

The JEWISH REVIEW

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Congregation Beth Israel clergy meet via Zoom using CBI Passover Zoom backgrounds, a collection of which can be downloaded at bethisrael-pdx.org/passover.

Pandemic Passover 2.0

BY DEBORAH MOON

Passover will be the first major Jewish holiday that will be celebrated for the second time under pandemic restrictions.

Since Pesach is traditionally home-based, it is perhaps the easiest Jewish holiday to adapt to our new landscape. Still, it has been a challenging experience for individuals and congregations. But we have learned a lot about the virtual world over the past year, and some silver linings have appeared.

People traditionally come together in large groups of family and friends for a seder on the first night of Passover, and many congregations offer a community seder on the second night. Last year, Oregon restrictions on gatherings began about three weeks before Passover, disrupting seder plans.

Many congregations canceled their community seders last year.

Congregation Neveh Shalom, however, moved its in-person community seder to Zoom with Rabbi Eve Posen as the lead and experienced an incredible turnout.

"For the first time since I left home, I was able to have seder with my family across the country AND be present for my congregation here in Portland," says Rabbi Posen, highlighting one of the key silver linings of virtual life – the ability to "gather" with loved ones

who live far away.

Congregation Shaarie Torah Executive Director Jemi Kostiner Mansfield noticed the same advantage: "Families and friends from out of town can come together on a virtual platform, people who normally wouldn't be around the seder table."

Shaarie Torah normally hosts a second night seder, but chose to cancel last year and instead tried to match people up for Zoom seders, offering tips and tricks on leading one. They plan to do the same this year.

Congregation Beth Israel also shifted its holiday focus to virtual experiences.

"Last year, we quickly pivoted our Passover experiences to an online platform and held a congregational seder for the first time in many years," says Rabbi Rachel Joseph. "It was the early days of Zoom when people were still trying to figure out how to be together – physically distanced but spiritually connected. We craved connection, and it was a joy to be together on the screen."

Building on last year's experiences, this Passover many organizations and congregations are hosting virtual seders or offering resources so congregants can host virtual seders for family and friends. The Jewish Federation of Greater Portland has compiled a

Marking one year of pandemic life

March 16, 2020, marks the day that our schools and buildings closed last year, and our lives were drastically changed by the reality of COVID-19 reaching Oregon. As

the soundtrack of the musical "Rent" put it: "525,600 minutes, how do you measure a year?"

Living according to the Jewish calendar provides us with one answer to this question. We measure our year by completing the full cycle of holidays and Jewish rituals. Time and our need for our community and these rituals haven't stopped in this year, even though so many of our usual ways of marking these holy moments have been interrupted.

Congregation Neveh Shalom has created a booklet offering four rituals to help mark the past year.

Introducing the rituals, the booklet notes: "As we approach the milestone of this unique and challenging year, we recognize that this year has encompassed deep loss and grief, innovation and resilience, as well as joy and hopefulness. In order to mark this moment, we invite you to explore the following pages (in booklet) and engage in any of the four rituals or blessings that speak to you during the anniversary week of the beginning of the pandemic."

Lighting a yahrtzeit candle to remember a loved one or to recognize the grief we've held this year (page 4).

Shehechyanu blessing: "We are grateful to be here at this time!" (page 5).

Rock Garden: Paint or decorate a rock with acrylic paint or sharpies with messages of hope, grief, a dedication to the memory of someone you lost this year or anything that speaks to you (page 6).

Short candlelighting on the Shabbat anniversary of the pandemic: Friday, March 19, 2021, at 6 pm on Zoom (page 7).

The booklet concludes with a pandemic poem by Alicia Jo Rabins entitled "Accidental Monks."

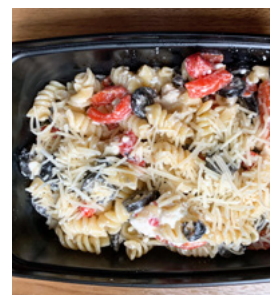
The booklet was mailed to members of Congregation Neveh Shalom, but others are welcome to download the pdf at bit.ly/3rBOYTi.



See PANDEMIC PESACH, page 6



Chef Jenn Louis, center above, has recruited many volunteers to help cook, collect and deliver food and other essentials to some of the many tent encampments that have sprung up around Portland as the houseless population has swelled.



Former restaurateur cooks for the homeless

BY DEBORAH MOON

Last fall, local chef and cookbook author Jenn Louis walked into a tent encampment to see if anyone wanted some sweaters her boyfriend wanted to give away.

“It is one thing to drive by; it is another to stand in a camp,” says Jenn. “The next day, I bought beans and rice and took them a hot meal.”

Since that first visit in November, Jenn has gone to tent camps every week to bring the basics to people with no permanent home. Now she visits about eight to 10 camps two to four days a week with hot meals, nonperishable food, clothes, warm socks, hygiene supplies, sleeping bags, tents, dog food and other items that people have requested on her previous visit.

She has attracted a score of volunteers from Havurah Shalom, where she is a member, Congregation Beth Israel and many individuals concerned with Portland’s homeless crisis. Donations of food, supplies and homemade cookies (a favorite in the camps) have rolled in from individuals and companies. Information on cooking, volunteering and donating (including an Amazon wish list) is available online at jennlouis.com/food-for-the-homeless or by emailing Jenn at hello@jennlouis.com.

The site also features a list of her partners who regularly donate food and supplies. Jenn says some people don’t want to donate to her effort, because she is not registered as a nonprofit, while others like the ability to help so directly. She did not want to start another business after having run several

Good Deeds Month

Later this spring, a “Good Deeds Month” promotion will feature organizations and people such as Jenn Louis who are doing good in our community. The monthlong promotion will give people the opportunity to volunteer and help with those efforts.

Good Deeds Day is an annual celebration of community volunteering that takes place on a Sunday with millions of participants around the world doing good together. But this year with the increased needs combined with pandemic restrictions on gatherings, the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland will spotlight individuals and organizations doing good to create a monthlong opportunity for Good Deeds.

businesses in her life including restaurants such as Lincoln and Ray, an Israeli restaurant she closed in 2018.

“I want all the products to go directly to people,” she says. “It makes a lot of difference when you work directly with people. It’s all volunteers who work directly with people.”

Some people cook or collect donations. Some drive a second car to take all the deliveries Jenn cannot fit in her own car.

“Our job is to care for people who can’t take care of themselves,” says Jenn. “I can’t save people, but I can provide basic needs.”

She says basic needs should be a right in our wealthy country.

“I don’t ask their stories – not judging is really important,” says Jenn, who adds if people want to talk, she listens “with an open heart.”

Jenn is trying to scale back her deliveries to two days a week because she needs time to organize donations, cook and coordinate. She also needs time to continue offering online cooking classes and consulting with food service businesses.

She says her cooking classes have blossomed into virtual cross-country family gatherings. “I’ve done cooking classes for birthdays or other occasions for families scattered around the country,” says Jenn. “They all get to cook together. It’s really, really fun.”

Her third cookbook, published last year, reflects her respect for diverse cultures and family and regional traditions. Her website says of *The Chicken Soup Manifesto*: “Looking at the world through the lens of a simple bowl of chicken soup, I share stories about traditional cooking styles, ingredients, folklore, family history and more.”

Jenn Louis has competed on Bravo’s “Top Chef Masters,” was named one of Food & Wine’s “Best New Chefs” and was nominated for a James Beard Award for her second cookbook *The Book of Greens*, which won an International Association of Culinary Professionals award. Information about her classes and cookbooks on chicken soup, greens and pasta are available on her website, jennlouis.com.

Challah orders spread cheer to survivors, others

BY JENN DIRECTOR KNUDSEN

How many loaves of challah did the following ingredients make?

