

April 26, 2023/Iyar 5, 5783 Volume 58, Issue 9

Incoming editor of Jewish Review

Rockne Roll joins the Jewish Review May 1, 2023, as the incoming editor of the bi-weekly e-newspaper published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland. He will work alongside editor Deborah Moon until her retirement on June 1.

"We are delighted to welcome Rockne to the Jewish Review as our new editor," says JFGP President and CEO Marc Blattner. "He has big shoes to fill following Deb, but he is excited to continue the work to bring Jewish news to our community."

Rockne earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Oregon State University in 2010 and in 2012 a master's in journalism from the University of Oregon.

After graduating from UO, Rockne spent 18 months at his hometown paper, the News-Times in Newport, Ore., covering city government, education and sports while also working as the paper's photographer. He moved to McMinnville



Rockne Roll

in 2014 to work at the News-Register, covering sports, tourism and the wine industry, while also working as a photographer and videographer.

In 2018, Rockne and his wife, Emily, moved to Seattle where he began a career as a freelance journalist before returning to Oregon in 2019. His clients have included The Oregonian, the Bend Bulletin, Willamette Week, Seattlerefined.com and Baseball America magazine.

"Rockne's extensive experience as a journalist and storyteller make him an excellent choice to continue the important work of the Jewish Review," says Deborah. "He eloquently shared his experiences connecting with the Jewish community during the interview process."

He has won awards from the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association, the National Newspapers Association and the National Press Photographers Association.

"It's an honor to join the Jewish Federation and to tell the stories of Portland's vibrant Jewish community," says Rockne. "In today's world, these stories are more important than ever, and I'm looking forward to really immersing myself in them."

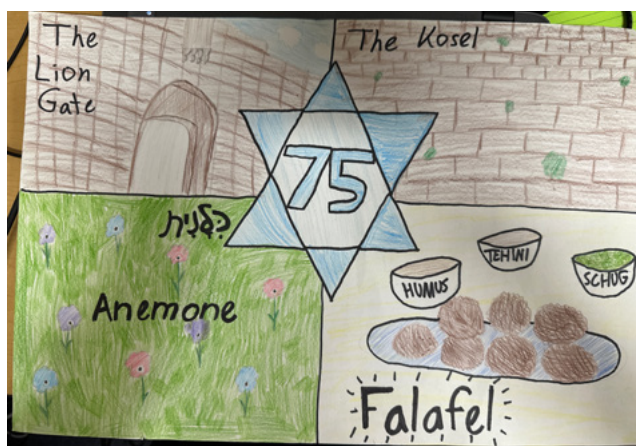
Beginning May 1, Rockne can be reached at rockne@jewishportland.org or 503-892-7404.

Celebrate Israel today

Join in the fun and celebrate Israel's 75th Independence Day with Portland's Jewish community from 4:30 to 9 pm, today, April 26, at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center.

The Yom Ha'atzmaut festivities will feature Israeli dancing, Israel at 75 Celebration Ceremony, trivia, Israeli music sing-along, a photo contest, youth and teen programming, and a DJ to close out the night. The event is free; Israeli food will be available for purchase. At 4:30, a basketball dunk contest will raise money for a Jewish National Fund Indoor Playground in Sderot, Israel.

Sponsored by an Israel at 75 Grant from the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, the Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration is a collaboration of the MJCC, Keruv Levavot, Israeli American Council, PDX Hillel, Israel 360 and Congregation Neveh Shalom.



Israel at 75 art winner

The Jewish Federation of Greater Portland has announced the winners of the Israel at 75 essay and art contests for students. Frieda Leah Skolnik, sixth grade, Maayan Torah Day School, won the middle school art contest with the artwork above. Kindergarten through eighth-grade students competed in art, and students in sixth to 12th grades were invited to write about Israel. For other winners, see story page 8.

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Agency Spotlight

The Jewish Review is featuring a profile of each of the 18 local beneficiary agencies of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's 2022 Annual Campaign.



OREGON JEWISH MUSEUM AND CENTER FOR HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

ojmche.org | 503-226-3600

AREA OF SERVICE: Museum, Holocaust education, archives and collections, public programming, stewards of the Holocaust Memorial

2022 Allocation: \$57,750

MISSION: OJMCHE explores the legacy of the Jewish experience in Oregon, teaches the enduring and universal relevance of the Holocaust, and provides opportunities for intercultural conversations.

OJMCHE recently was named as a finalist for the Institute of Museum and Library Service National Medal, the nation's highest honor for institutions that make significant and exceptional contributions to their communities.

From its humble start as a "museum without walls," OJMCHE has become a vital part of Portland's cultural landscape. Within our permanent home, our exhibitions and programs celebrate and explore, in the broadest terms, Jewish contributions to world culture and ideas, issues of identity and the forces of prejudice.

On June 11, OJMCHE hosts a grand reopening from noon to 3 pm featuring a free street-wide cultural exchange. The museum reopens with an expanded footprint that includes a new core exhibition, Human Rights After the Holocaust.

As stewards of the Oregon Holocaust Memorial in Portland's Washington Park, OJMCHE brings thousands of school children to both the memorial and the museum. OJMCHE believes the Holocaust provides one of the most effective subjects for examining basic moral concerns. It simultaneously addresses universal issues of intolerance and the dangers of denying diversity. For many young Oregonians, an OJMCHE program has been their first encounter with the history of the Holocaust.

The 2019 Oregon Senate Bill 664 directed schools to provide instruction about the

Holocaust and genocide. Since the passage of the bill, OJMCHE Director of Education Amanda Coven has been reaching out to school districts across the state to prepare them to integrate the teaching of the Holocaust and genocide into their curriculums. The mandate includes nine learning concepts that will then be integrated into the revised Social Sciences Standards when they are released in 2026. Coven views the upcoming several years as a "piloting phase," during which the museum can work with teachers and districts to share the history and determine how to best design lessons for various grades.

OJMCHE has been an affiliate of the Jewish Federation for most of its existence. "Financial support through the allocations process has always been most appreciated," says Executive Director Judy Margles. "But we are also grateful for JFGP leadership and the institutional support that we receive through program partnerships, agency council meetings and ongoing conversation about the challenges and opportunities that Jewish communal organizations face today."

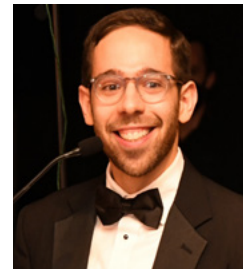
OJMCHE has more than 100 volunteers who work in many areas of the museum from front desk and event support (contact Heather Brunner, hbrunner@ojmche.org) to volunteering in archives and collections (contact archivist Alisha Babbstein, ababbstein@ojmche.org).

Sephardic leader to speak at May 5 dinner

Congregation Ahavath Achim's final Sephardic Shabbat dinner before a summer hiatus features a special guest May 5. Monthly dinners resume Aug. 4.

"Our May dinner is going to be really special, as the director of the Sephardic Brotherhood organization from New York City will be here. He always has wonderful comments to share," says Ahavath Achim Vice President Renee Ferrera.

Ethan Marcus is the Managing Director of the Sephardic Jewish Brotherhood of America, the national umbrella organization for the Ladino-speaking Sephardic community in the United States. In this capacity, he has rapidly grown the Sephardic community's membership base and developed innovative programs to engage a new generation of young Sephardic Jews around the world.



Ethan Marcus

"Our Shabbat dinners were set up with the goal of exposing the greater Portland community to our warm Sephardic customs and cuisine in a setting that is not totally focused on elaborate religious services," says Ferrera. "We have gained a number of new members, and we have had very positive feedback from the people who have attended."

From 2019 to 2020, Marcus was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to study in Athens, Greece, where he conducted an independent research project on the unique liturgical customs of the Romaniote Jews of Greece. His family originates from the Sephardic communities of Veria in modern-day Greece and Izmir in Turkey.

Ahavath Achim was founded in 1910 by Jews arriving from Turkey and Greece's Isle of Rhodes, so Marcus's talk will be especially poignant to members of those founding families.

"Every time I hear Ethan speak, it tugs at my heartstrings," says Ferrera.

She adds it will also appeal to the many in the community who are not Ahavath Achim members, but whose grandparents have roots in the Ladino-speaking Sephardic diaspora.

Join the congregation for dinner and the discussion at 6:30 pm, May 5, at Ahavath Achim, 6686 SW Capitol Hwy., Portland.

Cost: \$20/adult, \$10/child or college student. RSVP: ahavathachimpdx.weebly.com/monthly-shabbat-dinners.html. For details, email info@ahavathachim.com.



JEWISH FEDERATION OF
GREATER PORTLAND
103rd ANNUAL MEETING

JUNE 6, 2023 - 7:00PM
MITTLEMAN JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER
IN PERSON ONLY

**Brandeis University will share the results of the
most comprehensive Community Study ever
completed in Jewish Portland!**

**In addition, we will thank our outgoing board members
and elect new ones, present several awards, and share
our accomplishments from the past year.**

RSVP: jewishportland.org/annualmeeting23
or call 503.245.6219

Jewish and Hindu communities break bread and barriers

BY ROCKNE ANDREW ROLL

Chance encounters can be the gateway to some of the most meaningful conversations. So it was with a recent series of Jewish/Hindu intercommunity dialogues led by the Jewish Community Relations Council.

Bob Horenstein, Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Director of Community Relations, hadn't met anyone from the Hindu community since college until he was approached about a year ago after he made a presentation.

