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May 2026
Iyar — Sivan, 5786



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OVER 60 YEARS LATER, FIDDLER ON THE ROOF'S LESSONS ARE STILL RELEVANT TODAY

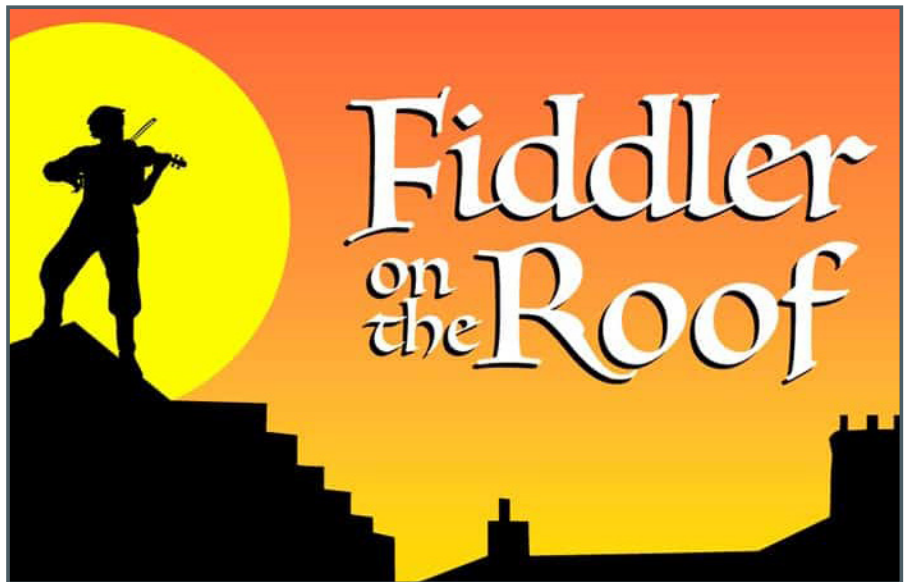
It may come as a surprise, especially given that I'm a Jewish professional, but I have not always appreciated the message or the lessons portrayed in *Fiddler on the Roof*. In 2013, I distinctly remember, as I sat in a Claremont Laemmle theater during my first *Fiddler on the Roof* sing-along, lamenting about how there has not been another "thing" in the last 50 years that could galvanize Jews like this iconic movie and show. I was thinking about this last month as my daughter was performing the role of Chava in her high school production of *Fiddler*.

As I watched my daughter and her friends perform in their four shows, I realized I had a new appreciation for the messages portrayed in the show. While I am pretty sure the teens may not have truly comprehended the show's deep complexities, I found a new relevance and appreciation for it.

I highly encourage you to sit down and watch the movie, or find a production somewhere, whether it is your first or 12th time. And when you watch, try to view it through the lens of the Jewish community today.

There is a line in the dialogue that I somehow have missed over the years. It is when Tevye is telling Golda how he gave his permission for Perchik to marry their daughter Hodel. It is clear that Tevya is lamenting the fact that everything around them is changing. He says, "So what can we do? It's a new world... a new world."

The fact is that for so many of us in our community, the Judaism we grew up with and knew has evolved, changed, and looks very different today. What once was an essential part of everyday life,



Judaism... let alone religion, for the vast majority of the community has become something like a hat that people put on when they choose to "do something Jewish."

Please know that I am in no way judging anyone for how they choose to engage with their Judaism... it is merely an observation I have seen over the years as the Executive Director of our Jewish Federation. It is important to note that this is not only taking place in the Jewish community. Religion as a whole has become less and less a part of society.

In 2023 and 2024, the Pew Research Center conducted its most recent religious landscape study, which provided a snapshot of "current" religious views in American society. One key finding from that study indicated that while many Americans identify as religious, the vast majority do not attend religious services of any kind at least once a month. The study also found that Americans are increasingly less likely to consider religion an important part of their lives and have become very

divided over its role in society, according to a CNN news story following the publication of the Pew study's findings.

However, it is important to note that since October 7, the Jewish community has seen a significant increase in Jews looking to connect and become more committed and involved in Jewish life. National Jewish organizations like Jewish Federations of North America, Union for Reform Judaism, United Synagogue, and others are working hard to use this moment to reimagine ways to sustain this interest and counter the trend that the Pew study indicates.

I can assure you that our Jewish Federation works hard each day to provide programs and opportunities that engage our community as the Jewish world continues to evolve. ☆



JASON MOSS IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF THE GREATER SAN GABRIEL AND POMONA VALLEYS.

“Did your grandfather not dream of safety and prosperity for his future offspring? You are an answer to those Mashadi-dreams . . .”

PARTYING AND PURPOSE

Wartime Celebrations Are a Mixed Blessing

BY ANDREA SIMANTOV

So much excitement. The first *bar mitzvah* in a family of four boys, months of learning, accompanying Abba to *shul* during the week as well as Shabbat, proudly embracing your new status of Jewish manhood.

Some of your friends are already *bar mitzvah* and you've been to parties and outings, celebrating this milestone birthday with others. The more recent parties, however, have required close proximity to safe rooms or bomb shelters. Planning a *simcha* in Israel requires that this element gets added to all 'To Do' lists. You take it in stride because you have never been on a class trip without an armed-security guard. In Israel, that's the way it is.

When my father, Poppie Stanley, was *bar mitzvahed* in 1937, his father stood beside him at the weathered bima, proudly pointing to the ancient words in his own open *chumash* (bible); his permanently stained fingers (from years of housepainting and furniture refinishing) followed each precious utterance of his first American-born son. Together they returned to the fifth-floor tenement walkup in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, where neighbors made a *l'chaim* and dined on sponge-cake and a few bowls of walnuts-and-raisins. The Depression was in full bloom and the feast was considered elaborate.

Your great-grandfather (Saba Raba) Isachar was *bar mitzvahed* on a Shabbat morning in Herut, Afghanistan. I can only intuit that the poverty his family endured was immeasurable.

Who were those *bar mitzvah* boys during the Spanish Inquisition, some of whom swore allegiance to a foreign religion rather than be murdered, while secretly trying to keep our *mesorah* (tradition) alive? A few of these conversos have found their way back to our collective bosom but the



vast majority has disappeared.

Like me, you have heard the stories of Holocaust survivors who were never *bar mitzvahed*; death marches dwarfed *simcha* planning. Those who lived are counting on you, Aviel, to invest, soar, somehow making their unrequited sacrifices meaningful.

Having just come out of Pesach, we recall that not all of the Jews were redeemed from the jaws of Egypt. Only 20% left, the rest left to evaporate into the rank and file of forgotten nations. You are among this fragment which carries the torch of our ancestors; our blood courses with the song and spirit of Sinai when we received an eternal mandate, a mandate that you wear with both pride and defiance at this pivotal moment in Jewish history.

Eli Sharabi, author of the book *Hostage*, endured 491 days in Hamas captivity. His entire family was murdered and he suffered indescribable abuse. When asked about the comparison between the Holocaust and the October 7, 2023 massacre, he responded: "Don't

equate the two. During the Shoah, the victims were alone, desperate, awaiting inevitable death. There was no one to save them. No Jewish army, no Jewish state. They felt doomed."

"While languishing in tunnels in Gaza, I did not know whether or not I'd be found alive but none of us doubted that we had a loving nation and a mighty military machine that would stop at nothing to bring us home.

"There is no comparison."

