

March 2024
Adar I / Adar II 5784

Jlife

SGPV JEWISH LIFE

Fiddler *on the* Roof

LATKES
AND TEMPURA
A Jewish Asian
story about
navigating our
changing world

BIRTHRIGHT
TRIPPERS
Visiting Israel
during war

TRADITION,
RESILIENCE —
TO LIFE!

The JFed Players Present
Fiddler on the Roof

GOT KIDS?
Look Inside for
kiddish



JEWISH
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OF THE GREATER SAN GABRIEL
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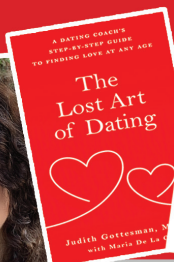


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JEWISH LIFE

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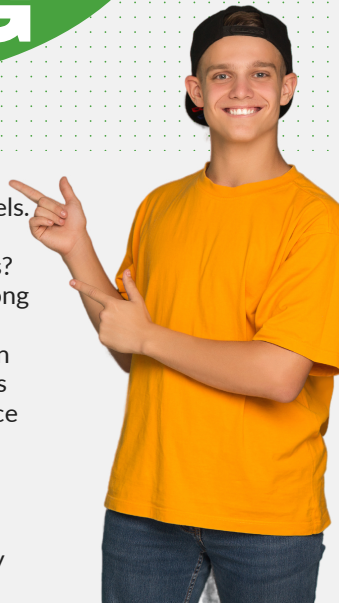
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“DOING JEWISH”

Our definition of affiliation is different than at any point in our collective history.

Do me a favor... stop reading this column for a moment and search online for Jews and humor and see what you find. (Go ahead... I'll wait 😊).

There are many theories as to why Jews are synonymous with comedy... or, more specifically, the two are tied so closely together. In fact, there have been countless books written about this subject to better understand this connection and what led to the proliferation of Jewish history in comedy.

One of my great disappointments is that I was born in the wrong era (and lived on the wrong coast) to experience and witness the comedians that graced the Borscht Belt stages in the Catskills. You see, I love comedy. While I do like clever dialogue and comedy writing, give me an opportunity to listen to a great stand-up routine, and you will hear my distinctive laugh cutting through the crowd.

So why am I writing about what many people already accept as gospel?

This month, our Jewish Federation will hold our inaugural Ladies of Laughter Comedy Fest: Celebrating Funny Jewish Women. As far as we know, this is the only comedy festival that exclusively features and highlights Jewish women's incredible contributions to the comedy world. And I could not be more excited.

In 2021, the Pew Research Center published the results of its Jew-



The Catskills Mountains of New York

ish Americans in 2020 study. The findings from this research were astounding and caused many in the professional Jewish world to rethink how it conducted their work to engage with today's Jewish community. In my opinion, one of the most significant points this study illustrated is that the majority of American Jews have reshaped how they consider they are “affiliated” with their Judaism. A substantial number of people today feel their Jewish connection comes from eating Jewish food or watching a Jewish TV show or movie. In essence, “doing Jewish” is different than at any point in our collective history.

This is one of the reasons we created our Ladies of Laughter comedy festival. It is an opportunity to bring another Jewish experience to our community that, for many, is more in line with how they feel about their Judaism. And being able to add to the nationwide celebration of National Women's Month is an added bonus.

Since I became our Jewish Federation's Executive Director over 15 years ago, I have strived for us to create and provide opportunities that are relevant and unique in the lives of our Jewish community. I am proud that we have found something “Jewish” that many people are excited to do.

Before I began grad school, Rabbi Richard Joel, then the President of Hillel International, shared his definition of what makes something Jewish - “the fact that two Jews are doing something together, makes that activity Jewish.” In other words, Judaism is two Jews doing something together.

I hope to see you at our Ladies of Laughter Comedy Fest so we can “do Jewish” by laughing together as we celebrate funny Jewish women.

☆



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

“Whereas articles of clothing are typically not used as war amulets, tzitzit have filled this role for many IDF soldiers.”

UNIQUE PROTECTION

Tzitzit as War Amulet

BY TEDDY WEINBERGER

An amulet is defined as “an ornament or small piece of jewelry thought to give protection against evil, danger, or disease.”

Throughout the ages and all across the globe, soldiers have worn amulets hoping to increase their protection against harm—thus also increasing their courage.

Whereas articles of clothing are typically not used as war amulets, tzitzit have filled this role for many IDF soldiers. I assume that for religious soldiers, this has always been the case; that is, given that tzitzit are part of a religious man's attire (in that they are considered to fulfill a mitzvah), it is natural for a religious soldier to feel through their tzitzit a protective bond with G-d.

Over the last few decades, however, there has been a growing demand for tzitzit as war amulet from non-religious soldiers as well.

What was a relatively minor phenomenon in “Cast Lead” and in “Protective Edge” (wars fought in 2009 and 2014, respectively), became in “Iron Swords” a juggernaut. With demand reaching into the hundreds of thousands, Rabbi Asher Weiss, a major *haredi halakhic posek* (ultra-orthodox Judaic decisor), even ruled that due to the need, women and minors are permitted to braid/make tzitzit.

It is not clear to what extent the large demand for tzitzit has been stimulated by the soldiers themselves or by a haredi desire to contribute to the war effort (while very few haredim are in the military, the tzitzit suppliers are predominantly haredi).

It is evident that after the shocking events of October 7th, voluntarism skyrocketed among haredim. Video clips of different tzitzit initiatives are widely accessible on the internet, and

they feature haredi adults and youth braiding tzitzit and distributing them to soldiers. In one of these, presumably shot on the Gazan border, a haredi man calls out: “Who else needs tzitzit for the battle.”

What to make out of tzitzit as war amulet? Seemingly, this is a significant departure from how the bible describes tzitzit's purpose: “Thus you shall be reminded to observe all My commandments and to be holy to your G-d” (Numbers 15.40). And given that in the United States usually only very religious men wear tzitzit, it is a bit jarring to see tzitzit on soldiers who are bareheaded.

On the other hand, it doesn't make sense to speak of any kind of “profanation” of tzitzit in that they do not in themselves have the highest sanctity, which is why, for example, one takes off tefilin before entering a washroom but not tzitzit. What's more, because Judaism encourages people to take upon themselves commandments even if they do not experience them as divine imperatives (in hopes that their experience will deepen over time), there is no warrant for criticizing a non-religious soldier who first puts on tzitzit just as war amulet.

Even more importantly, precisely the tzitzit with its unruly fringes always getting in the way, may remind the soldier to remain ethical,



“to be holy.” With the removal of ordinary restraints against violence during wartime and the temptations involved when coming into contact with enemy civilians, it can be very good for a soldier to wear on his body something that is designed to make him, as the bible says, “recall all the commandments of the lord and observe them, so that you do not follow your heart and eyes in your lustful urge” (Numbers 15.39).

We all are familiar with the aphorism “There are no atheists in foxholes,” but in American culture this is usually depicted in Christian terms, with a soldier crossing himself, or saying an “Our Father” or a “Hail Mary,” or touching a cross around his neck.

In Israel, if there is some truth to the aphorism, it should not come as a surprise that many Israeli soldiers, whether religious or not, want to wear tzitzit when they go into war. ☆

TEDDY WEINBERGER IS A CONTRIBUTING WRITER TO JLife MAGAZINE. HE MADE ALIYAH WITH HIS FAMILY IN 1997 FROM MIAMI, WHERE HE WAS AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES. TEDDY AND HIS WIFE, SARAH JANE ROSS, HAVE FIVE CHILDREN.

FLOWERING AMONG THORNS

Clarity Under Fire

BY ANDREA SIMANTOV

“I Know We Are Your Chosen People. But Can't You Choose Someone Else?”

- Tevye the Dairyman

Sometimes being chosen doesn't feel like such a *bracha*.