"There was an individual listening who's a member of the Hindu community," Horenstein says. "He reached out to me after he heard my presentation and wanted to figure out how we might be able to start a relationship between our two communities."

The process started as a series of lunches with Horenstein and Associate JCRC Director Rachel Nelson, along with Horenstein's contact and another member of the local branch of Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh, a worldwide Hindu volunteer organization. Through those conversations, Horenstein and Nelson spearheaded the JCRC's participation in a food drive during the Hindu festival of Diwali, a project that contributed 10,000 pounds of food to families in need. Then the framework for the recent dialogue series came together.

"Since we're veterans of doing dialogues over the years, we thought that would be a good way for a group of about 20 to get together and start to know one another," Horenstein says. "I'm guessing most people in the Jewish community don't understand the Hindu religion and vice versa. What we found was that was very much true."

The dialogues took place on Monday nights in February, alternating between Congregation Neveh Shalom and a Hindu temple in Southwest Portland. Each meeting was held over dinner.

"I got to experience really good Indian food, which I had never had," Nelson says. "One of the greatest things about these dialogue groups is that we know that meeting over a meal brings in a different nature of things, and it's a chance to experience a culture from a different sort of view."

A particularly memorable experience was the group's tour of the Hindu temple. While Judaism and Hinduism are theologically quite different, both faiths' ceremonial use of light and fire provided a sense of commonality, as did the depth of meaning in what was displayed. Even the design of the Hindu sacred space felt familiar in a way.

"What really spoke to me was it felt very similar to what the Tabernacle may have looked like, that we don't necessarily have a visual of, because we don't display gods in the same way in our Jewish sacred spaces," Nelson says. "It felt like you were looking at a Tabernacle space when you were looking at their temple space. There was something that felt very connective to it. It was visually very beautiful."

Horenstein drew a connection between the 13 attributes of God described in the Torah and the polytheistic Hindu deities.

"They have multiple gods that seem to represent different attributes, and we sort of connected with it in that way," Horenstein says. "When you walk into their sacred space, you see a lot of representations of these gods. It's beautiful."

A symbol Nelson and Horenstein didn't see was the swastika, a traditional symbol of well-being that is common in India. That name is identified now with the symbol of the Nazi Party, but the reality is more complicated. **(See story at right.)**

"It was never called the swastika in World War II ... it was always referred to as a *hakenkreuz*, which is a hooked cross," says Nelson, adding that having swastika termed a hate symbol has brought pain to the Hindu community.

Horenstein says that Hindus don't display swastikas anywhere in the United States "because of their sensitivity toward the Jewish community."

"Imagine if the Nazis had taken the Star of David and somehow corrupted it – what would we think about that?" asks Horenstein. "It's unfortunate. I feel bad for them for that. They should be able to claim ownership of that."

The dialogues revealed further commonalities: a sense of connection to homeland and a history of persecution and genocide through the ages.

"They have suffered enormous genocides," Horenstein says. "I couldn't believe what I was hearing, even somewhat recently, where millions of Hindus have been murdered over the centuries. There's sort of this feeling that we've both suffered, we've both been 'othered.'"

Jews and Hindus have a common history of oppression, which continues today.

"The Hindu community didn't realize that we feel constant fear of attack and oppression in a way they didn't expect, because many of us are white-presenting," Nelson says.

"One of the participants said, 'I don't understand how you can feel vulnerable.' She couldn't get beyond the color of my skin. But she said she wants to learn why," Horenstein says. "That's a conversation I look forward to having."

It's a conversation that's already moving forward – the dialogue group is reconvening to discuss next steps and future goals. Horenstein is already coordinating with Hindu dialogue participants to advocate for legislation to expand ethnic studies education in Oregon.

"I hope that folks in the broader Jewish community know that we continually do that," Nelson explains. "We know as a minority community that we need allies and friends, and we need to be allies and friends in the broader community."

Monthly meetings resume in May with a discussion of the book *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson.

Rockne Roll is the incoming editor of the Jewish Review (see story page 1).



Clarifying misconceptions about swastika

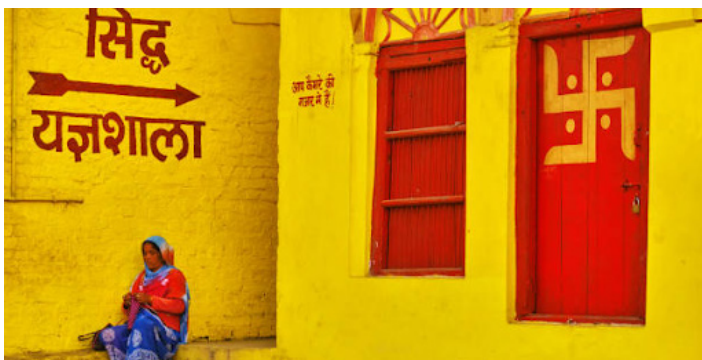
BY SIDDHARTH RAI

The swastika is a sacred symbol that has been ubiquitously used for thousands of years by the Dharmic traditions of the East, namely Hindus, Buddhists and Jains all over the world and throughout history.

In Hinduism, the swastika is a highly revered symbol that represents auspiciousness and good luck. The word "swastika" is a Sanskrit term that is a combination of two words: "su" meaning "well" and "asti(ka)" meaning "being." Hence, swastika means "well-being" or "good existence." In Hindu mythology, swastika is closely associated with Lord Ganesha, the elephant-headed god of wisdom and good fortune. In fact, Ganesha is often depicted with a swastika on his palm and forehead, symbolizing his power and ability to bring good luck and prosperity to his devotees.

In Dharmic cultures, swastika is a symbol that is used in a wide range of contexts, from religious ceremonies to everyday objects. It's often used in the decoration of temples, homes and other sacred spaces, and is considered to bring positive energy and good fortune to those who encounter it.

The swastika is also a common motif in Eastern art and architecture. See **Hooked cross** on next page



Images of the swastika and how the Dharmics (Hindus, Buddhists, Jains) around the world use it in their everyday lives.

Hooked cross, not swastika, is name of Nazi symbol

(Cont. from previous page)

ture and can be found on everything from clothing to jewelry to pottery. It's a symbol that has played an important role in the spiritual and cultural lives of countless Hindus, Buddhists and Jains. Its use continues to be an important way to express their faith and connect with their cultural heritage and remains a deeply meaningful and positive symbol that represents auspiciousness and good fortune.

The swastika has also been used by other cultures throughout history, including Native Americans, ancient Greeks and Nordic peoples, where this symbol has positive connotations representing concepts such as life, the sun and good fortune.

This symbol unfortunately came to be associated with evil, hatred, genocide and violence in the 20th century after a symbol similar to the shape of swastika became popularly used by the Nazi party of Germany. Hitler and everyone in the Nazi party referred to this symbol not as swastika, but as "*hakenkreuz*." *Hakenkreuz*, or hooked cross, is a Christian symbol with no relation whatsoever to the Hindu/Buddhist/Jain symbol of the swastika. The *hakenkreuz* symbol was also referred to as "gammadion" on other occasions in European history. Hitler was neither influenced nor ever associated with the Hindu culture or civilization.

This confusion between the hooked cross and the swastika can be traced to the wrong and misleading translation of the *hakenkreuz* to swastika in the German-to-English translation of Hitler's book *Mein Kampf*. Translated for the second time in 1939 by a Christian priest named James Vincent Murphy, *hakenkreuz* was wrongly translated to swastika, rather than "hooked cross."

Hindus, Buddhists and Jains around the world hope global discourse moves to distinguish between the swastika and the hooked cross and expect that the Nazi symbol of hatred be referred

to as the hooked cross and not swastika in future references to this symbol.

By understanding the true history of swastika and its role in the spiritual traditions of the Eastern world, we can work to reclaim the glory of swastika and recognize its true meaning and significance. That will also help to promote tolerance, understanding and appreciation for cultural diversity by recognizing the different representations of symbols in different cultures around the world.

In 2008, a Hindu-Jewish collaboration between the Chief Rabbinate of Israel and the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha made the following joint declaration as part of their summit:

"Swastika is an ancient and greatly auspicious symbol of the Hindu tradition. It is inscribed on Hindu temples, ritual altars, entrances and even account books. A distorted version of this sacred symbol was misappropriated by the Third Reich in Germany, and abused as an emblem under which heinous crimes were perpetuated against humanity, particularly the Jewish people. The participants recognize that this symbol is, and has been, sacred to the Hindus for millennia, long before its misappropriation."

"The Silence of Swastika: The Biggest Betrayal" is a well-researched documentary that gives a comprehensive history and overview of how this sacred symbol swastika was hijacked by the mainstream discourse and how the symbol *hakenkreuz* came to be known as swastika. See the film at [youtube.com/watch?v=HspDwwVv1Fk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HspDwwVv1Fk).

Dr. Siddharth Rai is a semiconductor professional working in the Greater Portland area. Along with semiconductors, he also has a lot of interest in cross-cultural and cross-civilizational studies. He participated in the local Hindu-Jewish dialogues in February (see related article). He also loves to sing, play tennis and hike to enjoy the natural beauty of the Pacific Northwest.

Remembering bat mitzvah 'twin'

Last fall, Portlander Bella Leavitt "twinning" her bat mitzvah with Betje de Vries, a Dutch girl who died in the Holocaust a few days before she would have turned 12. (Read the full story on page 8 of the Sept. 7 issue of the Jewish Review at cdn.fedweb.org/fed-29/2/JR090722.pdf.)

