melanoma is discovered early, when it is still superficial and less than one-millimeter-thick, it is removed and the patient recovers. Late diagnosis, when the melanoma is more than one-millimeter-thick, significantly reduces the chances of recovery and is life-threatening.

"The idea that guided us in developing the technology was that in the visible range, there are various substances, having various colors, which are not characteristic of each substance. On the other hand, in the infrared region, various substances have different 'colors' of a sort, depending on the chemical makeup of each substance," Katzir said. "Therefore, we figured that with the help of devices that can identify these 'colors', healthy skin and each of the benign and malignant lesions would have different 'colors' which would enable us to identify melanoma."

Katzir's research group developed special optical fibers that are transparent in the infrared. The group, in collaboration with physicists Professor Yosef Raichlin of



Ariel University, Dr. Max Platkov of the Negev Nuclear Research Center, and Svetlana Bassov of Professor Katzir's group, developed a system, based on these fibers, which is suitable for the requirements of evaluating skin.

The researchers connected one end of this type of fiber to a device that measures the "colors" in the infrared, and touched the other end lightly, for several seconds, to a lesion on a patient's skin. The fiber made it possible to check the "colors" of the lesion in real time.

Clinical trials were carried out on suspicious lesions in about one hundred patients. With the new system, physicists performed measurements of the color of each lesion, before it was removed and sent to a pathology laboratory. The researchers showed that all of the lesions that were determined by pathologists as being of a certain type, such as melanoma, had a

characteristic color in the infrared. Each lesion of a different type had a different color.

"This technology gives us a kind of 'fingerprint' that makes a clear diagnosis of the various lesions possible, by measuring their characteristic 'colors,'" says Katzir. "In this way, lesions can be diagnosed using a non-invasive optical method, and the physician and the patient receive the results automatically and immediately. This is unlike the test that is routinely used, which involves surgery, and the pathological diagnosis takes a long time."

Following the success of the study, the researchers plan to confirm the evaluation method on hundreds of patients.

In conclusion, Professor Katzir noted that the innovative system will enable dermatologists to determine the character of a suspicious lesion automatically, and particularly if it is melanoma. This system has the potential to cause a dramatic change in the field of diagnosing and treating skin cancer, and perhaps other types of cancer as well. The challenge will be to make this technology, which is still expensive, something that will be used in every hospital or clinic."

Delivery Man Who Refused to Service French Jews Deported Back to His Native Algeria

By Cnaan Liphshiz, JTA

French immigration authorities deported a 19-year-old immigrant from Algeria who was jailed for refusing to deliver food to Jews after it was discovered he was living in France illegally.

Dhia Edine D. was sentenced in January to four months in jail for

declining to deliver food made by a kosher restaurant in Strasbourg while he was working there as a food courier for the Deliveroo delivery company.

Upon his arrest, following a complaint to police by the restaurant's owner for discrimination,



the courier was found to have been living illegally in France.

In announcing the deportation on Saturday, Interior Minister Gérald Darmanin wrote on Twitter: "Anti-Semitic hatred has no place in France."

Flexible Robotic 'Mini Surgeon' Set to Ease Hysterectomies

Memic Innovative Surgery raises \$96m, receives FDA authorization for Hominis system to be used in laparoscopic transvaginal benign procedures.

By Abigail Klein Leichman, Israel 21c

An estimated 600,000 American women have hysterectomies every year to treat a variety of non-cancerous conditions.

And although the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends transvaginal – rather than abdominal – hysterectomy as the safest, least invasive and most cost-effective approach with the fastest recovery time, only 15 to 20 percent of uterus removals are done this way.

Many more hysterectomies could soon be done vaginally, now that the Hominis robotic surgery system from Israeli company Memic Innovative Surgery has gotten marketing approval from the US Food and Drug Administration and \$96 million in Series D investment.

Hominis gets around anatomical barriers that human surgeons can't, such as pelvic organ prolapse.

"This is what robotics can do," says Dvir Cohen, CEO and president of Memic. "It's a fundamental architectural change and there is nothing else like this in the market."

Hominis is the first FDA-authorized surgical robotic platform with human-level dexterity, flexibility and 360 degrees of articulation.

Its miniature humanoid-shaped robotic arms replicate the motions and capabilities of a surgeon's hand, shoulder, elbow and wrist joints.

