



# Jewish Community News

The Publication of the Jewish Federation of the Desert

www.jfedps.org

Adar II/Nissan 5784 - April 2024

## Beginning My Third Year



**Alan Potash**

Jewish Federation  
Chief Executive  
Officer

As I start my third year as the CEO of the Federation, I am surprised at how much

more there is to learn. I recently learned something that has not been in practice for some time. Primacy. In other communities, this is called a blackout period. In short, it means if an organization receives financial support from the Federation when planning an event, it should not compete with a Federation event. Also, I have learned that the community calendar fills up rather quickly during the "season." "The season" is something I have also recently learned.

One of the Federation's goals is community engagement.

Some very positive feedback I have received is how much more engaged the Jewish Federation is in the community whether it is holding more events like the author series, which unless there is a meal involved, are free to attend and we encourage them to do so.

As part of community engagement, the Federation leadership and staff are also ambassadors in the community. If there are events we should be attending and or participating in, please let me know. The type of event that does not matter is more

the exposure the Federation can have in the community. In addition, organizational event planning and using the Federation online calendar is a great way to make sure the event is not competing with another event. Plus, it is a great way to promote the event. We do our best to include everything that we receive or discover. It is easy to access, and we are ready to add to it when we receive the information.

I am looking forward to what I will discover in my third year. Thank you for your engagement and support.

## Responding to Need...Campaign 2024 Underway

It is April and most people are thinking about their taxes. At the same time, the Board of the Federation is thinking about allocating money to the organizations that we support



**Arnie Gillman,**  
President

locally and overseas. local organizations that we support include Bikur Cholim (Rabbi Kreiman's work), Inland and Desert Hillel Council, and Jewish Family Service of the Desert. The Board reviews each grant, making sure that these organization's requests meet the mission of our Federation.

During these difficult times, we are concerned about the people living in

Israel and we want to make sure their needs are also met. Organizations that we support in Israel include Ramat HaNegev Regional Council, the Joint Distribution Center, ZAKA, and Leket (supporting youths at risk).

We would love to fulfill the grants of all the organizations who request our help. Obviously, to achieve this goal requires having the funds ... which

we receive from you. Thank you to all who have supported our 2024 Annual Campaign to date. If you haven't, please pledge now. Remember, when you say YES to our campaign, we do not have to say NO to the many organizations in need that we support. Thank you.

### Spring Events

• Wednesday, April 3, 2024

**JBC Rachel Shteir:  
"Betty Friedan"**

Monday, April 8, 2024

**Card/Game Day in Sun City**

• Sunday, April 14, 2024

**All Things Israel**

• Thursday, April 18, 2024

**JBC Joe Posnanski  
"Why We Love Baseball"**

Sunday, May 5, 2024

**Yom HaShoah; Holocaust  
Remembrance**

**Bold** - Federation Event

• Event held at Federation Offices



## Day of Israel Education

On April 14th at 10:00 AM as part of our day of Israel education we will hear virtually from Oren Kessler speak on his incredible book *Palestine 1936: The Great Revolt and the Roots of the Middle East Conflict*. One of the Wall Street Journal's 10 Best Books of 2023. This book is a must-read, especially with what is happening in Israel today. Oren Kessler is a journalist and political analyst based in Tel Aviv.

He has served as deputy director for research at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies in Washington, Middle East research fellow at the Henry Jackson Society in London, Arab affairs correspondent for the Jerusalem Post, and an editor and translator at Haaretz English edition. Raised in Rochester, New York, and Tel Aviv, he holds a BA in history from the University of Toronto and an MA in diplomacy and conflict studies from Reichman University (IDC Herzliya). Kessler's work has appeared in media outlets such as Foreign Affairs, Foreign

Policy, the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, and Politico. *Palestine 1936* is his first book and has been favorably reviewed by Booklist with a starred review, The Wall Street Journal, Foreword Reviews, Commentary, The Jerusalem Report, and more. Visit his website here: orenkessler.com.

"This is the story of two national movements and the first sustained confrontation between them. The rebellion was Arab, but the Zionist counter-rebellion--the Jews' military, economic, and psychological transformation--is a vital, overlooked element in the chronicle of how Palestine



Oren Kessler



became Israel.

Today, eight decades on, the revolt's legacy endures. Hamas's armed wing and rockets carry the name of the fighter-preacher whose death sparked the 1936 rebellion. When Israel builds security barriers, sets up checkpoints, or razes homes, it is evoking laws and methods inherited from its British predecessor. And when Washington promotes a "two-state solution," it is invoking a plan with roots in this same pivotal period.

Based on extensive archival research on three continents and in three languages, *Palestine 1936* is the origin story of the world's most intractable conflict, but it is also more than that. Oren Kessler's engaging, journalistic voice, reveals world-changing events through extraordinary individuals on all sides: their loves and their hatreds, their deepest fears, and profoundest hopes."

Please RSVP to gloria.benavides@jfedps.org or 760-324-4737

**everyone  
counts**

can we count on you?

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2024**

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**2023-2024  
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**Alan Potash**

Chief Executive Officer

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**Sunday, May 5, 2024 3-5 pm**

UC Riverside Auditorium. Palm Desert Campus  
75080 Frank Sinatra Drive. Palm Desert, CA 92211

**Remembrance  
of Things Present**

Inspiring and unexpected stories from the children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors. See *Remembrance of Things Present*, a work of theatre from The Braid. Real experiences, brought to life by professional actors. Recorded on Thursday, April 20, 2023 from a live performance presented at the Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust in NYC.



**Jewish Federation of the Desert's**

**SWORDS OF IRON  
EMERGENCY ISRAEL CAMPAIGN**

**Israel needs our support NOW! Go to "Jewish Federation of the Desert" home page and click on "Israel Swords of Iron" to make your contribution. 100% of funds will go to Israel.**

## Israel Update

On April 14th in conjunction with the virtual talk by Oren Kessler, we will be hosting an update on the current situation in Israel—this is a work in progress as I am

still finalizing participants. I will also share what I learned and experienced in my recent trip to the Negev.

The goal of this session is to provide

an update for the community on what we know about the War with Hamas and current issues facing Israel and world Jewry. The update will begin following Kessler's

talk. The discussion will be in person. If you have topics or questions you would like addressed, please submit them to me in advance at Alan.potash@jfedps.org.

## Golshim L'Chaim Ski to Live

By Alan Potash, CEO

During our day of Jewish Learning in December we were introduced to a special program for wounded Israeli soldiers called Golshim L'Chaim Ski to Live. Soldiers from Israel are invited to travel to Aspen, Colorado, and spend time working through their wounds on the ski slopes.

Now in its seventeenth year, Golshim L'chaim was founded by Rabbi Mendel Mintz of Aspen's Chabad Community Center. "If you can learn to ski with injuries and a disability, then the lesson is you can do anything," Rabbi Mintz said. "People leave here renewed with a new lease on life—with joy and exhilaration. What it does to their bodies and souls is truly amazing."

The program is sustained by the time,



talent, and treasure of many from Aspen, from Colorado, and from around the world.

"Jewish Colorado got behind Golshim L'chaim the very first year and partnered with us to make sure it was a success," Rabbi Mintz said. "Without JEWISHcolorado's loyal, consistent generosity and their commitment to support these heroes from Israel, this program never would have come to fruition."

Since this article will appear after Nina Zale tells about her recent opportunity, to join this year's group in Aspen, look for an updated article in the May edition of the paper. Also, you can learn more about the program through her documentary film, "Beyond Boundaries."

## Soldiers in Uniform

Last year for Yom Haatzmaut we hosted two incredible soldiers, Boaz and Adam, who are currently battling Hamas. We have the same opportunity this coming May to host two soldiers. We are anticipating they will be here the first week of May. Last year, Boaz and Adam

had a great time and they have stayed in touch with many of us in the community. They are still in the army and fighting Hamas. I hope they are safe. I want to thank everyone who met them last year and will do the same this year when we bring two more soldiers.

I was a little surprised that the Jewish Agency was offering this again because of the current war. Since our hosting and programming were successful (we were a pilot project), the Jewish Agency expanded it this year. The goal of the program is for the soldiers to be part of

community observance of Yom HaShoah, Yom HaZikaron, and Yom Haatzmaut, as well as anything else we ask them to do. This year one of the soldiers might be the brother of Adam, who came last year. I will keep you posted.

## Joseph Posnanski, "Why We Love Baseball"

We tried to find authors for all interested topics, and we found one on baseball. On April 18th at noon and in person we will be hosting Joseph Posnanski, #1 *New York Times* bestselling author. Joe Posnanski is back with a masterful ode to the game: a countdown of 50 of the most memorable moments in baseball's history, to make you fall in love with the sport all over again. He

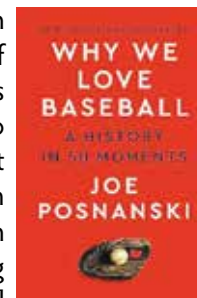
will discuss his new book *Why We Love Baseball; A History in 50 Moments*.

If you like baseball history and exciting moments of the sport you will enjoy hearing from Posnanski. He



Joe Posnanski

covers more than 50 moments of incredible incidents from players who are surprised that they hit a home run to pitchers when caught tampering with the baseball and try to deny it in not-so-clever ways. This



book is a fun and easy read. The author does a great job of moving the reader through the book by highlighting these events. This talk will be in person at the Federation building. Please RSVP to Gloria.benavides@jfedps.org or 760-324-4737. We will have copies of his book available but I encourage you to read it in advance so you can ask great questions.

## TEC Update

Arnie and I shared in the last JCN that the Federation was asked to take over the operations of the Tolerance Education Center. We did, and now we are working to make minor repairs and updates to the technology and space. It is a great building with great opportunities in front of us. Due to COVID, the building

has not been used much over the past several years so there are things we need to do to bring the space up to date.

We are coordinating efforts with the current staff, and I am learning about the needs and the potential. I have put together a short-term and long-term plan for creating and implementing

programs. A job description for the open position of Educational Program Director has been posted. I will leave the post up for the next six weeks. If you know anyone who meets the qualifications, please have them apply.

My goal over the next month or two is to have a calendar of events scheduled

for the fall.

One of the most exciting parts of the center is the 70+ seat auditorium which I hope we can use to show limited-release films and maybe show some of the past films of the Palm Springs Jewish Film Festival which have been outstanding.

# United Hatzalah

By Alan Potash, CEO

In early March I was invited to an event to learn more about United Hatzalah. I have been familiar with the work of this incredible organization for many years. It is hard not to notice their first responders when you are in Israel. Their specially designed *Ambucycles* are ready to respond in seconds, actually 90 seconds.

United Hatzalah of Israel is the largest independent, non-profit, fully volunteer emergency medical service (EMS) organization that provides the fastest emergency medical service throughout Israel, and they do it completely free of charge. Their goal is to provide immediate lifesaving medical intervention during the critical window



Hatzalah Ambucycle

between the onset of an emergency and the arrival of traditional ambulance assistance. United Hatzalah's services are available to all people regardless of race, religion, or national origin.

They have a network of more than 7,000 volunteers across the country, available around the clock – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year – who respond to more than 2,000 emergencies each day. With the help of the innovative GPS-based technology and our iconic *ambucycles*, they have cut down emergency medical response time in Israel to less than 3 minutes, and in many metropolitan areas, less than 90 seconds.

The volunteers consist of ordinary citizens who have received full training and become certified first responders, enabling them to administer lifesaving treatment to anyone suffering a medical emergency in their vicinity, including but not limited to co-workers, neighbors, family members, and total strangers. When an emergency occurs, every second matters and our selfless volunteers drop whatever they are doing and respond to the emergency to save lives.