As Israeli Jews, we've been chosen to suffer the unimaginable. Whether one is a survivor of Beeri, related to a hostage, a parent/grandparent/sibling/buddy of a combat soldier who is alive, injured or dead, no one here owns a rulebook for surviving this shocking chapter.

Some days, the pain is unbearable. And the worst part? We can't opt out.

The torment, the unbearable sadness is always there, even when having a manicure, listening to Andrea Bocelli at full volume, taking a spa-day or hitting the gym with fervor. Occasional distractions do allow us to place one foot in front of the other as we conduct that exercise called “Life,” assisting us to navigate these tentative, strung-together days. Temporary poultices.

On a recent trip to South Africa, I was asked by a woman at the Sabbath kiddush, “Andrea, are we going to win the war?”

Gobsmacked, I felt bile rising in my throat and that congenital New York attitude kicking-in. Thankfully, this is when God grabbed me by the shoulders and clobbered me with a whopper dose of patience and compassion.

I intuited that she was getting her news from South Africa's Daily Sun along with, possibly, online issues of *The New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, *Wall Street Journal* and/or *Al Jazeera*. Media outlets that view “Swords of Iron” as fodder, chatter-worthy entertainment and even with a voyeur fascination of a cock-fight, excitedly watching the

bloodied and butchered. Lazy hustlers with license to twist our story can even convince a Jew in outside of Israel to consider whether or not we will prevail.

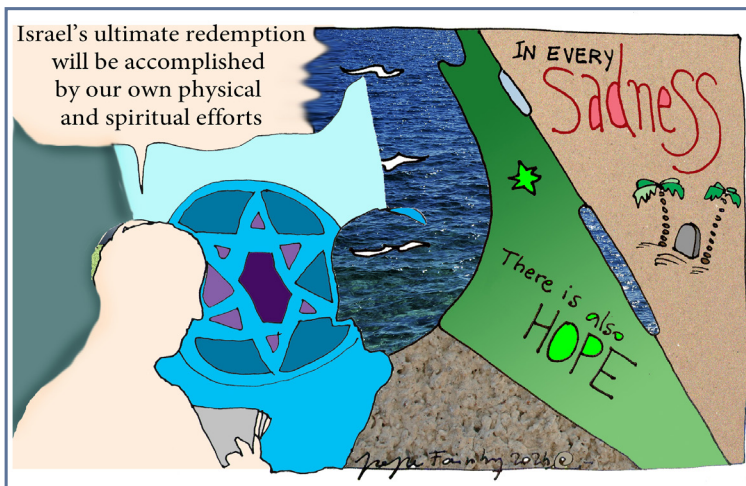
We will win because we have no choice.

We have nowhere else to go. Today is a dangerous day to be a Jew anywhere in the world. Anywhere. And yet, I live in a country where I can wear a *Magen David*, *hamsa* or *chai* necklace without fear, my yarmulke-sporting husband goes to synagogue, any synagogue, and there are no police cars or security guards checking out congregants or passers-by.

We live in a miraculous country where even completely secular children know holidays other than Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur, Passover and Purim. They may not observe Shabbat but they participate in Tu B'Shvat, Lag B'Omer, and Shavuot. Without question, Israel today is the safest place in the world in which one can be a Jew regardless of his/her ethnicity, level of observance, sexual identity or political leanings. Even when at war.

But we are held to a standard that no nation in the world would, themselves, adhere to.

And despite universal finger-pointing, our IDF soars way above traditional codes of exemplary



behavior. From treating the enemy's wounded, to putting our own holy soldiers at risk rather than inadvertently injuring non-combatants, from assisting civilians to safe-passage before embarking on missions, we do not fear Heaven's judgment. For the sake of transparency, as the mother of a combat soldier who faces unspeakable danger with each heart-stopping operation, I am not comforted by our policy of restraint.

Perversely charged with ethnic cleansing, bankrolling all of the world's evil, along with other depravities that are too numerous to mention, Israel will remain in charge of its narrative and neither a morally corrupt U.N. or Hollywood lightweight is entitled to determine our outcome.

We are not looking to be saved by strangers. Israel's ultimate redemption will be accomplished by our own physical and spiritual efforts. ☆

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.

LATKES AND TEMPURA

A Jewish Asian story about navigating our changing world

BY DIANE BURR, CO-CHAIR OF JEWISH EQUITY,
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT
PASADENA JEWISH TEMPLE AND CENTER.

During this time of rapid change, divisions and challenges we face as a nation, many Americans have been inspired to write books about their heritage and lived experiences.

A plethora of these are books by Jews of varied identities looking at our need for connection, belonging and the celebration of our rich Jewish diversity.

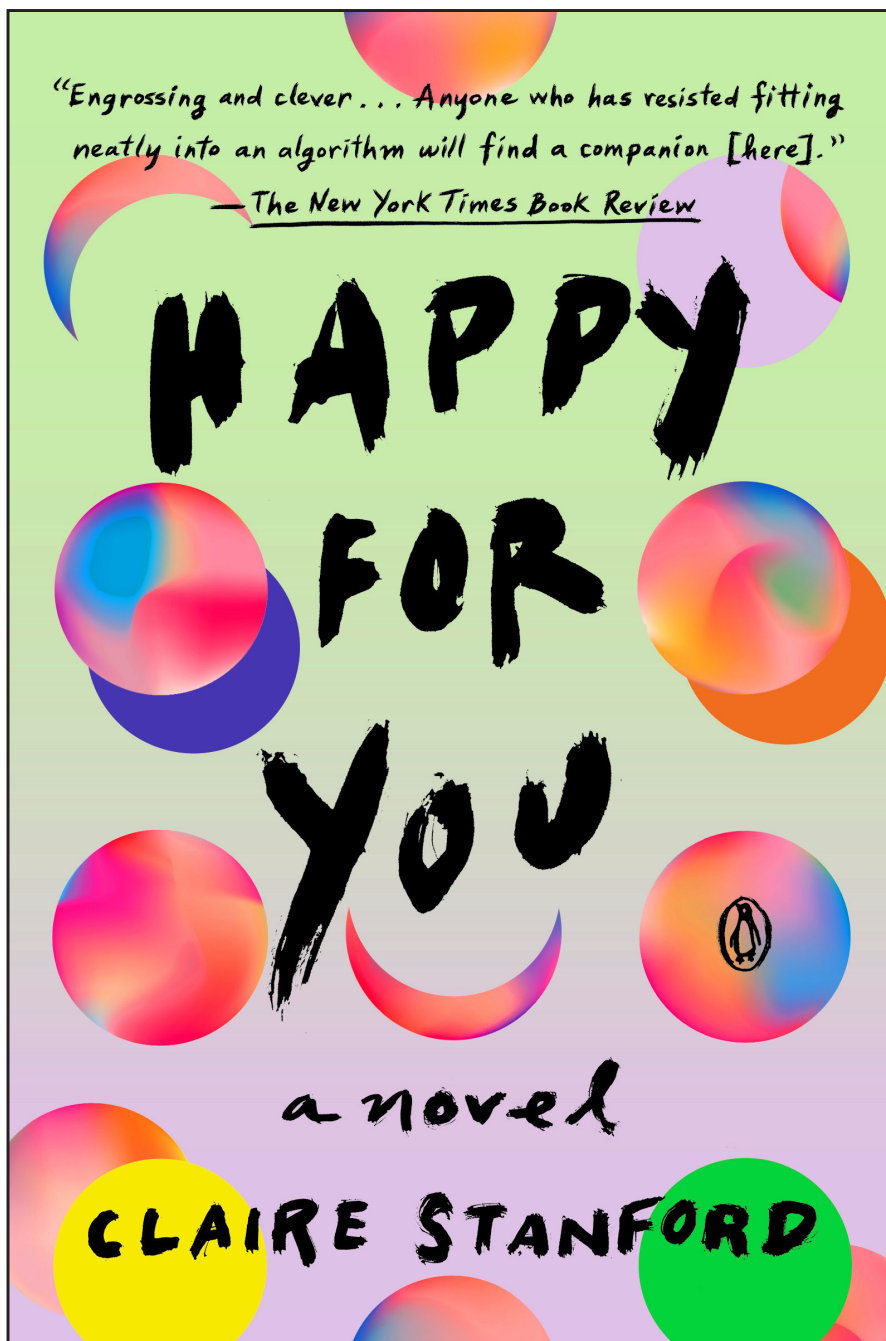
Some rely on Jewish values to understand how technology, the fast pace of our lives, and the larger culture around us affect our feelings, behaviors, and choices. The Jewish multicultural mix and the spirit of *B'tzelem Elohim* (all humans are created in G-d's image) have brought forth stories exploring Jewish values, often at the intersectionality of race, ethnicity and personal identity.

