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# The JEWISH REVIEW

Established 1959  
Oregon and SW Washington's Online Jewish Newspaper

Jan. 17, 2024 / 7 Shevat, 5784 Volume 59, Issue 2



## Laughing their way into 2024

A packed house of over a hundred young and young-at-heart adults enjoyed Jason Sklar, left, and Randy Sklar perform at PDX Cross Collaboration's "L'Chaim and Laughter" Wednesday, Jan. 3 at the Eastside Jewish Commons. For more images, see page 9. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

## Co/Lab tunes into nature's conversation starting Jan. 25

By **ROCKNE ROLL**  
*The Jewish Review*

Co/Lab's latest learning series takes the ideals of Tu B'Shevat and uses them to look at our relationships with nature, but with other humans.

"Tuning Into Nature's Conversation," a three-part series, begins Thursday, Jan 25, with sessions two and three held Feb. 8 and 24th, respectively,

at the Eastside Jewish Commons in Portland. Each session begins at 6:30 pm with snacks, refreshment and socializing.

, Rabbi Devin Villareal, recently of Congregation Aha-vath Achim, will lead the sessions along with Co/Lab's Rabbi Josh Rose. It's a collaboration that Rabbi Rose has been looking forward to.

"I just kept hearing really great

things about Rabbi Villareal as a teacher and as a human from a bunch of people," Rabbi Rose said. "We sat down and kicked around ideas and he came up with this beautiful idea."

Rabbi Villareal begins with the insight that while people long for a sense of deep connection to each other, the tools

See **NATURE**, page 8



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# Women's Roundtable Havdalah is Jan. 20

*The Jewish Review staff*

The Jewish Women's Roundtable's annual Havdalah service at Cedar Sinai Park returns next Shabbat, Saturday, Jan. 20 at 7 pm at Zidell Hall on the Cedar Sinai campus.

It's the 24th year of the Jewish Women's Roundtable's marquee spring event, and the second year that the service has returned in-person following the Covid pandemic. Ellen Bick explained that the annual tradition started when a friend and fellow member of the Congregation Beth Israel Sisterhood mentioned that her mother was living at Rose Schnitzer Manor.

"She was saying, 'Wouldn't it be nice if we did some kind service there for the residents?'" Bick recalled.

Over the years, Rabbis, Cantors, and lay leaders from the community have come to lead the service, which brought as many as 75 attendees to the facility. The service is usually expanded beyond a typical Havdalah with extra songs and explanations of the components of the service.

"It's very meaningful," Bick said. "We always pass out spiced oranges, with cloves stuck into the oranges, then you smell that orange and it smells sweet. This is reminiscent of looking forward to a sweet week."

This year's service will be lead by Congregation Beth Israel's Cantor Reyna Green. Refreshments and socializing will follow. The service is free and open to the public.

For more information, email [JewishWomensRoundTable@gmail.com](mailto:JewishWomensRoundTable@gmail.com).

**SHARAKA: BUILDING PEACE BETWEEN ISRAELIS AND ARABS IN A TIME OF WAR**

Sharak's critical work has intensified since the horrific October 7 Hamas attack, creating space for dialogue and understanding between young Israelis and Arabs.

Presenting nuanced perspectives straight from the region, Sharaka aims to inform, reduce polarization, and encourage dialogue around Israel and the current conflict, offering a positive and constructive way forward.

**Monday, January 22, 2024**  
**7:00 PM**

**IN PERSON / REGISTRATION REQUIRED**  
[jewishportland.org/sharaka](http://jewishportland.org/sharaka)

Congregation Heneh Shalom  
2900 SW Peaceful Lane  
Portland, Oregon 97239

For more information please contact: [bob@jewishportland.org](mailto:bob@jewishportland.org)

Live stream will also be available here - no registration required:  
<http://theheneshalom.org/main-sanctuary-live-stream>

**SHARAKA PANELISTS**

- Dan Feferman - Israel**  
Sharak's Executive Director, author, speaker, and community leader
- Dalila Zieda - Egypt**  
Sharak's Executive Director, author, speaker, and community leader
- Loay Sharif - Saudi Arabia/UAE**  
Sharak's Executive Director, author, speaker, and community leader
- Fatema Al Harbi - Bahrain**  
Sharak's Executive Director, author, speaker, and community leader
- Youssef Elazhari - Morocco**  
Sharak's Executive Director, author, speaker, and community leader

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# Tivnu secures matching grant from Project Accelerate

By ROCKNE ROLL

*The Jewish Review*

Portland's Jewish gap year service program is getting a big boost from Project Accelerate.

The program has awarded Tivnu: Building Justice a matching grant for their nationally recognized gap year program and other local programs.

"It's a grant to national Jewish organizations that they believe are doing really good work," Tivnu Executive Director Steve Eisenbach-Budner explained, "and just need a boost in terms of taking it to the next level."

Eisenbach-Budner worked as a carpenter and construction contractor for 20 years, including teaching construction techniques, and founded Tivnu as an avenue to implement Jewish values by addressing a foundational aspects of poverty in a hands-on way.

"Tivnu helps young people, whether they be teens or young adults, integrate their Jewish selves with their passion to make a better world, to make a decent world in which the needs of every everybody has their basic human needs met," he said.

The core of this work is their nine-month gap year program, which has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Times of Israel*, *The Forward*, and many other Jewish and secular publications, including this one. (See "Tivnu creates gap year fans," [Oct. 28, 2020, page 1](#).) Tivnu also holds shorter programs throughout the year for local groups of young people, through schools or synagogues, to participate in Tivnu's projects. Gap year students work in internships with one of Tivnu's local partners, a group of 70 area non-profits, as well as working in construction, often of "tiny houses" that have been a critical tool in mitigating Oregon's ongoing housing crisis.

"They're very hands on," Eisenbach-Budner said. "Housing is actually foundational."

To receive the full amount of the grant, Tivnu will need to raise \$600,000 in matching funds. Eisenbach-Budner has a list of needs he'd like to address with that support – the first being the hiring of a partnership and outreach director.

"We need people to be pounding the pavement and making partnerships with other national Jewish organizations," he said.

Additionally, Tivnu hopes to build a professional communications strategy to get the word out about its work, bring on an operations manager to support day-to-day logistics, database management and retain a part-time development staffer to continue the organization's growth.

Tivnu has received significant local support from the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, the Zidell Family Foundation and the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation.

"They can be proud that their investment has been recognized by a national funder now putting dollars into our community, helping fund a capacity expansion project to launch the growth of Tivnu into a nationally recognized organization based on Portland," Eisenbach-Budner said.

While the additions Eisenbach-Budner is hoping to make with the Project Accelerate grant are important, they're not typically the kinds of things that stand out on a fundraising mailer. That's the beauty of the Project Accelerate grant.

"It's specifically meant for capacity building," he explained. "It's meant for building out your infrastructure, so that you can do what you're doing, but do it in a more sustainable way and do it for the long haul."

Learn more at [tivnu.org](http://tivnu.org)

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# Flock of "Doves of Hope and Peace" in PJA lobby

By ROCKNE ROLL

*The Jewish Review*

If you walk into the main lobby of Portland Jewish Academy and look up, you'll be met with quite the sight – hundreds of blue and white paper birds – doves – together with a simple wish in Hebrew; "*Shalom*." (peace)

"Doves of Hope and Peace" is the latest in a series of community art projects put together by parents and students at PJA. The projects began during the Covid pandemic and continued with this year's work meant to express solidarity with Israel and the hope for a better future.

David Solondz, co-chair of PJA's parents' association, Kehillah, explained that the first two community art projects were outward-facing expressions of connectedness during the pandemic. The group's art committee took last year off but was seeking a project for this year.

The practice of origami is not a new one at PJA – a number of faculty members teach the practice either through art classes or as part of other programs. Origami had been tossed around as an idea for a project, but concrete plans had not been laid.

Then Oct. 7 happened.

Solondz was inspired by the Japanese practice of *senbazuru*, the folding of 1,000 origami cranes as a metaphorical wish of long life.

