

The JEWISH REVIEW

Oregon and SW Washington's Online Jewish Newspaper

Jan. 6, 2021 / Tevet 22, 5781

Volume 56, Issue 1

*Israel and Zoom
beckon young — pages 4-6
Mocktails & eateries
reinvented — pages 8-9
Yahrzeit, obits — pages 11-12*



Rather than spend another year of college online, Jesse Rothstein (in mask) headed for Israel on a Masa Journey. Here he joins other Masa participants at the Kotel (Western Wall).

A new chapter in Israel

BY JESSE ROTHSTEIN

When I was sent home from Chapman University in Orange, Calif., in March 2020, we were in the midst of a global pandemic with no end in sight. I spent the online portion of the school year worried that it would still be like this in the fall. And of course, it was.

I had to weigh my options. Should I go back to school? That would mean staying at home and taking more courses online. I was not ready to spend another year at home after getting my first taste of independence. I would have to figure out another plan for my year. That's when I realized I should live with my older brother Jonah in Israel.

Flying across the world wasn't as simple as it used to be. I started to look into Masa-approved programs that could get me a visa to get into the country. I found Destination Israel, a program that would find me an internship in Tel Aviv. I could

live with my brother in Herzliya and take a short commute into the city. It was perfect. I made all the plans and left America at the end of October. My COVID summer had ended, and a new chapter began.

On arrival, I was required to quarantine for the first two weeks, during which I really began to bond with my "program-mates." Although we were all from vastly different parts of America and all doing completely different internships, we instantly clicked. It was like making friends at summer camp. We all shared a Jewish experience that shapes how we view the world. My favorite moments are from the two Shabbat dinners during our quarantine. I'm used to my parents taking charge of the food and the blessings, but this time I wanted to participate. Things feel completely different when you choose to do them yourself.

See MASA ISRAEL, page 4

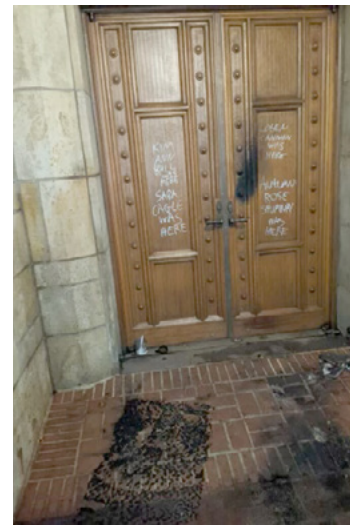
No sign of hate crime in fire at Beth Israel

Fire investigators from the Portland Police Bureau and Portland Fire and Rescue are asking for the public's help investigating a suspicious fire at a building on the grounds of Congregation Beth Israel in Northwest Portland.

"There is no indication that this was an anti-Semitic event," says Rabbi Michael Z. Cahana, senior rabbi of the Reform congregation.

A statement on Beth Israel's website notes, "There have been reports in the media about a small fire set outside the sanctuary on New Year's Eve. The damage to the side sanctuary doors was minor, and there is currently no indication of anti-Semitic intention. The investigation is ongoing, but the initial sense is that it was a small fire set by trespassers for their own use. It is unlikely the intent was to do damage. It was careless, but probably random."

A press release from the Portland Police Bureau details the event: On Wednesday, Dec. 30, 2020, at 9:10 pm, Portland Fire and Rescue responded to a call of a fire to a door of a Jewish education building in the 1900 block of Northwest Flanders Street. After the flames were extinguished, fire investigators responded and determined the fire appeared to be intentionally set. While we have no information that this is related to anti-Semitic or any other bias-related activity, it is nevertheless concerning that a fire might



have been intentionally set near a place of worship.

If you have information about this case, contact PPB Detective Meredith Hopper at Meredith.Hopper@portland.oregon.gov, 503-823-3408, or PF&R Fire Investigator Lieutenant Jason Andersen at Jason.Andersen@portland.oregon.gov, 503-823-3797.

In addition, Crime Stoppers of Oregon offers cash rewards of up to \$2,500 cash for information reported to Crime Stoppers that leads to an arrest in any unsolved felony crime, and tipsters can remain anonymous.

Visit the App Store and download P3 Tips or go online at p3tips.com/823 to submit secure and anonymous tips.

Crime Stoppers of Oregon is funded 100 percent by community donations. To support Crime Stoppers with a donation, please visit <http://www.crimestoppersoforegon.com/>

PDX support helps Israeli crisis team save lives

BY DEBORAH MOON

Portland funding for nine special projects in Israel during COVID have had even more impact than usual. ERAN, an NGO that provides mental health first aid to residents of Israel in emotional distress, received \$18,000 to provide ongoing training of volunteers in five ERAN branches.

Since March, ERAN has received an unprecedented number of calls, more than 1,100 calls a day for a total of 260,000 calls in nine months, with 6,000 calls from people feeling suicidal. Each day, ERAN has kept two or three people from committing suicide.

"ERAN received the largest grant in this cycle because not only were we impressed with the organization generally, but clearly in this global COVID climate, the mental health work they do is that much more important and impactful," says

Jewish Federation of Greater Portland Director of Community Relations and Public Affairs Bob Horenstein.

Each year, the JFGP's Overseas Special Projects Committee allocates funds for programs in Israel that help vulnerable populations. This year that funding was even more vital.

"Your partnership has been very significant," wrote ERAN Director of Resource Development Ayala Gottfeld in a mid-year grant report to the OSP Committee. "It allowed us to provide emotional crisis and suicide-prevention services to every person dealing with emotional ordeals, including depression, sexual or mental abuse, loneliness, mental illness, distress or unemployment, which increased amid the coronavirus crisis."

She said the funds enabled ERAN to extend its services by providing training and enrichment services to the volunteers

in five branches – Kfar Saba, Hadera, Tel Aviv, Rishon LeZion and Netanya.

OSP Committee Chair Yafit Heyman said it was obvious this year that all the organizations applying for grants were impacted by COVID. But ERAN's need for more training and support for its volunteers was especially compelling.

"Their call volume tripled, and people were in desperate need for mental health issues," says Yafit of the committee's review of the grant request in May. "We felt we couldn't just be silent on this."

Yafit says that the mid-year report shows Eran "delivered exactly what they said they would."

In the mid-year report, Ayala writes: "The grant improved the listening and group interaction skills of the volunteers. It increased the volunteers' knowledge in mental health-related issues and empowered

them in providing unconditional emotional support and crisis intervention to people in distress."