You, my precious grandson, come from a long line of Jews who did not give up. We neither bowed-out or tossed off the yoke of Torah observance. By G-d's grace, we arrived at this day with joy and humility, and watch you eagerly accept the responsibility of moral Jewish manhood with modesty, gratitude and a profound appreciation of our staggering, blessed history. ☆

NEW YORK NATIVE **ANDREA SIMANTOV** HAS LIVED IN JERUSALEM SINCE 1995. SHE WRITES FOR SEVERAL PUBLICATIONS, APPEARS REGULARLY ON ISRAEL NATIONAL RADIO AND OWNS AN IMAGE CONSULTING FIRM FOR WOMEN.



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SUCCESS AT CAMP

BY MARLA LERMAN, MY JEWISH LEARNING

Inclusion...mainstreaming ...general education.... One on one/shadow...these are words that fly through my mind almost daily and are a regular part of my vocabulary. My son Sammy is 9 years old, and on the autism spectrum. He is what some might consider "high functioning." He has no issue with communicating his needs and likes (and his dislikes!). He is happy, affectionate, and has a healthy sense of humor. This social butterfly loves unconditionally and just wants to be friends with everyone. He is incredibly smart and has a memory that won't quit. Sammy is adventurous and active, sometimes a little too fearless for my comfort level. He is incredibly aware of his surroundings and is a creature of habit. Due to his developmental disability, he appears younger than he actually is. His interests are not always completely age appropriate and can be limited in scope. We work to introduce new activities and interests as often as possible to broaden his horizons and help keep up with his peers.

He has a full and happy life, but his knowledge of Judaism is quite limited. Our oldest son attended Camp Deeny Riback (CDR) in Flanders for nine years and our daughter has been there for seven years and running. This day camp program is second to none, offering an enviable array of activities and just the right dose of Jewish heritage programming. It was determined that Sammy was a perfect candidate for the Camp Friends program, CDR's inclusive experience for children with special needs. Last year we took a deep breath (well truthfully, I did, my husband was cool as a cucumber the whole time) and decided it was time to give Sammy the chance to shine in that setting too. We signed Sammy up for the minimum four-week session. CDR's staff has a reputation for being attentive, professional, and dedicated to making each and every camper's summer a spectacular one.

It was now Sammy's turn to experience this fantastic program and all it has to offer. Since I feared that placing him in a group of boys his own age— while being the "new kid on the block"—might be a bit too much for him, I asked if we could try fitting him in with group of boys just one year younger. This request was granted without question and helped to ease my apprehension. Since cooperative play, initiating with peers, and asking/ answering questions were at the top of our list of goals, we thought this arrangement would be a more appropriate fit.

At this point I knew several things for certain: 1) Sammy would have an amazing summer at CDR, 2) he would have a dedicated one-on-one shadow assigned to him (and I was assured that his shadow would blend in with the other counselors, no hovering, step in and support when needed, etc.), 3) he would have a somewhat easier time socially, thanks to that one year age difference between him and his bunk mates, 4) he

would get the perfect amount of exposure to his Jewish roots via Israeli culture, Friday afternoon Shabbat programming, cooking, songs, etc. and 5) he would be gently nudged out of his comfort zone a bit via new peers, new routine, new activities, and a new setting.

The one thing I didn't know... the thing that had me worried... will Sammy fit in? Will the other kids like him and accept him for who he is? Will he have friends? These thoughts plagued me. Nevertheless, it was time to take a chance and give both he and CDR the chance to prove my fears were inflated.

Fast forward to the day before camp began...camp visitation day. We knew attending this event was a must. It would be the perfect opportunity for Sammy to see firsthand where he would be spending the next four weeks. We arrived and were cheerfully greeted by Becca (the head of the Camp Friends program) and Sammy's unit leaders, who lead us to a group of friendly and energetic young men, the counselors in charge of Sammy's group. We handed Becca a list of "goals" (developed by one of our private therapists) for Sammy to work on over the summer such as social skills, eye contact, asking for help, and fostering independence. We were introduced to a friendly, down to earth young man (Mikey) who was assigned to be Sammy's shadow. We spent a few minutes talking to Mikey about Sammy, but the best way for Mikey to get to know Sammy was by jumping right in and spending time with him. Mikey immediately worked to start forging a connection with Sammy. Sammy was invited to explore camp with the counselors... find his cubby...see the pool...see the ropes course...kick around a soccer ball. My heart skipped a beat as I watched my curly haired boy happily and willingly trot off with the counselors to check out his new camp. It's as if with that gesture he was saying "it's all going to be ok, mom. Don't worry, I'm gonna have a great time here." He would've jumped in the pool that day if we let him. On the ride home Sammy was asking to come back the next day and talking about all of the things he wanted to do there. He was READY.

I didn't sleep much the night before camp, as my nerves had gotten the best of me. That morning, he leapt out of bed, excited and energized. He hopped onto the bus smiling, happy, cheery. My 11-year-old daughter must have sensed my anxiety and took me aside to say "Don't worry Mom, I won't let anyone tease him. I will look after him." Tears of pride filled my eyes. I watched the bus pull away and felt a pit in my stomach. "Please let my baby have a great day..." was all I could think to myself. I had to sit on my hands all day to keep from calling the camp and checking on him. Although I knew he was in very good hands, the "mama bear" in me couldn't help being concerned and worried.

The bus arrived home at the end of the day. Sammy was tired, he smelled of chlorine, his clothes had a generous film of dirt from playing outside, and he was happy: the



surefire signs of a successful day at camp! Since I was given his schedule on camp visitation day, I knew exactly what kind of questions to ask and what sort of answers to expect when talking about his day. Several minutes later, Becca called me with the best news I could possibly expect. She told me he had a great day: He participated in all of the activities, followed the daily routine, he was happy, he was social, and that he was a pleasure to have. What more could I ask for than a great start to a new experience?

The days went by and every day it was evident that Sammy was having increasingly more fun. He would share stories about himself and the boys in his group, and all the new experiences he was having. He was singing some of the Hebrew songs, reciting bits of the prayers, and was without fail excited to go to camp each and every morning. It was clear to see that he was part of a camp family and expanding his horizons.

About a week and a half into the summer, Becca called to offer Sammy the opportunity to visit Camp Nah Jee Wah (an NJY overnight camp in PA) for "Science Day." Many of the boys in his group were attending, and the activities would likely appeal to Sammy. Another deep breath was required here... this involved a long bus ride to a new location, as well as a change of routine. I was assured that Mikey would accompany him for the day, so I asked Sammy if he was interested. He enthusiastically agreed, and I knew I needed to allow him the chance to try something new. He ended up having a great time and participated in activities such as banana boat rides on the lake and science experiments.

Two weeks of camp had passed, and Sammy's enjoyment continued to grow. It was obvious that he felt right at home. The reports from staff were glowing; he was blossoming. He started to pedal a two-wheeler a little, he canoed for the first time, he zipped down the zip line. He was taking chances, coming out of his comfort zone, learning new things, and feeling more connected to his religion. We were told that he was truly part of the group, and well-liked by the other campers. He was interacting with campers and staff of all ages,

making his mark on CDR.

At this point in time, we knew what had to be done... it was an easy decision to extend Sammy to a total of seven weeks at camp (the eighth week was set aside for our family summer vacation). The benefits he was reaping from this program were huge. Our little caterpillar was turning into a strong confident butterfly.

