

INSIDE

**Hadassah to host
Reosenblum**

– page 2

**Latke Ball lights up
Neveh Shalom**

– page 2

**Deresiewicz named
AJU Public Fellow**

– page 4

**Portland Jewish Film
Festival returns**

– page 4

**Kesser Israel adds
security fence**

– page 5

**Shabbat of Love is
Jan. 19**

– page 5

**Work For The World
service day Jan. 15**

– page 7

Events

– page 11

**Chaplain: How to
respond to God's
absence**

– page 12

**Gleizer: Seeking
redemption**

– page 13

Obituaries

– page 14

The JEWISH REVIEW

Established 1959
Oregon and SW Washington's Online Jewish Newspaper

Jan. 3, 2024/22 Tevet, 5784 Volume 59, Issue 1



A escort leads a member of the Portland/Las Vegas solidarity mission group into the home of Carmella Dan at Kibbutz Nir Oz in Southern Israel Tuesday, Dec. 5. Dan was murdered along with her granddaughter by Hamas terrorists during the Oct. 7 terror attacks. (Rachel Nelson/The Jewish Review)

No Ordinary Trip

Portland delegation makes solidarity journey to Israel

By **ROCKNE ROLL**

The Jewish Review

For the group of Portlanders who travelled to Israel in early December to bear witness to the aftermath of the Oct. 7 terror attacks, the first reminders of the state of the country they were coming to came before they'd even officially arrived.

"As we landed, there was a rocket attack" at Ben Gurion International Airport in Tel Aviv, Rachel Nelson, Director of Educational Initiatives and Associate Director of Community Relations for the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, explained, "and we were basically told, 'Well, sit on the plane because there's nowhere to go.'"

Rabbi Eve Posen, Associate Rabbi of Congregation Neveh Shalom, was also on that plane.

"That made it real," she recalled, "that this wasn't going to be any ordinary trip."

-

When Rabbi Posen stepped off the plane at Ben Gurion Airport, it was her first time on Israeli soil in 17 years, but her connection to the place is indelible.

"It's the land of my lineage because it's the land of the Torah," she said. "When something terrible happens there, my heart breaks because we're all family."

She said she did not hesitate to take the opportunity. See **SOLIDARITY**, page 8



CLICK TO LISTEN TO
THE NEW EPISODE

Subscribe at
jewishportland.org/subscribe

Hadassah hosts AG Rosenblum Jan. 28

By **ROCKNE ROLL**
The Jewish Review

Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, is kicking off the new year with an auspicious guest appearance.

The group will host Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum Sunday, Jan. 28 from Noon-2 pm at a private event in Portland to speak on reproductive rights for women.

Eva Novick, one of the group's leaders, worked extensively with Rosenblum as a lawyer with the Oregon Department of Justice.

"I knew that women's reproductive rights was one of the areas she cares deeply about and so it aligns very well with Hadassah's mission," Novick said.

Hadassah has been growing its presence in Portland since the middle of this year, and Novick has been a big part of that growth. It's been a great experience for all involved, she said.

"Regardless of what synagogue they belong to, or if they're unaffiliated, it's a way to elevate Jewish values," Novick explained. "Like in

our last event, we all donated feminine hygiene products to a shelter."

Beyond the sharing of common values, the common connections among Portland's Hadassah chapter were a source of comfort in the wake of the Oct. 7 terror attacks in Israel, as was the knowledge that Hadassah's hospitals in Israel were caring for the victims of the attacks.

"It was really meaningful for people to come together. We saw a lot of people who hadn't been involved in the Jewish community in Portland at all, and they came because it was so important to have that sense of community and have the sense of belonging and know that there are other people with similar values and so it is, in a sense, a support group for all of us," Novick said. "Hadassah hospital, for years, has provided medical care for everyone, regardless of race, religion, nationality. It employs a diverse staff, and that's one way where you see the heart of Israel."

Registration is \$18. For more information, email Deanna Migdal at dmigdal@hadassah.org.

Tishby webinar Jan. 18

The Jewish Review staff

StandWithUs and Temple De Hirsch of Seattle will host Israeli actress and activist Noa Thursday, Jan. 18 at 7 pm at the synagogue in Seattle and by livestream.

Tishby is the former Israeli Special Envoy for Combating

Antisemitism and Delegitimization of Israel. She'll be discussing her bestselling book, "Israel: A Simple Guide to the Most Misunderstood Country on Earth."

Register for the livestream free online at jewishportland.org/noa-tishby.



Click the logo
for the latest
episode of
The Jewish
Review Podcast



Partygoers take in Congregation Neveh Shalom's Young Adult Latke Ball Saturday, Dec. 9. (Devin Getreu/Courtesy Congregation Neveh Shalom)

Latke Ball lights up Neveh Shalom

By **ROCKNE ROLL**
The Jewish Review

Congregation Neveh Shalom's Second Annual Latke Ball for young adults lit up the shul with not just the warmth of the menorah, but the electricity of the dance floor.

More than 50 attendees took in the party, held Dec. 9, the third night of Chanukah, with dancing, drinks, and, of course, latkes courtesy of Allen Levin of Century Catering.

"His are the closest to my mom's latkes, which is a pretty big endorsement," Neveh Shalom Program Director Lisa Richmond explained.

This was CNS's second young adult Chanukah party, but the first partnering with other community young adult groups through PDX Cross Collaboration. Participating groups included Congregation Beth Israel's Jews Next Dor, Moishe Pod West, Portland Jewish Connection, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland.

"I think partnering with the affiliate groups really made it truly communal for young Jewish adults across Portland," Richmond said.

Despite the young crowd, the dance floor seemed to be at its most vibrant when DJ Solomite was spinning older tunes.

"It was funny because it took people a while to warm up to get on the dance floor. And towards the end of the night," Richmond said, "we really saw them get out there doing, not the pop music, but the Jewish songs, the hora, stuff like that. That's what they got excited about."

The true measure of success, though, came as the night wound down.

"Everyone had a great time," Michelle Caplan, Neveh Shalom's Assistant Executive Director, said, "and I think that the testament to the great time is watching them exchange phone numbers and contacts for social media, that was the best part."

At the end of the day, the goal of the Latke Ball is much more than downing fried potatoes and dancing the hora – it's building the next generation of Jewish community, one connection at a time.

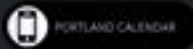
"I have to give credit to Alex Menashe, who is the chair of our membership committee," Caplan said. "He has been really passionate about young adult involvement and engagement because it's the future of our leadership."



Jewish Federation
of Greater Portland

#ShabbatofLove

January 19th, 2024



Scan the QR Code for ways
to participate in Portland



Shabbat of Love is a chance for Jews of all ages, backgrounds, and affiliations to come together as a community and celebrate Jewish light and love. Learn how you can join the celebration on January 19th @ www.shabbatoflove.org



JEWISHPORTLAND.ORG/GIVE

Donate To Our 2024 Campaign For Community Needs!

OUR ANNUAL CAMPAIGN FOR COMMUNITY NEEDS BUILDS
FLOURISHING JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN THE GREATER
PORTLAND AREA AND AROUND THE WORLD.

Deresiewicz named inaugural AJU Public Fellow

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

Portland's own William Deresiewicz has been named to the inaugural class of American Jewish University's Public Fellows Program for 2024.

Deresiewicz, an author, speaker and former professor, is one of six fellows in the inaugural class, created to enable leading Jewish scholars to broaden the audience for their work.

"I am thrilled to find myself among so distinguished a group of fellow Fellows," Deresiewicz told *The Jewish Review*. "I look forward to engaging with the AJU community over the course of 2024 and beyond."

The inaugural class of fellows was selected by Mark Oppen-

heimer, AJU's director of open learning, and AJU President Jeffrey Herbst. Each fellow will give a public talk in their community and take part in one of AJU's public forums. Each fellow is also receiving a grant for an undisclosed amount to pursue further scholarship.

