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# THE JEWISH REVIEW

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## Potential Medicaid cuts imperil Portland Jews

Cedar Sinai residents protest as Federal budget process targets health programs

By ROCKNE ROLL  
*The Jewish Review*

On Saturday, Apr. 5, busloads of demonstrators unloaded on to the sidewalk of Southwest Beaverton Hillsdale Highway to protest proposed budgetary measures by President Donald Trump and Republican leadership in Congress – a sight not unusual in Portland, particularly not on a weekend of nationwide “Hands Off” protests around potential cuts to Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid.

What may have been more unusual was what came off the bus after the demonstrators – their walkers.

Dozens of residents of the Cedar Sinai Park complex, joined by family members, friends and a handful of community members, lined the highway next to the facility in a demonstration organized by residents. The honking of cars along the four-lane highway on the very edge of Portland rever-



Cedar Sinai Park residents demonstrate with friends, family and community members along Southwest Beaverton Hillsdale Highway Saturday, Apr. 5 as part of nationwide “Hands Off” protest against federal cuts to benefit programs. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

berated in solidarity up the hill onto Southwest Boundary Street that runs between the Rose Schnitzer Manor and the Robison Jewish Health Center and Harold

Schnitzer Center for Living. Those of all abilities and mobilities came, including one man whom fellow residents said had not left his room at the Harold Schnitzer Center

for Living in years, but felt this moment was so important he could not miss out.

The demonstration rep-

See **MEDICAID**, page 9

### INSIDE

**Security** – page 14

**Obituaries** – page 15

**Events** – page 16



**JFGP hosts Parent Advocacy** – page 3



**Passover show at CBI** – page 4

**The Jewish Review Podcast**



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## Lincoln alum Aliyah Blank receives USC's Lev undergrad research fellowship for Holocaust work

*The Jewish Review staff*

Relatively few college undergraduates spend their senior year conducting original research into the Holocaust.

Aliyah Blank is not your average college student.

Blank, a senior at the University of Southern California and graduate of Portland's Lincoln High School, is finishing her research into Jewish resistance in the Vilna and Kovno ghettos of Lithuania through the Beth and Arthur Lev Student Research Fellowship, which she was awarded this year by USC's Dornsife Center for Advanced Genocide Research.

Blank began her work in this area began with a pair of classes taught by Prof. Wolf Gruner, the chair of USC's Judaic studies program; "Mass Violence and Comparative Genocide in Modern World History," and "The Holocaust in 20th Century Europe." Her research paper in the second of those classes has grown into her current project, which she will present at USC's Undergraduate Research Symposium this month.

A Law, History and Culture major, Blank has added a major in Jewish Studies and a minor in Resistance to Genocide – she'll graduate with all three at the end of this semester.

"I took another class when I was a sophomore called 'The Holocaust,' and it really changed my perspective," Blank said.

The great-granddaughter of a Lithuanian survivor, Blank hopes to counter the simplistic victim narratives that often surround the Holocaust, especially in Lithuania where between 90 and 95 percent of the Jewish population was murdered by the Nazis, most of them long before the Jewish population was moved to the ghettos.

"Both of the ghettos created entire medical systems. They had hospitals, they were assisting patients," Blank explained. "There were doctors that would still assist women in having babies or having abortions, which I consider an act of resistance."

From publishing newspapers to building schools to pass on Jewish culture and languages, a constellation of small acts combined to reject the absolute power the Nazis sought.

"A lot of things that people just did, they didn't realize maybe at the time that they were resisting. But now that I'm kind of looking at it with like more of a bird's eye view and years later, I would consider it resistance," Blank said. "A lot of them were just doing what they needed to do to get by, but I consider that resisting."

Blank has tapped USC's immense collection of oral histories and other materials on the Holocaust, held at the Dornsife Center and at USC libraries, to complete her project.

"It's very emotionally overwhelming," Blank said. "When you're watching a video of a survivor talk about some of their experiences. It's kind of very hard to get through and

See **BLANK**, page 8

## JADE, OJCF host legacy giving brunch

By **ROCKNE ROLL**

*The Jewish Review*

Conversations around death in Judaism are typically rooted in the values that drive Jewish life. For those looking at what their financial legacy might be, the Jewish Association for Death Education and the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation are facilitating a conversation rooted in those same values – over brunch.

"Legacy Planning Through Community and Tradition," featuring Rachel Crawford from JADE and estate planning attorney and OJCF Professional Advisors Group Chair Aaron Frishman, is set for Sunday, Apr. 27 at 11 am at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center in Portland. The project stems from a collaboration between Crawford and Rachael Evans from OJCF.

"The Foundation works with a lot of people on their legacy plans. When I met [Crawford], it was an opportunity to kind of add some more spiritual Jewish values elements to that conversation," Evans said. "It's important to have these conversations, whether you're in your 20s or you're in your 80s."

As important as those conversations are, they can be some of the most challenging to have, wherever one falls in (or outside of) that age range.

"It's hard to think of a world where you won't exist," Crawford said. "It's ultimately what separates us from our loved ones, but it also connects us during life, that we all share the same

ultimate destiny. To root that back in Judaism and how we embody that fact that we're going to die through our rituals and traditions connects us on an even deeper level."

That connection, naturally, extends to legacy giving.

"Legacy giving is all about how you can give from your assets to support a cause after you've died, something that aligns with your values in life," Crawford continued.

"Connecting that to Jewish tradition and our rituals around end of life, they're very community based, and they're very community driven. So, there is a common thread there between legacy planning and our preexisting traditions; there's a lot of community involvement on both of those ends."

Complimenting the exploration of Jewish values in this realm is Frishman's expertise in the technical aspects of estate planning, making this event a valuable resource both for those with a plan that they want to infuse their values into and for those with a clear sense of what they're after but who are unsure how to get there.

"I think it can be scary to ask some of these technical questions, or you feel like you need to already be an expert, or something you know, like that," Evans noted. "It's very important to me, and very important to the Foundation, that people feel okay with asking these questions; they feel safe, they feel comfortable."

The brunch is free, though preregistration is required. Sign up online at [ojcf.fcsuite.com/erp/donate/list/event?event\\_date\\_id=1495](https://ojcf.fcsuite.com/erp/donate/list/event?event_date_id=1495).