750 pounds of flour

85 pounds of sugar

70 dozen eggs

6 quarts of vanilla

10 pounds of salt

7 gallons of oil.

If you answered in the ballpark of 1,600 challah loaves, you're right.

That's the number of loaves of bread for Shabbat that Rich Meyer, the mind and baker behind The Challahman – "Portland's tastiest kosher challah," according to its website – has donated to Jewish Family & Child Service since last spring.

It was then that Meyer – one of about 100 Jewish community members – placed calls on behalf of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland to check in on people and ask how they'd been doing. The pandemic and lockdown were new then, and people shared with Meyer they had begun to feel rather sad and isolated.

"We're part of a community and this is a very difficult time, and I feel very fortunate to be healthy and be able to get around," Meyer says. The stories people told him put others' situations in perspective, particularly the most vulnerable among us.

"Especially those who lived and survived the Holocaust, and now they're near the tail end of their lives having to live through just this awful thing," he says of the pandemic and its social fallout. "It occurred to me: all these people are just shut in; they can't see anyone."

But he could at least help them usher in Shabbat with an edible piece of love and support. So he contacted JFCS, a partnership was formed and Meyer got to baking.

He'd founded The Challahman in 2012,



Challahman Rich Meyer brings a bin of challah loaves to Janet Menashe to deliver to Kehillah residents. For every two loaves sold, one more is donated to Jewish Family & Child Service. Each week about 75 Holocaust survivors, clients with special needs and other JFCS clients get a fresh loaf of challah for Shabbat.

but last March needed to shut down his operation for distribution issues.

"I'd wondered if I could restart my business and also help the community simultaneously," he says. His model is to charge a bit more per loaf for regular customers to help offset the cost of those he donates. As his website specifies, for every two loaves purchased, a third is donated to JFCS.

Holocaust Survivor Services Manager Kim VanKoten shares what the challah has meant to one survivor. The 82-year-old survivor told her, "I want to thank you for the delicious meals and challah and all you are doing for us in this difficult time. You are doing everything you can to make our lives easier!"

Every Friday, Meyer drives to a Gresham-based facility where JFCS clients' meals are assembled and drops off up to 60 loaves to be delivered around town.

VanKoten says, "Clients have mentioned they are very grateful for the meals and the challah for Shabbat, that such deliveries

help them stay safe in their homes."

Holocaust survivors aren't the only JFCS clients who receive weekly Challahman loaves. Disabilities Inclusion Specialist Janet Menashe thought the bread could give Kehillah residents a brighter and heartier Shabbat. Located at Cedar Sinai Park, Kehillah is independent, affordable housing for adults with developmental disabilities.

Now Menashe distributes up to 15 loaves to Kehillah House residents and a few clients around town. Her rounds include a gentleman in his 40s. "I take him the challah each Friday," she says. "He looks very much forward to getting the challah since it is so good, but he also enjoys our talks each Friday because he is feeling isolated."

Meyer said he plans to offer his challot for as long as this pandemic drags on. Even if it's another 1,600 loaves, or more.

"I'm happy to play a small role to brighten up their weeks," says Meyer.

To order two of your own loaves to benefit a JFCS client, visit challahman.com.

Holocaust Remembrance events

March 31: Musical tribute (see story)

April 7: Yom HaShoah will be observed virtually with a short service led by Oregon Board of Rabbis at 7 pm with Holocaust survivors and their descendants via Zoom.

April 8: Reading of the Names. Community members, elected officials and survivors will read the names inscribed on the Oregon Holocaust Memorial in Washington Park. The event will be livestreamed and recorded.

These events are part of a series recognizing Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month. The series is co-sponsored by The Immigrant Story, Oregon Historical Society, OJMCHS, PSU Holocaust and Genocide Project, Never Again Coalition and WorldOregon.

Details/registration: ojmche.org/calendar/

Yom HaShoah musical tribute

The Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education and Jewish Family & Child Service present a 7 pm, March 31, Zoom-based musical tribute in honor of Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Rich with music and meaning, the free evening event features Chamber Music Northwest musicians playing pieces composed by those imprisoned and murdered during the Holocaust. The musical interlude portion of the event includes a piece for cello composed by James Simon, who perished in the gas chambers of Auschwitz in 1944, following his internment at Theresienstadt. There will also be a movement for clar-

inet, violin and cello by Olivier Eugène Prosper Charles Messiaen of France, considered one of the major composers of the 20th century. He composed "Quartet for the End of Time" while a political prisoner in Germany.

Following the musical program, Holocaust survivor Ruth Bolliger, a member of OJMCHS's speakers' bureau, will be in conversation with Amanda Coven, OJMCHS's director of education. Born in 1938 in then-Czechoslovakia, infant Ruth and her family escaped to Belgium, then France, followed by England, before arriving in New York City in 1941. Bolliger later moved to Oregon, settling in Portland in 1975.

Events past & future (For Passover events, see page 7)



A COVID-19 community workshop featuring Max Cohen, N.D., on March 4 covered the COVID-19 virus and the safety and effectiveness of vaccines. Dr. Cohen said this slide on how to get vaccinated in Oregon was one of two to remember. The other showed that all three current vaccines are 100% effective in preventing death and hospitalization. Sponsors: CNSCOS, JFGP and Boost Oregon.



Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education
Director Judy Margles welcomed over 300 participants to its first virtual Gala. *Settling In* included a short video with cameo appearances from staff, donors, educators, students, community members and elected officials. Donations for the Mitzvah Moment are still being received and are near the goal. Julie Diamond won the raffle for a virtual coffee/cocktail date with Ari Shapiro, co-host of NPR's All Things Considered. View the gala: ojmche.org/annual-gala.



PDX Hillel celebrated 13 years of inspiring the Jewish Future at their B'nai Mitzvah celebration March 4. Executive Director Hannah Sherman was joined by more than 60 smiling faces as they honored Zack Dworkin with the Future Leaders Award, heard from students and founders about the impact of Hillel, and launched the Future Leaders Campaign to support ethical Jewish leadership raising \$39,462. To contribute, visit pdxhillel.org/donate.

MARCH 18: Confronting Anti-Semitism

The Jewish Federation of Greater Portland presents “Uncovering the Hidden History of Jews and Antisemitism in Oregon” on Zoom Thursday, March 18, at 7 pm.

“The webinar concludes our six-part series focusing on the shameful history of discrimination and bigotry in our state,” says JFGP Community Relations Director Bob Horenstein, who coordinated the series and is a panelist for this webinar. “It is imperative that we learn about this history because in our schools it has been largely whitewashed, ignored or even distorted. And in order to effectively address current issues around racial injustice and hate, we believe that it’s important to take a step back in order to move forward.”

Speaking about this final webinar, Horenstein says, “When we think about racism and bigotry, sometimes anti-Semitism gets short shrift because of the perception that Jews are just part of the white majority. The program on the 18th will show both how Jews have been accepted, yet, on the other hand, faced – and still face – bigotry.”

Past webinars can be viewed at jewishportland.org/uncovering. On May 26, the many partner organizations that have participated in the history webinars will gather for a virtual summit to confront hate now and in the future. More information will be posted on the same site as the webinars when it is available.

The anti-Semitism panel features Horenstein and Ellen Eisenberg and will be moderated by Judy Margles, director of the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education.

As director of community relations since 1994, Horenstein has directed the Federation’s efforts to safeguard the social safety net, promote civil rights, combat hate and bigotry, and strengthen the local community’s ties to Israel.

Professor Eisenberg holds the Dwight and Margaret Lear chair in American History at Willamette University. Her book *The First to Cry Down Injustice? Western Jews and Japanese Removal during WWII* was a 2008 National Jewish Book Award finalist.