"It just seemed to me that a Jewish center as dynamic as American Jewish University would be a great part-time intellectual home for this amazing, diverse, eccentric band of wonderfully weird Jewish thinkers," Oppenheimer said in a press release. "AJU has this history of being at the frontier—literally and figuratively—of American Jewish life, and so do these six fellows."

Deresiewicz has earned a

bachelor's in biology and psychology, a master's in journalism and a doctorate in English, all from Columbia University. He previously taught English at Yale University. In 2012 Deresiewicz received the Nona Balakian Citation for Excellence in Reviewing from the National Book Critics Circle.

Deresiewicz has published four books of his own. "A Jane Austin Education" analyzes his own journey to adulthood through the lens of Austin's novels. "Excellent Sheep" expands on his essay in *The American Scholar* criticizing America's elite educational institutions for creating out-of-touch graduates and became a best-seller. "The Death of the Artist" examines how modern

technology affects the arts. His latest work, a collection of essays, is titled "The Death of Solitude." *American Scholar* also published a version of his viral "Solitude and Leadership" address to the United States Military Academy. His work has also been published in *The New Republic*, *The Nation*, *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic* and *Harper's*.

The other Fellows in the inaugural class are writer, activist and Guggenheim Fellow Roya Hakakian, author and former Obama White House speechwriter Sara Hurwitz, National Jewish Book Award recipient Jay Michaelson, *Ms. Magazine* co-founder and author Letty Cottin Pogrebin and Yiddish musician Anthony Russell.

Portland Jewish Film Festival returns with seven films Jan. 9-14

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

The Portland Jewish Film Festival is back.

For the first time since 2019, Portland's community celebration of Jewish film will take to the screen at Portland State University's Lincoln Hall, Tuesday through Sunday, Jan. 9-14, with seven films looking at Jewish life and history from a variety of angles.

Previously put on by the Institute for Judaic Studies, the festival was inherited by the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center For Holocaust Education following the closure of IJS in 2019. The festival makes its post-Covid return this year thanks to festival sponsorships from Rosalind Babener, Cedar Sinai Park, Congregations Beth Israel and Shir Tikvah, Elizabeth Menashe, the Mit-

tleman Jewish Community Center, the Multnomah County Cultural Coalition, the Oregon Israel Fund, the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation, Portland Jewish Academy, the Harold and Arlene Schnitzer Family Fund, Jordan Schnitzer, the Lois & Leonard Schnitzer Supporting Foundation, the Schwartz Charitable Foundation, Diane Solomon and Carolyn and Gary Weinstein, as well as leading sponsors for each screening.

The festival opens Tuesday, Jan. 9 at 7 pm with "Remembering Gene Wilder," a biographic look at the late comedian, writer and director. The 92-minute film is followed by a conversation with film critic and author Shawn Levy. Lead sponsors for this screening are the Harold and Arlene Schnitzer Family Fund and Jordan Schnitzer.

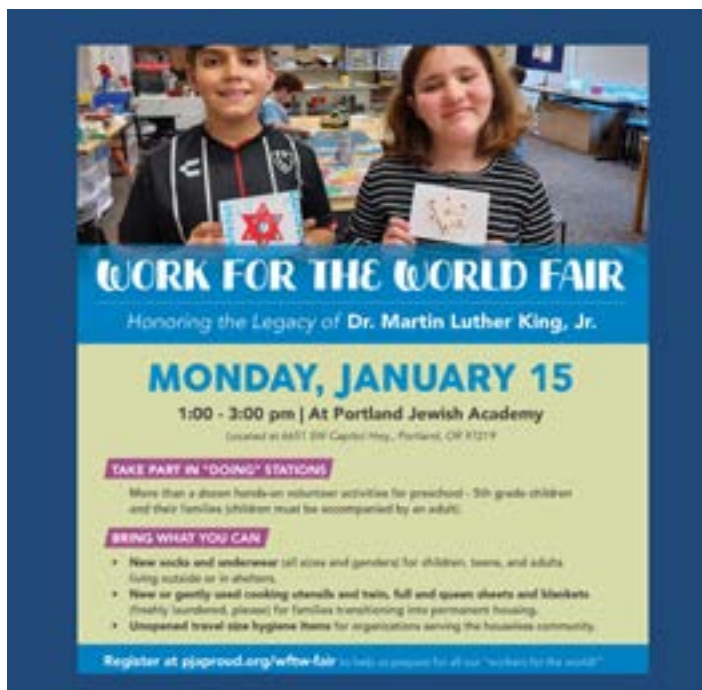
Wednesday, Jan. 10 will see a 7 pm screening of "Vishniac," exploring the life of photographer Roman Vishniac, who's work in Central and Eastern Europe before the Holocaust are some of the only remaining visual evidence of Jewish life in these regions before the specter of the Nazis descended. The 90-minute film, directed by Laura Bi-

alis, will be followed by a brief conversational program. The lead sponsors for this screening is the Lois & Leonard Schnitzer Supporting Foundation.

Thursday, Jan. 11's 7 pm screening features "The Artist's Daughter," Margarita Linton's film looking at the evolution of her relationship with her estranged father, a prominent Israeli painter, throughout an examination of his work. The one-hour feature will be followed by the world premier of local filmmaker Michael Turner's latest short "Mom & Judy," an eight-minute journey through Israel with two traveling women as they discuss memory and aging with a humor only Jewishness can provide. A brief conversational program follows. Lead sponsors for this screening is Cedar Sinai Park.

Saturday, Jan. 13 will see another 7 pm twin-bill, starting with "Nathan-ism," which looks at the art career of Nathan Hiltu, a Syrian-Jewish immigrant to the United States who was assigned to guard the defendants of the post-war Nuremberg Trials and spent a lifetime making art processing the experience.

See **FESTIVAL**, page 7



Kesser fence a timely, tasteful addition

By ROCKNE ROLL

The Jewish Review

Those passing by Congregation Kesser Israel will likely notice a new addition to the property, but the idea for this addition is not new at all.

The congregation completed the installation of a seven-foot wrought iron fence around the perimeter of the synagogue's property on Southwest Capitol Highway – a installation called for in the security plan drawn up a dozen years ago during a spate of antisemitic incidents but brought over the finish line in part due to the recent rise in similar incidents.

Aki Fleshler, the shul's Director of Security, explained that the combination of concerns about targeted acts against the synagogue's property combined with less insidious but still dangerous threats like theft, vagrancy and drug use, securing the property's perimeter has been a high priority of his work.

"Given our location is quite physically vulnerable, with no control of our property boundary, no way to keep people back at a distance from us," Fleshler said, "a fence was considered as essential as part of a long-term plan for safety and security."

Essential projects still have to be funded; Kesser Israel worked with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Non-profit Security Grant Program to fund a number of security enhancements to the building, including enhanced emergency



From left, Congregation Kesser Israel Director of Security Aki Fleshler, President Charles Elder, Rabbi Sholom Skolnik and Community Security Director Jessica Anderson show off the synagogue's new perimeter security fence Thursday, Dec. 21. (Courtesy Congregation Kesser Israel)

exits and ballistic film for the windows. Fleshler and Kesser Israel also worked extensively with Jeffrey Weitz, the project advisor, as well as Jessica Anderson and Gene Moss of Secure Community Network, as well as the Oregon Department of Justice, the United States Department of Homeland Security, the Portland Police Bureau, the Jewish Federations of North America and the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland.

Fleshler explains that the fence's height – fractionally over seven feet – is tall enough

to provide security but short enough to avoid a complicated, drawn-out permitting process that would have been required for a taller fence. The fence wraps around the entirety of the property with gates for pedestrian access and emergency exits as well as a rolling gate to cordon off the parking lot. Fleshler has received nothing but compliments on both the fence's appearance and its presence.

"It blends right into the aesthetic of the synagogue," Fleshler said. "It looks really tidy."

Fleshler expressed thanks to Anderson, Moss, the government agencies the congregation worked with, the legislators who authorized the grant programs and the synagogue itself.