"Facing new realities of working from home, temporary unemployment, home-schooling of children, and lack of physical contact with other family members, friends and colleagues highlighted the need to increase ERAN's emotional support services urgently," wrote Ayala.

With the onset of COVID, to provide emergency emotional crisis intervention services online and on the phone, ERAN had to open lines in Russian, Amharic and Arabic in a short time. At the same time, ERAN's 1,450 volunteers had to shift to work at home, requiring equipment and increased job supervision, training and technical support.

"On behalf of our beneficiaries, we thank you again for your kind donation," concluded Ayala.



Focus on wellness

Community Wellness Havdalah

Jan. 9, 6 pm, on Zoom (see page 3)

Mental Wellness workshop

Jan. 13, noon, on Zoom

JPro Greater Portland and The Blue Dove Foundation present: Making Mental Wellness Part of Your Community's Culture, which engages participants in a variety of activities that focus on encouraging mental wellness in their community. Sign up: <https://forms.gle/S5FU7APW2tzn8jzUA>.

Jewish Perspectives on Rest

Jan. 13, 7 pm, on Zoom

The Oregon Board of Rabbis presents Give it a Rest! Jewish Perspectives on Rest and Mental Health. The event is free but [advance registration is required](#). Email joann@oregonboardofrabbis.org.

To see more local and national wellness programs and events visit:

jewishportland.org/wellness

Community's new security tool

The new security page on the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's website (jewishportland.org/security) goes far beyond the public safety adage, "see something, say something," says Regional Security Director Gene Moss.

The security page includes a [link](#) to an incident report form, so that community members can report any suspicious incident.

"We want you to feel empowered to do something," says Gene, who spent 28 years with the Washington County Sheriff's Office serving as chief of police and enforcement commander of patrol and detective divisions. "This is a process to be able to do something about suspicious activity, graffiti, anti-Semitic events and minor crimes."

Gene urges people to call 911 for emergencies and to report suspicious activity to the police, as well, but he notes that they may not be able to get to it right away. "So we want you to report suspicious activity to us so we can track it," says Gene, noting he also has the background to assess situations and share information with appropriate local, state and federal law enforcement agencies for action and resolution.

"I can also share information with the Anti-Defamation League and the national Security Community Network," says Gene. The Secure Community Network is the na-

tional safety and security organization that works to implement best-practice security programs on behalf of Jewish institutions and communities across the United States.

The sharp rise in hate crimes and anti-Semitic attacks and rhetoric throughout the world, coupled with the current COVID-19 pandemic spread, has left the Jewish community with grave concerns about individual and communal safety. The Jewish Federation and local synagogues and agencies have come together to financially support this security initiative, but they need community members to help us make sure that our Jewish community is secure and safe.

The goal of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Security Initiative is to identify and assess any potential threats to our community. It is extremely important to report incidents as soon as you witness them.

The security page also includes resources and training materials for local congregations, agencies and Jewish organizations. Groups can sign up on the page for training programs or request a walk-through or assessment of the group's security plan. Groups can also request an emergency operations plan, emergency response guide, crisis communication plan, and procedures and policies to deal with emergencies such as earthquakes, bomb threats or trespassing.



Br'it & B'rachot A Community Wellness Havdalah

January 9, 2020 at 6pm

**Come together in community to nurture our
mental health & wellness and celebrate the
start of a new week with Havdalah.**

Register Now:

jewishportland.org/wellnesshavdalah



Jewish Federation®
OF GREATER PORTLAND



Applications open for teen science camp in Israel

BY DEBORAH MOON

Local high schoolers with an aptitude in STEM are invited to apply for SciTech 2021, the Technion Israel Institute of Technology's summer international science research camp on Technion's campus in Haifa, Israel. The application is open to current 11th and 12th graders (graduating in 2021 and 2022).

"Even with the COVID-19 worldwide situation, we hope that by July 2021 we will be able to operate SciTech 2021 safely," says Tal Neeman of Technion's SciTech team. If the camp cannot be run, a full refund of the application fee will be made.

In 2013, a teen from Vancouver, Wash., participated in the summer research camp. At age 17, Mitchell Kaiser participated in SciTech, where he was paired with an Israeli researcher to work on his long-term passion for fresh water. He had participated in StreamTeam since he was 11. He learned the value of tikkun olam (healing the world) at Congregation Kol Ami, where his family are still members. Mitchell's research

at the Technion involved the development of a quick way to detect bacterial contamination in drinking water.

Mitchell is now a third-year graduate student in the University of Washington's Department of Chemistry. He works in the lab of Professor Jun Liu studying the physical properties of the surface of two-dimensional semiconductors and their interface with liquids and solutions.

"Looking back on my experience at SciTech, it was instrumental in preparing me for a career in advanced scientific research," says Mitchell. "It was a unique opportunity to work with incredibly knowledgeable and passionate scientists on real research to solve important problems."

Of his current research, he says: "Through this research, we hope to learn how to intentionally tune the properties of a material for a desired application, such as sensing or catalysis. Previously, the general process of material development was first to discover a material, then figure out what it was use-



Mitchell Kaiser from Vancouver, Wash., delivers his final presentation during SciTech in 2013.

ful for. We hope to replace this process of trial and error with a method of understanding what material properties are needed for a specific application and then synthesizing a new material with those properties."

Applicants for this summer's program can choose from two disciplines: medicine/life science/biology or exact science/engineering.

This will be the 27th anniversary of SciTech. This English

language program is intended for students with exceptional ability in mathematics, science or computer technology. Students gain hands-on experience in the Technion's modern research laboratories under the supervision of faculty members.

Registration for SciTech 2021 is open until Feb 7.

More information about SciTech2021 and application information are available online at scitech.technion.ac.il.

MASA ISRAEL (story continued from page 1)

I was tasked with saying kiddush (the blessing over the wine) as I was the only one with the words memorized. I felt more connected to my Judaism than I had in years. I realized that wherever I go, as long as there are Jews, I have a family. The rest of quarantine went by quickly, and soon I was free. I packed up my things and took a taxi to my new apartment. My brother greeted me on the sidewalk and helped me unpack. I was finally where I had been dreaming about for the past several months. After not seeing my older brother for years at a time, I was spending time with him every day. I had freedom to go to the market and buy fresh food, lie on the beach and watch the sunset, or sit in my room and play guitar on my bed. And that's when I wasn't at my internship.



Jesse Rothstein, left, with older brother Jonah during Chanukah in Herzliya where they were volunteering at a community garden.