"I kind of came up with the idea of making a certain number of doves. And figuring *chai* is 18, 1800 was our goal," he said. "For peace and for the future of Israel in response to the events on Oct. 7."

Solondz's co-chair, Naomi



A sampling of the paper doves that make up Portland Jewish Academy's 2024 Community Art Project, "Doves of Hope and Peace," displayed at the school Friday, Dec. 17, 2023. Below, from left: The front of the display bears the Hebrew word for "peace." Students and parents string the over 900 paper doves together. Volunteers hang the constellation of doves in the school lobby. (Courtesy David Solondz)

Harwin, had a similar moment of inspiration.

"I went down to San Diego for a bat mitzvah and there's an installation at the San Diego airport of origami cranes," she recalled. "I said, 'I think this is exactly what we need to do.' So everyone was on the same page."

Having the idea is one thing, getting it done is something else. Students and families started folding just before

Thanksgiving with the ambitious goal of installing the finished project during the school's winter break.

"We weren't sure if anyone was going to do this," Harwin recalled, "and the first day that we opened it up, I brought home three (grocery) bags full of doves. The second day, David brought home two bags full of doves. We just kept having more and more people contributing. It

really was a community effort. I think that people really needed something to express how they were feeling and, in a way, to feel connected to one another and connected to Israel."

Many of the doves had messages written on them – some on the outside, some folded up into the body of the dove.

"I didn't peak," Solondz said. "I treated them like the messages you put in the Western Wall, where it's a little message that's private to them, between them and whomever."

A total of over 900 doves – 50 *chai* – were collected. From there, parents strung them together with 350 yards of thread into a frame using over 60 feet of left over half-inch PVC pipe, along with 900 plastic beads to hold the cranes on and 28 heavy-duty zip ties to secure the whole array to the lobby ceiling.

For Harwin, a conversation with her daughter gave the finished work even deeper meaning.

"My daughter was saying that in fifth grade they were talking about words of inspiration for the New Year and she had chosen the word 'soar' as her word," Harwin explained. "One of the greatest things is that you walk in and you immediately look up and you lift up your mind, your heart, looking up at something and, to me, it really lends itself to that idea of being able to soar together as a flock."

"I couldn't believe how impressed I was with our organization as a community," Solondz added, "that we were able to pull this off. Not just that, but how amazing it looks as well."



# Rabbis Gleizer, Weinstock join expanded Kollel

By ROCKNE ROLL

*The Jewish Review*

In recent months, the Portland Kollel has welcomed a pair of new rabbis, both moving to Oregon from Jerusalem.

Rabbi Dovid Gleizer joined the Kollel as Rosh Beit Medrash in November, coming from Jerusalem's Mir Yeshiva.

"We spent six years there and we were looking to stay in Israel forever," Rabbi Gleizer said of himself, his wife, Rivka Malka Gleizer, and their three children. "And then we did the next common move from Jerusalem to Portland."

Rabbi Gleizer laughed and then explained that the Kollel is expanding its programming to reach out to the broader Jewish community, and he was excited to be a part of such a project while having the opportunity to continue his own studies.

After attending an Orthodox day school in Boston, Rabbi Gleizer received a degree in psychology from Yeshiva University in New York, starting his rabbinical training there before moving to Yeshiva Mir, where he had been teaching after finishing his ordination until moving to Portland.

"You can continue studying, but at the same time you're involved in the community here, having a chance to attract people from the outside and educate people of all different ages and all different backgrounds," he said of his new posting.

As Rosh Beit Medrash, which translates to "head of the house of study," Rabbi Gleizer is tasked with developing programs for all levels of religious understanding, from advanced-level instruction for those already immersed in Jewish scholarship to more foundational level classes and events for those interested in deepening their textual understanding.

"I enjoy things that are related to interpersonal relationships through the lens of the Torah. How the Torah views that," Rabbi Gleizer said. "One thing I very much enjoy is the idea of growth; how to grow as a person, how to grow as a Jew, how to expand yourself. If you can present it in the right way to the right crowd, I think it can be very powerful."

He'll have some help in this endeavor, as Rabbi Berel Weinstock joined the Kollel as a teacher at the end of November.

Also coming from a Jerusalem Yeshiva, though a smaller one than the 9,000-student Yeshiva Mir, Rabbi Weinstock grew up in Toronto. After finishing high school, he moved to England to study at the Gateshead Yeshiva in northern England. He then moved to Israel, returning to the United States for a time where he met his wife, Leah Weinstock, before completing his



Rabbi Berel Weinstock, left, and Rabbi Dovid Gleizer, pictured at the Portland Kollel Wednesday, Jan. 10. The pair joined the Kollel in recent months to enhance the Kollel's educational programs. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

yeshiva studies back in Israel. As he began to look for teaching opportunities, he connected with Rabbi Gleizer.

"Rabbi Gleizer is very convincing," Rabbi Weinstock said of his decision to make the move with his family, which now includes three children, but there is more than that.

"Portland is a very nice place to be. The people I find are very pleasant. They're very open and they want to grow," he said. "So it was a great opportunity for me."

Rabbi Weinstock enjoys teaching all aspects of the Torah, from the ideals of Jewish character development to the intricacies of *halacha*, Jewish law – particularly the Torah's insights into winemaking, as he is a hobbyist winemaker.

Both Rabbis are eager to share their learning with the broader community, not just around the specifics of the texts themselves, but how the logic of Jewish thought

and philosophy links the various texts together.

"I think an unbelievable value that Kollel rabbis bring is that when you spend day and night for years immersed, understanding the logic of the Torah, getting all the fine details, your brain starts to begin to be trained on how the Torah logic really works," Rabbi Gleizer said. "That's something which, until one experiences it, it's a little bit hard to hard to fully understand, but when they do experience it, you see it, you see it smiles, excitement, because they're connecting to that which they want to connect to. It unlocks something."

"We want to promote growth, but it shouldn't be like a head overload," Rabbi Weinstock added. "We do it in slow steps. That means at all levels."

See the latest Kollel programs and classes at [portlandkollel.org](http://portlandkollel.org)

# Overnight Camp Roundup



Above: Camp Keshet. (Courtesy Meira Spivak) Below: B'nai B'rith Camp (Courtesy Noa Rubin)

## *The Jewish Review staff*

Portland is lucky to have five Jewish overnight camps nearby. B'nai B'rith Camp began in 1921. Camp Solomon Schechter was founded by Portland Rabbi Joshua Stampfer, z"l, in 1954. Each year, Congregation Ahavath Achim encourages families to explore the Sephardic Adventure Camp, the only Sephardic overnight camp in the country. In 2019, NCSY added Camp Keshet to the local overnight camp roster. Another Jewish camp in Washington is Camp Kalsman, which opened in 2007 as the newest camp in the Union for Reform Judaism family of camps.

Beyond the locally affiliated camps, the Foundation for Jewish Camp lists general and specialty camps ranging from arts and aquatics to sports and wilderness skills. Search by interest, affiliation, region, grade, dietary restrictions and special needs at [jewishcamp.org/one-happy-camper/find-a-camp/](http://jewishcamp.org/one-happy-camper/find-a-camp/).

The site also includes information on One Happy Camper grants that are funded locally by the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland for first-time campers ([onehappy-camper.org](http://onehappy-camper.org)).

In addition to the One Happy Camper grants, families can offset the cost of summer camp with an interest-free loan from Jewish Free Loan sponsored by JFGP. Families can borrow up to \$5,000. For more information, visit [jewishportland.org/Jewish-free-loan](http://jewishportland.org/Jewish-free-loan).

## **B'NAI B'RITH CAMP**

[bbcamp.org/summer-camp](http://bbcamp.org/summer-camp)

503-452-3443 | [info@bbcamp.org](mailto:info@bbcamp.org)

Overnight Camp Associate Director: Moses Felberg

Campground: On the Oregon Coast by Devil's Lake ADA-accessible heated cab-



ins (with showers and bathrooms), lake activities, zipline, ball field, ropes course, new gym and amphitheater.