This year during spring break, Bella and her parents, Naomi and Scot Leavitt, visited Amsterdam and participated in a ceremony to remember Betje's family and cousins.

Throughout Europe, there are stumble stones, called Stolpersteine, in front of the homes of people who were victims of World War II. Each one shows the name of the person and the dates of their deportation and death. They are placed on the sidewalk so you stumble over them. Each stone costs \$150.

For her bat mitzvah project, Bella wanted to raise enough money to cover five stones, for Betje and her immediate family. Bella inspired more than 39 families to contribute to the effort, raising enough money to pay for 11 stones.

At the ceremony setting the stones in front of Betje's former home, Bella and Naomi spoke along with surviving members of the family and the ambassadors from the United States, Israel and Germany.

"We stood and honored her family," says Naomi. "We sang, we prayed and we cried."



Bella Leavitt, left, received a medallion from Shefali Razdan Duggar, the U.S. Ambassador to the Netherlands, for raising money for the stumble stones.

Longtime leader wants other women to carry on

BY DEBORAH MOON

When Liz Menashe finishes her term on the National Women's Philanthropy board in June, it will mark the end (or if the community is lucky, a pause) of a proud tradition stretching back more than three decades.

Liz isn't sure what comes next for her, but she knows she wants the tradition of Portland women having a national voice to continue.

Portland has been represented on the National Women's Philanthropy Board and its predecessor, the National Women's Division Board, for nearly as long as Liz has been a leader. Sharon Weil was on the national board when Liz joined. Over the past few decades, other women – including Priscilla Kostiner, Rita Philip, Carolyn Weinstein and Gayle Romain – have shared Portland's perspectives on a national board dominated by East Coast representatives.

"It's good for Portland to know what's going on nationally and internationally, and it's good for them to be aware of this part of the country," says Liz. "It is such an East Coast mindset. I am the only one from the Pacific Northwest."

"I am worried there is no one to replace me," she says. With her departure, the only West Coast representatives on the board are from Los Angeles and San Francisco.

She hopes to inspire other women to step up and renew Portland's connection. As much as the local and national community have benefited from her participation, Liz says she has received so much personally – eye-opening and educational experiences, the sense of making a difference, the chance to explore New York City at annual retreats, friendships and so much more.

Liz became the first woman president (now board chair) of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland in 1993. She was already a confirmed leader in the local Jewish community. She chaired every division of women's campaign and is a Lion of Judah. She has remained a key player both locally and nationally. For the past

eight years, she has served on the National Women's Philanthropy Board.

"Liz's dedication is boundless, her heart large, her care of this Jewish community unending," says Wendy Kahn, JFGP Chief Development Officer. "I had my first opportunity to spend time with Liz at an International Lion of Judah Conference, an opportunity to meet women from across the globe. Liz knows so many, and I got to know Liz so well. Our friendship is what I treasure most and what I am sure the women on that board will cherish; they learned from her. And she shares with me, personally, and our community generously." During her term as Federation President, Liz introduced the large community gala for all Federation supporters, not just major donors. When "the old boys" told her no, Liz pushed back and suggested a big event with a pre-reception for the big donors.

"It worked out," says Liz. "You have to try something new sometimes."

She used that same attitude to help bring two programs – PJ Library and Dignity Grows – to Portland.

In 2007, Harold Grinspoon offered \$90,000 if Portland would match it and become one of the first communities outside of Massachusetts to offer PJ Library, a program that sends a free Jewish book each month to families who enroll their young children. Liz was the first to step up and offer \$15,000. She encouraged five other mothers and grandmothers – Lila Goodman z"l, Renee Holzman, Shirley Lenske z"l, Lois Schnitzer and Eve Stern – to match her gift and make it a women's initiative.

During a Women's Philanthropy Board Retreat, one woman told the group about a new project called Dignity Grows, a program to pack and donate hygiene materials to those who can't afford to buy menstrual products.

"Some women could not go to work when they are menstruating," Liz says they learned. "It was shocking to all of us. We hadn't thought of that. So, I brought it to Portland and told Wendy."



When Elizabeth (Liz) Menashe took the reins of the board of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland in 1993, it was a page 1 story in the Jewish Review. She displays that story and her Lion of Judah pin, which represents a woman's a gift of \$5,000 or more to her community's annual campaign for community needs.

"Wendy Kahn deserves all the credit for making Dignity Grows a reality," says Liz. "I only brought the idea, pushed for it to happen in Portland, gave her the names of resources, etc. She got the 'go-ahead' from Marc (Blattner, JFGP President and CEO) for Women's Philanthropy of Federation to proceed. And, she ran with it and made it all become a reality."

Liz hopes the prospect of being involved in projects such as Dignity Grows and PJ Library will inspire women to continue her work.

"I think there are many young women who want to make an impact," says Liz.

Interested? Contact Wendy Kahn at 503-892-3015 or wendy@jewishportland.org.

Saul Korin leaves MJCC/PJA to lead PNW Jewish National Fund



Saul Korin

Saul Korin leaves his position as director of donor engagement and philanthropy at Portland Jewish Academy and the Mittleman Jewish Community Center on April 27, 2023. Korin will become the Pacific Northwest Director for Jewish National Fund-USA on May 1.

As Director, Pacific Northwest, Korin will oversee and grow fundraising for JNF in Portland, Seattle and around the region.

"I am honored to fundraise for a country I love and for people that I love," says Korin. "My grandfather was a halutz (pioneer) before the founding of the State of Israel, and I lived in Israel twice (sophomore

year of high school and junior year of college). I am grateful I will be able to stay here in Portland while traveling to Seattle and around the most beautiful part of the country – the Pacific Northwest."

Korin says he is proud of the dollars raised for PJA through the Auction, Annual Fund, Giving Circle and Atid Fund. He is grateful to Friends of the Center Society members, business sponsors, event sponsors, Day for the J sponsors and more. The MJCC will celebrate "Israel at 75" Yom Ha'atzmaut beginning at 4:30 pm, April 26 (see page 1).

Starting May 1, Korin can be contacted at skorin@jnf.org or 310-701-5208.

MJCC aims to excel in service to youth, families

BY DEBORAH MOON

Mittleman Jewish Community Center is working to implement the priorities in the new strategic plan it began sharing with the community in February. You can read a summary of the plan at oregonjcc.org/about-us/resources/strategic-plan.

“All six strategic priorities (see box) are focused on areas where the J is making efforts to excel and be ‘best in class,’” says MJCC Executive Director Steve Albert.

Of particular note, he says, is the J’s focus on enhancing services to youth and young families. To that end, the J has expanded its summer day camp offerings by adding cheer and dance camps to the sports camps traditionally on its specialty camp roster. The camp has also divided its counselor-in-training program into groups for junior (eighth- and ninth-graders) and senior (10th-graders) to offer more age-targeted programming. More day camp options are also available for the youngest campers (ages 3-4).

Programming for young families has also expanded since the MJCC became the implementing partner of the Portland-area PJ Library affiliate (jewishportland.org/jewishreview/jr-stories/mjcc-takes-reins-of-pj-library). With funding from the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, the J now administers the program that provides free Jewish books to children each month.

Spring programming also expanded to include more diverse afterschool programs.

The fitness program is another area where the MJCC strives to become “best in class.” Thanks to a generous gift, \$100,000 of new equipment and updates have enhanced the fitness center. More personal trainers and group classes have been added to meet the different needs of members.

MJCC STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Revitalize and reimagine camp.

Invest in a significant expansion of our portfolio of youth programs, including afterschool enrichment, aquatics and sports.

Strengthen the “pipelines” for young families into the MJCC (including Portland Jewish Academy families, PJ library and more).

Launch a “signature” outreach or events series that increases the MJCC’s profile, importance and relevance in the Jewish community (and especially beyond its own campus).

Develop our board to more effectively carry out its governance and philanthropy work.

Refresh the fitness offering in ways that accentuate our positioning as a welcoming and inviting wellness community.



The “Day for the J” on April 23 gave families and people of all ages the chance to experience many of the MJCC’s resources. Above, kids enjoy the “Kids for the J” youth programming in the Sportsplex. Other activities included a walk, swim, pickleball, racquetball and Mah Jongg.

“Our goal is to have an inclusive fitness program whatever your age, fitness level, body type or goals,” says Albert. “We are a welcoming, inviting, nonjudgmental space.”

“The changes to date are just the first of ongoing growth,” says Albert. “The labor shortage makes it difficult to offer a number of things we want to add or expand. We can’t find qualified instructors for swim lessons, rock climbing, gymnastics...”

While many children are enrolled in the center’s swim programs, he says the demand for swim lessons especially outstrips the J’s ability to find instructors.

In addition to those priorities identified in the strategic plan, the center continues to offer cultural programs, casual clubs (such as knitting and mahjong), and other opportunities for people to connect with each other and the community.

“A lot of what the J does isn’t tied to the strategic plan, and the plan is really intended to highlight the areas where we plan to invest additional resources to develop ‘best in class’ programs,” says Albert. “The J will, of course, continue to offer programs and events that do not specifically target youth and young families, and the PDX Business Series is a good example, but that isn’t part of the strategic plan.”

Explore youth programs at oregonjcc.org/youth-programs and upcoming arts and culture programs at oregonjcc.org/arts-culture/upcoming-events.

Mittleman JCC to celebrate community May 9

The Mittleman Jewish Community Center will hold its 4th annual Community Celebration on Tuesday, May 9, 2023, at 5:30 pm.