The main focus of my program is an internship in Tel Aviv, the city where my maternal grandmother spent her young adulthood. Now I am in the very place she talked about. Walking through the streets gives me a stronger connection to my family and myself. Every

Sunday and Thursday, I take an hour bus into the city. It's a good time to think and listen to music. I also have time to look at the beautiful city I am spending so much time in. It's completely different than what I'm used to in Portland. Flags of many countries and religions

are waved proudly at every street corner. Delicious smells from restaurants and fresh fruit stands drift into the bus. Art covers almost every surface. It's one of those places people from across the world travel to, and now I know why. Although I was born on the other side of the planet, I feel like I belong.

The past few months have helped me understand that everyone has to travel to really experience life. We are all content living in the bubbles we create for ourselves, forgetting that it isn't what true life is. We need to have new experiences, meet new people, try new foods and live a little outside of our comfort zone every once in a while. It's the only way to know what you might be missing. The world is huge and full of amazing things. The only person who can help you see it is you.

Exploring, volunteering in Israel with JNF

BY OLIVER TWAIN

As a student at the University of Oregon, I moved home in March to finish the term virtually. If I'm being honest, I didn't love taking my courses from home.

I had been to Israel on the Alexander Muss program for a semester during my junior year in high school. One of my friends from that program called and said that Jewish National Fund was going to have a similar program for freshmen and sophomores in college who wanted to take the fall as a gap term. After finding out a little more about the program, I swiftly made a decision and was on a plane to Israel the next month.

The Frontier program was focused on volunteering; we also had a couple of classes on the Jewish people's history and a Hebrew class to complete the experience. There were three main geographical areas (south, north and central) where we lived and worked. After quarantining for two weeks at our home base in Hod Hasharon, we went to the south and stayed in Be'er Sheva at Ben Gurion University. While we were there, we volunteered on a couple of farms doing agricultural work. I also laid the foundation for a house on one of the farms. Besides the farm work, I got to paint a playground at a school and the inside of a refugee center. From there, we went to the north and stayed at Moshav Ben Ami. My volunteer experience involved packing up food and necessities for families that needed it at a center in Akko. Finally, we finished up in Hod Hasharon, and I worked at a food pantry in Lod.

Besides the volunteering, we went on a variety of hikes and excursions as we walked through Israel's history. Highlights for me were learning more about the Eritrean Women's Center for immigrants in Tel Aviv and volunteering there to assemble packages of toys, furniture and food for the women and their families. I loved being in the north,



Oregonian Oliver Twain volunteered in a variety of programs during a fall gap term in Israel.

WANT AN ISRAEL EXPERIENCE?

Masa Israel Journey is accepting young adults for spring 2021 programs. Masa Journey offers immersive experiences for young diaspora Jews; it lasts two to 12 months and includes study, volunteering and career development programs. Masa offers a wide range of programs through a network of partners. For more information visit www.masaisrael.org.

One Masa partner is the Alexander Muss Institute for Israel Education (AMIIIE-JNF), which will offer a Spring Semester (Jan. 26-May 27, 2021) of Frontier Israel for college freshmen and sophomores currently enrolled in U.S. academic institutions. Frontier Israel is designed to provide a real life, modern day pioneering experience. For more information, contact Marni Heller at 212-879-9305 ext. 485 or visit amhsi.org/programs/frontier-israel.

The **Jewish Federation of Greater Portland** offers Chai Israel scholarships for high school, summer or gap year programs in Israel. Gap year scholarships are for high school graduates who have not yet started college. For more information, contact Rachel Nelson at rachel@jewishportland.org or 503-892-7415.

where we rode mountain bikes through a nature reserve (Agamon HaHula), drove jeeps in the Golan and visited an abandoned Syrian intelligence center where Eli Cohen had been based. I had a few exciting ex-

periences in Jerusalem, which included wandering into an empty Holy Church of Sepulchre, joining a rally when the American election results were announced and visiting the Knesset where Miki Zohar (the

Coalition leader) talked to us. I also made some fun memories zipping around on a scooter in Tel Aviv.

Of course, the best part of the trip was meeting and having the experience with 20 other people my age from across the United States who all attend different colleges.

I've been asked many times, "what about COVID-19?" COVID is definitely a factor in Israel. Just like here, we had to wear masks, stay sanitized and limit our gatherings to the people in our group. That said, we met with farmers, speakers and nonprofit leaders who took the same precautions.

After being in Israel two years prior, it was hard to see the toll that the pandemic has taken across the country. Walking through Tsfat and seeing the empty artisan shops, not being able to see some of our close family friends who live there and noticing the restaurants that have had to shut down was heartbreaking. That said, Israel is Israel and as always, the nation will persevere. I'm already looking forward to the next time I can walk the streets and be in a country that I call home.

PDX Pathways kicks off cohort 5 on Zoom

Nineteen young Jewish professionals and their mentors gathered virtually in December for the kickoff of the fifth cohort of PDX Pathways, a mentoring and leadership program for Jewish young professionals ages 21 through 35ish.

"I'm really proud to see these young adults come together during difficult times to improve themselves and create intentional Jewish community," says JFGP Young Leadership and Communications Manager Nadine Menashe. "Our program kickoff was the first time everyone was on screen together, including our incredible mentors."

This will be the first virtual cohort, and the first to offer four mentor group types: Jewish professionals, mid-level pro-

fessionals, young professionals (two cohorts); and leadership development. The program runs from January through May following the December kickoff party on Zoom, which was held so that participants and mentors could meet each other.

"We started the event with some quick activities to get everyone comfortable interacting as a full cohort and then in smaller breakout rooms," says Nadine. "I used a website called Mentimeter, where you can create polls that participants answer on their phones as they watch the answers pop up on their computer screens in real time. We also got everyone out of their seats to go grab an item that represented a personal success for them, and then they



The 19 young Jewish professionals in this year's PDX Pathways program met each other and their mentors on Zoom Dec. 21, 2020.

discussed what that success meant to them while also introducing themselves to individuals they had never met before."

Then the mentor groups met for the first time and discussed their hopes for the mentorship

experience.

"I know that meeting for the first time virtually can feel really awkward, so it felt important to dive into that initial interaction before the program formally starts in January," says Nadine.

Young adults invited to Sip & Tzedakah Jan. 20

Sip & Tzedakah presents a Virtual Giving Circle for young adults at 7 pm, Jan. 20.

Created for younger adults in their 20s and 30s, Sip & Tzedakah gatherings provide a chance to give back while meeting new people and having fun. Sip & Tzedakah is a program of the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation and the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland.