Using a patented surgical method, surgeons operating Hominis can introduce multiple instruments into the body through a single laparoscopic incision, avoiding obstacles and optimizing access and working angles.

In addition to these operational features, the system will be sold at

a significantly lower price than other robotic surgery systems, potentially enabling more medical facilities to offer robot-assisted surgery.

Surgeons wanted to miniaturize themselves

Cohen, previously a robotic systems developer in the IDF's elite intelligence technology Unit 81, came to Memic in 2013 to further develop a small, flexible robotic finger innovation from Ariel University medical robotics expert Prof. Nir Shvalb, who helped invent the ViRob micro-robot platform.

"When I joined the company, I found out surgeons desire to miniaturize themselves inside the abdominal cavity," says Cohen, "so I developed a robotic system with fingers, shoulders and wrists, with 360 degrees of flexion, which is unheard of in the field of surgical robotics."

Hominis also is a game-changer because instead of the usual bulky and expensive controllers usually used in surgical robotics, its positioning technology allows for a handheld controller at a fraction of the cost.

Memic was selected by the Israeli Ministry of Economy to be presented in a book of "Israeli Innovations – Breakthrough Products that Changed the World" and was named one of the most innovative medical inventions since Israel's creation in a competition to celebrate Israel's 70th Independence Day.

The system received "de novo" marketing authorization from the FDA in February "for use in single site, natural orifice laparoscopic-assisted transvaginal benign surgical



Hominis, the surgical robot that acts like a surgeon's arm

procedures including benign hysterectomy." (De novo devices are considered reasonably safe and effective even though there are no other legally marketed devices of the same type.)

"The technology can do much more than that, of course," Cohen tells ISRAEL21c. "It can be used through the entire abdominal cavity for indications that, until now, have been off-limits to robot-assisted surgery. But we decided to focus first on this strong unmet need."

Ready to sell

Or Yehuda-based Memic, established in 2012, opened a US subsidiary in Florida last year for global sales, marketing, customer support and education.

"Our team built a training program with a fast-learning curve, for surgeons with and without robotics experience," says Cohen.

"We have a team ready to sell it and we have tremendous interest from surgeons and hospitals and surgery centers. We have multiple site visits per day."

The made-in-Israel Hominis eventually will be marketed in other countries as well. Continued research and development will expand Memic's portfolio of products and manufacturing scaleup.

"Memic brings to the market a disruptive laparoscopic robotic

surgery technology that entails a substantially improved surgical technique that is also significantly cheaper and capable of surgical procedures the competition is unable to conduct," said Eyal Lifschitz, managing general partner of Peregrine Ventures, a lead investor in the recent Series D round.

"Memic is on the road to implementing the vision of becoming a major global player that will enable surgeons to conduct safer laparoscopic procedures that will be more precise, will lead to a more rapid recovery, and will also lead to billions of dollars in lower costs for hospitals in the form of a substantial reduction in days of hospitalization," Lifschitz concluded.



We are grateful that over 17,000 North American donors have committed over \$1 billion in legacy gifts through the collaboration with the Harold Grinspoon Foundation's LIFE & LEGACY Initiative.

Locally dozens of donors have already committed a legacy gift to Jewish Federation of the Desert and other organizations that have shaped their lives. This is just the beginning of a community-wide effort to ensure a vibrant Jewish future in the Palm Springs and Desert area.

For more information contact Kevin Giser at Kevin.giser@jfedps.org or 760-324-4737.

**What Do You Want
YOUR Legacy To Be?**

Israeli, UAE Fighter Jets Fly Together in Large International Exercise in Greece

Air forces from eight countries take part in the drill, simulating airstrikes, dogfights and rescues over unfamiliar terrain

By Judah Ari Gross, *The Times of Israel*

Israeli fighter jets flew alongside Emirati aircraft as part of a major international aerial exercise hosted by Greece, simulating in-air dogfights, large airstrikes and rescue operations, the Israeli military confirmed on April 21.

This is not the first time that Israeli and Emirati pilots have flown with one another — they both participated in a similar Greek-led exercise in 2017 and an American drill the year before — but it marks a rare case of open military cooperation between the two countries, even following last year's landmark normalization agreement.

Seven countries are joining Greece in its Iniohos exercise this year: Cyprus, Israel, the United Arab Emirates, France, the United States, Spain and Canada.

