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Grandparents' Learning Fest is Jan. 27

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

If you've wanted to learn more about navigating the challenges of being a Jewish grandparent, mark your calendars for Tuesday, Jan. 27.

That's when the Jewish Grandparents Network is hosting its first- ever Learning Fest online from Noon-3:30 pm. (Pacific Standard Time) The Jewish Federation of Greater Portland is co-sponsoring this inaugural virtual gathering of Jewish grandparents worldwide for in-depth, small group discussions.

"Grandparents play a special and unique role in their grandchildren's lives. They are the sharers of family traditions, the hosts of holiday gatherings, the tellers of family stories and more," Federation Chief Planning and Engagement Officer Caron Blau

See JGN, page 9

Deni delights in Blazers' Chanukah win



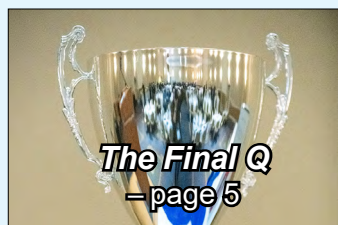
Portland Trail Blazers forward Deni Avdija schmoozes with Portland-area Jews following the Blazers' 134-133 overtime victory over the Sacramento Kings Thursday, Dec. 18, 2025 at the Moda Center. Avdija hit the game-tying and go-ahead free throws with 1.5 seconds remaining in overtime, finishing the game with 35 points, five rebounds and five assists. Avdija, the league's only active Israeli player, is averaging a career-high and team-leading 26 points per game this year and was named the NBA Western Conference Player of the Week on Jan. 6. The Blazers are encouraging fans to vote for Avdija for the 2026 NBA All-Star Game - learn more and vote online at nba.com/blazers/allstar. (Courtesy Portland Trail Blazers)

INSIDE

Security – page 12

Events – page 14

Obituaries – page 14



The Final Q
– page 5



Shirtzenpantz's
success – page 8

The Jewish Review Podcast



New episode Jan. 14

Leikam Brewing responds to break in with sweatshirt drive

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

Business break-ins don't seem unusual anymore, but sometimes the results can still be surprising.

Leikam Brewing in Portland was the victim of a break-in; on Dec. 19, a yet-unidentified intruder smashed into the brewery's space on East Burnside Street and made off with laptops, tools, and cash. What struck Sonia Marie Leikam, however, was what was left behind – not a drop of the brewery's beer or liquor was touched – and what was taken with – the company's entire stash of logo hooded sweatshirts.

"It was clear the person was seeking warmth. They seemed houseless," Leikam said, referencing security camera footage of the burglary.

This observation led her to an inflection point – and a plan to act on it.

"It felt like there were two ways to go about responding," she said. "One was to

get angry and just be upset about it, and one was to figure out how to slightly address some of the reason why this person got to that point of desperation."

Leikam chose the second option. She reached out to Rendered, the firm that handles printing the brewery's merchandise, and came up with an arrangement: For every one Leikam Brewing hoodie they took an order for, Rendered would donate a blank hoodie to an organization supporting homeless youth.

"We felt like the best response we can do right now is turn the frustration and the feeling of violation and anger into something positive," Leikam said. "We got to do some good out of it, which I think was important for me, psychologically."

The goal was to sell 100 hoodies – Leikam said the current total is around 150 and counting. The plan is to split the donated hoodies up

See **LEIKAM**, page 6

Melton courses return to Portland in Root and Branch winter catalog

The Jewish Review staff

Root and Branch, the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's adult learning program, released its upcoming course catalog late last month, including the return of courses through The Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning.

The Melton School, endowed by inventor Florence Melton, z"l, in 1986 through Hebrew University in Jerusalem, was a pioneer in dispersed adult Jewish education in an era before Zoom calls and online learning. Local facilitators were trained to deliver curriculum designed by faculty at Hebrew University, making high-level Jewish learning accessible to communities outside of major educational institutions. Dr. Yosef Rosen, the Federation's Director of Jewish Life and Learning, explained that the previous Melton program in Portland from more than a decade ago was a two-year intensive dive into all things Judaism, but that model has changed.

Melton reached out to [Federation] a year ago," Rosen explained, "saying, 'Are you interested in reviving this model? We now have a whole new way of doing things, which is, we now have tons of different courses, 10-week-long courses and six-week-long courses, and you choose what's appropriate for your community.'"

Two courses – the 10-week "Social Justice: The Heart of Judaism in Theory and Practice" and the six-week "Jewish Journeys: Collective Memories through Place and Time," begin with weekly Zoom sessions Feb. 12 and May 1, respectively. Each includes an in-person concluding celebratory meet-up event, with the goal of building community as well as knowledge.

Rosen will facilitate each of the Melton courses. The addition of Melton curricula greatly expands the breadth and depth of Jewish learning that the Federation is able to offer to the community, he explained.

"I'm not an expert in Jewish social justice," Rosen said. "It would be difficult for me to teach a course on social justice. Here, we get to collaborate with other great educators who aren't in the room, and to learn from them."

Beyond Melton courses, other Root and Branch offerings in the coming months include the Jewish Grandparents Learning Circle (see "Grandparents' Learning Fest is Jan. 27," page 1), as well as the upcoming Young Family Edition of Reset and Refresh (see "Young Families' Reset and Refresh launches." Dec. 3, 2025, page 5) and the third cohort of Reset and Refresh for multi-heritage younger couples.