"Our partnership with OJCF

has pivoted during the pandemic, just like everything else," says Nadine Menashe, JFGP young leadership and communications manager. "We used to get together to raise money for our community at local bars and restaurants, but now we're glad to have the opportunity to gather online and look at the concept of tzedakah through a different lens – one of justice in education and community rather than just raising money."

In her role as OJCF program officer, Sonia Marie Leikam leads programs to engage the next generation of leaders; those programs include Sip & Tzedakah, the Oregon Jewish Community Youth Foundation and the OJCF Giving Council.

"After a year like 2020, we know more than ever the power of coming together," says Sonia Marie. "Giving collectively allows us to have more impact and bond together in service to our community. Although we are not able to gather over drinks in a bar, we are still able to connect with each other and respond to the needs of our community."

Giving circles bring people together to pool their charitable contributions and go through an intentional process to decide how to allocate their funds.

"We're only asking everyone to contribute \$18, but at the end

of the night we'll have a great pot of money to give to one really deserving organization," says Nadine. "For our virtual giving circle, we're getting together over Zoom to really learn about different organizations that work with homeless youth: Outside In, P:ear, Outside the Frame and New Avenues for Youth.

Participants will break out into small groups with each group learning about one of these organizations and how they impact our community. When the groups reconvene, each group will try to convince the other groups to give their organization all the pooled money.

To register and make a donation, visit jewishportland.org/sip-and-tzedakah.

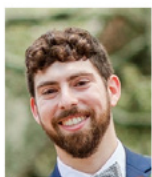
For questions, contact Nadine at nadine@jewishportland.org or Sonia Marie at soniamariel@ojcf.org.

Public Service Announcement



Covid-19 Vaccine Q&A
With Sam Stampfer and Erin Ross

Thursday, January 14, 7-8 PM
Zoom link provided day of event



Sam Stampfer, MD, PhD, is a physician scientist in his final year of infectious diseases fellowship at Emory University, where he develops vaccines for potential pandemics, including Ebola and coronaviruses.



Erin is a science journalist and the lead Covid-19 reporter for Oregon Public Broadcasting. Her work has also appeared in national and regional publications including NPR and Scientific American.



Register & submit questions here
<https://tinyurl.com/CNSCOS-Vaccines>



Financial Planning for Life Post-COVID-19

The Mittleman Jewish Community Center's PDX Business Series continues with a program on Financial Planning for Life Post-COVID-19 at noon, Jan. 21.

The program will be moderated by Marni Glick, treasurer of MJCC and PJA boards. Panelists are Rich Barker, wealth management advisor, Merrill Lynch, and Mort Simon, financial advisor, Simon Financial Services.

Free but \$18 donations requested. Register: oregonjcc.org/pdxbiz.

Fertile Ground Fest offers Window into Elder World

BY DEBORAH MOON

A humorous play on elder advocacy by Portland Jewish playwright Darlene Zimbardi comes to the virtual world in February as part of the Fertile Ground Festival of New Work 2021.

A program of the Portland Area Theatre Alliance, Fertile Ground will present 40 projects for the 12th annual festival, which is virtual and free for the first time (donations encouraged). This year's festival productions will stream on Fertile Ground's Facebook and YouTube channels from Jan. 28 through Feb. 7, 2021. Each show will premiere on a scheduled date during the 11-day festival, with most accessible for on-demand viewing until Feb. 15, 2021.

This is the third play in Darlene's series "Reports from the Elder Front," inspired by her own advocacy for her aging mother on the East Coast. The first play performed at Profile Theatre involves a four-day whirlwind to move Darlene's mom and her dog into assisted living. Last year's part 2 marked Darlene's first appearance in the Fertile Ground Festival. This latest installment, "A Window into Elder World," illuminates the perils of elder advocacy as a daughter advocates from afar for her mother, marooned in an assisted-living facility across the country during COVID.

"It is the sad joys of being an elder and the heartbreaking ups and downs," says Darlene of the trilogy. "It's a dark humor piece. ... 'A Window into Elder World' shines a light in the labyrinth of elder advocacy while laughing at the absurdities along the way."

WINDOW INTO ELDER WORLD

A theatrical reading by Darlene Zimbardi, directed by Steph Myers

Part of 12th Annual Fertile Ground Festival of New Works

Premiers 7 pm, Feb. 5

Streams until Feb. 15 on Fertile Ground's [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) channels

Free; donations accepted

Festival Schedule: fertilegroundpdx.org

"It's a wake-up call," she adds. "So many caregivers go into it blindly and don't even know where to start."

Darlene says writing the plays is her contribution to social justice, which she says drew her to Judaism.

Darlene grew up going to mass and attending Catholic school. In high school, she attended a public school where most of her classmates were Jewish. "As soon as I met my high school friends, the value of education and the arts came to the forefront," she says.

Later as an adult, complications from lupus put her on life support. When she recovered, she went searching for a spiritual home and attended a class at the 92nd Street Y in New York. She converted to Judaism in 1997 and worked for Synagogue 2000 for a time. She and her husband, Allen Maertz, whom she met in New York City shortly after 9/11, moved to Portland in 2006. After attending Havurah Shalom



Last year at Fertile Ground, playwright Darlene Zimbardi (left) and her cast, Debbie Marr, Jeanette Ceccarelli Williams and Gerie Vose, performed live; this year they will be on Zoom screens.

High Holiday services and home-based gatherings at Geshar, she joined Congregation Shir Tikvah.

In addition to her social advocacy plays, she also volunteers for elderly and end-of-life organizations. She represents Shir Tikvah on the cemetery committee that oversees the Jewish Cemetery at River View. She volunteered for Signature Hospice for a number of years and now serves as a volunteer for Oregon's Ombudsman program.

She also will be offering a free writing workshop for caregivers in conjunction with her staged reading at Fertile Ground (recorded on Zoom). The workshop and theatrical reading are supported by a Catalyst grant from the Regional Arts & Culture Council. The workshop will be 11 am, Feb. 6. For the Zoom link, email Darlene at Darlene.zimbardi@gmail.com.

Israel360 presents two January programs

Israel360 is a series that focuses on historical, cultural and political aspects of Israel with a monthly program. January will feature two programs.

Middle East experts David Makovsky and Dennis Ross will speak on "What's Next: The Insiders' Take" at 4 pm, Jan. 6, on Zoom. The two men have spent a lifetime deconstructing the complexities of that part of the world throughout many presidential administrations. Go behind the scenes and learn about the "real intrigue" on Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Qatar and more, and what it means for Israel and the American Jewish community.