Sammy truly grew attached to his shadow in a very short time. We saw numerous great pictures of them together and it was easy to see their bond and mutual caring for one another. Mikey left at the end of four weeks and on his last day was awarded a small plush cow wearing a CDR t-shirt. This is a CDR tradition—the COW (Counselor of the Week) award. My daughter told me that Mikey gave this award to Sammy. When he arrived home with this lovely token I was brought to tears. For the remaining three weeks Sammy was paired with a different shadow counselor, also a very nice young man. He had a wonderful time with him as well. He was a super friend and support to Sammy and helped his summer to end on a great note.

We are incredibly grateful for the role that CDR played in Sammy's life last summer. The Camp Friends program made it possible for him to immerse himself in all the wonderful aspects of a Jewish day camp, while receiving the support and encouragement he needed. Becca, Mikey, and all the staff who worked with Sammy deserve a round of applause for making him feel comfortable and safe enough to take chances he might not have otherwise taken (and for making this nervous mother feel comfortable enough to let go and allow Sammy to show us all he is capable of). I cannot stress enough how important it is to find that perfect balance of the right staff, the right setting, and a warm, welcoming atmosphere to make the inclusion experience a true success. Needless to say, Sammy is registered to attend CDR next summer. He has been talking about his camp friends for months and hopes to see many of them again. We are optimistic for another great summer and expect to see him grow and develop even further in this fantastic inclusion program. ✨

MARLA LERMAN IS A CONTRIBUTING WRITER TO MY JEWISH LEARNING AND JLIFE MAGAZINE.



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 July 27 - August 7 (Weeks 7-8)
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by Osborne and Eppler
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THE TECH SIDE OF CAMP

The role new technology plays for the Jewish summer camp industry.

BY RABBI JASON MILLER, MY JEWISH LEARNING



As Jewish camp leaders once again convened at Leaders Assembly, the Foundation for Jewish Camp's biennial conference here in New Brunswick, there was a lot of networking taking place – both in person and via social media. The dozens of ad hoc camp reunions taking place in the hallways of the hotel also materialized into an exchange of best practices for these Jewish camp professionals. The hot topic this year was the use of technology, both in the back office of the camp operations and front and center for campers, their parents and alumni.

What role all of this new technology plays for the Jewish summer camp industry was hashed out in breakout sessions at the camp confab in what were termed “Hot Topics” and also discussed in the “Shuk” where the companies that provide this new technology were camped out. “Do you keep your camper registrations and medical forms in the cloud?”, “Who manages your alumni Facebook page?”, “Have you started Instagram or Pinterest accounts,” and “Which online service do you use for

staff background checks” were just some of the questions overheard at the conference.

While many don't typically associate high tech with the camp world, which for generations was thought of as a low tech industry, there's no question that camps have come to depend on the latest support applications in the technology world to run their camps efficiently, effectively and safely in the 21st century. After all, while one of the core missions of the overnight summer camp experience may continue to be allowing our youth to unplug from their electronic gadgets for several weeks each summer, the camps charged with that mission must be run like businesses. And that means using the best technology to manage everything from security, registration, financials and medical information to social network engagement, summertime communication and alumni relations.

In one “Hot Topic” session, Sacha Litman, the founder of Measuring Success, demonstrated the importance of using “Big Data” to help camps with their year-round engagement efforts. Big corporations, he explained, have been using “Big Data” for many years and summer

camps need to utilize the same data tools to acquire new campers and maintain existing relationships with both current staff and the valuable alumni who are now positioned to donate and send their children or grandchildren to the camp. These data measuring tools have been available to camps for years, but most didn't know how to put that data to good use for philanthropic or camper recruitment and retainment purposes. Litman employs camps to focus on engaging their campers twelve months a year rather than in the traditional camp recruitment season.

PPC, SEO, back-linking and analytics are terms that traditionally haven't been tossed around in the offices that run Jewish summer camps. In the new period of the Internet age, however, summer camps have had to shift their marketing focus to include such things as Google AdWords and pay-per-click advertising on such networking sites as LinkedIn and Facebook. Andrew Hazen, a maven in the field of Internet marketing spoke in a skill building workshop at the conference that was billed as a "Fireside Chat with a Digital Marketing Expert." Camps have only recently been allocating funding toward web marketing and social media, and Hazen was on hand to advise these camps on how to do it in a more cost effective manner. From targeting the camp's main demographics on Google and optimizing their Facebook posts to blogging regularly for search engine optimization and analyzing the traffic to the registration page of the website, the camp professionals in the session were all ears and frantically jotting down notes on these best practices. The days of asking the youngest professional in the camp office to set up a Facebook page or upload some summer highlight photos to the camp's Instagram account are about over and a more professionalized Internet advertising and social media marketing era is needed for Jewish summer camps.

Summer camp professionals are undoubtedly feeling the stress with all of the technology that now goes into managing the many aspects of running a camp. CampMinder is one of a few full-service companies that have packaged every thinkable component into the software they sell to camps. Paul Berliner, of CampMinder believes that camps should be places that are technology-free zones – aside from the office that is. "Technology can be great if used properly." He said. "It shouldn't be a crutch; it should enhance. We're about building relationships."

CampMinder, founded in 2001 by former camper and staff member Dan Konigsberg, is the leading web-based camp management and communication system. The team works closely with camp professionals to identify the best practices in camp administration and even publishes an annual print magazine that focuses on the technology camps should be implementing into their management office. Their software is described as more than just a typical database. Their system claims to be intuitive

and runs like the proprietary backend software being used by large corporations, which is how Berliner says camps need to be run.

Jeff Bowman, a Toronto native, launched CampBrain, which camps have come to rely on for all of their data, financial information, camper registration and even photo albums and e-mail newsletter communication during the summer. Bowman explained that his software is branded to look like the camp's website so parents have a seamless registration experience and their first impression of the camp is a positive one.

CampBrain is offered to camps as either a desktop version or as a web-based, cloud managed option. Like CampMinder, all of their forms are customizable for the type of camp and includes a robust alumni management system for historical reporting. What parents appreciate, Bowman said, is that they only need one login and password for everything on the website. CampBrain offers camps credit card processing and complete medical records. Both CampMinder and CampBrain offer what has been described as the one-way window into camp. Parents (and other approved relatives) can get a taste of what the kids are up to each summer by logging into the website and viewing photo albums and reading newsletter updates from the staff.

One area in which camps have adapted very quickly in has been camper and staff medical information. Just as physicians and hospitals have had to break old habits and are now charting with electronic medical records (EMR), camps also have progressed to digital health care data. Dr. Michael Ambrose, founder of CampDoc.com, held court in the Shuk area and carefully explained why camps should use his software. Launched in 2009, Ambrose collaborated with camp doctors, nurses and directors to improve efficiency and maximize safety in local camp communities. CampDoc is growing exponentially each year while also moving into new arenas such as day camps, day care centers and schools. Gone are the days of camps using pencil and paper to keep track of campers' medications and clinic visits. Today, everything is done the same way a hospital manages its patient data thanks to the embrace of new technology and a willingness to adapt.

The general consensus among camp experts is that technology shouldn't be seen much by the campers who should unplug and have an electronics-free oasis during their summer experience. However, today's summer camps must be run efficiently with the most up-to-date technology available.

The evidence shows that Jewish summer camp is a magical experience for thousands of Jewish youth, and the leaders of these camp institutions now recognize that in order to perpetuate their camp's success they must run them more like businesses. That means exploiting the current technology available and ensuring that each camp's professional staff has been trained in its use. Embracing the new technology will help camps further their mission and the campers will be the true beneficiaries. ✨

RABBI JASON MILLER IS A CONTRIBUTING WRITER TO MY JEWISH LEARNING AND JLIFE MAGAZINE.