"We didn't really have to dip into our own capital budget to put this together, which made it an easy sell internally," he said. "Everybody said, 'Yeah, it's about time,' whereas a year ago, there might have been some questions: 'Why do we need a fence?' or 'Why does it have to be this fence now?' Everybody's saying, 'thank you.'"

Local events planned for Jan. 19 North American Shabbat of Love

By ROCKNE ROLL

The Jewish Review

The Jewish Federations of North America is putting on the largest Shabbat dinner ever held on the continent – and you're invited.

Shabbat of Love, Friday, Jan. 19, encompasses programs from all over North America meant to bring communities together to spark Jewish joy at a time of year and a time in our lives when it's very much needed.

"We welcome Jews of all ages, backgrounds, and identities to come together with your family, friends, and supportive neighbors, to experience the sacred joy of Shabbat - a celebration of Jewish light and love," JFNA's website explained.

"We encourage people to sign up for the Shabbat of love, to bring in a little more light in these dark periods of winter and dark periods in our world and to come together in community

and be part of a larger Shabbat of Love nationally across the United States," explained Rachel Nelson, Director of Educational Initiatives and Associate Director of Community Relations for the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland.

Local events start the Monday before at Portland Jewish Academy's Work For the World Fair (see story, page 7) where participants can make challah covers that will be distributed at Cedar

Sinai Park in time for Shabbat.

JFGP will be hosting a Virtual Challah Braid with master braider Lisa Spiegel on Zoom Thursday, Jan. 18 at 7 pm in preparation for the Shabbat of Love. Pre-registration is required and free at jewishportland.org/community-calendar/virtual-challah-braid-for-shabbat-of-love.

"We're excited that Lisa Spie-

See LOVE, page 6



Christmas dinner and a movie

Portland Jewish Connection hosted dinner and a movie on Christmas Day for 15 young Jewish adults in Portland. The evening, hosted by Beni Henig, featured dinner at Xin Ding Dumpling House in Portland and a screening of "The Boys in the Boat." The group's new website, listing their upcoming activities, can be found at portlandjewishconnection.com. (Devin Getreu/Portland Jewish Connection)

LOVE (continued from page 5)

gel of Art Rising and Challah by Lisa is going to lead us in an inspiring, challah braid workshop in advance of Shabbat of Love," explained JFGP's Chief Allocations and Engagement Officer Caron Blau Rothstein. "Join along and braid with her, or to be mesmerized by her artistic challah creations."

Local organizations including Congregations Ahavath Achim and Neveh Shalom, along with Chabad of Southwest Portland and the Mittleman Jewish Community Center, in collaboration with PJ Library and Portland Jewish Academy, will be hosting events Friday evening. Congregation Beth Israel will distribute mini challot during their Friday night services and B'nai B'rith camp will include a Shabbat of Love dinner in their Tu B'Shevat Family Shabbaton run in collaboration with CBI. Details are still to be

determined for many events and will be available on JFGP's website at jewishportland.org/community-calendar/shabbat-of-love/ as they are announced.

OneTable has also partnered with JFNA to connect those hosting Shabbat dinners with those interested in attending. Details are available online at shabbatoflove.org, along with a registration link to mark your participation, however you choose to join in, along with a chance to win prizes from ModernTribe and Oneg. The site also features a guide to Shabbat dinner, produced by JFNA and OneTable.

"Shabbat isn't necessarily part of everybody's practice, so whether you do this every week or you choose to do this this particular week, join in the Shabbat of Love," Blau Rothstein said.

Free online subscription:

jewishportland.org/subscribe

Weekend in Quest returns Mar. 1

By ROCKNE ROLL

The Jewish Review

Registration is now open for the reborn, in-person Weekend in Quest program, a focused weekend of Jewish learning and community scheduled for Friday through Sunday, March 1-3 in Astoria.

Previously a program of the Institute for Judaic Studies, the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education took over following IJS' closure. The program was run online during the Covid pandemic and resumes in person this year.

"It's like a Shabbaton. It's a weekend of study and community complete with Shabbat services and a Havdalah service," explained Gail Mandel, OJMCH's Chief Operating and Advancement Officer. "There's a scholar that's brought in to speak about a specific topic over the course of four lectures."

This year's topic is "The Jews In Italy: Challenges of Emancipation and Identity" with Professor Nancy Harrowitz. The Director of the Elie Weisel Center for Jewish Studies at Boston University, Harrowitz is currently researching secular Judaism in Italy following Italian unification, while also directing BU's new major and minor programs in Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Studies.

"In Italy, as elsewhere, Jewish communities were struggling with how to negotiate a perceived freedom with the realities of integration into communities that didn't always welcome them. This theme underlies Jewish history everywhere: what we learn from the stories of the Jews of Italy has a broader application as well," Harrowitz said. "I'm a native Portlander so it's wonderful to come back to Oregon to give this series of lectures."

Sessions begin Friday afternoon with an examination of Jewish identity in Italy between the end of the ghettos in 1860 until the beginnings of the Holocaust. Saturday focuses on a

pair of Italian Jewish writers: Giorgio Bassani, the author of "The Garden of the Finzi Contini," and Primo Levi, a poet and Holocaust survivor.

Sunday's closing discussion will focus on the 2003 film "Facing Windows," a fictional account of a Holocaust survivor in post-war Italy. The film will be screened on Saturday afternoon or can be viewed by attendees in advance.

"It's about a woman who befriends a Holocaust survivor," Mandel explained. "[Harrowitz] is going to use that film as a way to address what it was like for Jews and the general Italian population's understanding or awareness of the Holocaust."

Weekend in Quest will continue to include Shabbat evening, morning, and Havdalah services, led this year by Jack Falk of The Carpathian-Pacific Express, a local Klezmer music luminary and liturgical singer.

Kosher-style lunches and dinners are included in the registration price and are served at the Holiday Inn Express in Astoria, where all programs take place.

Weekend in Quest in co-sponsored by Beit Haverim, Cedar Sinai Park, Congregations Beth Israel, Kol Ami, Neveh Shalom, P'nai Or, Shaarie Torah and Shir Tikvah, the Eastside Jewish Commons, Havurah Shalom, the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, Mittleman Jewish Community Center, *Oregon Jewish Life* and Portland Jewish Academy.

Registration is \$245, covers all programs as well as lunches and dinners, and is available online at ojmche.org/events/weekend-in-quest-2024. An exclusive room block, which includes Saturday and Sunday breakfasts, is available for participants until Feb. 8 at the discounted rate of \$165 per night. Call the hotel directly at 503-325-6222, extension 0 and request the special Weekend in Quest room rate.

For more information, email Mandel at gmandel@ojmche.org.

JFCS celebrates Chanukah with Survivors

A pair of Holocaust Survivors paint acrylic projects at Jewish Family & Child Service's Chanukah event Thursday, Dec. 14 at the Portland Kollel. Approximately 70 Holocaust Survivor clients of JFCS and their family members, caregivers and volunteers from the community came together for the party, which included beautiful food (latkes were on the menu, of course), a sing-along and well-timed warmth as the outdoor temperature dropped. While JFCS Case Manager Alla Piatski translated from English into Russian, Community Chaplain Rabbi Barry Cohen related the Hanukkah story from the Books of the Maccabees to today's heightened tensions during the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas. JFCS thanks Congregation Neveh Shalom's middle and high school students who created take-home Shabbat kits for the Survivors. This program was made possible by a grant from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany. (Robin Taylor/Jewish Family & Child Service)



PJA to host 'Work For The World' day of service

By ROCKNE ROLL

The Jewish Review

Portland Jewish Academy's MLK Day of service is back this year and looking to be bigger than ever as it expands to welcome community members beyond the student body.