It is an opportunity to recognize individuals who have made a significant contribution to the MJCC and/or the Jewish community at large. Gayle Romain will receive the MJCC Pillar of Excellence award; eight-year NFL guard and University of Oregon alum Geoff Schwartz will be inducted into the Oregon Jewish Sports Hall of Fame; and two high-achieving high school athletes will receive the Harry

Glickman Scholar-Athlete Award.

Israeli photographer Erez Kaganovitz will be the keynote speaker. A native of Tel Aviv and a TEDx speaker, Erez is the human behind the *Humans of Tel Aviv*, *Humans of Israel* and *Humans of the Holocaust* projects. Through his work, Erez has helped bridge a cultural gap in society, both within and outside of Israel. His compelling work brings understanding, emotional connection and unity to many around the world.

Currently exhibited in the MJCC lobby, *Humans of Israel* combines photojournalism with digital storytelling to give a

sense of what makes Israel, and the diverse humans in it, tick. The *Humans of Israel* project showcases Israel’s diversity, multiculturalism and vibrant civil society.

As the featured program in the MJCC’s celebration of Israel@75, *Humans of Israel* will remain at the MJCC through mid-May.

Admission is free, but registration is requested at oregonjcc.org/celebration.

To support the MJCC and future programs, a donation of \$18 for members or \$36 for nonmembers is suggested.

Israel at 75 art, essay winners

The Jewish Federation of Greater Portland has announced the winners of the Israel at 75 essay and art contests for students.

“It was so wonderful to see the creativity of our students as they reflected on 75 years of Israel’s history through art and essays,” says Rachel Nelson, JFGP Director of Educational Initiatives & Associate Director of Community Relations. “It was hard to narrow down – so many great pieces were created.”

Kindergarteners to eighth-graders competed in art, and students in sixth to 12th grades in

writing. From 50+ entries, the winners are high school essay winner, Sarah Esther Weisman; middle school essay winner, Jacob Jordan; middle school arts winner: Frieda Leah Skolnik (see page 1); and elementary arts winner, Moshe Leib Espinoza.

Elementary school arts honorable mentions are Liam Furtado, fourth grade, Sabin Elementary School; Avigayil Keiserman, kindergarten, Maayan Torah; and Shoshana Dall and Talia Sohn, second graders at Maayan Torah.



First-place elementary art was a three-part view of the Kotel plaza by Moshe Leib Espinoza, fourth grade, Maayan Torah Day School. (See middle school first-place art on page 1.)

High School Essay Winner

BY SARAH ESTHER WEISMAN

Ninth-grader, Maayan Torah Day School

Eretz Yisrael, cherished Land of Israel. I have many vivid memories of you. I was born within your boundaries and was nurtured within you for more than half of my life. You are not like any other land, not like any other birthplace.

You are a beautiful land, physically unique, given a special touch of majesty. You possess powerful scenery: rocky hills and tall mountains, clear waters and sunny springs. Lush green fields and deep, blue skies; colorful valleys and bright sunshine. You are called “שָׂדֵךְ בָּלֶחֶם וְתֵבֶן זֵרַת, a land flowing with milk and honey.” Your soil brings forth a wide and delicious assortment of special fruits and vegetables: wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates.

You are home to ancient cities and acclaimed destinations. To give some examples, you host the *Kotel* (remains of the Western Wall of the *Beit Hamikdash*, the Holy Temple), where many Jews go to pray and pour out their hearts. The graves of our patriarchs and matriarchs are in *Me'arat Hamachpela* and *Kever Rachel*, in the city of Hebron. Rabbi Akiva and his student, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, both great Torah scholars, are also buried there.

Jews love and feel a deep connection to you. We glow, we sparkle as we speak and tell of your splendor and beauty. After visiting you, we leave spellbound and awestruck. You're a land that draws Jews from all kinds of back-

grounds, from all over the world. Many Jews come to you to celebrate their joyous occasions, relishing your holy atmosphere.

Compared to the rest of the world, though, *Eretz Yisrael* barely exists geographically: looking at a world map, one almost needs a magnifying glass to find its location. What about this particular piece of Earth is so pulling and captivating to the heart? Yes, it has many distinct features, but can you not find them in other parts of the globe? There are ancient pyramids in Egypt, breathtaking Swiss Alps, powerful Niagara Falls – beautiful settings and historical landmarks all around the world.

Clearly, as impressive as *Eretz Yisrael* seems to the casual observer, it's not why the land is so precious and unique. The previously mentioned factors are not, by themselves, what makes the land endearing to the Jewish people. How can we explain the phenomenon of seeing so many being drawn toward the Land of Israel?

Imagine a general who finds a bar of gold, lying on the ground beneath his feet. He would rejoice at his good fortune, of course. Yet, it would mean so much more to him had he received it as a gift from the king himself. Such a gift is priceless. That general would never want to sell it for any amount of money in the world. For the same amount of gold, one can be worth much more than the other.

This parable helps us gain further insight into the intrinsic worth of *Eretz Yisrael*. The Almighty promised Avraham Avinu (Abraham, our Forefather) that He would give the Land of Israel to Avraham's

descendants. Later, He gave that promise to Yitzchak (Isaac) and Yaakov (Jacob). What gives *Eretz Yisrael* its *chashivut*, importance, is the fact that the King of Kings gave it to the Jewish people. The Almighty, Master of the World, chose to give us a gift. How fortunate we are!

Eretz Yisrael is an elevated place, where we can connect with the Almighty in a different dimension. We were given certain *mitzvot* (commands) that only pertain to the Land of Israel. An example of this is *Shmita* (the mitzvah to desist from working the ground for one year, every seventh year). By performing the *mitzvot* that the Almighty gave us, we deepen our connection with Him.

Eretz Yisrael is a land of natural beauty. More than that, it is a land on which we can easily tap into the feeling of our closeness with the Almighty. A place where we can each feel His immense love for us individually. Even more than a caring father loves his only child.

I feel loved.

Middle School Essay Winner

BY JACOB JORDAN

Eighth-grader, Lake Oswego Junior High

The 75th anniversary of Israel's statehood is a momentous occasion that deserves to be celebrated. On May 14, 1948, the modern State of Israel was declared by David Ben-Gurion, and since then, it has become a vibrant, diverse and prosperous nation.

The history of Israel is a long and complex one. It has been the home of the Jewish people for thousands of years, yet it has also been a site of conflict and war. Yet despite the challenges, the people of Israel have persevered and built a strong and vibrant nation.

Today, Israel is a thriving country with a strong economy, a vibrant culture and a robust democracy. Its people are diverse, with Jews, Muslims, Christians and Druze living side by side in relative harmony. It is a leader in science, technology and innovation, and has made great strides in the fields of medicine, agriculture and education.

Israel has also been a beacon of hope and a safe haven for Jewish people around the world. It has welcomed millions of immigrants from all over the world and provided them with a place to call home. This has created a vibrant and diverse society and made Israel a leader in the Middle East.

The 75th anniversary of Israel's statehood is a moment to celebrate the country's accomplishments and to recognize the hard work of its people. It is also an opportunity to reflect on the challenges that Israel has faced, and to reaffirm our commitment to peace and security in the region.

As we celebrate this momentous milestone, let us remember the courage and resilience of the people of Israel and the strength of their spirit. May the future of Israel be one of prosperity.



Yossi Klein Halevi spoke to a crowd of about 350 people at Congregation Neveh Shalom April 19.

Israel at 75 faces internal crisis

BY DEBORAH MOON

Yossi Klein Halevi, the Israeli writer and journalist, spoke April 19 on the identity crisis modern Israel faces as a Jewish and democratic state. The event was sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, Israel360 at Neveh Shalom, Congregation Beth Israel and StandWithUs.

Introduced as a profound thinker and one of the foremost experts on Israel society and Israeli politics, Halevi noted that Israel has faced many existential moments from without but that the current crisis “is what I regard as a life and death moment from within.”

Speaking days before Israel’s 75th anniversary, he said the gratitude Israelis traditionally feel for living in Israel at this time in history has been dampened by a sense of anxiety, a sense of impending chaos. For months, hundreds of thousands of Israelis have flooded the streets protesting the government’s “judicial reform” proposals.

“This government has declared the Israeli Supreme Court to be an enemy of the state of Israel,” he said. Calling this the most corrupt and extreme government in Israel’s history, Halevi said they claim, “if you win a democratic election, you have the right to undo democracy.”

He said liberal moderates consider democracy a complex balance between the rights of the majority and the rights of minorities, and “the purpose of the court is to protect the minority.”

Even Prime Minister Netanyahu, who is championing the effort to weaken the Supreme Court, previously supported the court wholeheartedly. In a 2012 speech, Netanyahu said that there is “no democracy without an independent judiciary.”

What changed, said Halevi, is Netanyahu’s years-long legal trouble. Currently on trial for corruption, he has pivoted to push legislation promoted by his far-right and ultra-Orthodox coalition partners. Though protests caused him to temporarily withdraw the legislation, Halevi said it is only a postponement.

Despite the panxiety over the future of Israel, Halevi said, “At the same time, I have never felt such exhilaration and pride in being Israeli.” The protests, which continue to grow, and which include people from across the political divide, “will continue until the threat passes,” he said.

“This is the most patriotic opposition move-

ment I can think of,” he said. “This is an affirming movement.”

“The slogan of the protest movement is one word, busha, shame,” he said, adding that protesters have “a sense of outrage – How could you do this to the state of Israel? How dare you?”