THE MAGIC OF SUMMER CAMP

Jewish overnight campers have very fond memories of their summers.

BY JONATHAN KRASNER, MY JEWISH LEARNING



When my ten year old daughter heads to sleep-away camp this summer she will follow a family tradition that began the summer after World War II. Fearing an outbreak of polio in New York City, my grandparents shipped my father off to Massad, a Hebrew-speaking camp in the Poconos. He was only five years old. My grandmother kept the postcards he mailed home. My dad was just learning

to print and his penmanship was atrocious. Still, they weren't difficult to decipher, and all were virtually identical: "I don't like it here," his postcards wailed. "Take me home!"

As a former camp counselor I know that dad's homesickness was hardly anomalous. But by-and-large, his peers who attended Jewish overnight camps have very fond memories of their summers. Dr. Josh Perelman, the deputy Director of Programming

and Museum Historian at the National Museum of American Jewish History recently told me that the section of the museum's permanent exhibit dedicated to summer camping is easily one of the biggest draws. A section of the museum's website is devoted to Jewish summer camps and guests are invited to upload their own camp photos and share memories.

When I was researching the origins of Jewish culture camping for *The Benderly Boys* I was struck by the central role that overnight camps played in the Jewish identity formation of my informants. Decades after the closure of Cejwin Camps, the oldest Jewish culture camp, hundreds of alumni remain connected through an online discussion group and social media. A Camp Massad Facebook group has almost 600 participants. Another venerable overnight camp, Modin, which still thrives in Belgrade, Maine, held a 90th anniversary reunion gala at a swanky Manhattan venue with over 500 former campers in attendance. And a reunion of the oldest Yiddish-speaking camp, Boiberik, drew 450 alums and merited an article in the *New York Times*.

I suppose my father's memories of camp were not all bad. The summer I turned ten, he and my mom signed me up for a month at Camp Massad. I spent three glorious seasons at Massad Bet and would have returned. But dwindling enrollment compelled the camp to close, in 1979, the same year that the Boiberik campgrounds, in Rhinebeck, New York, was sold to a meditation center. Cejwin, which paved the way for camps like Massad, was shuttered a little over a decade later, in 1991.

Various reasons have been given for these camps' decline. My guess is that the phenomenon can largely be explained by their failure to keep pace with the rapid socio-economic advancement of the Jewish community. As much as I loved Massad, the truth is that the camp facilities were terribly outdated by the 1970s. I doubt that they were ever in mint condition. But whereas an earlier generation was willing to write off overgrown playing fields, dilapidated communal shower houses and leeches in the lake as symptomatic of the camp's rugged charms, such blemishes could not be overlooked by middle class kids thoroughly acclimated to the creature comforts of suburbia. Certainly not when there were other well-manicured, flashier alternatives competing for the same clientele.

Moreover, the ideological core of these camps—their devotion to Zionism, Hebrew or Yiddish language and culture—did not tug as deeply at the heartstrings of the third generation. By and large, their parents left their immigrant ideologies in Brownsville and Roxbury when they moved to Great Neck and Newton.

My hypothesis is borne out by the opposing fates of Cejwin and Modin. Established within a few years of one another (1919 and 1922, respectively) and sharing some of the same founders, the former catered to a working class clientele and placed Jewish culture front and center, while the

latter attracted the children of professionals and businessmen, enticing them with bourgeois activities like horseback riding and (later) waterskiing. In the 1940s and 50s, Cejwin was teeming with campers and seemed to be in permanent expansion mode. But in the long run, Modin's formula had greater longevity. The same summer that Cejwin closed, the current owners of Modin relocated their high end camp to a first class facility on the picturesque Belgrade Lakes with a state-of-the-art fitness center and recreation pavilion. The 2011 brochure features panoramic views and happy children of privilege, sailing, windsurfing, white water rafting and wall climbing.

Even Orthodox Judaism had gone bourgeois by the 1970s. In the 1980s I worked at Camp Raleigh, the "sports camp in a Torah environment." Raleigh boasted private showers in each bunk, a gleaming swimming pool, and a pastry chef who's creations could rival anything one might find at the nearby Grossinger's resort hotel. A colleague and fellow member of the Massad Diaspora mockingly referred to Raleigh as "Camp Fress," from the Yiddish word for pigging out. But camps like Raleigh and Seneca Lake embodied the American Jewish zeitgeist of the late twentieth century, the Age of Fress.

Twenty years later, there is a new trend in Jewish camping: the boutique or niche camp. In 2010, the Foundation for Jewish Camp created a camp incubator that facilitated the launching of five non-profit specialty camps, with names like Adamah Adventures and 92Y Passport NYC. The incubator experiment was so successful that plans for a second incubator are well underway. According to the American Camp Association, the Jewish interest in specialty camps mirrors a larger trend in American camping. Rabbi Eve Rudin, a veteran Reform Jewish camp leader and former Director of the Department of Camp Excellence and Advancement at the Foundation for Jewish Camp is positively bullish on the new specialty camps: "Before specialty camps, young people had to choose between their area of interest and their Jewish interests. Too often, they chose to opt out of the Jewish community in order to gain the skills and mentoring they desired. In these new settings, young people can lead Jewish lives, have Jewish experiences and still receive the sophisticated training and opportunities in their areas of interest."

Individual Jewish summer camps may come and go and the trappings and programs of these camps may adapt to changing times. But the idea of Jewish camping is as fresh and as full of promise for Jewish identity building and personal growth today as it was when the first Jewish culture camps were founded almost a century ago. My daughter will be attending one of the new specialty camps, Eden Village, a religiously pluralistic camp in Putnam Valley, New York, focusing on Jewish environmentalism and organic farming. Like her counterparts twenty, fifty and ninety years ago, she is breathlessly counting the days until summer. ☆

JONATHAN KRASNER IS A CONTRIBUTING WRITER TO MY JEWISH LEARNING AND JLIFE MAGAZINE.



Kathy Kobayashi and Hal Barron,
Photo Courtesy of Kathy Kobayashi

“THE BRAID” COMES EAST MAY 23, WITH “WHAT DO I DO WITH ALL THIS HERITAGE?”

The first theater show by and about Asian American Jews

BY DIANE BURR, CO-CHAIR JEWISH EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (JEDI) COMMITTEE
AT PASADENA JEWISH TEMPLE AND CENTER (PJTC)

// Have you ever heard of Challah topped with *kurogoma*, Japanese black sesame seeds?” asks Kathy Kobayashi, a third generation Japanese, Sansei. “Of all of the challenges I faced as a Japanese American Jew, one of the surprising ones was all the bread,” muses Kobayashi, one of ten writers of “What Do I Do with All This Heritage?”.

Hosted by Pasadena Jewish Temple and Center’s Jewish equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI) committee, the play, created by famed “The Braid” theater group and the LUNAR Collective, celebrates Asian American and Pacific Islander Month AND Jewish Heritage Month.

“I grew up on a farm in Texas,” Kobayashi says. “All four of my grandparents were Buddhist, but my parents took us to a Presbyterian church. As an adult I began to explore Judaism. Then there was the bread. It seemed to be a part of every ritual, Shabbat, holidays, everything! But I am a rice person. So my husband Hal, the challah maker in the family, in a thoughtful gesture to my Japanese ancestors started making challah topped with *kurogoma*.”

