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Purim's pagentry and parties



Hindu and Jewish families enjoy colored face paints at the joint Purim/Holi celebration hosted by the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland Sunday, Mar. 17 at Congregation Neveh Shalom. See more photos from Purim celebrations and shpiels around the area on pages 6-7. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)



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'Once in a lifetime' - one year later 2023 Israel mission participants reflect on experience

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

A year ago, 200 Portlanders headed out on what proved to be the adventure of a lifetime.

All clad in matching blue shirts, the participants in the PDX>>Israel 2023 mission had been anticipating the adventure – some for as many as four years. The journey was an amazing experience for almost all involved, and a transformative one for a few.

For Kara Orvieto, who had been interested in the trip since it had been announced late in 2018, the delay worked out well. Her daughter

would have been 10 during the originally scheduled dates in 2020 – lining her up to be 13 in 2023, when the trip finally set off.

“It was a once in a lifetime thing,” Orvieto said. “All the stars aligned for this to happen.”

Orvieto’s daughter celebrated becoming *bat mitzvah* on the trip. Rabbi Gary Oren of Congregation Shaarie Torah, where the family are members, was there for her ceremony at the Kotel in Jerusalem. She wore a *talit* that she had picked out in Tzfat earlier in the trip.

See MISSION, page 10

Hillel centers student voices



From left, Abe Allina, Yael Avsker, Isaac Babus and Prof. Natan Meir participate in a panel discussion at Greater Portland Hillel's Hear Our Voices event Thursday, Mar. 14 at The Raquet Club in Portland. Avsker, an Israeli Portland Community College student, told the capacity crowd that "I take public speaking and one of my classmate's speeches was about how Israel should be wiped off the map." She went on to explain that the Women's Resource Center at PCC's Rock Creek Campus is covered in Palestinian flags. "The only safe place I've found is Hillel," she said. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

Northwest Jewish Artists to host April 7 showing at Oregon Jewish Museum; free admission

By **ROCKNE ROLL**
The Jewish Review

For the first time at its current location, the Jewish museum in Portland will host a show by the major local Jewish artists group.

ORA: Northwest Jewish Artists and the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education will stage a one-day show to coincide with the museum's "Oregon Jews A to Z" exhibit Sunday, April 7 from 11 am-4 pm. As this is the first Sunday of the month, admission to the show and the rest of OJMCHÉ's exhibits is free.

Twenty nine of ORA's more than 60 members will be exhibiting in the show, curated by OJMCHÉ staff, with their work running the gamut of visual art styles.

"We've got oil painters, acrylic painters, watercolor artists, we have wood workers, we have ceramic, we have glass, jewelry,

just anything that you can think of," explained ORA member and show co-coordinator Diane Fredgant, who herself paints silk laid over acrylic. "We've got such a wide range."

With a diverse array of mediums, styles, and Jewish experiences amongst their ranks, the common factor that brings ORA's members together is the embrace of Jewish identity.

"A majority of our members are not affiliated with synagogues, or have membership and other classic Jewish organizations. And so for many folks, this is their Jewish connection," Eddy Shuldman, a co-coordinator of the show and ORA artist, said. "Folks come together in small groups and support each other in their art. And I think that's been possibly our very biggest draw."

"It's important sometimes to get another

See **ARTISTS**, page 9

'Moxie' a guide for grieving

By **ROCKNE ROLL**
The Jewish Review

Candi Wuhrman has been a hospice chaplain for a long time, but when she lost her mother, she went through a spiritual experience that she didn't expect and that she couldn't find a guide for.

"I knew I was going to grieve, but I didn't know what it was going to look like," she said. "I would ask rabbis, 'do you know of a book that shows the spiritual transformation of grief?'"

Eventually, she decided to write one.

"Moxie: A Hospice Chaplain's Journey Through Grief," now available for pre-order in paperback and e-book, carries a title that comes from Wuhrman's games of Scrabble with her mother.

"Moxie is a word that my mom always played," she said. "When she died six years ago, I inherited her Scrabble board and I knew she would show up for me in some way."

The decision to write it, Wuhrman said, came after one of those conversations with a rabbi, who said she didn't know of such a book but that if someone wrote, they would purchase a copy.

"Hearing that, something ignited inside of me," Wuhrman said. "We talk in Judaism about, 'may their memory be for a blessing.' What does that really mean? This is what it meant to me."

The book represents a melding of her personal and professional experiences to serve as a guide on how to make the grieving process

See **MOXIE**, page 9

PASSOVER 4 ALL

Help local families celebrate Passover



“Let all who are hungry come and eat” is not just a part of the Passover Haggadah – it is a community imperative.

Each Jewish community is obligated to ensure that everyone has the food they need to celebrate a joyous Passover.

With your help, over the next 2 1/2 weeks, we will raise \$10,000 to provide local families who would not otherwise be able to celebrate with the food they need to make a seder.

Your support is needed to make this possible.



www.jewishportland.org/passover4all24

Kesser Israel's Purim gifts take on extra meaning

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

Congregation Kesser Israel's *mishloach manot* baskets are a major production each Purim; a thematically prepared box of joy given out to the congregation's members and others in fulfillment of one of Purim's *mitzvot*.

With this being the first Purim since the Oct. 7 attacks, the congregation settled on a fitting theme for this year's packages: *Am Yisrael Chai*.

To that end, not only are the baskets filled with Israeli products, but the congregation took the extra step of preparing additional *mishloach manot* packages to share with Israeli families in the area who have been affected by the attacks and ongoing war.

Kesser Israel's Rabbi Shalom Skolnik said when the idea came up, it seemed like a natural fit. The execution came down to Nurit Kahana, who is well connected to the area's Israeli community.

"She went out and delivered



Nurit Kahana of Congregation Kesser Israel prepares a batch of *mishloach manot* packages for delivery to Israeli families in the Portland area Thursday, Mar. 21. (Courtesy Congregation Kesser Israel)

them to the families that she knows here," Rabbi Skolnik said. "She really took care of contacting the families and

making sure it happened."

Rabbi Skolnik had not seen the baskets as of press time, as the contents of the pack-

ages are a surprise to the Kesser Israel members who receive them, but said that the contents not only came from Israel, but were in the blue and white of the Israeli flag.

"We try and make them high quality and it should be something that people will value," the Rabbi said of Kesser Israel's *mishloach manot* packages. "It's really nice to be able to extend it out to bring some relief and some comfort to families that have been affected."

While *mishloach manot* are certainly appreciated by their recipients, and Kesser Israel took to the extra step to spread cheer to those who have been most directly affected by the situation in Israel in recent months, the packages are not a form of *tzedakah*. Instead, Rabbi Skolnik explained, the *mitzvah* of *mishloach manot* has another important purpose.

"The whole *mitzvah* is designed for the purpose of creating unity and camaraderie," he said.

First songs from Moses musical to premier at Fertile Ground Fest



Singers rehearse for the upcoming concert performances of "Freedom: The Untold Story of Moses" as part of the Fertile Ground Festival of New Works in Portland. (Andie Petkus Photography)

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

Cheri Smith's latest work is something akin to a biblical "rest of the story."

While her musical, "Freedom: The Untold Story of Moses" is still being completed, music lovers and theatergoers can have a look behind the curtain, so to speak, in a pair of concert performances of 10 songs from the upcoming musical Sundays, April 14 and 21 at the Eastside Jewish Commons as part of the Fertile Ground Festival of New Works.

The idea started for the show started when Smith

went with her husband and his coworkers to see a musical theater production of "A Christmas Carol."

"I sat there thinking, 'Why aren't there more musicals based on Jewish holidays?'" she said.

Resolved to make a contribution, she settled on Passover as the way to start and began writing in 2018. The work focuses heavily on the supporting cast of the Passover story – starting with a duet titled "Home" that features both Moses' birth mother, Yocheved, and his adoptive mother, Pharaoh's daughter Princess Batyah.

See **MUSICAL**, page 8

Melamed looks 'Inside the Middle East' at MJCC

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

At long last, Avi Melamed arrived at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center, in the flesh, to talk about what's happening in Gaza, Israel and the surrounding region.

The author of "Inside The Middle East" and the founder of the organization that bears the same name had been scheduled to speak about the regions political challenges late last year – this plan was upended by the Oct. 7 attacks and became a zoom presentation about the War in Gaza.