Register for this free Zoom program at jewishportland.org/uncovering-the-hidden-history-of-jews-and-antisemitism-in-oregon

MARCH 18: PDXBiz on survival on pandemic

The Mittleman Jewish Community Center’s #PDXBIZ Business Series presents “THE PIVOT: How Restaurants and Venues Survived COVID-19” at noon, March 18, on Zoom.

When the world shut down, how did businesses survive? Learn examples from the past year of shut down and what we can expect moving forward. The panel includes Ezra Holbrook, Alberta Street Pub, and Uri Kushner, Dairy Hill Ice Cream.

Congregation Neveh Shalom COVID-19 Outreach and Services is the presenting sponsor of this program. Cost: Free. \$18 suggested donation. Register: oregonjcc.org/pdxbiz

MARCH 21: Authors series – *Becoming Eve*

The Mittleman Jewish Community Center’s Authors Series presents Abby Stein, author of *Becoming Eve*, at 4:30 pm, Sunday, March 21, on Zoom.

Stein is the 10th-generation descendant of the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of the Hasidic movement. Stein was born as the first son in a dynastic rabbinical family, poised to become a leader of the next generation of Hasidic Jews. In 2015, Stein came out as a woman, and she now works as a trans activist. *Becoming Eve* explores: How far will you go to become the person you were meant to be?

The talk is presented in partnership with Congregation Beth Israel, Congregation Neveh Shalom, Congregation Shaarie Torah, Congregation Shir Tikvah and Havurah Shalom.

Cost is \$8 per household. Register at oregonjcc.org/authorseries

Next year in Jerusalem!

HERE
FOR
you

PANDEMIC PESACH (from page 1)

page of local and national resources available at jewishportland.org/passoverhappenings.

Cedar Sinai Park has a Plan A and Plan B for seders on the senior living campus, where the vast majority of residents and staff have been fully vaccinated.

"We are cautiously optimistic that we can have small gatherings of residents for Passover seders," says Cathy Zheutlin, CSP spiritual life coordinator. "Plan A allows for small seders, one in each household, one for Post-Acute and four at Rose Schnitzer Manor. The seders at RSM in the dining rooms are being led by Rabbi Sara Rinson and Rabbi Barry Cohen, both of whom are fully vaccinated chaplains."

No guests will be invited to this year's seders.

"Residents know that we have a Plan A and Plan B," Cathy adds. Plan B exists in case someone tests positive for COVID or if the state or CDC issue more stringent guidelines on gatherings before Pesach.

"Given Plan A and Plan B, it feels either like living in a Dr. Seuss book or exiting from Egypt with no time to prepare," says Cathy. "This year is different from all other years."

Beth Israel's Rabbi Joseph agrees this is a different year from all others, as well as from last year.

"This year feels different," says Rabbi Joseph. "Why is this Passover different from last Passover? Because this year, the CDC said it is OK for vaccinated grandparents to hug their grandchildren. Because this year, while our seder tables are smaller, while we still incorporate Zoom, we also open our doors to hope. Because this year, we can truly say these words from the Passover Haggadah: *Matchil b'ganut u'mesaim b'shevach* – You begin with the bad news, but you end with the good news. We don't deny the bad, the difficult, we don't ignore it, but we say that's only the beginning, and the end is going to be an ending of hope."

This year, in addition to a second night virtual seder, Rabbi Joseph is leading a noon, March 17, workshop on how to make an online seder meaningful for your whole family. Last spring, it was a scramble to get ready for the Passover holiday in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Now we've had a year to learn tips and tricks. Beth Israel has a variety of resources, including Zoom Passover backgrounds, available on its website at bethisrael-pdx.org/passover/.

Neveh Shalom also brings back its virtual seder experience drawing on the lessons of last year. "We've learned how to use the technology to our advantage by inviting participants to prepare sections in advance," says Rabbi Posen.

Neveh Shalom's community seder will be on Zoom and will feature a CNS Community Haggadah comprising video, writing and art from all generations of its congregation. Nonmembers are welcome to join the Zoom seder at 6 pm, March 28. Seder reg-

istration and other resources are available at nevehshalom.org/passover/.

Havurah Shalom, which offered virtual seders last year, is organizing a limited number of virtual seders for the first and second nights for members. This year, the congregation added music recordings, recipes and additional resource links on its website.

With an ever evolving, and for now, seemingly improving situation on the pandemic, the CNS Health Workgroup, Reopening Task Force and Executive Committee has agreed to open the doors of its sanctuary to members for Yom Tov Pesach services for up to 12 congregants with preregistration. There are, of course, health and safety protocols that must be agreed to and followed, and preregistration/confirmation is required.

Congregation Kesser Israel will also offer in-person services, as they have over the past year when state guidelines have permitted.

"We offer both indoor and outdoor live services, with masks and distancing," says Kesser Rabbi Kenneth Brodtkin, adding the congregation does not host a community seder. "In addition, our weekday services are livestreamed."

Kesser also created a "Seder Map" to guide people who are just learning how to make the seder, step by step. The Orthodox congregation also has developed a three-part learning series for Pesach (see next page).

"Over the past year, we have focused a lot on reaching different people with different needs in different ways," says Rabbi Brodtkin. "In the 'old days,' everyone just came to Shul. Now, with the pandemic, we are trying to offer an array of programs that meets different needs simultaneously. All of our learning and inspiration takes place online live and is also offered as podcasts."

"The virtual world has really pushed us to offer a wider array of offerings," says Rabbi Brodtkin. "Personally, I'm really excited about Kesser's weekly podcast, the Torah Journey. This podcast helps people find the next step in their Jewish journey."

Beit Yosef, an Orthodox Sephardic congregation, also plans in-person services for Shabbat and the first two days of Pesach. The congregation will set up a tent adjacent to the open doors of its building to combine indoor and outdoor open-air seating.

"We will not be hosting a community seder," says Beit Yosef President Benaya Laws. "That will be left for families to conduct in their own homes."

This year, as families sit down with their relatives at the table or on Zoom, Rabbi Posen suggests they consider: "Last year we were slaves, this year we are free is a common theme of the Haggadah and Passover narrative. What were you a slave to in pre-pandemic living and how have you been made free from it?"

Meals

Kosher Passover Meals To-Go

Century Catering will once again offer Kosher Passover Meals To-Go the week of March 21. "Crazy to think it's been a year since we started this tradition," says Allen Levin, owner of Century Catering, Cafe at the J (currently closed) and Garbanzo's Food Cart in the parking lot of the Mittleman Jewish Community Center. Allen has worked to ensure kosher meals remain available during pandemic restrictions.

Each seder meal comes with charoset, horseradish to grate, gefilte fish, matzah ball soup (chicken or vegetable broth) and flourless chocolate cake. Choose from one of four main dishes: herb-roasted chicken, slow-cooked brisket, roasted lemon-dill salmon or stuffed portobella mushroom – all of which come with vegetable sides.

An assortment of side dishes is also available a la carte.

Orders are due by midnight on Sunday, March 21, and the meals will be ready for pickup on Thursday, March 25, between 3 and 5 pm at the MJCC turnaround, 6651 SW Capitol Hwy., Portland.

Order: centurycateringholiday.square.site/ or you can email your order to centurycatering84@gmail.com.

The full menu will be posted on square site and at oregonjcc.org/about-us/cafe-at-the-j.

Chabad Northeast offers Seders-To-Go

Chabad of Northeast Portland will again offer seders-to-go. Order by Sunday, March 21, with pickup (delivery available) Friday, March 26.

Each box includes three matzahs for one seder, English/Hebrew Haggadah, step-by-step guide to the seder, kiddush cup, seder plate items (limited supply), wine and a seder dinner of matzah ball soup and brisket with sweet carrots, zucchini and potatoes. JewishNortheast.com/sedertogo

Events & Resources

Kesser Israel offers virtual Pesach prep series

Congregation Kesser Israel invites the community to join Rabbi Ken Brodtkin for a three-part series in preparation for Pesach. He will present three drashot (discussions) at 8 pm, March 18 and 24 and April 1, on Zoom.