Last year, their highly trained and fully equipped volunteers treated over 750,000 people and have treated more than 6,200,000 people since their inception in 2006. Recently they released a new book sharing experience from the October 7th massacre. The book is titled *Angels in Orange: Uplifting Stories of Courage, Faith, and Miracles*. There is a copy of the book in the Federation Library if you would like to check it out.



## JEWISH COMMUNITY NEWS

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### EDITORIAL

Alan Potash, CEO  
Miriam H. Bent, Editor  
Bailey Communications,  
Layout & Design

### 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.

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

### ARTICLES & ADVERTISING,

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Temple Isaiah invites you to a warm and welcoming

## Community Seder

FIRST NIGHT OF PASSOVER: MONDAY, APRIL 22<sup>nd</sup> - 6:00 PM

Led by Rabbi Steven Rosenberg, Dr. Sarah Sela & very special guests.

Join us for a joyous evening of friendship and lively participation, along with a delicious Seder meal, catered by J's Deli of Palm Desert.



**\$75 members / \$85 guests**

Dinner includes gefilte fish, chopped liver, matzah ball soup, salad; choice of beef brisket, roasted chicken or salmon; matzah, charoset, tzimmes, potato kugel, assorted desserts, Manischewitz wine & kosher grape juice.

Reserve your seat at our table! Deadline: April 16. To RSVP and select meal options, go online to [www.templeisiahps.com](http://www.templeisiahps.com) or call the Temple Office Tuesday-Friday: 760-325-2281.



Temple Isaiah, Jewish Community Center,  
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# What Makes for a Successful Outcome of a Shabbat Service and Discussion?

By Lynda A. Zions

When like-minded people come to study, worship and create community, the predicted takeaway is an appreciation of Jewish values and ideas.



Professor Alvin Rosenfeld

That is just what happened at Har El on Saturday, March 9th. This was made possible by the Borns Family sponsorship of a visiting scholar from Indiana University.

This third lecture of the series was presented by Professor Alvin Rosenfeld, Director of the Borns Jewish Studies Program and the Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism, also at Indiana University.

The title of his lecture was "Combating



Jewish Federation CEO Alan Potash, Sandra Borns, Betsy Borns and Emily Borns

Anti-Semitism" followed by discussion, hosted in the home of Sandra Borns.

The community of attendees

included the Har-El Board, Officers and Members as well as guests of the

congregants and community

leaders including Alan Potash, CEO of the Jewish Federation of the Desert.

Marcia and Rick Stein represented "Stand With Us."

Also in attendance was Betsy Borns, President of the Borns Jewish Studies Program at Indiana University.

Her sister, Emily Borns, who serves as Vice President of Lifelong Learning for Congregation Har-El, also participated.

Shabbat Morning Worship was enhanced by Rabbi Richard Zions and Cantor Joseph Gole accompanied on the piano by Sook Lee.

In 2025, once again, study will be offered and our world issues brought into focus. When you are reminded of these events, mark your calendar, RSVP and attend. Truly, knowledge is power.

**Ladies, New to the Desert?**  
**Jewish Federation Women's Philanthropy**  
 has its welcome mat out for you!

Planning a move to the Desert? We have useful information for you. Call Leslie Pepper, WP Coordinator  
**760-324-4737**  
 email: [leslie.pepper@jfedps.org](mailto:leslie.pepper@jfedps.org)  
 or check our website [www.jfedps.org](http://www.jfedps.org).

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Friday ZOOM Shabbat Services 5 PM  
 Saturday ZOOM Torah Study 11 AM  
 Led by Rabbi Zions  
 Summer schedule begins in June.  
 Email [harelurjpd@gmail.com](mailto:harelurjpd@gmail.com)

**HAR-EL PASSOVER SEDER**

**FIRST NIGHT OF PASSOVER**  
 Monday, April 22, 2024 • 6 PM

Conducted by  
 Rabbi Richard Zions & Cantor Joseph Gole

Adults: \$89  
 Children 14 & under: \$60  
 Seating limited  
 RSVP by April 15<sup>th</sup>.

Email [harelurjpd@gmail.com](mailto:harelurjpd@gmail.com)

**Har-El Goes to the Movies**  
**Flash!**

There is music in the air and it brings with it a glimpse into Jewish and World History. The melodies carry us from joy to sadness and back to joy again. Like a weed, we see growth and strength of friendship and love.

Join Har-El for the Spring/Summer Film Series and then stay for discussion led by Rabbi Richard Zions, PhD and Cantor Joseph Gole, D. Mus., of the films that are or have been Broadway musicals.

Let us pause in between the two musicals and sing "Hallelujah" as the world sings along in the documentary on Leonard Cohen.

When? WEDNESDAYS ...

- May 15 Comedian Harmonists ("Harmony" played on Broadway Winter 2023-24)
- June 12 Hallelujah: Leonard Cohen, a Journey, a Song
- July 10 Cabaret (based on the book "Goodbye Berlin" and the play "I Am a Camera")

Email [harelurjpd@gmail.com](mailto:harelurjpd@gmail.com). You will receive up to date information on all intellectual pursuits and details of the Har-El Spring/Summer Film Series.

**Community Schools**  
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 73-550 Santa Rosa Way,  
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 Children 18 months through  
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**347-721-8782**

**BOOKS & BORDEAUX - WED. APRIL 3 - 3 PM**

Joan Moyer will review "The Little Liar," by Mitch Albom, the powerful, gripping novel of hope and forgiveness, inspired by true events during the Holocaust in the Greek city of Salonika.

Held in a private home. Seating is limited.  
 Non-members welcome if space is available.

**Stepping Out**

Join us on Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup> for HAR-EL AFTERNOON STEPPING OUT INTO THE COMMUNITY with a trip to the Aqua Caliente Cultural Center, Palm Springs, followed by no-host "Early Dinner" at Sherman's across the street. Entrance cost for seniors: \$5. Park your car once!  
 Email [harelurjpd@gmail.com](mailto:harelurjpd@gmail.com)

Har-El offers three classes with Rabbi Richard Zions on Zoom on Mondays for residents and non-residents: 10:30 AM—Adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah Class; 1:00 PM. Conversion to Judaism; 4:00 PM—Youth Bar/Bat Mitzvah Preparation. Individual Zoom Sessions will be offered for beginning students who require extra preparation for group study. For registration and additional information, email: [harelurjpd@gmail.com](mailto:harelurjpd@gmail.com) or call Rabbi Zions at (760) 668-9943.

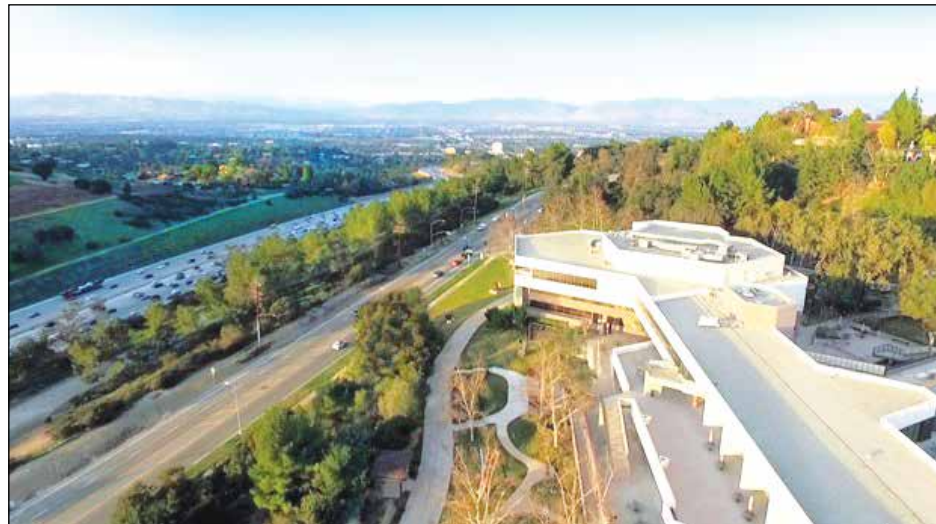
# AJU Completes Deal to Sell its LA Campus to Nearby Jewish School

By Asaf Elia-Shalev, JTA

American Jewish University in Los Angeles completed the sale of its main campus to Milken Community School, a nondenominational Jewish school located only a few hundred feet away, the two institutions announced February 21.

The announcement puts to rest concerns that the 22-acre hilltop property would go to an entity outside of the Los Angeles Jewish community, whose philanthropic donations allowed the construction of classrooms, a synagogue, mikveh and other facilities on the site over the past seven decades.

"Today marks a significant milestone as American Jewish University and Milken Community School take a major step to strengthen our Jewish community for future generations," leaders of the two institutions wrote in a joint announcement



An aerial view of American Jewish University's Sunny & Isadore Familian Campus

Wednesday.

The two sides did not disclose the financial terms of the deal but it includes only the Familian Campus in Bel Air, and

not the Brandeis-Bardin Institute in Simi Valley, which will remain the property of AJU.

AJU, formed in 2007 with the merger of the University of Judaism and the Brandeis-Bardin Institute camping and conference center, announced in February 2022 that it would sell "all or part" of its campus to help pay for more academic offerings and community programs as it turned increasingly toward digital learning.

AJU had originally accepted a bid for the property from a Swiss language education company. The proposed deal valued the campus at \$65 million, according to the Forward. But the sale fell apart after nearby residents voiced their opposition to plans for the campus presented by the company, EF Education First. In a letter to the Los Angeles Planning Commission, EF Education First, said it decided to back out of the deal because of the "level of fear and bias" it encountered from neighborhood residents.

In the aftermath, local Jewish leaders renewed calls to find a Jewish institutional buyer for the campus, where generations

of Conservative rabbis have been ordained from the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies and countless others have participated in various undergraduate and graduate programs. Also of concern were the fate of AJU's mikveh, the only non-Orthodox ritual bath in the region, and a major library collection.

Milken, which previously submitted a losing bid for the campus in 2022, remained interested in buying the property. With 800 students, Milken is one of the largest Jewish high and middle schools in the country. Hopes to grow Milken required it to expand beyond its six-and-a-half acre footprint.

The sale delivers to Milken more classroom space, but also a football field and more spaces to hold large gatherings.

## Future of Mikveh and Rabbinical School

AJU will continue to maintain its administrative office on site and run the mikveh for three to five years, according to the joint announcement, which did not specify what would happen to the campus' library collection. The Ziegler rabbinic school will relocate to an area near Pico-Robertson, a neighborhood in the heart of Jewish Los Angeles.

With the proceeds from the sale, AJU will be able to shore up its finances, which have struggled as enrollment in its degree-granting programs declined, and double down on its recent investments in online learning and engagement. Programs such as its introduction to Judaism for people considering converting to Judaism have soared in popularity since the pandemic.

"The new resources will promote new dynamism at a time when many decry the stagnation of the Jewish world," Wednesday's announcement said.



## An update from Eran Doron, Mayor of Ramat HaNegev.



Recently, our nation held local elections, a pivotal event occurring once every five years, delayed by four months due to the ongoing war in Gaza and the north.

It brings me great joy to share that 95% of the voting public extended their support to me. Such resounding endorsement would not have been possible without the unwavering dedication of our team and the invaluable collaboration of our esteemed partners, both locally and globally.

Amidst the considerable challenges we've faced, from political upheaval to the global pandemic and now the current war, our collective efforts have persevered. Together, we've propelled development initiatives forward, welcoming new residents, establishing vital educational institutions, rejuvenating historic landmarks, bolstering the region's economy, and emerging as a beacon of innovation in various fields.

Ramat HaNegev stands as a testament to our collective resilience and determination in addressing Israel's myriad challenges.