Melamed's Mar. 13 appearance, part of a nationwide tour of Jewish community centers, was a longer-form discussion of the driving forces behind the Oct. 7 attacks and the big-picture forces that will affect the future of the region.

Recent events in the region were, of course, initiated by Hamas' attacks on southern Israel that killed 1,143 Israelis and saw more than 240 hostages kidnapped to the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip. But, Melamed said, this was only part of the story.

Melamed said that Iran has long used Arab proxies to work toward its ultimate goal of Shi'ite Muslim control of the entire region, supporting governments and non-governmental entities aligned with this goal all over the region in the pursuit of a combined offensive against Israel, its Sunni Muslim Arab opponents and the Western powers aligned against it. A Hamas-led attack on Israel has always been part of a larger-scale plan, Melamed said, to launch coordinated offensives by Hezbollah in



Author and intelligence analyst Avi Melamed presents on the ongoing war in Gaza at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center Wednesday, Mar. 13. His appearance was part of a nationwide speaking tour addressing Jewish communities about the root causes of the war and how the situation may continue to develop. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

Lebanon, Shi'ite militias in Syria and Iraq, Islamic Jihad in the West Bank, and Houthi militants in Yemen.

"Oct. 7 was supposed to be this, at least the eyes of Hamas and Islamic Jihad," Melamed said. "Oct.7 was supposed to be the thing."

While Iran's influence is part of the equation, Hamas is also influenced by its own power struggle against Fatah, the political party and former terrorist organization in charge of the Palestinian Authority and thus in control of the West Bank. While Fatah is organizationally committed to a Palestinian state and accepts, by accession to the 1993 Oslo Accords, the State of Israel, Hamas,

an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, not only openly seeks the destruction of Israel but sees a Palestinian state as only an intermediate step to its ultimate goal.

"The Muslim Brotherhood totally rejects the concept of national states," Melamed said. "The Muslim Brotherhood says, 'Look, this is a Western Christian concept. It's totally alien to Islam, we are not willing to accept it. We envision the creation of a global entity, an Islamic entity, by the name of Caliphate, and that Caliphate should be based upon Sharia law.'"

These factors, combined with a desire to slow the process of diplomatic normalization between Israel

and its Arab neighbors, let Hamas to initiate the recent conflict with the strategic aim of forcing a reaction by Israel which would alienate its Western allies and erode international support.

While Hamas' propaganda puts out a message of Arab unity and Palestinian dignity through violence, much of the Arab world sees Hamas' actions as sacrificing the lives of innocent Palestinians not to gain liberation, but to further Iranian influence in the region, and they're not impressed.

"There are circles in the West that constantly insist on exempting Hamas from responsibility," he said. "The irony is that while they are insisting on exempting Hamas from responsibility in the Arab world, there has been an increasing criticism of Hamas way before Oct. 7, let alone after."

Now that the world has come to this point, what happens next is an open question.

Israel's objective, Melamed said, is "not to eliminate Hamas because it's not achievable. The objective here is in the end of the day to shrink Hamas capacities and ability to continue to dictate its radical agenda."

A complicating factor in this pursuit is the wave of public opinion that has been generated against Israel through popular media that present what Melamed called a "flat" understanding of one of the world's most complicated conflicts.

"It's all narratives and buzzwords and slogans and sound bites and concepts and theories and throwing out terms that you don't even understand what they stand for," he said.

See **MELAMED**, page 8

PURIM -palooza



Clockwise from top: Haman is led away by King Ahasuerus at the conclusion of Congregation Shir Tikvah's "Disney goes to Shushan" Purim shpiel Saturday, Mar. 23, at the Eastside Jewish Commons; Cedar Sinai Park CEO Kimberly Fuson kicks off the search for a new bride for King Ahasuerus in the facility's "Middle East Side Story" schpiel Sunday, Mar. 24 at Rose Schnitzer Manor; Root beer floats (right) and balloons (left) are prepared for celebrations at Congregation Shaarie Torah on Saturday and Congregation Neveh Shalom on Thursday, Mar. 21, respectively. Shaarie Torah community members dance the night away at the shul's sock hop themed Purim party Saturday evening. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)





Clockwise from left: Clergy, staff and members of Congregation Beth Israel perform the synagogue's "5784: A 1984 Purim Rock Opera" Saturday, Mar. 23 at their main sanctuary; The smallest hamantaschen award winner in Congregation Shir Tikvah's baking contest are displayed next to a standard size hamantaschen; youngsters enjoy the inflatable slide at Congregation Neveh Shalom's Purim carnival Thursday; audience members jeer Haman with groggers at Cedar Sinai Park's shpiel performance Sunday; Mordecai, right, is confronted by Haman in Congregation Beth Israel's Saturday night shpiel; costumed children and their families construct masks as part of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Purim/Holi celebration Sunday, Mar. 17 at Congregation Neveh Shalom. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)



A truly Super Sunday

Jewish Federation of Greater Portland staff and volunteers make calls to Federation donors during an in-person, "March Madness" themed Super Sunday fundraising event Sunday, Mar. 17 at Portland Jewish Academy. Basketball-attire clad volunteers were led by "referee" Laura Jeser, the Federation's Associate Campaign and Engagement Officer, in connecting with donors on behalf of the Federation's annual Campaign for Community Needs. (Daniel Berger/The Jewish Review)

MELAMED (continued from page 5)

Those reductionist messages, Melamed continued, "don't really offer the ability to understand, let alone navigate the complex reality."

"We need to replace this with education, context, nuance, critical thinking, understanding the ins and outs," he said. "These are the cornerstones of a healthy functioning society. If you move out these cornerstones, the structure falls apart. If you move out this cornerstone, you don't see more inclusiveness and diversity. You see the opposite. You see growing polarization."

Some of that was on display as anti-Israel activists interrupted the opening portion of Melamed's presentation, shouting slogans before being removed by MJCC security.

"I'm sorry for the people who scream and shout because I think it could [have been] very valuable for them," Melamed said at the conclusion of the event.

More information about Melamed's work, including links to purchase his books, is available at insidethemiddle-east.com.

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MUSICAL (continued from page 4)

"We have both women on opposite sides of the stage, with Yocheved saying goodbye and having the anguish and with Princess Batyah having the joy in finding a baby," Smith said."

Smith has been writing songs since age 7 and pursued piano all the way to the prestigious Berklee College of Music before taking another path, studying psychology. Her mini-musical, "Book Club," was part of Fertile Grounds in 2020.

"I really enjoy the writing process, the collaboration of bringing something to the stage that hasn't been there before and hearing how people react to it," she said.

Much of "Freedom: The Untold Story of Moses" was ready to go in 2020, but the COVID pandemic shut down any chance to rehearse and perform. The upside was that it gave Smith a chance to incorporate more songs, more material, and get the story closer to its conclusion. She's at the point now where its time, she thinks, to get some of this project out into the world to gauge reaction, though a full performance of the whole show is much farther down the road.

"Doing these 10 songs, especially since they're duets and solos for the most part, is much more doable in terms of our rehearsal schedule and working with different people," she said. "I'm going to ask everybody to do a survey because I'm really interested in what people think."

Smith did extensive research into the lives of the characters she's spotlighting, delving deep into Ancient Egyptian history, and adding in details where none exist.

"I bring forward his dad, Amram and his brother Aaron, and of course, Miriam, who does get some of the spotlight," she said. "I really wanted to make it a more holistic approach to the story, so it's not just about Moses, it's about the entire journey."

Both shows start at 4 pm. Tickets are \$10 and available online at wannago.show/shop/wa/event?id=63&k=f4zfnyuk-40d56cj2ucs5ik3375ek27&e=WNGEvent.



Preparing for Purim

Students from Congregation Neveh Shalom's Foundation School construct mishloach manot packages with the assistance of Shirley, a resident of Rose Schnitzer Manor during the school's pre-Purim visit to the Cedar Sinai Park campus Wednesday, Mar. 20. The packages were distributed to clients of Jewish Family & Child Service. (Sydney Clevenger/Cedar Sinai Park.)

ARTISTS (continued from page 2)

artist's eye," Fredgant said. "What's also amazing is that a painter and a woodcarver would come together in a group and not knowing somebody else's medium is a positive thing because you can think outside of the box."