More information about all of these programs, as well as registration links, is available online at jewishportland.org/jewish-life-and-learning.

Jewish Grandparents Network Learning Fest 2026

Jewish Grandparents Network
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Neveh Shalom death information fair is Feb. 1

By **ROCKNE ROLL**
The Jewish Review

Talking about death can be challenging – planning for it even more so. Like so many things, it's easier with friends.

Congregation Neveh Shalom, in partnership with Holman's Funeral Service, is helping to facilitate some of those challenging conversations at their Planning for Peace of Mind Information Fair Sunday, Feb. 1 from 2-4 pm at Holman's in Southeast Portland.

The fair is part of a renewed emphasis by Neveh Shalom on preparing for the end of life, and on supporting loved ones through the passing of a friend or relative. Rabbi Eve Posen discussed leaning into discomfort, particularly in showing up to *Shiva*, the traditional seven-day period after a funeral where mourners receive visits from friends and community members. The Congregation has worked to put the ideas of addressing this challeng-

ing but universal experience into action.

"It's part of a larger focus this year at Neveh Shalom on preparing and leaning into all things death and dying," Rabbi Posen said. "That started with the recognition that we weren't doing super awesome when it came to holding people after they had a death in their life."

Step one was to provide that support – enter *Chevra Nichum*. Translating to "comforting friends," this lay-led group of volunteers at the synagogue receive training to support their fellow congregants through the entire year of traditional Jewish mourning for a close family member – from ritual questions to practical details.

"It's an effort to support what staff and clergy give the mourner," Sandy Axel, Chevra Nichum co-chair and coordinator of *Chevra Kavod HaMet's* Shroud Crowd, which makes traditional burial garments for the community, said. "We're just an

added layer of support and comfort."

When there's a death in a Neveh Shalom member's family, a Chevra Nichum member is matched to the congregant to provide support, comfort and directions to resources as needed. Fellow Chevra Nichum Co-Chair Anna Davis explained that a Chevra Nichum volunteer isn't there to do everything, but to help enable mourners to navigate the challenges that go with a loved one's passing.

"They can help you know where the resources are to get help," Davis said. "It can be anything from somebody saying, 'Gosh, I've never had to deal with the finances before. I don't even know who to ask for help' to 'I want to try morning minyan, but I don't know that service.'"

Chevra Nichum's services are for Neveh Shalom members, but the group quickly realized that while not everyone is a member of the

synagogue – or any synagogue – every Jew will end up addressing these issues in one way or another.

"We realize that education about end-of-life issues is really important and has been lacking in this community," Axel said. "That's why we're presenting this information fair to the wider community and hoping that everybody will access this information, because we all need it."

That information will be provided by the Jewish Association for Death Education, the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation and more than 50 other participants ranging from attorneys to cemetery monument dealers and more. Whether you have family members who are getting older or are preparing for your own passing, the goal is to cover every facet of these challenging but essential conversations. Loss and grief are hard enough to deal with on their

See **FAIR**, page 9

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FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER

The Final Q - NCSY's last trivia event is Jan. 24

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

The final question will take on a whole new meaning at The Q, NCSY's annual fundraiser trivia night. After 18 years, it is, in fact, The Final Q.

The last chance to join in on a Jewish Portland institution is Saturday, Jan. 24, at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center at 8 pm. More than a trivia contest, The Q has evolved over its nearly two decades into a high-energy, multimedia extravaganza that gives adults a taste of what NCSY offers its young participants.

"The reason why The Q is something that we really put our heart and soul into is because we make Judaism fun and relevant for youth," Oregon NCSY Director Meira Spivak said. "People come to The Q and they understand that. 'Oh, I get it. This is so fun.'"

Portland's Q was inspired by a speed-dating trivia event in New York that Spivak brought west. The inaugural show hosted 100 folks at the Hilton hotel in downtown Portland for dessert and the same quiz that New York's event used. It was Oregon NCSY's first event, and it raised \$5,000.

"People loved it," Spivak said.

By Portland's third year, the New York group had folded their event, so Spivak's hus-



Above: Portland trivia aficionados will have one last chance to vie for The Q's championship trophy Saturday, Jan. 24 at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center. Below: Scenes from the Israel-themed edition Saturday, Jan. 27, 2024. (Rockne Roll/Jewish Review file)

band, Portland Kollel *Rosh Kollel* Rabbi Chanan Spivak, took over writing the show. In recent years, The Q has packed hundreds into the MJCC for a showcase of lights, music, visual effects and trivia that goes far beyond the Jewish world into all manners of subjects – fortunately for participants, it's a team sport.

The food is part of the

experience, too – especially with the annual varying themes The Q has incorporated. The 2024 show highlighted Israel at a pivotal moment just months after the Oct. 7 attacks with a full *shuk* spread with previous editions exploring everything from Winter Coziness to Back to the Future – including parking an AMC DeLorean in front of the

MJCC. This year's theme is a closely guarded secret, as always.

Spivak gives credit to Allen Levin of Century Catering for making The Q's thematic menus happen in challenging timeframes, given The Q's traditional Saturday night schedule.