It remains my honor and privilege to continue leading this extraordinary council into the future.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for the tremendous support you provide to all of us; it gives me the strength to continue leading Ramat HaNegev and its exceptional people in building our land and society.

With warm regards,

Eran Doron



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

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

# 'Golda,' Biopic About Israeli Leader at War, Wins Top Prize from Cinema for Peace Foundation

By Toby Axelrod, JTA

Israeli director Guy Nattiv and British actor Helen Mirren have received a Dove Award from the Cinema for Peace Foundation for their joint work in the 2023 biopic, "Golda," in which Mirren stars as Golda Meir, the fourth prime minister of Israel. The film focuses on Meir's role during the Yom Kippur War in 1973.

Nattiv and Mirren attended the awards ceremony in Berlin this week, where their prize was presented by 102-year-old Margot Friedlander, one of the oldest remaining Holocaust survivors. The ceremony took place contemporaneously with the Berlinale International Film Festival, where "Golda" premiered last year.

In intervening year, Israel was plunged into war again with an attack by Hamas on a different Jewish holiday, Simchat Torah, on the 50th anniversary of the Yom Kippur war. Nattiv said on Instagram after receiving the award that he remained hopeful that the current Israel-Hamas war would end with the kind of rapprochement that resulted from Israel's victory in the Yom Kippur



Actress Helen Mirren and Guy Nattiv, film director and screenwriter, attend the Cinema for Peace Gala Berlin, Feb. 19, 2024

War.

"In 1973 after the horrific Yom Kippur war, leaders took responsibility and accountability and resigned. Menachem Begin and Anwar Saadat made a historic peace agreement that saved millions of lives," he wrote. "Today, we need to see new courageous leaders from Israel and Palestine with vision empathy and hope for a better

future for the two nations."

The ceremony took place at the Cinema for Peace gala, attended by former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. At the gala, Clinton's talk was interrupted by pro-Palestinian protesters, according to video posted to YouTube. The Israeli clarinetist Giora Feidman also led the crowd in a rendition of the Hebrew folk song

"Shalom Chaverim."

The Berlin-based Cinema for Peace initiative was founded after the 9/11 terror attack on the United States and in 2008 expanded to include a foundation whose goal is to "foster change through film." Last year, the foundation gave the Dove Award to "All Quiet on the Western Front," based on the classic World War I novel. This year, it announced that it would issue a special prize for "filmmakers whose work supports the protection of Jewish life, reminding of the Holocaust and the events on October 7 all over the world."

"Golda" shared the organization's Most Valuable Film of the Year award with James Hawes' "One Life," which stars Anthony Hopkins as Sir Nicholas Winton, a London broker who rescued more than 600 children from Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia; and Jonathan Glazer's "The Zone Of Interest," about the everyday life of Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Hoess and his family living just a wall away from the extermination camp.

## Friedan Biographer Here in Person April 3

Fran Kaufman, Chair of Women's Philanthropy is excited to announce our next in-person speaker, Rachel Shteir, author of Betty Friedan, Magnificent Disruptor, on Wednesday, April 03, 2024, at 10:00 am. at the Jewish Federation.



Feminist writer and activist Betty Friedan (1921–2006), pathbreaking author of *The Feminine Mystique*, was powerful and polarizing. A

leading figure in the women's movement in the United States, her 1963 book *The Feminine Mystique* is often credited with sparking the second wave of American feminism in the 20th century. In 1966, Friedan co-founded and was elected the first president of the National Organization



for Women (NOW), which aimed to bring women «into the mainstream of American society now [in] fully equal partnership with men."

In this biography, the first in more than twenty years, Rachel Shteir draws on Friedan's papers and on interviews with family, colleagues, and friends to create a nuanced portrait.

Shteir considers how Friedan's Judaism was essential to her feminism, presenting a new Friedan for a new era.

**Rachel Shteir** is an award-winning writer whose work has appeared in national magazines and newspapers

including the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal. She is the author of three previous books: *Striptease: The Untold History of the Girlie Show* (Oxford University Press, 2004), *Gypsy: The Art of the Tease* (Yale University Press, 2009), and *The Steal: A Cultural History of Shoplifting* (The Penguin Press, 2011). She is also the founder and current head of the Dramaturgy and Dramatic Criticism Program at The Theatre School at DePaul University.

For more information and to RSVP contact Leslie Pepper at 760-324-4737 or [leslie.pepper@jfedps.org](mailto:leslie.pepper@jfedps.org).

## Jewish Federation of the Desert's **SWORDS OF IRON** EMERGENCY ISRAEL CAMPAIGN

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# Israel to Launch Strategy to Proactively Fight Antisemitism

**"We as a country have a responsibility to fight for the good name of our people."**

Jewish News Syndicate

Israel's Foreign Ministry and Ministry of Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism are launching a joint strategy aimed at fighting Jew-hatred and the delegitimization of the Jewish state.

Foreign Minister Israel Katz and Diaspora Affairs Minister Amichai Chikli agreed to promote the initiative, which seeks to strengthen the country's international standing.

"We are in the midst of a war for our lives and we are on the side of justice. We as a country have a responsibility to fight for the good name of our people," Katz said. "We aim to work hard in cooperation with the amazing people who have been fighting for Israel since October 7," he added.

Chikli said the time has come to "move from defense to offense and ensure



*Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz (left) and Diaspora Affairs Minister Amichai Chikli meet in Jerusalem*

that the perpetrators of antisemitism are identified and dealt with."

As part of the proposal, Katz and Chikli agreed on rolling out offensive actions against organizations and individuals accused of perpetrating antisemitism, as well as campaigns that seek to improve Israel's image.

The ministers also decided to increase government support for civil society groups that fight antisemitism, the statement said.

In the first three weeks after Hamas launched its terror onslaught on the northwestern Negev on October 7, murdering some 1,200 people, the Israeli government recorded a 500% surge in antisemitic incidents worldwide, compared to the same period in 2022.

The events on October 7th, 2023, and the subsequent war in and around Israel have brought about profound feelings of dread, anger, anxiety, and grief for many local members of the Jewish community and others.

Jewish Family Service of the Desert (JFS) is offering a group for anyone seeking support, a chance to share their feelings of sadness and worry, or a place to feel accepted.

The group **Shoulder to Shoulder** will meet via Zoom biweekly 4:30-6 pm, starting Monday, May 20, with 8-10 sessions designed to help participants mitigate troublesome and sometimes debilitating feelings associated with the atrocities of Hamas' actions and the subsequent rise in antisemitic words and actions throughout our country and the world.

Registration is easy:  
call 760/325-4088 ext. 121 or send an email to [intake@jfsdesert.org](mailto:intake@jfsdesert.org) to sign up or request additional information

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# Community Leaders Attend StandWithUs International Conference

By Marcia Stein

Rick and I attended StandWithUs annual "Israel In Focus" International conference (IIF) held March 1-3 in Los Angeles. It was so moving as we sat with hundreds of high school and college students from all over the world and heard about their painful experiences with antisemitism.



So many were feeling alone as their

school peers and administrations and even their friends shunned them for standing up for Israel. I was in tears hearing such personal stories. StandWithUs co-founder and CEO Roz Rothstein explained that the conference was critical for these teens so they know they never have to face antisemitic incidents alone and that SWU is there to guide and support them.

SWU campus Emerson Fellows and SWU Kenneth Leventhal High School Interns attend IIF as part of their year-long program. Both programs select and

train hundreds of student leaders from hundreds of colleges and high schools worldwide to inspire their peers, educate about Israel and confront antisemitism at their schools. The connections these students made with like-minded peers and community members who also attend IIF, will live long after the conference.

In the end, we left energized, feeling hopeful and part of a greater community. We know the students left feeling energized, empowered and importantly, supported. Now more

than ever, the world needs the work of StandWithUs.

Rick and I are honored to be a part of SWU. We look forward to having hundreds of our community (and students) join us at our upcoming Gala on April 11 here in the desert. The Borns family are being honored and our speaker is Dennis Prager.

For tickets, please visit: [WWW.STANDWITHUS.COM/2024-COACHELLA-GALA](http://WWW.STANDWITHUS.COM/2024-COACHELLA-GALA). See ad below.

# Civil Rights Groups Launch Legal Aid Initiative for California Parents of Victimized Jewish Students

By Dion J. Pierre, *The Algemeiner*

Three leading civil rights nonprofits announced on February 29 a partnership for providing free legal assistance to parents of children attending California K-12 schools where antisemitism is reported to be pervasive and unchecked.

The initiative, titled Legal Protection K-12 Helpline, follows the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law's and the Anti-Defamation League's (ADL) filing a civil rights complaint alleging that the Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) has refused to enforce anti-discrimination policies that would protect Jewish students from bullying and trauma in and out of the classroom.

"Frankly, school principals and administrators should themselves be cracking down on the surge in anti-Jewish bullying we are witnessing. This is what the law requires," Brandeis Center founder and chairman Kenneth D. Marcus said on Thursday. "However, far too many are failing in their legal responsibilities and choosing to sweep escalating antisemitism under the rug. Our legal team stands by ready to step into this gap and demand the protections Jewish students are guaranteed under the law."

Legal Protection K-12 Hotline will also be supported by StandWithUs, a nonprofit which promotes education about Israel and fair treatment of Jewish students on college campuses, and four law firms. In a press release, the groups said parents will be offered both legal counsel and referrals to other

organizations that can be of help.

"Spikes in antisemitic incidents in K-12 schools, coupled with the failure of administrators to respond with meaningful corrective action, has created the need for a more unified and coordinated educational and legal response," Carly Gammill, legal strategy director of StandWithUs Center for Legal Justice (SCLJ) said. "All students deserve an educational environment free from discrimination and harassment based on their protected identities. StandWithUs is proud to partner with this coalition to achieve this goal and further protect Jewish and other Zionist students."

As *The Algemeiner* previously reported, a civil rights complaint filed last week alleges that antisemitism in the Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) in California has caused severe psychological trauma to Jewish students as young as eight years old and fostered a hostile learning environment.

At several schools throughout BUSD, students were recruited to assist anti-Zionists teachers in cheering Hamas' atrocities as "liberation." They were called called on to join "walk outs" and rewarded with excused absences in return for their participation, another violation of district policy forbidding excused absences for all but the most important reasons. These demonstrations became salvos of antisemitic rhetoric. During one organized at Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School, students shouted "KKK," "Kill Israel," "Kill the Jews," and

"From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free." In another incident, a second-grade teacher instructed her students to write "Stop bombing babies" on sticky notes.

"With reports of antisemitism in K-12 schools rising significantly since the Oct. 7 massacre in Israel, we wanted to

ensure that parents and students have a place to turn to for legal help when they need it," ADL CEO Jonathan Greenblatt said. "If this pilot helpline is successful in California, ADL and our partners will look toward expanding it to other states where antisemitism in schools is surging."

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# Ontario Women's Event that Canceled Jewish Speaker over IDF Service is Itself Canceled

By Jennifer Lovy, JTA

A Canadian International Women's Day event that drew attention for canceling its keynote speaker over her past Israeli military service has itself now been canceled. Leah Goldstein, the 2021 winner of Race Across America, had her invitation to speak at a Canadian women's empowerment event rescinded after Oct. 7 because of her past IDF service.

"Circumstances beyond our control" led to the cancellation of the event in Peterborough, Ontario, that had been planned by INSPIRE, a women's empowerment organization, the group told *kawarthaNOW*, a local online publication, this week.

The cancellation came just days after a Jewish Telegraphic Agency report that INSPIRE had rescinded its speaking invitation to Leah Goldstein, a Jewish motivational speaker and the first woman to win a grueling 3,000-mile bicycle race across the United States. It cited as the reason "a small but growing and extremely vocal group" that took issue with Goldstein's IDF service more than 30 years ago.