Program: Since 1921, BB Camp has been a vibrant and inclusive Jewish community, creating immersive experiences for children of all ages, identities and backgrounds. Our intentional programming, based on our core Jewish values, provides each camper with formative experiences to build on as they develop their own personal Jewish identity. We create a balanced schedule of cabin and large group activities, daily elective offerings, and alternative and traditional Shabbat and Jewish programs to ensure that every child makes the most of their camp experience.

Specialty camps: Middle School; Teen Leadership Programs; Outdoor Jewish Adventure trips in Europe and Pacific Northwest for incoming 11th-graders; and

Staff-in-Training program for incoming 11th-graders.

Dates/Ages/Cost Sessions of one, two, three or four weeks begin June 25 and end Aug. 13, 2024, for rising 2nd- to 11th-graders.

Camp Fees vary. Financial aid and incentive grants available. Scholarships and financial assistance: BB Camp offers needs-based financial aid and up to \$1,000 in incentive grants for first time campers. Visit [bbcamp.org/grants/](http://bbcamp.org/grants/) for a full list of financial assistance options.

## **CAMP SOLOMON SCHECHTER**

[campschechter.org](http://campschechter.org)

206-447-1967 | [info@campschechter.org](mailto:info@campschechter.org)

Executive Director: Zach Dutich

*continued on next page*

continued from previous page

Campground: Olympia, Wash.  
Amenities: 170-acre facility, private lake with dock and aqua park, boat house, art shed, amphitheater, dining hall, infirmary, sports shed, bog and river, full sports fields and ball courts, climbing tower, challenge course, zip line, hiking trails and yurt village.

#### Program

Camp Solomon Schechter has a 68-year tradition of fun, friendship and Jewish experiential education in the Pacific Northwest. We create a unique, welcoming and spiritual Jewish environment for youth of all denominations entering 1st-12th grades. A summer at CSS enables children to try new activities, improve social skills, gain self-confidence, make Jewish friends, become independent and discover talents and abilities they never knew they had. These benefits last a lifetime. At CSS, we emphasize the values of integrity, *derech eretz* (respect) and *tikkun olam* (repairing the world). We do this through activities and *teva* (nature) to create our ideal Jewish community. At Camp Solomon Schechter, Judaism and joy are truly one!

#### Dates/Ages/Cost

Sessions vary by duration and cost – a full list of dates and pricing is available at [camp-schechter.org/dates-rates](http://camp-schechter.org/dates-rates). Payment plans available.

#### CAMP KESHER

[campkeshher.ncsy.org](http://campkeshher.ncsy.org)  
503-757-3037 | [oregonoffice@ncsy.org](mailto:oregonoffice@ncsy.org)

Director: Meira Spivak

Campground: Camas and Ocean Park, Wash.

The first week of camp will take place in Camp Lacamas in Camas, Wash., and the second week and a half will take place in the Ocean Park Camp and Retreat Center in Ocean Park, Wash. Amenities include a week and a half at the ocean, rock climbing, bubble soccer and incredible trips (white water rafting, overnight camping).

#### Program

With a focus of making Judaism fun and alive, Camp Keshher affords 3rd- to 9th-graders the opportunity to have an awesome time with friends while boosting Jewish pride. Activities include Jewish cooking and baking, sports, drama, kayaking and crafting. Campers make lifelong friends who they can travel to Israel with during a summer in high school.

#### Dates/Ages/Cost

2024 camp session is June 25-July 11

Grades 2-9: \$3,000 including registration fee.

Staff-In-Training (arrive two days early)

10th grade - \$1,500, \$250 stipend offered.

11-12th grade – Free, \$250 stipend offered plus performance-based tips.

#### SEPHARDIC ADVENTURE CAMP

[sephardicadventurecamp.org](http://sephardicadventurecamp.org)  
[office@sephardicadventurecamp.org](mailto:office@sephardicadventurecamp.org)

Campground: Cle Elum, Wash.

Amenities include a heated pool, trout pond, lending library, team building course, and sports courts and fields.

#### Program

A host of traditional camp activities in addition to lots of fun, Sephardic experiential programming. Campers enjoy basketball, color war, mountain biking, arts and crafts, Sephardic baking, trout fishing, archery and more.

#### Dates/Ages/Cost

June 20-July 9: \$3,600 for the three-week session for Grades 4-11.

One-week sessions available for entering grades 3-4.

#### URJ CAMP KALSMAN

[campkalsman.org](http://campkalsman.org)  
[campkalsman@urj.org](mailto:campkalsman@urj.org)  
425-284-4484

Director: Rabbi Ilana Mills

Campground: Arlington, Wash. Camp Kalsman's 300 beautiful acres offer a great balance of education and recreation with great sports and arts facilities and a pool.

#### Program

Camp Kalsman is committed to our six core values: friendship, *kehillah kedoshah* (sacred community), Reform Jewish identity, *chesed* (kindness), connection to Israel and our relationship to *teva* (nature). Activities include: Arts – painting and ceramics; Performing arts – improv, theater, musical, writing; Music – guitar; Sports/waterfront – biking, archery, frisbee, soccer, basketball, lake, pool; and Experience – hiking, cooking, outdoor survival skills, gardening, animal care, high ropes course, climbing tower and swing.

#### Date/ages/cost

1-3 week sessions June 23-Aug. 14 for grades 1-10 with fees varying by age, dates, and URJ membership.

Counselor in Training (11th graders) June 23-July 30 is \$5,995 for URJ members or \$6,395 for nonmembers.



 Jewish Federation  
of Greater Portland

# #ShabbatofLove

## January 19th, 2024

Scan the QR Code for ways  
to participate in Portland

Shabbat of Love

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](http://www.shabbatoflove.org)

# Rohr's year-long poetry community, Stafford Challenge launches today

*The Jewish Review staff*

A yearlong challenge inspired by a former Oregon Poet Laureate begins today, but there's still time to sign up.

Poet Brian Rohr, who also serves as Congregation Neveh

Shalom's communications director, was inspired to create The Stafford Challenge after looking for way to spark his poetic creativity. William Stafford, the challenge's namesake, maintained a long term prac-

tice of writing a poem per day, every day. Rohr was inspired, with the blessing of Stafford's son, Kim Stafford, to make the year-long challenge and online community.

More than 900 poets have

registered thus far. Participation is on a "pay-what-you-want" basis. For more information or to register, visit [staffordchallenge.com](http://staffordchallenge.com). Registration will close in the next couple of days, Rohr said.

## Women's Giving Circle grant applications due Feb. 12

*The Jewish Review staff*

The 2024 grantmaking cycle for Portland's Women's Giving Circle is now underway.

The group, a division of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Women's Philanthropy, will accept applications through Feb. 12 for micro-grants from \$1,000-5,000 to Jewish nonprofits in Oregon. A total of \$32,000 in grants will be awarded.

"We're looking to fund micro grants for nonprofits that are doing work that has impact in the Jewish community," explained Women's Giving Circle co-chair Aimee Coughlin. "We want to be able to provide localized funding and we're specifically interested in organizations that are trying to advance Jewish values for women and young girls, as well as people identified as trans women and

LGBTQ+ women."

The grants are funded by the personal contributions of the giving circle's members. The focus this cycle is on programs and services for Jewish women, initiatives that strengthen Jewish identity and programs that combat antisemitism and other forms of bigotry.

Women-led philanthropy is an essential part of Jewish community work, Coughlin explained, in order "to lift up women as important philanthropists, but also being decision makers and being able to identify the needs that we see as perhaps different in the community based on our own experience as women."

For more information, email Federation Chief Allocations and Engagement Officer Caron Blau Rothstein at [caron@jewishportland.org](mailto:caron@jewishportland.org).

## NATURE (continued from page 1)

to forge those connections have gone missing. There are ways to address this that can be seen in nature, he says, particularly through the lens of Jewish texts.