"[Levin] really extends himself out of his comfort zone to help create these events. Without him, they never would have been possible," Spivak said. "He's done amazing work."

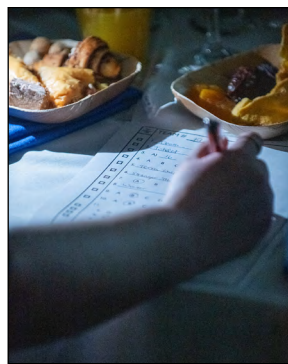
After nearly two decades of success, including the challenge of going virtual through the COVID-19 pandemic, it's easy to wonder why Spivak and the NCSY team are bringing down the curtain on such an institution.

"I am trained in innovation, so I think there's an opportunity. People get complacent just doing the same things, and I think there's so much more; let's think of what's next. I'm excited, I'm up for the challenge," Spivak said.

Whatever comes next, there's still one more show to put on. The Q has long been a can't miss date on Portland's Jewish community calendar, and Spivak is committed to going out on a high note.

"It'll be the best Q ever," she said.

Registration and sponsorships are available online at oregon.ncsy.org.



Tisch PDX hosts Jews of Color Initiative tour

By **ROCKNE ROLL**
The Jewish Review

When the Jews of Color Initiative planned out their national listening tour, Portland was a natural stop.

“We’ve been working with the Jews of Color Initiative since 2022 when they gave us a grant to help fund what we think is one of the first surveys of Jews of Color in the Pacific Northwest,” Tisch PDX Executive Director Eleya Fugman said. “We appreciate their support and the work they do nationally and have been really happy to be connected to them.”

Tisch PDX hosted JOCI’s Portland stop at the Eastside Jewish Commons Thursday, Dec. 11. After a presentation from JOCI CEO Ilana Kaufman, the assembled group of community leaders and Jews from communities of Color tackled a trio of questions, which Kaufman asks at each stop, designed to provide JOCI with feedback about how to tailor their work now and in the future.

“What is most important



The Jews of Color Initiative’s national listening tour visited Tisch PDX’s offices at the Eastside Jewish Commons Thursday, Dec. 11. (Jason Edelstein for the Jews of Color Initiative)

about the work that we do?” Kaufman said, listing her discussion questions for *The Jewish Review*. “Because who we serve in this community of multiracial, multi-ethnic Jews, changes over time, we want to hear from the community who, in their mind’s eye, they imagine us serving. The third question we ask is: if the Jews of Color Initiative stopped our work today,

from their perspective, what would be lost in the community?”

One community leader in that conversation was Jewish Federation of Greater Portland President and CEO Marc Blattner.

“We are grateful for the ongoing work of JOCI,” Blattner told *The Jewish Review*. “They have assisted communities, like Jewish Portland, in recognizing the growth, impact, and importance of Jews of color in our community. We must continue to be open, accessible, and welcoming as organizations

and find ways to engage this population even more.”

Sabina Spicer, the Cultural Shift Program Manager for Tisch PDX and a Jew of Color, was also on hand for the event.

“As people really started to explore things, we realized that there was a lot more to talk about, and it was a conversation that a lot of us have been wanting to have,” she said. “It was something we knew we wanted but didn’t realize how much we needed it. It could have gone on for hours.”

“You had that the whole community coming together around the table, representing the multiracial, multi-ethnic diversity of the Portland Jewish community together solving problems,” Kaufman said. “We were so happy to be able to convene that opportunity.”

“Synagogues and other places that are Jewish spaces, they say that they want to be more inclusive. They say they want to be more welcoming, and often they say that they think that they are, but people don’t show up, and they don’t understand it,” Spicer explained. “We were able, those of us who identify as Jews of Color, to give more of an insight.”

LEIKAM (continued from page 2)

between Outside The Frame, a nonprofit that uses film to help homeless youth share their stories and find careers in the film industry, and Portland youth services nonprofits Outside In and Janus Youth Programs.

The donation program is running through Jan. 10 – sweatshirts will be available for pickup at the brewery later this month. For more information or to get a hoodie of your own, visit leikam-brewing.com.

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Ms. Col. (Ret.) Miri Eisin

Senior Fellow at the International Institute
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Shirtzenpantz' kicks rock, grows quickly

By **ROCKNE ROLL**
The Jewish Review

One transplanted Jew's quest to make clothing resale more fun turned into an online phenomenon and a growing business here in Portland.

Owen Gail, raised in Wilsonville, came to Portland following his studies at Brandeis University. He was already selling used clothing online but wanted to open a retail outlet. He and his brother, Ethan, wanted a name that sounded a "little Yiddishy," Gail said. They eventually settled on Shirtzenpantz.

"We came up with a couple different spellings, and we were trying to decide if it should be Shirtzenpantz or Skirtzenpantz, because we have both men and women's clothing, but Shirtzenpantz just had more of a ring to it," Gail said. "I think the spelling and the weirdness of the name, it's intriguing and it's representative of the weird stuff that goes on at our store."

A mobile of three rendi-



In this still image of an Instagram reel, Christosphere, the formerly-two-pound rock that Shirtzenpantz co-owner Owen Gail is kicking every day until it becomes spherical, is weighed on the 188th day of the project. (Shirtzenpantz via Instagram)

tions of Sir Shirtzenpantz, the store's mascot, rotates above the entrance to their premises in the Hillsdale

neighborhood of Southwest Portland. Customers can compose a poem and recite it to Gail to receive a percentage discount – the percentage varies based on how good the poem is.