According to the Israeli Air Force, the drill is meant to simulate a



The flags of the eight countries taking part in the Hellenic Air Force's 'INIOCHOS 2021' multinational aviation exercise.

variety of scenarios, including air-to-air combat, strikes on land-based targets and evading attacks from surface-to-air missiles.

"This exercise is an important milestone in the strategic international cooperations between the Israeli Air Force and the different countries through strengthening shared interests," the Israeli military said.

Dozens of planes from each country participated in the exercise, held largely along the Greek coast and over the Mediterranean.

The Israeli delegation includes F-15 and F-16 fighter jets, Boeing 707 refueling planes and Gulfstream G550 surveillance planes. The different countries participating in the exercise work together to



A Hellenic Air Force F-16 jet takes off behind an Israeli F-15 from the military airport of Andravida in southern Greece.

complete different aspects of a shared mission, while a so-called "Red Team," pretending to be an enemy military, tries to stop them.

"Before each sortie, you get mission orders that include all kinds of protocols, what you have to do. There will be 20 planes from different countries in different formations. So the French will be doing air-to-air combat missions, while the Spanish are looking for ships, while we are searching for and striking targets. That all needs to happen simultaneously because I can't carry out a strike if there's a ship [firing surface-to-air missiles at me] or there's a plane threatening me," said Yod, an Israeli officer and

F-16 navigator participating in the exercise. The exercise does not have one overarching narrative or storyline. Instead, each mission is its own self-contained scenario.

He noted that the flights back and forth from Israel to Greece were in themselves a useful bit of training as it is a relatively long distance for fighter jets to travel and required them to fly along civilian flightpaths.

For the Israeli pilots, the exercise provides a much-needed opportunity to train over significantly different terrain than they are used to and at extremely low altitudes, under 200 meters (660 feet).

"We are doing 'hunting' flights where you fly at low altitude in the mountains here. This is topography that we don't have in Israel. It's really amazing. You're flying through canyons — a mountain on one side and a mountain on the other and it's all snowy, at altitudes we're not used to," he said. "It prepares you for things that you may deal with operationally," he added.

DID YOU KNOW?

All monies donated to the TZEDEKAH FUND enables the Jewish Federation of the Desert to respond to emergency needs of Jews living in our community.

Donating to the TZEDEKAH FUND is a wonderful way to thank, extend good wishes, offer condolences or recognize an occasion.



Call the Jewish Federation at 760-324-4737 or go online to jfedps.org/donate.

In Australia, Jewish, Muslim and Christian Children Team Up to Help Combat Historic Flooding

By Henry Benjamin, JTA

A Jewish-run community kitchen in Sydney played host to an interfaith effort to combat the effects of historic floods that have pummeled the southeast coast of Australia. Jewish, Muslim and Christian schoolchildren gathered at Our Big Kitchen to cook food and biscuits for frontline workers and victims of the flooding, the worst for the region in more than 50 years.

The students were brought together by the organization Together for Humanity, led by Zalman Kastel,



Children worked at Our Big Kitchen to prepare food for people working to battle historic flooding.

a local Chabad rabbi, for Harmony Day, an annual event hosted by the community kitchen founded in 2005 by Chabad Rabbi Dovid Slavin. "It is wonderful to see children working

together as flooding does not choose or discriminate," Slavin told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

Our Big Kitchen is part of a local disaster response group that has pitched in locally when needs have emerged in the past. In January 2020, the kitchen hosted hundreds of volunteers who worked around the clock to prepare food for firefighters working to battle the worst wildfires in Australian history.

Israel Breaks Records with \$1.6 Billion Defense Deal with Greece

By Jewish News Syndicate

On April 18 Israel and Greece announced the signing of a defense cooperation agreement worth approximately 5.4 billion shekels (\$1.6 billion). The agreement includes the establishment of a flight training center for the Hellenic Air Force, to be built and operated for 22 years by Israeli defense company Elbit Systems. Greece approved the Israeli bid for the contract in January.

The training center will be modeled after the Israeli Air Force's own flight academy, and it will be supplied with 10 M-346 training aircraft made by Italy's Leonardo company. The aircraft will be an Israeli variant known as the "Lavi," which, according to Elbit, are equipped with "unique avionics and embedded training solutions." These aircraft are also used by the IAF for training cadets.

Within the framework of the agreement, Elbit Systems will also provide kits to upgrade and operate the Hellenic Air Force's Beechcraft T-6 Texan II training aircraft, as well as training, simulators and logistical support.

