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OREGON & SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON'S JEWISH NEWSPAPER

May 14, 2025 / 16 Iyar, 5785 Volume 60, Issue 10

A band that's *bashert*

Ellis Street built around love of music, Judaism

By **ROCKNE ROLL**

The Jewish Review

A list of Jewish rock-and-rollers doesn't end with Bob Dylan and Billy Joel.

Those two might be the most famous, but Randy Newman, Alanis Morissette, John Mayer and half the founding members of KISS (Gene Simmons and Paul Stanley) count themselves amongst *Am Yisrael* (the Jewish people).

There are many more than that, of course – four of whom, right here in Portland, were brought together by their common heritage and community.

Ellis Street consists of Andy Gilbert, Rick Menashe, Steve Resnikoff and Dave Bloom. Gilbert, Menashe and Resnikoff have known each other since their days in Congregation Neveh Shalom's preschool program. Menashe recalls picking up drumming in seventh



Rock quartet Ellis Street performs at The Cider Mill in Southwest Portland Saturday, May 10, at a benefit for the Ida B. Wells High School music program. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

grade, forming a band in college called Homegrown along with Gilbert. Homegrown split when Menashe

took a summer job at Camp Solomon Schechter. He sold his kit but taking the music out of the musician is much

harder.

"I still kept playing with anything I could get my

See **BAND**, page 11

INSIDE

Security – page 14

Events – page 17

Obituaries – page 18



The
Jewish
Review
Podcast



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Antisemitism not a known factor in altercation outside Jewish preschool last week

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

There is currently no indication that antisemitism was a motivating factor in an assault that resulted in a Jewish preschool security guard shooting a man last Thursday morning.

Just before noon on Thursday, May 8, a security guard for The Gan Portland Jewish Preschool went to investigate a vehicle that was outside the preschool. Regional Security Director Jessica Anderson, who has been communicating with Portland Police Bureau and leadership at The Gan, indicated that the guard approached the alleyway between The Gan and the Fanno Creek Medical Clinic to document the vehicle for future reference.

“The occupant of the vehicle got out and initiated contact, assaulting the security guard, unprovoked,” Anderson said. “The guard sustained injuries to his head, arms and knees where he had made contact with the ground during their scuffle.”

It is still unknown whether the individual was armed. Anderson said the struggle continued until the security guard drew his handgun, which he is licensed to carry on duty through Oregon’s Department of Public Safety Standards and Training, and fired at close range, hitting his attacker.

The guard then called 911 and knocked on the nearby back door of the clinic for assistance, Anderson continued. The Oregonian reported that the clinic’s medical director treated a gunshot wound to the man’s abdomen while awaiting emer-

gency services.

Students at the school were well away from where the altercation took place behind the school’s secure perimeter.

“We want to emphasize that at no point were the children in direct danger,” Gan Preschool Director Chaya Citron and Executive Director Rabbi Motti Wilhelm said in an email to families early Thursday afternoon which was provided to *The Jewish Review*.

Portland Police Bureau Public Information Officer Mike Benner said that the assailant was transported to an area hospital and underwent successful surgery to treat his injuries. He remained in intensive care as of Thursday afternoon, with the hospital declining to release further information about his condition.

Benner and The Gan said that there was no indication of an antisemitic motive in Thursday’s attack.

“At this time, Portland Police do not believe the Gan was being targeted or that the disturbance was related to Jewish bias,” The Gan said in a statement Thursday evening.

“At this early stage of the investigation, there is no indication of bias,” Benner told *The Jewish Review*.

Portland Police Bureau’s investigation into the incident is ongoing, in conjunction with the Multnomah County District Attorney’s Office. *The Jewish Review* is not reporting the name of the security guard out of respect for their privacy. Anderson said Monday morning that Portland Police were not yet releasing the name of the other individual involved.

Student to Student wraps first year

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

As the school year winds to a close, so does the first year of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland’s Student to Student program. And while antisemitism in schools has garnered plenty of attention, this program has proven to be a major step in improving the climate for Jewish students in schools around the area.

“For those participating in the conversations, it’s the opportunity to hear information, digest it and follow up with clarifying questions. The students are really wonderful about presenting and then taking questions between each section of the presentation,” Federation Director of Educational Initiatives and Associate Director of Community Relations Rachel Nelson, who manages the Student to Student program, explained. “It’s really empowering for everybody.”

The 12 students in this year’s cohort are continuing presentations through the end of this month at middle and high schools around the metropolitan area – at least six of which have been completed or scheduled. They come bearing food – challah and small packages of Oreos, the latter of which bear a *hechsher* (kosher certification stamp) that students are asked to identify before enjoying the kosher cookies within.