"This year, we are going to be doing a learning series on Pesach that includes study of the Haggadah, how to have Shalom Bayit on Pesach, as well as study of the Song of Songs, which is read in synagogue on Passover," says Rabbi Brodtkin.

"On Thursday, March 18, we will be discussing The Essential Haggadah Lesson," he adds. "In that learning session, we will look at the most important thing about the Pesach seder and how to do it. The essential lesson revolves around engagement. We need to engage ourselves, our kids and all of those around us, and we will be looking at what engagement is all about."

On March 24, attention turns to Shalom Bayit (peace in the home) on Erev Pesach (and beyond). Learn how to observe Erev Pesach on a Shabbat and keep your Shalom Bayit intact while you're at it.

The third session on the Song of Songs will be held during the intermediate days of Passover. What's Your Love Language? Lessons in love from Shir HaShirim will be April 1.

For the link for all drashot, email admin@kesserisrael.org.

Chocolate Seder on Zoom March 21

Make this your family's sweetest Passover yet by joining Congregation Shaarie Torah for a Family Chocolate Seder Sunday, March 21, at 11 am.

Led by Dr. Sharon Pollin, we will be reminded that freedom is sweet as we make our way through mounds of M&M's and Kit Kats, glug gallons of chocolate milk, and sing traditional and silly songs.

All CST Religious School families will receive a bag of most needed materials delivered to their home. Non-members will receive the supply list and Chocolate Haggadah upon registration. This event is free and open to the entire community. Register at shaarietorah.org/passover/.

Passover Storybook Trail March 21

Chabad Northeast is hosting a Passover Storybook Trail at Laurelhurst Park on March 21 to help families to prepare for Pesach.

Families can sign up for half-hour time slots between 2 and 4 pm. Capacity of each shift will be limited to ensure that social distancing and all safety precautions can be followed.

Families are invited to enjoy the great outdoors. Go back in time as you read the story of Passover and collect souvenirs along the way. At the end of the trail, participate in Passover arts and crafts.

Register for a time slot at Jewishnortheast.com/Storybooktrail.

Candy Seder March 21

Join B'nai B'rith Camp and Congregation Beth Israel to prepare your family for Passover the sweetest way possible at 4 pm, March 21, 2021, on Zoom.

The seder is suitable for grades 1-6. Reserve your kit (with candy enough for two) by March 18 and schedule a pickup in Portland.

Then Zoom in to snack and learn about the holiday on March 21.

Register at bethisrael-pdx.org/candy-seder-2021/

Neveh Shalom virtual seder March 28

Last year, Congregation Neveh Shalom quickly shifted its second night seder to a virtual event led by Rabbi Eve Posen. This year's community seder will also be on Zoom and will feature a CNS Community Haggadah comprising video, writing and art from all generations of our congregation. Non-members are welcome to join Neveh Shalom's ZOOM seder at 6 pm, March 28. Details can be found at nevehshalom.org/passover/.

Virtual Eugene Community Seder March 28

Attend the Temple Beth Israel (Eugene) Virtual Community Seder led by Rabbi Ruhi Sophia Motzkin Rubenstein at 5:30 pm, March 28, on Zoom.

Enjoy a short second night seder with the community, then have dinner on your own.

The seder will use the Saratoga Haggadah, compiled years ago by Rabbi Ruhi Sophia's parents. It takes more than 30 minutes, but not more than an hour, to get to the meal.

Before the seder, visit the Saturday, March 27, Pesach tips section at tbieugene.org/passover-2021/. [Sign up by March 24.](#)

Central Coast Virtual Seder March 30

This year's Central Coast Community Seder will be a virtual event at 5:30 pm, March 30. B'nai B'rith Camp staff will lead a virtual seder with Passover activities and traditions.

BB Camp invites the Central Coast Jewish community for an evening of reflection and celebration from the comfort of your own home. The seder is sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland and PJ Library in Oregon.

When you register, get a list of ceremonial foods (in case you wish to participate in this way) or bring creative alternatives from what you have on hand.

Register: bit.ly/3qvV9qt. Details: slebenzon@bbcamp.org.

Shop for Passover essentials at the museum

The Ron Tonkin Family Museum Shop at the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education (724 NW Davis St.) is open for Passover shopping March 16-19 from 11 am-3 pm.

Along with beautiful Passover items, including Haggadot, seder plates and candles, the fully stocked gift shop offers books for children on Passover and other Jewish holidays, cookbooks, jewelry and special Judaica. Masks and social distancing are required.

OneTable offers Seder connections

[OneTable](#), an organization that empowers people to envision new rituals and build community through Shabbat dinner experiences, is helping make the 2021 Passover seder possible. At a time when people are feeling isolated and in need of meaningful connection, OneTable is supporting people of all ages interested in hosting or attending virtual, household-based or outdoor socially distanced Passover gatherings.

"Passover is such a communal holiday experience filled with meaning and memories," says Al Rosenberg, chief strategy officer of OneTable. "We learned a lot last year about the ways people can be creative and adapt ritual to make meaning in these times of distance. People may not gather together this year, but we can help create those personal connections and interactions that make Passover special, memorable and resonant today."

Young adults (20s-30s) can turn to OneTable.org/passover if they're interested in hosting or attending virtual, household-based or outdoor socially distanced Passover gatherings. OneTable extends this support to people of all ages through Herefor.com. These platforms offer financial and creative support for Passover gatherings, a way to connect and a place to share photos of and reflect on celebration. Resources include guides to group, solo and Shabbat seders, Haggadot, recipes, playlists and inspiration boards.

In the second year of the pandemic, the need for meaningful connection and ritual is greater than ever. Last year, OneTable and Seder2020 (now Herefor.org) supported more than 38,000 virtual Passover participants, building on a long history of facilitating meaningful engagements through its Shabbat dinner program.

More Passover Resources and Events

Visit jewishportland.org/passoverhappenings for more Passover resources and events. New events are being added as received.

Open throughout pandemic for essential spiritual needs

BY JENN DIRECTOR KNUDSEN

Restaurants closed. Athletic facilities shuttered. Schools emptied. Synagogues and other Jewish organizations locked their doors.

But Mikvah Shoshana remained open throughout the pandemic. Because it had to. It represents the centrality of home and family in Jewish life.

It's been a year since the pandemic took hold, "and we remained open 363 days of the year," says Simi Mishulovin about Mikvah Shoshana, which every year closes on the two major fast days, Tisha B'Av and Yom Kippur.

"We've had to deal with so much in addition to the pandemic: early curfews, riots over the summer, ice, loss of power. And the mikvah was able to be open through it all," says Chabad of Oregon's Mishulovin.

She is a certified mikvah educator and teaches Jewish women of all denominations about the mitzvah. She also is the primary appointment scheduler for those who immerse in Portland's only Orthodox ritual bath and the city's only mikvah that remained open all of the past year.

Mishulovin said that on March 14, 2020, she and a few others immediately jumped into action to learn how to keep Mikvah Shoshana open during the then newfangled pandemic.

In the Jewish world, Mishulovin consulted with the experts behind Mikvah.org, from which she earned her certification and which is advised by Israel's health ministry. Further, she conferred with larger mikvaot in New York City, because theirs were guided by a team of doctors. And in the secular world, she followed protocols provided by local family physicians and infectious disease specialists, such as those with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Mishulovin estimates her small team – volunteers all – put in 160 hours of time and effort to ensure the safety and security of Mikvah Shoshana in the face of COVID-19, and

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Mikvah Shoshana was able to remain open during all the pandemic challenges of the past year thanks to the guidance of health experts and the work of volunteers to ensure users' safety.