The Work For The World Fair, set for Monday, Jan. 15 from 1-3 pm at PJA, brings back the annual service day from its Covid hiatus and provides children from across the community, ages preschool through fifth grade and their accompanying adults a chance to make a hands-on contributions to local projects serving the community. The fair is put on in partnership with PJ Library, B'nai B'rith Camp and the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland.

Elana Cohn-Rozansky, PJA's Service Learning Coordinator, explained that PJA began exploring its own day of service following work from Hands On Portland, a project of the local United Way. PJ Library, hosted its first MLK service day for children in 2016 and continued until the Covid pandemic.

"We looked at the opportunities available in Portland, explained Rachel Nelson, Director of Educational Initiatives and Associate Director of Community Relations at the Federation, who managed PJ Library when the service day was launched, said. "There were very few opportunities for hands on volunteerism for the under-five group and we wanted to create opportunities to reflect our Jewish values."

PJA had previously conducted family programming for MLK Day, Cohn-Rozansky explained, but saw an opportunity to shift to a service oriented event.

"We'll be making place mats for Meals on Wheels," she said.

"We'll be doing some cooking for PEAR, they serve homeless youth. We have signed up to bring lasagna, so there'll be some cooking going on. We will be assembling towel packages for Community Warehouse, taking large amounts of towels and breaking them up so that we can make them available to the people they serve."

An adult is asked to accompany each child, not just to help manage the sheer volume of youngsters, but to help visualize how these kinds of activities can be organized and conducted by families themselves, making *tikkun olam* (repairing the world) a part of each family's culture, not just the school's.

"We want there to be a glimpse at all sorts of opportunities that could potentially be done at home or organized as part of a birthday party celebration," Cohn-Rozansky said. "Planting those seeds for future service."

She estimated that around 60 people showed up to the first service day, with about 90 coming to the second. She's hoping for more than 100 this year with welcoming the broader community of young families, and hoping that, in a time where it seems that opportunities for community service are shrinking, this can be a way for those opportunities to grow.

"We really want to reignite those opportunities and give them some ideas about how to do that in small scale ways," Cohn-Rozansky said.

Registration is available now at pjaproud.org/wftw-fair. Cohn-Rozansky said that organizers are still looking for opportunities for service projects at the fair. Questions or ideas can be sent by email to workfortheworld@pjaproud.org.

FESTIVAL (continued from page 4)

The 80-minute feature is followed by "The Anne Frank Gift Shop," a 15-minute short centered on using humor to solve a terrifying problem – the fading memory of the Holocaust. Another conversational program follows the films. Lead sponsor for this evening is the Mittle-

man Jewish Community Center and Portland Jewish Academy

The festival wraps with a Sunday, Jan. 14 matinee of "Irena's Vow" at 2 pm. The two-hour film depicts a nurse assigned to run the home of a Nazi commander in occupied Poland. Instead of turning a blind eye

to the brewing genocide, she uses her position to protect a dozen Jewish refugees, hiding them just under the nose of the German authorities. A final program follows the screening. The lead sponsor for Sunday's matinee is the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland.

Tickets to each screening are \$12, \$10 for students, seniors and OJMCHE members. A festival pass is \$45 for those eligible for discount tickets and \$55 for the general public. For more information or to purchase tickets and passes, visit tinyurl.com/2024pjff.



The home of Carmella Dan and her granddaughter at Kibbutz Nir Oz in Southern Israel Tuesday, Dec. 5. Both were murdered by Hamas terrorists Oct. 7. (Rachel Nelson/The Jewish Review)

SOLIDARITY (continued from page 1)

tunity to make a solidarity visit. Nor did Rabbi Michael Cahana, Senior Rabbi of Congregation Beth Israel.

"I jumped on it right away," he said of the invitation.

Rabbi Cahana's father was born in Mandatory Palestine, where the family had been rooted for generations.

"I had been feeling like I needed to be in Israel," he continued. "I really wanted to be there personally and not be reading about things from a distance."

A friend of Portland's Jewish community, Pastor J.W. Matt Hennessee of Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church in Portland, joined the trip as well. Pastor Hennessee, who is active in interfaith work in Portland and spoke to the community gathering held at Neveh Shalom days after the attacks, has his own connection to Israel from studying in the country 40 years ago, staying with an

Israeli family that he is still connected to, and visiting the country often over the years.

"It was the most stressful trip that I have taken to Israel because of the dynamics of what was going on," he said. "I care so much for the region that it was really hard; seeing and feeling and hearing all of the things that we were exposed to there."

After landing, the nine-member Portland group, along with a five-person delegation from Las Vegas, met in Jerusalem with Osnat Sharabi Matalon, a survivor of the attacks at Kibbutz Be'eri, Idan Roll, the former deputy foreign minister and member of the Knesset (Israel's legislature) from the Yesh Atid party and author Saul Singer, before traveling the next day to Kibbutz Nir Oz, less than two miles from Gaza. Nir Oz was, in Nelson's words, a "left-wing, peace-loving" community that had employed agricultural workers from Gaza. When Hamas came to Nir Oz on Oct. 7, the community's head of security was the

first person killed.

"They knew where he lived," Rabbi Cahana recounted. "Somehow, the people who had been from Gaza, who had been on the kibbutz, got information to the Hamas terrorists to know exactly where to go and how to attack."

After donning body armor and ballistic helmets, the delegation was led through the kibbutz, house by house. Buildings were so badly damaged that only the safe rooms remained.

"You could see that it once was a home but it's not anymore," Rabbi Posen said. "Their sukkot were still up, you could see that there were half-empty bottles of wine around. On Oct 6, it was a joyful place filled with sound and people. Since Oct. 8, you cannot go there without a government representative and a flak jacket."

The protection was there for a reason — while there, a siren sounded and notifications flashed on phones that rockets from Gaza were headed their way and they had 15 seconds to get to a safe room.

"I will never forget the mo-

ment where we were all in helmets and flak jackets and were pushed to a safe house," Pastor Hennessee said.

Of the kibbutz's 400 residents, a quarter were killed, wounded or kidnapped. The homes of the kidnapped had posters on the doors detailing those who had lived there who were now hostages in Gaza. Fires had burned so hot that appliances had melted, and blood was everywhere.

"I've seen houses destroyed by hurricanes," Federation President and CEO Marc Blatner said, "but you didn't see blood splattered because somebody got shot and killed or bullet holes through the doors of the safe room."

"The bodies may have been removed," he later wrote in an email, "but the specter of pure evil remains."

Even among the evil and the horror, some remnant of the kibbutz's beauty remained.

"One of the things that stood out to me was towards the end, there was a tree that was full of

continued on next page

continued from previous page

birds and the birds were chirping,” Nelson recalled, “and just that contrasted with the singed remains of plants and houses; there was still life in the kibbutz.”

After seeing the trauma of the attacks and the response to them, the travelers got to hear about them from a variety of sources. Ambassador Joel Lyon, Israel’s ambassador to Armenia and Moldova who had been recalled to assist with domestic matters, and Gil Hoffman of HonestReporting.com spoke to the day-to-day situation while IDF spokesperson Maj. Libby Weiss, a Portland native who made *aliyah* in 2011, addressed the military situation.

While the details of their specific situations varied, a common message stood out.

“In Israel, it’s still Oct. 8,” Nelson said. “Until the hostages all come home and until there is a lot of work that happens, it will continue to be Oct. 8.”

The group also spoke with a wide variety of people who were either victims of the attacks or rushed to the aid of those who were.

Nelson recalled speaking to a family who, on a lark, had added a lock to their saferoom door years ago – an uncommon feature, as saferooms are designed to protect occupants from rockets and other heavy weapons as opposed to intruders bearing small arms – which saved their

lives on Oct. 7.

She also mentioned a woman who she connected with based on their youngest children being the same age, who was holed up in a saferoom with her family for 18 hours as Hamas terrorists roamed her neighborhood.

“She spoke about having to keep her 18-month-old quiet for 18-plus hours while in her WhatsApp messages, she’s getting videos of terrorists on her in her yard,” Nelson recalled.