This program is presented in collaboration with numerous synagogues throughout the country. Register at bit.ly/38TXncB

The second program is a virtual tour of Israel led by Rabbi Rob Kahn, an Israeli tour guide and the son of Portlanders and Neveh Shalom members Garry and Judith Kahn.

"The Mystery of Herod the Great: Film and Colorful Insights" will be pre-



Portland native Rabbi Rob Kahn will share colorful insights of Herod's reign during a Jan. 30 Zoom program from Israel.

sented on Zoom at 11 am, Jan. 30.

Congregation Neveh Shalom rabbi emeritus Rabbi Daniel Isaak is coordinating the program with Rabbi Kahn.

"King Herod was arguably the most flamboyant, enigmatic character in all of Jewish history," says Rabbi Isaak. "A paranoid megalomaniac, he knew how to curry favor with his Roman overlords to secure his power. He rivaled Cleopatra of Egypt prior to her affair with Mark Antony."

Herod was both admired and despised,

engendering hatred as well as fear. He had his own children and his beloved wife executed. Whether he was even Jewish is a matter of debate. He ruled as king of Judea for 34 years.

No builder before or since has left a greater footprint in the land of Israel.

"Every pilgrim to Israel cannot but marvel at the 2,000-year-old remnants of his reign," says Rabbi Isaak. Those remnants include the Western Wall constituting a small segment of the grand Temple platform, the three-tiered palace including frescoes atop Masada, the remains of the man-made port of Caesarea replete with hippodrome and amphitheater, and his hideaway wilderness refuge at Herodium, where his remains have only recently been discovered.

Register for the tour at bit.ly/38Pd6JK

For questions about either program, contact Lisa Marie Lynch at receptionist@nevehshalom.org or 503-246-8831.

Student's mocktail book helps feed hungry kids

BY DEBORAH MOON

Portland Jewish Academy seventh-grader Jake Chisholm did not let a global pandemic interfere with his yearlong community service project to raise funds for the Portland Backpack Project. The project provides backpacks full of food to kids who are experiencing food insecurity.

Though his party will have to wait, Jake decided to finish his project to publish and sell a cookbook of mocktails he created. Proceeds from book sales are donated to the Portland Backpack Project. The first run of 100 books sold out quickly, and another 100 copies are on the way. Copies of *Makeshift Mocktails: Mocktails for Every Season* are \$12. To order, visit jakechisholm.com.

Jake has attended PJA since first grade.

"It has been a wonderfully welcoming and supportive community for us, even though we are not Jewish," according to an email from his parents, Carrie Wynkoop and Kari Chisholm.

Jake wanted to share some of the bar mitzvah experience all of his school friends were experiencing, so (in collaboration with his parents and teachers) he decided to do a community service project culminating in a big party.

"He's always loved cooking, and in the last couple of years



Seventh-grade mixologist Jake Chisholm has created 26 mocktails for his book to raise funds for the Portland Backpack Project.

that love has turned to making creative drinks, so he came up with the idea of a cookbook for mocktails," explain Carrie and Kari. "He's always been a community-focused kid – one of the many reasons we love PJA – and for the past couple of years has been focused on inequality and food insecurity. He was exposed to the Portland Backpack Project at PJA and decided that, especially during the pandemic when those kids who depend on food at school didn't have as much access to the program, he would donate the proceeds of his book to them."

Jake experimented and created 26 mocktail recipes and



organized them into four seasons. He developed the recipes, wrote all the descriptions and took all the pictures.

Jake says his dad likes to make cocktails. "He showed me how to make cocktails without the alcohol, otherwise known as mocktails. As soon as I started making them almost on a regular basis, I knew that I was hooked."

Kari and Carrie say they are very proud of Jake. "It would've been easy for him to just spend some time coming up with fun drinks and leaving it there," they write. "But he had to learn how to use Microsoft Publisher to create the book, type in all the recipes, come up with

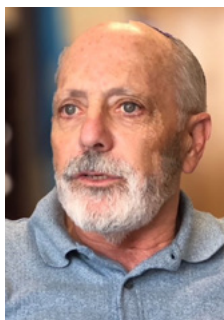
descriptions for them all, find photos, etc. It has been a long project with lots of ups and downs, but we're thrilled that he saw it all the way through to the end."

"The response has been very enthusiastic," write Kari and Carrie. "We think that as folks move on from the holidays into a time when people are focused on getting healthy and not drinking so much alcohol, we'll see the book sales pick up again. We even had a well-known bartender from Washington, D.C., order two copies of the book!"

And the family is planning a big 14th birthday party when the pandemic is over.

Conservative Judaism taps Steve Sirkin as new regional chair

Steve Sirkin became the regional chairperson for the USCJ's Northern Pacific Region on Jan. 1. The position includes a seat on the board of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, the major congregational organization of Conservative Judaism in North America. The region encompasses Conservative synagogues from Northern California, Oregon, Washington, part of Nevada and the two western provinces of Canada.



Steve says he is looking forward to his new role because, "It will give me the opportunity to engage with and learn from Jews, and Jewish communities associated with the Conservative movement, across the Pacific Region's states and provinces and beyond. In my own way helping to strengthen and guide the evolution of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, and its synagogues, from their historical roots into the post pandemic world we are all about to enter."

Steve is a member, volunteer and board secretary of Congregation Neveh Shalom in Portland and is a Northern Pacific Region Synagogue Ambassador. He is a retired teacher who served as president of his previous synagogue, Adat Chaim, in

Reisterstown, Md.

Synagogue ambassadors are part of a team of individuals from synagogues in the region who are committed to learning about USCJ and sharing information about USCJ with other synagogue leaders in the region.

Steve succeeded Jerry Bloom as regional chairperson. Jerry will continue as an NPR synagogue ambassador.

Steve will support synagogues in the region in partnership with regional Synagogue Consultant Rachel Sisk and the team of committed NPR Synagogue Ambassadors from across the region. If you'd like to get involved with NPR on a leadership level, contact Steve at stevejew18@frontier.com or Rachel at rsisk@uscj.org.

Portland eateries reinvent themselves

BY KERRY POLITZER

As many Portland restaurant owners can attest, the COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging on an epic scale. The [Portland Food and Drink](#) blog keeps a running tally of area restaurant closures, which recently reached 100. Surviving eateries are recasting themselves as groceries or “ghost kitchens,” building covered outdoor spaces or launching new concepts.

While it’s difficult to find a silver lining in this crisis, some of Portland’s most beloved restaurateurs continue to delight customers, who remain hungry for innovative, delicious offerings. And some have even found ways to honor their Jewish heritage in the process.