While a fair share of the work on display could fall into the category of Judaica – Shuldman, who works in glass, will be showing a selection of menorahs and Shabbat candlesticks as well as some of her signature glass masks – for other artists, the Jewish influences in their work are more subtle but definitely present.

"We're always wrestling with 'Well, if we're a Jewish organization, what's Jewish about it? Is it the art? Is that Jewish? Is it the theme of the work?" Shuldman said." I've often had people say to me, 'Look, I'm Jewish, but there's nothing Jewish about my art.' Then we start talking, and I started asking some questions; 'What's your background? Where are you from? How do you identify Jewishly?' All of a sudden, you can start seeing things in their work."

ORA's first exhibit was at the previous Oregon Jewish Museum location in Chinatown nearly two decades ago, when the group had a dozen members. This show will feature styles ranging from whimsical, abstract pieces, to portraits of jazz musicians and Orthodox rabbis, to functional works like wood pens and bowls – all of it available for purchase.

"That thing that pulls us together," Fredgant said, "is that we're all Jewish."

Learn more about ORA and the upcoming exhibition at northwestjewishartists.org.

MOXIE (continued from page 2)

into one that is spiritually meaningful, even transformative.

"I try to tell people this isn't a disorder. It's not a shame-based experience to grieve. It's necessary. It's purposeful. It's here for us to grow," Wuhrman said. "I wanted people to know that somebody like me who knows a lot about death and dying and grief and loss, I'm not immune. I'm just like anybody else that's going through grief. We're all going to go through it."

It's not a step-by-step manual, as no two grief experiences are the same.

"I specifically didn't want to do, 'here's what you do next,' for that reason," Wuhrman explained. "it's a guide in the sense of we don't even know what to ask. We don't know what we don't know."

"Moxie: A Hospice Chaplain's Journey Through Grief," will be released April 26. Paperbacks are available for preorder at publishcourage.com/product-page/moxie-a-hospice-chaplain-s-journey-through-grief or as a Kindle e-book at amzn.to/48DxvOV.



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

MISSION (continued from page 1)

“We were surrounded by lovely community members and some of our friends that are like family to us,” Orvieto said. It was reminiscent of Orvieto’s own bat mitzvah ceremony in 1993, celebrated when she was 23 years old atop Masada.

“My daughter always heard that story,” she continued. “So when we were talking when she was 11 and 12, that’s how it was in her mind; she would do it in Israel, just like mom did.”

Steve Friedman’s son had been planning an Israel bar mitzvah for the trip’s originally scheduled dates with Friedman’s daughter, then 11, and his mother. While his mother couldn’t make the rescheduled trip and his son’s bar mitzvah had passed, he was still able to share a special experience with his son.

“That was the first time he’s ever put on *tefillin*, and I took video of it and have pictures of it and watching him perform the ceremony with [Rabbi Chayim Mishulovin], wrapping him in *tefillin* at the Western Wall in Jerusalem was simply incredible,” Friedman said. “Amazing and a father’s dream come true.”

It was a profound moment for his son, as well.

“He was a little bit overwhelmed,” Friedman said. “It was pretty spiritual, pretty amazing, that you could do something of that magnitude at such a holy place.”

Friedman first visited Israel in 1979, and while this excursion was shorter than the 44 days he spent in the country back then, it was profound for him to be able to share the Jewish homeland with his children.

“They may have an inkling to go back sooner than I did,” he said.

The trip was also a powerful experience for Amanda Neter’s two children. They has planned to travel as something of a bar mitzvah present to their oldest son, Max, who became bar mitzvah in 2019. It became a bigger experience when the trip finally left in 2023, as Amanda’s in-laws were able to join along with the rest of the family – three generations together in the Jewish homeland. It was her in-laws’ first time in Israel.

“It was a blessing because they got to go with us and experience Israel,” she said.

One particularly memorable moment came with that Amanda, her husband, Steven, and both of her sons on a tour of the tunnels under Jerusalem. The tour led all the way up the foundations of the Kotel.

“It was just so special to see my boys walk up and touch the wall and just to see how they felt,” Amanda recalled. “I’m tearing up right now just remembering it.”

They bought souvenirs – Magen David necklaces for both their sons, a tallit for their younger son, Ari, to use at his bar mitzvah ceremony. The pursuit of one other souvenir led to another special connection to the Jewish community for Max.

The family shared a bus with Federation President and CEO Marc Blattner. Like many of the Federation staff on the trip, he was sporting a jacket embroidered with the Federation’s logo.

“[Max said,] ‘Marc, I really like your jacket. How can I get one of those jackets?’ And Marc said, ‘Well, you have to work for Federation,’” Amanda recalled. “Max said, ‘OK well, how do I work for Federation?’”

Over dinner with Federation Chief Development Officer



From left, Rabbi Gary Oren, Emelia Orvieto, and trip co-chair Priscilla Kostner celebrate Orvieto’s *bat mitzvah* ceremony at the Kotel in Jerusalem. (Jewish Review file photo)

Wendy Kahn in Tel Aviv, an internship was arranged for Max that summer. Max spent the summer learning about and assisting Federation operations throughout the organization. Amanda recalls his last day.

“Max’s last day, he came home and he was smiling ear to ear,” Amanda recalled. “I said, ‘Wait, you’re wearing a Federation jacket.’”

Blattner met with Max at the conclusion of his time at Federation and handed him his company-issue jacket.

“He wears it all the time,” Amanda said. “He loves it.”

Another trip member developed a much closer relationship with the Federation on returning home, but as a board member. Greg Retsinas is the news director at KGW-TV in Portland. Just a month before the trip left, he happened into Blattner, Federation Chief Allocations and Engagement Officer Caron Blau Rothstein and Federation Director of Community Relations Bob Horenstein, who were at the station to talk about an unrelated subject. The trip came up and it struck Retsinas as the perfect opportunity to see a part of the world – and explore a part of his own identity – that he had always been curious about.

The people of Israel left an indelible impression.

“With all the conflicts there and with the history and the divisions that exist there among a lot of people, there’s a lot of people in Israel who are working to make it a place of peace,” Retsinas recalled. “We could see that.”

While Retsinas connected deeply with Israel, he also forged connections with the Jewish community here in Portland. Those connections have endured; since returning, Retsinas has joined the Climate Action Committee of the Jewish Community Relations Council, as well as the Federation’s Board of Directors.

“I’d known very few people in the local Jewish community prior to this trip, and the chance to go with nearly 200 of them for a week getaway made for a chance to meet many of them, spend more time with them, get to know them a little bit better,” he said. “I have not had reason to tap into that side of my personal back story and this gave me a chance to start to open the door to that.”

A planned follow-up trip, specifically geared to families, has been postponed due to ongoing events. Friedman expects it will be sometime before his children return to Israel, making the time they had there all the more meaningful.

“As a father, the greatest experience you can have is going to Israel with your kids and experiencing the Jewish homeland with your family,” he said.

OJMACHE Gala set for April 14 at MJCC

The Jewish Review Staff

Mark your calendars and plan to join the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education for their 2024 Gala, "Celebrating Our Vision," Sunday, April 14 at 5:30 pm at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center.

Come see old friends, make new friends, and support the museum as they highlight the importance of truth, history, dignity and justice. The event will feature a cocktail hour followed by dinner and kenote speaker Jill Winebanks, author of *The Watergate Girl*,

MSNBC legal analyst and co-host of the podcast #SistersInLaw.

Tickets are \$118, \$58 for guests under 40. Purchase online at https://ojm.tofinoauctions.com/gala2024/register/ticket_sales. For more information, email gettinger@ojmche.org

Eisenberg at EJC May 3

Eastside Jewish Commons

Portland's Eastside Jewish Commons presents Brooklyn-based, brash, irreverent Jewish comedian Ophira Eisenberg Thursday, May 3 at 8 pm for a night of stand-up comedy.