Other writers contributing their personal stories have Korean, Bengali, Chinese, Vietnamese and mixed cultural heritages. Some have come to Judaism through birth or adoption, others by choice. Each story speaks to the heart of the human experience, taking the audience into a world shaped by two cultures. It speaks not only to Asian American Jews, but to all of us who have ever had to balance diverse aspects of our identity.

Like many great ideas, The Braid (formerly the Jewish Women’s Theatre) began at a kitchen table with coffee, bagels, passion and three women who inspired each other to realize their dream of creating a Jewish theater group like nothing they had seen before.

They had no money, no building, but an abundance of talent and stories that were waiting to be told. They launched with the enthusiasm of dreamers in 2007. The 2008 financial crisis swooped in like a tornado for those in the arts, but that didn’t stop them.

Today The Braid is known as a story company that has given stage to every corner of the Jewish



Kenzo Lee and Lillian Mimi McKenzie, Photo by David Chiu

experience. Partnering with the LUNAR Collective, a national organization by and for Asian American Jews, “What Do I Do with All This Heritage?”, written and produced by Asian American Jews offers more than a dozen true stories, music and dance brought to life by a cast of five professional actors.

“I discovered The Braid when I lived on the Westside,” recalls Linda Mazur a longtime volunteer in the Jewish community who is generously underwriting the Pasadena Jewish Temple and Center performance.

“When I heard about The Braid’s new production “What Do I Do with All This Heritage?”, I wanted to support it and went to see it in Encino. I loved it, and can’t wait to see it again in Pasadena. I laughed and cried. Heartfelt! Real! Being an Ashkenazi Jew, it opened my eyes to Jews who I never knew were Jews. It is relevant to all of us who live in communities where the richness of many Asian cultures is part of our experiences”.

The Braid is known for its authentic Jewish stories written by professionals and community members of all walks of Jewish life, spotlighting voices and experiences often overlooked by both the Jewish and

non-Jewish world. Their many “firsts” include the stories of Iranian Jews, Russian Jews, Latin Jews, Queer Jews, Jews in multi-faith and multi-heritage families, Israeli Americans and women rabbis across the world.

The Braid was first conceived as the Jewish Women’s Theatre to give authentic voice to the stories of women, with its first production in a Pacific Palisades backyard. The first season began as “Salon Theater”, featuring all original shows reaching nearly 500 patrons. Fast forward to the 13th theatrical season, the Jewish Women’s Theatre celebrated its Bat Mitzvah season by taking on a new name. “The Braid” represents the intertwining of art, conversation and performance, symbolizing the traditional challah, and reflecting that they had become a community working innovatively to present untold Jewish stories by writers ages 13-98 of all genders, Jews of color and other diverse backgrounds and identities.

Now in its 18th season, The Braid has performed for more than 145,000 audience members in Los Angeles, the South Bay, The San Francisco Bay Area and beyond, including 50 states, 40 countries and off Broadway.

And on May 23, at 7:30 pm, The Braid comes to the community of Pasadena Jewish Temple and Center (PJTC). Since the loss of PJTC’s synagogue in the devastating Eaton Fire the community has drawn strength from the belief that the people, not the buildings, are the community. Stories like those told in “What Do I Do with All This Heritage?”



Kathy Kobayashi and Kaitlyn Tanimoto, Photo Courtesy of Kathy Kobayashi

offer comfort and a reminder that each of our stories is important.

PJTC has been grateful to be able to gather at a local Pasadena church for services and events such as this production. If you’d like to attend “What Do I Do with all This Heritage?”, AND enjoy an Asian inspired dessert reception generously provided by PJTC Sisterhood, please connect with Theresa@pjtc.net or at 626 798 1161.

TICKETS are “Give as You Are Able”, or a suggested donation of \$25.00. Location and other information will be given with an RSVP.

“What Do I Do with All This Heritage?” is produced, adapted and curated by Ronda Spinak and David Chiu, co-produced by Vanessa Bloom, Maryam Chishti and Jenni Rudolph, and directed by Susan Morgenstern.

Generous support for the development of this production is from the Jews of Color Initiative, the LA County Performing Arts Recovery Act, and the City of Santa Monica as part of the Community Access and Participation Grant Program.

American Sign Language (ASL) Interpretation

Pasadena Jewish Temple and Center is pleased to host American Sign Language interpreter Nina Treiman, who will interpret the entire The Braid theatrical production “What Do I Do with All This Heritage?” ☆



Kenzo Lee, Lillian Mimi McKenzie, and Kaitlyn Tanimoto, Photo by David Chiu

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SGPV'S JEWISH YOUTH & PARENTS

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*Jewish
Summer
Camps*



★MAY 2026

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kiddish

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Creating a Cooperative Community

“The friends you make become a part of you.”

BY MY JEWISH LEARNING

These words are sung as part of the classic camp song “Stars in the Sky.” Ringing out from the voices of children around the dining hall, they speak to some of the most profound benefits that camp can provide for children: friendship, connection to others and the skills needed to participate in community.

When a child first comes home from camp they’ll talk excitedly about how high they climbed on the ropes course and show off a lanyard or a friendship bracelet made at the art studio. These material takeaways from camp are exciting and important but as the passage of time fades them away, the more permanent truths of camp emerge: the friends.

The weeks and years at summer camp teach young people some very important skills about how to live together in a group. This model allows counselors to deeply get to know each of the campers in their bunk and the group as a whole, as they are not asked to also double as activity specialists. The counselors’ jobs are supporting the campers and leading the bunk. They’re trained in camper management, building the group, leading bunk discussions and facilitating consensus-decision making.

Spending these weeks together in such close community forms a bond between camp friends that is unlike any other. The mere weeks spent together at camp create a bond between friends that far surpasses that which is formed in the endless months of school. Why is this? It is because the time at camp is a time where you are living for more than yourself. You are part of a group, in good times and bad, your failures and successes interwoven with those of



your bunkmates in an intricate latticework of solidarity.

The world we live in is a communal one; to have successful and fulfilling lives almost everyone needs to participate in various communities and groups. As noted journalist David Brooks said, “Creativity is not a solitary process. It happens within networks... when talented people get together, when idea systems and mentalities merge.” Friendship plus group skills is a simple equation for success. Beyond the skills to simply succeed remains that timeless truth of camp, friendships that last a lifetime. It is not uncommon to see countless friends who met at camp standing hand in hand under the chuppah together, sharing a freshman dorm room in college or calling each other for parenting advice, tapping forever into that sense of community and camaraderie that is such a treasured part of camp. ✨



Tikkun Olam

A partnership with nature.

BY MY JEWISH LEARNING

It is fitting that Earth Day was recently celebrated since a huge part of a camper's experience of going to camp is being outside, going on adventures with friends in the outdoors and learning to love the natural world with all the benefits it provides.

At camp, simply being there is a literal breath of fresh air. Campers leave the city and suburbs, where they spend 90% of their time, far behind and arrive at a bucolic, peaceful oasis where many of the other goals this blog series has highlighted are allowed to blossom and flourish. Removed from the constant pull of technology and returned to a comfortably rustic style of living, children can connect to more timeless truths. They can appreciate a refreshing dunk in a natural body of water and marvel at the beauty of a sunset, produced not by special effects but simply by the gentle brushstroke of the creator.

Beyond simply enjoying being outdoors, an experience at camp can help campers connect to the deep and ancient Jewish traditions of *shomrei adamah* (guarding the earth) and *tikkun olam* (repairing the world). When campers go with their bunks on backpacking trips, they not only forge deeper bonds with each other but also learn from our staff about the wilderness ethic of "leave no trace" as a way to take care of all places they visit. Campers learn that nature is not something that can be taken for granted.