"There is a beautiful kind of tension in Jewish wisdom that says, on the one hand, we're supposed to be able to transcend nature and, on the other hand, we're also supposed to learn from nature. Both of those things are true at the same time," he said. "And Tu B'Shevat being the holiday that really puts our focus on the natural world, it seems like a good opportunity to pick up on one side of that tension, which is 'What is it that we have to learn from the natural world about connection? What is it that the natural world has to offer us about how we overcome some of the obstacles we are experiencing to connection?'"

"Tu B'Shevat is a bit remote for a lot for a lot of people," Rabbi Rose added. "it's not something that's at the center of most people's Jewish consciousness. But what is at the center of people's consciousness right now is an awareness that the Jewish world is so divided right now. So Rabbi Villareal's idea to have this approach to Tu B'Shevat that takes people through these texts and helps people sort of to see trees in the natural world as this living thing that has something to teach us, I felt like that was a beautiful angle on this that that gives people access to Tu B'Shevat and is, in and of itself, just a very important topic."

In addition to discussions from Rabbi Villareal, each class will also foster its own connections by making use of *chavruta*, the traditional practice of partnered textual study where students analyze a text as peers, breaking it down together and sharing insights collaboratively.

"It is such a gift in this day and age of people trying to take a stance on something they've read in 90 seconds," Rabbi Rose said. "It's such a luxury and it's so restorative and it's so healing to be able to put texts and careful learning at the center in a relational context with another person."

Rabbi Villareal explained that one of the first texts he's addressing comes from Jewish mysticism – it depicts a Rabbi meditating and observing a tree.

"He has this epiphany and realizes there is so much to learn from the entirety of the natural world that if we realized how much we weren't learning, we would be sitting in mourning," Rabbi Villareal explained. "But that's really just what's perceivable at the surface when we actually look at this rabbi's process and what it was that he observed and the details of that reaction again, there's actually a lot for us to start to unpack."

This might sound like a deep dive – and it is – but it's an accessible one, too.

"I feel like sometimes some people are kind of intimidated by Jewish learning," Rabbi Rose explained. "Anybody with an interest in this can walk in. There's no there's no prerequisite for Hebrew or Jewish background or even if somebody doesn't know what Tu B'Shevat is. Especially if they don't."

Tickets are available on a sliding scale basis from \$36-72, with financial assistance available, at [colabpdx.org/learninglab](http://colabpdx.org/learninglab). For more information, email [rabbijosh@colabpdx.org](mailto:rabbijosh@colabpdx.org).



# Sklar Bros shine at L'Chaim and Laughter



A full house (left) took in a performance from the Sklar Brothers at the Eastside Jewish Commons Wednesday, Jan. 3. The comedy duo of twins Jason (center row, left) and Randy Sklar (center row, right) took on all manner of topics including Portland culture, parenting and sports. Attendees enjoyed a cup of "Liquid L'Chaim" (center) along with plenty of laughs and fellowship. "I really enjoyed schmoozing with various attendees and making some new friend," explained Devin Getreu, a leader of event co-sponsor Portland Jewish Connection. The show was a debut for PDX Cross Collaboration, the umbrella for leading Jewish young adult groups in Portland. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)



## JFCS hosts parenting workshop on Zoom Jan. 23

*The Jewish Review staff*

Jewish Family & Child Service continues their workshop series on relationship-based parenting Tuesday, Jan. 23 at 7:30 pm on Zoom.

The second of two sessions, led by Zoe Muller and Chaviva Greenberg, focuses on building strong family connections to address power struggles, provide effective encouragement and creating a positive family environment.

"There are a lot of parenting workshops out there that kind of tell you what to do and what to say, but there's a missing piece," Greenberg said. "You're not able to access those skills if you're not in a place to be able to use them to begin with."

"Many parents look at play; 'Oh, I need to play the right way with them,'" Muller added. "It's less important what you play with them. It's more important that you are present, that you are being playful. It's the authentic connectedness that makes the difference."

Greenberg, previously a teacher at Maayan Torah Day School, turned her career toward counseling during the pandemic and graduated with honors from the Wurzweiler School of Social Work in 2022. Muller received her master's in social work from Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Both are currently accepting new child and family therapy clients and planning additional future workshops.

For more information or to register for the Jan. 23 workshop, visit [jfcs-portland.org/parenting-workshop-2024](https://jfcs-portland.org/parenting-workshop-2024).

**SUBSCRIBE:**  
[jewishportland.org/subscribe](https://jewishportland.org/subscribe)

## A Happy (Early) New Year at MJCC



The Mittleman Jewish Community Center was excited to invite over 500 people to ring in the New Year for their New Year's at Noon Celebration Sunday, Dec. 31, 2023. They had their biggest turnout yet for this event, and attendees were able to enjoy bounce houses, crafts, snacks, a photo wall, and a sneak peak at Summer 2024 camp offerings. New Years at Noon ended with a balloon and beach ball drop at noon, the perfect way to start 2024 just a few hours early! (Becky Ewer/MJCC)

## Israel360 hosts pair of Jan. events

*The Jewish Review staff*

Israel360 presents The Shema Series, beginning Sunday, Jan. 28 at 10 am at Congregation Neveh Shalom.

Named for the Hebrew word meaning 'to listen,' The Shema Series will provide participants a chance to share their personal connections, thoughts and worries about Israel.

In the aftermath of the events of Oct. 7, many of us continue to have questions and varied feelings about Israel's response to the attack. In the January 28th session, we will use a model in which we share our perspectives with one other person, moving into a small group to continue the dialogue with the intention of strengthening our bonds of connection and understanding with one another. This will be the first in a series of discussions facilitated by Rabbi David Kosak. Israel360 remains committed to the Kindness Commons guidelines for respectful and safe dialogue.

To register, visit [members.nevehshalom.org/event/I360Sh1](https://members.nevehshalom.org/event/I360Sh1).

Israel360 also presents "One Woman, Two Wars," Wednesday, Jan. 31 at 7 pm at Neveh Shalom.

In this presentation, Ana Sazonov unfolds her remarkable personal journey, tracing her discovery of her heritage, the transformative decision

to make *Aliyah* (emigrate to Israel), and her evolution into a dedicated Jewish professional. She vividly recounts the profound impact and the proactive steps she took in response to the war in Ukraine and Israel, as well as the alarming surge in global antisemitism.

Sazonov's life began in Ukraine. She wasn't aware of her Jewish roots until the collapse of the Soviet Union, when her family moved to Israel. During her years in Israel, she developed a strong Jewish and Zionist identity. After serving in the IDF and gaining a degree in Business and Economics, she took a position as an Israel Fellow at Emory University Hillel. This led to a passion for Jewish Education and Jewish Professional Leadership, another degree, and a position as Executive Director at the Jewish Federation in South Carolina.

However, when war broke out in Ukraine, Ana answered the call to support her homeland and has been working on the front lines of humanitarian aid in Ukraine. Ana Sazonov's life journey is a testament to resilience, self-discovery, and the power of giving back. In recognition of her remarkable contributions, Ana was selected for the 2023 Hadassah list of 18 women shaping the future of Zionism. RSVP online at [members.nevehshalom.org/event/I360AnaS](https://members.nevehshalom.org/event/I360AnaS).

# NATAN seeking skilled rehabilitational volunteers for Ukraine

*The Jewish Review staff*

NATAN Worldwide Disaster Relief, a dedicated Israeli humanitarian organization with over 19 years of global experience, is actively involved in relief efforts in Israel and committed to supporting Ukraine during

ongoing conflicts. Even while NATAN Worldwide Disaster Relief continues the intense work it's been doing in Israel since Oct. 7, the humanitarian organization also continues to honor its commitment to Ukraine, where war rages on. As such, NATAN

is seeking physical therapists, occupational therapists and other specialists to work for 2-week stints at a rehabilitation center in the Lviv suburbs.

Translators are available, so there is no need to speak Russian or Ukrainian.