Ophira Eisenberg is a standup comedian, writer, and host of the comedy podcast 'Parenting Is A Joke' with iHeart and Pretty Good Friends. She also hosted NPR's 'Ask Me Another', where she interviewed hundreds of celebrities including Sir Patrick Stewart, Rosie Perez, Yo-Yo Ma, Awkwafina, Roxanne Gay, Nick Kroll, Chelsea Handler, and more. She's appeared multiple times on CBS's "The Late Late Show," "Sherri!" with Sherri Sheppard, Comedy Central, HBO, The

New York Festival, and is regular on "The Moth Radio Hour." Her stories are included in three of The Moth's best-selling collections. Her memoir, 'Screw Everyone: Sleeping My Way to Monogamy' was optioned for a TV series, and her recent comedy special 'Plant-Based Jokes' is streaming on YouTube. She is a regular at The Comedy Cellar and other New York clubs, and her solo show 'Leaving A Mark: A Comedy About Scars' made its OffBroadwaydebut to rave reviews and won the Women in the Arts & Media Award for Solo Show Scripts. See more at www.ophiraeisenberg.com.

Tickets are \$25 and available online at events.humanitix.com/ejc-presents-comedian-ophira-eisenberg.

Introductory Israeli folk dance series begins Apr. 14 at SWCC

Portland Israeli Folk Dance

Spring afternoons are a great time to enjoy Israeli folk dancing. The Southwest Community Center offers a spring term beginners class and open drop-in dancing for ages 14 and up. The next beginners' class with Sue Wendel starts Sunday, Apr. 14, at 2:30, meets for four sessions and registration is required. From 3:30 to 5 pm, session leader Rhona Feldman leads the drop-in weekly open dance session for all levels of dancers. Note these are new

start times for the beginners class; 2:30, and drop-in open dancing, 3:30-5 pm.

Please contact the SWCC to register for the beginners class at 503-823-2840. Open dance is drop in, \$6, \$5 seniors at the front desk. SWCC is located at the northwest corner of Gabriel Park on SW Vermont and 35th. Please see PIFD News for details (sites.google.com/site/pifdnews). Questions? Email Rhona at rhonaf@comcast.net, or Sue at pifdnews@gmail.com.

Maccabi Media 2025 applications now open through Oct. 1

Maccabi Media Program

While Maccabi USA athletes compete for gold and personal achievement in Israel during the summer of 2025, a unique team within the U.S. delegation also expects to shine – although this group will be the one providing the spotlight. The Maccabi Media Program (MMP) will bring 18 highly-skilled Jewish media students to the 2025 Maccabiah to perform various broadcasting, journalism, and communication roles, and play a pivotal role in enhancing coverage of the Games for family and friends back home. This will be the fourth edition of the Maccabi Media Program after previous cohorts were assembled for Israel, Argentina, and London.

As part of an intense career-development program, Maccabi Media students will gain experience and sharpen their skills in play-by-play, color analysis, sideline reporting, videography, live streaming production, video editing, interviewing, sports reporting, and social media. Under the leadership of former 76ers broadcaster and MMP Chairman Marc Zumoff and Digital Media Director Neal Slotkin, the team will receive hands-on guidance and instruction from veteran media professionals and volunteer mentors who will accompany the group to Israel. Simon

Rosenwasser, President of Play by Play Productions, will oversee the streaming and technical operations on location and lead the students in all facets of the project.

In addition to documenting the accomplishments of Maccabi USA teams and generating in-depth profiles of athletes, coaches, and staff both before and during their three-week journey, the media team will also cover and personally participate in a week-long cultural program called Israel Connect that is crucial to absorbing the entire Maccabiah experience.

The Maccabi Media team is open to current college students and recent graduates (ages 18-25) who can demonstrate strong media skills and plan to pursue a career in a related field. The recruitment phase runs through October 1, 2024, and the final team will be announced after a comprehensive evaluation process later this year. Virtual monthly training sessions featuring notable guest speakers will then begin in early 2025 to prepare the students for both their Israel responsibilities and their future careers in a challenging industry. You can apply or learn more about MMP at maccabiusa.com/22nd-maccabiah-sports-2025 or contact Neal Slotkin at nslotkin@maccabiusa.com.

Hundreds of Hamantaschen



Jewish Family & Child Service's Holocaust Survivor Services program, in partnership with Congregation Neveh Shalom's Sisterhood and program director, put on a festive and yummy Café Europa-style Purim event in the synagogue's Atrium. Jennifer Kalenscher, Sisterhood's indefatigable president, made dough for no fewer than 700 traditional hamantaschen – filled with apricot jam – some of which were folded into their three-corner shape, whisked away to bake and then enjoyed by about 20 Survivor clients, some family members and JFCS volunteers. Also on tap was Cantor Eyal Bitton on guitar with jaunty tunes. Why, he asked, when the story of Purim in the Megillah is anything but jaunty, and a nasty man wants to erase the Jews? "Because the Jewish people decided to take the Mel Brooks approach and laugh at it," he said. Naomi Leavitt, one of the afternoon's volunteers, told the story while Yelena Benikov, 90, who was born in Kyiv, translated it into Russian for many of the Survivors gathered. "I have no skills in cooking," she joked, "and I will happily help people with translation. It feels like family here." Joining in the fun, too, were Foundation School preschoolers led by puppeteer Candace Rothstein. (Marina Milman/Jewish Family & Child Service)

Rabins' 'Girls In Trouble' take to YouTube in new series

By HANNAH KAHN GLASS

In a groundbreaking fusion of art, feminism, and religious reinterpretation, "Girls in Trouble TV" is set to captivate audiences with its fresh take on the stories of Biblical women across the rich and diverse cultures of the contemporary Jewish diaspora. Inspired by Alicia Jo Rabins' acclaimed song cycle and filmed in Portland and New York, this new indie web series weaves together traditional and original commentary, asking how stories of the Hebrew Bible might read differently with women at their center.

"This project focuses on interpretation of Biblical women's stories across the rich and varied cultures of the contemporary Jewish diaspora," says Alicia Jo Rabins, creator of the series. "Our

concept is inspired by food and travel shows - but rather than visiting a location and exploring its food, culture and landscape, each episode explores a Biblical woman's story through storytelling, song, animation and interviews with diverse Jewish artists and activists."

The first episode was released Tuesday, Mar. 12 and centers on the story of Queen Vashti, often considered an anti-hero in the Purim story, and features an in-depth interview with Persian Jewish singer, cantor and anthropologist, Galeet Dardashti, original illustration by Jessica Tamar Deutsch and animation by Zak Margolis.

Set against the backdrop of ongoing societal sexism and religious conservatism, "Girls in Trouble TV" is more than just a web series; it's a call to ac-

tion. "We believe in the liberatory potential of our Jewish traditions," says Rabins. "Religion has the power to be a force for good or for evil, to liberate or oppress. With 'Girls in Trouble TV,' we're contributing to a larger mosaic of progressive religious voices, building an inclusive Judaism where all are equal and beloved."

"Girls In Trouble" TV is available for free on YouTube and Vimeo. Future episodes will include interviews with groundbreaking soferet (female Torah scribe) Julie Seltzer, chef & cookbook author Sonya Sanford, Black rabbi/artist/organizer Rabbi Kendell Pinkney, pioneering klezmer fiddler Alicia Svigals, and queer radical Jewish herbalist Dori Midnight. For more information, visit www.girlsintroublemusic.com.