And, he noted, many moderates who voted for Likud feel betrayed by the government’s judicial revolution, which was not on Netanyahu’s list of priorities during the campaign.

“Netanyahu has destroyed Likud as a democratic party,” said Halevi. “It is now aligned with the far right.”

In addition to the assault on Israel’s identity as a democratic state, Halevi said the most religious government in history has also embarked on a bitter debate about Israel’s identity as a Jewish state. Liberal Zionists define Israel as the state of the Jewish people, whereas the Orthodox and many traditionalists call Israel the state of “authentic Judaism.”

Halevi said he fears the extreme government’s next move will be to challenge the “Right of Return” with an attempt to roll back the clause that says anyone with one Jewish grandparent is eligible for Israeli citizenship.

“The good news is... the liberal center has awakened,” said Halevi.

At the start of the evening, Neveh Shalom Rabbi David Kosak questioned if we are at a precipice “between good and evil... between the Israel we dreamed of and the Israel we received.”

Referring back to that comment, Halevi concluded his prepared remarks by saying, “We are on a precipice, (but) I believe we have the resilience to pull back.”

He went on to respond to audience questions moderated by JFGP Community Relations Director Bob Horenstein, who had provided a sterling introduction of Halevi. Questions ranged from the Israel-diaspora relationship, whether some judicial reform is indeed necessary, if the protests are projecting a sign of weakness in Israel that has encouraged attacks from some Middle East neighbors, the damage Netanyahu has done to his legacy, and the views of various groups and minorities on the protests.

Watch the whole talk and Q&A session at youtube.com/watch?v=DVakISOzArU

Life cycle

ENGAGEMENT

Oren-Fowler

When Rabbi Gary Oren proposed to Allison Fowler, it wasn’t a total surprise.

Just a few weeks before, they had watched “When Harry Met Sally” together. When Harry said to Sally, “When you realize you want to spend the rest of your life with somebody, you want the rest of your life to start as soon as possible,” Gary leaned over to Allison and said, “that’s right.”

They actually had talked about getting married the first week they were dating. It was clear right away that they were similar in all the important ways, had fun together, laughed all the time and had a chemistry that has just grown and grown.

The couple went on the March Jewish Federation trip to Israel. It was their first time away together, and they were without kids and animals and had so much fun seeing Israel. It was Allison’s first time in Israel. Gary had lived there and is fluent in Hebrew, so it was great for them each to see Israel through the other’s eyes. Their hotel in Jerusalem had a deck and overlooked the old city walls and just before Shabbat on March 24, Gary proposed.

Gary is the rabbi of Congregation Shaarie Torah.

They live in Lake Oswego, and the wedding is planned for late summer.



Submit births, b’nai mitzvah, engagements, weddings, anniversaries and landmark birthdays to editor@jewishportland.org.

Dr. Avital O'Glasser earns national award

Avital Y. O'Glasser, MD, FACP, has been awarded the Walter J. McDonald Award for Early Career Physicians by the American College of Physicians, a national organization of internal medicine physicians. Award recipients will be recognized at ACP's annual convocation ceremony on April 27, 2023, at the San Diego



Convention Center, where ACP is hosting its annual scientific conference, Internal Medicine Meeting 2023.

Dr. O'Glasser is a member of Congregation Neveh Shalom and serves on the board of Camp Solomon Schechter, where her sons go to camp. Her two children are also students at Portland Jewish Academy.

The Walter J. McDonald award recognizes outstanding achievement by an internal medicine physician member within 16 years of graduating medical school. Achievements may include leadership; academics; clinical care, including publishing, teaching and mentoring; and/or volunteerism.

"I am absolutely honored and elated to be receiving this award from the American College of Physicians, an organization whose vision and leadership have been instrumental in helping me become the physician I am today," says Dr. O'Glasser. "It is also truly a privilege to join the list of prior recipients of this award, many of whom have been role models, mentors and friends through my professional journey."

Dr. O'Glasser joined the teaching faculty within Oregon Health & Science University's Division of Hospital Medicine Clinic shortly after completing her residency at the same university. She is now OHSU's Medical Director of the Pre-Operative Medicine Clinic and an Assistant Program Director for the Internal Medicine residency program. Dr. O'Glasser's clinical and research interests include perioperative medicine and quality improvement, perioperative COVID-19, social media for physicians, nontraditional scholarship, advocacy, gender equity and case report writing.

Receiving the Walter J. McDonald Award comes with a special meaning for Dr. O'Glasser due to Dr. McDonald's contributions to OHSU as a Professor Emeritus for the Department of Medicine. Aside from Dr. McDonald's affiliation with OHSU, she is the first internal medicine physician from the university to receive this award since 2004 when it went to Sima S. Desai, MD, FACP, a career mentor and colleague.

She is actively involved with ACP both nationally and at the Oregon Chapter level and served on the National Council of Early Career Physicians. At the local chapter level, she serves as Co-chair of the Residents & Fellows Council, Chair of the Medical Student Interest Groups and Chair of the Communications Committee. In 2016, Dr. O'Glasser received the Oregon ACP Early Career Physician Award. Dr. O'Glasser is currently a Fellow at ACP and a Senior Fellow of Hospital Medicine. She is also the vice president of the Society for Perioperative Assessment and Quality Improvement and a Distinguished Fellow of Perioperative Medicine.

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Preschoolers play and learn at Gan Yeladim in Northeast Portland.

East side preschool grows

A new Jewish preschool that had a limited launch on Portland's east side last fall now is ready to welcome more students.

Gan Yeladim (garden of children) initially opened to siblings of students attending Maimonides Jewish Day School, after the day school partnered with Chabad of Northeast Portland to purchase the 8,700-square-foot former day care center at 4635 NE 9th Ave.

"Before we opened last fall, we had tours, and people were thrilled we were so close to them," says NE Chabad Executive Director Rabbi Chaim Wilhelm. "We are the only Jewish preschool on the east side."

Demand is obviously high. A PJ Library map of families with young children who have signed up to receive free Jewish books shows a large concentration of families in Northeast Portland. A Jewish preschool in the area gives those families a day care option that also connects them with Jewish life, says Rabbi Wilhelm.

Initially, the preschool had to turn away a lot of interested families while they developed their program and organized the space. Now, Gan Yeladim has space for a few new students for the rest of this school year and plans a full preschool for children ages 18 months to 5 years beginning in the fall.

Rebbetzin Mushka Wilhelm serves as the preschool's director. She encourages families to come in now for a tour before school ends June 16. The new school year begins Aug. 28. To schedule a tour, call 503-288-8919.

"Jewish values are the basis of our curriculum, environment and school culture," says Mushka Wilhelm. "We use a mix of *Reggio Emilia* and Montessori (educational philosophies). The goal is to create a warm and friendly environment nurturing to children. We use a variety of hands-on and creative learning experiences including music and art. What is unique is our days are infused with Jewish celebration – we make it come to life for the kids."

Gan Yeladim offers a full-day program (8 am-4 pm) for ages 18 months to 3 years. The 3- to 5-year-old class has half-day (8:30-12:30) and full-day options.

For more information, visit eastsidejewishpreschool.com or call administrator Andrea Cadena at 503-288-8919.

Learn to help your child manage anxiety

"Helping Your Child Manage Anxiety," a free four-part series for parents, begins May 1.

Presented by Jewish Family and Child Service, Congregation Neveh Shalom and Portland Area Jewish Educators, the Monday evening series offers three virtual sessions followed by an in-person panel discussion and opportunity to meet the presenters and other parents (see box).

"We've seen a rise in the prevalence of anxiety and depression since Covid," says JFCS child and family therapist Laura Cohen.

Similarly, CNS Director of Congregational Learning Mel Berwin has seen more students struggling with anxiety over the past three years.

Berwin says all three of her children struggled with mental health issues as teens or young adults. So, the family participated in a two-year dialectical behavior therapy program.

"We learned so much – it's very skill based," says Berwin. "A lot of the skills and language learned in DBT are great life skills. My

educator brain kicked in."

She developed workshops combining DBT skills with Jewish texts and tradition and presented the workshops for Neveh Shalom educators and the Blue Dove Foundation, a nonprofit founded to address mental health and substance abuse through a Jewish lens.

The idea for the parenting series emerged when Cohen and Dan Rothenberg, a therapist and teen resiliency coach, attended an adaptation of that program Berwin offered for parents in the Neveh community.

The trio decided to expand that program and create a parenting series to help parents across the Jewish community. Each member of the trio will present a virtual program using their particular expertise before coming together May 22 for an in-person panel discussion.

"We want to destigmatize mental health and break down the isolation parents feel when their kids have mental health struggles," says Cohen.

FREE PARENTING SERIES

Supporting Youth with Anxiety Through a Jewish Lens, May 1, 7-8 pm, on Zoom, presented by Mel Berwin: Jewish tradition offers wisdom to help shift unhealthy thinking patterns into a healthier way to view ourselves and the world around us.

A Taste of SPACE (Supportive Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions), May 8, 7-8 pm, on Zoom, presented by Laura Cohen, ACSW: SPACE is a treatment model that teaches parents skills and tools to change their own behavior in order to help their child better manage their anxiety.

Finding the Appropriate Mental Health Professional for Your Child, May 15, 7-8 pm, on Zoom, presented by Dan Rothenberg, LCSW: Learn the differences between a variety of therapy and life-coaching techniques to find the right fit for your teen or young adult.