\$4,600 for a stockpile of additional cleaning products, like personal protective equipment, and systems such as those for water testing. The money came solely from private gifts.

Why was it so important for Mikvah Shoshana to stay open? Because adherence to Torah-based living does not pause for a pandemic.

"Torah is the guide to the way of life, including married life, and the home is at the center of Judaism," Mishulovin says.

The physical intimacy husband and wife enjoy is considered the most G-dly power, a very holy act, she explains. To engage in lovemaking and possibly procreating, the woman must be ritually pure to usher in such G-dliness.

Put another way: "It's bringing Judaism into sex," says Beth, who visits the mikvah every month.

(Beth is a pseudonym; some interviewees requested a pseudonym or to not be quoted. Their reasons are similar: mikvah is such a personal, private act that its intimate nature compels anonymity. "It's between a man and a wife," says Beth, who is not affiliated with Chabad.)

While a mikvah itself is a ritual bath filled with "living waters" sourced from any naturally flowing water source such as rain, the mitzvah of mikvah goes beyond the physical structure. References to mikvah appear in Genesis, the first book

of the Torah, and in ancient times, as today, it offered a way to transcend to a purer, even divine state of being.

Mikvah Shoshana is solely for women for traditional immersions. Portland's other mikvah, Rachel's Well Community Mikvah, is open to all who self-identify as Jewish for traditional and contemporary immersions. Mikvaot request a small donation for use.

The word "ritual" is as intentional as the use of mikvah itself.

From the onset of menstruation, a woman is not physically intimate with her husband for at least 12 days. Shortly before the end of those dozen days, she makes an appointment to go to the mikvah. On the day of her mikvah visit and prior to arriving at the facility, she eats foods that likely will not get lodged between her teeth and also cleanses from hair follicle to toenail (now at home per pandemic protocols).

Then, fully naked and bereft of any jewelry or makeup – to ensure nothing comes between her and the waters of the mikvah – the woman fully immerses and then recites a brief prayer upon emerging from her successful self-dunking. She then submerges additional times.

What occurs after the immersion is between only the woman and G-d.

"Engaging in mikvah is pu-

rifying yourself, taking everything away that's between yourself and G-d or the universe," says Rebecca, 62, who immersed during the pandemic, for the first time. She asked only her first name be used.

"So many people are hungering for ritual right now," says Rebecca, who was so taken with mikvah, which she chose to engage in upon completing menopause, she is considering making immersion before Yom Kippur a regular practice.

"It's such a gift to yourself. You literally take everything away from yourself to be there in the world," says Rebecca, who also is not affiliated with Chabad.

Mikvah was not part of Beth's mom's life, though her family toured ruined ones around the world. Prior to marrying, she knew she would commit to mikvah.

A regular Shabbat service attendee, Beth said recitation of prayers at services can become rote. Mikvah provides the opposite.

"Every month, it's a time to focus on what I am asking for from G-d – such as healing – and also the 'thank you's' to G-d," such as the advent of the COVID-19 vaccine, the recent election results and good health outcomes for family members.

There were more than 230 visits to the mikvah last year, and the women are grateful Mikvah Shoshana was open all year long.

Mishulovin says one woman told her, "Thank you for being my only social outlet." Another woman prepared for her wedding by immersing in the mikvah for the first time.

Beth says, "I would have been at a loss if the mikvah had to close during the pandemic." A mother of only sons, who is committed to mikvah and its meaning, she adds, "I'd pass mikvah on to a daughter, if I had one; I'm already thinking about how I can pass it on in my own family."

For an appointment, contact Mishulovin at 503-309-4185 or simi@chabadoregon.com.

Slingshot tags TischPDX for 10 to Watch list

Portland's TischPDX has been named to the 2021 "10 to Watch" list by Slingshot, an organization that engages young Jewish philanthropists to make lasting impact. The list highlights young organizations and projects in North America that are responding to current and timely needs in the Jewish community and beyond.

The third leadership cohort of TischPDX launched in August 2020. TischPDX bolsters the leadership and visions of Jews who have been historically marginalized in Jewish communal life: Jews who are queer and trans; Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC); and Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews.

"I see Oregon, the Pacific Northwest and the West Coast all as places where Jewish innovation is taking place, and I am excited to have national attention focused here," says Eleya Fugman, who cofounded TischPDX with fellow East Side Portlanders Rabbi Ariel Stone and Kalyn Culler Cohen. The group launched its first cohort of six diverse young adults in August 2018.

"Our work at TischPDX is to empower young Jewish leaders in our community (to) move from seeing themselves as marginalized in the Jewish community to being a central force guiding our community into the Jewish future," says Eleya. "I see our recognition by Slingshot as a boon, bringing eyes and attention to our community and to the young Jewish leaders

here working to make Jewish life accessible to their peers here in Portland."

Other groups named to this year's list are: Dayenu: A Jewish Call to Climate Action, GrowTorah, JCC Harlem, Jewish Youth Climate Movement, JQY Drop-In Center for LGBTQ Jewish Teens, Lost Tribe Esports, The Elaine Breslow Institute at Beit T'Shuva, Ta'amod: Stand Up! and Work At It. Read about the 10 honorees at slingshotfund.org/10-to-watch.

"This year's '10 to Watch' list highlights projects that are responding to unmet needs that have only intensified during the pandemic," says Stefanie Rhodes, CEO of Slingshot. "We are featuring initiatives that are mobilizing Jewish leaders and community members to address a wide range of issues – including the climate crisis, at-risk Jewish youth, addiction and substance abuse, and sexual harassment and gender discrimination in Jewish workplaces."

Over the next several months, Slingshot will feature content on the "10 to Watch" organizations to offer a deeper look into their work. In addition, Slingshot will be facilitating educational opportunities for young philanthropists to learn about how to fund these initiatives.

Eleya notes that when TischPDX applied for last year's list, they didn't make it, but one of the young philanthropists who reviewed their application did reach out for



The December 2020 Zoom graduation of TischPDX cohort 2 was joined by members of cohort 3, who began their program in August.

more information. That encouraged the group to apply again this year, and they were named to the list.

Eleya says TischPDX appeals to young people who want to learn more about their Judaism but do not feel comfortable in more formal organizations. She says they also had one cohort participant who was raised modern Orthodox, and hence knew a lot about Judaism, but felt alienated in the organized Jewish world after coming out as non-binary.

Each cohort features six participants chosen for the 10-month program. After eight months, participants have the option to opt into an extension to 18 months and receive a \$750 stipend to attend a Jewish retreat or conference or other educational experience. Five of the six participants in each of the first two cohorts opted for the extension.

The extension provides an overlap between cohorts that has proven beneficial, notes Eleya.

The cohorts meet monthly (now on Zoom) for Torah study, skills and relationship building. Each participant develops a project or program for the community. Social justice is a com-

mon theme.

"For people raised outside Judaism, they are often pulled to Judaism by its connection to social justice," says Eleya, who was herself raised in a very secular household in rural northern California. Her only exposure to Judaism before college was a seder at her grandparents in the Bay Area every couple years. She found her connection after moving to the Bay Area and coming out as a lesbian in her 20s. She found Queer minyans and other home-based groups a draw to Jewish life, which inspired her to help create TischPDX.

TischPDX is providing Jews in the Portland area with the tools they need to lead enriching and purposeful Jewish lives – and establishing a model for Jewish engagement that could be replicated in other small cities across the U.S. These leaders have hosted more than 120 events and programs, ranging from a Queer Sci-Fi Zoom Shabbat to a Bike through Sukkah parade and a Tzedakah and Reparations giving circle. These events have reached more than 1,000 of their peers in the Portland area.

For more information, visit tischpdx.org.