It sounds like fun and games – and it is – but it's also a conscious effort by Gail to address what he identified as a gap in Portland's clothing resale market.

"The prices were high, and the vibes weren't really there," he said of his visits to other resale outlets in the area. "So, we try to make a really good experience for people but also have affordable prices."

Gail's brother has since graduated from college himself and joined up as a business partner, specializing in content ideas for the shop's social media marketing.

"His superpower is idea generation, and then I will often execute the ideas," Gail said.

The most famous of these has been Christosphere, which began life as a two-pound rock. Gail began posting daily videos about kicking Christosphere along streets, sidewalks and walking paths, vowing to continue until the large, jagged stone was a perfect sphere. The quest for spherical nirvana is more than 180 days old now. Gail estimates he's gone through at least six pairs of shoes; Christosphere has transformed into a fairly smooth ball, and a recent video from the series has more than three million views on Instagram.

"I want to get to at least day 200," Gail said. "Then we can have a big day 200 party for him, and then maybe let the people who come to that vote on if I should keep kicking him or not."

This has translated to more than 300,000 Instagram followers, selection by voters as The Oregonian's Best Portland Area Thrift Store of 2025 (just two months after opening) and an expansion to a second location in the St. Johns neighborhood of North Portland – evidence of more than just a fun marketing plan.

"It turned out really well," Gail said. "A lot of that is due to our social media success, but I think mostly it's the repeat customers that have come in. They've found good deals and a good selection of organized stuff, and they keep coming back."

Both Shirtzenpantz locations are open from 11 am – 8 pm daily. Find Shirtzenpantz – and the ongoing journey of Christosphere – on Instagram at @shirtzenpantz.

Women's Giving Circle



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JGN (continued from page 1)

Rothstein said. “Also, grandparents are people too, who want to create community with other grandparents, both together with their grandchildren and also just as adults looking to connect.”

“Many families have complicated dynamics, and the world today is also complicated,” JGN Executive Director Debra Weinberg said in a press release. “Learning Fest 2026 will help grandparents navigate these challenges, connect with each other for support, and feel valued. We’re excited to share knowledge and tools to build strong Jewish families and a brighter Jewish future.”

The event features keynote speaker Dr. Becky Kennedy, a clinical psychologist and podcaster, in conversation with Assembly Vice President of Education Leah Kahn about how grandparents

can play a meaningful role in supporting strong, emotionally healthy families across generations. Breakout sessions include conversations addressing the needs of mixed heritage families, using Jewish ritual to creating meaningful interactions with grandchildren and building relationships with grandchildren who live far away, as well as sessions addressing the specific needs of neurodivergent grandchildren and grandchildren who are transgender or who identify as non-binary.

Registration is \$36 (discounted for Portlanders) and is available through Monday, Jan. 19. Portland grandparents can register at jewishgrandparentsnetwork.org/learningfest/?org=JFGPortland.

They can also sign up for an upcoming in person Grandparents learning circle

hosted by the Federation’s Director of Jewish Life and Learning Dr. Yosef Rosen. This local group will meet in person on five Wednesday mornings in February and March to discuss grandparenting as it relates to Jewish text and tradition, as well as build community among grandparents, and is geared for those with grandchildren ages 0-10.

“The curriculum is coming to us from the Jewish Grandparents Network,” Rosen said. “We’ll be learning about grandparenting through a Jewish lens; practical stuff, psychological stuff, history, Bible, religion and more.”

More information and registration for the local Grandparents Learning Circle is available at <https://jewishportland.regfox.com/jewish-grandparent-circle-spring-26>.

FAIR (continued from page 4)

own, but it’s all the more challenging without a plan.

“When you’re in the moment, when you’ve had a loss, and all of a sudden you have all of these decisions to make, you think maybe you probably know what the person wanted and you want to do right by them, but it feels really overwhelming,” Davis said. “This is a way for people to have some of those conversations beforehand and know some of the options.”

Axel said that both of her parents had planned in advance for their passing, which made things significantly

easier on her and the rest of her family. Michelle Caplan, Neveh Shalom’s Assistant Executive Director, knows plans are in place for her parents and her in-laws, all of whom are in their 80s. She’s grateful for that because, in her role at the synagogue, she handles phone calls from community members whose families did not plan ahead and are now having to make difficult decisions at an already difficult time.

“I know exactly, on both sides of the family, what has to happen,” Caplan said, “but that’s not always the case, as we know.”

“The less we talk about death, the scarier it becomes. And we live in a society that really doesn’t want to talk about death,” Rabbi Posen said. “We are people of a tradition, Judaism, that understands that death is a part of living, that has rituals that are meant to help us walk that journey. That’s really what we’re trying to lift up here; not that death isn’t sad, not that it’s not hard or scary, but that you’re not in it alone.”

For more information on the information fair, email Caplan at mcaplan@nevehshalom.org.



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NEXT ISSUE

Issue date Deadline

JAN 21 JAN 15

Security Corner

Who you gonna call?