Panel Discussion, May 22, 7-8 pm, at Neveh Shalom, 2900 SW Peaceful Lane, Portland: A chance to ask specific questions and connect with presenters and other families managing similar challenges in small breakout groups.

REGISTER: jfcs-portland.org/manage-anxiety/

Caregiver's family woven into Cedar Sinai tapestry

BY SYDNEY CLEVENGER

Jasmine Lohn, L.P.N., C.N.A., is a prime example of the interconnectedness and tradition of Cedar Sinai Park. Her parents worked at Robison Jewish Home when Jasmine was a young girl.

"She looked just the same," says Harold Schnitzer Center for Living Resident Joeen Rodinsky, whose mother lived at Robison in the mid-1990s and was cared for by Jasmine's mother, Aura. "When I came here to live, she said, 'Do you know who I am? I am Aura's daughter.' It was immediate love. I adore her."

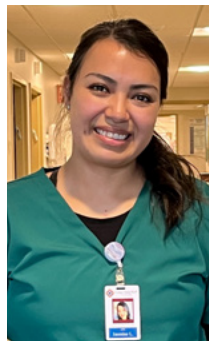
Jasmine was born in California, where her parents, Aura and Luis, worked at a Jewish community in Sylmar. When they moved to Oregon in 1991, they joined Robison.

"It was a cozy place," says Jasmine of her childhood visits. "When you walked into the reception area, they used to make cookies, and it smelled like home. I remember one resident in particular who used to make necklaces out of beads. ... So I would sit there and eat the cookies that they would give me at reception and talk with her, and she would show me her collection."

Jasmine occasionally read to the residents and put lotion on their hands. Later, she attended Beaverton High School and visited Robison as a teen through their Health Careers program. She says her upbringing definitely influenced her decision to go into health care.

After becoming a certified nursing assistant, she worked at West Hills Village, and then she managed a foster home.

"And then in 2010, my mom was like, 'Come apply at Robison!'



Cedar Sinai Park's Annual Benefit

Join with your friends and family on May 13, 2023, at the beautiful Cosmopolitan Ballroom in the Hotel Eastlund to celebrate Cedar Sinai Park's mission of love, honor and respect.

Doors open at 6:30 pm. Entertainer Susannah Mars is the emcee for this in-person event.

Tickets are \$140. Space is limited, so please make your reservation today at 503-535-4476.

We can all be together. So I ended up coming here and applying and got hired."

Jasmine and her parents all worked at Robison together for the next eight years. She has mainly worked on the Robison side of campus, in post-acute and rehabilitation, and the Harold Schnitzer Center for Living households. Now Aura is mostly retired, and Luis works closer to home, but Jasmine has stayed on. She became a licensed practical nurse in 2016.

"I enjoy the residents," she says. "They're just like family. They're like my grandma and grandpas, so I really enjoy being around them."

Jasmine lives near McMinnville and spent five hours on the road during the recent snowstorm to get to Robison to make her shift. She spent a night in the Holzman household to ensure she would be at work the following day.

In her free time, Jasmine enjoys walking and hiking with her fiancé, Duncan. She has three children (Aimee, 11, Allyson, 9, and Ailis, 5), and three dogs (a pug, a standard poodle and a St. Bernard). Aura and Luis live a block away.

Relevant concert explores refugee experience



Michelle Bushkova

"From Darkness to Light"

Refugee Experiences in Words and Music

WHAT: A concert and panel discussion focusing on refugees

WHO: Portland Chamber Orchestra featuring soloist Michelle Bushkova, an 18-year-old Jewish woman born in Russia

WHEN: Panel 6:30, Concert 7:30 pm, May 13

WHERE: Patricia Reser Center for the Arts in Beaverton

INFORMATION: portlandchamberorchestra.org

TICKETS: secure.thereser.org/469/569

BY YAKI BERGMAN

As a survivor of a family who lost members during the Holocaust, I want to share with you the significance of the Portland Chamber Orchestra's coming May 13 concert and its relevancy to the reality we are all experiencing today, especially with the war in the Ukraine.

I was born to parents who found themselves living in Europe in the early 1930s under daily fear of cultural, physical and mental abuse that left them with no option but to escape a homeland contaminated by a totalitarian and dictatorial reality. The outcome of this tortuous journey as refugees was the beginning of a new and free life in Israel.

This coming May, the Portland Chamber Orchestra will feature a gifted 18-year-old virtuoso pianist and violinist, Michelle Bushkova, whose family of eminent musicians was forced to flee Russia both for being Jews and for opposing the war in the Ukraine. Michelle's family, like my family, was forced into becoming refugees in search of a new home ... a search that ended recently with the beginning of a new life in Israel.

The Portland Chamber Orchestra will host Michelle as both violin and piano soloist. She will perform the world premiere of a violin concerto dedicated to her and named for her by Belarus' most prominent composer, Victor Copytsko, who is at this moment persona non grata in his country. His music is not allowed to be performed and his teaching, as well as any way of making a living,

is blocked by the authorities. Based on last week's information from mutual friends, he is literally in a desperate state of starvation.

The Portland Chamber Orchestra has stood in support of victims of oppression and against social injustice and discrimination and is about to make an imperative statement in supporting the people of Ukraine and all who bravely defend justice and freedom of speech.

The PCO's May 13 concert program, "From Darkness to Light," will conclude with Michelle Bushkova as soloist in Mozart's sunny and optimistic Piano Concerto No.23 in A Major, K.488.

There will be a 6:30 pm pre-concert panel discussion among three refugees: Dr. Baher Butti from Iraq, Tapiwa Kapurura from Zimbabwe and Mariya Klimenko from Ukraine. Local photographer, Jim Lommasson, will display works from his award-winning exhibits and books documenting what people fleeing their homes take with them. Lommasson's project, "What We Carried," would itself be banned in an oppressive regime, but on May 13 we celebrate our freedom of artistic expression and the struggles of people going from darkness to light.

Yaki Bergman is the Music Director/Conductor of Portland Chamber Orchestra.



"For Love" part of Jewish American Heritage Month



David Fuks

A May 7 theatrical reading of "For Love," a new play by David Fuks, will be featured in the local celebration of Jewish American Heritage Month in May. The play is a humorous and poignant exploration of the impact of the Holocaust on the survivors and their descendants.

The monthlong celebration includes 200 educational centers, archives, libraries, museums and cultural, religious, advocacy and government institutions offering people around the country the opportunity to discover nearly four centuries of American Jewish experience. Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education will present three programs (see box).

Fuks began writing short stories and plays while he was working in human services, including

several years as CEO of Cedar Sinai Park. His play, "Invisible Friend," received a stage reading in Portland's 2019 Fertile Ground Festival and was slated as a full production before the pandemic sidelined that effort.

"For Love" is inspired by Fuks' relationship with his younger sister, of blessed memory, and the siblings' relationship with their parents. Their father was in the Lodz Ghetto and then survived five years imprisoned in Buchenwald. Their mother was enslaved for five years in Oberstadt, a labor camp near Prague. They married after the war and came to the United States after four years in a displaced persons' camp in Germany.

See **FOR LOVE**, next page

**Oregon Jewish Museum and Center
for Holocaust Education presents
Jewish American Heritage events**

May 3, 7 pm: Avraham and Mary Dramatic Reading

Avraham and Mary: A Historical Fiction of My Immigrant Grandparents is a historical novel based on family stories of Sherry Fishman's grandparents, who immigrated to the U.S. from what is now Belarus in the early years of the 20th century.

Free for OJMCHE members, \$5 general public.

RSVP REQUIRED: ojmche.org/events/dramatic-reading-of-avraham-and-mary/

May 4, 7 pm: Interrupting Contemporary Antisemitism: What Can We Do About It? A Community Conversation

Rabbi Michael Z. Cahana (Congregation Beth Israel), Stephen Paolini (ADL-PNW), Dr. Randall Blazak (Coalition Against Hate Crimes) and Ryan Nakade (Cure-PDX) will participate in a panel discussion at Congregation Beth Israel and online. The panel will discuss the current information on trends and patterns of antisemitism, its impact on the local Jewish community, social forces driving the increase in attacks and conflict resolution skills to successfully confront antisemitism. The panel is co-sponsored by the Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland.

RSVP for in person or online: ojmche.org/events/interrupting-contemporary-antisemitism-what-can-we-do-about-it-a-community-conversation/

May 7, 2 pm: Theatrical Reading of "For Love"

Free for OJMCHE members, \$5 general public.

RSVP REQUIRED: ojmche.org/events/theatrical-reading-of-for-love/

FOR LOVE (cont. from previous page)

"It's fiction, but it is based on our relationships and pays tribute to my sister and parents," says Fuks. "The depth and breadth of what was lost and what people experienced (during the Holocaust) is hard to grasp. But it is easier for people to understand if we tell individual stories."

The play is part of the work he now does in Holocaust education.

"My sister, Myra, was very active in Holocaust education," says Fuks. "After her passing, I felt it was my turn to step up."

Myra passed away five years ago, but "it was too raw" for him to create this play earlier. "Ashkenazi women and breast cancer," says Fuks, reflecting on his sister's passing.

He calls OJMCHE an appropriate place to have the first reading. He encourages members of the Jewish community to come see the reading and provide feedback as part of the process of getting "For Love" ready for a full production.

The reading will be directed collaboratively with Sarah Lucht, an Equity actress affiliated with Artist Repertory Theater and an acting teacher at the Portland Actors Conservatory. Conservatory acting students will perform.

"It will be highly trained actors doing the reading," says Fuks.