This incident is one of a growing number of situations where athletes, musicians and other public figures have been affected by anti-Israel protests and sentiments regarding the Israel-Hamas war. And the story of what happened in Peterborough quickly spread, including to the *Daily Mail* tabloid, igniting criticism of INSPIRE from around the world.

Amid the outcry, Goldstein posted a copy of the letter she penned to INSPIRE, expressing her feelings over what she described as "a deeply upsetting turn of events."

"Now that global media has begun publishing various articles and news posts, I feel it's imperative that I too provide a response to my followers... the same response that I conveyed to the event organizers," Goldstein wrote on her website.

"I don't believe you hired me because I was a soldier and a cop. While these jobs are part of my story (and I'm very grateful to have had these experiences), they do not define me as a human being," she wrote in the letter. "As a Jewish woman, I would never be offended if a Palestinian woman were to speak about her obstacles and life journey. I thought that's what women were supposed to do for each other — listen and support!"

She added, "Instead, it seems you have chosen to give in to threats and hate — and this is the saddest part. You removed me



and made a statement to your audience, without even giving me a chance to make my own."

Heather Doughty, INSPIRE's founder and volunteer leader, previously told JTA that she had been surprised by the pushback against Goldstein's inclusion and that the entire experience had been "so traumatic for me." She did not respond to a request for comment about the cancellation of her group's event.

Goldstein was flooded with messages, most expressing solidarity. Many stated that they contacted INSPIRE to express outrage over its treatment of the Canadian-Israeli cyclist and motivational speaker. Some of the anger was mistakenly directed to organizers of other International Women's Day events scheduled in the area and a law firm that sponsored the INSPIRE event last year.

"We are so grateful for the support of so many," she tweeted Thursday, adding, "But we would ask those wishing to share a complaint to be certain they are connecting with the right organization."

Murray Miskin told JTA that his firm, Miskin Law, didn't renew its sponsorship this year because it was involved in other projects. Miskin learned his firm had been listed as a sponsor when he and his predominantly Jewish colleagues were flooded with emails accusing the office of antisemitism and questioning its association with the event.

"In this situation, we had an event where the organizers were overwhelmed by the reaction from the antisemitic and anti-Israel people, and they overreacted to that," Miskin told JTA. "Then, they were overwhelmed by the pro-Israel, pro-Jewish

voices that came after and criticized the decisions they made. They basically gave up and left kind of a mess here."

Miskin said he hoped that INSPIRE would learn from the experience in planning for next year's International Women's Day, marked annually on March 8.

"Peterborough is a very accepting community, and more people in our community will get involved to help make things better," he said.

Dean Pappas is one of the community members already getting involved. Pappas, who previously served on the Peterborough city council, asked the

city's diversity, equity, and inclusion counselor to investigate INSPIRE. He said he was compelled to intervene, calling the situation, at the very least, discrimination and, at the worst, antisemitic. Pappas, who is Greek, also noted that, like in Israel, military service is mandatory in Greece and that he reached out to Goldstein and the Jewish community to offer support.

Miskin added that tremendous sympathy was expressed within the community, "mostly people thinking this was a very bad decision and wanting to help bring Leah to Peterborough to speak in the future."

Miskin recently connected with Goldstein; the two appeared this week on Canadian podcast to talk about their reaction to the chain of events and discussed plans to bring the cyclist to Peterborough for a summer speaking engagement.

Goldstein told JTA that since her story became public, she hasn't been sleeping — not because she's upset over the incident but because she feels compelled to respond to the messages from supporters.

"I've probably slept as much as I did when racing Race Across America. This is great training for sleep deprivation," she said. "Like I have to respond to these nice people. It's just so touching. I'm just so happy and so grateful. It's restored my faith in humanity that good always wins."



## 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.

# A Perspective of a Jewish Student

By Naum Yankelevitch, a sophomore UC Riverside student

October 7<sup>th</sup> terror attack caught everyone by surprise. The first thing I did after finding out about what was happening in Israel was to go onto Discord (social media platform) and



premonitions were correct.

I was further saddened when I asked a pro-Palestinian student, "Why do you support Hamas?" and he referred to Israel as a "Zionist Entity". It was also distressing to see the SJP (Student for Justice in Palestine) students put up posters showing Palestine as a state encompassing all of the land of Israel. Moreover, it was very upsetting to see



send a message to my friend in Haifa: Stay Safe.

A week later, when the initial shock finally subsided, the emotion that replaced it was rage. Not only because of the images and videos coming out, and not only because some of my friends were called up to serve, but because there were students at UC Riverside who had the gall to demonstrate on campus, proudly plant Palestinian flags on the green lawn and proclaim that the massacre that had occurred was an act of resistance.

As a Jew, it made no sense. How could rational people, who attend a university to get an education, come to the conclusion that supporting Hamas is the right thing to do? Later, when I went home and I saw that Jewish friends were reporting about similar experiences across the USA, I wondered what the following months would bring.

There is something surreal in discovering that all the stories I heard from my grandparents were not exaggerations, and that people really don't want anything to do with you on the basis of your Jewish heritage. I was sad mainly because, as it turned out, my

the door of UCR Hillel Center vandalized. But the worst thing of all was the feeling that the university administration was doing almost nothing to address the blatant antisemitism on campus.

Over the past 4 months, I went from being a regular student who happened to be Jewish, to taking a position on the Hillel student board and becoming an active advocate for Israel. Organizations like Hillel and Chabad were the glue that ensured students were not left to their own devices in their grief, anger and anxieties. Without them, I can only imagine how poorly other Jewish students might have processed the shock of what happened.

Hillel on campus helps us remember that Jewish students are not alone. It provides opportunities for us not only to interact with others students, but also to respond to the sharp increase of antisemitism on campus. As U.S. campuses imploded and became politicized environments, it was the Jewish community that noticed how wrong the reactions of college and university administrations were. Our communities allowed us to coordinate better and combat anti-Israel and



antisemitic activities. Being able to respond made both me and the rest of the UCR community feel empowered, resilient and valued. Hillel gave me the opportunity to address the UC Regents regarding the negative climate on campus and advocate in front of the UCR student government.

At the same time, while combating disinformation and antisemitism, Hillel and Chabad managed to bring me and

many Jewish students back to our roots and teach us what it means to be Jewish. Although antisemitism is on the rise, Jewish students celebrate life and spread hope and happiness. As a result, never before have I been so in touch with my culture and heritage. Never before have I had as many Jewish friends as I have today. And never before have I felt so safe to show off my Jewish heritage with pride.

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# One Third of Americans are Reluctant to Vote for a Pro-Israel Politician, ADL Survey Finds

By Luke Tress, Jewish Telegraphic Agency

More than a third of Americans would be reluctant to vote for a pro-Israel politician. One fifth are uncomfortable buying products from Israel. More than 40% at least somewhat agreed that Israel intends to cause as much Palestinian suffering as possible. But nearly all U.S. adults believe Jews have the right to an independent country.

Those are some of the results of a survey published February 29 by the Anti-Defamation League, measuring antisemitism and anti-Israel views across the United States. The survey found that antisemitic views had increased since the ADL's last such study, taken prior to Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on Israel and the ensuing war, though anti-Israel

views had not.

Thursday's survey polled more than 4,000 U.S. adults in mid-January, with a 1.5% margin of error.

As it has for decades, the ADL presented respondents with a list of 11 antisemitic tropes — such as "Jews are more loyal to Israel than to America," and "Jews have too much power" — and found that nearly 24% of respondents believed in six or more of them, an increase of four percentage points since 2022.

When it came to Israel, the survey's authors said the overall number of respondents who held anti-Israel positions had not drastically changed since Oct. 7, based on a survey taken

last summer. But the group found that views had become more polarized, with more respondents saying they "strongly" agreed or disagreed with negative statements about Israel.

The poll found that many respondents viewed Israelis as callous or malicious toward Palestinians, with 43% agreeing strongly or somewhat that Israelis intend to cause Palestinians as much suffering as possible. A similar proportion said Israelis were indifferent to Palestinian suffering.

Nearly 36% agreed to some extent with the statement, "If Israelis had their way, they would live in a world where all Palestinians were killed."

One fifth supported, strongly or

somewhat, the removal of Israeli products from grocery stores. And more than a third agreed to some extent with the statement, "I would not consider voting for a pro-Israel politician." (Whether that finding bears out in the upcoming presidential election remains to be seen. While they disagree on Israel policy, all major candidates say they are supporters of Israel.)

In some cases, criticism of Israel overlapped with age-old antisemitic conspiracies. The survey found that 30% of respondents agreed in some measure that supporters of Israel control the media. And one third somewhat or strongly agreed that "Israeli operatives are secretly manipulating US national policy through [the pro-Israel lobby] AIPAC or other influence tools."

Despite the findings regarding anti-Israel beliefs, the overwhelming majority of respondents — 88.8% — said Jews had the right to an independent country.

Anti-Israel views were more widespread among young people and correlated with antisemitism, the poll found. Surveys taken since Oct. 7 have consistently found lower levels of support for Israel among young adults.

Many respondents, especially younger Americans, expressed at least some degree of comfort with supporting Hamas. Slightly more than half of Gen Z respondents said they would be comfortable having a friendship with a supporter of the terror group. Twenty-seven percent of all respondents said it would be acceptable for a close family member to support Hamas.

Twenty-four percent of all respondents said they have a close friend or family member who dislikes Jews. Younger respondents were more likely to hold antisemitic beliefs, the poll found. Millennials agreed with the most antisemitic tropes, on average, followed by Gen Z. ADL polling showed that belief in the tropes generally declined between 1964 until 2014, when the numbers started trending upward.

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# New Zealand Declares Entire Hamas Organization a Terror Group

Jewish News Syndicate

New Zealand has designated the entire Hamas organization as a terrorist group, its prime minister, Christopher Luxon, announced on February 29.

While the armed wing of Hamas, known as the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, was declared a terror group by New Zealand in 2010, its "political wing" had not been outlawed.

"The terrorist attacks by Hamas in October 2023 were brutal, and we have unequivocally condemned them," Luxon said.

New Zealand Foreign Minister Winston Peters said in a statement that Hamas's Oct. 7 massacre in southern Israel "reinforces we can no longer distinguish between the military and political wings of Hamas."

Wellington's decision freezes any assets Hamas may have in New Zealand. It also makes it a criminal offense for New Zealanders to provide Hamas terrorists with funds or other forms of material support.

"New Zealand wants to be clear that the designation of Hamas is about the actions of an offshore terrorist entity and is not a reflection on the Palestinian people in Gaza and around the world," Luxon stated, stressing that Thursday's decision does not stop Wellington from providing "humanitarian support to Palestinian civilians" in the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip.

"Similarly, the designation does not stop New Zealand providing humanitarian and future development assistance to benefit civilians in Gaza, nor does it stop us providing consular support to New Zealand citizens or permanent residents in the conflict zone," added the premier.

In a post on X, Israeli ambassador to New Zealand Ran Yaakoby thanked Wellington for designating Hamas terrorists "as what they all are" and condemning the "massacre of Israelis and foreigners" by Hamas and its terrorist allies.

Hamas started a war against the Jewish state on Oct. 7 when it led a mass invasion into southern Israel, murdering 1,200 people, wounding thousands and kidnapping 253 others. Widespread atrocities were reported, including rapes, beheadings and desecration of corpses.

## 'A lie disconnected from reality'

In a separate decision, the New Zealand government announced travel bans on "a number of extremist Israeli settlers who have committed violent attacks against Palestinians in the West Bank."