“Seeing and realizing that this devastation came as a result of people who hated so much that they would take innocent people, mutilate their bodies, burn them alive, behead children, rape women who had nothing to do with their oppression, it was staggering,” Pastor Hennessee said. “I still feel very moved by that.”

The group also met with leadership from the Jewish Agency for Israel, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, and United Hatzalah, Israel’s civil ambulance service – agencies which all received contributions from JFGP’s Israel Emergency Fund. They’ve been at the forefront of efforts to help the country recover.

The efforts to recover have been a unifying force in Israel, a marked change from the months before the attacks when political divisions seemed poised to rip the country apart.

“All of that disappeared overnight,” Rabbi Cahana said. “The religious community is volunteering alongside the secular community, the liberals and the right wing, everybody is volunteering and they’re volunteering in lots of different ways.”

The delegation visited Kibbutz Mashabei Sadeh, a secular community of around 400 before the war that has now doubled in population by hosting mostly Orthodox refugees from elsewhere in Israel. Families arrived with children in pajamas, without shoes, and everything has been taken care of. The kibbutz now has two laundry centers for the additional residents, running nearly constantly.

“They called the mayor of their regional council,” Nelson explained. “These people need to do laundry.” “Well, buy the washers and dryers; we’ll figure out how to pay for them later.”

The kibbutz’s kitchen has tripled the amount of meals it serves, and the school will accommodate the displaced children for the remainder of the school year so they don’t have to deal with the shock of being relocated again.

“All over the kibbutz, there are these signs that say, ‘Need Something?’ and there’s a QR code and you take a picture of it and it immediately takes you to a place where you can request things, whatever you need,” Nelson said.

In other places, it’s the reli-

gious community that’s supporting the secular one. Because individuals from strictly observant communities are typically exempt from conscription into the IDF, they’re now some of the only civilians left in areas that have been most affected by IDF reservist call-ups.

“So there are volunteers from the *Haredi* community who are kind of coming in and taking on some of those pieces,” Nelson explained, using the Hebrew term for groups that are sometimes identified as “Ultra-Orthodox.” “You don’t usually see these communities unified like that.”

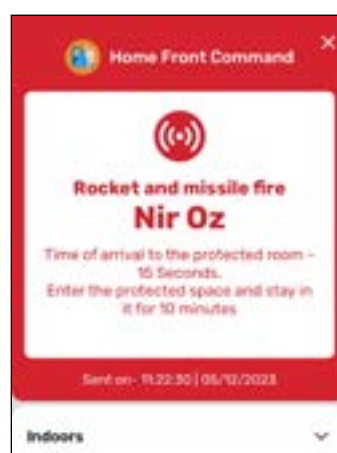
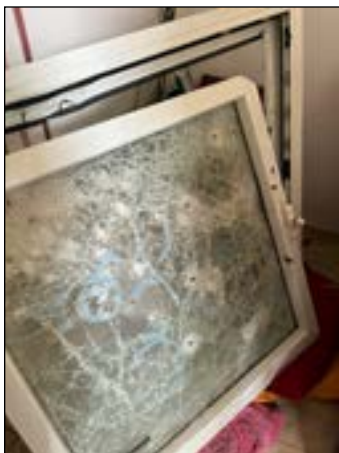
“People who have traditionally been working in agriculture were gone, and so ordinary Israelis and foreigners, Americans, were coming on solidarity missions are volunteering to help pick fruits, to take care of the crops,” Rabbi Cahana added.

Wherever they went and whoever they saw, Rabbi Posen said that she recalled having similar conversations.

“The first thing was that everyone thanked us for coming and were so grateful that we showed up and because they were feeling alone,” she said. “But then the second question was, ‘Are you safe in America?’”

That idea seems backwards, but Rabbi Posen recalls the Jewish Agency for Israel mentioning that inquiries about immigration to Israel from the

continued on next page



From left: A bullet-riddled window removed from a home at Kibbutz Nir Oz. Pastor J.W. Matt Hennessee embraces Osnat Sharabi during a meeting with the solidarity mission in Jerusalem; two of Sharabi’s brothers are being held captive by Hamas in Gaza. A screenshot of a Home Front Command app alert received while the solidarity mission was at Kibbutz Nir Oz. The temporary grave of Kibbutz Be’eri member Narkis Hand at Kibbutz Revivim; Hand’s stepdaughter, 9-year-old Emily Hand, was kidnapped and taken to Gaza but later released. (Rachel Nelson/The Jewish Review)

continued from previous page

United States are up 78 percent since Oct. 7; from France, the figure is more like 500 percent.

"Which I think speaks to the global rise in antisemitism," she said, "the fact that people who have red alerts every day, multiple times a day, were asking us if we were safe."

One of the most memorable stops on the trip was at Kibbutz Revivim. As many kibbutzim have expanded their facilities to accommodate the displaced amongst the living, so Revivim has done for the displaced dead; 30 victims from Kibbutz Be'eri are temporarily interred in an expanded portion of Revivim's cemetery pending relocation back to Be'eri when it is safe to do so.

"Some of these coffins are not full," Rabbi Cahana said. "They're burying the parts that they have."

As the visitors assembled around the temporary graves, a thunderstorm blew through the typically dry Negev desert, the

claps of thunder mingling with the rumble of IDF helicopters. One of the members of the Las Vegas delegation was a cantor who led the assembled group in *El Malei Rachamim*, a prayer for the souls of the dead, using a specific version for martyrs, as the storm intensified.

"Right towards the end, when the words were that they should rest in peace, there was a huge snap of lightning," Rabbi Posen recalled. "And when we got to the end and all said 'amen,' there was a long thunder blast. It was almost as though the heavens were crying with us at that moment."

"It was a very quiet ride back to Jerusalem," Nelson said. "It was dark out, it was raining and people really didn't have a lot to say."

From the smallest moment to the largest, Israel remains in mourning.

"This is not about Arabs versus Jews or Palestinians versus Jews. This is Israel versus terrorists, this is humanity versus terrorism," Rabbi Posen said. "And when you see the way

that Israel has come together to support those who have been displaced and to cry out for the hostages, this is a broken-hearted country. You can't say 'Oh, look at the destruction in Gaza. Israel doesn't care.' Look in the eyes of the people who are so hurt and so upset and so devastated. This is good versus evil and not Israel versus anything other than terrorism."

Rabbi Cahana said that he was awoken in the middle of the night shortly after his return from the trip by the app he had downloaded while in Israel to alert him in the event of a rocket strike. It was notifying him of an attack in Tel Aviv, the last place it had recorded his GPS signal; a stark reminder of the reality that remains in the Jewish state.

"I think it's hard for us to remember here that, for Israelis right now, it doesn't matter however many days we are into the war; today is Oct. 8," he said. "They're in shock in the same way that we in America were in shock on the 12th of September in 2001. I lived in New York during that time. It

was Sept. 12 for a long time. We were in shock for months afterwards. You don't just move on from something like that, and that's where Israelis are."

Israel is in shock, Israel is in mourning, but Israel will rebuild.

The mayor of Ramat HaNegev, Eran Doron, who told the staff of Kibbutz Mashabei Sadeh that he would find a way to pay for laundry machines for displaced families, made two distinct impressions on the group when they met him. First, he came to their meeting wearing his IDF-issued rifle slung over his shoulder; a practical reality of living so close to a war zone.

The second, Nelson recalled, was that "we need to go back to these communities and rebuild for the living and not for the dead. We need to go back and create living communities. That stuck with me."

"It's a message to say we will not be defeated," Blattner added. "We will rebuild."

Find the latest information on the situation in Israel at jewish-portland.org/israel/resources.