The Jews of Color initiative reports that 17% of American Jewish families are multiracial and 1 in 7 young adult Jews identify as non-white or multiracial. The 2020 Pew Research report tells us that as Jews, we are "the most diverse of any living generation." This is especially significant in the San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys where we enjoy and celebrate a multitude of traditions and cultures with our neighbors, friends and family.

Happy For You, Claire Stanford's debut novel features the Jewish Japanese American protagonist Evelyn and explores themes of race, religion and navigating the world with a mixed identity. As a Jewish Book Council selection, it was described as "poignant, touching and wry". Although fiction, many of the themes reflect Stanford's growing up, as well as facing adult challenges with a mixed identity. The tender description of Evelyn's recollection of becoming a Bat Mitzvah touches on the richness and complexity of growing up in a multicultural,

multiracial family.

Stanford herself became a Bat Mitzvah at Congregation Beth El in Berkeley in 1998. "It was a really meaningful experience for me," she remembers. "Everyone who knew me from the Temple came, and my dad's family and my mom's Japanese side



of the family came. Both sides of the family were there and interested. I just loved that day and sharing it with all of my family."

Stanford's Japanese American mother embraces Jewish culture, "making the best Latkes ever for Chanukah", says Stanford. "She is a really great cook and she always makes tempura and rice to go with the latkes."

Happy For You begins when Evelyn is thirty-one years old and struggling with a PhD thesis in philosophy that just doesn't seem to come together. She is offered a high paying position at the "third most popular internet company" that is seeking to increase happiness through an app that is being created and tested on their staff.

Evelyn struggles with the concept of quantifying and oversimplifying happiness and wonders if the seemingly ever-present beeping of the app is counter intuitive.

Evelyn tells her boss that "You think that people want to be told they are happy, but really I think people want even more to feel understood."

Meanwhile, Evelyn's life seems to be taking many twists and turns as she grapples with issues of marriage, motherhood and how she fits into her community and her world. "She is a woman who feels out of place, uncategorizable, and this reflects everything about her life and choices," explains Stanford. "The way technology has developed has put more pressure on her. She feels like technology should allow her to control everything and she's learning that life is unpredictable, and she doesn't have control of everything," Stanford says.

Jenni Rudolph, co-Executive Director of the LUNAR Collective—"a space for Asian Jews to connect with their tribe," proclaimed "I love this book." We all want to feel seen, heard and understood," she said. "Many Asian Jews grow up feeling different and wanting to connect. One of the themes of the book that stood out for me was Evelyn's search for joy. Joy is written off as unimportant. But really, it is part of the journey we are all on. Joy is what keeps our community together," says Rudolph.

This book holds many emotions and nuanced subplots. The multiple themes are seamlessly woven



together in a graceful story that may surprise the reader with insights far beyond Evelyn's search for self-identity.

Stanford holds an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Minnesota and a PhD in English from UCLA. She is an assistant professor at the University of Nevada, Reno. She is grateful for the Jewish teaching of Tzedek (Justice) which guides her in "how to run an equitable, diverse, anti-racist classroom that promotes social justice."

Pasadena Jewish Temple and Center welcomes Claire Stanford and Executive Director of Q Talk Radio, and Producer and Director of Pasadena Media, Xavier Mejia, for a conversation about Happy For You, Q & A, book signing, and a terrific dessert reception on Thursday, March 28, at 7 pm. The event is free, but reservations are required. To reserve space, https://www.pjtc.net/form/JEDI_mar28, or call (626) 798-1161 ASAP, as seating is limited.

For information about LUNAR Collective, log on to weareasianjews.org. ☆

DIANE BURR IS A CONTRIBUTING WRITER TO JLIFE MAGAZINE.

WAR-RELATED REHAB

Leading Israeli hospital uses innovative simulation system and unique tools

BY ELANA SZTOKMAN, JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY (JTA)

Even before the smoke began to clear from Hamas's deadly Oct. 7 attack, Israeli healthcare professionals realized they were facing a series of unprecedented challenges.

Not only would wounded civilians and soldiers require treatment, but the entire nation was traumatized, including caregivers.

"By the afternoon of October 7, we knew this was a huge event that nobody had ever encountered in Israel," said Prof. Amitai Ziv, a former combat pilot and director of the Integrated Rehabilitation Hospital at Sheba Medical Center near Tel Aviv. "We immediately realized we will have two major challenges, each one a tsunami. One is the number of patients that require rehabilitation, and two, the largest numbers ever of people suffering from acute stress disorder, which might lead to PTSD—post-traumatic stress disorder."

Ziv, a physician, is also the founder and director of MSR – the Israel National Center for Medical Simulation at Sheba. The center enables healthcare providers like doctors and nurses to practice challenging clinical procedures and encounters in a simulated environment using tools such as robotics, surgical simulators and even role-playing actors so that real patients are not put in any danger. Since its establishment, over 300,000 healthcare professionals have been trained and certified by MSR.

In the days immediately following Oct 7, MSR switched to focus on new wartime needs. The center transported high-tech, full-body mannequin simulators to train army medical teams serving in both major conflict zones—in the Gaza area and along Israel's northern border with Lebanon—to improve their trauma management skills and prepare them for the lifesaving scenarios they were about to encounter in the battlefield. The center also used actors for "high-touch" simulations of interactions with people experiencing trauma to help prepare psychosocial teams to manage stress-related issues.

The hostage issue presented the most difficult



Dr. Amitai Ziv, right, is director of Sheba Medical Center's Integrated Rehabilitation Hospital and the Israel National Center for Medical Simulation. The hospital has played a critical role in caring for Israel's wounded from the Oct. 7 war, including the patient pictured at left. (Elana Sztokman)

challenge.

Even if the hostages' release could be secured, how could they be reintegrated into Israeli life under such extreme circumstances—with relatives still being held by Hamas, family members murdered, their homes destroyed, entire communities displaced and the nation in the midst of an intense war with mounting casualties?

Ziv launched a series of intensive training courses involving simulations to prepare Sheba physicians, psychologists, and social workers, as well as Israel Defense Forces psychosocial professionals, to receive the hostages and accompany them during the early hours and days after their return from captivity. Out of the over 100 captives that were released in November, 30 went to Sheba.

Treating the hostages is just part of Ziv's war-related work at Sheba, Israel's largest hospital. As soon as the war started, Ziv began moving around entire departments and retraining staff to add capacity in the rehab hospital, which consists of three divisions: physical, mental and geriatric rehabilitation. Quick renovations added 122 new rehab beds to the 140 existing beds.

"We made a decision that we would not say no to any patient who needs to be here, war- as well as non-war-related, and we do not push anyone out," Ziv said. "We pushed ourselves to accommodate all evolving patient

needs.”