# Problems, progress at Parent Advocacy Night

By **ROCKNE ROLL**

*The Jewish Review*

At the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's latest K-12 Parent Advocacy, held Monday, Apr. 7 at Congregation Neveh Shalom, Danielle Frandina pointed out a fundamental problem.

"A lot of people don't understand antisemitism and they don't recognize it," she said.

Frandina, who has led the development of a curriculum on contemporary antisemitism for Facing History and Ourselves, the national education nonprofit, said this can lead to the kinds of incidents that Janine Gottheiner, the parent of a Lincoln High School student, described when her child came home and mentioned a classroom presentation about the ongoing war in Gaza that made her uncomfortable.

"The sources are very questionable; Al Jazeera, visualizingpalestine.com, sources that are not credible," Gottheiner said of the slides she



Janine Gottheiner discusses her experiences with anti-Israel bias at Portland's Lincoln High School during the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Parent Advocacy Night Monday, Apr. 7 at Congregation Neveh Shalom. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

saw. "This slide show begins with a slide introducing the concept of the Oct. 7 invasion, and then 46 slides demonizing Israel, repeating lies about the civilian death toll, omitting crucial facts

about the maps of the region, dealing in antisemitic tropes, tokenizing Jewish anti-Zionists and then ending with the brilliant conclusion that luminaries like Cynthia Nixon and Selena Gomez have

urged Biden for a cease fire."

Gottheiner and Federation Chief Community Relations and Public Affairs officer Bob Horenstein are working with the school and Portland

See **ADVOCACY**, page 8



"A lender is greater than one who gives to charity."  
Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 63a



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# CBI musical highlights women of Exodus story

By ROCKNE ROLL  
*The Jewish Review*

Theatrical performances for Purim are nothing new. For Passover? That's a little more unusual.

Nevertheless, Kim Schneiderman and Congregation Beth Israel came together to add a theatrical twist to the retelling of the Exodus story. Schneiderman's musical, performed by students from CBI's religious school, premiered Sunday, Apr. 6 at the Reform synagogue's main sanctuary in Portland.

Ironically, perhaps, Schneiderman was originally approached about writing a Purim spiel for Beth Israel's religious school students. Not wanting to try and counter-program the famous CBI spiel, Schneiderman had another idea.

"I said, 'I've always wanted to write a musical for Passover. Would you be interested?'" she recalled. "And [B'nai Mitzvah and Family Educator Cantor Rayna Green] said 'absolutely.'"

In retelling the story of the Exodus, spanning from Moses' birth to passing through



Students from Congregation Beth Israel's Religious School perform the premier of Kim Schneiderman's new Passover musical Sunday, Apr. 6 at the synagogue's main sanctuary in Portland. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

the Red Sea, Schneiderman covers a broad swath of history while focusing on some key themes.

"The Exodus would not have happened without the courageous acts of five women who are really highlighted in the musical," she explained.

The first two were Puah and Shifrah, the midwives who refused Pharaoh's order to kill Israelite baby boys.

"That is the first recorded act of civil disobedience," Schneiderman said. "And it's interesting that these two women were given names because, really, there are no names for many women in Torah."

The story continues to lift up Moses' mother, Yochaved, his sister, Miriam, and the daughter of Pharaoh who plucked Moses from the Nile in his basket. Schneiderman mentioned that, in the Torah she is referred to as *Bat Par'o*, literally "the daughter of Pharaoh" in Hebrew, but later scholars gave her the name *Bat Yah*, "the daughter of G-d."

"It was in all of the teachings afterwards that she became daughter of G-d because she saved the nation," Schneiderman said.

Another crucial theme is the treatment of strangers –

a key theme from the Torah, as well – which comes front and center in the show's final number, "Enough."

"How to treat the stranger is one of the underlying ideas behind the whole musical, and that is woven in throughout, and then kind of comes together at that final song," Schneiderman said. "Talking about how to treat the stranger is written in Torah 36 times. It emphasizes that we must know how to treat the stranger because we, too, were once strangers in Egypt."

Work began on the show last year, just before Pesach, and some of the songs were introduced to religious school students as early as last spring. Though written by Schneiderman, many of CBI's senior staff and all the clergy contributed to the final product.

"Every time I work with CBI and I go to the clergy

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**Women's  
Philanthropy**

See **MUSICAL**, page 10



# OJCYF brings "Giving and Glamour" to EJC



Photographs by ROCKNE ROLL

*The Jewish Review*

The Oregon Jewish Community Youth Foundation held "A Night of Giving and Glamour" their 2025 fundraiser dinner, Thursday, Apr. 10 at the Eastside Jewish Commons in Portland. The capacity crowd took in a keynote address from Adam Davis, Executive Director of Oregon Humanities.





# Jewish Music Festival adds Mizrahi melodies

*The Jewish Review staff*

Portland's klezmer festival is returning with a new name and a new focus that goes beyond the sounds of the shtetls.

This year's Portland Jewish Music Festival, presented by the Eastside Jewish Commons, runs from May 8-18 with performances, lectures, workshops and more at the Commons in Northeast Portland.

The klezmer festival launched in 2022 as a collaboration between Sophie Enloe and Bubbaville, a Portland non-profit dedicated to supporting traditional music.

"Sophie came to them and said, 'In Jewish culture, there's this whole traditional folk music called klezmer. You guys are out there supporting this old-time stuff. This is the same thing,'" Eric Stern, EJC's Director of Programming and Cultural Arts Ambassador said.

After two successful iterations, EJC now steps into a leading role as the festival's presenter. Co-sponsorship comes Co/Lab, Congregation Neveh

Shalom, P'nai Or of Portland and Bubbaville. The festival's focus is also expanding to include other forms of traditional Jewish music.

We diaspora Jews, and Jews in Israel too, have many distinct cultural streams, and one that I am particularly fond of is the Mizrahi culture," Stern said. "I thought, 'Let's add a weekend at the front of it so that we can build on the klezmer festival, but we can have a whole other modality of music and appeal to and showcase a whole other cultural element.'"