By JESSICA ANDERSON

At the end of my previous article about the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) community meeting, I shared some good news about Portland's 911 response. I recently had to call 911 for a medical (but not life or death) emergency occurring in a local coffee shop and was on the phone with a live person within 20 seconds. EMS arrived several minutes later. I was pleased with that response and wanted to make sure that the word got out about it. There's enough to complain about, living in Portland, but it's important to acknowledge improvements and put away the trope that we have to wait 10 minutes before reaching someone.

The discussion of emergency response times prompted questions about when – or when not – to call 911. I use PPB as an example, but no matter what your local jurisdiction, there's a similar process for emergencies and non-emergencies.

We'll start with the worst scenarios where you need an immediate response from police or EMS – this is definitely the time to call 911. In these situations, perhaps the most important piece of information you'll need is an address. This coffee shop I was at literally did not have one – I didn't know you could have a business without an address! I gave the address of the adjacent buildings and the cross street.

Another critical piece of information was that the person was conscious and breathing. If they weren't, it would have been critical



Jessica Anderson is the Portland-area Director of Community Security. She was previously an FBI agent for 24 years. This position is funded by SCN (the official safety and security organization of the Jewish community in North America) and a local three-way partnership of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, Oregon Jewish Community Foundation Endowment Fund and multiple Jewish organizations in the region.

to convey the level of emergency right away. Before I made the call, I also received concurrence to call 911 from the victim's companions. Although it was instinctual at the time, it wasn't till after EMS had arrived that I realized I may have incurred a medical expense to the victim. I'd love to say I was cool as a cucumber making the call, but I could feel my heart racing and the words tumbling out of my mouth in a rush to the dispatcher. I had to take a breath [just like I teach in training classes] and slow down.

Setting aside obvious medical issues, Portland 911 should definitely be called when there are issues of safety (like a person menacing with a baseball bat) or person-on-person crime (a person doing something harmful or physically threatening to another person). Portland Police calls these "an active threat or emergent crises." Be prepared to describe what you see and consider moving to a safer location to make the call.

The vast majority of crimes in Portland can, and should, be reported through the online portal (portland.gov/police/cor) or by calling 311

or 503-823-3333, the city's non-emergency number. When you visit the portal, the site will walk you through seven questions to identify whether you can report online or if you need to call the non-emergency number. If you call, you'll talk with a live person who will assess the situation. Most of the time, car accidents (without injuries), damage, theft, or harm to physical objects do not rise to the emergent dispatching of police, and we gum up the system by calling 911.

One relevant and important exception is Bias Crimes, and those are expressly not permitted to be filed online - call 311 if the criminal act is over, and they will dispatch an officer to take a report. I have had excellent experiences calling this number.

It is important to report crimes! I once had my car broken into. I could have decided not to report it; they didn't get much, but these reports are how city leaders know what's going on in town – if we don't report, they won't have an accurate picture of property crime.

"The Police Bureau uses the data generated from your

See **SECURITY**, page 12

The (antisemitic) doctor will see you now

Imagine a nurse who works for a local hospital posting on her Instagram page that she won't treat Black people, whom she refers to as "monkeys" and "apes." Following an uproar from the Black community, the hospital fires the nurse. Only a few months later, however, the state nursing ethics board renews her license to practice for another two years.

Who would ever believe that this (fictional) racist nurse would be allowed to continue practicing short of a heartfelt public apology to Black leaders? And even that would likely be insufficient for her to have her license renewed.

Now imagine that the nurse's vitriol is directed not at Black people—but at Jews. She calls Jews "vermin" and "dogs," and insists she won't treat "animals." The hospital fires her, yet her license is subsequently renewed for two more years.

Still improbable? If you believe so, then you're ignoring the double stan-

dard when it comes to antisemitism as distinct from other forms of hate.

Last March, in a series of Instagram posts, now-former Oregon Health Sciences University Hospital nurse Camesha Hart not only referred to Jewish people as "vermin" and "dogs," she also wished for them to "meet their ancestors soon." She even justified Hamas' murder of Israeli hostages Shiri Bibas and her two young children, writing that Shiri was "fair game to be killed as military personnel." Although OHSU fired her after an outcry from the local Jewish community, the Oregon State Board of Nursing renewed her license in November with no conditions or restrictions.

Sadly, the case of this antisemitic nurse is hardly an anomaly. Whereas much of the spotlight in the last two years has been on the failure of American universities to confront antisemitism on their campuses, the increasing normalization of antisemitism in the



Bob Horenstein is the Chief Community Relations and Public Affairs Officer for the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland.

US healthcare sector receives much less media coverage.

Since Oct. 7, 2023, a growing number of Jewish practitioners in hospitals, clinics, and healthcare facilities have found themselves marginalized for perceived Zionist sympathies, attacked on social media, and shunned in professional forums. Medical schools are now incorporating social justice education, often with an anti-Zionist slant leading to what Jewish students and profes-

See **HORENSTEIN**, page 12

Clergy Corner

Antisemitism isn't just a Jewish problem

By **RABBI GARY OREN**

After yet another antisemitic attack in which more than a dozen Jews were murdered in Australia, many Jews find ourselves in a familiar and unsettling place: grieving what just happened while bracing for the next incident. It's an exhausting way to live, and it's not one Jews should be expected to manage on our own.

This piece is especially for Oregonians who are not Jewish but who share daily life with Jews: neighbors, coworkers, classmates, elected officials and friends.