Pre-Passover Food Drive

People came by car and wagon to make their community a little brighter March 14 with their food donations for the Portland Jewish community's Pre-Passover Food Drive. More than 1,000 pounds of food was collected at four sites for three food pantries.

Rabbis on the move

Rabbi Debra Kolodny to head east

After 10 years in Portland, Rabbi Debra Kolodny (in blue jacket) will relocate to Amherst, Mass., on June 4 with wife, Brio, and their dog, Cinna-mon.

Rabbi Debra was a co-founder of Portland's UnShul in 2015 and will continue to serve that congregation. In 2018, UnShul members opted to transition from an event- and activity-based model to a Renewal congregation soaked in ecstatic and contemplative prayer, mystical Jewish learning, psycho-spiritual healing and radical political engagement. Recent Zoom services have acclimated people to distanced but intimate services, so Rabbi Debra and the UnShul will continue together online, with High Holy Days in person when allowed.

"After 10 years in the cross hairs between armed White nationalists and violent police, forest fires and a PNW culture that was never quite a match, I'm excited to relocate to a smaller area drenched in leftist politics, Jewish and queer communities, and amazing universities," says Rabbi Debra.

Originally from New York and Washington, D.C., Rabbi Debra looks forward to returning to the East Coast. The rabbi's brother and about 30 friends, including eight rabbis, live in western Massachusetts.

Though excited to explore new horizons, Rabbi Debra has some incredibly fond memories. At their first High Holy Days at P'nai Or in 2011, Rabbi Debra integrated part of the Occupy Wall Street manifesto into the Kol Nidre drash. This inspired a congregant to build a sukkah at the Occupy Portland encampment and ask Rabbi Debra to lead a teaching. For three years they served as executive director of Nehirim, a national organization of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Jews. Before it closed in 2015, they produced a Queer Clergy for a Black Lives Matter conference with local BLM and Don't Shoot Portland activists.

Over the past four and a half years, Rabbi Debra has attended hundreds and spoken at dozens of marches and forums against Trump policies and in support of immigrant rights and ending police violence. They also gave testimony to the state legislature and city council and got arrested to support refugee rights.

In addition to continuing to serve the UnShul, which is populated with serious Torah divers, social justice activists and LGBTQI+ folks, Rabbi Debra will also continue with activism, producing their musical *Princess Prophet*, and teaching and consulting locally and nationally.

To learn more about Portland's UnShul, email UnShulAdmin@asthespiritmovesus.com.

Rabbi Truzman to stay connected from Israel

On Feb. 28, Congregation Beit Yosef Rabbi Shlomo and Dorit Truzman left Portland for Israel to make aliyah. The couple will continue as Rabbi and Rabbanit Emeritus from Israel for the Orthodox Sephardic congregation, which is located at 4200 SW Vermont St. on the edge of Portland's Gabriel Park.

"Because of the virtual world we now live in, the Truzmans are

instantly accessible, and they will remain close to the congregation," says Beit Yosef President Benaya Laws. "They will remain active with our congregation ... providing direction on policy and our customs."

Rabbi Eliyahu and Rabbanit Malky Weisman, who have been members of the congregation, take the on-the-ground rabbinic lead related to supervising the kashrut, providing classes for Jewish education and determining immediate halachic issues.

The Truzmans came to Portland in 2003. They founded Congregation Beit Yosef in 2007 and have led the congregation since.

Rabbi Truzman grew up in *Melilla* in Spanish Morocco. He did his rabbinic studies in London, England, and served as the spiritual leader of one of the two Sephardic synagogues in Manchester, England. He held rabbinic posts in Hong Kong, Guatemala, Aruba, Canada and Arkansas before moving to Portland. The couple met when he served as a rabbi in Guatemala, where Dorit Truzman was born and raised.

"They are beloved and brought to Portland their rich Sephardic tradition infused with their characteristic Sephardic warmth," says Laws. "Through their continued leadership, Congregation Beit Yosef is remaining alive and active in Portland."

Beit Yosef is named in honor of Maran Yosef Karo (1488-1575), author of the last great codification of Jewish law, the Shulchan Aruch.

"Congregation Beit Yosef is so grateful that the Weismans are stepping into a rabbinical leadership role," says Laws. In addition to supervising kashrut and leading classes, Rabbi Weisman will be the authority to determine immediate halachic issues.

Beit Yosef is returning to in-person Shabbat services and will hold services the first two days of Pesach, as well. Doors from the congregation's building will open into an adjacent tent to combine indoor and outdoor open-air seating. People can register for services on the website www.beityosef.org.

More Transition News: Rose, Levy, Boettiger

Other Oregon congregations will also see changes in rabbinic leadership this year. Stories are planned on the following transitions.

- Rabbi Joshua Rose announced in January 2020 that he planned to conclude his role as Shaarie Torah's rabbi in June of 2021. Rabbi Rose and his family will stay in Portland and plan to remain connected to the Shaarie Torah community. The board and rabbi search committee are interviewing candidates to fill the post.

- In 2014, Rabbi Gadi and Eve Levy moved to Portland to work for and within the Jewish community. Since 2018, the couple have served as rabbi and rabissa of Congregation Ahavath Achim, Portland's 105-year-old Sephardic synagogue. Earlier this year the couple announced they will move in June to Deerfield, Ill., a suburb of Chicago, to lead L'Chaim Center, an outreach organization.

- Rabbi Joshua Boettiger has announced he will be leaving Temple Emek Shalom of Ashland in July. Rabbi Boettiger has accepted a post as the Jewish Chaplain at Bard College in upstate New York. He will also teach some Judaic studies classes at Bard. He also will serve (primarily remotely) as the Associate Rosh Yeshiva for the Center for Contemporary Mussar based in Philadelphia.



Science news

Study of fish could offer clues to aging and cancer in humans

BY DEBORAH MOON

Portland and Israeli researchers have joined forces for a study of embryo dormancy and aging in killifish that could have applications in the fields of human aging and spread of cancer.

Portland State University Professor of Biology Jason Podrabsky, Ph.D., and Hebrew University Assistant Professor of Genetics Itamar Harel, Ph.D., were awarded a National Science Foundation grant last year to study the role of vitamin D synthesis and signaling on embryo development/dormancy and aging. The researchers are studying annual killifish, which have short life spans and whose embryos can become dormant in dry conditions.

“We are asking basic science questions,” says Dr. Harel from his lab The Silberman Institute at Hebrew University. “However, our findings could identify principles in embryonic development or aging that are conserved throughout the animal kingdom (including humans). If that case, our research could be applied for manipulating similar biological processes in humans, as well.”

Both researchers study annual killifish that live in seasonal ponds. When the ponds dry up, the adult fish die, but the embryos survive in the dry mud. They can survive without water for years.

“They can stop their development and remain dormant as embryos for years – this is what I study,” says Dr. Podrabsky. “Second, they are one of the fastest-aging vertebrate species on Earth – some species go through the entire process of growing old and aging in a handful of weeks – this is what Itamar studies. We are combining forces to study both processes.”



Hebrew University Assistant Professor of Genetics Itamar Harel, above (left), works in his lab in Jerusalem. At right, Portland State University Professor of Biology Jason Podrabsky works out in the field. The two researchers received a grant to study dormancy and aging in killifish.

Harel lived in the United States for five years while doing his postdoc research at Stanford. He has been studying aging in killifish in Africa. The two researchers had been following each other's work, and Harel reached out to Podrabsky to initiate the collaboration.

“Jason is a pioneer in diapause research and was a natural collaborator for this project,” says Harel.

As Podrabsky explains on pdx.edu/podrabsky-lab/what-is-a-killifish, “Diapausing embryos experience a profound arrest of cellular metabolism, growth and proliferation. Understanding how these feats are accomplished could help to understand how to slow or arrest development of human cancers.” Vitamin D controls whether the embryos of these fish enter into dormancy during development. The researchers use modern genome editing techniques (CRISPR/Cas9) to knock out the function of genes that produce vitamin D to see if it affects the fish's ability to enter dormancy or changes the speed of aging.