Bonnie Morales, chef/owner of the high-end Russian restaurant [Kachka](#), had to think quickly when the pandemic reached Oregon. “We had to go down to a skeleton crew; it was heart-wrenching. And with a food business, you have perishable inventory, and it’s expensive. So, we had \$15,000 worth of food sitting there rotting, and we had to make good use of it.”

Bonnie had to brainstorm how to communicate with her customers without having them enter the building. At first, she conducted all business through phone orders, trying to offer her entire fine-dining menu so that she could sell off her inventory. But she soon realized that this strategy wasn’t sustainable.

She soon found a niche in takeout dinner boxes. “One of the very first things that came up was Passover; this would have been our fifth year doing a seder. I was bummed to not have this holiday; it was this way I could express this other part of my culture that I don’t typically get to do (at the restaurant). So we did this dinner box for Passover, and it was this huge success. We sold out in two or three days!” Several generations of family members would pick up seder boxes and then celebrate Passover over Zoom. Ever since, Kachka



Justin King, owner of Ben and Esther’s, is thinking outside the box during the pandemic’s assault on traditional restaurant operations. He has transitioned his deli to an all-vegetarian menu. Photo by Aaron Lee Photography

has offered dinner boxes, with home delivery through Community Cycling Center.

Bonnie has also opened the Lavka Deli & Grocery, which offers a tantalizing variety of baked goods, caviar, meal kits and prepared foods. In addition, she started a line of frozen cheese and cherry dumplings that can be found at New Seasons, Green Zebra and other stores. And in December, the chef launched a special horseradish vodka, which had already sold through two entire pallets as of this writing.

In August, Allen Levin, who operated the currently closed Café at the J, opened the Garbonzos food cart in the Mittleman Jewish Community Center parking lot. The kosher, plant-based cart offers falafel, veggie kofta made from Beyond Burger, grilled vegetable plates, and a variety of salads and dips. View the menu or order online at [garbonzos.square.site](#).

While [Ben and Esther’s](#) owner Justin King offered deliveries at the start of the pandemic, when guidelines changed to allow takeout, he installed plexiglass guards around his counters and a sanitation station. In addition, he transitioned his deli to an

all-vegetarian menu. “I figured now was as good a time as any to experiment and think outside the box, and our customers have been incredibly supportive of us,” he says. Especially popular dishes are Justin’s “Not-Lox,” which is made from thinly sliced, salt-roasted carrots, as well as vegan chicken salad, matzo ball soup and knishes. Justin also makes a “whitefish” salad with smoked, seasoned hearts of palm.

The chef’s efforts have been so successful that he is on the verge of opening a bakery and expanding the deli. We’ll be doing babkas, cheesecakes and

pies, while on the deli side, we’ll be offering vegan Reubens on marble rye, vegan club sandwiches and more,” he says.

Located in the parking lot of the 76 gas station on Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway, the [Holy Smokes Righteous Eats](#) cart has been serving up kosher barbecue for more than three years. Owner and chef Steven Goldsmith hasn’t changed his menu since the start of the pandemic, but he’s seeing his clientele grow. “(People are) driving around, and they’re like, let’s just go walk over there – there’s no reason why we shouldn’t try it, it’s here!”

Steven is happy to report that his new customers are hooked on his cinnamon-spiked, boneless beef ribs and his Pacific Northwest take on brisket. About the latter, he says, “We use a coffee rub and onion wine reduction that goes on top. The idea was, Texas barbecue is salt, pepper, hot peppers and tomato vinegar. Ours has sage, coffee and sugar, and we balance it out with an orange chipotle barbecue sauce. It’s sort of a familiar flavoring, but with a Pacific Northwestern flair.”

When asked what has changed for him since the start of the pandemic, Steven says that customers no longer seem as interested in dessert, and that due to limitations on gathering, they take their orders to go instead of sitting down to eat. “People are getting used to not eating out.”

Shop Local/Eat Local

The Jewish Community Relations Council, as part of the United in Spirit coalition, recently met with Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler to discuss ways the coalition’s faith-based and civic groups can support the city. His message was quite simple and clear – shop locally! The following organizations and websites provide information about small, local businesses that offer online options and in-store pickup, or local-owned restaurants offering takeout.

Portland Business Alliance/Downtown Portland Clean & Safe: [downtownportland.org/were%20open](#)

Travel Portland: [travelportland.com/attractions/shop-local/PDX SOS: pdxsos.com](#)

Mercatus/Buy Native:

[builtoregon.shop/collections/my-peoples-market](#)

Shop Small PDX (Prosper’s campaign): [shopsmallpdx.com](#)

Chaplain's Corner

All cannot be futile

BY RABBI BARRY COHEN

A New Year, whether secular or religious, offers an opportunity to reflect, remember and discover meaning.

For me, conducting this exercise for the year 2020 is daunting and darkly comical. My cynical side says, "Why in the world would I devote even more time to a year that has taken so much from me already?"

But another side compels me to confront the year that was. Fortunately, Judaism is hard wired for such conflicts, and I turn to the book Ecclesiastes as my guide. Ecclesiastes, or "Kohelet," is attributed to King Solomon. Most likely, being part of the Wisdom Literature, it was written by another author or authors as late as the 2nd century BCE, influenced by Greek and Persian thought.

Kohelet is perfect for our time. It begins with the words, "Utter futility! ... Utter futility! All is futile!" (Ecclesiastes 1:2) This book is a quest for life's meaning and purpose. It asks many more questions than it offers answers.

Through its chapters, Kohelet contrasts wisdom vs. foolishness, justice vs. injustice and wealth vs. poverty.

Here is but one excerpt: "I found that wisdom is superior to folly, as light is superior to darkness; a wise man has his eyes in his head, whereas a fool walks in darkness. But I also realized that the same fate awaits them both. So I reflected: the

fate of the fool is also destined for me; to what advantage, then, have I been wise? And I came to the conclusion that that, too, was futile, because the wise man, just like the fool, is not remembered forever; for, as the succeeding days roll by, both are forgotten." (Ecclesiastes 2:13-16)

Repeatedly, Kohelet asks why injustice is ever present? Why do good people suffer? Why do evil people thrive? How can any of this make sense?

The response is twofold: "I saw that there is nothing better for man than to enjoy his possessions, since that is his portion. For who can enable him to see what will happen afterward?" (Ecclesiastes 3:22.) In addition, the author stresses that somehow, somehow, this is all part of God's plan, even though we finite beings will never be able to comprehend this plan. Kohelet's final words instruct that God will call all of us to account; therefore, whatever may befall us, we are to continue to revere God and fulfill God's "mitzvot" or commandments.