I understand why, when Jews are targeted, some people feel an instinct to step back. When attacks happen because Jews are visibly Jewish, like celebrating holidays, wearing symbols of our tradition, gathering publicly, it can feel safer to keep your distance. Over time, Jewish suffering can even become socially inconvenient, some-

thing people would rather not have to contend with.

History shows us where that instinct leads. Societies have long resolved their discomfort with Jewish "otherness" by blaming Jews themselves: our beliefs, our visibility, our behavior, or the actions of a Jewish state. Sometimes that distancing isn't about believing those ideas at all, but about not wanting to get pulled into violence that feels complicated or dangerous.

Understanding that impulse doesn't make it any less damaging.

That's why it matters when people choose closeness instead.

Standing with Jews, openly and consistently, signals that antisemitic violence isn't just something that happens to "them," but something that tears at our shared civic fabric. For Jews, there is no clearer affirmation of belonging than knowing our neighbors are willing to claim us as part of the "we," even

when doing so carries real social or political cost.

But moments of solidarity, important as they are, aren't enough.

I find it deeply troubling that Jewish safety is still treated primarily as a Jewish responsibility. Jewish institutions are increasingly forced to divert enormous energy and resources toward protecting Jews and "fighting antisemitism"—a hatred we did not create and cannot defeat on our own.

Of course Jews take steps to protect ourselves. But security cannot be the whole answer. Antisemitism cannot be meaningfully confronted without leadership from the broader society, particularly from within the communities and institutions from which antisemites emerge. When Jews are expected to carry this burden alone, something fundamental is broken.

The cost of this arrangement is real.

See **OREN**, page 12

SECURITY (continued from page 10)

report to identify patterns and trends across the city. This helps us develop new strategies for addressing crime and distribute agency resources to the areas of greatest need,” PPB’s website explains. “Your report is of great value to this agency,

your neighborhood, and the city more broadly.”

PPB’s online system even attempts a sense of humor; when I reported the vehicle break-in online, part of the digital response I received was, “Be thankful they didn’t steal your car!” While

true, the joke fell a little flat at the time, as I recall.

Portland Police and many other jurisdictions are in the middle of hiring challenges, and it means resources will remain thin in the short term. Knowledge of how to best use and contact these ser-

vices helps everyone in the community.

As always, if you have questions about something in this article or want to get in touch for training or to report bias incidents, reach out at jander-son@securecommunitynet-work.org or 872-273-9214.

HORENSTEIN (continued from page 11)

sors describe as a torrent of anti-Israel hostility directed toward them with little or no support from peers.

A disturbing example of this antisemitism couched in anti-Israel rhetoric is Dr. Mobeen Rathore. A decorated pediatric infectious disease specialist in Jacksonville, Florida and active leader within the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Rathore takes issue with Zionists, posting on X such gems as, “Zionism is the root of all evil” and “We pray for the disappearance of Zionism and Israel.”

In October, offensive posts notwithstanding, he was honored by the Florida Chapter of the AAP for his “tireless dedication and inspiring leadership.” Apparently, being a rabid antisemite doesn’t disqualify one from receiving a prestigious

award.

Even where there has been pushback against antisemitic behavior, the consequences have been minimal. Two years ago, a blacklist of “Zionist” therapists in Chicago started in a Facebook group. The blacklist collaborators were looking for names that “sounded Jewish” and adding them to the list of therapists to whom colleagues “should avoid referring clients.” Most of the those blacklisted had never publicly spoken about Israel or openly self-identified as Zionists.

Last April, Illinois’ professional licensing body issued a formal reprimand to Heba Ibrahim Joudeh, the blacklist’s creator. However, it didn’t require her to apologize to the therapists whose names she shared publicly, nor did it affect her ability to

continue practicing.

Antisemitism has also been pervasive in the American Psychological Association. Jewish members have reported being harassed and ostracized by their colleagues because of their Jewish or Zionist identity. Their complaints to the association—including the APA offering credits for members to attend conferences featuring speakers who endorse “violence against Jews and Israelis, antisemitic tropes, and Holocaust distortion”—have gone unanswered.

In 2024, the Association of Jewish Psychologists applied to be recognized by the APA as an official ethnic group. They were denied. A memo in response to their application claimed Jews are “too white,” “too privileged” and not victimized enough to be granted official status.

In response to these challenges, the American Jewish Medical Association was formed to empower a community of Jewish healthcare professionals and medical students committed to combating antisemitism. With over 3,000 members, AJMA, in partnership with organizations such as the Jewish Federations of North America and Hadassah, has advocated for the inclusion of Jewish voices in DEI initiatives and organized a network of attorneys to assist members in fighting discrimination.

It’s imperative that these efforts succeed. They must ensure that in a profession dedicated to treating disease, the virus of antisemitism spreads no further.

A version of this article originally appeared on The Times of Israel opinion blog Wednesday, Dec. 24, 2025.

OREN (continued from page 11)

Resources are pulled from education toward security. Children grow up learning that hatred is inevitable. Participation in civic life becomes conditional, accompanied by the quiet expectation that Jews must continually prove their loyalty. Jewish identity gets flattened into a story of chronic vulnerability, met with bursts of sympathy that fade once the crisis passes.