NATAN will cover transportation expenses in Ukraine, as well as accommodation and food, but asks that the volunteers pay for their flights to Ukraine.

For more information or to apply, email [anat.b@natanrelief.org](mailto:anat.b@natanrelief.org).



## Cedar Sinai helps Jewish National Fund plant trees for Tu B'Shevat

Though trees are typically planted on the Cedar Sinai Park campus for Tu B'Shevat, this year a circle of three trees were purchased for planting in Israel through the Jewish National Fund USA. "We wanted to send love and life to Israel so we purchased trees to be planted there on behalf of our residents," said Spiritual Life Coordinator Cathy Zheutlin. A plaque commemorating the trees will also be sent. The plaque will be shared at a Shabbat dinner at Rose Schnitzer Manor Active Assisted Living on Friday, January 26, with young people from B'nai B'rith Camp and their families in attendance. At the Robison Jewish Health Center/Harold Schnitzer Center for Living, long-term care residents will plant parsley that will grow in time for Passover dinner. (Courtesy Jewish National Fund via Cedar Sinai Park)

## CBI preschool to host pair of open houses

*Congregation Beth Israel*

The Jennifer Barnum Luria Early Childhood Center on Congregation Beth Israel's historic campus (located 428 NW 20th) will open in a few short weeks, providing full-time, Reform Jewish education for children aged six weeks to pre-kindergarten.

The Jennie invites you to visit our beautiful, brand-new school, meet our staff

(and maybe let your children give the classroom toys a test run), and learn more about our art- and play-based program at one of two upcoming open houses: drop in and join the fun on either Saturday, Feb. 10 or Saturday, Mar. 16 from 2-5pm. RSVP to [TheJennie@bethisrael-pdx.org](mailto:TheJennie@bethisrael-pdx.org), and find out more about our school at <http://www.TheJenniePDX.org>.

## OJCF grant applications open for three funds

*Oregon Jewish Community Foundation*

The Oregon Jewish Community Foundation is accepting proposals for the Helen & Jerry Stern Family Grandchildren's Fund, the Oregon Jewish Youth Foundation, and OJCF's Community Endowment Fund.

The Stern Family Grandchildren's Fund accepts proposals from synagogues and other Jewish organizations in Oregon that support a thriving Jewish community. This year, the family is prioritizing projects that work to fight against antisemitism but is also accepting proposals for other projects except for security needs. The Stern Grandchildren's Fund's request for proposals closes January 31, 2024.

The Stern Grandchildren's Fund is dedicated to giving back by empowering people and organizations to build a stronger and more vibrant Jewish community in Oregon. The Fund strives to fulfill its mission by honoring Helen and Jerry Stern's legacy of sharing their time, passion, and resources to invest in the success of Jewish organizations; advancing organizations that champion Jewish continuity and build Jewish community; and promoting the importance of Jewish education and Jewish learning for all ages, to instill individuals with a sense of pride and connection to their unique Jewish identity.

OJCYF, in its 21st year, is a teen-led organization that empowers high school students to take action that aligns with their Jewish values through fundraising and granting money to Jewish and secular nonprofit organizations.

The members of the Youth Foundation, with the support from OJCYF donors and the OJCF Community Endowment Fund, are committed to uplifting the residents of Oregon and SW Washington through fiscal support. During the 2024 grant cycle, OJCYF members will focus on nonprofits that resonate with enduring Jewish values, including Responsibility (*Areyvut*), Human Dignity (*Kavod*), Preservation (*Shmirah*), and Justice (*Tzedek*) and will prioritize the following issues: 1) Antisemitism and Hate, 2) Gun Violence and Prevention, 3) Human Health Education, Care, and/or Advocacy—focusing on mental health and suicide prevention. Qualified applicants include Jewish and general nonprofit organizations in Oregon or Southwest Washington. OJCYF's request for proposals closes February 20, 2024.

The Community Endowment Fund has extended the deadline for requests for proposals through March 1, 2024. With CEF grants, OJCF intends to seed innovative and collaborative organizations and programs in Oregon and SW Washington that remove or lower one or more of the four main barriers to Jewish participation identified in the community study commissioned by the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland: programming, geography, cost, and "feeling Jewish enough."

For more information, please contact Noah Rosenberg, Director of Community Relations and Operations at [noahr@ojcf.org](mailto:noahr@ojcf.org) or (503) 248-9328.

# Chaplain's Corner

## Tu B'Shevat's Call to Action

By **RABBI BARRY COHEN**

Ever since I arrived in the Pacific Northwest, I promised never to take this region's natural beauty for granted. I continue to be amazed by the scenery, the rolling hills, the vibrant colors, the foggy mist and even the consistent precipitation. I make it a priority to hike 5 different local trails, for the sake of my physical and psychological health. Getting outside keeps me grounded, reduces my stress and worries and connects me to something much greater than myself.

As a people, we will soon have a chance to celebrate Tu B'Shevat, which falls on January 25. For centuries, we used this holiday to connect ourselves with the land of Israel, but we can also use this holiday to re-connect with nature. How fortunate we are to live on a tiny planet, hurtling through space. We have a responsibility to care for it and protect it, not only for ourselves, but for generations that follow.

Let me share a Tu B'Shevat-related story: "Once Honi was walking along the road when he saw a man planting a carob tree. Honi asked, 'How long before it will bear fruit?' The man answered, 'seventy years.' Honi asked, 'Are you sure that you will be alive in seventy years to eat from its fruit?' The man answered, 'I found this world full of carob trees. Just as my ancestors planted for me, so shall I plant for my children.' " (Ta'anit 23a)

This tale places the tree-planter in a continuum of generations: he acknowledges gratitude for those who came before him who ensured he would benefit from nature, and he acts to make sure that future generations will continue to benefit.

This story also teaches that trees symbolize eternity. When we reflect upon the grandeur of trees, we place our existence in proper perspective. After all, most trees live well beyond the lifetime of a single human generation. One way that we continue to live, long after we have passed away? Through our children and our children's children. For this reason, the man planted trees not for his own physical needs, but to ensure that his legacy would be passed down from generation to generation.

With Tu B'Shevat, we return to our first encounter with trees. We return to the Garden of Eden, when for a short while, we lived in harmony with nature, not in competition. But then we ate from the Tree of



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

Knowledge of Good and Evil. This forever altered our relationship with nature, as we were expelled from the garden.

We read God's punishment, "Cursed be the ground because of you; by toil shall you eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles shall it sprout for you But your food shall be the grasses of the field; by the sweat of your brow shall you get bread to eat, until you return to the ground – for from it you were taken. For dust you are, and to dust shall you return." (Gen. 3:17-19)

In the Garden of Eden, symbolically at the dawn of humanity's existence, we were not mature enough to handle the aftermath of eating from the Tree of Knowledge. But now we know better. We are aware of the damage we have inflicted upon our planet through uncontrolled consumption of fossil fuels and rampant pollution of our environment.

Tu B'Shevat is our call to action to foster a healthier relationship with our environment and with our world. We can no longer make excuses of ignorance for the damage we have inflicted. Tu B'Shevat calls upon us to do what we can to repair the world.

But herein lies the challenge. How much power do we have to affect change? How can we oppose the might of multi-national fossil fuel companies and government officials denying scientific conclusions?

Here are some ideas: We can vote for politicians who share our values to protect and preserve our environment. We can act to reduce our carbon footprint. We can consume less and recycle more. We can manage our thermostat. We can eat less beef and chicken. We can shop locally. We can reduce our use of plastics. We can fly less. And we can protect local green spaces and parks.

With Tu B'Shevat, let us all act selflessly to fulfill our responsibility to reconnect with our planet and preserve and protect it for generations to come.