Burned Piano Project opens at OJMCHE Apt. 7

By BECCA BIGGS

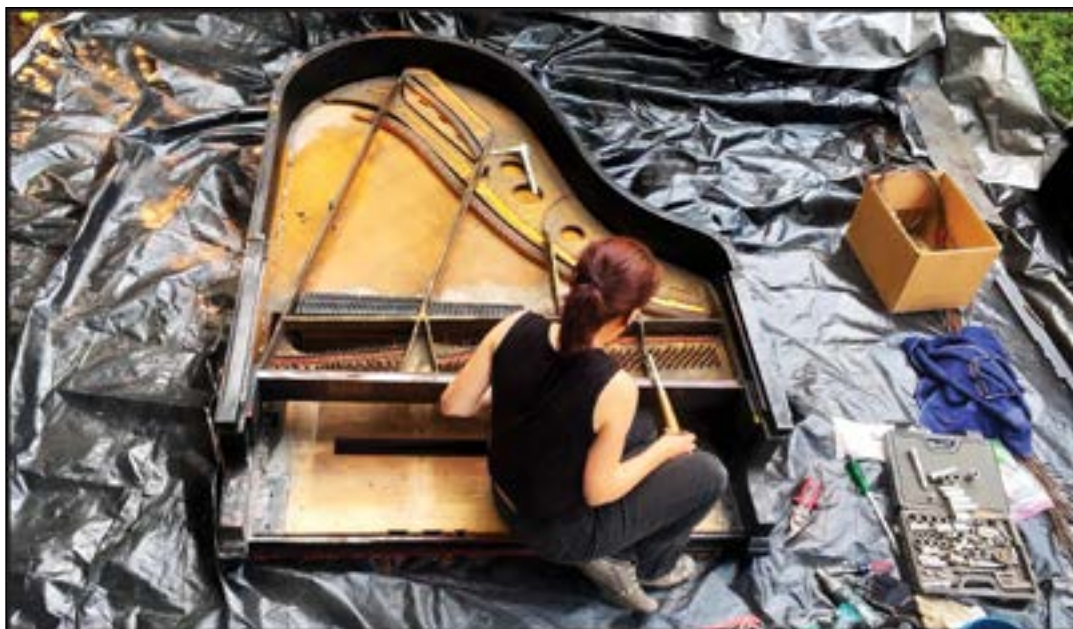
Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education

The Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education presents “The Burned Piano Project: Creating Music Amidst the Noise of Hate” featuring textile artist Bonnie Meltzer and composer Jennifer Wright opening Sunday, Apr. 7 and running through June 30 at the Museum.

“The Burned Piano Project” began with one family’s experience of antisemitism and reminds us of the larger context of rising hate crimes today. In spring 2022 a mosque, a Black-owned restaurant, and two synagogues were vandalized in Portland. Following these incidents, a family’s home, which shared a Jewish organization’s mailing address, was destroyed by arson in the middle of the night.

The creation of this exhibition, focused on the family’s ruined Steinway piano, celebrates how community can promote healing, build empathy, and grow understanding. Almost every part of the burned piano was incorporated into the artworks on exhibit, including two works, *Lifecycle* and *Pushing the Pedal*, contributed by family members.

“The Burned Piano Project: Creating Music Amidst the Noise of Hate reminds us of the larger context of rising hate crimes in Portland and the United States today,” said OJMCHE Executive Director Rebekah Sobel. “This exhibition celebrates



The damaged Steinway piano at the center of the newest exhibit at the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education, “The Burned Piano Project,” became a new, unique instrument in the hands of composer Jennifer Wright while its parts were turned into tapestries by Bonnie Meltzer. Both are featured at the museum until June 30. (Courtesy Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education)

and how community can promote healing, build empathy, and grow understanding. We will need to do more and do better to combat rising antisemitism, but more awareness and empathy is a beginning.”

From the remains of the family’s burned Steinway piano, Meltzer created a tapestry with piano strings and also transformed the wooden key cover and additional piano strings into a sculpture. Wright transformed the ruined Steinway into a fantastical new instrument and created a ritual space around the piano’s massive cast iron harp. In addition to audio recordings in the exhibition, Wright will perform concerts, free with admission, in the gallery on this one-of-a-kind instrument Sundays, Apr. 21, May 5 and 19 and June 16

and 30, as well as Wednesday, May 29. All concerts are scheduled from 2-3 pm.

Wright is a pianist, composer, multi-faceted performer, educator, multidisciplinary artist, event producer, and culture-maker. She has been described as “a real force of nature” (FearNoMusic artistic director Kenji Bunch), “New music glam!” (Aligned Artistry), and “brassy, nutty, classy... mad, quite mad.” (Oregon ArtsWatch). She teaches at Reed College, Portland State University College of the Arts, and in her award-winning private piano studio in Portland, Oregon.

Meltzer’s art-making, activism, community building and gardening are linked together like crochet; one thread looping with itself creating an interlocking life.

Born in New Jersey, Meltzer moved to Seattle to get an M.F.A. at the University of Washington. There, she found her medium, her social commentary voice, and installation as a format. As a networker she crochets (crochet being a form of netmaking) and purposefully designs projects that invite people to participate and connect with each other. In 2020, Meltzer produced the interactive installation, *Tikkun Olam - Mending the Social Fabric*, which was exhibited at OJMCHE in 2022.

OJMCHE is grateful for exhibition support from the Oregon Arts Commission, Regional Arts and Culture Council, Trio Foundation and the Zera Foundation.

For more information, visit OJMCHE.org.

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NEXT ISSUE

Issue date Deadline

APR 17 APR 11

MAY 8 MAY 2

MAY 22 MAY 16

By **JESSICA ANDERSON**

In 2023, the US Jewish community reported 1,005 false bomb threats and “swatting” calls (“Swatting” is the act of making false emergency calls, often to 911, to trigger a response from law enforcement.) This was a 774% increase from 2022 when only 115 incidents were reported. 998 of these 2023 incidents were false bomb threats, so I thought I would take some time to address this situation, as a number of our organizations in Oregon received bomb threats via email in the past few months. Every organization should have a plan for dealing with bomb threats (give me a call if you don’t have one!) and our community members, as building users, should understand how organizational leaders will respond to the threats.

You should NOT evacuate the building upon receiving a threat. Most people are surprised to hear this; however, evacuations can put people in more harm than if they stayed in place and the building itself can provide protection if the bomb is real. The decision to evacuate will be made after an evaluation of the threat and often after police arrive and conduct a sweep of the building.

According to an FBI-led training I recently attended, there are only two incidences in modern US history in which a real bomb had been placed AND the person called to let the organization know. This means that statistically speaking, your bomb threat is a hoax.



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.

Being on the receiving end of a bomb threat call or email can be very stressful and fear-inducing. This is a normal immediate response and I raise the likelihood of it being a hoax so that your next thoughts can focus on calming down so you can collect the recommended information. It’s a bomb threat and must be addressed thoughtfully, but being in a calmer state of mind, knowing it is probably not real, will help you navigate the recommended next steps.

According to the FBI and DHS’s Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), here are best practices if you receive a threat call (cisa.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/Bomb%20Threat%20Guide_v1.0.pdf):

-Write down the caller’s number from the phone display and record the call if possible (this is legal to do in Oregon but not in Washington) through your organization’s phone/computer system or by putting the call on speaker and using your cell phone.

-Keep the caller on the phone as long as possible, asking questions such as When is the bomb going to explode? Where is it right now? What does it look

like? Did you place the bomb? What will cause it to explode? What is your name? The CISA checklist is helpful to keep near your phone for easy reference. If the caller hangs up, do not hang up your phone, as it may help the police trace the call. The checklist also has a list of different ways the caller may have sounded and background noise options, to recall elements of the call that might be useful to law enforcement.

-Try to get another person’s attention so they can call 911. That call should be made from a building phone, (not on a cell phone), or call 911 from a different phone after the caller hangs up.

-Turn off power to cell phones and walkie-talkies (portable and stationary). Radio signals from these types of devices can detonate a real bomb.

-Do not touch any suspicious objects or use the building’s fire alarm or “panic button.”

In each instance when our organizations called 911, Portland Police responded to the building and conducted a sweep of the property. They spoke with leadership and

See **SECURITY**, page 19

Climate Corner

Our values compel us to move away from fossil fuels

By BRIAN ROMER, HANK KAPLAN, and RACHEL NELSON

Recently, the board of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland voted to stop investing our reserve funds in fossil fuels, a Jewish values-aligned step that continues our local Federation's leadership on climate.

The Federation Board took this step at the prompting of the Jewish Community Relations Council. The JCRC Climate Action Committee recommended this change for several reasons.

First, here in Portland, we are increasingly feeling the impacts of the climate crisis. In the last few years we have faced a more severe and volatile wildfire season, not to mention ice storms and floods. Second, the primary driver of the climate crisis is the burning of fossil fuels - coal, oil and gas. Fossil fuel corporations have known for decades about the harmful impacts of their products, but they have shown little interest in changing their business model. Nevertheless, a world powered by clean energy is within reach.

When our climate action committee first considered a recommendation that the Federation screen out fossil fuels, we looked to the Federation's core values. The Federation's mission is to protect and enhance the well-being of Jews worldwide through meaningful contributions to community, Israel and civil society. Taking action on climate change – the existential threat of our time – is an important way we ensure Jewish life and culture can thrive *l'dor vador*, from

generation to generation.