What will ultimately make Jews safer in Oregon, and make our democracy healthier for everyone, is not security alone, but a renewed, shared commitment to the values and institutions that hold a pluralistic society together.

Oregon Jews cannot carry that commitment by ourselves.

I will continue urging my own community to keep the

larger picture in view: to stand up for others as part of our shared civic responsibility. But that effort cannot succeed in isolation.

This is where non-Jewish Oregonians come in: neighbors, educators, faith leaders, elected

officials, and community members. Antisemitism is not a “Jewish issue.” It is a democratic one. Confronting it requires leadership, moral

clarity, and a willingness to strengthen the civic culture that makes pluralism possible and political violence unacceptable.

The question before us isn’t whether Jews can endure another wave of hatred. History tells us that we can.

The real question is whether we will face it together.

Rabbi Gary Oren is Rabbi of Congregation Shaarie Torah in Portland.

jewishportland.org/subscribe

Portland Jewish Connection does Dec. 25 dinner and movie night



Thursday, Dec. 25, 2025, Portland Jewish Connection and Mike Vladimir celebrated their third annual Chinese Food and a Movie Night! More than 30 attendees enjoyed tasty, shared dishes from The Duck House and the Anaconda movie at Pioneer Place. PJC Board member and event co-organizer Beni Henig said, "It was great connecting with so many familiar and new faces. We love this annual tradition and I'm looking forward to growing it even bigger next year!" Those interested in connecting with Portland Jewish Connection, a non-profit with Jewish social events for 21- 42ish-year-olds, find PJC on Instagram and Facebook or reach out by email to portlandjewishconnection@gmail.com. (Devin Getreu/Portland Jewish Connection)

Events

See all of Portland's Jewish community events online at jewishportland.org/community-calendar

Jan. 8: Weekly Parsha Class

Weekly 10-minute Torah discussion presented by The Portland Kollel at 8 pm on Zoom. Learn more at portlandkollel.org/zoom

Jan. 9: First Friday Sephardic Shabbat Dinner

Kabbalat Shabbat services and Sephardic dinner at Congregation Ahavath Achim at 5:30 pm. \$32; discounts for members, students and children. Tickets at ahavathachimpdx.weebly.com/monthly-shabbat-dinners.html.

Jan. 10: Women's Torah Study

Weekly Torah study at Congregation Ahavath Achim Saturday mornings at 10:30 am. For more information, email info@ahavathachim.org.

Jan. 10: Sephardic Foundations

Weekly Sephardic history class at Congregation Ahavath Achim Saturday afternoons at 12:30 pm. For more information, visit ahavathachimpdx.weebly.com/

sephardic-foundations.html.

Jan. 11: All-Ages Baking Class

Sephardic baking class at Congregation Ahavath Achim at 11 am. \$5. Registration at ahavathachimpdx.weebly.com/sephardic-cooking-all-ages.html.

Jan. 11: 'Death Trip'

Book Talk Author book talk at 2 pm at the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education. \$5. Registration at ojmche.org/events/death-trip-book-talk-with-seth-lorinczi.

Jan. 11: The Road Between Us

Documentary film screening at Congregation Neveh Shalom at 2 pm. \$10. Registration at members.nevehshalom.org/event/RBU.

Jan. 11: Dr. Naya Lekht

Presentation on antisemitism for teachers, families and community members at 2 pm via Zoom. Free. Registration at tinyurl.com/DrLekhtPDX. For more information, email limorgeis-ler@gmail.com.

ler@gmail.com.

Jan. 12: 'With my Whole Broken Heart'

Film screening hosted by Chabad of Gresham at 7 pm. Free, preregistration required at jewishgresham.com/filmmight.

Jan. 13: Sephardic Film Festival

Double feature film screening at Congregation Ahavath Achim at 7 pm. Free, preregistration required at ahavathachimpdx.weebly.com/sephardic-film-festival.html.

Jan. 14: Portland Death Schmooze

Death education event at the Eastside Jewish Commons at 6:30 pm. Registration required at luma.com/xcvw255y.

Jan. 18: Step into Wonder at Hopscotch

Community art visit sponsored by Jewish Family & Child Service at Hopscotch in Southeast Portland at 4 pm. Free. Preregistration required at jfc-portland.org/hopscotch.

Jan. 19: Work For The World

Family volunteer service fair at Portland Jewish Academy at 9:30 am. For more information and to register, visit jewishportland.org/workforthe-world-young-volunteers.

Jan. 20: Women's Kabbalah Class

Monthly class at Chabad of Southwest Portland at 6:30 PM. For more information and to register, visit https://www.jportland.com/templates/articlecco_cdo/aid/5653557/jewish/Rosh-Chodesh-Society-Registration.html.

Jan. 21: Senior Movie Matinee

Afternoon screening of "Fiddler: A Miracle of Miracles" at 1 pm at Congregation Neveh Shalom. Registration at members.nevehshalom.org/event/WJMM25.

Jan. 22: Jewish Community Town Hall

Conversation with Jewish Federation of Greater Portland President and CEO Marc Blattner at the Eastside Jewish Commons at 7 pm. For more information and to register, visit ejcpdx.org/events.

Hebrew University launches summer program

Hebrew University of Jerusalem

The Rothberg International School at Hebrew University of Jerusalem is proud to announce the launch of its new Pre-College Summer Program (June 29 – July 26, 2026), an immersive academic and cultural experience designed for rising high school juniors and seniors seeking both college-level coursework and global adventure.