Published biweekly by

Jewish Federation of Greater Portland  
9900 SW Greenburg Road, Suite 220  
Tigard, OR 97223  
503-245-6219  
[JewishPortland.org](http://JewishPortland.org)

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### Circulation

To receive the Jewish Review in your email inbox, fill out the form at  
[jewishportland.org/subscribe](http://jewishportland.org/subscribe)

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

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### Jewish Review Online:

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

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Issue date	Deadline
JAN 31	JAN 25
FEB 14	FEB 8
FEB 28	FEB 22
MAR 13 (Purim)	MAR 7

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# Clergy Corner

## Living with radical amazement

By CANTOR RAYNA GREEN

We made it a point to watch the sunset each evening on our vacation. The colors of the sunset felt more intense and beautiful than usual. Perhaps it was because our “to-do” lists were put away for the week and we had no after-school rush causing us to race through the evening. We stood and watched the sunset with new eyes. Our 4 and 5 year old boys asked questions like, “Where does the sun go when it sets?” and “How did those colors get up there in the sky?” We were truly in awe.

I prompted my children to express their awe as we do in our morning “Yotzer Or” blessing. I asked, “What do we say when we see something in nature that is beautiful?” I started whispering in their ear, “Mah Rabu Ma’asecha Ad-nai!” “How numerous are Your designs, Oh G-d!” Before I could finish, my 5 year-old exclaimed, “Mah Ra-BOOYAH!” At first I corrected him, thinking he had made a Hebrew mistake. Then I realized, his adaptation was pretty brilliant. “Yes!” I said to him. “That’s right!” We are exclaiming, “Wow!” Or “BOOYAH!”

Fortunately, as Oregonians, we do not need to be on vacation to appreciate nature. Here in the Pacific Northwest, we can easily watch the sunset, or the thrill of rushing water, or the majestic nature of the mountains. What we need is the reminder to slow down and open our eyes so that we can truly appreciate our surroundings.

Reciting blessings help us to slow down, notice, and appreciate. Reciting the “Yotzer Or” blessing in the morning is a daily reminder of our connection to the earth, and therefore with G-d. Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav so beautifully teaches, “Hitbodedut,” the spiritual practice of being alone in nature. He taught that although one can pray and be in relationship with G-d anywhere, being in nature makes G-d more accessible. He said, “Grant me

the ability to be alone; May it be my custom to go outdoors each day, among the trees and grass, among all growing things, and there may I be alone, and enter into prayer, to talk with the One to whom I belong...”

This month we celebrate Tu B’Shev, the New Year for the Trees. Our Rabbis deemed Tu B’Shev so important that it is one of the 4 Jewish New Years to be celebrated. Tu B’Shev connects us to the Land of Israel, as it is a time of planting trees and appreciating first blossoms of spring in Israel. Tu B’Shev is often referred to as “The Birthday of the Trees” or a “Jewish Earth Day” as it is a day to celebrate G-d’s creations and a reminder of our responsibility to be partners with G-d in taking care of the earth.

Congregation Beth Israel is proud to celebrate Tu B’Shev this year by retreating to beautiful B’nai Brith Camp in Lincoln City, Oregon. There, among the trees and the lake, we will take moments to be alone with G-d, to be in awe of the grandeur of our world, and to give thanks. As Abraham Joshua Heschel teaches, “Our goal should be to live life in radical amazement. .... get up in the morning and look at the world in a way that takes nothing for granted. Everything is phenomenal; everything is incredible; never treat life casually. To be spiritual is to be amazed.”

This Tu B’Shev, we will commit ourselves to staying connected to Israel, to taking care of our earth, and finding more moments of awe, and then we will say in appreciation, “Mah Rabu Ma’asecha Ad-nai!” “How numerous are Your designs, Oh G-d!”

*Cantor Rayna Green is B’nei Mitzvah and Family Educator at Congregation Beth Israel.*

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.

# JCRC Column

## Jews as oppressors?

By BOB HORENSTEIN

There is an ideology that has taken hold in progressive spaces in the US, especially among members of the youngest generation (Gen Z). If left unchecked, this ideology will gradually lead to a deepening normalization of antisemitism on the Left and a significant decline in American support for Israel.

American progressives overwhelmingly view oppression exclusively through the lens of race. That is, if you’re white, not only are you privileged (which is true), but you’re also inseparable from the oppressive



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

white power structure that has long persisted in this country.

When this belief is juxtaposed with the common misconception that Jews are a “white religious community,” it’s easy to disregard Jewish feelings of vulnerability and dismiss antisemitism as a serious problem. Thus, a December Harvard-Harris poll found that two-thirds of Americans 18-24, and 44 percent of those 25-34 agree that “Jews as a class are oppressors and should be treated as oppressors.”

This binary concept of oppression (all whites are oppressors, all non-whites are oppressed) harms Jews—and by extension, Israel—in multiple ways. Jewish students at many universities report feeling unsafe and ostracized, having experienced a toxic climate on campus, now worsened by the Israel-Hamas war.

Yet, shamefully, few universities released any statements supporting their Jewish students who were traumatized by the Oct. 7 massacre in Israel and the celebration it prompted from some of their peers. In fact, college diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs have often failed to address rising antisemitism, even perpetuating it due to an underlying ideological framework that views Jews as oppressors.

It was hardly surprising, then, that during a December Congressional hearing, the presidents of Harvard, Penn and MIT refused to state explicitly that calls for the genocide of Jews violated their schools’ codes of conduct. When it comes to the murder of Jews, it depends on the context, according to these university leaders. Is there any doubt that had there been calls on campus for the lynching of Black people, it would have elicited a very different response?

The Jews-as-oppressors dogma has been a key driver of the anti-Israel Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement. Countless examples exist of Jews who refuse to disavow Zionism as integral to their identity being excluded from progressive social justice spaces or expelled from university student government boards.

That’s because Zionism, they’re told, is “an inherently white supremacist ideology.” It wasn’t sufficiently offensive to bar Jews from the club of marginalized minorities—we also had to be portrayed as white supremacists (though I’m certain those antisemitic, Holocaust-denying folks wouldn’t want us in their club either).

See HORENSTEIN, page 14

# HORENSTEIN

(continued from page 13)

Despite our centuries-long history of persecution in Europe when we were despised as non-white “outsiders,” Jews have now been stripped of an ethnic identity indigenous to the land of Israel. We’ve been reduced to a religious community whose adherents are of “white European” stock, ignoring the 15 percent of American Jews and majority of Israeli Jews who are people of color.

It’s no wonder so many on the Left believe the fictitious narrative of Zionism as a European “settler colonial” movement—“white Jews” having dispossessed the indigenous “brown” Palestinians of their land. From there, we get the comparison of Israel’s establishment to European colonial rule in South Africa and the false accusation of Israeli “apartheid” as a means of delegitimizing the Jewish state.

This narrative is particularly seductive to the Gen Z crowd. According to the December Harvard-Harris survey, 51 percent of those 18-24 believe Israel should “be ended and given to Hamas and the Palestinians” while 60 percent believe the Oct. 7 Hamas atrocities were “justified” by Palestinian “grievances.” And these are America’s future leaders.

How can we disrupt the Jews-as-oppressors worldview? It won’t be easy. The American Jewish establishment—national advocacy organizations and local Jewish Community Relations Councils (JCRCs)—should double down on efforts to work with university and governmental DEI programs to incorporate Jewish identity and antisemitism into their frameworks.

There’s also a need to counteract the anti-Zionist echo chambers common on college campuses, especially the prestigious universities that receive substantial donations from Qatar and other Persian Gulf governments. Heavier investment in Jewish and Israel studies programs would promote more balance in the way Israel and Zionism are discussed and represented.

Lastly, the Jewish community should work with state legislators to include Jews as a historically marginalized community (along with those minorities recognized as underrepresented) in ethnic studies standards and curricula. Last year, for example, the Portland JCRC succeeded in efforts to amend an Oregon ethnic studies law that had originally omitted Jews.

Bottom line: The claim that Jews are a subset of the dominant white majority is oppressive in its own right. It must therefore be vigorously repudiated.

*This article was first published in a January issue of The Jerusalem Report magazine.*

# Events

*Check with event organizers for more information on potential cancellations/rescheduling due to severe weather conditions*

## Jan. 17: PDX Nigun Circle at EJC

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

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](http://ejcpdx.org/events).