"In the future, the parties will also consider areas of cooperation between the Israeli flight academy and Hellenic Airforce Academy," the joint statement added.

Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz described the agreement as a reflection of "the excellence of Israel's defense industry and the strong relations between the defense establishments of Greece and Israel."

IDF Brig. Gen. (res.) Yair Kulas, the head of the Israeli Defense Ministry's International Defense



Cooperation Directorate, called the deal "the most expansive and one of the most significant defense agreements to date." The agreement "further cemented" the "strategic partnership" between the Israeli and Greek Defense ministries, he added.

Greece and Israel have held several joint military training exercises in recent years. Last month, the Israeli Navy played a central role in an anti-submarine warfare exercise, held 150 nautical miles off the Cypriot coast, involving the navies of Greece, Cyprus, the United States and France.

In July, Greece's National Defense General Staff Chief Konstantinos Floros met with his Israeli counterpart, IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Aviv Kochavi, to discuss deepening bilateral military ties between during a visit to Israel.

"The Israeli-Greek military bond continues to grow stronger," the IDF tweeted after the meeting. The chiefs of staff discussed "operational developments in the region."

During an official visit to Israel in June, Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis pointed to Ankara as a regional threat. "Turkey is undermining stability in the region. It aims to control politically and militarily the entire area of the eastern Mediterranean," Mitsotakis told *Ynet* at the time of his visit.

Senators Introduce Bill to Justify 'Critical' Arms Sales, Citing Israel's Security

The act would require the president to provide congressional committees with detailed certifications to show that U.S. aircraft technology and Israel's security are protected before such sales.

By Jewish News Syndicate

Citing concern for Israel's security, Sens. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and Bob Menendez (D-N.J.) introduced a bill on April 16 that would require the president to justify the sale of "mission-critical" U.S. military systems such as the F-35 fighter to other countries.

The "Secure F-35 Exports Act of 2021" was introduced after the Biden administration reported its decision to proceed with the sale of \$23 billion in weapons, including the fifth-generation F-35 stealth fighter jet and advanced armed drones, to the United Arab Emirates—a deal that was originally negotiated under the Trump administration.

The Biden administration originally halted the sale pending a review.

According to a news release from

Feinstein's office, the act would require the president to provide the appropriate congressional committees with detailed certifications to show that U.S. aircraft technology and Israel's security are protected before such sales.

"Congress has an obligation to uphold U.S. policy and ensure that weapons sales to foreign governments don't undermine Israel's military edge. Our bill achieves that goal by restricting sales of the F-35—our most sophisticated aircraft—until the administration certifies to Congress that the sale complies with that objective," Feinstein said in the release.

A presidential report is not needed for an F-35 sale to members of NATO, Israel, Australia, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand.



U.S. Air Force F-35 Joint Strike Fighter

The bill also requires security measures to be in place and that the countries receiving the F-35 and subsequent aircraft not have a record of providing America weapons, directly or indirectly, to armed militias fighting the United States or Israel, conduct surveillance on U.S. citizens or enable the violation of human rights.

Menendez noted that he remained concerned with the implications of selling the nation's most advanced military aircraft on national security, technology interests and regional

stability, including the legal requirement to maintain Israel's Qualitative Military Edge.

"But if the administration has decided to proceed with this Trump-era deal, then we must enact protections to ensure the incredibly sensitive technology of these aircraft is not compromised by powers hostile to the United States, including making sure the UAE pulls back from its burgeoning relationship with China and other U.S. competitors," he said. "This legislation lays out the types of assurances and commitments the United States must have to safeguard this sale."

The original agreement was made as part of negotiations for the Abraham Accords last year that normalized relations between the UAE and Israel.

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Have A Nosh With Miriam

Shavuot begins the evening of May 16th. The tradition is to serve dairy dishes for the holiday and it has been a few years since I gave recipes for the ultimate dairy favorite – cheesecake! Looking over my recipes I saw the super-easy non-



bake Funfetti Cheesecake that I remembered bringing to Temple Isaiah for Shavuot . . . and was stunned to realize it had been two years. It felt so much longer ago. Being isolated at home for the past 14 months distorts memories. Regardless, it was a good recipe, widely enjoyed, and I'm happy to share it with you. For a second choice, one can never go wrong with chocolate, and here is an easy, delicious choice. B'tay avon! Hag samayach. MHB

NON-BAKE FUNFETTI CHEESECAKE

Crust:

1 ½ cups graham cracker crumbs
(about 10 graham cracker sheets)
6 Tbsp butter, melted
1/3 cup sugar

Cheesecake:

24 oz cream cheese (3 8-oz. bars)
at room temperature
½ cup + 2 Tbsp sugar
2 Tbsp flour
2 tsp vanilla extract
4 Tbsp sprinkles,
splus more for topping
12 oz Cool Whip, divided

Put graham cracker sheets to a large Ziploc bag and crush with a rolling pin to make crumbs. Alternatively, crush with a food processor.