Mizrahi folk music originates from the Middle East and North Africa. With the influx of Sephardim from Spain and Portugal following the expulsions of the late 15th century, Spanish sounds became incorporated into those musical styles.

"The oud is really a prominent instrument," Stern said, referring to the 10-to-13-string lute popular in much of the Arab world. "The way the violin is tuned is different. There's more percussion. Of course, this is not a monolith. It varies over many, many cultures."

The festival opens on May 8 with the film "On the Banks of the Tigris," documenting the history of Iraqi music, how Iraqi Jews contributed to its development and its near-destruction at the hands of the Ba'ath Party. The first performance is set for Friday night May 9, with guitarist Brenna McDonald joined by Stern, an accomplished oud player, to explore how the flamenco sounds of Spain stayed with Sephardim as they fled the Iberian Peninsula and became woven into Mizrahi music. The festival caps off with Portland's own Carpathian-Pacific Express, led by clarinetist Yankl Falk, fusing klezmer influences with a variety of stylings, on Sunday, May 18. A whole host of events, featuring local and international artists, workshops and more are scheduled – or being scheduled – in between.

Tickets are available for individual shows along with festival passes, which represent a 15 percent discount for all events versus purchasing tickets individually, online at [ejcpdx.org/portland-jewish-music-festival](http://ejcpdx.org/portland-jewish-music-festival).

## Dara Horn to visit Wald's online Jewish book club May 15

*The Jewish Review staff*

Elissa Wald saw a problem in the publishing industry and decided to do something about it – something you can be a part of.

"Jewish Americans are being marginalized and ostracized within the literary world," she explained. "[Authors] are being told by their agents, their editors, their publishers that this isn't the right time to go with the Jewish book. It doesn't even have to be anything to do with Israel. It's not the right time to go out with a Jewish book."

In response, Wald has launched the "Never Alone Book Club," which shares a name with her Substack. The club's online meeting on May 15 will be joined by Dara Horn, bestselling-author of "People Love Dead Jews," and of the newly released "One Little Goat," a child-

dren's book about Passover.

The idea is that a group of people interested in books by Jewish authors can drive enough traffic to get the publishing industry to pay attention. It takes fewer than you might think – certainly fewer than Wald thought.

"Whenever Oprah picks a book, it goes to the top of the bestseller list immediately, and I always assumed that she had millions of people in her book club, but she only has 77,000 worldwide," she said. "It turns out you only need to sell 5,000 books in a single week to be on the New York Times bestseller list."

"One Little Goat," Horn's latest work, "is a quirky, dryly funny, Passover-themed graphic novel featuring a lost matzah, a never-ending seder and a time-traveling talking goat," according to her website. Illustrated by Theo

Ellsworth, it is Horn's first children's book following five novels and her essay collection, "People Love Dead Jews," – a bibliography that has netted her three National Jewish Book Awards.

"Ellsworth's visual style elevates the book and makes it feel grungy and subversive," *Kveller* wrote in review. "Yet like Horn's non-fiction, 'People Love Dead Jews,' it's also a deeply timely lesson about Jewish history and resilience, and about just how special and magical Jewish tradition can be."

The Never Alone Book Club launched in 2024 and is already up to 3,000 members, Wald said, "just with me alone shaking the trees." She's since partnered with the Jewish Book Council to promote the club and connected with Horn late last year when she was in Portland to speak

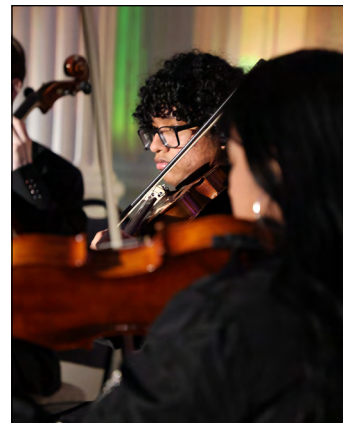
at a Jewish Federation of Greater Portland event.

"We ended up spending the whole day together. We just really hit it off. She's become a friend, and we talk all the time," Wald said. "She told me, 'I don't do book clubs anymore, but I'll do yours because this is a great idea.'"

The idea isn't just for fun; there's an important goal behind it.

"[People] don't even have to show up. They can just buy the book," Wald said. "Jewish voices are being silenced; that is the overarching point and we can't allow that to happen. We must stand up for ourselves."

Those interested in the club, or Horn's appearance on May 15, can learn more by searching "Never Alone Book Club" on Facebook or visiting Wald's Substack, [neveralone.substack.com](http://neveralone.substack.com).



## OJMCHE shines at "Bravo!" banquet

Photographs by ROCKNE ROLL

*The Jewish Review*

A packed ballroom at Portland's Sentinel Hotel celebrated the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education's year at their annual gala, titled "Bravo!" Thursday, Apr. 3.





## ADVOCACY (continued from page 3)

Public Schools to address the situation, but Gottheiner pointed out that materials like these are truly dangerous both for the present and the future.

"This is their education. This is their entry into what is happening," she said. "And that is frightening, because if this is the way they're getting educated, wow, we are in trouble."

She's not the only one facing these issues with curriculum. Scottie Weintraub explained that she was anxious when her freshman son at McDaniel High School in Portland came home saying his world history class would be taking on a unit about Palestine.

"He said to me, 'Mom, my teacher is really nice. He's a great teacher, and I'm sure he's not going to do anything bad,'" Weintraub explained. "But when I saw what he was covering, that's when I got concerned."

The curriculum in question was "Teaching Seeds of Violence in Palestine-Israel" by Bill Bigelow. Bigelow, a long-time social studies teacher for Portland Public Schools, also works with Rethinking Schools, an education activism non-profit, and is one of the editors of "Teaching Palestine," a book published by Rethinking Schools and the basis for an upcoming workshop being hosted by the Beaverton Education Association, the union for teachers in the Beaverton School District.

Weintraub contacted the teacher and met with him and McDaniel's Vice Principal. The outcome was somewhat surprising.

"We had a great conversation," Weintraub said. "What I came to realize pretty quickly is that his interest in this lesson was not grounded in ideology. It was not grounded in him having a political opinion he wanted to push."

The school ended up pulling the curriculum.