“We talk about different Jewish holidays. We talk about Israel. We talk about antisemitism. It’s not a major focus, but we do talk about it,” Student to Student presenter Ben Luria said on a recent episode of *The Jewish Review* Podcast. “The main goal is essentially to remove the stigma, the fear that comes from being Jewish. It’s all about just trying to tell people we’re Jewish and we’re not monsters, we’re human beings.”

Presenter teams are organized to share multiple facets of Jewish identity. On top of the food, they also bring items of Jewish practice: a replica Torah scroll, complete with mantle and crown, along with a *tallit* (prayer shawl), and various candles, including a braided *Havdalah* candle. Luria has also brought his Israeli father’s Haopel Jerusalem basketball jersey.

“I told them that if they ever meet a Maccabi Tel Aviv fan, to run away,” Luria said of Hapoel’s traditional rivals in the Israeli Basketball Premier League.

While basketball (and perhaps even Hapoel’s red and black colors, shared with the Portland Trail Blazers) can be a source of connection, the deeper meaning of the process comes from the desire to learn and the willingness to share.

“We don’t reach out to these schools first, they reach out to us,” presenter Anouk Cohen told *The Jewish Review* Podcast. “I think it’s just really inspiring to see how much people want to learn.”

That feeling runs both ways.

See **STUDENT**, page 12

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Jewish Federation
of Greater Portland

Rosenfield's Israel work garners Song of Miriam award

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

Randi Rosenfield has long had a deep connection to Israel. Now, the work that has sprung from that connection is being publicly recognized.

Rosenfield will receive the Song of Miriam award from the Jewish Women's Round Table this year following her nomination from the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland. Rosenfield, who has lived in Israel twice and spoke with *The Jewish Review* recently before departing on her sixth trip to the country, has been actively involved with the Jewish Community Relations Council's Israel Advocacy Committee for years, and currently serves as its co-chair.

"There are those volunteers who like to show up at meetings, who sort of talk the talk. Which is important; we need those people, too. But she walks the walk. She shows up." Federation Director of Community Relations and Public Affairs Bob Horenstein said of Rosenfield. "She's willing to roll up her sleeves, do the work and be present, which is really important. She's a consummate volunteer."

Frustrated with media coverage surrounding the Jewish state, Rosenfield resolved to get involved and contacted the Federation, which started her journey into the IAC's work.

"One of the most important things is I got educated. I think a lot of people would find it surprising, but I learned more about the Palestinian concerns," she said. "I think a lot of people may think that the Israel Advocacy Committee is just, 'Israel, right or wrong,' but that's not what it is. It's about un-



Randi Rosenfield, the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's 2025 Song of Miriam award nominee, pictured at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center Thursday, May. 1. "The Israel Advocacy Committee is... about understanding the issues that are happening, and they're so complex," Rosenfield said. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

derstanding the issues that are happening, and they're so complex."

Indeed, she recalled that one of the first words she was taught when learning Hebrew was *ze mesovech* – it's complicated.

"People reduce Israel down to just the conflict with the Palestinians. They forget, first of all, there's a regional conflict, and so that kind of flips the whole idea of who's the David and who's the Goliath. But more than that, Israelis are amazingly inventive and resilient and community- and family-oriented and have contributed so much to the world. We don't hear enough of that," she said.

Getting that message across is work Rosenfield has taken a key role in. She worked with Horenstein and others to draft a state plan to combat antisemitism for Gov. Tina Kotek's office. In meetings with leaders outside the Jew-

ish community, Rosenfield is keen to offer solutions – as in a recent conversation with Portland State University leaders about how to tackle instructors bringing anti-Israel political sentiments into unrelated subject matter.

"Randi suggested to [PSU President Ann Cudd], 'Why don't you have surveys for these courses that are sent out to all the students for them to be able to respond in a way that's safe?'" Horenstein recalled.

Rosenfield's voice is also a valuable contribution to conversations within the Jewish community.

"In some of our committee meetings, she wants us to brainstorm, 'How would you respond to someone making this claim?' Not just to say, 'you're an idiot, you're wrong,' but what kind of questions might you ask of someone accusing Israel of apartheid, for example?" Horenstein said.

Beyond her work with the IAC, Rosenfield and her husband have hosted for Greater Portland Hillel's Shabbat Around the City – and beyond, as they've invited students back to their home on a weekly basis for more than two years.