“Once we learned more about the mechanisms that regulate

diapauses, it became clear that these same mechanisms also affect aging, so it is a very complementary collaboration,” says Podrabsky.

“Because vitamin D signaling is conserved between fish and humans, this project could help us to better understand aging in humans, and could help us to develop technologies to make human tissues (and maybe even whole humans) dormant,” Podrabsky adds.

COVID has significantly impacted the researchers' ability to do field work and to establish and strengthen the collaborative project between the scientists and their labs.

“We would normally travel to South America and/or Africa each year to collect embryos and fish from the field, but all travel has been paused,” says Podrabsky. “There is also a significant amount of money in the grant to pay for student exchanges (two-three months at a time) between my lab and Itamar's lab to foster cross training. I am hopeful that these trips will be possible as early as late this year or early in 2022.”

The study is due to run until about fall 2024.



Podrabsky also serves as interim vice president, research & graduate studies at PSU. In that role, he oversees PSU's visiting scholar program to bring an Israeli scholar to campus for a yearlong visiting professor appointment in a PSU department related to their area of study. The program was created as part of the Harold & Arlene Schnitzer Family Fund of the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation's 2018 donation to PSU's Judaic Studies Program.

“It is just a coincidence that I also have a collaboration with Itamar,” Podrabsky says. “I really enjoy working with the folks associated with the visiting scholar program, and it is a great opportunity for international collaboration.”

In 2019, Professor Stanley Rotman was the first visiting scholar. Rotman did research with Professor John Lipor of the electrical and computer engineering department, presented multiple seminars and mentored graduate students.

“Basically, we're pausing the program due to COVID and until we can safely host Assaf Shmerling, our second scholar,” says Podrabsky.

Chaplain's Corner

A Chance to Rewire our Brains

BY RABBI BARRY COHEN

Imagine a circle that is seven-eighths complete. What words would you use to describe it?

Most people say “incomplete,” “unfinished” or “broken.” We are hardwired to use this kind of language. Our brain has a habit of focusing on the negative and overlooking the positive.

Leonard Felder, in his book *Here I am: Using Jewish Spiritual Wisdom to Become More Present, Centered and Available for Life*, cites a study that Bluma Gerstein Zeigarnik conducted at the University of Berlin in 1927. She had subjects look at incomplete pictures. She discovered that when the eye looks at a circle that is seven-eighths complete, the brain focuses on the one-eighth that is incomplete.

Felder notes the problematic aspect of the way our brains process reality: “Our brains have an exhausting tendency to focus constantly on things that are unfinished, while at the same time, we tend to overlook or take for granted things that are solid.”

Our brains are more wired to note what we lack rather than to emphasize what we already have. We innately focus on the negative rather than the positive. (A silly but effective illustration: I still remember the handful of times my mom was late in picking me up when I was a little kid, rather than the hundreds of times she was punctual.)

During these extended months of the COVID-19 pandemic, this default setting of our brains has been our enemy. Many of us at times have become stressed out, anxious, fatigued or even depressed. In response, our brains can overly fixate

on what we perceive we lack, which only makes us feel even worse.

Psychologically, we have paid a price. Our brains naturally create chemicals that make us feel good: serotonin, norepinephrine and dopamine. What depletes these chemicals? Fatigue, stress, anxiety and depression. In effect, our pandemic world and our natural tendency to fixate on the incomplete and broken are adversely affecting the brain's ability to manufacture “feel good” chemicals that foster a sense of balance, satisfaction and joy.

Fortunately, we have an opportunity to rewire our brains. We can teach our brains to notice and recall positive experiences and good outcomes. Though the prospect may seem daunting, Felder encourages us that we only need to be deliberate and dedicated. We only need to offer a simple six-word blessing: Baruch she-amar v'hayah ha'olam. Baruch hu. “Blessed is the One that constantly speaks, expresses or creates, and the world around us and inside us comes to be; blessed is this awe-inspiring process.”

We can say these words when we see something beautiful, alive or mysterious. We can say these words after we share a good experience or even after our curiosity has been piqued.

In addition, there is more than one way to offer this prayer. If we prefer feminine language, rather than saying Baruch hu, we can say B'rucha Yah, “Blessed is the breath of life that is blessing us right now.” We can also say “Blessed is Shechinah” (God's female indwelling presence.) We can shorten the six words to two words: Baruch she-amar. Finally, we can offer spontaneous, heartfelt words,



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

such as “Something just happened that I don't want to overlook. It made me feel good that I experienced ...”

Offering our version of this prayer is a way to get feel-good drugs without a prescription. Just try it out. We may discover that recognizing and acknowledging the positive in our lives is a way to stimulate and increase the flow of neurotransmitters in our brain cells and nerve endings. The result? Calmness, balance, satisfaction and joy.

Felder writes, “Even if you are currently saying a grand total of zero blessings or just one thank-you each day, see what happens to your clarity and your moods when you start focusing your mind on the many things in your life that are going well and shouldn't be taken for granted.”

So here's our homework assignment. For the next week, don't focus on the one-eighth of our everyday experiences that is “incomplete;” rather, find beauty in the seven-eighths of our interactions that are positive, constructive and even transcendent. Then without pause, offer that six-word prayer of gratitude, in whichever form we choose.

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In addition to the Chaplain's Corner, the Jewish Review offers space for our community's rabbis to share their thoughts on the week's parsha or current events. Rabbis can schedule a date to submit a column by emailing editor@jewishportland.org.

Guest Column

Police Reform: Soft Skills for Hard Encounters

BY DAVE DAHLAND JATHAN JANOVE

Before creating *Dave's Killer Bread*, Dave Dahl spent 15 years of his life in jails and prisons. In his numerous encounters with police and corrections officers, their approach was always force or threat of force, obedience or physical suffering.

Now approaching age 60 with a highly successful business venture behind him and currently working as a philanthropist, Dave holds no bitterness toward law enforcement. He freely admits that his behavior was far from exemplary, not only with the crimes he committed, but the way he responded to law enforcement.

Hostile, Threatening Situations can be De-escalated Without Force or Threats of Force

In the 1970s, a friend of Jathan's, "Sam," achieved his dream of becoming an LAPD police officer. He got called to a domestic disturbance in Watts. He and two other white police officers arrived at the call and encountered a large Black man. The man stood in a narrow doorway so they couldn't surround him. He said he was going to beat up each of the cops, one at a time. Sam approached him and said, "OK, we agree to fight you, one at a time. However, I'd like to go last."

A puzzled look came over the man's face. He said, "Why?"

Sam responded, "I figure you might be tired by then, so it'll give me a better chance of taking you."

The man's anger dissolved. He held out his wrists. Sam cuffed him and took him into the station without incident.

Two days later, Sam was notified to see the captain. Expecting praise or a commendation, he was shocked when he received a reprimand. "You showed weakness," the captain said. "You had weapons. Instead, you embarrassed the LAPD."

What Sam did, and what the captain failed to appreciate, was de-escalate a potentially violent encounter by listening and responding to what he listened to. In the many tragic-horrific videos of encounters between the police and African Americans, you almost never see the officers actively listen and respond to what they heard. Instead, it's essentially "obey or get hurt or die." Lost are opportunities for verbal engagement to de-escalate the situation without force.

Verbal Aikido

Conventional martial arts center on blocking strikes and striking attackers. These arts are defensive in nature yet can result in the attacker's injury or death. By contrast, Aikido centers on maneuvering the attacker to a position where no one gets hurt. Instead of fight or flight, you engage with your opponent. Instead of blocking and striking, you blend in, moving with the attacker while maintaining your balance and conserving your energy, and while requiring the attacker to expend his/her energy and struggle to maintain his/her balance.