As it turns out, a lot of people don't understand antisemitism because they don't understand Judaism. One of the ways to combat that is the Student to Student program, which trains high school students to present to their peers.

"We go into schools, and we educate the students in those schools, not on the Israel-Hamas War, but on being Jewish," Maddie Garfinkle, a junior at Ida B. Wells High School and Student to Student presenter explained. "We talk about different aspects of what it's like to be Jewish, and our heritage and our traditions."

Portland is the newest of 26 cities in North America to operate the Student to Student program, originally developed by the Jewish Federation of St. Louis. There are, of course, many more cities not benefiting from this program – that's where curriculums like the one Frandina works on are critical.

"It is essential that antisemitism is not students only point of reference and exposure to Jewish identity and culture," Frandina said. "We need to see living, breathing Jewish.

Jewish life. Many schools have no exposure to that, and what happens is these narrow stereotypes form of what it means to be Jewish and what it looks like to be Jewish."

Her organization, Facing History and Ourselves, started out by building a curriculum around the Holocaust, but has since expanded its focus because that's only part of the picture.

"If students only exposure to Jewish identity is the Holocaust," she said, "that is also a very narrow understanding of Jewish history and Jewish life."

Frandina's team created interactive tools allowing students to explore Jewish culture, history and practice at their own pace. The curriculum next moves on to contemporary expressions of antisemitism because, just as Judaism is not defined by the Holocaust, neither is hatred thereof.

"One of the things we really want to focus on is suppression of identity as an impact of antisemitism. Most teachers and administrators would never say it's OK that a kid can't bring their whole self to their classroom, right?" Frandina said. "So, if you now have a student who can't come into their classroom wearing a Star of David or talking about their relationship to Israel or even saying that they're Jewish, that is the impact of suppression of identity, which is something I think we would all say is a terrible thing that we should be combating."

Facing History's work is getting results – after a four-week lesson series for teachers, the percentage of those who said they felt like they could discuss the intersection of anti-Zionism with antisemitism jump from 17 percent to 48 percent, and the share saying they could articulate how antisemitism fits into the broader spectrum of racism jumped from 51 percent to 83 percent.

What Facing History's work doesn't do is teach about the current conflict in the Middle East. But it gives students the tools to engage with material about that conflict in a more meaningful manner.

"We want students to recognize antisemitism wherever it shows up; if it shows up on the far right, if it shows up on the far left, or anywhere in between," Frandina said. "If they know the tropes, if they have seen examples of it and analyzed them in a contained, safe environment, then it's not so much that they need to know the regional history of the Middle East or you know everything about the war, they need to be able to see when these tropes and conspiracy theories are embedded in the rhetoric."

Learn more about Facing History's work at [facinghistory.org](https://facinghistory.org).

Rising juniors or seniors interested in participating in next year's Student to Student cohort can get more information at [jewishportland.org/studenttostudent](https://jewishportland.org/studenttostudent).

To report incidents of antisemitism in schools, email Horenstein at [bob@jewishportland.org](mailto:bob@jewishportland.org) or Federation Director of Educational Initiatives and Associate Director of Community Relations Rachel Nelson at [rachel@jewishportland.org](mailto:rachel@jewishportland.org).

## BLANK (continued from page 2)

require me to take a lot of breaks and step away from the material at times because it's just very heavy. But I feel like it cultivated even more respect than I already had for not only what they went through, but their ability to share it."

Blank will publish a paper on her work later this year. She's planning to take some time away before heading to law school.



# MEDICAID (continued from page 1)

resented one of the largest organized demonstrations by Portland's Jewish community against federal policy changes since the Trump administration retook office – fitting, considering how those changes stand to impact Portland's Jewish population.

The focal point of these conversations is often referred to as the “budget blueprint;” legislation which will set targets for the federal budget for the next 10 years and instruct congressional committees to identify spending cuts to meet those targets. Of particular concern is a directive to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce to cut \$880 billion in spending from programs it oversees in the next decade.

The committee oversees mandatory spending that, at current levels, would amount to \$8.8 trillion over the next decade. Of that amount, \$8.2 trillion is for Medicaid, the state-administered but largely federally funded program of health insurance for low-income individuals and families. Because no specific policy changes have been outlined yet, it's more challenging to estimate what these numbers will look like in practice, but KFF, the health policy think tank formerly known as the Kaiser Family Foundation, estimated those figures would represent a 16 percent cut in Medicaid spending.

According to a report by the Center for Children and Families at Georgetown University's McCort School of Public Policy, Oregon receives approximately \$11.5 billion per year annually for Medicaid, which is known in Oregon as the Oregon Health Plan. The state receives \$1.37 from the federal government for every dollar that it spends on the Oregon Health Plan.

One of the crucial costs Medicaid covers is residential care for seniors without the ability to pay out of pocket, as these facilities are not covered by the federally run Medicare program. David Fuks, who was Chief Executive Officer of Cedar Sinai Park for 18 years, estimates that during his tenure, approximately 60 percent of residents at the Robison Jewish Health Center were receiving Medicaid benefits to cover their stay. He said that level was likely similar at the Harold Schnitzer



A demonstrator at the Saturday, Apr. 5 "Hands Off" protest organized by residents of Cedar Sinai Park. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

Center, as well. Those individuals have little alternative to pay for their care, Fuks explained, because Medicaid's economic requirements and the high cost of such care have forced them to “spend down” their assets in order to receive support from Medicaid, the only program which covers this kind of care.

“A lot of these folks who spend down, they're the people who built our community,” Fuks said. “These are not profligate people. They just had jobs that didn't provide them with huge numbers of assets.”

Claudia Bules, the current administrator of Cedar Sinai Park, did not respond to an interview request from *The Jewish Review*.

Susan Greenberg, Executive Director of Jewish Family & Child Service in Portland, estimates that one-third of the Holocaust survivors that JFCS works with are also receiving Medicaid benefits. Many of the services that JFCS provides for survivors are funded through the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany, but that money only goes so far.

“So, if all of a sudden a client loses their Medicaid dollars, or they've been cut considerably,” Greenberg said, “We

may not be able to support the true care they need.”