Sheba has received more war-related rehab patients than any other hospital in the country. Most are recovering from complex injuries involving abdominal, surgical, and orthopedic injuries, amputations, or neurologic, spinal, or head injuries. Pain management and mental support are major priorities.

“PTSD is going to be the main, long-lasting condition requiring treatment,” Ziv said. He estimated that the numbers will be in the thousands and warned that even before the war, Israel had a 40% national staffing shortage of mental health professionals.

Patients, most of whom spend two to three months in rehab, have access to an array of therapies at Sheba, including physical, occupational, and hydro therapies, as well as complementary therapies such as art, yoga, and even animal-assisted therapy using Sheba’s four trained dogs.

“It doesn’t feel like a hospital,” said Avishai Shoshani, 49, a combat soldier at Sheba injured in both legs during combat in Gaza. “Here you feel like you’re with a bunch of friends. And this is a very important aspect of rehab.”

Unlike most other rehab facilities in Israel, Sheba’s integrated rehabilitation hospital is part of the larger medical center, giving rehab patients full access to the acute care hospital where many of them have been treated initially. The integration helps ensure continuity of care for patients who need surgery and other medical treatments during the rehabilitation process.

The war also brought an unprecedented partnership between Sheba and IsraAID, the Israeli disaster relief organization that provides emergency medical response, post-trauma mental health support, and humanitarian relief after disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, fires, and wars. IsraAid and Sheba had collaborated in the past on global disasters, but they never before had to work together in Israel.

Both Ziv, 65, and IsraAID CEO Yotam Polizer, 40, are members of a unique group: They are laureates of The Charles Bronfman Prize, an annual \$100,000 award given to a Jewish humanitarian under age 50 whose work benefits humankind and is grounded in Jewish values.

The Prize was established in 2004 by the children of Canadian philanthropist Charles Bronfman—Ellen Bronfman Hauptman and Stephen Bronfman together with their spouses Andrew Hauptman and Claudia Blondin Bronfman—to honor their father’s values and philanthropic work.

Ziv received the Prize in 2007 and is now one of the judges on the prize committee; Polizer won the award last year. As part of the prize fellowship, laureates get to



Yotam Polizer, IsraAID’s CEO, at a field school that the relief organization set up in the southern Israeli city of Eilat to serve Israeli families displaced by the Oct. 7 war. (Yehuda Ben-Itah/IsraAID)

know one another and sometimes end up collaborating. IsraAID recently facilitated a partnership with the State of California to donate a field hospital to Sheba.

While IsraAID has worked in many countries, including post-tsunami Japan and post-earthquake Haiti, the current war in Israel is unlike any other disaster it has dealt with because it’s happening at home, Polizer said.

“This is a new challenge for us to give professional humanitarian support while we are at the same time part of the community that is affected,” Polizer said. “Being able to do something, even if it is small, also helps our team from a mental-health perspective. My coping mechanism is doing something and getting into action.”

Soon after Oct. 7, IsraAID began working with displaced Israeli families who had been relocated to hotels from their homes in Israeli communities in the conflict zone.

Ziv, too, is touched personally by the war, as is practically every Israeli. He has two sons who serve in the army reserves, one a surgeon in the medical corps in Gaza. His staffers also have family in the army or friends injured or killed or displaced.

“This is a long journey. We will be dealing with the outcomes of the war for years to come,” Ziv said. “Yet I trust the solidarity and courageous spirit of the Israeli people. These unique, exceptional qualities are of utmost significance for successful rehabilitation—and for resiliency, strength and cohesion of Israeli society.”

This story was sponsored by and produced in partnership with The Charles Bronfman Prize, an annual prize presented to a humanitarian whose innovative work fueled by their Jewish values has significantly improved the world. This article was produced by JTA’s native content team. ☆

BIRTHRIGHT TRIPPERS

Visiting Israel during war

BY ELANA SZTOKMAN, JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY (JTA)



Birthright's current trips include all the typical highlights of the organization's tours, including this jeep tour, but also offer opportunities to volunteer and bear witness after Oct. 7. (Oded Antman)

When Alon Fishman visited Israel in early January on a group trip, it wasn't his first time in the country. But Fishman, 23, had never seen Israel like this before.

When his Birthright Israel group arrived at the Western Wall, they found it uncharacteristically empty, and the plaza featured a new memorial with the names of the 1,200 victims of the Oct. 7 attack. For Fishman, a native of Rockland County, New York, the muted visit was a poignant reflection of the times—and a powerful emotional experience.

"It was a blessing to have that space and time to reflect, and an opportunity I may never get again," Fishman said of the experience of visiting Israel in wartime. "It made me understand not only how hard we got hit but also how we face these things, how we are still standing and come out ahead."

Many participants traveling to Israel on Birthright Israel trips these days say the experience is unique and affirming at a time when many Jews around the world feel at a loss for how to respond to the atrocities of Oct. 7 and public displays of anti-Israel sentiment in their communities. In Israel, they say, they feel safe, embraced and a sense of belonging being around Israelis and fellow Jews.

"The friendships I made—it's nothing I've ever felt before," said Noah Solomon, 25, from Boca Raton, Florida. "The amount of Israelis who I met who now

say 'You are my brother for life, my friend for life, come to my house for Shabbat'—it's incredible."

Over 400 Jews visited Israel in January on Birthright, which offers free 10-day Israel trips to Jews ages 18-26. Participants came from the United States, Canada, Argentina, Brazil, France, and Russia.

When Gillian Zitrin, a 21-year-old Skidmore College senior from New York's Westchester County, told friends she was going to Israel, many of them expressed surprise.

"There was a lot of concern from people—like, there's a war happening, don't go," Zitrin said. "But I felt very safe and had such an amazing experience. I'm glad I didn't listen to those people."

Since November, over 1,200 Birthright Israel alumni have come to Israel to volunteer in the country. Seeing their enthusiasm as well as hundreds of new Birthright Israel participants come on the 10-day trip has been extraordinary and heartwarming, said Noa Bauer, Birthright Israel's vice president of marketing.

She added, "Some may be concerned with safety or that they will miss the 'real' Birthright Israel experience but I want to assure them that safety is our top priority and we will not compromise on anyone's gift of their free trip to Israel."

Birthright's current trips include all the typical highlights of the organization's tours, including visits to popular sites and encounters with Israelis, but they also offer opportunities for participants to volunteer, bear

witness to what happened on Oct. 7 and go beyond the headlines to learn about what's happening on the ground in Israel.

Participants visit Tel Aviv's "Hostage Square" to learn about Israel's captives in Gaza and spend time volunteering on farms. They also hike Masada, swim in the Dead Sea, eat their way through shuks in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, sleep in Bedouin tents and visit national sites like Yad Vashem. They currently do not spend time near the border conflict zones or in the Golan Heights.

Birthright Israel is booking trips now for the spring and summer both for traditional 10-day tours for Jews ages 18-26 as well as for volunteer-focused programs for Jews ages 18-40 who want to spend their time volunteering.

"We expect thousands of young Jews to visit Israel this summer," Bauer said.

Fishman said that visiting Schneider Children's Hospital, where he learned about how the hospital dealt with the historically unprecedented challenge of caring for children recently released from Hamas captivity, was one of the most meaningful moments of his January trip.

"It was a very deep, emotional day," Fishman said, "seeing how much people cared, and understanding that this is what Israel is about."

Zitrin said her trip helped equip her to better deal with challenges of being a representative of the Jewish community at home, especially on her college campus.

"The trip changed me," she said. "I now connect more with Israel and understand the importance of Israel and I feel like I can now advocate in my community."



Over 400 American Jews came to Israel on Birthright trips in January 2024. (Courtesy of Nate Lawler)

Nate Lawler of Los Angeles, 25, said he's always been a proud Jew: "I wear a Chai and star of David, I love being Jewish, and I'm unapologetically me," said Lawler, who went to Israel in January. "But now I feel like I want to be more outspoken and I have better understanding to do so. When I see people attacking the Jewish community, I will stand up for what I love and what's close to my heart."