Campers will come home unconcerned with



a grass stain on their shirt and some dirt under their nails. Campers will tell their parents about their most spiritual moment at camp, often not at a formal prayer program, but rather on a solo sit at sunset, spread across a ridge overlooking a valley side by side with their bunkmates, silently staring in awe at the majesty of creation laid out before them, and contemplating their place in it.

What a camp experience can help a child realize is that we are not apart from nature, but rather a part of nature and that there is so much to be gained from engaging in outdoor experiences. ✨

A Camp Dream

The magic of a special needs camp.

BY FOUNDATION FOR JEWISH CAMP



Camp has been a magical time for all seven of our children. They've had a wide range of experiences from being campers to working as staff. Camp has enlarged my children's circle of friends as well as provided a variety of new experiences. Shira will be joining her siblings next summer as she goes from being a camper to working at Camp Kaylie.

When Shira was born with Down syndrome, we talked and dreamed about when she would also be able to go to camp. We put those thoughts on the "back burner" as we got caught up in the whirlwind of daily life.

When I asked Shira what is the best part about Camp Kaylie, her immediate response was, "my friends." Because she is very social, Shira's life revolves around her friends. When she was little, Shira played 'skip-it', Chinese jump rope, and games on the monkey bars with her friends. As they grew older, her friends began to prefer sitting around and schmoozing. Shira learned to schmooze at camp.

The typical girls who pick Camp Kaylie have chosen to be in a camp where they will be living together with girls with special needs. They learn that everyone has something to contribute to the group. The special staff chosen



by Camp Kaylie works hard to develop a variety of creative activities appropriate for all. These are group activities where everyone can shine. For example, in one activity each bunk built a boat out of cardboard and duct tape and paddled across the lake. The winning boat the first year in boys half was designed by a boy on the autism spectrum. In another activity campers placed different sized straws together to pour water from a bucket at one end of camp to a bucket at the other. Traditional camp group activities are also an important part of camp; such as "color war."

In living in a bunk with girls of all abilities, our daughter has grown in her ability to interact with her peers. Living together 24/7, Shira has learned a great deal about maneuvering everyday life. She's developed a better sense of empathy and awareness of others. When talking with her friends, Shira is tuned into their needs and interests. She knows that when she's on the phone and a friend says that she needs to go, that it's time to say a quick "good-bye". The best part is that her friends reciprocate. We spend a lot of time in the evening answering phone calls

for Shira. She speaks with many of her friends each week. Shira also talks with her counselors and with Lisa, her division head. It was fun to hear Shira studying her multiplication tables with her BFF (best friend forever), Yael, and listened as they both celebrated their mutual success. Yael joined us for a family wedding, and she and Shira have stayed at each other's homes.

Now, Shira is ready to move on and work at camp. After five summers as a camper, Shira is going to be an assistant shallow water lifeguard. She is preparing for her job this year by swimming laps, watching lifeguard videos, reading the lifeguard book and meeting with a lifeguard instructor. Shira is also in contact with Hindy Wein, the Camp Kaylie head lifeguard, to ensure that she's properly prepared.

When we dreamed about Shira going to camp and having the full experience that her sibling enjoyed, we had no idea if this would even be possible. Camp Kaylie is a unique experience that allows families dreams to come true. ✨

THIS POST WAS SUBMITTED BY A CAMP KAYLIE PARENT

COOKING JEWISH

Lifestyle

SAY CHEESE!

Celebrating all things
dairy for Shavuot.

BY JUDY BART KANCIGOR

PHOTO COURTESY OF ALFONSO REVILLA FOR IDANAS TABLE

Cheesecake Bites

They call it the cheesecake holiday, but Shavuot is, oh, so much more. According to rabbi and food historian Gil Marks, author of the “Encyclopedia of Jewish Food” (Wiley, \$40), “The use of dairy to celebrate this holiday is not a biblical injunction, nor is it mentioned in the Talmud. Shavuot falls when the animals are beginning to be weaned away from the mother, so you have a surplus of milk and therefore cheese, yogurt and dairy products. Once you have a tradition, you will find biblical reasons for it.”

Herdsmen of almost 6,000 years ago stored milk in the waterproof stomachs of animals (the first “bottles”), he explained. These ancient people discovered that when the milk separated, it coagulated into curds – the first fresh cheese – which not only tasted good, but lasted longer than milk. (Blintzes would come much later!)

More importantly, Shavuot commemorates the giving of the Torah at Mr. Sinai. “No Jews existed before the giving of the Torah,” Marks said. “One of the new laws concerned keeping kosher, and since their utensils and any meat products they had produced before were no longer kosher, for the first Shavuot they ate dairy products. Milk also suggests the purity of the people not only having received the Torah, but having accepted it and having agreed to become a holy nation.”

When preparing a Shavuot menu, cheesecake is a popular choice, and Dana Shrager’s colorful Cheesecake Bites never fail to satisfy.

For Shrager, a food blogger and recipe developer at Dana’s Table (danastable.com), food has always been more than sustenance. It’s memory, community, and a way of practicing Judaism around the table. She grew up in what she calls “a very food-centered family,” surrounded by accomplished home cooks – her mother, grandmother and aunts – and by the camaraderie that filled the kitchen, especially during Jewish holidays. Those early experiences shaped not only her love of cooking but also her understanding of how food binds people together.

A self-taught home cook, Shrager approaches recipe development with the analytical mind of her former profession: she is a psychologist by

training. “I develop recipes in a very scientific way,” she explains, working methodically to create dishes that are deeply flavorful, use a manageable number of ingredients and are easy for home cooks to replicate.

Her first recipe experiments were born from family lore. Like many families, hers passed down beloved dishes in the form of incomplete ingredient lists and vague instructions – impossible to reproduce as written. Shrager began researching, testing and tweaking those fragments until she could faithfully recreate the flavors she remembered. Those reconstructed family recipes became the foundation of her website, Dana’s Table, which she launched about 15 years ago after repeated requests from friends and fellow parents at the Jewish nursery school her children attended, where she taught cooking. Over time, that online presence grew into something much larger. Shrager now runs two Jewish cooking groups on Facebook. She took over Joan Nathan’s long-running Jewish Cooking group and has since doubled its membership. She also moderates her own Jewish Holiday Cooking group. Together, they function as vibrant online communities where thousands of people trade recipes, ask questions and try to recreate dishes from their childhood.

“People come hoping to recreate their grandmother’s recipe that they no longer have,” Shrager said. “Taste memory from childhood is very strong.” Members post descriptions of half-remembered dishes, hoping that someone else’s family recipe will be similar. Shrager answers questions, shares her own recipes and watches as group members help one another. “It’s a two-way street,” she notes.

“Yes, it’s about the food and the best version of a recipe, but beyond that, it’s what you do with it – gathering people around the table and building community.” That sense of connection extends beyond the screen. Shrager has taught cooking classes through Wilshire Boulevard Temple, has presented at the Skirball Cultural Center and hosts private classes at her home. This fall she will present a Rosh Hashana menu at Melissa’s Produce. Jewish food remains the thread that runs through all her work. That thread led her, unexpectedly, to southern Italy.

For nearly 20 years, Shrager had

dreamed of attending cooking school in Italy. She waited until her children were old enough for her to travel, then began researching programs and took a cooking class at The Awaiting Table Cooking School in Lecce, Italy, in the Puglia region, run by Silvestro Silvestori. When she finally went, she expected an immersive Italian culinary experience. Instead, she found herself surrounded by Jewish history.