In a medium bowl, mix the graham cracker crumbs, melted butter/margarine, and sugar until combined. Pour into a 9 inch springform pan and press tightly into the bottom of the pan and slightly up the sides. Set in freezer for 10-15 minutes to firm.

In a large bowl, mix cream cheese, sugar, flour, and vanilla until smooth and well combined. Gently stir in 8 ounces of Cool Whip and sprinkles.

Pour filling into the chilled graham cracker crust, smoothing the top. Refrigerate for 4-6 hours or until firm. Remove cheesecake from springform pan and top with sprinkles and remaining Cool Whip (optional). Refrigerate until ready to serve. Enjoy!

PHILADELPHIA DOUBLE CHOCOLATE CHEESECAKE

24 Oreo cookies, crushed	2 tablespoons flour
¼ cup butter or margarine	1 teaspoon vanilla
4 8-oz. Philadelphia Cream Cheese bars, softened	8 oz. semi-sweet chocolate, melted
1 cup sugar	4 large eggs
	Optional: ½ cup blueberries.

Heat oven to 325 degrees. Mix crumbs and butter; press onto bottom of a 13 X 9 pan lined with foil. Bake 10 minutes.

Beat cream cheese, sugar, flour and vanilla with mixer until blended. Add chocolate and mix well. Add eggs, one at a time, mixing on low after each until just blended. Pour over crust. Bake 45 minutes or until center is almost set. Cool. Refrigerate 4 hours. Use foil to lift cheese cake from pan. Cut in squares and top with berries.



Simchas

Received the happy news from **Linda Sage** that she is now a great grandmother! **Claire Madeline Weiss** was born January 30th to **Nicole Najjar Weiss** and **Michael Weiss** ... This issue of the JCN was assembled in Hibbing, MN when our layout and design maven **Lynda Bailey** flew to daughter **Alexis Engdahl's** side as she gave birth a month early to son

Owen Lee on April 20, who was a small 4 lbs. 6 oz, but so healthy he was able to go home after only two days! Congratulations to **Alexis** and **Warren Engdahl** and delighted grandparents **Lynda** and **Trevor**



Warren, Alexis Engdahl and Owen Lee



Elaine Kravitz and family ... and roses

Bailey ... We cannot count them in the picture, but **Elaine Kravitz** was feted on her 94th birthday by her grandson giving her 94 roses! Congratulations Elaine ... As she was

leaving Palm Springs for her summer home in Seattle, parttime resident **Rabbi Charna Klein** called to say her new book "**Inside the Torah**," which connects science and spirituality, is now out and available in hardcover and paperback ... Congratulations to **Sheri** and **Jim Borax** on being honored as Tree of Life recipients by JNF at a virtual gala on June 8. *Share your Simchas with us. Email mhbentjcn@earthlink.net or call Miriam Bent at 760-323-0255.*



Candle Lighting Times

Friday, May 7	Shabbat Behar-Bechukotai	6:51 pm
Friday, May 14	Shabbat Bamidbar	6:56 pm
Friday, May 21	Shabbat Naso	7:01 pm
Friday, May 28	Shabbat Bahalotcho	7:06 pm
Friday, June 4	Shabbat Shelach	7:10 pm
Friday, June 11	Shabbat Korach	7:14 pm
Friday, June 18	Shabbat Chukat	7:16 pm
Friday, June 25	Shabbat Balak	7:17 pm
Friday, July 2	Shabbat Pinchas	7:17 pm
Friday, July 9	Shabbat Matot-Masei	7:16 pm
Friday, July 16	Shabbat Devarim	7:13 pm
Friday, July 23	Shabbat Vo'etchanan	7:09 pm
Friday, July 30	Shabbat Eiker	7:04 pm



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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. 101.

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We Mourn the Passing of...

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