Most of all, Lawler said, he felt like he was among his people.

"I made wonderful friends. I never felt like I fit in so much in my life. It strengthened my feeling of being Jewish," Lawler said. "When you're in Israel, you are wrapped up in Jewish unity."

Solomon said the trip made him reflect on his Jewish observance in a way he had never before considered. Solomon grew up in a religious household but stopped practicing as an adult. After spending Shabbat on a kibbutz during the trip, he said, he realized for the first time that Shabbat is not about restrictions but about connecting with community.

"I feel so much lighter. I can genuinely say that I enjoy Shabbat. That's amazing for me," Solomon said. "Just trying to talk about it I get choked up because I don't have the words to describe the feeling. It definitely changed me."

Since returning home, Solomon said, he finds himself turning his experiences over and over in his mind and wishing he could go back to Israel.

"I tell everyone I know that they have to visit," he said.

This story was sponsored by and produced in partnership with Birthright Israel, which aims to give every young Jewish adult around the world the opportunity to visit Israel on an educational trip. This article was produced by JTA's native content team. ✨



After returning home to the US, Nate Lawler, pictured here with his mother, said his trip to Israel strengthened his feeling of being Jewish. (Courtesy of Nate Lawler)



TRADITION, RESILIENCE – TO LIFE!

The JFed Players Present Fiddler on the Roof

BY LORI MCKENNA

Tradition—the word that most likely comes to mind when one thinks of the iconic musical, *Fiddler on the Roof*. The story and the music are well-known to most, whether seen on the stage or screen. Based on “Tevye and his Daughters,” a collection of stories by Sholem Aleichem, *Fiddler on the Roof* is more than a tale of a man dealing with everyday

trials and tribulations in a small village. It is a story of one man grappling with a world that is quickly changing around him, challenging the long-held traditions that have been accepted without question in his world—until now. As Tevye says, “Because of our traditions, everyone here knows who he is and what G-d wants him to do.”

But the traditions that have guided the lives of Tevye and his neighbors may not hold against the onslaught of the modern world. For instance, arranged marriages had been the norm for countless generations, but are challenged. As Tevye is approached by his eldest daughters, one by one, each telling him she has fallen in love and wants to marry without benefit of the traditional matchmaker, his traditional view of the world of marriage changes and he struggles to understand this modern idea of “love.” After all, love was not something to be looked for before marriage, or even at all. Many times, a man and wife met on their wedding day. Confronted by challenges to tradition at every turn, Tevye often confers with G-d, looking for guidance in his ever-changing world. Through Tevye’s eyes, *Fiddler* chronicles





the transition between the old and new, and how people cope, or not, with the eventuality of change. At its heart, *Fiddler on the Roof* is a story of family, resilience, and the closeness of community.

Fiddler on the Roof, book by Joseph Stein, music and lyrics by Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick respectively, premiered on Broadway on September 22, 1964 – 60 years ago this year. The musical has been produced every year since then, in many different languages and in many different countries. The story is timeless and relatable, no matter where the show has been produced, among Jews and non-Jews alike. In a recent documentary entitled “*Fiddler: Wonder of Wonders*,” a woman in Japan was surprised to learn that the musical has been performed in English, as it was “their” story; when it was produced at a university in Thailand, the

students were skeptical. As they rehearsed, they found it was their story as well. Although *Fiddler* is set in the little Jewish shtetel of Anatevka in 1900, the themes are universal—acceptance versus being ostracized, change versus tradition, the importance of community and family.

The Cultural Arts Program of the Jewish Federation of the Greater San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys started thirteen years ago with a seed of an idea—creating another way to connect members of the community through the arts. At that time, Dr. Stuart Miller, then vice-president of the Jewish Federation, Jason Moss, the Executive Director, and Cantor Judy Sofer met and discussed this little seed of an idea. It was germinated and, over time, has sprouted into a thriving program

“**The JFed Players are proud to produce *Fiddler on the Roof*, directed by Cantor Judy Sofer, opening on April 6, 2024, 8:00pm at Porticos Art Space with an opening night reception honoring Dr. Stuart Miller.**”





THE CAST

- Tevye John Carlton
- Golde Danielle Schlichter
- Yente Lori McKenna
- Tzeitel Vivianne Taylor
- Hodel Kenley Schlichter
- Chava Juliet Hubbard
- Schprintze Alena Zepkowski
- Bielke Winter Kaplan
- Taybele Eleanor Galvez
- Son Ian Brown
- Motel Kamzoil,
the Tailor Greg Hardash
- Motel Kamzoil,
the Tailor Avi Spitzer-Tilchin
- Shandel,
Motel's Mother Sharon Gold
- Perchik Erik Friestad
- Fyedka Steven Owsley
- Lazar Wolf Rob Schaumann
- Rabbi/
Constable Mark Hilliard
- Mordcha,
the Innkeeper Neil Brown

- Mendel,
Rabbi's son Austin Lubetkin
- Avram, Bookseller Norm Gold
- Nahum, Beggar Michael DiRosa
- Yussel/Priest Kyle Kelley
- Sasha,
Young Russian Trenton Muraoka
- Grandma Tzeitel Kate Landro
- Fruma Sarah Calista Ruiz
- Fiddler Carla Epstein
- Townspeople Cindy Bernhardt, Jodi Britt,
Janet Ryan Ho, Joe Ozer





with several facets, the most prominent of which is the JFed Players Community Theater Ensemble, which has blossomed into a thriving theater community. Its primary mission is to produce plays with Jewish themes by Jewish authors and/or composers. In the years since its inception, great care has been taken to find plays and musicals with a Jewish connection. So, what better way to celebrate this milestone year, along with our Jewish Federation's 30th Anniversary, than with *Fiddler on the Roof*, our 26th production.

Just as *Fiddler on the Roof* is a story of community, tradition, and resilience, so is the story of the JFed Players. Ask any of its members and they will most likely say that this little band of thespians is itself like a community, even a family. Coming together for a singular purpose—to showcase Jewish contributions to American culture through theater and music, each cast bonds in a unique way, often resulting in lasting friendships.

The JFed Players are also resilient. Without a theater of their own, they have managed to stage performances in three different venues without interruption. Some members have left the ensemble due to the inevitable challenges, changes, and shortness of life. Yet the JFed Players, under the leadership of Cantor Judy Sofer, has persevered and thrived, presenting both virtual and live performances even during the COVID pandemic, when many other theater companies were forced to close—some forever. With each show, new people join the community, on stage, backstage, and in the audience.

The JFed Players are proud to produce *Fiddler on the Roof*, directed by Cantor Judy Sofer, opening on April 6, 2024, 8:00pm at Porticos Art Space with an opening night reception honoring Dr. Stuart Miller. The talented cast is working hard to bring *Anatevka* to life! ☆

LORI MCKENNA IS A CONTRIBUTING WRITER TO JLIIFE MAGAZINE.



SGPV'S JEWISH YOUTH & PARENTS

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Like most ways of eating, a kosher diet can be very healthy—or very unhealthy.



kiddish

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Color Outside of the Lines

A guide to using art as therapy.

BY DIANA SHABTAI, PSY.D., ATR-BC.



Art is a fantastic coping mechanism and tool for emotional healing, wellness, self-care, stress relief and therapeutic creative expression—particularly during these post-pandemic times.

Making art aids in healthy mindful communication and expression of feelings and emotions—such as grief, depression and trauma ... what we've all been experiencing in recent years. It is a fantastic mindful coping

mechanism, helps healing and brings more clarity.

There are many beneficial creative ways to utilize art in our daily lives to practice healthy expression.