"We've built a community and a place where American Jewish and Israeli Jewish young people can feel safe to just be themselves, talk about whatever they want to," she said. "It's important to me to try and build bridges and connections between the Israeli community here and the American Jewish community here."

Rosenfield will receive her award at the 30th Annual Song of Miriam Brunch, hosted by the JWRT Sunday, June 1 at 10 am at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit jwrt.org/song_of_miriam_2.html.

JFGP's Gather Grants launch for summer cycle

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

The Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Gather Grant program applications open today for the summer cycle of its successful microgrant program for Jewish community-building events.

In two quarterly cycles so far, the Federation has awarded nearly 100 grants through the Gather Grant program, modeled after successful efforts in Atlanta and spurred on by findings from Portland's 2023 Community Study. After applications are approved, hosts of events with six people from outside their household fill out a survey about the event and receive reimbursement of up to \$120 for expenses associated with putting on the event.

"It's been so positive what people say, how the funds enable them to do either a bigger event or just being invited to participate this way has helped them go from thinking about it to acting upon their ideas," Federation Chief Planning and Engagement Officer Caron Blau Rothstein, who administers the program, said. "They talk about what a good time they had. Then we get the participant surveys. If you want to sit around and smile all day, you just read all those."

You don't have to take her word for it: Blau Rothstein shared some of the host survey responses with *The Jewish Review*.

"I think I most enjoyed seeing how much people appreciated having something organized for them so they could come and enjoy each other's company," one host



The Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Gather Grant program has awarded nearly 100 grants for small-scale Jewish community building events, like the one shown in this photo submitted by an event host, in its first two grant-making cycles. A new cycle for summer events opens tomorrow. (Courtesy JFGP)

wrote. "I have no notes! Just a lot of appreciation for the JFGP addressing the loneliness epidemic in a real, practical way."

"I think the Gather Grant program is awesome!" another host said. "It makes it easier to get support for different events and thus encourages more people to host events than without Gather Grants. I liked that the Gather Grant was relatively easy to apply for."

While the variety of events supported by Gather Grants is large, many events supported by the program's spring cycle naturally centered around Passover – with the small amount of financial support making a big difference.

"I enjoy opening my home to celebrate this and every Jewish holiday," one host who put on a Gather

Grant-supported Seder said. "[The Gather Grant] was the difference in providing a beautiful, bountiful meal versus a bare-bones meal, underscoring the fact that we are free and no longer slaves."

But there's more to Gather Grants than just the funds—Blau Rothstein recalled one Gather Grant Seder host who was going to be short on *haggadot*.

"I gave him a couple resources for where he could crowdsource those, and he was able to use those recommendations to get himself an abundance of different *haggadot*," Blau Rothstein said. "Everybody had one for the Seder and it was really nice."

Other programs included Shabbat dinners, get-togethers over coffee, book club meetings, movie nights, and

even an outing to the Woodburn Shoe Tulip Festival in Woodburn.

"That's such a ubiquitous Portland event, there's nothing Jewish about the event, but to go with a group of Jewish friends to that experience," Blau Rothstein explained. "That group of people really had a great time."

Applications are now open for events scheduled for June 15-Aug. 31, with Fall event grants applications for Sept. 1-Nov. 15, encompassing the High Holy Days, will open in August. The grants are supported by the Federation's Catalyst Fund and by a grant from the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation.

For eligibility guidelines, program ideas and to apply for a Gather Grant, visit jewishportland.org/ourcommunity/gathergrants.



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

Nemer's book shows how 'Simple Mental Health' saved his life

By **ROCKNE ROLL**
The Jewish Review

Adam Nemer's life changed when someone stopped into his office for a seemingly innocuous conversation.

The transformation that one conversation brought about is laid out, along with the tools for readers to have similar conversations with those who need them, in Nemer's new book, "Simple Mental Health," available later this year from Manuscripts Press.

Nemer explained that the journey that led to this book really began nearly 25 years ago when his father took his own life and Nemer found his body. He embarked on a successful corporate career, becoming a senior executive at Kaiser Permanente in Oregon. Nemer also began experiencing what he now recognizes as severe untreated depression and anxiety, but didn't do anything about it until, 20 years later, he found his mother's body after she passed away.

That's when the life-changing conversation happened. A colleague from Kaiser's national office popped in to Nemer's office and asked how he was doing, if he was seeing a therapist. Nemer brushed the inquiry off with a joke.

"He said, 'Adam, do you know the signs to look for in yourself in case you might need to get some help down the road?'" Nemer recalled.

Nemer's colleague connected him with Kaiser's employee assistance program.