VOICES FROM ISRAEL WEBINARS

HEAR FROM PEOPLE ON THE GROUND

MOST WEDNESDAYS 9-10 AM PST THROUGH FEBRUARY

JANUARY 10



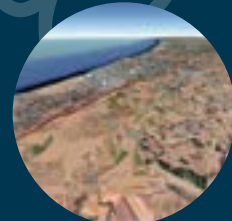
DAN SENOR
NYT Best-Selling Author

JANUARY 17



DR. NACHMAN
SHAI
Former Israel Minister
for Diaspora Affairs

JANUARY 24



VIRTUAL/DRONE
TOUR OF GAZA

REGISTER FOR THESE
AND OTHERS AT

[jewishportland.org/
israelwebinars](http://jewishportland.org/israelwebinars)



Jewish Federation
of Greater Portland

Jan. 4: The African American Experience

Join Cedar Sinai Park for an enlightening January lecture series, "The African American Experience," where experts who played pivotal roles in shaping civil rights advancements share their insights the first three Thursdays of January from 7-9 pm at Rose Schnitzer Manor.

On Jan. 4, Kerry Tymchuk, the distinguished representative from the Oregon Historical Society, delves into the profound impact of the 1948 Vanport flood on race relations and housing practices in present-day Portland. Gain a historical perspective on how this event continues to shape our community.

For more information, email jennifer.felberg@cedarsinai-park.org.

Jan. 4: Cafe Shalom Israeli Folk Dancing

Weekly open Israeli dance session Thursdays, 8-10 pm at CHCC, 8936 SW 17th Ave in Portland. All experience levels and ages welcome. \$7. For more information, contact Allison Victor at allisuev@gmail.com.

Jan. 6: Mini Mensches Tot Shabbat

Start your Shabbat off with some fun at Congregation Beth Israel's Tot Shabbat Saturday, Jan. 6 at 9 am at CBI. Tot Shabbat is open to all members of the community and aimed at kids 0-5 years old. We'll sing, dance, and tell some stories all about Shabbat. This is a great way to introduce kiddos to Judaism and meet other Jewish families with young kids. All are welcome. For more information visit bethisrael-pdx.org/community/mini-mensches.

Jan. 6: Too Jewish? A Mensch and His Musical at CBI

Join Congregation Beth Israel for a presentation of Avi Hoffman's "Too Jewish" Saturday, Jan. 6 at 7 pm at CBI. "Too

Jewish?" premiered Off-Broadway at New York's Houseman Theatre in 1994 and has been presented all over the world, as well as on the national PBS network. Hoffman, a child of Holocaust survivors, was taught at an early age to appreciate the beauty and depth of Jewish literature, music and tradition. In Avi Hoffman's Too Jewish? he combines a delightful mix of music, comedy, impersonations and personal reminiscences, taking his audiences on a journey through his own Jewish roots, illustrating the traditions and history of his beloved Yiddish culture. Free. For more information, email tracy@bethisrael-pdx.org.

Jan. 7: JSGO presents Family Declassified

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Oregon presents Family Declassified Sunday, Jan. 7 at 10:30 am on Zoom. Katherine Fennelly's academic specializations are in demography, public health, and immigration policy. After learning of her Jewish heritage as an adult she began a very different kind of research—a study of the life of her maternal grandfather, Francis (Ferenc) Kalnay, a Jewish Hungarian immigrant who arrived in the United States 100 years ago. The result is *Family Declassified*, a book in which she describes how Kalnay became the head of an elite espionage unit for the Allied Forces and an award-winning children's book author. For more information, email JG-SoOregon@gmail.com.

Jan. 7: EJC Klez Jam

The people have spoken and what they've asked for is a Klezmer jam at Eastside Jewish Commons! Let's have one Sunday, Jan. 7 at 1pm. Bring your instruments, sheet music, heart and soul, and don't worry about ability--this is a (facilitated) jam for all. We'll settle in and play for a couple of hours. As this is the first jam we'll be getting the lay of the land. Feel free to eat here (maybe it will start to become a Klezmer

brunch), just no pork or shellfish. Free. Preregistration requested at ejcpdx.org/events.

Jan. 7: Israeli Folk Dance Class and Session at SWCC

Drop in for a beginner's class and/or open dancing at the Southwest Community Center each Sunday through Feb. 11. The class is 1:30-2:30 pm. Open dancing is 2:30 to 4 pm. \$6, \$5 seniors. Pay at the front desk. Everyone welcome! For more details visit sites.google.com/site/pifdnews.

Jan. 8: Israeli Folk Dancing at Leedy Grange

Enjoy Israeli folk dancing Mondays, 7:30 - 10:30pm with this friendly group in Cedar Mill (now in our 10th year). The session, run by Sue and Donna, starts with easier, classic dances and moves on to newer forms, couples' dances, line dances, and teaching, too. New attendees please email Sue at pifdnews@gmail.com prior to the session. Find us on Facebook at "Israeli Folk Dancing in Portland, OR."

Jan. 9: Yoga for Renewal with Sido Sirkus

Come and enjoy/explore your inner self in "Yoga for Renewal," a gentle yoga class Tuesdays, 10-11 am at the Eastside Jewish Commons. This class is appropriate for both beginners and seasoned mature yogis. \$10. For more information or to register, visit ejcpdx.org/events.

Jan. 9-14: 2024 Portland Jewish Film Festival

Five screenings of new Jewish cinema at PSU's Lincoln Hall. See Story, page 4.

Jan. 11: CNS Queer Movie Night: The Birdcage

Prepare for a riotous night of sequins, feathers, and questionable wigs at our CNS Keshet movie night Thursday, Jan. 11

at 7 pm at Congregation Neveh Shalom. Join your LGBTQIA+ Kehillah as we share one of the finest features in flamboyant film, *The Birdcage* (1996), along with fresh popcorn, beer, and cider. \$7, \$5 for CNS members. For more information, email receptionist@nevehshalom.org.

Jan. 12: MLK Shabbat Service at CBI

Always a highlight of the Congregation Beth Israel calendar, our annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Shabbat Service, set for Friday, Jan. 12 at 6 pm at CBI honors Dr. King's memory, work, and enduring legacy. The CBI and greater Portland communities come together for a service featuring CBI's Kol Echad Choir, the Northwest Freedom Singers, and a keynote address, which in 2024 will be delivered by life-long activist Hezekiah Watkins.

On July 7, 1961, at age thirteen, Watkins was the youngest of 328 "Freedom Riders" arrested in Jackson, MS for "breach of peace" as they demonstrated against state segregation laws. He presently works with The Civil Rights Museum, and his dedication to the cause of Civil Rights was recognized by Congressmen Bennie Thompson in 2012.

As in previous years, gospel music from our own Kol Echad Choir and the NW Freedom Singers will be prominently featured. More at bethisrael-pdx.org/mlk.

Jan 13: Carpathian-Pacific Express at Artichoke Music

Portland Klezmer band Carpathian-Pacific Express opens their 2024 season Saturday, Jan. 13 at Artichoke Music, 2007 SE Powell Blvd in Portland. Doors at 6:30 pm, performance at 7. Tickets \$20, available in advance online at artichoke.org

Jan. 15: Work For The World

MLK Day of Service presenter

See EVENTS, page 14

Chaplain's Corner

How to respond to God's absence

Published biweekly by

Jewish Federation of
Greater Portland

9900 SW Greenburg Road,
Suite 220

Tigard, OR 97223

503-245-6219

JewishPortland.org

facebook.com/JewishPDX

[instagram.com/](https://instagram.com/jewishfederationpdx/)

jewishfederationpdx/

Editor

Rockne Roll

editor@jewishportland.org

Circulation

To receive the Jewish
Review in your email inbox,
fill out the form at

jewishportland.org/subscribe

OPINIONS printed in the
Jewish Review do not
necessarily reflect those
of the Jewish Review,
the Jewish Federation
of Greater Portland, its
governing board or the staffs
of either the newspaper or
the Federation.