A few years earlier, during renovations for what was supposed to be a restaurant in Lecce’s historic Jewish quarter, workers discovered a medieval mikvah. The owner pivoted, turning the space into a Jewish museum that opened in 2016. Silvestori began researching Jewish recipes to connect with this newly uncovered local history. When he learned of Shrager’s background in Jewish cooking, he proposed that she return to teach a Jewish-Italian cooking class and invite members of her Facebook community to attend. The idea was born in 2019, but then came the pandemic. After Shrager returned to Italy for extensive research in 2023, she and Silvestori finally taught the class together in 2025 with participants exploring the region’s Jewish past together.

For Shrager, it was a full-circle moment. “Food is the thread of my life,” she said. Whether she’s reconstructing a grandmother’s kugel, answering questions in an online forum or teaching Jewish-Italian recipes in a centuries-old town, her mission remains the same: to help people gather around the table, reconnect with their heritage and build community, one recipe at a time. ✨

“**They call it the cheesecake holiday, but Shavuot is, oh, so much more.”**

JLIFE FOOD EDITOR **JUDY BART KANCIGOR** IS THE AUTHOR OF “COOKING JEWISH” (WORKMAN) AND “THE PERFECT PASSOVER COOKBOOK” (AN E-BOOK SHORT FROM WORKMAN), A COLUMNIST AND FEATURE WRITER FOR THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS AND CAN BE FOUND ON THE WEB AT WWW.COOKINGJEWISH.COM.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DALYA RUBIN FOR DANAS TABLE



Italian Frittata with Zucchini and Tomato

Italian Frittata with Zucchini and Tomato

Yield: 12 servings

- 1 tablespoon plus 1/2 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 2 medium zucchinis cut into 1/4-inch half-moons (2 1/4 cups cut)
- 1 medium onion, diced small (1 cup)
- 1/2 cup halved cherry tomatoes (3 ounces)
- 12 large eggs
- 1 1/2 teaspoons Diamond Crystal kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh basil, loosely packed (1/2 ounce)
- 1/3 cup grated parmesan cheese, divided

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease bottom (not sides) of 9x13 pan with cooking spray or oil. Set aside.
2. In large nonstick skillet, over medium heat, add 1 tablespoon olive oil and onion. Cook about 5 minutes, mixing occasionally until softened. Increase heat to medium-high, add zucchini, and cook 6 to 8 minutes, stirring often. Transfer to bowl and set aside. Add cherry tomatoes and remaining 1/2 teaspoon olive oil to empty pan. Cook over medium-high heat 3-5 minutes just until tomatoes begin to blister and char. Remove from heat and let cool 5 minutes.
3. In large mixing bowl, whisk eggs, salt and pepper until just combined and yolks and whites form uniform mixture. Don't overmix; otherwise, it will start to rise in oven and deflate into a denser frittata once set. Mix in most of the zucchini mixture (leaving some aside for garnish), basil, and half the parmesan. Pour egg mixture into prepared pan, even out mixture, and sprinkle top with remaining parmesan. Decorate top with cooked tomatoes and remaining zucchini slices. Make sure sautéed tomatoes are

Cheesecake Bites

Yield: 24 Bites

- For crust**
- 2/3 cup graham cracker crumbs (crushed from about 6 graham cracker sheets or ready-made)
 - 2 tablespoons butter, melted

- For filling**
- 2 (8-ounce) blocks full-fat Original Philadelphia Cream Cheese
 - 2 tablespoons brown sugar (not packed)
 - 2 large eggs
 - 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
 - 1 teaspoon lemon zest

- For topping**
- 1/2 cup jarred fruit preserves or spread, chunky style, any flavors

1. Line two mini muffin tins (12 muffins each) with parchment mini cupcake liners.
2. In medium bowl, combine graham crackers crumbs and melted butter and mix thoroughly. (Recipe continues at Jlifeoc.com.)

- facing upwards revealing inside of tomatoes.
4. Bake on center rack of oven 21 to 23 minutes, or until top is speckled light golden brown and most of top is firm. Okay if very center of the frittata jiggles very slightly, as it will continue to cook as it cools. Run a knife around edges to loosen frittata from pan. Allow to cool 5 minutes before slicing and serving. Serve warm or at room temperature.
- Source: Recipes from danastable.com ☆



CAMP-MOON!

BY ALLISON COHEN, MY JEWISH LEARNING



There always was the honeymoon. Then people started taking babymoons—a trip when they were pregnant, before their world was turned upside-down by a kid. Now I am getting ready for my seven week long CAMP-MOON.

Obviously, I think camp is the best thing since sliced bread for all the right reasons—kids come home more independent, they develop new skills like leadership and community building, they're better swimmers and can zipline with the best of them. They are more engaged Jewishly, may have led a service or sang a blessing, or were just in the company of great role models. And then there are a few more reasons, selfish ones, that we often don't talk about.

I love my kids—with every ounce of my being. I love kissing their heads after they are fast asleep, I love how they cheer me down a ski mountain and I return the favor by cheering from the sidelines at umpteen softball and soccer games a year (we won't mention the trips to the ER, really, I could live without those). I even love the late night questions. Tonight I got hit with "Mommy, we don't believe in Jesus but we believe in Chinese medicine, right?" and "If twins are born at 11:59 pm on Monday and 12:01 am on Tuesday are they still twins? What if those days were New Year's Eve and New Year's Day?" (Thank you, Google for confirming that they still are twins. Apparently my saying so just wasn't enough).

Even though I long for all of this when they're gone, I love sending my kids off to camp so I get the chance to

reconnect—with myself, my friends and my husband. Who are we kidding? By reconnecting I really mean, eating. That bus pulls out of the parking lot, and my husband and I whip out our restaurant wish-list and start making reservations. Come on, anyone that just packed two kids for camp (while holding down a full time job) definitely deserves a cocktail. We have been waiting 10 months for this (live 10 for 2!).

So maybe it is a little more than a gluttonous journey through NYC's finest. It is the time my husband and I have to actually have a conversation that doesn't revolve around logistics, grades and rules for texting that we can barely enforce. We fall in love with each other all over again. These few weeks give me time to carve out real conversations with my girlfriends, not just a call them from the train to confirm that one of us is pawing off our kid on the other that weekend so we don't have to pay for a babysitter.

Sure I miss my kids, miss their sleepy morning faces and shuttling them around from place to place. Even though I swear I won't, I scan those camp pictures like every other Jewish mother. But I cherish the time I have with my husband. I love not having to make a train and run through the station, praying I make it to a game to see my 10 year old pitch. Each day will inevitably start the same "Honey I can't possibly go out again tonight" A green juice for breakfast, a salad for lunch and by 3:00..."a two-top please! We are on our camp-moon." ☆

ALLISON COHEN IS A CONTRIBUTING WRITER TO MY JEWISH LEARNING AND JLIFE MAGAZINE.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

FRIDAY, MAY 1

6:30 - 9:30 PM

Kinder Shabbat with Gitai and Main Service
Temple Beth David, TBD

FRIDAY, MAY 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29

7:00 - 8:00 PM

EVERY WEEK UNTIL

MAY 29, 2026

Erev Shabbat
Temple Ami Shalom
On Zoom, TAS

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 9, 17, 23 & 30

10:00 AM - NOON

EVERY WEEK UNTIL

MAY 30, 2026

Shabbat services at
Temple Ami Shalom, TAS

SATURDAY, MAY 2

8:00 PM

SUNDAY, MAY 3

3:30 PM

THURSDAY, MAY 7

7:30 PM

SATURDAY, MAY 9

8:00 PM

SUNDAY, MAY 9

3:30 PM & 6:30 PM

JFed Players' production of *Southern Fried Funeral*
A heartfelt and hilarious comedy filled with family secrets, big personalities, and plenty of Southern spirit.