Celebrating Generations

JFCS celebrates YOU at 75th anniversary community gala May 19

BY JENN DIRECTOR KNUDSEN

For some, 75 years of togetherness calls for diamonds. For Jewish Family & Child Service, 75 years means community and providing for it: then, now, always.

Celebrating Generations is JFCS' party to toast three-quarters of a century and to raise a glass, in person, to celebrate you, our community.

"Jewish Family & Child Service is a community organization. We are here for the community, and we are strongest when the community is here for us," says Larry Holzman, JFCS board president.

Celebrating Generations kicks off at 6:30 pm at Castaway Portland on Thursday, May 18. It features what promises to be an incredible musical performance by China Forbes of Pink Martini, who will be accompanied by a bassist and a drummer. Also featured are a menu of hearty hors d'oeuvres, wine and dessert in the company of dear friends.

Tickets are \$118 and must be purchased in advance; the room is filling fast, so reserve your spot at jfcs-portland.org/celebrating-generations.

A mitzvah moment will help support JFCS' four programs: Holocaust Survivor Services, Community Support Services (formerly Emergency Aid), Disability Support Services and Counseling. Attendees also will have the opportunity to consider a gift toward the \$500,000 Renée Holzman Matching-Challenge Grant for Holocaust Survivor Services.

Even if you cannot attend Celebrating Generations, you still can participate in the mitzvah moment by donating at weblink.donorperfect.com/cg-donation.

Larry Holzman is the generous presenting sponsor of Celebrating Generations. JFCS is grateful to all of its event sponsors. Evening co-chairs are Elana Stampfer Emlen and Carolyn Weinstein, and catering and décor co-chairs are Carol Danish and Michelle Gradow.

"Seventy-five years ago, JFCS was founded in response to the needs of the Jewish community after World War II devastated so many," says Carolyn, who is also a JFCS Advisory Council member. "Now as then, JFCS has been there with multiple programs to help those in need."

Her co-chair Elana, also JFCS board secretary, adds, "It warms my heart to celebrate JFCS for 75 years of high-quality, steady service to our community. For all of these years, JFCS has been responsive to new needs as they arise, and the agency's crucial work supports the Jewish community and builds positive relationships with others."

So, secure your ticket, don your festive attire, get ready to jam to China Forbes of Pink Martini, and come celebrate and support 75 years of greater Portland's only Jewish social services agency. (Who needs diamonds?)

**"For all of these
years, JFCS has been
responsive to new
needs as they arise."**

**~ Event cochair Elana
Stampfer Emlen**

Chaplain's Corner

From Anticipation to Action

BY RABBI BARRY COHEN

Let's take a few moments to remember when we waited for something special – a birthday, an anniversary, a birth, a graduation, a reunion or even a sporting event. We counted down the months, days and hours, looking forward to its arrival. Within this anticipation were hopes, dreams, expectations ... a vision of what could be.

As a people, we are in the middle of a 49-day waiting period, the time between Passover and Shavuot. Passover began on sunset of April 5; Shavuot begins on sunset of May 25. The point of Passover was to experience freedom after 430 years of slavery. The point of Shavuot is to learn for what purpose we received our freedom. Passover does not celebrate freedom for freedom's sake; rather, it celebrates the purpose of freedom.

Part of this purpose relates to the overlapping circles of our identity: the self; family; community; K'lal Yisrael, the greater Jewish family; and humanity. With Shavuot, when we mark the receiving of the Torah, we learn how we have obligations, responsibilities and connections related to all of our overlapping circles.

In this waiting period between Passover and Shavuot, we have precious time to reflect. We can reflect upon our complicated, nuanced identity. As part of our identity, what do we look forward to? How do we express our identity? How much time do we devote to building and maintaining the legacy we will leave behind?

One of my favorite movies speaks of the power of legacy and how our legacy is intimately connected with everyone who has affected our lives, whether directly or indirectly. The final scenes of the movie "Saving Private Ryan" tackle the relationship between legacy and our dependence on others.

In the movie, Captain John Miller has been fatally wounded. Ryan draws close. With his dying breath, Miller tells Ryan, "Earn this... earn this."

Then the scene cuts to years later, when Ryan is gathered with generations of his family at the military cemetery where Miller is buried. At Miller's grave, Ryan says, "Every day I think of what you said to me that day on the bridge. I've tried to live my life the best I could. I hope that at least in your eyes, I've earned what all of you have done for me."

Then Ryan's wife walks to his side. He turns to her and says, "Tell me I led a good life. ... Tell me I'm a good man."

I always tear up at these scenes.

Think of what we owe the generations who came before us. Have we earned what they did for us? Every day, I try to "earn this." Sometimes I feel I have succeeded. Sometimes I feel I could have done better. But every day, I try.

As we count in anticipation of the celebration of Shavuot, what have we done to earn our iden-



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tity as part of the Jewish community? We owe a debt of gratitude to untold numbers of people who lived before us. And we are obligated to ensure the health and welfare of our fellow men and women, whether they live under our roof or halfway across the world.

So let me share some tangible ways that I try to "earn this." On a basic level, like all parents, I try to fulfill my obligations to my children. I support them 100 percent and often sacrifice my needs for theirs. As a sibling, I offer gratitude and a listening ear to my sister, who is the primary caregiver of our mother in Houston, who recently moved to a new retirement community.

Professionally, I know that being your Jewish Community Chaplain is not "a job" and is not 9-5; rather, it is part of my identity... who I am.

Politically, I try to remain as engaged as I can. This has always been a challenge. I have found it much easier to be invested on a national level than a local level. I have to keep reminding myself I can have a greater impact if I increase my involvement locally.

I also try to "earn this" by addressing injustice and inequality. But this can be daunting. There is only so much I can do as an individual politically and economically. At the very least, I will work to protect the social contract that glues us together as a nation. I will also continue to learn about the ideas that form the bedrock of our democracy. This has required me to accept the hard facts of American history I was never taught as a youth.

Finally, to "earn this," I must stay connected with the land of Israel. Much like the United States, Israel is nuanced, complicated and at times aggravating. But it will always be one of my many homes.

In about a month, we celebrate the tradition of how we gathered at Sinai to receive the Torah. This will always be the instruction manual of how to live in relationship with ourselves, our family, our community, humanity and God. The more we learn about Judaism and put its wisdom in to action, the more we "earn this."

And the more we learn and act, the more we will express our multifaceted identities and change our world for the better.

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Submit photos, news, obituar-
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April 27: Antisemitism on the Left symposium

Join Rabbis Ariel Stone and Jill Jacobs, author Shane Burley and scholar Natan Meir for a symposium exploring antisemitism on the left at 6:30 pm, April 27, at the Eastside Jewish Commons. Free, but registration is required at ejcpdx.org/events.

April 29: EJC Open-Mic Poetry Night

On the final weekend of Poetry Month, EJC invites the community to share work in a safe, supportive and fun environment; 7-9 pm, April 29, at the Eastside Jewish Commons, 2420 NE Sandy Blvd. To sign up to read, please email ericstern@ejcpdx.org. Free. ejcpdx.org/events

April 30: Short Stories with David Fuks

The Next Generations Group and Havurah Shalom present “An Afternoon with David Fuks: Short Stories from a Child of Holocaust Survivors.” The event will be on Zoom and in person at Havurah Shalom, 825 NW 18th Ave., Portland, at 2 pm, April 30. The event is free, but please register at havurahshalom.org/event/an-afternoon-with-david-fuks-short-stories-from-a-child-of-holocaust-survivors.html.

April 30: Israeli folk dancing at SWCC

Enjoy Israeli folk dancing at the Southwest Community Center with session leader Rhona Feldman; 2:30-4 pm every Sunday. Free. sites.google.com/site/pifdnews

April 30: EJC Israeli Dancing

Israeli dancing at the Eastside Jewish Commons led by Allison Victor; 3-4:30 pm. sites.google.com/site/pifdnews

April 30: Concert with Israeli Superstar Noa

The Jewish Federation of Greater Portland and Congregation Beth Israel present “Celebrating Israel at 75” at 7 pm, April 30, at the new Patricia Reser Center for the Arts in Beaverton. The concert features Noa performing with Grammy-Award winning pianist Rustan Sirota. Tickets: thereser.org/event/celebrating-israel-at-75-with-israeli-superstar-noa/.

April 30: Timely Topics – Finance

The Portland Kollel presents an opportunity to learn about finances and spirituality at 7 pm, April 30, at the Kollel and via Zoom. “Take Control of Your Money: A guide to value-based spending and saving for the whole family,” with Lori Prestidge-Davtian, and “Honoring and Delighting in Shabbat: A Financial Guide,” with Rabbi Dovid Y. Rimmer. Questions: info@portlandkollel.org. Free, but sign up at portlandkollel.org/timely/.

April 30: Israeli Folk dancing at Water Tower

Enjoy Israeli folk dancing at the Water Tower Dance Hall, 7:30-10:30 pm, April 30, with session leader Donna. sites.google.com/site/pifdnews

May 1: Israeli folk dancing at Leedy Grange

Enjoy Israeli folk dancing at Leedy Grange weekly, Monday nights, 7:30-10:30, with session leaders Sue and Donna. sites.google.com/site/pifdnews

May 3: Dramatic Reading of Avraham and Mary

See page 13. No walk-ins. RSVP: ojmche.org/events/dramatic-reading-of-avraham-and-mary/

May 5-7: Spring Family Camp at BB Camp

Get outside and explore B’nai B’rith Camp with your family and

friends! More info and registration at bbcamp.org/family-camp/

May 5: Monthly Sephardic Shabbat Dinner

See story page 2.