A second key consideration was impact. The Federation is proud to join a growing list of over 1600 institutions representing over \$40 trillion in investments. A full third of those institutions are faith-based. And just last month, our state legislature voted to screen out coal investments from the state pensions.

Some argue that in order to combat energy poverty, we need to expand access to fossil fuels. But the opposite is true. The International Energy Agency has [stated explicitly](#) that we have enough fossil fuels to meet global energy demand without expanding fossil fuel extraction; what we need to do now is rapidly and equitably build out renewable energy.

We know that pollution from fossil fuels is [cutting years of life](#) off of people across the globe, and that unchecked climate change will put [hundreds of millions of humans at risk](#) by mid-century, including our friends and neighbors here in Oregon.

Of course, a primary responsibility of the Federation Board is to serve as fiduciary. The Board carefully considered the decision from a financial perspective, including multiple conversations with staff at the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation (which manages our assets) and vetting by the Federation's finance committee. The energy sector comprised more than 25% of the US Stock Market in the 70's,

See CLIMATE page 19

Israel Stories

What I learned - reflections on cruelty and hope

Editor's Note: With many members of the Portland Jewish community visiting Israel to volunteer, support the Israeli people and bear witness to the ongoing war, The Jewish Review is making space available for those who wish to share their stories of visiting the region. If you would like to share a 400-500 word account of your recent journey to Israel, please email editor@jewishportland.org for more information.

By CARMELLA ETTINGER

My recent visit to Israel with A Wider Bridge, a group dedicated to building connections between LGBTQ+ communities in Israel and the United States, was my first since the horrifying Hamas attacks on October 7th. From the moment I stepped off the plane I experienced a society filled with fear, sadness and anger. But there is also a complete commitment to supporting and protecting their families, their friends and each other.

Every person we spoke with in Israel has been affected by the violence. Everyone knows someone who was killed, raped, injured, currently fighting or currently held hostage. One of our most poignant meetings was with a young peace activist whose parents were both killed in Kibbutz Be'eri. He struggled to speak with us but thought it was important to share that he will still advocate for peace for everyone living in Israel and the region.

We visited Kibbutz Kfar Aza and also the site of the Nova music festival and human slaughter. Ninety-eight members of the kibbutz were brutally killed or taken hostage on October 7th. The kibbutz members are strong advocates for Palestinians. Some of the most active peaceniks were targeted and killed. Their tattered Pride flags and pro-two state banners are still hanging. At the Nova music festival site, Israel was marking Tu B'shevat by planting over 300 new trees, one for each of the young people who were murdered there.

The ongoing plight of at least 130 hostages still held in Gaza is a grim testament to the cruelty of Hamas's actions and the urgent need for their unconditional release. It is a cause that should rally all of us, demanding our attention and action. They have not been visited by the UN, by the Red Cross or anyone else. They are simply civilians, young and old, who were celebrating Shabbat with their friends and families.

At the same time, it is clear that Gaza is suffering massive casualties and deprivation and it is of utmost importance that we recognize the complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from all sides and acknowledge the pain and suffering of everyone who is affected.

We visited several Pride centers while we were in Israel:

See ISRAEL, page 19



Beth Israel honors Sandler, raises more than \$360k at "Back to School" dinner

Congregation Beth Israel Education Director Ben Sandler received a standing ovation at the synagogue's recent Back To School fundraiser in honor of his 20 years of service at CBI and the establishment of the Ben Sandler Religious Education Support Fund. The event also included a tour of the Jennifer Barnum Luria Early Childhood Center as well as musical performances from Cantors Ida Rae Cahana and Rayna Green, Artist-in-Residence Kim Schneiderman, student singers Anna Rosicky and Aaron Geller, and from Michael Allen Harrison and Julianne Johnson. The event raised over \$360,000 for CBI's education programs (Andie Petkus Photography for Congregation Beth Israel)

Guest Column

Your Jewish employees need their own employee resource group – now

By DEBORAH GRAYSON RIEGEL

I had just finished facilitating a workshop for a Fortune 500 company in New York City and was saying goodbye to the participants. Two women from the group stayed after to chat with me, until one of them looked at her watch and said, "We need to go right now, or we will miss our train." As a former Long Island Railroad commuter myself, I said, "I totally get it – go!" and sent them off with a wave. As they walked towards the door, one woman turned to her colleague and gestured to her Jewish star necklace: "Don't forget to tuck that in before you get on the subway." The other woman replied with a startled look on her face, "I can't believe I had it out the whole day!" and quickly hid it inside her shirt.

They had good reason to be concerned. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) reports an average of nearly [34 antisemitic incidents occurring per day](#) since Oct. 7. According to the American Jewish Committee, nearly two-thirds of American Jews [feel less secure](#) in the U.S. than they did a year ago. 68% of people in the US have seen or heard antisemitic rhetoric on social media, and 44% shared that they had seen news stories that were negative towards Jewish people. The research also highlights what my colleagues experienced – a quarter of survey respondents reported that they've avoided publicly wearing, carrying, or displaying items that might identify them as Jewish out of fear of antisemitism.

With so much of our workforce feeling at risk, our organizations need to find ways to help Jewish employees feel safe, included, protected, respected, and heard. A crucial but often-resisted option is to establish a Jewish Employee Resource Group (ERG).

ERGs are [employee-led groups](#) that provide personal and professional support, an opportunity for traditional-

ly marginalized groups—like women, people of color, or LGBTQIA employees – to feel connected through a common cause and offer a shared space to surface issues that might feel too risky for an individual to tackle on their own. ERGs can directly and positively impact the business strategy, serve as an essential part of the employee experience, and be a mechanism to attract and retain top talent in what is still a highly competitive market. And ERGs are, perhaps most importantly, a safe environment where [employees can bring their whole selves to the table](#).

So why aren't more ERGs for Jewish employees being supported and sponsored in the same way they are for working parents, Indigenous employees, or people of color?

Because too many people think of Jews [as white](#) and [privileged](#), both of which [are sweeping generalizations](#).

In her article in [The Atlantic](#), "Why the Most Educated People in America Fall for Anti-Semitic Lies" Dara Horn writes, "The premise...that Jews don't experience bigotry because they are "white," [is] itself a fraught idea, [and] would suggest that white LGBTQ people don't experience bigotry either—a premise that no DEI policy would endorse (not to mention the fact that many Jews are not white). The contention that Jews are immune to bigotry because they are "rich," an idea even more fraught and also often false (about 20 percent of Jews in New York City, for instance, live in poverty or near-poverty), is equally nonsensical."

As the [ADL reports](#), "antisemitic conspiracy theories and stereotypes of Jews being overly successful has often caused them to be excluded from DEI work and has led to their experiences with bias and bigotry being minimized or ig-

continued on next page

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nored.”

This was my personal experience in trying to get this article published in mainstream media. As the author of several books, and a frequent contributor to *Harvard Business Review*, *Inc*, *Forbes*, *Fast Company* and other publications, I am used to pitching my writing and getting a positive response (more often than not). However, the feedback I got on my pitches for this piece were that the topic was “too niche,” “too opinionated,” “not balanced enough,” or “too controversial.” I interpreted that to mean “too Jewish”. I was thrilled when *Psychology Today* published the original article, but I was stung by the bigotry from mainstream media.

That’s not to say nothing is being done to help Jewish employees at work. Leading companies like Target, Apple, American Express, Intel and American Airlines do have [Jewish ERGs](#) as part of their commitment to include faith in DEI initiatives. Yale Professor Jeffrey Sonnenfeld [tracks the companies](#) that condemned Hamas’ terrorist attack on Israel.

But if your company doesn’t have the infrastructure, financial, personnel, or legal resources of a Target or an American Airlines, your Jewish employees may still need more support than they are getting. And they may not be speaking up about it because they’re scared of rejection or being seen as pushy – or even to admit that they’re Jewish.

Many of my Jewish colleagues and clients have expressed to me that they are afraid to speak up, raise issues of antisemitism, or draw attention to themselves. Several shared the belief that “it’s better to be invisible” – is a frightening reminder of how Jews had to live during the rise of Hitler and the Nazis. This is a legacy which still has [deleterious mental health impacts](#) today.