"I had no idea the path he was sending me down," Ne-

mer said. "They gave me the checklist and over the course of the next handful of days, I finally got to that Crucible moment in life, where I finally figured out what was going on and I had to reach out for help. That path of recovery started."

Later, his colleague told him that he had, just the day before their conversation, attended a leadership meeting of his church where they talked through what is known as mental health first aid – how to recognize situations like the one Nemer was in and have conversations like the one that Nemer said saved his life.

"A senior leader at a \$90 billion company became mental health literate in half a day. The next day, in a five-minute conversation, [he] saved my life."

Nemer started to recover, to heal. He also started thinking about leadership differently.

"Every year, one out of four Americans experience what a behavioral health clinician would diagnose as a mental illness, but less than half of us get help and the median time period from the onset of symptoms to getting help is 11 years," Nemer said. "Can you imagine if someone recognizing the signs and symptoms of breast cancer in themselves, but waited 11 years to see the doctor?"

Nemer's analysis kept going as he applied the math to the team he led.

"I only have 400 or 500 people on my team here," he said. "That means I have 80 to 100 people on my team,

See **NEMER**, page 13

Robison Foundation launches with 'ChikChok' grants

By **ROCKNE ROLL**
The Jewish Review

When Cedar Sinai Park's campus on Southwest Boundary Street in Portland was sold last year, it was meant not to be the end of a story, just that particular chapter.

The next chapter now begins in earnest as the Robison Foundation for Jewish Elders announces its first grant-making cycle and its plans for the next stage in supporting Jewish life for seniors in Portland.

Michael Millender, President of RFJE, was on the committee of Cedar Sinai's board that looked at what to do in light of the group's financial model becoming untenable. Even before the sale of the campus and the reinvestment of proceeds from the sale into what has become RFJE was decided upon, Millender started working to put an action plan together.

"One of the things that very quickly became clear to me is that, in most cities, the board had been so focused on the sale process that no one had really put much thought into what would happen next, and we did not want to let that happen in Portland," Millender said.

A new entity was created, and a new board constituted – starting with Millender and adding others from the committee that charted this course, as well as those from outside Cedar Sinai's existing cadre of leadership.

"We have a lot of people who are in their 40s," Millender said of RFJE's board. "They're the ones who are going to be the leaders of this community in the future, so I'm thrilled that they've that they are serving on this board. "They've brought a lot of energy and a lot of great perspectives to the work."

That board includes Millender as President, Jaimie Harper as Vice President, David Hirsch as Treasurer, Margo Feves Pearmine as Secretary and Eddy Shuldman, Karen Blauer, Josh Erde-Wollheim and Lesley Sacks as members.

The new foundation then refined its mission – their official statement says that RFJE works to "enhance the lives of elders in the Jewish community of greater Portland by supporting their social, spiritual, and physical well-being." Millender explained that the more detailed view is rooted in what the new board saw as the two primary functions of Cedar Sinai Park.

"One was to make sure that there would always be a place for anyone in the Jewish community who didn't have resources to live in a dignified, safe and well-run place as they aged," he said. "But beyond that, Cedar Sinai Park was meant to be a Jewish institution. It's a place where people could live in a Jewish environment, celebrate Jewish holidays, have Jewish learning opportunities, really live the rhythm of a Jewish life."

Without a physical campus, Millender said, the new foundation's goal is "to broaden it out to serve Jewish seniors wherever they call home."

Next was the name – the "Cedar Sinai Park" brand was

See **ROBISON**, page 12



Tibon speaks on living in the shadow of Gaza

Ha'aretz reporter Amir Tibon speaks at Congregation Neveh Shalom's Scholar-in-Residence weekend Saturday, May 10, about his recent book, "The Gates of Gaza." He described his decision to move from Tel Aviv to Kibbutz Nahal Oz after reporting there during the 2014 Israel-Hamas War, saying "We felt that our mission was to go and support this border community." (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

Smaller scope, still high stakes

School board elections put crucial issues to voters - Jewish and otherwise

By ROCKNE ROLL

The Jewish Review

Last fall, voters across the country cast their ballots in what was touted as the most consequential election of many of our lifetimes. In six days' time, ballots will be counted across Oregon in another immensely consequential, if less heralded election.

Per state law, members of school boards are elected the third Tuesday in May in odd-numbered (Gregorian) years. While school board elections do not receive the fanfare, funding, or media coverage of Presidential contests, these elections have the utmost impact.