The effect of potential Medicaid cuts goes well beyond the elderly. A total of 14 percent of those surveyed in the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's 2023 Community Study responded that they were enrolled in either the Oregon Health Plan or Apple Health, the State of Washington's Medicaid program, while 27 percent reported that they either can't make ends meet financially or barely so.

The study also found that 34 percent of Jewish Portlanders require mental health treatment of some kind, including the counseling services provided by JFCS. Douglass Ruth, the agency's Clinical Director, said that between 40 and 50 percent of JFCS' counseling clients use the Oregon Health Plan to pay for the services they receive.

“It's not just that necessarily cutting people off of getting benefits from Medicaid, there are other ways that can look at well,” Ruth explained. “Medicaid reimbursement rates can change and that means if I see somebody on Medicaid, they may reimburse for less money, which of course would affect the budget for JFCS. It might mean we are able to serve fewer folks on Medicaid.”

Ruth also explained that, to meet the high demand for mental health services, JFCS utilizes therapists who are still working toward full licensure and whose practice is supervised by Ruth. Known as Clinical Social Worker Associates, as opposed to the Licensed Clinical Social Worker title carried by Ruth, these professionals are limited in their ability to bill Medicare or private health insurance for their services but can be reimbursed through the Oregon Health Plan; an ability that would potentially be threatened by Medicaid cuts.

Whether or not potential cuts come to pass, the mere threat of them is already producing ill-effects in the patients Ruth serves.

“You still have to sit with the worry. ‘Am I going to have access to SNAP [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, previously known as Food

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Stamps; another program that is threatened by potential federal spending reductions] next month? Am I going to have Medicaid in three months?' In most of my sessions, they're talking about that anxiety right now," Ruth said. "Whether it be depression, anxiety, suicidality, all these things are coming up more because of the unknowns and the fear."

With the Federal budget process creaking into motion, the unknowns are set to go on, though a few possibilities have floated out.

Rep Cliff Bentz, a Republican represent Oregon's Second Congressional District, is the only member of Oregon's Congressional delegation to sit on the House's Energy and Commerce committee that controls Medicaid spending. In a Feb. 27 interview with Oregon

Public Broadcasting's Dave Miller, Bentz said that tying employment to eligibility for Medicaid is something he's looking at.

"The idea is... that if you want to be eligible for Medicaid, you'll have to work or at least be making an effort to get a job," he said.

Bentz also alleges, along with other Congressional Republicans, that fraud and abuse of benefits are significant drivers of Medicaid costs.

When Miller asked if Bentz would vote for a final bill that would result in people being kicked off the Oregon Health Plan, Bentz replied that, "if Oregonians are kicked off the plan, it's because they don't deserve to be on it. When I say deserve, for whatever reason, they are fraudulently participating or they're participating for reasons that have nothing to do with the original goals of the program."

Fuks described the idea that work requirements would

significantly decrease Medicaid enrollment is a "fantasy."

"The fact is most people want to work. And a number of people who are working are working for \$15 an hour in this state, or lower wages elsewhere. They may be working two jobs to try and make ends meet. They do not enjoy an employer's healthcare program and it's an enormous challenge for them," he said.

Oregon is working to hold up its end of the equation.

In Mid-March, the State Senate voted to pass House Bill 2010, which renews a pair of tax assessments – two percent on health insurance plans and six percent on hospitals' net revenue – which directly support the Oregon Health Plan. Federation's Jewish Community Relations Council had lobbied for the bill's passage. The bill passed the State House at the end of February; it now goes to Gov. Tina Kotek, who is

expected to sign it into law.

"HB 2010 will help ensure that those Oregonians continue to have access to care and that our hospitals and providers have the resources they need to serve all Oregonians," House Speaker Julie Fahey, a Democrat from Western Lane County, said in a statement following the House's passage of the bill. "Regardless of whether Congress cuts Medicaid funding this year, passing HB 2010 is the surest way to position us to accomplish those goals."

What happens next with regards to the Oregon Health Plan will be determined on the other side of the continent.

Fuks encouraged those concerned about these developments to speak up, "not only to those who are our advocates, but also to try and have an impact on the more conservative members in our state and in our country, to be able to say, 'hey, to not have this program is penny-wise and pound-foolish.'"

## MUSICAL (continued from page 4)

and senior staff and say, 'I have this idea,' they're always saying yes," Schneiderman said. "Everybody is open to something new and different, which I love."

That included producing a video segment, played during the performance, which starred Cantor Green, Rabbi Michael Cahana, Cantor Ida Rae Cahana, Rabbi Rachel Joseph, Executive Director Josh Kashinsky and Education Director Ben Sandler acting out nine of the plagues sent against Egypt in comedic fashion.

"There was so much going on and they said we have two hours, whatever we can get done in two hours, that's

fine," Schneiderman recalls. "I brought all these costumes. I set everything up and I handed each of them the scripts and with my phone, I started filming them doing these crazy things in their office space. It was amazing."

Rehearsals started in earnest in January – just 45 minutes per week on top of class for those participating, around the time Schneiderman was putting the finishing touches on a song about Miriam, which was written as a tribute to the retiring Cantor Cahana.

"I've worked with Cantor Cahana since she first came here. What she has brought to this community is so au-

thentic, and her heart is so beautiful. There is no one like her," Schneiderman explained. "That's what connected this idea of Miriam and who she was in this story to Cantor Cahana and who she is for all of us. She is really the holder of the tambourine. I always say when I'm teaching this to kids that when everybody was packing to carry things with them and leave as quickly as they could, my favorite part of this is that Miriam packed her timbrel, which is amazing, because when you're packing to survive, who's going to think about musical instruments? To me, it reminds me of Miriam

packing hope. Even if in this moment we are not celebrating, we are always looking ahead and knowing that that we will be celebrating one day, so I'm going to pack this with me. That is who I believe Cantor Cahana is."

All these ideas were brought to life by the students on stage, as well as the CBI musicians supporting them and the leadership of Cantor Green.

"I absolutely loved working with the religious school students. They were amazing," Schneiderman added. "They each brought a piece of their hearts and created something that was just so entertaining and meaningful. To me, that's everything right there."