Luxon said his government was "seriously concerned" by what he called a "significant increase" in violence

perpetrated by Israeli residents of Judea and Samaria against Palestinians in recent months. "This is particularly destabilizing in what is already a major crisis," he claimed.

Peter added that "settlements undermine the prospects for a viable two-state solution. Recent statements by some Israeli ministers about plans for further settlement construction are of serious concern and will raise tensions further between Israelis and Palestinians."

According to IDF and Israel Police data, Jewish violence against Palestinians in Judea and Samaria has been steadily

decreasing. Earlier this year, Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen called reports of growing "settler violence" a "blood libel" and "a lie disconnected from reality."

Representatives of the Israel Defense Forces told members of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee on Wednesday that "there is no such concept as settler violence" in Judea and Samaria.

"There is nationalistic crime, but we are talking about a few incidents... We have great respect for the residents of Judea and Samaria. They are our brothers, and

it is our job to ensure their safety," the senior IDF officials told lawmakers during a closed-door meeting.

On Thursday afternoon, a Palestinian terrorist murdered two Israelis at a gas station outside the town of Eli in the Binyamin region of Samaria.

The victims were identified as Yitzchak Zeiger, a 57-year-old father of three from Shavei Shomron, a village in northern Samaria; and Uria Hartum, a 16-year-old high-schooler from Dolev who had hitched a ride with Zeiger.



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## **New Polls Show Huge Increase in Trust of Israeli Security Forces**

*By Amelie Botbol, Jewish News Syndicate*



The level of trust in the Israel Defense Forces is soaring among both Jewish and Arab Israelis amid the country's war against Hamas, according to survey published on Thursday.

The Israel Democracy Institute's yearly Israeli Democracy Index was conducted in June 2023, with some questions then repeated in Dec. 2023 and Jan. 2024 following Hamas's Oct. 7 massacre.

Among the Jewish public, the IDF received the highest trust rating (86% on average).

Municipalities and local government, which took a prominent role in evacuating and resettling residents from the war-ravaged southwest and north, came in second (55% in June, 64% in December), while the president came in third position (54% in June, 61% in December).

Similarly, levels of trust in the Israel Police rose significantly after Oct. 7, from 35% in June to 58.5% in December.

However, trust in the Knesset presented the sharpest decline, from 24% in June to only 19% in December.

While levels of trust in state institutions are significantly lower among the Arab Israeli public, trust in most institutions has been on the rise since Oct. 7, with the Supreme Court and the IDF ranking first and second respectively. Supreme Court ratings went from 26% in June to 53% in December, while IDF ratings rose from 21% in June to 44% in December.

The survey also shows a substantial increase in trust in the police, possibly explained by a newfound sense of solidarity within both the Israeli and Arab publics following Oct. 7.

Among Jewish respondents, solidarity

*continued on page 22*

# Israel Begins to Rise in Military Firepower Rankings After a Decade of Decline

By Yuval Barneamarch, *The Jerusalem Post*

Tel Aviv University's Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) took to X to lament Israel's slow slump down Global Firepower's PowerIndex (PwrIdx) which measures a nation's conventional fighting abilities.

Although this year's ranking, 17th, is a slight improvement on last year's ranking, 18th, Israel is still outpaced by several local powers and rivals.

Israel was ranked as the fourth most powerful state in the Middle East with Turkey (8th), Iran (14th), and Egypt (15th) gaining a better ranking.

This is still an overall reduction in ranking over the decade, as Israel had been in 11th place 10 years ago, during which time Iran rose rapidly despite the sanctions imposed on it.



Israeli fighter jet

## How is the ranking calculated?

There are over 60 different factors through which a nation is given its PwrIdx score. This score should represent the country's conventional fighting capability. The factors that determine the score range from manpower, airpower, natural resources, finances, and

geography. Importantly, each of these factors encompasses a variety of sub-categories. For example, the manpower category breaks down to total population, available manpower, fit-for-service, and more.

A perfect PwrIdx score is 0.0000, however, this is "realistically

unattainable" under current conditions, thus the lower the score the more conventionally powerful that country is.

The large spectrum of factors allows for a much more precise calculation of each country's Power Projection. While the Data is detailed and expansive, it does not

take into consideration the soldiers' ingenuity, passion, dedication, and motivation.

The INSS characterized Israel's main advantages as "reflected in [its] technological quality and air superiority," while it characterized the advantages of the Iranian army as "the growth of the drone industry, its extensive scope, and a large armored force."

The INSS makes an extremely important point by highlighting the difference in military doctrine and spending, Israel currently outspends Iran by a factor of nearly 2.5x.

The INSS did highlight that although Israel had slumped over the decade it still remained in a much better place than most other Middle Eastern states, with Saudi Arabia at 23rd and Israel's neighbors Syria and Jordan much further down, at 60th and 80th respectively.

Lebanon was ranked 118th, below Eritrea and above South Sudan, although this likely does not reflect Hezbollah's firepower as it operates separately from the Lebanese Armed Forces.

# Parkinson's Breakthrough: Link Discovered Between Disease and Brain

*The discovery and research of a newly-found link between the brain's structure and Parkinson's could advance efforts to find a cure.*

By John Jeffay, *Israel 21c*

Researchers in Israel's University of Haifa say they have established a "groundbreaking" connection between Parkinson's disease and the "scaffolding" that supports cells in the brain.

This discovery opens up a whole new area of research into a neurodegenerative disorder that affects 10 million people globally, robbing them of the ability to walk and talk.

Experts at the University of Haifa say they have, for the first time, found a connection between Parkinson's and the extracellular matrix (ECM), a mix of proteins and carbohydrates that provide cells with structural and biochemical support.

Results of the research by Prof. Shani Stern and her team at the university's

Sagol Department of Neurobiology have been published in the journal *NPJ Parkinson's Disease*.

"Until now, most of the studies concerning Parkinson's have focused on the cells and on synaptic connections," she said. "The results of our study found changes in the extracellular matrix, which has not been a focus of Parkinson's research."

"To gain a deeper understanding of Parkinson's disease and make progress in efforts to find a cure for the disease, we need to examine the changes that occur in the extracellular matrix."

The exact cause of Parkinson's disease remains a mystery, but it is known to result in damage to the nerve cells in two small but crucial areas of the brain (one on the left, one on the right) called substantia nigra.

These cells produce dopamine, the chemical that helps control movement. When they're not working at full capacity, they don't produce enough dopamine, resulting in tremors, stiffness and slowed movement.

The research team took skin cells from some Parkinson's patients with a genetic link to the disease (a small minority), from patients who have a non-genetic link and from healthy participants as a control group.

They then reprogrammed the cells for all three groups so that they carried the same genetic information. They found evidence that in both types of Parkinson's patients there were changes in the expression of numerous genes that encode proteins of the extracellular matrix.

In other words, there's a link between

Parkinson's and the extracellular matrix that doesn't exist with people who don't have Parkinson's.

"It was found that cells produced from Parkinson's patients have less mRNA (the messenger molecule) and fewer proteins that build the extracellular matrix than cells produced from healthy individuals," says a press release from the university.

"The researchers also discovered for the first time that the collagen 4 protein, which plays an important role in building the extracellular matrix, undergoes aggregation in Parkinson's patients, but not in healthy individuals."

The study was carried out in cooperation with the Salk Institute in San Diego, USA, Erlangen University in Germany, and UCL (University College London).

# 2024 Palm Springs Jewish Film Festival a Tremendous Celebration of the Jewish People

By Rabbi Steven Rosenberg, Spiritual Leader, Temple Isaiah

"This year's Palm Springs Jewish Film Festival was a tremendous celebration of the indomitable spirit, strength and courage of the Jewish people, as well as celebrating Jewish pride, just when we needed it the most," said Rabbi Steven Rosenberg, spiritual leader of Temple Isaiah, Jewish Community Center of Palm Springs.

Temple Isaiah produces the PSJFF, with the Federation of the Desert as one of its major sponsors. In fact, the PSJFF is now considered one of the top Jewish Film Festivals in the Country.

This was one of the best **Palm Springs Jewish Film Festivals** we have produced, with the highest attendance to date. We were able to engage the best line-up of guest speakers with a stellar schedule of premieres. The PSJFF opened to a SOLD OUT audience with "Suzanne Somers... One Incredible Life," which was her LIVE Las Vegas show produced by her husband who did a Q&A after the film,» said Michael Frydrych, PSJFF Festival Chairman.

He goes on to say, "The "Symphony of the Holocaust" was a once-in-a-lifetime

documentary premiere, with the Orchestra playing the piece after the film LIVE with Conductor Noreen Green, Los Angeles Jewish Symphony. The Q&A with Braun Family Members and Director/Producer Greg DeHarte was an incredible experience to bring this all together for our patrons of

the Coachella Valley. We also were proud to have the premiere of "Remembering Gene Wilder" as our closing night event with Karen Wilder, Gene's widow and Executive Producer Julie Nimoy, daughter of legendary actor Leonard Nimoy along with writer and co-producer Glenn Kirschbaum."

Alan Potash, CEO of the Jewish Federation of the Desert wrote: "I want to congratulate Temple Isaiah and the committee that puts on the Palm Springs Jewish Film Festival. This year's selection of films was outstanding. I believe the film festival is one of the best community programs I have experienced in my two years in the valley. I think the committee does a great job selecting the films and creating the panel discussions afterward. I want to specifically thank the committee for selecting and organizing the performance that accompanied the *Symphony of the Holocaust*, which was outstanding!"

Rabbi Rosenberg added, "Just as Temple Isaiah has seen unprecedented growth in the past several years, the PSJFF also broke records for attendance and boosted our level of sponsors by a tremendous amount, to which we are very grateful and feel very blessed."

"The PSJFF has truly become a tremendously important event that celebrates the amazing history, creativity and spirit of the Jewish people." Rabbi Rosenberg continued, "one of the best ways to combat this growing wave of antisemitism is to gather together and show our Jewish Pride, strength, courage and resolve. I congratulate everyone who attended and participated in the PSJFF who did just that." Rabbi Rosenberg concluded by saying "none of this would have been possible without the leadership of our PSJFF Chair Michael Frydrych, coordinator Doug Morton and our amazing PSJFF Committee and of course our beloved sponsors. On behalf of our Hazzan, Dr. Sarah Sela and myself, we thank everyone from the bottom of our hearts for an amazing festival!"



Musicians from LA Jewish Orchestra playing "Symphony of the Holocaust"



Roz Rothstein of StandWithUs, Gene Wilder's widow Karen Wilder, writer-producer Glenn Kirschbaum, and Rabbi Steven Rosenberg of Temple Isaiah.



Violinist Erik Ghukasyan, who played in the film and again at the PSJFF, and Conductor of the LA Jewish Orchestra Noreen Green being interviewed.



Rabbi Rosenberg, Suzanne Somers' husband Alan Hamill, and Film Festival Chair Michael Frydrych.



# Legacy Wall Dedication At Congregation Beth Shalom

At Congregation Beth Shalom's recent dedication event, a stunning Legacy Wall plaque was unveiled displaying the engraved names of over 60 donors to the synagogue's capital campaign which commenced over a year ago when the synagogue relocated from Bermuda Dunes to its new location inside the H.N. and Frances C. Berger Foundation building at the corner of Cook Street and Merle Drive in Palm Desert.

Through this campaign, members and non-members of The Coachella Valley's Conservative Synagogue subsidized a major renovation of a suite of spaces on the building's second floor resulting in a Beit K'nesset (sanctuary/great room), kosher kitchen, library/conference room, and administrative office. Supporters also dedicated installations and furnishings, including: Aron Kodesh (Ark), Ner Tamid (Eternal Light), Shulhan (Reader's Table), Shulhan covers, Lectern, several Mezuzot, and a state-of-the-art audio-visual system.