But that’s not the only reason that Jewish employees are having a hard time. They are subject to experiencing and witnessing discrimination (and even violence) in the same way that [other marginalized populations](#) are. As people with multiple identities – Jewish and gay, Jewish and a veteran, Jewish and disabled, etc. – Jewish employees are likely to [experience several forms of discrimination](#). And while there has been an [increase in company-wide mental health initiatives](#) since the COVID pandemic, employers still need to consider how [promoting diversity and inclusion around religion](#) can complement these efforts.

Jewish employees with college-age children would also benefit from their employer’s support. Rising [antisemitism on college campuses](#) means that working parents are worrying that their child is seeing pro-Hitler posters on their way to class, listening to antisemitic lectures from their professors, and facing death threats from classmates. This

isn’t something that professionals can worry about only after hours; it’s on their minds throughout the workday.

It’s no surprise that, since the Hamas attack on Israel on Oct. 7, divisions among Jewish, Muslim and Arab employees have grown. A common challenge to starting a Jewish ERG that my colleagues hear is “If we set something up for Jewish employees, what about our Muslim and Arab employees?” And while this “what-about-ism” response can feel like an excuse, Muslim and Arab employees are entitled to have a safe space at work as well – one that, like a Jewish ERG – should also welcome allies.

It’s evident that your Jewish employees are not alone in their emotional, personal, and interpersonal pain at work. Since Oct. 7, growing fears about racism and bigotry are being felt first-hand by [Jews, Palestinians and Muslims](#), and, by extension, their allies (which should include anyone who denounces hate). As the ADL points out [in its toolkit for creating Jewish Employee Resource Groups](#), ERGs help “promote unity and coalition building by creating a forum where Jewish employees can collaborate with other ERG groups and stand together in solidarity for issues that affect multiple communities.”

But by failing to help your Jewish employees create a safe space to share their unique challenges, you are communicating this: “Despite overwhelming evidence and lived experience confirming that you are at risk because you are Jewish, we will not support you in creating a forum that allows you to feel safe at work.” And the logical interpretation that your employees can make is that this decision is because they’re Jewish.

ERGs offer a psychologically safe space for employees to connect and process what’s happening, discuss why they may be scared, distracted, or disengaged from work, and can help them return to their responsibilities feeling more invested and productive. Feeling seen and heard, respected, and valued, and safe to be your authentic self, contributes to feelings of belonging and loyalty to the organization. And that’s not just “good for the Jews.” It’s good for business.

Your Jewish employees will continue to find back-channel vehicles to connect with and protect each other, as they have throughout history. This will perpetuate the message that being Jewish at work is something to hide. Or they can leverage a company-supported Employee Resource Group that will let them know they’re valued, included, and cared for -- not in spite of being Jewish, but because of it.

Deborah Grayson Riegel is an instructor in leadership communication at the Wharton Business School and Columbia Business School. She can be reached at deb@gettalk-support.com. A version of this was previously published in Psychology Today.

Jobs Board

See the latest Jewish jobs at jewishportland.org/ourcommunity/jewish-jobs

Mar. 27: City of Roses Death Café at EJC

Open community conversation about end-of-life facilitated by City of Roses Death Café at the Eastside Jewish Commons from 1:30 -3:30 pm. Free. Space is limited, please pre-register at ecjpdx.org/events.

Mar. 28: Red Cross Blood Drive

Blood donation event from 12-5:30 pm at Congregation Neveh Shalom. Make an appointment at redcrossblood.org - Sponsor Code: NevehShalom.

Mar. 28: Call Me John, Michael Schoenholtz

Lecture at Rose Schnitzer Manor at 7 pm. Free and open to the public.

Mar. 28: The Braid presents Yearning to Breathe Free

Zoom performance of new work based on true stories from The Braid: The Go-To Jewish Story Company at 4 pm. Free tickets sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland available with code "portlandjf2" at thebraid.my.salesforce-sites.com/ticket/PatronTicket_PublicTicketApp#/events/a0S5G00000VyIPdUAN.

Mar. 28: 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.

Mar. 30: Portland's Most OutRighteous

Purim Party

Drag Show Purim party at 7 pm sponsored by Co/Lab featuring Poly Poptart. Tickets at events.humanitix.com/purim2024

Apr. 4: Central Coast Community Seder

Passover seder with Rep. David Gomberg at B'nai B'rith Camp at 5 pm. \$36. Register at secure.ggiv.com/for/bbspaghetti/event/communityseder2024/

April 5: Sephardic Community Shabbat Dinner

Kabbalat Shabbat service and Sephardic dinner at 6:15 pm at Congregation Ahavath Achim. \$20. More information at ahavathachim.com.

Apr. 6: Mini Mensches Tot Shabbat

Shabbat morning program for ages 0-5 and families at Congregation Beth Israel at 9 am. More information at bethisrael-pdx.org/community/mini-mensches.

Apr. 6: EJC Puppetry Workshop

Puppetry workshop at Eastside Jewish Commons at 2 pm in collaboration with ORA: Northwest Jewish Artists. \$35. More information at ecjpdx.org/events.

Apr. 6: Ver Vet Blaybn? (Who Will Remain?) Film Screening

Film screening sponsored by Yiddish Book Center at the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education at 7 pm. \$12, \$10 for members. More information at ojmche.org/events/ver-vet-blaybn-who-will-remain-film-screening.

Apr. 7: The Marianne Wollstein Mah Jongg Madness Brunch and Tournament

Annual Brunch and Mah Jongg Tournament at Congregation Neveh Shalom at 11 am. \$36. RSVP at members.nevehshalom.org/form/mah-jongg-2024.html.

Apr. 7: The Braid presents Yearning to Breathe Free

Zoom performance of new work based on true stories from The Braid: The Go-To Jewish Story Company at 11 am. Free tickets sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland available with code "portlandjf2" at thebraid.my.salesforce-sites.com/ticket/PatronTicket_PublicTicketApp#/events/a0S5G00000VyIPdUAN.

Apr. 7: From Yiddish Book Rescue to Yiddish Renaissance

Lecture by Yiddish Book Center Executive Director Susan Bronson at 7 pm at Congregation Beth Israel. Free. More information at bethisrael-pdx.org/joinus.

Apr. 9: Sephardic Winter Film Series

Screening of "Above and Beyond" at 7 pm at Congregation Ahavath Achim. More information at ahavathachim.com.

Apr. 11: "I Was a Desert: Songs of the Matriarchs"

Musical performance by Alicia Jo Rabins and the Camas High School Choir at Revolution Hall in Portland at 7:30 pm. \$20. Tickets at etix.com/

ticket/p/65371678/alicia-jo-rabins-the-camas-high-school-choir-portland-revolution-hall.

Apr. 12: Mindful Collage at EJC

Collage workshop with artist Char Breshgold at the Eastside Jewish Commons from 12:30-4:30 pm. More info at ecjpdx.org/events.

Aug. 13: EJC Presents "Spill Those Guts Already"

Flash memoir workshop with Leanne Grabel from 2-6 pm at Eastside Jewish Commons. \$55. More information at ecjpdx.org/events.

Apr. 14: Israeli Folk Dance at SWCC

Beginner's class and open dancing at the Southwest Community Center each Sunday. Class from 1:30-2:30 pm, open dancing from 2:30 to 4 pm. \$6, \$5 seniors. For more details visit sites. google.com/site/pifdnews.

Apr. 14: CNS Men's Club Poker Tournament

Texas Hold 'em poker tournament with \$700 prize pool at Congregation Neveh Shalom from 5-9 pm. \$50. Register online at nevehshalom.org/Poker24.

Apr. 14: OJMCHÉ Gala

See story, page 11.

Apr. 17: Community Collecting Event

Collection of Jewish artifacts and documents by Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education from 11 am-3 pm. More information at ojmche.org/events/community-collecting-event-april-17.

ISRAEL (continued from page 15)

One in Beer Sheva, one in Jerusalem, and a new Trans center in Tel Aviv. These activist Queers give me hope and pride and I believe reflect the broader Israeli society's commitment to diversity and co-existence. But they are also confused and hurt.