I find neither of these responses to be satisfactory. The responses merely treat some of the symptoms of the disease rather than curing the disease.

Ecclesiastes is a strange book. It is positive and life affirming, but at the same time pessimistic; it is coherent and contradictory; it is insightful and confusing.

That being said, we still can



Rabbi Barry Cohen is the Jewish community chaplain of the Greater Portland area.

use it as we navigate our polarized, politicized, COVID-19 world. Toward the end, Kohelet teaches, "If one watches the wind, he will never sow; and if one observes the clouds, he will never reap." (Ecclesiastes 11:4)

Kohelet teaches me that in response to days seemingly bereft of meaning and purpose, we cannot be spectators. We must do something, anything, to help ourselves, our friends, our family or total strangers. But we must be pragmatic as we act within our means to create meaning and purpose. While we most likely will not be remembered centuries from now for what we do, we can be remembered today.

Kohelet may not offer perfect answers to the questions that plague our times, but the answers are good enough.

Published biweekly by
Jewish Federation of
Greater Portland
9900 SW Greenburg Road,
Suite 220
Tigard, OR 97223
503-245-6219
JewishPortland.org

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Circulation

To receive the Jewish
Review in your email inbox,
email your name and email
address to
editor@jewishportland.org

OPINIONS printed in the
Jewish Review do not
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Committee, the Jewish
Federation of Greater
Portland, its governing
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Upcoming issues

Issue date Deadline

Jan. 20	Jan. 14
Feb. 3	Jan. 28
Feb. 17	Feb. 11
March 3	Feb. 25
March 17	March 11

Submit news, photos and obituaries by the issue deadline to:
editor@jewishportland.org.

Rabbi's Corner

In addition to the Chaplain's Corner, the Jewish Review reserves space for a Rabbi's Corner each issue. Our community's rabbis are invited to share their thoughts on the week's parsha or current events. The Oregon Board of Rabbis organized the project.

Rabbis are invited to schedule a date to submit a 500-word piece. For more information, email editor@jewishportland.org.

Request from Israel generates graveside prayers in Portland

BY SURA RUBENSTEIN

Through a long chain of Jewish connection, Abraham Mordechai Zaidel of Israel reached out for help locating the grave of his grandfather, a Holocaust survivor for whom he was named. His grandfather had come to Portland after the war and died here in 1960.

The family knew only that he had died in Portland. They didn't realize there is more than one Jewish cemetery in the area, and they had tried several times without success to locate the grave.

The grandson, who lives in Beit Shemesh, was hoping to arrange for a Kaddish to be said at his grandfather's grave on the occasion of his 60th *yahrzeit*, the 5th of Tevet.

After some digging (the grandfather spelled his name "Seidel"), I found an entry on the Jewish Online Worldwide Burial Registry, hosted by JewishGen.org, noting that Mr. Seidel was buried in Congregation Shaarie Torah's Cemetery.

And so it was that on Dec. 20, 60 years after his passing, a minyan gathered at his gravesite to recite psalms, to say Kaddish and to recite a *Kel Malei*, the memorial prayer.

"We've come here together to commemorate, to share and to remember Abraham Mordechai Seidel on his 60th *yahrzeit*," said Rabbi Tzvi Fischer of the Portland Kollel, who led the prayers. "We are connected, as are all Jews. No one is anonymous. Every one of us is a part of the soul of our nation, a part of our national community."

"Abraham Mordechai Seidel, Avraham Mordechai ben David, is someone to us. This is a *chesed*, a kindness to him, and to the family and also to us. We have a connection with him; it is a lasting change for him and for us."

Mr. Seidel was born on March 3, 1905, in Tomaszów Lubelski, a small town in southeastern Poland. By the eve of World War II, its Jewish population was some 6,000 – about half of the town's population. Among



A minyan gathered at the gravesite of Abraham Mordechia Seidel to say Kaddish for the Holocaust survivor's 60th *yahrzeit*. Pictured from left are Gabe Genauer, Allen Levin, Michael Horenstein, Jeff Druckman, Jonathan Druckman, Brian Yablon, Rick Haselton, Adam Greenman, Will Yablon, Ben Yablon and Bob Mullen (partially obscured) facing Rabbi Tzvi Fischer at the graveside Dec. 20.

them were Abraham Seidel, his wife Gittel and their three children – an older son, Yaakov, then about 3 years old, and twin little boys, Israel and Gershon.

The Nazis bombed and invaded in early September 1939, and then the town was briefly occupied by the Red Army before returning to German control. When the Soviets withdrew, they allowed Jews in the city to follow them into Russia. Some 4,500 Jews fled with them, including Abraham's brother, Lipa, along with their parents, other family members and Abraham's son, Yaakov.

Gittel and the twins were murdered in the concentration camp of Belzec near Tomaszów. Somehow, Abraham survived.

Yaakov and other family members continued their flight, moving to Bukharia, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Siberia. In 1949, those surviving family members, including Yaakov and his uncle, made their way to Israel.

Yaakov died about four years ago, but his son contacted a number of people and groups in the Portland area trying to locate his grandfather's grave. After the war, Yaakov and his father were able to exchange letters, but never saw each other again.

According to Abraham's nephew, Hayyim Zeidel of Rishon Lezion, Yaakov served in the Israeli Army and then worked for the Israeli electric company for many years. He and his wife, Gila, lived in Haifa and had a daughter, four sons and more than three dozen grandchildren.

In 2004, Hayyim and Yaakov traveled together to Poland and Tomaszów, and for the past 11 years, Hayyim has been the chairman of the Tomaszów Lubelski Society. "We continue to keep the memory," he said. (For more information about Tomaszów and the Shoah: <https://tomashov.org.il/english/perpetuation>.)

There are few details about Abraham Seidel's life in Portland, or even how he happened to come to Portland. Both his cousin, Hayyim, and his grandson, Mordechai, said Yaakov did not like to speak of the past.

Local newspapers noted that Abraham became an American citizen in 1957, along with other Holocaust survivors who had settled in Portland. On his naturalization petition, he reported that he lived at 621 SW Hall Street, about a block away from what is now Shattuck Hall on the Portland State University Campus. He listed his occupa-

tion as custodian. At one point, he had a formal portrait taken at the Gladys Gilbert Studio in downtown Portland and sent it to his son in Israel.

The grandson, who goes by the name Mordechai, said he didn't believe anyone had visited the grave since the burial. "It is very meaningful for us that, after so many years and many unsuccessful attempts, we have finally located my grandfather's grave, which is so very far from us," he said. "Thank you."