Designated as the Larry & Ed Sogolow Beit K'nesset, dedicated in memory of Larry's parents, Nathan and Molly Sogolow, this room will serve the traditional functions of a synagogue: a home for prayer, learning, and gathering. The kosher kitchen is dedicated by Joel & Marlene Wolf, in memory of Joel's parents, Abraham Israel and Bertha "Bee" Wolf. The administrative office is dedicated by Bill Amplo & Bill Snellenberger, in memory of Ayala Marks and Barbara Roberts, former Beth Shalom office managers and well-known in the Jewish community. Rabbi Ira Helf has dedicated the library/conference room in memory of his parents, Bernice and Edward Helf.

The Legacy Wall, designed by Communications and Office Manager Bill Amplo, is a floating acrylic work of art with a dynamic cobalt blue background and raised engraved acrylic plaques with the names of donors of the rooms, installations, and furnishings, as well as Supporters and Friends of Beth Shalom. The 3D effect provides a beautiful overall aesthetic with the luxury of tactile donor names. The plaque, placed next to the synagogue's Tree of Life, is to be viewed as a tangible display of the generosity of the contributors and their ongoing



commitment to Beth Shalom's vitality and growth.

At the dedication ceremony, Board of Directors President Bill Singer recognized individual donors and spoke about the importance of ongoing support to sustain the synagogue into the future. Spiritual Leader Ken Hailpern connected the dedication to the weekly Torah portion, describing voluntary gifts brought by the ancient Israelites for the construction of



the portable sanctuary that accompanied them in their desert wanderings and the evolution of the Jewish prayer space from the Mishkan, to the Temple in Jerusalem, to contemporary synagogues in local

communities.

The dedication event included recognition of magnificent new signage at the entrance to the synagogue's suite, brief remarks by the major donors acknowledging the individuals to whom their spaces are dedicated, photographs of all donors, a celebratory toast, and sumptuous champagne brunch prepared and served by Cindy Hailpern, Heather Altman, and Arlene Schwartz. The celebration concluded with the prayer that Congregation Beth Shalom continues to welcome all who have cares to unburden, thanks to express, and hopes to nurture, and that it serve as the doorway to a richer and more meaningful Jewish life in the Coachella Valley.

## Are you receiving the weekly e-newsletter or the Israel updates? If not, please check your junk mail file.



The Jewish Federation has a robust weekly eblast emailed on Friday afternoons to over 1800 email addresses. Do you receive it?

If you have received it in the past but haven't received it lately it might be in your junk or spam folder. If it is, you need to go into the email settings and highlight the email and move it into the main folder—you can also call the office and we will walk you through how to fix it. It is important that you receive the eblast because we share information not just for the Federation but also for the local Jewish organizations that send us their events.

If you have never received the eblast it means we do not have your email address ... and we not only invite you but urge that you send us your email so that you can be "in" our community. We do not inundate you with emails ... this is a once-a-week Friday afternoon transmission with important news that impacts us as a Jewish community. Please join us. Email your email to [bebsabe.morrison@jfedps.org](mailto:bebsabe.morrison@jfedps.org).



# Shabbat Schedule - April 2024

## **BETH SHALOM, Palm Desert**

(Member, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism)

Ken Hailpern, Spiritual Leader  
42600 Cook Street, Second Floor, Palm Desert, CA 92211. 760-200-3636.  
IN-PERSON Shabbat Morning Services: 9:45 am, followed by light Kiddush lunch.

**Friday, March 1:** Shabbat Eve Service, 7:45 pm, celebrating Shabbat Across America and Hadassah Shabbat with Sabra Hadassah of the Desert followed by Oneg Shabbat Dessert Reception.

**Saturday, March 30:** Community Torah Reading Shabbat with multiple readers from the congregation: 9:45 am  
Visitors welcome with valid identification. For information, email info@congregationbethshalom.net or call 760-200-3636. www.CongregationBethShalom.net

## **CHABAD OF PALM SPRINGS & DESERT COMMUNITIES**

Rabbi Yonason Denebeim & Rabbi Arik Denebeim  
250 East Palm Canyon Drive, Palm Springs, CA 92264 www.chabadpalmsprings.com 760-325-0774.  
Check website or call to confirm times of Shabbat and holiday services.

## **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 & Rabbi Benny Lew.  
www.chabadrm.com  
Weekly Shabbat Services start at 10 am, followed by a sit down lunch/kiddush. Check online for weekday and Friday schedule of services Text 760-770-7785 or e-mail: info@chabadrm.com to be added to our mailing list. All programs and events are updated on our website.

**Ckids Hebrew School** 10:00 AM - 12:30 PM on designated Sundays throughout the school year. Check our

schedule online Info: chabadrm.com/ckids or Chaya Posner: chaya@chabadrm.com or 760-272-1923.

## **CHABAD OF SUN CITY PALM DESERT**

Rabbi Yonason Denebeim.  
Call 760-848-8250 or e-mail: info@chabadsuncity.com for schedule. Contact Rebbetzin Sussie Denebeim to receive weekly "Chabad in Sun City Newsletter" with listing of all services and activities: sussiedenebeim@gmail.com.

## **CHABAD OF LA QUINTA**

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

## **CONGREGATION HAR-EL,**

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

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

## **DESERT OUTREACH SYNAGOGUE, Rancho Mirage**

Rabbi Dr. Jules King; Rabbi Rachel Axelrad, Rabbi Andrew Bentley, Cantor Lori Reisman Patterson. 760-449-0111. Mailing address: P.O. Box 982, Rancho

Mirage, CA 92270. Shabbat services held on the second Fridays at Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert, 72425 Via Vail, Rancho Mirage. On second Saturdays: 10:30-11:30 am Torah study on Zoom with Rabbi Axelrad. Beit Sefer Religious School is held Saturday mornings (from 9:45 AM to noon. B'nei Mitzvah classes for Children with Arava Talve. "Talkin' Torah": See listing on Community Calendar. Check website for most current information: www.Desert-Outreach-Synagogue.com. or www.my-dos.org

## **OR HAMIDBAR**

Rabbi David Lazar rabbi@orhamidbar.org  
In-person services each 1st Friday of the month and 3rd Shabbat morning. Online services all other Friday evenings and Shabbat mornings of the month. Kabbalat Shabbat Service - Fridays 6:30 pm; Shabbat prayer and study - Saturdays 10:30 am.

## **SUN CITY JEWISH SERVICES, Palm Desert**

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

## **TEMPLE HAR SHALOM, Idyllwild**

www.templeharshalomidyllwild.org  
Email: templeharshalomofidyllwild@gmail.com. Shabbat Candle Lighting on Fridays at 6:00 pm on Zoom. 1st Friday with Rabbi Malka Drucker; 2nd Friday with Rabbi Ilana Grinblat; 3rd Friday with Kerry Abram; 4th Friday with Rabbi Ilana Grinblat. Shabbat Book Study with Rabbi Malka Drucker on Zoom Saturdays 4:00-5:00 pm. Check our website for current info including Torah Study with Rabbi Ilana one Saturday morning per month. For more information and for Zoom link call 951-468-0004.

## **TEMPLE ISAIAH, Palm Springs**

Rabbi Steven Rosenberg. (rabbisteven.rosenberg@gmail.com). Cantorial Soloist Dr. Sarah Sela join Rabbi on the bima most weeks.

332 West Alejo Road, Palm Springs, CA 92262, 760-325-2281. Email: temple@templeisaiahps.com; www.templeisaiahps.com.  
Shabbat services Friday evenings at 7:30 pm, preceded by Wine and Cheese 'Happy Hour' from 7:00-7:30 pm and Oneg following. Saturday morning torah study, "Nosh and Drash," begins at 10:30 am. All services also streamed online. To access any activity, go to Temple Isaiah's website and click on link to desired service or program.

## **Dor Hadash (New Generation)**

**Religious School** for children 8 through Bar/Bat Mitzvah held Shabbat afternoons at 1:00 pm online with Rabbi Rosenberg.

## **TEMPLE SINAI, Palm Desert (Member, Union for Reform Judaism)**

Rabbi David Novak rabbi@templesinai.org  
73-251 Hovley Lane West, Palm Desert, CA 92260. www.templesinaipd.org 760-568-9699. Go to templesinaipd.org for access information. Shabbat services are in-person and online on Livestream at www.templesinaipd.org. Friday evening services 5:30 pm, preceded by pre-service Oneg at 5:00 pm. Saturday morning Torah study 8:45 am; Shabbat morning services 10 am.

**Friday, March 8, 5:30 pm** – Special Erev Shabbat with guest speaker from Volunteers in Medicine, followed by Shabbat dinner with Beth Chayim Chadashim Los Angeles, the world's first synagogue founded by and for LGBTQ+ Jews, who will be celebrating a shabbaton in the dessert. Catered by J's Deli. \$38 per person

## **Temple Sinai's Avi Levine Religious School**

9:30 - 12:00 AM on designated Sundays throughout the school year. Contact Talia Lizemer-Hawley, Community Educator, for more information, educator@templesinaipd.org

## **BIKUR CHOLIM**

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



# Community Calendar of Programs - April 2024

## **Mondays:**

**Har-El** offers three classes with **Rabbi Richard Zions** on Zoom on Mondays for residents and non-residents: 10:30 AM—Adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah Class; 1:00 PM—Conversion to Judaism; 4:00 PM—Youth Bar/Bat Mitzvah Preparation. Individual Zoom Sessions will be offered for beginning students who require extra preparation for group study. For registration and additional information, email: harelurjpd@gmail.com or call Rabbi Zions at (760) 668-9943.

## **Tuesdays:**

**5:00-6:45 pm** Chabad Rancho Mirage's popular weekly **BBQ** is back for the season. Check their website (www.chabadrm.com) for convenient reservations/order form.

**6:00-7:15 pm** Temple Isaiah **Aleph-Bet for Adults** beginning Hebrew Class led by **Dr. Gary Levin**. By end of course participants will be able to read Hebrew prayers in the Siddur. Class closed. Call to register for next course, 760-325-2281.

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

## **Wednesdays:**

**11:00 am** Or Hamidbar: **Rabbi David Lazar** "Covenant and Conquest: The Book of Joshua" on Zoom. Link: visit orhamidbar.org.

**7:00 pm** Chabad of Palm Springs/Sun City: 'Ask the Rabbi': A Weekly Open Q&A with **Rabbi Yonason Denebeim**.

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

**8:00 pm** – Temple Isaiah "Judaism 2.0 with **Rabbi Steven Rosenberg**. Online course on ZOOM: Judaism 2.0: New course: "What Jews Believe" To

participate, email Rabbi at rabbisteven.rosenberg@gmail.com.

## **Thursdays:**

**11:00 am** Or Hamidbar: **Rabbi David Lazar** "Actively Engaging: Jews and Christians Reading Together Isaiah 40-55 on Zoom. Link: visit orhamidbar.org.

**7:30 pm** Temple Isaiah: Learn conversational Hebrew with **Dr. Sarah Sela** via Zoom.

## **Saturdays:**

**1:30 pm** Temple Isaiah "Jewish University" features adult education classes as well as religious school learning opportunities and Bnai Mitzvah preparation for the Temple's growing group of young people. Check website for programs: www.templeisaiahps.com.

## **YOUTH AND TEENS:**

Chabad of Rancho Mirage offers programs for children 3 through High School. Ckids Club for children 3-13 offers monthly programs. CTeen is for teens in high school who meet weekly for events, discussion and participation in humanitarian projects. For more information on kids' club events, or to register, visit us on the web www.chabadrm.com/ckids.