As individuals and as Pride centers they work to support Palestinians in any way they can. They understand from their personal relationships that Palestinian Queers face challenges beyond what Queers face in Israel proper. They do not understand

how so many in the American LGBTQ+ community believe it is helping Palestinian Queers to advocate for Hamas. And they feel marginalized or even erased by the global progressive movement.

I was fortunate to learn so

much from my trip to Israel. I saw the result of massive cruelty and inhumanity. But I also met so many amazing human beings who continue to fight for a safe and peaceful and just society where everyone can thrive.

SECURITY (continued from page 14)

helped evaluate the threat. Portland Police will not definitively say that a threat is a hoax, but discussions with them provided enough information for leadership to decide about evacuations. None of our organizations evacuated or stopped operations because of the threats. If you receive a threat, let me know, as I may know about others received by the community and I'm available to help evaluate the threat. As in everything related to safe-

ty and security, a little bit of pre-planning can go a long way to help staff respond effectively to stressful situations. Please let me know if I can be of help.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to share security news happening in our community. Adam Edward Braun was arrested for repeatedly defacing a synagogue in Eugene. His recent arrest in Eugene is a great example of local, state, and federal efforts to fight

criminal antisemitic acts. The vandalism took place between August and October 2023. On Jan. 14, 2024, there was another incident at the synagogue. When a search warrant was served at Braun's home, police allegedly found Nazi-themed paraphernalia.

Federal charges were announced on Mar. 7 and Braun has been detained in custody. Cameras at the synagogue played a crucial role in the identification of this suspect.

Lastly, you can always reach me at janderson@securecommunitynetwork.org or 872-273-9214. I'm always available for free personal and confidential consultations if you are having a safety/security issue in your life. My Zoom trainings are free and open to the public. I offer all my classes once per month and registration is available at the JFGP website security page, jewishportland.org/security.

CLIMATE (continued from page 15)

but now make up less than 5%. The Federation finance committee determined that screening out fossil fuels was unlikely to negatively impact its long-term financial returns. Indeed, the energy sector has underperformed the rest of the market over the past decade. The sector is also one of the most volatile and risky. Thus, screening out fossil fuels is both a values-aligned step and a financially prudent decision.

Finally, the Oregon Jewish

Community Foundation has in the last several years added two socially responsible investment funds to its portfolio that screen out fossil fuel investments.

In light of all this, the JCRC overwhelmingly recommended that the Federation divest from companies engaged in producing fossil fuels. After hearing from the JCRC and its own finance committee, the Federation Board voted unanimously to adopt this recommendation of the JCRC.

The Federation wants to lead by example. We hope and expect that many more Jewish institutions will soon join the Federation in excluding fossil fuel producers from their investment portfolios.

Brian Romer is chair of the Climate Action Committee of the Jewish Community Relations Council.

Hank Kaplan is a member of the Climate Action Committee, Chair of the JCRC, and member of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Fed-

eration of Greater Portland.

Rachel Nelson is Director of Educational Initiatives and Associate Director of Community Relations at the Federation.

To learn more about the Federation's climate work and get involved, email Nelson at rachel@jewishportland.org.

If your organization is interested in moving its endowment away from fossil fuels, Dayenu can support you - email Rabbi Jacob Siegel at jacob@dayenu.org.



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RENA TONKIN

Congregation Beth Israel mourns the loss of Rena Leah Tonkin, z"l, who passed away on Mar. 7, 2024, at the age of 96.

Rena was born in Bellingham, Wash., to Harry and Fanny Baron, younger sister to Mayer. She spent her early years in Hawaii for her mother's health before the Baron family returned to Washington and settled in Seattle. Even as a child, she was a spitfire, precocious and imaginative.

By the time she graduated from Garfield High School in 1945 she was garnering awards for her artwork and recognition as an inspiring class leader. Rena's pride in her Jewish heritage compelled her to speak out against injustice and prejudice of any kind.

At the University of Washington, Rena excelled in art and design, but a blind date with a sorority sister's handsome brother who was visiting from Portland upended her plans to transfer to Parsons School of Design - Marv Tonkin.

For Rena, family always came first, but community was a close second – she gravitated to the Social Action committee at Congregation Beth Israel, served on Jewish community boards, and in the broader community became a founding member of the Asian Art Council at the Portland Art Museum and the Portland Japanese Garden.

Once her children left home for college, Rena launched her design firm, Rena Tonkin Interiors, specializing in residential design. Rena's keen eye and dedication to her clients made her an instant success.

Rena Tonkin is survived by her daughter, Cheryl Tonkin, grandsons, David Lerner and Daniel Lerner, Dan's wife, Bonnie Lerner, and great-grandchildren, Max and Maisie Lerner.

Rena was preceded in death by her husband, Marvin R. Tonkin, z"l and son, Alan Baron Tonkin, z"l.

Her funeral was held Thursday, Mar. 14, at Congregation Beth Israel.

Donations in Rena's memory may be directed to: Congregation Beth Israel's Social Action Fund, The Portland Art Museum, The Alan Baron Tonkin Memorial Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation and CASA.

FREDERICK BLANK

Frederick Alan Blank, z"l, a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and respected member of the Portland community, passed away Mar. 8, 2024, at the age of 73.

Born in 1950 in Portland, Ore., Fred spent his entire life living in Oregon. Fred attended Wilson High School and the University of Oregon. He worked with his father at Blank's Home Furnishing before starting a lifelong career in wealth management.

Fred met Bettina, the love of his life, in the Fred Meyer hardware department in 1977. They were married in 1979 and went on to have two beautiful, intelligent, and caring children, Lisa and Alex.

Fred served as a board member at Congregation Beth Israel and was a member at the Multnomah Athletic Club, Portland Golf Club, and Astoria Golf Club. He was fortunate to have

a hole-in-one on two separate occasions: the 4th hole at Portland Golf Club and the 8th hole at Black Butte Ranch.

Fred is survived by his beloved wife of 44 years, Bettina Blank; daughter, Lisa Blank Wynn (Brent Wynn); son, Alexander Blank (Natasha Blank); cherished grandchildren, Carson Wynn, Charlotte Wynn, and Wyatt Blank; brothers, Bruce Blank (Jan Casey) and family, and Owen Blank (Lynn Blank) and family. Fred was preceded in death by his parents, Phil and Fay Blank, and grandson, Henry Blank.

Donations in Fred's memory may be made to local organizations he was passionate about: Central City Concern, Dougy Center, and Ethos Music Center. A funeral was held Sunday, Mar. 11, 2024, and a celebration of life will be held in April.

DANNIEL HOUSE

With great sadness, Congregation Ahavath Achim announces the untimely passing of Danniell Jonathan House, z"l, son of board member Shari House, who passed on Wednesday, March 13. He is survived by his sister Rachel (Simcha) Dolgin and his son Zyllis. The funeral was Monday, March 18, 2024.

KAY HOWARD

It is with sorrow that Congregation Kol Ami announces the death of Kay Howard, the mother of our member Dawnn Herrmann, who died Wednesday, Mar. 20. Celebration of Life services will be held later with information to follow.

RUBY SACHTER

Congregation Neveh Shalom is sorry to announce the passing of Ruby Sachter, z"l, at the age of 88. She was predeceased by her husband, David Sachter, z"l. She is lovingly remembered by her children Elaine (Michael Newman) Sachter, Sheryl (Steve) Rudolph, as well as her five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

The funeral was held Friday, Mar. 22, at Ahavai Shalom Cemetery.

DAVID AIKEN

With great sadness, Chabad of Southwest Portland announces the passing of David Franklin Aiken z"l, Friday, Mar. 22, at the age of 81. The funeral was Monday, March 25, at the Chabad section of River View Cemetery.

David is survived by his children Douglas Aiken, Laura Bloom, Allison Sherman, grandchildren and a great grandchild.

HARVEY KASH

It is with deep sadness that Congregation Shaarie Torah announces the passing of Harvey Kash, z"l, beloved father of Shira (Phil) Newman. Harvey died Saturday, Mar. 23, 2024. He was 89 years old.

He is survived by his daughters: Ivy (Joe) Chasan, Robin Kanefsky, and Shira (Phil) Newman Grandchildren: Ben and Ronin Chasan, Ella, Brian, and Risa Kenefsky, Ethan and Adar Newman. The funeral was held on Monday, Mar. 25, 2024, at Wellwood Cemetery, Long Island, N.Y.