## Jan. 18: 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.

Prepare for an eye-opening session on January 18<sup>th</sup>, from 7-9 pm at Rose Schnitzer Manor, featuring Tracey-Ann Nelson, Executive Director of the Oregon Education Association and original board member of Fair Fight Action. Nelson will shed light on the critical issue of voter suppression and share the organization’s strategies for promoting free and fair elections. For more information, email [jennifer.felberg@cedarsinainpark.org](mailto:jennifer.felberg@cedarsinainpark.org).

## Jan. 18 Razing Liberty Square Screening at EJC

Eastside Jewish Commons presents the second of its five-part Indie Pop Up Film Series with an advance screening of the documentary, “Razing Liberty Square,” Thursday, Jan. 18 at 7 pm at the Commons.

Liberty City, Miami, was home to one of the oldest segregated public housing projects in the U.S. Now with rising sea levels, the neighborhood’s higher ground has become something else: real estate gold. This screening is funded in part with the support of the Regional Arts + Culture Council, ITVS and SE Uplift. Free tickets available at [events.humanitix.com/razing-liberty-square](http://events.humanitix.com/razing-liberty-square).

## Jan. 18: 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](mailto:allisuev@gmail.com).

## Jan. 19: EJC Noontime Concert feat. Sunny South

Sunny South, featuring veteran bluegrass musicians, playing bluegrass with an emphasis on a traditional style similar to that of Flatt and Scruggs at Eastside Jewish Commons’s Free Noontime Concert Friday, Jan. 19 at Noon at the Commons. Pack a lunch or stop by one of the many eateries at 24th and Glisan, bring your food in (no pork or shellfish please) and come and hear the music! The EJC welcomes seniors, parents and kids, students, and all others. More at [ejcpdx.org/events](http://ejcpdx.org/events)

## Jan. 19: Shabbat of Love

Join the Jewish Federation of North America as we set the table for the largest Shabbat dinner celebration in North American history on Jan. 19, 2024. 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. Check out local events below and learn more at [shabbatoflove.org](http://shabbatoflove.org)

### Congregation Ahavath Achim

Join for a lovely Sephardic Kabbalat Service and Sephardic-themed Shabbat Dinner Friday, Jan. 19 at 6:30 pm at Congregation Ahavath Achim. \$20, RSVP required in advance at [ahavathachim.com](http://ahavathachim.com). For more info or financial assistance, email [melissa@ahavathachim.com](mailto:melissa@ahavathachim.com).

### Congregation Beth Israel

Congregation Beth Israel will send every attendee of our Friday Night Services (6 pm FCBI) home with a mini loaf of challah for their home Shabbat dinners.

### Chabad Southeast Portland

Shabbat at Chabad is a fun, warm, loving nonjudgmental traditional Shabbat dinner with singing, Torah discussions, kiddush, challah and a home cooked meal! Join us at 5:30 pm. More at [jewishsoutheast.com](http://jewishsoutheast.com)

### Neveh Shalom Sisterhood

Join the Neveh Shalom Sisterhood along with Rabbi David Kosak and Cantor Eyal Bitton for a very special Kab-

*continued on next page*

More upcoming community events online at [jewishportland.org/community-calendar](http://jewishportland.org/community-calendar)

*continued from previous page*

balat Shabbat service and oneq at 6:15 pm at Neveh Shalom. More at [nevehshalom.org](http://nevehshalom.org)

### **Mittleman Jewish Community Center**

The Mittleman Jewish Community Center is hosting the largest Shabbat dinner celebration in North American history at 5 pm. \$18 per adult for MJCC/PJA families, \$22 for guests, \$8 for children. Register at [oregonjcc.org/arts-culture/upcoming-events/shabbat-of-love](http://oregonjcc.org/arts-culture/upcoming-events/shabbat-of-love).

### **Kol Shalom**

Kol Shalom will be hosting virtual Friday night services. More at [kolshalom.org](http://kolshalom.org).

### **Jan. 20: Mini Men-sches Tot Shabbat**

Start your Shabbat off with some fun at Congregation Beth Israel's Tot Shabbat Saturday, Jan. 20 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](http://bethisrael-pdx.org/community/mini-mensches).

### **Jan. 20: The Q**

Join Oregon NCSY's largest fundraiser and the best multimedia trivia competition around on Saturday Jan. 20 at 7 pm at the MJCC. Advance tickets required, available at [oregon.ncsy.org](http://oregon.ncsy.org). For more information, email [meiraspiwak@gmail.com](mailto:meiraspiwak@gmail.com).

### **Jan. 21: Spill Those Guts Already at EJC**

In this workshop, which meets Sunday, Jan. 21 and Sunday, Feb. 4 from 11 am – 3 pm at EJC, you will be writing flash memoir. Flash memoir is short. You will be writing poignant, well-crafted autobiographical vignettes, basically, about the people, places, objects, moments that are unforgettable—that shaped your life. \$120 for both classes, Snacks provided. For more information or to register, visit [ejcpx.org/events](http://ejcpx.org/events).

### **Jan. 21: Israeli Dancing for Everyone at EJC**

Join local Israeli dance instructor Allison Victor as she leads a session of Israeli Dance for all ages and levels, but tailored especially to beginners Sunday, Jan. 21 at 1 pm at the Eastside Jewish Commons. Great for families, singles, couples and everyone! Groove around in a circle and dance the hora! Israeli line dancing and more! All Ages, children must be accompanied by adult at all times. (no drop-offs) Suggested Donation: \$6-\$12 sliding scale/person or family. Registration requested at [ejcpx.org/events](http://ejcpx.org/events)

### **Jan. 21: 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.com](http://sites.google.com/site/pifdnews.com).

### **Jan. 22 Sharaka Presentation at CNS**

Join the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland for Sharaka, Monday, Jan. 22 at 7 pm at Congregation Neveh Shalom. A delegation from Israel, the UAE, Bahrain, Morocco and Egypt will discuss peace and normalization between Arabs and Israelis during this difficult time in Israel and Gaza. Registration required at [jewishportland.org/sharaka](http://jewishportland.org/sharaka). For more information, email [bob@jewishportland.org](mailto:bob@jewishportland.org).

### **Jan. 23: 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 [ejcpx.org/events](http://ejcpx.org/events).

### **Jan. 24: Tu B'Shevat Celebration at MJCC**

Come celebrate the birthday of trees on Wednesday, Jan. 24 at 5 pm at the MJCC! Join us for a family friendly event where we gather to build small herb gardens in honor of Tu B'Shevat and to learn about the Jewish Tradition of stewarding the earth through ecological activism. This event will include a short program on Israel's approach to environmentalism and info on how your family can incorporate sustainability practices every day at home. More info at [oregonjcc.org](http://oregonjcc.org)

### **Jan. 24: Winter Sephardic Film Series**

Join Congregation Ahavath Achim for the first screening of the Winter Sephardic Film Series Wednesday, Jan. 24 at 7 pm at CAA. Everyone is welcome, and admission is free. Join us for delightful Sephardic desserts and engaging discussions following each film! To see a full listing of dates and films please visit our website, [ahavathachimpdx.weebly.com/winter-film-series.html](http://ahavathachimpdx.weebly.com/winter-film-series.html).

### **Jan 25: Tuning in to Nature's Conversation**

A Three Part Class with Rabbi Devin Villareal for Tu B'Shevat. See story, page 1.

### **Jan. 26: Mindful Collage with Char Breshgold at EJC**

Need a Creativity boost? Join Char Breshgold for a class on mindful collage-making Friday, Jan. 26 from 12:30-4:30pm at the Eastside Jewish Commons. Collage allows for spontaneous and layered work that can be beautiful, personally meaningful and is fun and easy to do. \$75, most materials included. For more information or to register, visit [ejcpx.org/events](http://ejcpx.org/events).