## **Wednesday, April 3**

**10:00 am** Jewish Federation Women's Philanthropy presents **Rachel Shtir**, in person, speaking on her book "**Betty Friedan, Magnificent Disruptor**", part of this year's Jewish Book Council book and author series. At the Jewish Federation Offices. RSVP to Leslie Pepper, Director of Women's Philanthropy and Community Engagement, Leslie.pepper@jfedps.org or 760-324-4737.

## **Wednesday, April 3**

**3:00 pm** Har-El **Books and Bordeaux**. Har-El "Members priority" event. **Joan Moyer** will review the NY Times bestseller "The Little Liar" by Mitch Albom. Held in a private home. E-mail harelurjpd@gmail.com re: space availability.



**First Seder: Monday night April 22**  
**Second Seder: Tuesday night April 23**  
**Eighth day Pesach/Yizkor: Tuesday, April 30**

## **Sunday, April 7**

Har-El "Afternoon Stepping Out into the Community" with a trip to the **Agua Caliente Cultural Center** in Palm Springs. Admission for seniors \$5. Tour followed by no-host early dinner. Email harelurjpd@gmail.com to RSVP. See ad page 5.

## **Monday, April 8**

**10:00 am – 4:00 pm** Jewish Federation **Game Day** at the Mountain Views Clubhouse of Sun City Palm Desert. Put your table together or ask to join a table for Mah Jongg, Canasta, Bridge and Poker. \$75, includes lunch and snacks. Lunch box choices: Egg Salad, Tuna Salad, Chicken Salad or Vegetarian. Indicate choice when making your reservation to Leslie Pepper, Director of Women's Philanthropy and Community Engagement: Leslie.pepper@jfedps.org or call 760-324-4737. See ad page 14.

## **Thursday, April 11**

**7:00 pm** (Doors open at 6:30 pm) **Sabra Hadassah of the Desert** program for men and women: **Rabbi Ira Helf** will share his fascination with the Roosevelt Family and specifically **Eleanor Roosevelt: First Lady of the World and Friend to Israel**. Meeting will be held at the Sun City Palm Desert Sunset View Clubhouse/Oasis Room. Couvert: \$20 members/\$25 non-members. Information/reservations: contact Vivian Posen, 818-687-9446. See ad page 13.

## **Thursday, April 11**

**StandWithUs** Gala, honoring Bob (z"l), Sandra and Betsy Borns, with Keynote Speaker Dennis Prager and Featured Speaker Roz Rothstein. See article and ad page 5.

## **Sunday, April 14**

**10:00 am** Jewish Federation program: **ALL THINGS ISRAEL**, featuring a virtual presentation from Oren Kessler, author, journalist and political analyst based in Tel Aviv, speaking on his incredible book **Palestine 1936: The Great Revolt and the Roots of the Middle East Conflict**.

In conjunction with the virtual talk by Oren Kessler, the Jewish Federation will host an update on the current situation in Israel. At the Jewish Federation Building. RSVP to Gloria Benvenides at gloria.benvenides@jfedps.org or call 760-324-4737. See articles pages 1 and 3.

## **Sunday, April 14**

**1:00-3:00 pm** Temple Isaiah's "Twice Blessed" presents **Comedian Jason Stuart and Francesca Amari's "Different Drum"** (Tribute to Linda Ronstadt) with **Wayne Abravanel**. Held at Temple Isaiah's Warsaw Ballroom. \$45; includes wine and snacks. Tickets available online at templeisaiahps.com or by calling 760-325-2281. See ad page 12.

## **Sunday, April 14**

**3:00 pm** Sabra Hadassah of the Desert presents a special musical variety entertainment performance by **Wendy and Rik** at Sun City Shadow Hills Montecito Clubhouse, 80888 Sun City Blvd., Indio, off Jefferson exit of Highway 10. Tickets \$50 (\$60 after *continued on page 20.*

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

# Community Calendar of Programs Continued - April 2024

April 7). For tickets and information contact Vivian Posen, 818-687-9446. See ad page 13.

## Thursday, April 18

Noon Jewish Federation presents Jewish Book Council author **Joe Posnanski**, in person, speaking about

his book **"Why We Love Baseball!"** RSVP to Gloria Benvenides at gloria.benvenides@jfedps.org or call 760-324-4737. See article page 3.

## Monday, April 22

**6:00 pm Temple Isaiah Community Seder.** Led by Rabbi Steven

Rosenberg and Dr. Sarah Sela. \$75 members/\$85 non-members. Reservation deadline: April 16. See ad page 4.

**Monday, April 22 Har-El Congregational Passover Seder** conducted by Rabbi Richard

Zionts and Cantor Joseph Gole. For information and reservations contact harelurjpd@gmail.com. See page 5.

## SUNDAY, MAY 5

**YOM HASHOAH, HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE** See ads on pages 2 and the back page.



## Tribute Card Donations

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

### Honorarium Tributes In Appreciation For:

- **Myra Gordon**, Happy birthday from Judy Appelbaum.
- **Stan Hack**, Happy Birthday wishes, from Larry and Cathy Pitts.
- **Fran Kaufman**, Mazel tov on your grandson's Bar Mitzvah.
- **Evan Morris**, Congratulations on your special birthday, from Diane and Arnie Simon and Ellen and Mel Gold.\*
- **Fefe Passer**, In honor of your 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, from Alan and Carol Parsow.
- **Steven and Alana Polacheck**, Congratulations on 54 years of a beautiful marriage, from Carol and Bill Kaplan.
- **Sandy Rosenthal**, Happy 85<sup>th</sup> birthday from Fred and Fredda Just.\*
- **Gail Scadron**, Thank you for a memorable evening, from Shelli Goodman, Terry Lubar, Eunice Meister, and Marnie Miller.

### Refuah Shleimah Get Well:

- **Ted Goldman**, Get well wishes from Phil and Ellen Glass.
- **Mal Kaufman**, Best wishes for a speedy recovery, from Gail and Bob Scadron.

### Memoriam Tributes Condolences Sent To:

- In memory of **Marilyn Glassman**, from Larry and Cathy Pitts.
- **Linda Friedman**, Condolences from Barbara

and Bernie Fromm.

- **Stephanie Garry**, In memory of your beloved mother Eileen, from Cora Ginsberg.
- **Bob Greenbaum**, In memory of your beloved mother, Peggy Greenbaum, from Bernard Bierman and Bill Bouchey, Lilo and Leslie Cooper.
- **Jim Greenbaum**, In memory of your beloved wife Peggy, from Perry and Nancy Altshule, Kathi Balaban and Phil Schneider, Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Ehrlichman, Ed and Sande Fineman, Nancy and Bob Fraiman, Bobby and Toni Garmisa, Cora Ginsberg, Micki and Jack Goldner, Margot and Jerry Halperin, Libby and Buddy Hoffman, Ronnie and Barbara Kahn, Ruth and Mal Kaufman, Pat and Joan Kerns, Mary Levine and Alan Goldstein, Dr. Paul and Terry Lubar, Eunice and Jerry Meister, Charlotte and Lester Morris, Bernie Plack and Shelli Goodman, Barbara Platt, Dale and George Rotner, Gail and Bob Scadron, Esther Schoenfeld, Sherry Schor, Elaine and Ted Stein.
- **Joan Hirsch**, In memory of your beloved husband Michael, from Micki and Jack Goldner, Margie and Stephen Kulp, Larry and Cathy Pitts, Michael Pollack and Judy Sontag, Dale and George Rotner.
- **Marian Holtz**, In memory of your beloved husband, from Debra and Mickey Star.
- **Arlyn Marks**, In memory of your beloved husband Lee, from Ruth and Mal Kaufman, Eunice and Jerry Meister.
- **Jean Mintz**, In loving memory of Peggy Greenbaum, from Mindy and Steve Brown.
- **Sherry Schor**, In memory of your beloved husband Howard, from Nancy Altshule, Judith Appelbaum, Merle Arenson, Kathi Balaban and Phil Schneider, Bonnie Carmell, Joanne and Bill

Chunowitz, Nancy and Dennis Ditlove, Suzanne and Jeffrey Feder, Sande and Ed Fineman, Bernie and Barbara Fromm, Cora Ginsberg, Muriel and Ron Goldberg, Micki and Jack Goldner, Alan Goldstein and Mary B. Levine, Russell and Beth Gould, Wendy Gross and Bill DeWoskin, Margot and Jerry Halperin, Sanford and Rosemary Hertz, Libby and Buddy Hoffman, Loreen Jacobson, Lois Johnson, Harriet Karmin, Fran Kaufman, Nora Kaufman, Ruth and Mal Kaufman, Pat and Joan Kerns, Mort Kirshner, Margie and Stephen Kulp, Gary and Joellen Leifer, Jim Levitas and Barbara Federman, Jeanne Levitt, Bertel Lewis\*, Dr. Paul and Terry Lubar, Marilyn Malkin, Eunice and Jerry Meister, Marnie Miller and Joe Noren, Barbara Platt and Norm Lewis, Michael Pollack and Judy Sontag, Dale and George Rotner, Gail and Bob Scadron, Esther Schoenfeld, Debra and Mickey Star, Leslie and Barry Usow.

- **Michael Scoby**, In memory of your beloved wife Gloria, from Micki and Jack Goldner, Carol and Bill Kaplan, Alan and Carol Parsow.\*
  - **Sheila Sloan**, In memory of your dear brother, Dr. Marvin Starman, from Phil and Ellen Glass, Margot and Jerry Halperin, Judy Sontag and Michael Pollack, Debra and Mickey Star.
  - **Barry Scott**, In memory of your loving wife Drinda, from Dale and George Rotner.
  - **Fern Weiss**, In memory of your beloved husband Stanley, from Ruth and Mal Kaufman, Marnie Miller and Joe Noren.
  - **Robbie Winnick**, in memory of your beloved husband Marvin, from Lois Johnson, Marilyn and Art Noll.
  - **Barbara Winston**, In memory of your beloved Mickey Freeman, from Ruth and Mal Kaufman.
- + Donation in support of Israel Emergency.

'I DREAMED OF SOMETHING IMPOSSIBLE. NOW IT'S HAPPENING'

## Israeli Scientists Harness Molecule to Treat Rare Disease Common in Ashkenazim

Research team isolates GHF-201 to fight APBD, a nervous system disorder mostly found in Jews of Eastern European descent, as patients eagerly await the green light for treatment

By Diana Bletter, *The Times of Israel*

Chagit Schreiber of Petah Tikva is the mother of six and the grandmother of 21. She used to run a nursery in her home, taking care of even more children, until she started to bump into things and complain of loss of feeling in her legs. After more than six years of consulting with doctors, she discovered she has Adult Polyglucosan Body Disease (APBD), a genetic disorder found predominantly among Ashkenazi Jews that affects the nervous system.

APBD is considered one of the rarest diseases in the world. Globally, there are 300 known APBD patients. In Israel, there are only 33 registered patients, a number so small that they have their own WhatsApp group to support each other and learn ways to cope with the condition.

Today, Schreiber is confined to a wheelchair, unable to walk. But a recent discovery by Dr. Or Kakhlon of the Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center is giving cause for cautious optimism to Schreiber and other APBD patients.

Kakhlon's work with Prof. Miguel Weil of the George S. Wise Faculty of Life Sciences at Tel Aviv University has led to the discovery of a small molecule, GHF-201, which, Kakhlon said, is capable of "degrading polyglucosans which cause APBD."

Kakhlon recently won a grant to continue his research, and an Urgent Compassionate Use Program to treat three APBD patients with GHF-201 that was begun two years ago at the Hadassah Ein Kerem Medical Center looks promising.