There is a strong connection between the arts and mental health (including self-care, wellness, self-love, mindfulness, attention, creativity and even improved cognition) and overall well-being.

Therapeutic art provides a way to gain



insight and understanding through self-expression. Art especially helps when words alone do not (with feelings, thoughts and emotions).

The creative process can help you identify and express those deep and difficult anxious feelings that we all feel sometimes. The process of creating art can be very calming and brings more self-awareness, which helps soothe stress, nervousness, and irritability.

Creating art actively helps you visually express and record experiences, perceptions, feelings, and imagination all while enhancing your physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Expression through art can help you gain insight, self-awareness, and it can even rejuvenate your capabilities to resolve and reconcile conflicts and problems.

Art making can help facilitate change. The art assists with developing interpersonal,

physical, cognitive, emotional, and social skills for healthy communication.

Art as self-care aids in increasing self-esteem/self-love/confidence and self-expression. Art is a healthy and fun coping mechanism. It helps people explore self-expression, such as new creative ways to gain personal insight and develop new coping skills.

The act of creating art calms the nervous system, promotes mindfulness, focus (reduction of over stimulation from outside sources), and the sense of accomplishment from creating a piece of art. Art exploration can aid in reducing anxiety by encouraging expression of feelings, problem solving and goal setting, which aids in working towards improved thinking patterns. Art is especially helpful when verbal expression is limited.

Art is an encouraging playful form of expression, which is especially great for kids. However, art is beneficial for all ages. It can be beneficial for anxiety reduction and would especially be beneficial at this time and start of this new year for children, teens, and families.

Some uplifting helpful art activities that are helpful particularly in regards to anxiety reduction are painting, crafting and clay. Also, creating a Vision collage can be helpful in setting goals especially to aid with the anxiety that may come with the new year and healing from the pandemic). You may also try creating a Gratitude Journal, which focuses on things you are grateful for (this can also help reduce anxiety). Affirmation art (ex: reflect



on affirmations to help cope with anxious feelings) and Mandala art (creating patterns in a mindful and meditative manner helps

reduce heightened emotions).

Expressive abstract art and emotion wheel/color therapy (a mind body connection) are also helpful art activities which aid in anxiety. There is much to discover from the therapeutic world of art!

Everyone is a creative expressive artist and it's the process, not the product that matters most. Art can help everyone. ☆



DIANA SHABTAI, PSY.D., ATR-BC, IS A CONTRIBUTING WRITER TO KIDDISH MAGAZINE.

Is Kosher Food Healthier?

Like most ways of eating, a kosher diet can be very healthy—or very unhealthy.

BY MY JEWISH LEARNING



Kosher foods are those that conform to Jewish dietary laws as given in the Torah and expanded by the rabbis. People who keep kosher do not eat certain animal species including pigs, birds of prey, and crustaceans. They also do not eat the blood of any animals, nor do they consume animals that have not been slaughtered in an approved manner. And people who keep kosher also do not mix dairy and meat products in single meal, instead waiting a set amount of time between these two categories of food.

In modern times, when many foods are pro-

cessed in factories, some food manufacturers affix labels to their foods to indicate that they are kosher. Kosher certification confirms that a leg of chicken comes from an animal that has been slaughtered in a kosher manner, or that a can of soup has been prepared in a facility that ensured non-kosher ingredients did not come into contact with the contents of the can.

The laws of keeping kosher are ancient, and many have sought an explanation for their origin—especially the Jewish taboo against eating pig—in the idea that this diet conveys health benefits. The idea is that pig meat was more likely to be diseased



and avoiding it was a way to remain healthier. Though there may be some truth to this explanation, it doesn't provide a strong explanation for all of the Jewish dietary regulations.

Is a Kosher Diet Healthier Than Other Diets?

Today, while many Jews keep kosher for religious reasons, some people (Jews and non-Jews) prefer kosher food because they believe it to be healthier. For one, they know that processed kosher foods are more closely supervised than other foods. And fresh foods, like salad greens, are carefully inspected for insects.

But while many, though not all dietitians might agree that not eating pig meat—or at least not consuming it in large quantities—is in fact beneficial to one's health, there is little reason to think that a kosher diet is inherently healthier than any other. Just as a vegan diet composed entirely of beer and

french fries is unlikely to improve one's health, a kosher diet that is loaded with processed meats and soda (read the interesting history of how Coca Cola became kosher!) is not likely to convey health benefits. Indeed, many of the traditional Ashkenazi foods that are thought of as quintessential "Jewish food" are not considered the most healthy foods around. (Traditional Sephardic cuisine may in fact be much better for you.) There is also a concern that to avoid bug contamination in produce, kosher vegetables are sprayed with extra pesticides that are not great for human health.

Although there is wide disagreement about what constitutes a healthy diet, one can pursue almost any diet (vegan, vegetarian, whole foods, paleo, keto, Mediterranean, etc.) while keeping kosher. As a bonus, raw vegetables and fruits are inherently kosher! So eat your veggies. ✨

COOKING JEWISH

Lifestyle

HEALTHY CHOICES

Fall in love with
vegetables

BY JUDY BART KANCIGOR

Salmon en Papillote

Amanda Cohen, chef/owner of Manhattan's Dirt Candy – she'd rather call it a vegetable restaurant than a vegetarian restaurant—knew she had found her calling while working at the upscale Diner Bar in Spanish Harlem. "I was working with one other cook turning out up to 200 covers each night," she told me. "That's when I realized there was no going back."

Cohen became a vegetarian as a teenager. "I wasn't a feral child fending for myself, but I was definitely the member of my family who spent the most time in the kitchen," she recalled. Living in Hong Kong in the '90's—she calls it "the best food city on earth"—she fell in love with vegetables. "Everyone has a time in their life that shapes everything that follows, and for me this was it." Growing up in a Jewish home, she realized "in Judaism almost every observance revolves around food," and she envisioned turning Dirt Candy "into that rowdy, fun, delicious Rosh Hashanah dinner we all had when we were ten years old and the dining room was crowded, the noise level was high, and everyone was having a blast."

The restaurant's website explains the name: "Dirt Candy because vegetables are just candy from the dirt." Ranked as one of the 100 Best Restaurants in New York City by the New York Times, Dirt Candy was the first vegetable restaurant in the city, garnering a Michelin star and a James Beard Nomination for Cohen, who was the first vegetarian chef to compete on Iron Chef: America, and her comic cookbook, "Dirt Candy: A Cookbook" (Clarkson Potter,

\$22), currently in its seventh printing, is the first graphic novel cookbook to be published in North America.

"Cooking vegetables is not the easiest path," she noted. "It's easy to take black truffles and put that on something, or caviar, and have people go, 'Oh, my god, that's amazing,' but it's hard to take zucchini and have somebody go, 'That's amazing.'"

"What we eat can prevent disease, help us feel good, function optimally, and even heal and restore our body," writes Carly Knowles, Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, in "The Nutritionist's Kitchen" (Roost Books, \$24.95).

After college, Knowles moved to a remote village in Peru, with no running water or electricity and little fresh food, to work with a U.S. non-profit promoting healthy behavior change in rural and impoverished communities. "The diet in this rural village was extremely limited," she explained, "causing serious and irreversible health issues." When she discovered that many of the villagers had white spots in their eyes due to a vitamin A deficiency, a condition which could cause blindness, she had an epiphany. "I was inspired to study nutrition in more depth and learn how to transform everyday food into medicine." Knowles went on to receive a master's of science in nutrition from Bastyr University, the oldest accredited natural medicine college in the United States, and "The Nutritionist's Kitchen" is the culmination of her scientific study as well as her real-life experience with her patients.