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



# MJCC receives Israel Engagement Grant

*Mittleman Jewish Community Center*

The Mittleman Jewish Community Center has been awarded a grant from JCC Association of North America, which is collaborating with Israel's Ministry for Diaspora Affairs as part of the international initiative Mit-habrim (connections). Through this initiative, Yamim grants are being awarded specifically to support programs that will commemorate key Jewish and Israeli holidays this spring: Yom HaShoah, Yom HaZikaron, and Yom HaAtzmaut. This year, more than \$1.5 million in Yamim grants have been distributed to over 110 Jewish Community Centers and Jewish Community Camps in the United States and five in Canada.

Mit-habrim, a \$7.2 million initiative set to strengthen ties between North American JCCs and Israel, demonstrates solidarity with Israel following the horrific attacks of Oct. 7. It includes Yamim grants, which provide seed funding for community programs that honor and celebrate Yom HaShoah, Yom HaZikaron, and Yom HaAtzmaut and help JCCs emphasize solidarity with Israel and the Jewish people. With more than 100 JCC communities designing events for the upcoming Jewish and Israeli holidays, the power of the JCC Movement will be felt across North America from Apr. 24–May 1, 2025.

“Following the successes of the Yamim grants in 2024 in which 80 percent of North American JCCs participated, our continued partnership with the Ministry for Diaspora Affairs has never been more important, especially as we mark more than 500 days since October 7,” said Leah Garber, senior vice president of Israel engagement at JCC Association and director general of the Center for Israel Engagement in Jerusalem. “With even more JCCs in our movement preparing to host holiday and commemorative events than last year, it’s clear that this initiative has become a driving force for deeper connections between North American Jews and Is-

rael, fueling an unprecedented level of involvement and engagement by JCCs and their communities.”

The MJCC will be welcoming DJ Barz (Matan Baron) from New Jersey as the featured entertainment for the Yom Ha’Atzmaut celebration, to be held May 1, 2025 from 5-8 pm at MJCC. He will be spinning both traditional and contemporary Israeli music for guests. The event will include educational, fun, hands-on activities led by local Jewish youth organizations as well as PJ Library. “This is a family friendly, community celebration that has drawn more than 500 people onto the MJCC campus in past years. We are excited to celebrate alongside the Israeli community again this year and encourage everyone to bring the energy!” says Bess Butterworth, the Development Events and Community Programs Manager at MJCC.

The success of last year’s Yamim programs demonstrated a powerful solidarity between the JCC Movement and Israel—with over 200,000 members engaged in 190 different events supported by more than \$1 million in JCC Association-provided grants. Sixty-three percent of JCCs reported a significant increase in community engagement and a 71 percent surge in participation compared to previous years’ Israel-related programming. Thirty percent of participants were first-time attendees of Israel-focused programs.

The \$7.2-million initiative is supported by a \$3.57-million grant from the Ministry for Diaspora Affairs, the largest such grant to any movement outside Israel. The broad and ongoing Mit-habrim initiative empowers JCC members, staff, and leaders to deepen their connections to Israel and confront antisemitism, especially anti-Zionism.

Yamim events happening in honor of Yom HaShoah, Yom HaZikaron, and Yom HaAtzmaut are supported by Yamim grants to JCCs, alongside grassroots fundraising efforts led by the individual JCCs.

*Community Calendar*

MON TUE WED THUR

**Jewish Federation**  
of Greater Portland

4 5 6 7 8

11 12 13 14 15

18 19 20 21 22

25 26 27 28

The Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Community Calendar contains information on local events, speakers, webinars, the arts information for young families and much more!



# CKI Cemetery cleanup days are Apr. 27, May 4

## *Congregation Kesser Israel*

Volunteers are invited to help with a spring cleanup at the Kesser Israel Cemetery, which marks its centennial this year. The congregation is partnering with SOLVE, a longtime Oregon environmental group, and the Oregon Commission on Historic Cemeteries for an initial two days of work Apr. 27 and May 4, from 1:30 to 4 pm. Additional days may be scheduled as well.

Tasks include everything from weeding and light grounds work to gravestone cleaning and moss removal. The events are appropriate for adults and ages middle school and up, and tools and onsite training will be provided. Advance registration is required.

"We've held a few cleanups in recent years, but those were all before COVID," says Sura Rubenstein, the cemetery's manager. "This being the Pacific Northwest, lichen and moss are constant challenges." Cleaning the gravestones requires attention to detail and a lot of elbow grease."

Aki Fleshler, who with his wife, Devora, has volunteered for several Kesser cleanups, said they both have been grateful to be able to participate. Devora Fleshler is an organizer of this year's cleanups.

"This is a unique opportunity to extend the mitzvah of *chesed shel emet*, lovingkindness, long after the burial



Aki and Devora Fleshler tend the gravestones for Louis Green and Joseph Tolpalar at the Kesser Israel Cemetery. (Congregation Kesser Israel file photo)

itself," Aki Fleshler said. "We care for the memories of the departed from our community, both those close to us and those from past generations whom we never knew. But in honoring them, we bind them into the bonds of life, as we say in the words of our prayers. And we ensure that there will be a place of honor and meaning for those not yet interred, including ourselves."

Please register through SOLVE (Stop Oregon Litter and Vandalism) at <https://volunteer.solveoregon.org/opportunity/a0CVL00001nVh-CH2A0/kesser-israel-historic-cemetery-cleanup-days>.

For more information, email Devora Fleshler ([dkfleshler@gmail.com](mailto:dkfleshler@gmail.com)) or Sura Rubenstein ([sura.rubenstein@comcast.net](mailto:sura.rubenstein@comcast.net)).

## Maayan Torah students visit Cedar Sinai Park for sing-along

### *Maayan Torah Day School*

Maayan Torah Day School students ages four through second grade mingled and sang with Robison Home friends to the delight of all. Led by beloved Portland music teacher and Cedar Sinai Park volunteer, Amy Shapiro, the children and residents sang their way through the Jewish holidays.

"At Maayan, we see every child as a precious link in the chain of our heritage," notes Dr. Sharon Pollin, Director of Organizational Development. "Visiting the Robison Home gives us the opportunity to make that vi-

sion into reality, kvelling as our elders and youngsters share moments such as these together."