The program provides motivated students with the opportunity to study at one of the world's leading universities while living on a residential campus in Jerusalem. Participants will earn academic credit, explore Israel through curated educational travel, and gain independence in a supportive, structured environment.

The curriculum includes two for-credit courses taught by Hebrew University faculty: Introduction to Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Performing Jewish Identity in American Musical

Theatre. Students who successfully complete the program will receive 4 university credits and an official academic transcript from the Rothberg International School of Hebrew University—an exceptional addition to a college application.

Students will reside at the Kiryat Moriah Educational Campus, in partnership with Machon L'Madrichim of the Jewish Agency. Dormitory living offers a true taste of university life, encouraging maturity, self-reliance, and essential time-management skills. A dedicated team of madrichim (counselors) and professional staff provides continuous academic, social, and emotional support.

Learning extends far beyond the classroom. Israel itself becomes a living campus as students participate in experiential field trips exploring Jerusalem, major cities, historical landmarks, and the country's diverse natural land-

scapes.

The program is fully Shabbat Friendly, welcoming students from diverse backgrounds, and all program-provided meals are kosher, with accommodation available for dietary needs.

The application deadline is Mar. 1, 2026. Tuition is \$12,500, with housing, meals, travel and activities within Israel, and college courses included. Thanks to the American Friends of Hebrew University, the first 30 accepted students from the US and Canada will receive a \$6,000 automatic scholarship. There are additional need-based aid and referral discounts.

For students choosing between college credit and meaningful travel, Hebrew University's Pre-College Summer Program offers both, all within one transformative summer.

For more information, visit: overseas.huji.ac.il/precollege/ or email Moriah Lamb at mlamb@hebrewu.org

Obituaries

Submit obituaries to The Jewish Review's online form at form.jotform.com/JFGP/jr-obituary

WENDY BOCARSKY

Congregation Beth Israel mourns the loss of Wendy Bocarsky, z"l, who passed away Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2025 at the age of 73.

Wendy is survived by her husband, Rabbi Shelton Donnell; her sister, Lori McCracken (Roger); sister-in-laws, Maureen Winick and Gaby Donnell (Pam Crow); as well as nieces and nephews.

A graveside service was held Thursday, Dec. 18, 2025 at Home of Peace Memorial Park in Los Angeles.

RITA WEISSMAN

Congregation Beth Israel mourns the loss of Rita Weissman, z"l, who passed away Wednesday, Dec. 24, 2025 at the age of 98.

Rita is survived by her daughters, Janet Hoffman (John Harland) and Marcie Hoffman; and granddaughters, Evelyn Hoffman-Harland and Fiona Hoffman-Harland (Edmond Veillard). Rita is preceded in death by her husband, Bernie Weissman, z"l, and siblings Joan Spound, z"l, Marcia Shainock, z"l and Richard "Dick" Sebel, z"l.

A funeral was held Sunday, Dec. 28 at Congregation Beth Israel Cemetery. Donations in Rita's memory can be made to the Oregon Food Bank and Meals on Wheels.

GABRIALA BROWN

With sadness, Congregation Kesser Israel announces the passing of Gabriela Brown, z"l, who died Tuesday, Dec. 30, 2025 in her Portland home at the age of 62 after a long illness.

She is survived by daughters, Shifra Spector, Portland, and Malka Young, Columbus, Ohio; five grandchildren; and brother, Joseph Mowry.

The funeral was held Wednesday, Dec. 31, 2025, beginning

in the Shaarie Torah Cemetery Chapel and concluding in the Kesser Israel Cemetery.

GARY HOFFMAN

Congregation Beth Israel mourns the loss of Gary Bruce Hoffman, z"l, who passed away on Dec. 30, 2025 at the age of 84.

Gary is survived by his wife of 62 years, Joyce Platt Hoffman; his children, Lane Hoffman (Marney), Joshua Hoffman (Kerri), and Lawrence "Drew" Hoffman; his grandchildren, Sophia, Cash, Lucas, Chloe, Lily, Maxwell, and Isabella; and many other extended family members and friends. Gary is preceded in death by his parents, Lawrence and Sylvia Hoffman, z"l.

There will be a funeral on Sunday, Jan. 11, at noon at Neveh Zedek Cemetery in Portland.

Donations in Gary's memory can be made to PeaceHealth Ray Hickey Hospice House in Vancouver, Wash.

TONY GIANGRECO

It is with tremendous sorrow that Congregation Kol Ami announces the death of Tony Giangreco, z"l, on Wednesday, Dec. 31, 2025 in Spokane, Wash.

He is survived by children Lisa and Anthony, wife Jessica and all of their children and extended family.

The funeral was held Tuesday, Jan. 6 at Northwood Park Cemetery in Ridgefield, Wash.

ENID BECK

It is with great sorrow that Congregation Kol Ami announces the death of Enid Beck, z"l, who passed away Friday, Jan. 2.

She is survived by Leah, Brandon & Bailey Bordman.

A funeral service will be held today, Jan. 7, at 1 pm at Northwood Park Cemetery in Ridgefield, Wash, with shiva this evening at 7 pm at Congregation Kol Ami.