Those helping to make the minyan were also deeply grateful.

"As Rabbi Fischer chanted ... and one of us who is still in mourning recited the Kaddish, I think we were all lost in thought," my husband, Rick Haselton, wrote afterward. "Thinking of Mr. Seidel, Avraham Mordechai ben David, z"l, of what his life, of which we know so little, must have been like. Of being at the end – and for so much of his life – a stranger in a strange land."

"It was such a privilege to be there," he added. "May his memory be a blessing."

Sura Rubenstein, a South Portland native, is a former newspaper reporter and volunteer manager of the Congregation Kesser Israel Cemetery.

Foundation School office named in honor of Leah Rubin, z"l

Congregation Neveh Shalom announced the naming of the Foundation School Director's Office in memory and honor of Leah Rubin, z"l. The family chose the week of Chanukah, a festival of dedication, to announce their generous gift to the congregation to honor Leah.

Leah's husband, Mark Rubin, a member of Congregation Neveh Shalom for more than 50 years, is generously dedicating the Foundation School Office in the name of his beloved wife. "Morah" Rubin was the school's director for more than 30 years, from 1974 until retiring in 2006. She passed away May 16, 2020.

Together with his three sons, their wives and his six grandchildren, Mark thanks the congregation for its strength and support after Leah's passing in May, and for the central role of Neveh Shalom in the lives of the entire Rubin family.

The announcement from Neveh Shalom said, "On behalf of the clergy, staff, lay leadership and all the members of CNS, we thank Mark and the Rubin family for this wonderful gesture and look forward to an installation ceremony this coming summer."

A plaque will be installed during a dedication ceremony in summer 2021.

Jobs board

The Jewish Review publishes job openings from local Jewish agencies and congregations. Job information will be shortened to fit available space with a link to the full job description.

Submit job openings to: editor@jewishportland.org

P'NAI OR RABBI'S ASSISTANT

P'nai Or of Portland is a vibrant, welcoming and egalitarian Jewish Renewal congregation in Portland, seeking a quarter-time rabbi's assistant to work directly with Rabbi Hannah Laner; there is the possibility for more hours in the future.

This person will provide administrative support to our part-time rabbi in several key areas including scheduling, communications and volunteer coordination.

The rabbi's assistant will also interact with the P'nai Or administrator, congregational leadership, members and the wider community.

Strong computer skills are a must. Outstanding written and verbal com-

munication skills are necessary for this role, as are excellent organizational skills and attention to detail. Familiarity with Hebrew and Jewish holidays is greatly preferred.

For the full job description and application instructions, visit <https://pnaiorpd.org/rabbis-assistant-position-available-part-time>

CAMP SOLOMON SCHECHTER DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Camp Solomon Schechter is seeking an experienced, dedicated, and outgoing professional for the Development Director position. Must embrace Camp Solomon Schechter's mission. Bachelor degree in a related field, required; Master's preferred. At least 5 years fundraising experience.

Full-time with benefits (vision, dental, health, sick and vacation) or may be filled on a contract basis. Please submit cover letter and resume to operations@campschechter.org.

Full job description online at campschechter.org/about/employment/

Obituaries

Obituaries are posted online as they are received at jewishportland.org/obituaries.

SAMUEL MILLER

Samuel Miller, z"l, passed away Jan. 4, 2021, at the age of 92. Sam is loved and remembered by his dear wife, Jo Ellen; daughters, Robin (Steve) Rayel, Cheryl (Bud) Peizner and Jody (Rob) Twain; and seven grandchildren, Stephen Rayel, Lauren Rayel, Elise Alexander, Aaron Peizner, Gabriel Peizner, Madelyn Twain and Eli Twain.

Sam was a long time Congregation Neveh Shalom member and daily minyan regular.

A private interment and Zoom shiva minyan were scheduled.

Congregation Neveh Shalom extends our deepest condolences to the extended Miller family.

MICHAEL HASSON

Michael Hasson, z"l, passed away Dec. 31, 2020. Michael is loved and remembered by his daughters, Michelle, Lauren and Jenna Hasson; his brother, Barry Hasson; and his dear mother, Marilyn Hasson.

In keeping with Neveh Shalom and the family's commitment to keep our community safe and healthy, and in compliance with our governor's directive, a private interment was scheduled.

Congregation Neveh Shalom extends our deepest condolences to the extended Hasson family.

MICHAEL ROSENFELD

Michael (Micha-el ben Nahum) Rosenfield, z"l, passed away in late December in South Africa. He is loved and remembered by his son, Barry (Wendy) Rosenfield, and their daughters, Allison and Samantha, members of Congregation Neveh Shalom.

Congregation Neveh Shalom extends our deepest condolences to the extended Rosenfield family.

JAKE GIJANTO

Jake Gijanto, z"l, passed away in Arizona in late December. He is survived by daughter, Rivka, and her husband, Rabbi Tuvia Berzow, executive director of Oregon Kosher.

Congregation Kesser Israel offers the entire family comfort in this time of loss.

DOROTHY REITER

Dorothy Reiter, z"l, passed away on Dec. 18, 2020. She was the beloved wife of Philip Reiter and mother of Gregg (Eleonore) Reiter, Scott (Judy) Reiter and Barbara (Thomas) Rosenbaum.

A private family service was held at the Beth Israel Cemetery.

Congregation Beth Israel sends condolences to Philip, Gregg, Eleonore, Scott, Judy, Barbara, Thomas and the extended Reiter family.

Donations in Dorothy's memory can be made to the Rose Schnitzer Manor or Hospice. <https://cedarsinaipark.org/giving/secure-online-donation/>

MEYER M. RUIMY

Meyer M. Ruimy, z"l, passed away Dec. 23, 2020, in New Jersey at age 73. He is loved and remembered by his brother, long-time Congregation Neveh Shalom member Daniel (Roberta) Ruimy; three additional brothers; two sisters; and many nieces and nephews. He was known as Michel to family and Michael elsewhere since living and working in the United States.

Michel, like his brother Daniel, was born in Casablanca and came to the States in 1969 – after he had served in the Israeli military and participated in the 1967 war. He never married and spent many years caring for his aging parents, even as they went to nursing homes. He retired early to be there for them every day and ensure they were getting the appropriate care. He was a kind, generous, shy, private man whose sole passions were Israel and his family.

Congregation Neveh Shalom extends our deepest condolences to the extended Ruimy family.

Submit obituaries to editor@jewishportland.org