In addition to Jewish songs, children and residents joined together in the folk favorites, "This Land is Your Land" and "If I Had a Hammer" before singing Amy Shapiro's recently state-adopted revised version of "Oregon, My Oregon," a favorite of Maayan's first and second graders.

"We'd love to have you back lots!" gushed Fabiana Dal Cero, Life Enrichment and Volunteer Manager at Cedar Sinai Park.



Students from Maayan Torah Day School and Cedar Sinai Park residents share in a sing-along. (Courtesy Maayan Torah Day School)





*New Episodes Every Two Weeks  
Hosted by Rockne Roll*



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## NEXT ISSUE

Issue date Deadline

APR 30

APR 24

# Security Corner

# PPB takes on hate crimes

By JESSICA ANDERSON

I recently became aware that the Portland Police Bureau produces occasional podcasts on topics for community education. It's called the "Talking Beat Podcast" and it highlights the work they're doing in various areas. The latest episode focuses on the efforts being made to address bias crimes in Portland. From my work with PPB, I know how seriously PPB takes bias crimes. Sgt. Matthew Jacobson is part of the Major Crimes unit. It was his insistence that PPB management know about every incident that gets reported to him. He works closely with the FBI and prosecutors and is passionate about his work. Every time I report an issue to him, he calls the affected person within 24 hours of learning about it. He's attended conferences hosted by the Anti-Defamation League and is committed to learning as much as he can about working with the Jewish community and the challenges they face.

In this most recent episode, Sgt. Jacobson discusses with the host how PPB investigates and helps support victims of crimes motivated by bias and hate. Listeners will gain an understanding of the unique challenges these cases present, and the collaborative approach taken with community and state partners. The discussion emphasizes the importance of encouraging victims and witnesses to report bias incidents and crimes. They also explain what bias crimes are, how they differ from hate incidents,



*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.*

and the role the unit plays in supporting victims and holding offenders accountable. Take a listen! [portland.gov/police/news/2025/4/8/talking-beat-understanding-bias-crimes-portland-oregon](http://portland.gov/police/news/2025/4/8/talking-beat-understanding-bias-crimes-portland-oregon)

If you're interested in learning more about what the Bias Crimes unit encounters, PPB collects and publishes all its data online. You can find the database online at [portland.gov/police/open-data/reported-bias-crime-statistics](http://portland.gov/police/open-data/reported-bias-crime-statistics). Be sure to check out the "Launch Dashboard."

The Talking Beat podcast is part of the PPB's broader efforts to connect with the public, provide transparency, and engage in meaningful conversations about public safety issues. Here are some other episodes that you might find interesting:

December 2024 - covers their efforts at recruiting and hiring officers in 2025 as part of a rebuilding year. [portland.gov/police/news/2024/12/17/talking-beat-recruiting-2025-rebuilding-year](http://portland.gov/police/news/2024/12/17/talking-beat-recruiting-2025-rebuilding-year)

November 2024 - Community Active Shooter Preparedness: This episode contains sensitive information and frank discus-

sions of potential and past violence. [portland.gov/police/news/2022/11/15/talking-beat-community-active-shooter-preparedness](http://portland.gov/police/news/2022/11/15/talking-beat-community-active-shooter-preparedness)

April 2024 - A Conversation with Chief Bob Day: Chief Bob Day discusses his reasons for coming out of retirement to lead the Portland Police Bureau. He talks about his hope for the organization and the community. [portland.gov/police/news/2024/4/19/talking-beat-conversation-chief-bob-day](http://portland.gov/police/news/2024/4/19/talking-beat-conversation-chief-bob-day)

If you didn't catch my recent article on safety and security training ([jewishportland.org/jewishreview/jr-stories/new-online-trainings-are-live](http://jewishportland.org/jewishreview/jr-stories/new-online-trainings-are-live)) be sure to take a look at the link on the JFGP Security web page for all the upcoming training. I offer all classes over Zoom and you're welcome to share the training schedule with anyone in or outside the Jewish community.

Please contact me if you have questions about any of the training or have a personal security issue in your life. Our conversations are always confidential. You can reach me at [janderson@securecommunitynetwork.org](mailto:janderson@securecommunitynetwork.org) or 872-273-9214.



## Tzedakah and Social Action

By **RABBI EVE POSEN**  
*Congregation Neveh Shalom and Oregon Jewish Community Foundation*

It is said in Pirkei Avot that "It is not your duty to finish the work, but neither are you at liberty to neglect it" (Pirkei Avot 3:1).

Tikkun Olam, improving the world, is a cornerstone of Jewish Identity. We are, by definition, change-makers. We have a duty to engage with pressing social issues and engage in social action. When you give Tzedakah, you are performing an act of Tikkun Olam, dedicating your resources to addressing societal issues close to your heart. The Oregon Jewish Community Foundation partners with individuals and families to address social issues and ensure a thriving community by facilitating

gifts of cash, stocks, real estate, and other complex assets. OJCF works both to address immediate needs and to ensure a Jewish future for generations to come by supporting endowments and planned legacy giving. OJCF welcomes community members of all affiliations, ages, backgrounds, and financial means to participate in the practice of Tikkun Olam. We welcome you to join us in the work of creating a more perfect world by assisting you with your charitable goals. For more information, contact OJCF at [info@ojcf.org](mailto:info@ojcf.org) or 503-248-9328.

*Oregon Jewish Community Foundation does not provide investment, legal, or tax advice. Please consult with your professional advisors before any tax planning or investment decisions.*

## Obituaries

### GARY MEMEL

With sadness, Chabad of Southwest Portland announces the passing of Gary Franklin Memel, z"l, on Sunday, Apr. 6, 2025.

Gary is survived by his mother Rosalind Memel, sisters Nina Miles, Mahri Weitz, Brother Ronn Memel, Sisters Mindi Memel, Lori Wyler.

The funeral was held on Thursday, Apr. 9, at the Chabad Section of Riverview Cemetery in Portland.

### LARRY MEYER

Congregation Neveh Shalom is saddened to announce the passing of Larry Meyer, z"l, beloved son of Taya Meyer and Ron Meyer z"l, father of Jacob (Chelsea) Meyer, Samuel Meyer, and Max Meyer, grandfather of Olivia and Brady Meyer and brother of Rochelle (Jay) Leisner.