Jewish Federation of Greater Portland online

Website: jewishportland.org

Instagram: [instagram.com/](https://instagram.com/jewishfederationpdx/)

jewishfederationpdx/

Facebook:

facebook.com/JewishPDX

Jewish Review:

jewishportland.org/jewishreview

NEXT ISSUES

Issue date Deadline

JAN 17 JAN 11

JAN 31 JAN 25

FEB 14 FEB 8

By RABBI BARRY COHEN

When we face misfortune, pain or suffering, we can easily ask, "Where is God? How is God allowing this to happen?"

Our ancient ancestors must have asked similar questions. This week's Torah portion is Sh'mot, the start of the Book of Exodus. This portion describes the Israelites' descent into slavery at the hands of the Egyptians.

Sh'mot, which means "names," begins by listing the names of the sons of Israel who went down to Egypt with Jacob at the end of the book of Genesis. (I will return to the significance of the people's remembering these names.)

During the dark days of slavery, God is absent for 400 years. How can this be? There is no indication from the text that either the initial flourishing of Jacob's descendants or their later enslavement were part of God's will. But at the same time, it is not clear that the people had a relationship with God. We do not know if they even prayed to God. We only read that their groaning "rose up before God." (Exodus 2:23)

The first indication that the people had any relationship with God was when Pharaoh, terrified by the large number of Hebrew slaves, orders the midwives to murder every male newborn. Their response? "The midwives, fearing God, did not do as the king of Egypt had told them; they let the boys live." (Exodus 1:17)

There is no clear reason why God decided to re-enter the scene and come to the aid of the Israelites. One Midrash offers an explanation: "The Israelites merited God's favor because they ... avoided slander, retained a knowledge of Hebrew, and kept their own traditional names."

Was this part of some mysterious plan? The Torah text is silent. All we know is that with God's re-appearance, the story of redemption follows. The primary players in the early chapters of Exodus are not Moses vs. Pharaoh but God vs. Pharaoh.

As we begin the year 2024, God apparently continues to be absent. Personally, we and our loved ones continue to face illness, tragedy and suffering. Communally and nationally, antisemitism is on the rise, targeting businesses, synagogues and college campuses. Fascism is gaining power and influence, dredging up horrible memories of the rise of Hitler and the Holocaust. And of course, we continue to face the collateral damage of Oct. 7, when Israel experienced a day of horror in a land where we assumed we would be safe from our oppressors.

How are we to respond to God's apparent absence in our world? We can look to this week's Torah portion and how our ancient ancestors responded to the terrifying reality of mass enslavement, with God seemingly nowhere to be found.



Rabbi Barry
Cohen is the Jewish
community chap-
lain of the Greater
Portland area.
[chaplain@](mailto:chaplain@jewishportland.org)
jewishportland.org

The midwives rallied together and drew strength and support from one another. They had the courage, in their own way, to say "no" to Pharaoh. And there is no indication that Pharaoh punished them for not following his orders.

We maintained respect for our elders. When Moses returned to Egypt, after receiving his marching orders from God at the burning bush, he first reunited with his brother Aaron. But immediately after that, Moses met with an assembly of the elders. The Israelites clearly looked to this assembly as their representatives and respected their collective wisdom and experience.

How else did the Israelites respond? We can look to a Midrash: They refrained from slander, they maintained their knowledge of Hebrew and they preserved their family names. In effect, they kept their unique and distinct identities intact. They knew who they were and where they came from. They could answer the questions, "Who am I? Why am I different?"

But I am more intrigued by how the Midrash emphasizes that the people did not engage in slander. They did not turn on each other to gain favor from their Egyptian oppressors. They did not allow Egyptians to divide and conquer them by self-sabotage.

That being said, the Israelites clearly expressed anger and frustration at their reality. They let Moses know that with his reappearance, the Egyptians only increased their suffering. But there is no indication that they slandered Moses (or the midwives or the elders). The Israelites remained a united community.

In their own way, the people were prepared for the pain and suffering that would follow, as God faced off against Pharaoh. How do we know? Because they were ultimately redeemed from slavery. As a result, they received opportunities to develop a relationship with God and to mature as a people during their travels through the wilderness.

We can look to this week's Torah portion and the lessons of our ancestors' slave experience to embrace a vision of hope and optimism for our future. Even when God appears to be absent from our world, we can still feel redemption and we can grow ever closer as a people.

Clergy Corner

The search for redemption

By **RABBI DOVID GLEIZER**

After many weeks of reading, learning and incorporating the lessons taught to us by our forefathers and foremothers, the Book of Genesis has concluded. We now embark on a new journey; the formation of the Jewish People as one nation.

The Book of Exodus recounts the evolution of twelve tribes into one Jewish People. In his introduction to the Book of Exodus, Nakhmanides refers to it as the “Book of Redemption.” At first glance this is a fairly reasonable title considering its highlight is the redemption from slavery in Egypt. Yet, the Jewish People leave Egypt in *Parshat Beshalach*, long before the book concludes.

The second half of the Book of Exodus primarily discusses receiving the Torah at Mt. Sinai and the construction of the Tabernacle, a physical edifice where G-d could rest His *shekhina*, Divine Presence. Why then, does Nakhmanides consider “the Book of Redemption” to be an appropriate name for the Book of Exodus when more than half of it focuses on matters other than exodus and liberation?

Nakhmanides explains that the ultimate redemption is when the Jewish People return to the level that the forefathers and foremothers reached and live with the *shekhina*. Since the Book of Exodus includes not only exodus from Egypt, but also revelation at Mt. Sinai (when the Jewish People reached the spiritual level of their forefathers) and the building of the Tabernacle (when the Divine Presence rested amongst them), the entire Book is a guide on reaching true redemption.

However, the topic of redemption is complex; there is national redemption (the focus of the Book of Exodus) and personal redemption. Just like the Jewish People have experienced many exiles over the last two thousand years, so too a person experiences personal exiles in their own life. These include things like financial stress, family pressure, health woes, the list is endless. How does one reach redemption for personal exiles?

I believe the answer to this question lies in the first comment *Rashi* makes in this week’s Torah portion. *Rashi* asks why the Torah enumerates the children of Jacob after they were already counted earlier in *Parshat Vayechi*. He explains that the counting of Jacob’s children in *Parshat Shemot* was not for a practical reason. Rather, the “Book of Redemption” is giving us a message; in G-d’s eyes, every son and daughter of Jacob is a star. He has a name and sparkle that is unique to Him. Every one of us has a special shine and we are obligated to notice that sparkle in ourselves and to bring it out in others.

We all have a spark of holiness inside of us and it is time to get in touch with it. As we say in the beautiful *Lecha Dodi* prayer each Shabbat, “*karva el nafshi ge’ala*,” “come close to my soul and redeem it.” The closer we come to our soul, through *mitzvot*, the study of Torah, and prayer we will find redemption. The soul will start shining through our personal exiles and we will be on a path of happiness, peacefulness and most importantly closeness to our Creator.

Rabbi Dovid Gleizer is Rosh Beit Midrash at the Portland Kollel. The Jewish Review regularly invites local clergy to share their insights with the community. These opinions do not necessarily reflect the views of the Review, the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, or its staff.

See the latest Jewish jobs at

jewishportland.org/ourcommunity/jewish-jobs

Israeli folk dance class series at SWCC begins Jan. 14

Want to learn Israeli folk dances? Has it been a while since you danced at summer camp or at college? Need a refresher? Join a class for beginners at the Southwest Community Center (SWCC) where you’ll learn/review basic steps and easy-to-do dances. Enjoy the catchy rhythms and tunes, the camaraderie, and make new friends too, as you enjoy this Israeli recreational and cultural tradition.

Registration is open now for two Winter term beginner classes that meet on five Sundays each, starting Jan 14 through February 11; and then February 18 through March 17, both at 1:30-2:30 pm. Class instructor is longtime dancer and teacher Sue Wendel. No experience or partner is necessary. Registered students are welcome to stay for the ongoing open dance session as long as they like, 2:30 to 4 pm. It will include the dances that you’ll learn in class. \$45/term, 14 yrs-adult. To register, please call the SWCC at 503-823-2840, or visit the SWCC website.