### **Jan. 27: EJC Presents "Traces" Holocaust Documentary Screening**

The Eastside Jewish Commons and Searching for Identity Present the award-winning documentary "Traces: Voices

of the Second Generation" Friday, Jan. 26 at 6:30 pm at the Commons. In "Traces," we hear directly from the children of Holocaust survivors. Sliding Scale admission \$8-\$15. More information and tickets online at [ejcpx.org/events](http://ejcpx.org/events)

### **Jan. 28: Israel360 presents The Shema Series**

Facilitated discussion on events in Israel post Oct. 7. See story, page 10.

### **Jan. 28: Hadassah presents AG Rosenblum**

Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, presents Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum Sunday, Jan. 28 at noon. Join our flourishing Hadassah community to hear AG Rosenblum, the first woman to serve as Oregon Attorney General, speak about issues of importance to Oregon women with a focus on reproductive rights. \$18. Register at [tinyurl.com/2jcfestc](http://tinyurl.com/2jcfestc).

### **Jan. 30: EJC Presents Author Reading: Gail Lehrman**

Gail Lehrman will read excerpts from her debut novel "Across Seward Park" Tuesday, Jan. 30 at 7 pm at the Eastside Jewish Commons. Set against the backdrop of 20th Century Manhattan, Across Seward Park weaves a riveting tale of family, ambition, and self-discovery. Author discussion and audience Q&A after the reading. Free, donations appreciated. Preregistration required at [ejcpx.org/events](http://ejcpx.org/events).

### **Jan. 31: The Mainstreaming of Antisemitism in America**

In this presentation Wednesday, Jan. 31 at 2 pm at Congregation Neveh Shalom, Bob Horenstein of the Jewish Federation will explore what antisemitism is (and what it is not) from both the far right and far left, how it has evolved over time, and how it is being normalized in America. RSVP at [members.nevehshalom.org/event/WJBH24](http://members.nevehshalom.org/event/WJBH24).

See EVENTS, page 16

## BEN AARON

It is with deep sadness that Congregation Shaarie Torah announces the passing of Ben Arron, z"l. Ben died early Tuesday morning, Jan. 2, 2024 after a long battle with pancreatic cancer. He was 64 years old.

He is survived by his wife, Francine, children Alexa and Zachary, father Max Wyszogrodzka, sister Zahara Wyszogrodzka, in-laws Jerry and Dora Newman, sister-in-law Sheri Newman (John) Jones and brother-in-law Joel (Dawn) Newman.

He was predeceased by mother Shura Wyszogrodzka, z"l.

The funeral was held Friday, Jan. 5, in Seattle.

## ETHEL BIRNBACH

Ethel Jocelyn Birnbach, z"l, passed away Thursday, Jan. 4 at the age of 96.

Ethel Birnbach (nee Katz) entered this world in Bridgeport, Connecticut in 1927, born to Louis Katz and Lillian Levitt. Her journey was one marked by remarkable achievements and dedicated service. At the young age of 19, she graduated with distinction from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY, earning her degree in civil engineering—a testament to her early brilliance and commitment to learning.

Her professional path led her to notable contributions in the field of aeronautics, beginning at Chance Vought Aircraft post-graduation. She continued to pave her way, making significant strides at NACA, a predecessor to NASA, where her expertise and dedication left an indelible mark.

Her work extended far and wide, taking her to the remote corners of Alaska, where she played a pivotal role in designing elements of the DEW (Distant Early Warning Line) for the defense department—a testament to her dedication to national security.

Later in her career, she found herself contributing her expertise to The Bonneville Power Administration in Oregon, leaving yet another legacy in her wake.

Beyond her professional accomplish-

ments, Ethel was a force in the competitive world of contract bridge, achieving national recognition and earning her place among the top 500 players in the country. Her passion for the game was matched only by her talent, making her a respected figure among her peers.

Ethel's legacy lives on through her two devoted sons, Jack (Melanie) and Gerald (Donna). Her memory will be cherished by all those whose lives she touched. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donations to be made to the Jewish Family and Child Service of Portland in honor of Ethel's compassionate spirit and commitment to helping others.

## JOSIF SHEINKMAN

Congregation Neveh Shalom is sorry to announce the passing of CNS member Josif Sheinkman, z"l on Jan. 5, 2024. He is lovingly remembered by his wife Inna Sheinkman; his daughters Lana (Joe Ahadian) Sheinkman and Alla (Justin) Pierce; and two grandchildren. The funeral was held Monday, Jan. 8, at Ahavai Shalom Cemetery.

## LEE BERNE

Lee Berne, z"l, passed away of natural causes on Jan. 7, 2024, surrounded by her four sons, four daughters-in-law, and several of her grandchildren. Lee was born in the Bronx in 1931 and grew up living in the same building as her parents (Louis and Edna Fenton, z"l), sister (Ronnie Wood, z"l), brother (Howie Fenton, z"l), and aunts, uncles, and cousins. Lee followed in her cousins' footsteps as a cheerleader at James Monroe High School.

Lee met the love of her life, Frank Berne, z"l, and they were married in 1953, shortly before they followed the rest of her family across the country to Portland, Oregon. After giving birth to her four sons, she was primarily a homemaker until she began 25 years of work at Standard Insurance. Lee and Frank worked hard, saved, and invested wisely, enabling them to pay off their mortgage, put their kids through college,

and have enough for frequent trips to Lake Tahoe or Reno with their lifelong friends, Hy and Lilly Evans.

Lee was one of the most upbeat, optimistic, positive, supportive, and loving people. Her smile would light up the room. She made sure everyone understood that a family member will always be a beloved family member and that nothing could or would break those bonds. Every new daughter-in-law was welcomed in and made to feel like a true daughter. Every toast was dedicated "To my bee-yoo-tee-ful family!" Lee would never allow anyone to say anything bad about any of her kids, each of whom was her favorite. And her family's friends became her family as well - she was "everyone's bubbe."

Lee is survived by her sons (Rick, Steve, Keith, Craig), daughters-in-law (Audrey, Peggy, Rosalie, Jan), grandchildren and their spouses (Aaron and Luisa, Alexa and Chris, Alisha and Cooper, Bridge and Fanny, Andrew and Lenora, Anna and Wes, Arielle and Jacob, Avi, Eli and Gina, and Rachel), and her great-grandchildren (Jenelle, Meri, Isaac, Grace, Lucy, Henry, Teddy, Aliza, Elyse, Kennedy, Violet, Milaya). Mom, we can finally get the last word - we love you more!

## MARK KASHINSKY

We mourn the loss of Marc Kashinsky, z"l, who passed away on Sunday, Jan. 14, 2024.

Marc is survived by his wife Eileen Eisenberg, his son Josh (Michelle) Kashinsky, his granddaughters Rosie and Fiona Kashinsky, and his sister Susan (Bob) Schrader.

The funeral will be held today, Wednesday, Jan. 17, at Mount Sinai Memorial Park Cemetery in Los Angeles. Shiva will be held Sunday, Jan. 21 at 3 pm at Congregation Beth Israel. Shiva Minyan will take place at 3:30 pm.

Donations in Marc's memory can be made to Congregation Beth Israel.

## EVENTS (continued from page 15)

### Jan. 31: Israel360 presents "One Woman, Two Wars"

Presentation from Ana Sazonov. See story, page 10.

### Feb. 2: CAA First Shabbat Sephardic Dinner

Join Congregation Ahavath

Achim for a shabbat service followed by a delicious Sephardic dinner the first Friday of each month at 5:30 pm All are welcome, preregistration required. \$20 per person, \$10 for children and college students, \$75 max per family. Register online at [ahavathachim.com](http://ahavathachim.com).

## Life cycle

Submit births, b'nai mitzvah, engagements, weddings, anniversaries and landmark birthdays to The Jewish Review's new online portal at [form.jotform.com/JFGP/jr-life-cycle](http://form.jotform.com/JFGP/jr-life-cycle)

See the latest Jewish jobs at [jewishportland.org/ourcommunity/jewish-jobs](http://jewishportland.org/ourcommunity/jewish-jobs)