The funeral is today, Wednesday, Apr. 16 at 1 pm at the Mausoleum at Ahavai Shalom Cemetery.

### ROBERT SONNES

It is with sorrow that Congregation Kol Ami announces the death of our member Robert Sonnes, z"l, Monday, Apr. 14.

Funeral services will take place on Friday at 11 am at our Kehilat Olam Cemetery at Northwood Park.

Submit obituaries to The Jewish Review's online form at [form.jotform.com/JFGP/jr-obituary](http://form.jotform.com/JFGP/jr-obituary)

**Free online subscription:**  
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## GOOD DEEDS MONTH: MAKING AN IMPACT TOGETHER

WHATEVER YOUR PASSION, THERE'S A GOOD DEEDS MONTH PROGRAM FOR YOU.



### APRIL 2025

**APRIL 22** Earth Day Clean Up & Planting  
At the Mittleman Jewish Community Center  
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM

**APRIL 24** Challah Bake: Volunteerism as a Jewish Value  
Explore the impact and expand your definition of Jewish volunteerism while learning to braid challah to be donated.  
5:30 PM - 7:30 PM

**APRIL 27** Kesser Cemetery Clean Up  
Showing respect by cleaning the historic Kesser Cemetery in its centennial year.  
1:30 PM - 4:00 PM



Register & See a Full List of Program Offerings Here!



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

# Events

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

*\*=Volunteer service opportunities which are part of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Good Deeds Month. Learn more at [jewishportland.org/gooddeedsmonth](http://jewishportland.org/gooddeedsmonth).*

## **Apr. 16: De-escalation training**

Online security training through Secure Community Network at noon. More information at [jewishportland.org/security](http://jewishportland.org/security).

## **Apr. 16: Jewish Wisdom for Great Life Questions**

Bi-weekly adult education class at 7 pm on Zoom, presented by Beit Haverim. Register online at [beithav.org/form/Spring2025AdultEd](http://beithav.org/form/Spring2025AdultEd).

## **Apr. 17: Countering active threats training**

Online security training through Secure Community Network at noon. More information at [jewishportland.org/security](http://jewishportland.org/security).

## **Apr. 17: Young Adult Seder**

Community seder for young adults (21-39) at 7 pm at Congregation Beth Israel. \$18. Register at [bethisraelpdx.shulcloud.com/form/young-adult-seder-2025.html](http://bethisraelpdx.shulcloud.com/form/young-adult-seder-2025.html)

## **Apr. 17: We Want the Funk!**

Documentary film screening at Eastside Jewish Commons at 7 pm. Free. For more information, visit [ejcpdx.org/events](http://ejcpdx.org/events).

## **Apr. 18: Family Shabbat Dinner at the J!**

Monthly Shabbat dinner at 6 pm at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center. \$5 per person, \$15 family. More information and tickets at [oregonjcc.org/arts-culture/upcoming-events](http://oregonjcc.org/arts-culture/upcoming-events).

## **Apr. 19: Kol Shalom CHJ Community Seder**

Family seder at 4 pm at Eastside Jewish Commons. \$20 adults, \$15 teens, Free for under 12. For more information, visit [kolshalom.org](http://kolshalom.org).

## **Apr. 20: Mimouna Celebration at CNS**

Moroccan post-Passover celebration at Congregation Neveh Shalom at 6 pm. \$8. Register at [members.nevehshalom.org/form/mimouna-celebration-25.html](http://members.nevehshalom.org/form/mimouna-celebration-25.html).

## **\*Apr. 22: Earth Day Clean Up and Planting Event**

Free Earth Day clean-up at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center at 5 pm. For more information, visit [oregonjcc.org/arts-culture/upcoming-events](http://oregonjcc.org/arts-culture/upcoming-events).

## **Apr. 23: Stop The Bleed**

Online security training through Secure Community Network at noon. More information at [jewishportland.org/security](http://jewishportland.org/security).

## **Apr. 23: Community Yom HaShoah Commemoration**

Prayer service at 6:15 pm at Congregation Neveh Shalom. Sponsored by The Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education and the Oregon Board of Rabbis.

## **\*Apr. 24: Challah Bake: Volunteering as a Jewish Value**

Challah bake event at Chabad of Northeast Portland at 5:30 pm, sponsored by OneTable and the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland. Register at [jewishportland.org/gooddeedsmonth/challahbake](http://jewishportland.org/gooddeedsmonth/challahbake).

## **Apr. 24: Yom HaShoah at Beit Haverim**

Community Yom HaShoah program and exhibit at 6 pm. Register online at [beithav.org/form/YomHaShoahService2025](http://beithav.org/form/YomHaShoahService2025).

## **Apr. 24: Jews Who Wine**

Wine tasting event at Oak Flat Vineyards tasting room in Southeast Portland at 6:30 pm, sponsored by Eastside Jewish Commons. \$20. More information at [ejcpdx.org/events](http://ejcpdx.org/events).

## **\*Apr. 26: Multi Faith Youth Service Activity for High Schoolers**

Community service day for teens at Cedar Mill LDS Stake Center at 2 pm, sponsored by Oregon Jewish Community Youth Foundation, LDS Church, Hindu Service Outreach and Bilal Masjid Mosque. RSVP to [youth@ojcf.org](mailto:youth@ojcf.org).

## **Apr. 27: Legacy Planning Through Community and Tradition**

See story, page 2.

## **\*Apr. 27: Kesser Cemetery Cleanup**

See story, page 12

## **Apr. 29: Challah Bake with Evolve Hadassah and Chabad of NE Portland**

Women's challah bake at 7pm. Registration at [events.hadassah.org/PDX-EvolveChallahBake](http://events.hadassah.org/PDX-EvolveChallahBake)

## **Apr. 29: Yom HaZikaron at the MJCC**

Israeli Memorial Day observance at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center at 7:30 pm. For more information, visit [oregonjcc.org/arts-culture/upcoming-events](http://oregonjcc.org/arts-culture/upcoming-events).

## **May 1: Yom Ha'Atzmaut Celebration**

See story, page 11

## Jobs Board

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