The Sunday weekly open dance session is run by longtime dancer and session leader Rhona Feldman. It includes easy warm up dances, intermediate instruction, and open dancing. No registration is needed. Drop-in anytime, everyone is welcome. Just pay at the front desk, \$6, \$5 seniors.

The classes and open dancing are held in the beautiful dance studio at the SWCC, 6820 SW 45th Ave., located at the northwest corner of Gabriel Park, with plenty of free parking.

Questions? Email Sue, pifdnews@gmail.com, or Rhona at rhonaf@comcast.net. We’d love to see you on the dance floor!

EVENTS (continued from page 13)

by Portland, Jewish Academy, PJ Library, BB Camp, and JFGP. See story, page 7.

Jan. 15: Renewal Kidney Donation Event at MJCC

Join Renewal for an informational event Monday, Jan. 15 at 6 pm at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center. Renewal is a Jewish organization based out of New York that helps people in need of a kidney transplant find a match who is willing to donate a kidney. We have events all over the country and educate people on kidney donation and hopefully have people swab as a potential donor. For more information, email zplotzker@renewal.org.

Jan. 17: PDX Nigun Circle at EJC

Join Portland’s monthly nigun circle Wednesday, Jan. 17, at 6 pm at the Eastside Jewish Commons.

A nigun is a primarily wordless melody. Emerging out of the 18th century Ashkenazic

mystical revival movement called *Hasidut* (Chassidism), *nigunim* (plural) have been passed down to us today through a long oral tradition.

PDX Nigun Circle is open to all! No Jew is too young, old, religious or secular to attend. Most importantly, you do not need to consider yourself a good singer, let alone a singer at all! The nigun is an act of vocalizing the needs of the soul, so quality is not a factor in having a meaningful experience. Free. Preregistration requested at ejcpdx.org/events.

Jan. 17: Winter Sephardic Film Series

Join Congregation Ahavath Achim for the first screening of the Winter Sephardic Film Series Wednesday, Jan. 17 at 7 pm at CAA. Everyone is welcome, and admission is free. Join us for Sephardic desserts and discussions following each film! To see a full listing of dates and films please visit our website, ahavathachimpdx.weebly.com/winter-film-series.html.

ALLAN SHERMAN

It is with sadness we share that Allan J. Sherman, 92, passed away Dec. 5th. He died at the Rose Schnitzer Manor, where he had lived for more than a year.

Allan was born and raised in Portland. He graduated from Grant High School, then completed two years of college at the University of Oregon before enlisting in the Air Force. In 1957, he met and married his wife, Marjorie. After two years of electronics training, he was sent overseas as part of the war effort, to Korea for six months and then Japan for two years.

Once his tour of duty was up, he joined the family business, Henry Sherman and Company, first as a shipping clerk, then as a traveling salesman and ultimately as its CEO. He did that for 42 years. After retiring, he delivered blood for the American Red Cross and read and tutored kids in a K-3 program for more than 10 years. Allan was also a committed leader in the Jewish community in Portland, serving as president of Congregation Neveh Shalom and its men's club. He also served on the board of the Jewish cemetery.

Allan loved to travel. He and Marge visited Europe, South America, Hawaii and many other destinations closer to home over their 65-year marriage. A former athlete, a baseball player and golfer, he did his Jack LaLanne-type exercises every morning, well into his 80s. He loved to throw a baseball and play frisbee on the beach. Often described as the "life of the party," Allan particularly loved to dance. A devoted friend, Allan went out to lunch every Wednesday, for the last 20 years, with the same group of guys, even as the ten dwindled to three.

Allan is survived by his wife; Marjorie; his daughter Laura and her husband Barry; daughter Karen and husband Bill; son Ken and wife Jen; eight grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

JANE HYTOWITZ

It is with deep sadness that Congregation Shaarie Torah announces the passing of Jane Hytowitz, z"l, beloved wife of David Hytowitz. Jane died Saturday, Dec. 16, 2023. She was 74 years old.

She is survived by her husband, David, daughters Rebecca and Teresa, brother Charles Swirsky, sister Mary Lou Swirsky and many nieces and nephews scattered throughout the country.

The funeral was held on Monday, Dec. 18, 2023 at Shaarie Torah Cemetery.

BERNARD JOLLES

It is with deep sadness that Congregation Shaarie Torah announces the passing of Bernard Jolles, z"l. Bernard died Sunday evening, December 17, 2023. He was 95 years old.

He is survived by his daughters, Jacqueline (Steve Wise) Jolles and Abbe (Henry Hemmendinger) Jolles, grandchildren Sydney and Julien Hemmendinger and many nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by parents Dora and Harry Jolles, z"l, sister Joan Slovin, z"l and children Howard and Caroline Jolles, z"l.

The funeral was held on Thursday, Dec. 21, 2023 at Shaarie Torah Cemetery.

BOBBIE ALTMARK

Congregation Neveh Shalom regrets to announce the passing of Bobbie Altmark, z"l, on Dec. 21, 2023 at the age of 79. She is lovingly remembered by her son, Asa (Debra) Altmark; her grandchildren, David & Eric Altmark, and her brother, Jerry Gellis.

The funeral was held on Tuesday, Dec. 26, 2023 at Ahavai Shalom Cemetery.

CELINA JACOBSON

Congregation Neveh Shalom is sorry to announce the passing of Celina Beatriz (Levinton) Jacobson, z"l, on Saturday, Dec. 30, 2023. Celina is the daughter of the late Leon and Flora Levinton, z"l. Celina is loved and remembered by her children, Deborah (Ariel) Levy, Issac (Reli) Jacobson, Lucas Jacobson, and David (Katie) Jacobson; her grandchildren, Kayim, Orr, Val, Ella, Kali, Ronen, Jonah, Zev, and Zelda; her late brother Sergio, z"l (Dora) Levinton; and her nephew Pablo; a wonderful extended family; and dear friends.

The funeral will be held today, Jan. 3, at 10:30 am at Neveh Zedek Cemetery (7925 SW Canyon Lane, Portland).

ROCHEL CHAITON

With great sadness, Chabad of Oregon announces the sudden and untimely passing of Rebbetzin Rochel Chaiton of blessed memory on Sunday, Dec. 31, 2023 in Las Vegas, NV.

Immediately after their marriage in 1988, Rebbetzin Chaiton joined her husband, Rabbi Yossi Chaiton, as a Chabad Shlucha in Portland.

For over three decades, she shared the joy and sweetness of Yiddishkeit and was integral in developing Portland's Jewish community. Hundreds of children learned Aleph Bet and experienced a "joyful Jewish beginning" under her tutelage, and her classroom was full of her lively and happy art.

She deeply cared about individuals and would make an extra effort to reach out to those who had no family or place to celebrate Shabbat. When she would host a women's class, it would not only lift the soul, but her celebrated desserts would lift the spirit as well. As an attendant of Mikvah Shoshanah, she was appreciated for her gentle, kind, and discreet manner. She had the unique ability to selflessly celebrate and encourage those around her.

After she and Rabbi Chaiton moved to Las Vegas closer to their grandchildren, she consistently stayed in touch with community members, sharing an encouraging word and taking pride in their growth.

She is survived by her husband, Rabbi Yoseph Chaiton and her sons: Rabbi Dovber (& Mushkah) Chaiton of Las Vegas and Shmueli Chaiton of Brooklyn, N.Y. and grandchildren.

The funeral will be held today, Jan. 3, in New York's Old Montefiore cemetery, in proximity to the Ohel of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Shiva will be in New York and then in Las Vegas.

Donations can be made to Chabad of Summerlin, specifying it is for the Rebbetzin Rochel Chaiton memorial fund, where Rabbi Dovber Chaiton serves as a Rabbi. Condolence notes and memories can be sent to his email dch8on@gmail.com.



Click the logo
for the latest
episode of
The Jewish
Review Podcast