How to transform your food into medicine? "Start with real food comprising whole, unprocessed,

and unrefined ingredients," she advises. "Instead of relegating medicine to pharmaceuticals, make the choice to eat food with life-giving energy versus food that depletes you of that energy. Eat food that exists in nature, real food that you can picture living and growing in its whole form in nature before it makes its way to your grocery store or farmers' market. Prioritize organic foods, both plant and animal, and buy seasonal produce."

With over 60 seasonal recipes, including Coconut Curry Red Lentil Stew, Salmon en Papillote, Beef and Beet Borscht, Flourless Chocolate Almond Butter Brownies, "The Nutritionist's Kitchen" is an approachable guide to supporting optimal health and wellness.

"My food philosophy is centered around the idea that food should taste good and bring you joy!" she writes. "My patients are always surprised when I say this. They often think that 'nutritious food' is bland and boring and that a dietitian only promotes diets and restrictions. I promote nutrition, of course, but not at the cost of sacrificing flavor or satisfaction." ☆

“**What we eat can prevent disease.**”

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.



Butternut Squash Soup

Salmon en Papillote

In French cuisine “en Papillote” refers to cooking or steaming food in parchment or paper pockets. You can substitute any type of fish in this recipe. Adjust cooking time as needed, depending on the thickness of the fish. Other seasonal vegetable variations include asparagus ribbons and basil, thinly sliced fennel and lemon, and thinly sliced orange and shallots.

Yield: 4 servings

Four (4-ounce) salmon fillets (skin on or off), washed and thoroughly dried

Sea salt and ground black pepper

1 small zucchini

2 large carrots

2 cloves garlic, peeled and thinly sliced crosswise

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 lemon, sliced paper-thin

Chopped flat-leaf parsley (garnish)

1. Cut four 18-inch-long pieces of parchment paper; fold each in half crosswise, creasing paper at fold. Using scissors, cut semicircle on folded parchment paper, using creased side as middle of circle. Discard pieces you cut off. When you open folded paper, you should reveal a symmetrical circle. Complete 4 parchment circles.

2. Preheat oven to 425°F. Salt and pepper salmon on all sides.

3. Using vegetable peeler, start at one end of zucchini (keep peel if organic). and peel long ribbons from top to bottom until you can't comfortably hold and peel any more (about 1 cup). Place in medium-size mixing bowl. Repeat with carrots, peeling long carrot ribbons (about 1 cup). Add carrots to bowl with garlic and olive oil; toss until well combined.

4. Place one parchment circle on baking sheet; place 1 fillet skin side down (if skin on) on one-half of circle. Place two slices lemon on top. Top with small handful (1/4 cup) vegetable mixture. Fold other half of parchment over filling and crimp sides together along rounded edge, folding tightly to completely seal pocket while leaving some air space in center of pocket. Repeat with other fillets. Bake 10 to 12 minutes until fish is cooked, (less time for thinner pieces of fish and more for thicker pieces).

5. To serve, place 1 pocket on each dinner plate for diners to open (my preferred way), or unwrap pockets, remove salmon and vegetables, and serve them together on a platter. Garnish with parsley, and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Source: “The Nutritionist’s Kitchen” by Carly Knowles

Butternut Squash Soup

“At the restaurant, I roast spaghetti squash and add a little pile of it to the bottom of each bowl.”

Yield: 4 servings

1 1/2 teaspoons coriander seeds

1/2 cup pumpkin seeds

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

2 cups chopped yellow onions

2 tablespoons chopped garlic

3 tablespoons chopped peeled fresh ginger

2 teaspoons ground sambar or curry powder

1/2 jalapeño, seeded and chopped

1 stalk lemongrass, chopped

1 lemon, peel only, removed with a peeler

1 tablespoon salt

4 cups diced peeled butternut squash, with seeds

2 tablespoons sugar (optional)

Coconut cream (1 tablespoon per serving)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.

2. In dry pan over medium heat, toast coriander seeds until fragrant, 5 minutes. Set aside.

3. Toast pumpkin seeds on baking sheet in oven until they turn golden brown and you hear them pop, about 15 minutes. Let cool, then grind into a powder.

4. Start a pot over medium heat with olive oil, onions, and garlic. Add 8 cups water and remaining ingredients except squash, sugar, and coconut cream. Bring to a boil over medium heat, then reduce heat to low, and simmer 30 minutes. Add squash and cook until fork-tender, about 20 minutes. Taste, and if it's slightly bitter, add sugar a teaspoon at a time (up to 2 tablespoons). How much you need to add depends on sugar content of squash.

5. Pour contents of pot into baking dish and roast in oven until it reduces and a crust starts to form, about 1 hour.

6. Remove from oven and strain, then push through a chinois. Let cool to room temperature. Skim oil off top. Line chinois with cheesecloth and push through again to make sure all chunks are removed. Serve with dollop of coconut cream.

Source: “Dirt Candy” by Amanda Cohen & Ryan Dunlavey

**MAKE
ME!
EASY TO
FOLLOW
RECIPE**

WHAT ARE JEWISH GENETIC DISEASES?

As many as 1 in 3 Ashkenazi Jews are estimated to be carriers for one of about 19 genetic diseases.

BY MY JEWISH LEARNING

Jewish genetic diseases are a group of rare autosomal recessive disorders that are far more prevalent among people with Jewish ancestry than in the general population. Autosomal recessive diseases are transmitted genetically by carrier parents who themselves do not suffer from the disorder but carry the genes that can cause the disease. When two carriers of a genetic mutation associated with a particular disorder have children together, each of their offspring has a one in four chance of developing the disease and a 50 percent chance of becoming carriers themselves.

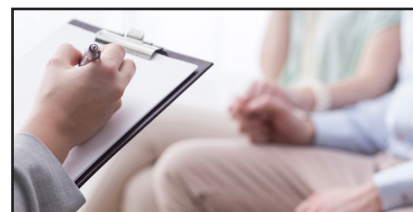
As many as one in three Ashkenazi Jews are estimated to be carriers for one of about 19 genetic diseases. In all, Jews have higher carrier rates for more than 40 genetic diseases. These include better-known disorders such as Gaucher disease, Cystic Fibrosis and Tay-Sachs, along with far rarer conditions like Nemaline Myopathy and Walker Warburg. Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews are also at risk for some genetic diseases, but these generally vary with the particular country of origin and do not affect Sephardic Jews as a whole. There are no known genetic

diseases specific to Ethiopian Jews.

While some Jewish genetic diseases can be effectively managed to permit those affected to lead mostly normal lives, none is curable and some are invariably fatal.

Certain diseases are believed to be more common among Jews because of the so-called founder effect, in which genetic diversity is reduced when a population descends from a small number of common ancestors. Moreover, since Jews historically have tended to marry only Jews, those mutations weren't passed along to other groups, and they weren't lessened by the introduction of new genes.

The best protection against these diseases is carrier testing, and there has been a broad push in recent years to make such testing standard practice for Jewish couples prior to pregnancy, and even prior to marriage. The incidence of some diseases has been reduced dramatically since genetic screening first became available in the 1970s. ☆



JEWISH GENETIC SCREENING

How to find out if you are a carrier for a Jewish genetic disease

By My Jewish Learning And Mjl Admin

Jewish genetic diseases are incurable, so the best defense against them is genetic screening to identify individuals who are carriers for particular diseases. Couples in which both partners are carriers for a particular disease have a number of options, including adoption, not having children, testing the fetus in utero, or in-vitro fertilization, in which embryos are tested for the disease and only implanted if they are healthy.

Who Should Be Tested and When

Most experts recommend that couples in which at least one partner has a Jewish grandparent undergo testing. The earlier testing is done, the more options are available. In some segments of the Orthodox community where marriage and dating are generally arranged by matchmakers, couples are screened for genetic incompatibilities before they even are introduced. In the broader Jewish community where such measures may be impractical, experts recommend individual testing prior to marriage, and absolutely prior to conception.