The principles of physical Aikido apply to verbal Aikido. Hostile words typically invoke a fight or flight response. "That's the stupidest thing I ever heard!" can produce flight or it can produce fight. "Yeah. Well, you're the stupidest person I ever met!" An Aikido response would be to ask a question such as "What makes it the stupidest thing you ever heard?" Or, "Wow, the stupidest thing ever. What's #2?" Either way you turn the attack into a conversation.

Verbal Aikido in potentially violent situations

Winston Churchill once helped Jathan avoid a bar fight. Late on a Friday night, a large and evidentially inebriated man took exception to something Jathan said. He put his face close to Jathan's and made it clear he had aggression on his mind.

Jathan responded by asking questions. At one point the man, who was Black, said, "I'm from Northeast Portland and I haven't been shot!"

Jathan said, "that reminds me of a quote by Winston Churchill."

"I don't like Churchill!" the man said.

"You may like this quote: 'There is nothing so exhilarating as to be shot at without result.'"

The man was silent, so Jathan repeated it.

The man's body posture and facial expression changed. He smiled and said, "You know what – I do like that quote." The parties shook hands and the incident was over.

Recently, a friend of Jathan's talked her way out of a road rage incident using verbal Aikido. A belligerent driver blocked her car, got out and began yelling threatening epithets at her. She managed to shift the dialogue to the respective colors of their cars, explaining that she preferred his car color to hers. She said, "The shift in topics clearly confused him. He muttered a couple of expletives, got back in

his car and drove away."

Learning lessons

Like any soft skill, verbal Aikido takes practice. What might you say or do that would redirect the other person from a fight/flight state of mind to one without anger or hostility? Being curious makes room for other options to be considered, resulting in better outcomes.

Recently, a video showed a confrontation between Portland police officers and a protester who stood in front of their squad car. The police showed restraint, not responding to the nasty things she yelled at them. Patiently, they kept repeating that she needed to move out of the way or be arrested. Finally, after it became clear she wasn't going to move, they arrested her.

Before they arrested her, the woman didn't just shout insults. She said other things including, "I have a college degree!" The officers never responded to any of these comments, yet they presented golden opportunities for verbal Aikido: "That's great, what school did you attend?" "What did you study?" "That's funny; I have a cousin who went to that school" and so on.

The officers showed restraint, and they made an arrest without violence. However, had they been trained in soft skills such as verbal Aikido, it's unlikely an arrest would have been necessary. Instead, between police officer and protester, a positive connection would have been made.

Jathan Janove is a member of Kesser Israel and works with several Jewish organizations as an organization consultant and executive coach.



He is the author of Hard-Won Wisdom: True Stories from the Management Trenches (Harper Collins 2016). jathanjanove.com

Dave Dahl is the "Dave" of Dave's Killer Bread and currently serves as a community philanthropist at his power2work.org with a passion for helping the formerly incarcerated find meaningful employment.



Jobs board

The Jewish Review publishes job openings from local Jewish agencies and congregations. Job information will be shortened to fit available space. Submit to: editor@jewishportland.org

Eastside Jewish Commons Director of Operations and Community Relations

Salary range: \$65,000-85,000 plus benefits package

Eastside Jewish Commons is pleased to share an incredible opportunity to be a leader in helping build Jewish life on Portland's Eastside. We are hiring for a new, full-time position: Director of Operations and Community Relations.

The goal of Eastside Jewish Commons is to create a lively and inclusive family and social gathering place on Portland's growing, thriving Eastside. We are on the verge of moving forward with a space that we intend to fill with educational, cultural, spiritual and recreational programming.

The full job description is posted on ejcpxd.org/ejc-is-hiring. For more information, email info@ejcpxd.org.

Moishe House NW Community Manager

Full-time position based in the Bay Area, Portland or Seattle.

Starting Salary Range (Portland): \$50,000-\$53,000 plus benefits

Founded in 2006, Moishe House empowers young adults to create their own dream Jewish communities. A Moishe House is led by a group of volunteer community builders who open their doors to 20-somethings to create spaces of connection, new friends and engaging events – all at no cost to the participant. To date, there are more than 140 communities in over 25 countries, and we're still growing!

Moishe House is searching for a Northwest Region Community Manager to manage and enable our community builders located across the Bay Area, Portland, Vancouver and Seattle to be leaders in creating meaningful, welcoming experiences that serve the young adult Jewish community in their city. A Community Manager is a member of the Resident Support team and is typically responsible for supporting 12-15 houses and pods and 35-45 community builders to achieve program goals, including recruiting new community builders, efficiently completing administrative

tasks, connecting residents to resources and other Moishe House opportunities, and developing a strong knowledge base about young adult life in their regional communities.

See full job description at moishehouse.org/about-us/join-the-team/northwest-community-manager-2/

Email cover letter and resume to: careers@moishehouse.org. Important: write "Northwest Community Manager" with your first and last name and preferred location in the subject line.

BB Camp Community Care and Inclusion Director/JFCS Child and Family Therapist

Salary Range: \$60,000-70,000 plus benefits

This dynamic position's primary role is to provide culturally competent mental-health clinical and inclusion services to the diverse community of B'nai B'rith Camp and Jewish Family & Child Service. "Diverse community" includes children, adolescents, couples, adults, seniors and family units from myriad cultural and ethnic backgrounds and faith traditions. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, recruitment, screening, intake and orientation, evaluation and intervention, treatment planning, referrals, counseling, training, patient education, case management, reporting, record keeping and information.

Requirements include Oregon licensed and registered mental-health clinician in good standing with their board; minimum of two years' clinical experience; experience in Jewish camping or similar nonprofit preferred; and ability to work effectively with and understand the Jewish community and Jewish values.

Job Responsibilities include working closely in both a summer camp and clinic-based setting with individuals, couples, parents, groups, families, children and teens on issues related to ADHD, autism, disabilities, anxiety, depression, trauma, grief/loss, relationship issues, emotional regulation and social skills; and working with parents of children with special and MESH (Mental, Emotional and Social Health) needs.

For a complete job description visit bbcamp.org/inclusion-dir/. Interested applicants should submit a cover letter and resume to Overnight Camp Director Bette Amir-Brownstein at bamirbrownstein@bbcamp.org. Review of applications will begin immediately. Position is opened until filled.

Obituaries

TSVI EPSTEIN

TSvi (Howard) Epstein, z"l, passed away March 12, 2021, at home in Portland at age 76. He is survived by wife, Navah (Bonnie) Epstein; daughters, Dorothy Epstein, Lillian Halem and Jennifer Kessner; sister Barbara Saltzman; and six grandchildren.

He was born July 5, 1944, in Los Angeles, Calif., to Sidney and Lillian (Nemor) Epstein, z"l. He was a member of Congregations Kesser Israel and Beit Yosef. A private funeral was held the afternoon of March 12 at the Kesser Israel cemetery.

On behalf of the Congregation Kesser Israel, Rabbi Brodtkin extended sincere condolences to Navah and his entire family.

SUBMISSIONS

Submit obituaries to: editor@jewishportland.org.

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

Pay tribute to family or friends in memory of their dearly departed by making a donation in their honor. 503-245-6219 or jewishportland.org/kavodtribute.

Public Service Announcement



Have you
or a loved
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affected by
Covid-19?
CNSCOS is
here to
help!

Services we can assist with:

- Housing such as hotels or motels
- Food / Meals
- Health care and self-monitoring supplies that are not covered by insurance
- Transportation related to individuals in isolation or quarantine (ambulance, taxi, etc.)
- Communications such as cell phones
- Cleaning services
- Grocery shopping
- Childcare

covid19@nevehshalom.org
971-990-5652
nevehshalom.org/covid19/