Ahiah Center
150 N. El Molino Ave.
Pasadena, CA 91101
Tickets: \$40 Priority | \$30 General | \$20 Students / Groups 10+, JFGSGPV

SUNDAY, MAY 3

3:00 - 5:00 PM

DIY Tzedakah Boxes and Gratitude Beads with PJ Library
Arroyo Seco Regional Branch
6145 N. Figueroa St.
Los Angeles, CA

LAG BAOMER EVENING OF MON, MAY 4, 2026 – TUE, MAY 5, 2026

7:00 - 9:00 PM

TUESDAY, MAY 5

6:30 - 9:00 PM

Lag Boemer Community Picnic
Falafel Dinner, Jumper, Games & Crafts
Adults \$18 (\$24 after April 28)
Children \$12 (\$16 after April 28)
Sponsor \$180
Redhill Park, Rancho Cucamonga Upper Level
Register online at www.chabadinlandempire.com, CIE

THURSDAY, MAY 7

7:00 - 9:00 PM

Interfaith National Day of Prayer
at Temple Beth David, TBD

FRIDAY, MAY 8

7:30 - 9:30 PM

Shabbat Service Honoring for Mother's Day & Mental Health Awareness
Temple Beth David, TBD

THURSDAY, MAY 14

10:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Security Briefing and CSI Town Hall
Monrovia - Exact location will be shared upon registration, JFGSGPV

FRIDAY, MAY 15

7:00 - 9:00

Final Day of L'Dor Vador with JAS Students
Temple Beth David, TBD

SUNDAY, MAY 17

11:30 AM

Shavuot Ice Cream Party
This Shavuot, we're celebrating with stories, cut paper crafts, and some with STEM learning ... with ice cream! Enjoy the sweetness of this holiday with us. Suggested for ages 5+.
Temple Beth David, TBD

TUESDAY, MAY 19

7:00 - 9:00 PM

Jewish Federation and ADL present: How to win hearts and minds: Combating antisemitism workshop
Temple Beth David, JFGSGPV

SHAVUOT EVENING OF THU, MAY 21, 2026 – SAT, MAY 23, 2026

FRIDAY, MAY 22

7:30 - 9:30 PM

The Kumzitz with Mickey Adelman & Rabbi Ira
Temple Beth David, TBD

SATURDAY, MAY 23

7:30 - 9:30 PM

What do I do with all this Heritage?
PJTC - JEDI committee
Pasadena Jewish Temple and Center (Temporary Location)
500 E Colorado Blvd.
Pasadena, CA 91101, PJTC

FRIDAY, MAY 29

7:30 - 9:30 PM

Special Shabbat Service with The Nextdoors and Rabbi Ira
Temple Beth David, TBD

SUNDAY, MAY 31

3:00 - 5:00 PM

Kol HaEmek presents: Shir Delights XVI at Temple Beth David, JFGSGPV

Beth Shalom of Whittier (BSW)

www.bethshalomofwhittier.net

B'nai Simcha Community Preschool

www.bnaisimcha.org

Chabad Jewish Center of South Pasadena

www.jewishsouthpasadena.com

Chabad of Arcadia (CoA)

www.jewisharcadia.com

Chabad of Pasadena (CoP)

www.chabadpasadena.com

Chabad of the
Inland Empire (CIE)
www.chabadinlandempire.com

Congregation Hugat
Haverim (CHH)
www.hugathaverim.com

Congregation Emanu El
(CEE)
<https://emanuelsb.org/>

Jewish Federation of
the Greater San Gabriel
and Pomona Valleys
(JFGSGPV)
www.jewishsgpv.org

Pasadena Jewish
Academy (PJA)
www.pasadenajewishacademy.com

Pasadena Jewish
Temple & Center (PJTC)
www.pjtc.net

Temple Ami Shalom
(TAS)
<https://templeamishalom.org/>

Temple Beth Israel of
Pomona (TBI)
www.tbipomona.org

Temple Beth David of
the San Gabriel Valley
(TBD)
www.templebethdavidsgv.org

Temple Beth Israel of
Highland Park and Eagle
Rock (TBILA)
www.tbila.org

Temple B'nai Emet (TBE)
<https://templebnaiemet.org>

Temple Sinai of Glendale
(TSG)
<http://temple-sinai.net>

Temple Sholom of
Ontario (TSO)
www.templesholomofontario.org

Tree of Life Preschool
(formerly TBI Preschool)
(ToL)
<https://tbipomona.org> ✨



Hope you will join us
for the Security Briefing
and CSI Town Hall on
May 14, 2026, from
10:00 AM to 12:30 PM

This event will provide a security briefing from local law enforcement and an opportunity to learn more about CSI's partnership with our Jewish Federation. Attendees will hear up-to-the-minute updates and the information presented at the event is aimed to empower community members – both Jewish and non-Jewish – to improve security awareness and to improve security postures throughout the community. Everyone is invited to attend.

NEWS & JEWS

Sheryl Sandberg endows scholarship at Camp Ramah in California in honor of late husband

The former Meta COO has long been a prominent donor to Jewish and Israeli causes.

By Gracie Gilson, The Jewish Telegraphic Agency (JTA)

Sheryl Sandberg, the former Meta COO, announced on Thursday that she is endowing a new scholarship fund at Camp Ramah in California in honor of her late husband, Dave Goldberg.

"Camp Ramah is where Dave built friendships that lasted decades. It's where he developed a sense of independence that shaped the rest of his life. It's where his Jewish identity took root and grew into something he held onto always," wrote Sandberg in a post on Facebook. "And all of this was made possible by the scholarship he received each year from his synagogue that allowed him to attend."

Goldberg, who was the former CEO of Survey Monkey, died

in 2015 after sustaining a head trauma when he fell off a treadmill while on vacation in Mexico with his family. Goldberg's brother, Rob, announced the scholarship fund alongside Sanberg and her current husband, Tom Bernthal.

Reflecting on her late husband's experience at Ramah, the Conservative movement's Jewish summer camp network, Sandberg said that he had developed an understanding of "Jewish Theology" there and had "passed that spirit of positive questioning on to our children when they were young."

"More children deserve a summer like that. A place that makes them more themselves and stays with them long after they leave," Sandberg wrote. "The scholarship will make it possible for 30 children with the greatest financial need to experience Camp Ramah in California each summer for many decades to come."

Camp is considered one of the more successful levers in solidifying Jewish identity, but it comes at a cost: Each four-week session at Ramah in California costs \$6,730.

Sandberg, the author of "Lean In," the bestselling book about women's equity in the workforce, has long been a prominent donor to Jewish and Israeli causes.

In 2019, Sandberg donated \$2.5 million to the Anti-Defamation League, and in 2021, she gave United Hatzalah, the Jerusalem-based volunteer first responder organization, \$5 million in honor of her parents.

"Dave, we miss you every single day," Sandberg wrote. "This scholarship is for the piece of your heart that you always left at camp." ✨



Dave Goldberg, right, with wife Sheryl Sandberg in Sun Valley, Idaho, July 10, 2013. (Kevork Djansezian/JTA)

EAST WORD

*"Unplug, explore, grow –
that's the summer camp
motto."*

– JLife



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