For couples screening, typically the woman is tested first and then her partner is tested for any diseases for which she is found to be a carrier. If only one partner is Jewish, it is generally that partner who is tested first. If the woman is already pregnant, both partners are tested simultaneously. If both are found to be carriers, then the fetus is tested for the disease.

How to Get Tested

People are generally screened with one procedure that simultaneously tests for multiple diseases. Various recommended testing panels include the most common Jewish genetic diseases, though some procedures screen for as many as 100 different conditions. Carrier testing is performed by DNA analysis, either from blood or saliva. Some diseases, like Tay-Sachs, may also require enzyme analysis. Screening can often be performed at an OB/GYN office or at a medical genetics facility. JScreen, a national nonprofit, offers home screening kits by mail at a cost of \$149 for those who have insurance. For those without, the price runs to \$349, and the organization does offer financial assistance for those who need it. Genetic counseling is provided by phone, so that couples understand their results and the options available to them.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SUNDAY, MARCH 3

10:30 - 11:30 AM

Bagel Babies
Contact Rabbi Sholom Harlig
info@ChabadInlandEmpire.com, CIE

THURSDAY, MARCH 7

7:30 - 11:30 PM

Ladies of Laughter Comedy
Fest: Improv and a
Live Podcast Recording
The Ice House
California Room
24 N Mentor Ave.
Pasadena, CA
<https://icehousecomedy.com/>,
JFGSGPV

FRIDAY, MARCH 8 & 22

10:00 - 11:30 AM

Gan Katan – PJ Library's Little
Garden Playgroup,
Contact Debby Singer
(626) 445-0810
dsinger@jewishsgpv.org
JFGSGPV

FRIDAY, MARCH 8

6:00 - 9:00 PM

Ladies of Laughter Comedy
Fest: Dinner at TBoyle's
T Boyle's Tavern
37 N. Catalina Ave.
Pasadena, CA
Contact Rebecca Russell
rrussell@jewishsgpv.org,
JFGSGPV

SATURDAY, MARCH 9

10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Shabbat Mevarchim
Contact Rabbi Sholom Harlig
info@ChabadInlandEmpire.com, CIE

SUNDAY, MARCH 10

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Ladies of Laughter Comedy
Fest: Workshops
Jewish Federation of the
Greater San Gabriel and
Pomona Valleys
114A W. Lime Avenue
Monrovia, CA
Contact Rebecca Russell
rrussell@jewishsgpv.org
Cost \$12.00, JFGSGPV

PURIM 2024

**BEGINS SATURDAY,
MARCH 23 AT SUNSET
ENDS SUNDAY, MARCH 24
AT NIGHTFALL**

SUNDAY, MARCH 24

4:30 - 8:30 PM

Purim Celebration
Contact Rabbi Sholom Harlig
info@ChabadInlandEmpire.com, CIE

**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

**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.templebethdavidsvgv.org

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

Temple B'nai Emet (TBE)
www.templebnaiemet.org

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

**Temple Shalom of
Ontario (TSO)**
www.templeshalomofontario.org

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

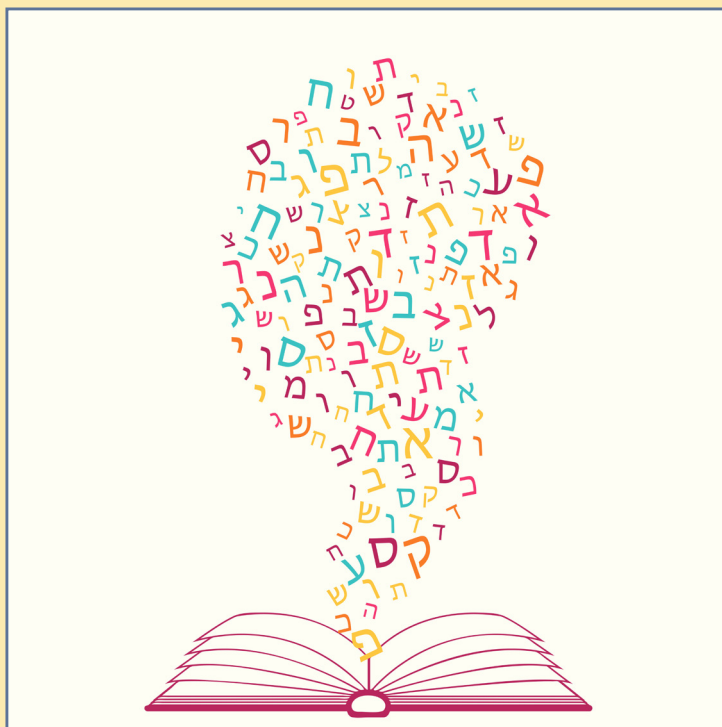


In celebration of Women's History Month and our Jewish Federation's 30th Anniversary, we invite you to our inaugural Ladies of Laughter Comedy Fest: Celebrating Funny Jewish Women.

Come out March 7-10 to the world-famous Ice House in Pasadena and laugh along with our lineup of performers. This 4-day festival will feature improv, sketch comedy, stand-up, and more from Jewish comedians like Or Mash, Judy Carter, Susan Messing, and headliner Cathy Ladman. And you can even join in on "making the funny" by registering to take a comedy workshop.

For ticket information and to see the festival's full lineup, visit: www.jewishsgpv.org or call 626.445.0810.

NEWS & JEWS



Exciting Announcement from Milken Community School

Dear Milken Alumni, Alumni Parents and Grandparents-

We are excited to share that the transfer of ownership of 15600 Mulholland Drive, formerly AJU's Familian Campus, to Milken Community School is officially complete. This is a transformational moment for Milken and for the entire Los Angeles Jewish community.

Throughout our people's history, excellence in Jewish education has always been at the center of our strongest communities. This is a generational moment for the Los Angeles Jewish community to invest in our future by creating a stronger school for our children. As Rabbi Jonathan Sacks (z"l) said, "Jews became the only people in history to predicate their very survival on education. The Egyptians built pyramids. The Greeks

built the Parthenon. The Romans built the Coliseum. Jews built schools."

This historic agreement triples Milken's campus in size, which will redefine what is possible to further impact the future of the Los Angeles Jewish community. As a leading Jewish community resource, this expansion will further provide Milken students with a safe and thriving environment, providing the future leaders and defenders of our tradition with enhanced programs, inspiring facilities, and strategic initiatives, as they prepare for the challenges of college and beyond.

The purchase and future capital projects on the site will be funded through philanthropic support. Milken has entered into a community-wide and historic Capital Campaign to build the property into a transformative campus, benefiting our students and the entire Jewish community. It is important for our community to invest in this campaign as we build a world class campus that will impact future generations of Milken students and the landscape of Jewish LA.

We are grateful for the incredible leadership of our Board Chair Richard Sandler and the partnership of Milken Community School's entire Board of Trustees. Without their dedication to and support of the future of the LA Jewish community, none of this would be possible.

Our students will be able to have some use of the site this spring including the performing arts spaces, athletics facilities and parking for our students and guests.

As Milken's mission says, "the world our children will create tomorrow is born in the school we build today." The impact will be community-wide, and it will be the entire community including faculty/staff, students, parents, alumni, alumni parents, grandparents and community leaders. It will also take the entire community to make this transformational project happen. In the coming months, our leadership team will work in partnership with the broader community to develop the vision for the site together.

To stay updated as we move forward, please visit milkenschool.org/eastcampus or email tbarak@milkenschool.org.

Sincerely,

Sarah Shulkind

Head of School



To take care of one's health is a mitzvah, and the Sages find this mandate implied in the words, "take heed to thyself and take care of your lives."

- Deuteronomy 4:9





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RCFE #198603118

Clearwater Newport Beach
(949) 751-6519
RCFE #306006401

Clearwater at Glendora
(626) 598-8692
RCFE #198603606



Scan QR code for more info

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