One of those patients is 69-year-old Orly Shani, who started the WhatsApp group. A former high school high jump champion, Shani first discovered something might be wrong after she fell on her back while skiing in 2017 and couldn't walk afterward. She thought she had suffered a stroke. When told she had APBD, for which there was no cure, Shani said she was determined to find a solution.

The day after her diagnosis, Shani began writing letters to different



pharmaceutical companies and contacted as many people as she could think of. Since she started the experimental drug treatment, she said the disease has stopped progressing.

"I've been dreaming of something that can't happen, but it's happening," she said. And although she is still in a wheelchair, Shani said, "I enjoy life, I go to the beach, and I know I'm going to dance again."

"Almost no doctor has ever heard of APBD," said Sean Gordon, 65, who had been running for years. In 2016, he started experiencing pain in his knees. An orthopedist said there was nothing wrong with him. Next, a physical therapist said that perhaps he had a neurological problem. After "many years and many doctors," he was finally

diagnosed with APBD.

Gordon said that because of the disease, his muscles have stiffened, preventing normal fluid movement. This outward symptom resembles Multiple Sclerosis, as well as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). Often misdiagnosed, APBD patients can endure unnecessary surgeries or take the wrong medications with serious side effects.

Walking is a "beautiful symphony of your muscles relaxing and tightening," something that people with APBD "just can't do," Gordon said.

Although the disease is not terminal, APBD patients eventually lose their ability to walk and control their bladder

and bowels. Some develop dementia. Gordon, a former tech executive who used to travel around the world, is now in a wheelchair. He said he was forced to retire a few years ago because "hi-tech is a young man's game, and walking around with crutches doesn't go over so well."

### Medical breakthrough

Prof. Alexander Lossos, who is directing the Urgent Compassionate Use Program at Hadassah Hospital with research coordinator Anat Mordechai, was the first person to learn about APBD. That was in 1990, when two patients came to see him with similar symptoms at about the same time. After many tests, Lossos discovered that both patients had excess deposits of polyglucosan, caused by a defect in an enzyme that is responsible for building the sugar deposit, glycogen, in the body.

In 2010, Lossos asked Kakhlon to help him with his research. Kakhlon then reached out to Weil at Tel Aviv University. Born in Argentina, Weil immigrated to Israel in 1983 and is the founder and director of the Cell Screening Facility for Personalized Medicine. Weil established this facility in 2010 as Israel's first fully automated, image-based, high-content drug screening facility to search for potential drug therapies for rare diseases.

Multi-phase clinical trials cannot be performed to evaluate a medicine's efficacy because of the low number of patients available. The facility has developed a novel approach to identify diseased cells in patients with rare diseases such as APBD.

Working together for more than two years, Kakhlon and Weil screened over 10,000 molecules and narrowed their search down to five small molecules, and then to one, GHF-201.

Kakhlon tested GHF-201 on mice modeling APBD and found that the compound improved the mice's locomotion and their reflexes.

"The results were fantastic," Kakhlon said. He believes that the discovery



## Have A Nosh

### YEMENITE CHAROSET FOR YOUR SEDER

There most probably are as many charoset recipes as there are cooks who prepare and serve them at Seders around the world and throughout the ages. For most of Ashkenazi background (northern Europe), the traditional recipe consisted of apples, honey, cinnamon, nuts and red wine, in varying proportions. In contrast, Sephardic homes (southern Europe and middle east) served a charoset made with a wide variety of fruits, nuts and spices. At my seders we traditionally offer up to

four different recipes, with a Yemenite version seeming to become the favorite over the past few years. The texture is such that we serve them as 1+ inch balls, usually stacked as a pyramid on a pretty dish, referencing the tradition that charoset was the mortar with which the Israelites built the Egyptian pyramids.

Two years ago Celia Norian found a recipe for "Yemenite" charoset, prepared it and brought the paste-like charoset to our seders. The taste resembled Yemenite ingredients but was clearly a very different texture. Then last year Dr. Sarah Sela, wife of Rabbi Steven Rosenberg, brought a brightly flavored, refreshing chunky "Yemenite" Charoset, completely different from the charoset balls of past years but delightful and delicious (and nut-free as she is allergic to nuts).

Already at last year's seder I decided it would be fun to have this year's Pesach Food Column feature these three "Yemenite" recipes! I wish you all a wonderful Pesach! Chag samayach! MHB.

#### Yemenite Charoset Balls (Miriam Bent)



1/3 cup pitted dates	1/8 teaspoon ground cumin
1/3 cup dried figs	3/4 cup pecans, toasted and coarsely ground
1/3 cup raisins	3/4 cup almonds, toasted, slivered
1/3 cup dried apricots	1 1/2 Tablespoons orange liqueur
2 1/2 Tablespoons honey	+ 1/2 cup almonds, toasted, slivered and ground
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon	
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger	
1/8 teaspoon ground clove	

Combine dried fruit, honey and spices in a food processor and pulse until finely chopped. Add the pecans, slivered almonds and orange liqueur and process until just combined. Form the mixture into balls about 1 to 1 1/2 inches in diameter and roll in the ground almonds. ( I stack as a pyramid on a pretty dish).

#### Yemenite Charoset Paste (provided by Celia Norian)



1 cup Medjool dates	powder
1/4 cup black or golden raisins	1/4 teaspoon each cardamom, ginger and cloves powder
1/2 cup walnuts	1/8 teaspoon fresh black pepper.
1/2 cup almonds or pecans	
1/4 to 1/2 cup sweet red wine	
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon	

Pit the dates. Rinse the dates and raisins. Toast the nuts for 10 minutes at 350 degrees, then cool. Puree the nuts. Add the remaining ingredients and puree. Add wine until it's your desired consistency. Refrigerate.

#### Fresh Yemenite Nut-free Chunky Charoset (Dr. Sarah Sela)



1/4 cup chopped dates	juice or red grape juice
1/4 cup chopped, dried Turkish apricots	2 Tablespoons honey
1/4 cup raisins	1 Granny Smith apple, peeled, cored and chopped
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon	1/2 navel orange, peeled and cut into 1-centimeter pieces
2 Tablespoons fresh lemon juice	
1 Tablespoon pomegranate	

Combine dates, apricots and raisins. Whisk together the lemon juice and pomegranate juice. Add honey and stir until completely dissolved. Add to dried fruit. Sprinkle with cinnamon and toss. Add apple pieces. Combine gently. Add orange pieces, stirring gently. Cover and chill for at least one hour before serving. For best results, cut dates, apricots and apple the size of raisins.

could provide relief for other disorders, including Pompe Disease, which affects children, in which the enzyme that helps the body degrade glycogen to glucose for energy does not work properly.

"Understanding the mode of action of this GHF-201 as well as other compounds can help cure a broad spectrum of diseases," Kakhlon said.

#### Help for an 'orphan'

In December 2023, the United States Food and Drug Administration granted Golden Heart Flower, the Israel-based pharmaceutical company that owns GHF-201, its Orphan Drug Designation, paving the way for it to treat APBD and similar diseases.

The FDA's Orphan Drug Designation supports the development of medicines for rare diseases or conditions that affect fewer than 200,000 people in the US. It gives the receiving pharmaceutical company significant incentives to promote the development of the drug — though, Kakhlon points out, it is not funding the Israeli startup that runs the compassionate use program.

One US organization, the Adult Polyglucosan Body Disease Research Foundation, is currently raising money for a clinical trial in America.

Meanwhile, Schreiber and several other registered APBD patients in Israel are not able to take part in the local compassionate use program, which is limited to the three patients initially approved for the experimental trial. For now, they must make the best of living

*continued from page 14*

from 73% in June to 63% in December. Ratings experienced a jump from a low 4.4 (on a scale from 1 to 10) in June to 7.2 in October, followed by a slight decline to 6.7 in December. The increase was shown on all sides of the political spectrum.

The Arab public also displayed an increased sense of togetherness, with solidarity ratings increasing from 3.6 in June to 4.8 in October and even reaching 5.2 in December.

Around one-fifth of Israelis rated Israel's situation as either good or very good—21% in June and 22% in December.

In the Jewish sample, respondents who identified as left-wing and who rated Israel's situation as bad went

with their condition. Her husband, Shimon, helps her with shopping and housework. Just being able to cook from her wheelchair and put things in the dryer is an accomplishment.

#### A pinch ofchutzpah

APBD patients carry the genetic disorder from birth, but might not exhibit symptoms until after the age of 40. Nurit Gabay, 57, another member of the WhatsApp Group, is one of the few people who manifested symptoms of the disease when she was young.

"I didn't write until I was nine," Gabay said. Her parents yelled at her — "They didn't understand what the problem was" — and thought she was clumsy. Despite her difficulties walking, she still goes to a mall in Kfar Saba three times a week, not to shop but to climb up the stairs — up 16 floors six times "to improve my strength and make me feel more confident."

She suffers from back pain and she's still clumsy. On the street, people want to help her, often offering to give her a lift.

"It's nice, but I need to learn to cope with my condition," Gabay said. "There's not always medicine for everything."

Yet Shani is still fighting to make the cure available to others.

"You need determination and *chutzpah*," she said, using the Hebrew term for audacity, adding that despite the ongoing war, "in Israel, technology and innovation are still on our side."

Relations between the country's political right and left remain the top source of tension within Israeli society among Jewish respondents; this rose from 43% in June to 46% in December.

Tensions between Jews and Arabs came second (31.5%); in 2021 and 2022 this received the highest ranking. Disagreements between religious and secular Jews were viewed as a source of tension by only 9% of respondents in December as opposed to 19% in June.

Among Arab respondents, tension between Jews and Arabs topped the list of sources of tension in Israeli society, but declined from 53% in June to 47.5% in December.



## Simchas

Mazel tov to **Rabbi Shimon** and **Chaya Posner** on the upcoming marriage of their son **Sholom** to **Sarale Bergstein** of Oak Park, Illinois. The wedding will be in

Chicago, Illinois on April 11. The March 17 "One Nation One Heart" brunch ended as we were putting this paper to bed. A quick picture from the day: The LA Jewish Women's Chorale's delightful entertainment at the absolutely lovely event. More next month! *Share your simchas with us.*

Email Miriam Bent at [mhbentjcn@earthlink.net](mailto:mhbentjcn@earthlink.net) or call her at 760-835-1022 (cell) or 760-323-0255 (home).



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## We Mourn the Passing of...

**Roger Attia, Peggy Greenbaum, Phyllis Pepper, Howard Schor, Nadya Spivak, Marvin Stern and Kenneth Waters.** Our deepest sympathies to their families and friends. *May their memories endure as a blessing.*



## Candle Lighting Times

Friday, April 5	Shabbat Shmini	6:27 pm
Friday, April 12	Shabbat Tazriah	6:32 pm
Friday, April 19	Shabbat Metzora	6:37 pm
Monday, Apr 22	1 <sup>st</sup> night Pesach	6:40 pm
Tuesday, Apr 23	2 <sup>nd</sup> night Pesach	After 8:03 pm
Friday, April 26	Shabbat/Pesach	6:43 pm

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# Remember

Holocaust Memorial Observance

May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024



**GUEST SPEAKER**

## B.A. Van Sise

B.A. Van Sise is an American photographer and author. He has worked as a travel photographer, and collections of his fine art photography have been exhibited in public installations by US museums.

B.A. Van Sise, a seasoned photojournalist, spent four years collaborating with Holocaust museums and outreach organizations to assemble these compelling images and narratives. The result is an inspiring testament to the human spirit, capturing the wisdom and strength forged from the ashes of despair.

Van Sise's extensive background in photography, including exhibitions at prestigious institutions and publications in renowned media outlets, underscores the depth and quality of this cherished keepsake.



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