May 6: Mini Mensches Tot Shabbat

Welcome Shabbat with singing, dancing and sweetness. For kids 0-5 and parents. Gather in Pollin Chapel at Congregation Beth Israel, 9-10 am, May 6. <https://www.bethisrael-pdx.org/community/mini-mensches/>

May 6: Meditation Shabbat

The first Saturday of each month at Congregation Neveh Shalom is Meditation Shabbat. A series of practices will be incorporated into the regular sanctuary service, with the sermon slot dedicated to a focused meditation 9:30 am-noon, April 1. For information, email brohr@nevehshalom.org.

May 6: Lecture: Writing biography of Philip Roth

Stephen Zipperstein will speak about writing the biography of Philip Roth during the Kleinstein Scholar Lecture Series at Beit Haverim at 7 pm, May 6. Dr. Zipperstein is the Daniel E. Koshland Professor of Jewish Culture and History at Stanford. Co-sponsored by the Harold Schnitzer Family Program in Judaic Studies at Portland State University. The lecture, part of a series of annual lectures on current critical issues, will be in person at Beit Haverim, 1111 Country Club Road, Lake Oswego, and on Zoom at tinyurl.com/25rv9sjm. For more information, call 503-568-1241.

May 7: Schechter Spark

Join Camp Solomon Schechter as we celebrate camp, raise critical funds and build our Jewish future, 4-6 pm, May 7, on Zoom. iconley@campschechter.org or campschechter.org

May 7: Texas Hold'em Poker Tournament

Poker tourney presented by the Shaarie Torah Men's Club on May 7. Doors open at 4 pm, tutorial at 4:15 and games start at 4:30. \$50 buy-in includes tournament entry, snacks, a hot dog, soda and one drink coupon for beer or wine. Register: shaarietorah.wufoo.com/forms/m8jbp81lq618e/

May 8: “The Protocols of the Elders of Zion” and the Allure of Conspiracy

Steven J. Zipperstein delivers the 2023 Lorry I. Lokey Lecture at Portland State University, hosted by The Harold Schnitzer Family Program in Judaic Studies at noon, May 8, Room 294, Smith Memorial Student Union. Why has “The Protocols of the Elders of Zion” managed to draw such widespread attention with countless reprints and websites in many languages – across the political spectrum – foregrounding its message of a mysterious Jewish cabal controlling the world's finances and politics? Professor Zipperstein will explore the reasons for its extraordinary resilience. Few better examples exist on the world stage of the resilience of “fake news.” pdx.edu/judaic-studies/2023-lorry-i-lokey-program-portland-state-university

May 9: MJCC Community Celebration

See page 7.

May 10: What I want to Teach: Rabbis teach

Join Rabbi Jonathan Seidel, President of the Oregon Board of Rabbis, for a conversation about “What he wants to teach.” This series will feature Oregon rabbis on a range of topics on a monthly

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SEMION STOLYAR

Semion Stolyar, z"l, passed away in late April at the age of 78. Semion is loved and remembered by his wife, Larisa; stepson, Dmitriy (Alla) Shore; grandchildren, Daniel, Benjamin, Rebecca, Jacob; daughter, Nataly (Igor) Mogilevsky; grandchildren, Arthur (Elizabet), Erika (Jake), Kevin; and great-granddaughter, Lyanna.

The funeral will be 11 am, April 26, 2023, at Ahavai Shalom Cemetery.

RIKVAH MALKA

Rikvah Malka (Rivkah bat Zohara), z"l, passed away in late April. She was the mother of Yossi (Judy) Malka.

The family will hold shiva hours April 26, 2023, at their Lake Oswego home.

ALDEN SCHWIMMER

Alden Schwimmer, z"l, passed away in Los Angeles on April 22, 2023, at the age of 98. He was the father of John (Rosemary) Schwimmer of Portland.

RONALD SOBEL

Ronald Sobel, z"l, passed away on April 18, 2023. Ronald is survived by his wife, Elaine Sobel; and his stepchildren, Scott Ankersen and Brent and Valerie Burroughs.

The family will hold a memorial service on Sunday, May 7, at 4 pm at Congregation Beth Israel.

Donations in Ronald's memory may be sent to the National Alliance on Mental Illness at donate.nami.org/fundraiser/4635729

LEV ASTRAKHAN

Lev Astrakhan, z"l, passed away on April 16, 2023, at the age of 103. Lev is loved and remembered by his sons, Boris (Tatiana) and Alex (Svetlana, z"l) Astrakhan; and three granddaughters, Alisa, Nadine and Natalie.

Lev was a decorated World War II veteran with the Soviet Army. He was a member of Congregation Neveh Shalom. The funeral was April 17 at Ahavai Shalom Cemetery.

RUTH KAPLAN

Ruth Kaplan, z"l, passed away on April 12, 2023, at the age of 100, in Damascus, Ore. Ruth was preceded in death by her husband, Harry Kaplan. She is survived by her cousin, Nathan Singer; nieces,

Events (Continued from page 15)

basis. 11:30 am-1 pm, May 10, at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center. oregonjcc.org

May 10: Sephardic Film Fest: "GI Jews"

The final film in this year's Sephardic Film Festival is "GI Jews," the story of the 550,000 Jewish American men and women who fought in World War II. Admission is free. Films screen at 7 pm at Congregation Ahavath Achim, 6686 SW Capitol Hwy., Portland. Discussion and Sephardic desserts follow each film. RSVPs are appreciated: info@ahavathachim.com.

May 11: It Won't Kill You to Talk About Death

The Eastside Jewish Commons presents a symposium on death and dying from a Jewish perspective, 7-9 pm, May 11. Register at tinyurl.com/3ctcfvrm

May 12-14: PJ Library Family Camp

Join families with young children from across the state of Oregon to explore BB Camp and build community! Many PJ Library activities and events to participate in such as book readings, meeting others from your area, and of course arts & crafts, swimming, canoeing and ziplining, too! Information and registration: bbcamp.org/family-camp/

Rebecca Baer, Sheryl Kelly and Barbra Stern; and nephews, David Chassman, David Singer, Martin Singer and Doug Singer.

She was born on Oct. 11, 1922, in Portland. Ruth loved her neighbors and was always so thankful for the love and support she was given by others. She will be especially missed by her neighborhood pets, who she faithfully loved and fed. A memorial was held on April 25, 2023, at Willamette National Cemetery.

MARK L. DANISH

Mark L. Danish, z"l, Mordechai Elihu ben Shlomo Reuven, died on April 3, 2023, in Dallas, Texas, at the age of 70. He is survived by his wife, Louise; sisters, Susan Danish, Tracy Frankel, Kimberly Rosenberg and Debbie Plawner; brother, Scott Danish; and stepmother, Carol Danish of Portland.

A private family memorial was held. Donations in Mark's name can be made to the American Heart Association, ASPCA or the U of O Duck Athletic Fund.

BEVERLY SHIRLEY KERNESS UNGER

Beverly Shirley Kerness Unger, z"l, of Portland, Westbury, N.Y., Salt Spring Island and Victoria, British Columbia, and La Jolla, Calif., passed away on April 1, 2023 at the age of 98. She is survived by her children, Jane Unger, Martha Rothstein, Thomas Unger and Sally Unger; eight grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

She was born on June 13, 1924, to Sara and Morris Kerness, both immigrants from Kiev. She graduated from Simmons College in 1944. After earning a master's degree in social work at Columbia University, she worked as a social worker for the Red Cross and the Jewish Board of Family and Child Services before earning certification to practice as a psychiatric social worker. She leaves behind dear friends of all ages and nations. She was preceded in death by her husband of 63 years, Robert "Bob" Samuel Unger. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the Victoria Symphony, the Beverly Kerness Unger Scholarship Fund (c/o Trustees of FR HS Alumni Scholarships, P.O. Box 2519, Fall River, MA 02722-2519), or the Salt Spring Island Foundation's Unger Family Fund for Children and Their Mothers and Senior Women in Need (online at ssifoundation.ca/support-a-cause/).

ELIZABETH HECHT ZACKHEIM

Elizabeth Hecht Zackheim, z"l, passed away on Feb. 15, 2023. Lizzie is missed deeply by her parents, Miriam Hecht and Ivan Zackheim; her brothers, Eli and Sam and their wives, Beth and Yi Wang; her niece, Lark; her aunts, uncles, cousins and a grandmother; and many, many friends.

Lizzie was born on Earth Day, April 22, 1982, in Portland. You could say she was a gift to the Earth. She attended preschool at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center and school at Ainsworth Elementary, West Sylvan Middle School and Lincoln High School. She began working in restaurants in high school and preferred that to going to her college classes at the University of Oregon.

Lizzie helped Laurelhurst Market open its doors over a decade ago and worked there for life, hostessing, managing and serving. She was exceptional at her job, probably because she loved her co-workers, her employers and the people she served. Her dedication and imagination were critical during the pandemic. Lizzie made friends everywhere and forever. She never let go of her friends, and they never let go of her. Lizzie loved her friends, her family, her work, her friends' pets and children, the volunteers and volunteering at the restaurant at Albertina Kerr. She made us all laugh a lot, she made us smile, she helped us and she made us soup. She gave blood. She loved the beach and making pickles. She was a Master Recycler. A wonderful mind powered her awesome sense of humor. She loved life. Her calendar was full. She just didn't live long enough.