"The school board is critical to the success of a school district," Karen Twain, the former assistant superintendent of the Tigard-Tualatin School District, explained. "First of all, they're the boss of the Superintendent, so that's important. But all really big decisions go through the school board. It's an important job."

There will be plenty of big decisions to make. Districts all over Oregon are facing significant budget cuts; Beaverton School District will be \$30 million short for the coming year, according to a press release from the district, while Portland Public Schools is facing a \$40 million shortfall. PPS is also asking

voters to approve a \$1.8 billion bond package, supported by the continuation of a property tax levy that was set to expire, to fund school construction.

"How are budget cuts going to impact our schools? Class size, for example, teacher burnout, those kinds of things," said Bob Horenstein, the Chief Community Relations and Public Affairs Officer at the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland. "Those are the issues that every school parent, Jewish or not Jewish, should care about."

"I have always maintained that all elections are extremely important and this one is no different," Rachel Nelson, the Federation's Director of Educational Initiatives and Associate Director of Community Relations said. While Horenstein's children have all graduated from Portland Public Schools, Nelson has two children who attend schools in the Beaverton School District.

On top of the things that concern all parents in this election, Horenstein added that, "We have our specific set of issues and it's important to know where these school board candidates stand. We want to make sure that Jewish students feel a sense of belonging in the schools that they attend, and they feel safe."

That's been easier said than done.

Well before Oct. 7, antisemitism was a known problem in many metro-area schools. Since Hamas' attacks on Israel and the war that Israel has waged against Hamas in Gaza, anti-Israel advocacy in schools – often led by teachers – has escalated significantly.

The Beaverton Education Association held a workshop Monday, Apr. 28, for members on the "Teaching Palestine" curriculum developed by former Portland Public Schools teacher Bill Bigelow. These materials, which refer to Israel as a "settler-colonial" and "apartheid state," are not approved curriculum in Beaverton School District. Oregon Educators for Palestine held a similar event for teachers and community members in Portland Saturday, May 10.

"It is important to note that if this material is out there, it will find its way into the classroom, whether the exact curriculum or in a more informal way, in how teachers view certain student populations," Beaverton district parent Liz Terzo told *The Oregonian* ("[A union-sponsored 'Teaching Palestine' training draws pointed questions in Beaverton](#)," Apr. 25, 2025. "As a parent, I am concerned it will normalize

See **ELECTION**, page 13

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SCAN FOR DETAILS

Portland celebrates 76 years of modern Israel



(Kyle Glenn)

Contributing Photographers

Revelers celebrated the 76th anniversary of the State of Israel's declaration of independence at a pair of Yom Ha'Atzmaut parties - Thursday, May 1, at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center and Sunday, May 4, at the Elsie Stuhr Center in Beaverton.



(Kyle Glenn)



(Paul Rich for the Mittleman Jewish Community Center)



(Kyle Glenn)



(Kyle Glenn)



(Paul Rich for the Mittleman Jewish Community Center)

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From left, Ellis Street members Andy Gilbert, Rick Menashe and Steve Resnikoff grew up together as members of Congregation Neveh Shalom in Portland - when they formed their band in 2020, Menashe discovered that his racquetball partner, Dave Bloom (also a Neveh Shalom member) played bass guitar and invited him to join the group. Many of the band's first performances have been connected to the synagogue. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

BAND (continued from page 1)

hands on; a table, the steering wheel on the car, the dashboard," Menashe explained. "I still do that, and I drive my wife crazy."

Gilbert and Menashe stayed connected, and Gilbert still played, but mostly acoustic and mainly solo. He went on to work in the music industry, becoming President of Pacific Talent in Portland. All three are members of Neveh Shalom and active with the synagogue and other Jewish organizations.

"We finished college and got on with our lives," Gilbert explained. "We stayed in touch, but the band was kind of a thing of the past at that point you know in our lives."

Gilbert paused and added, "Until now."

In early 2020, Menashe decided that he had gone long enough without a drum set. He recalled that Gilbert had just purchased a new guitar, and that Resnikoff was picking up the instrument as well.

"It just kind of hit me, I remember, in January of 2020 that I wanted to get a new drum set," Menashe said. "I hadn't had one since the late 70s, and so I went out and bought one."

The wheels were in motion. Soon Gilbert and Resnikoff were on board. They still needed a bass player.

"Coincidentally, Rick is a really is a really good racquetball player and he plays at the [Mittleman Jewish Community Center] all the time," Gilbert said.

"My main racquetball partner was a fellow named David Bloom who goes to Neveh Shalom. He and his family have been up here about 10 years from California," Menashe recalled. "I said, 'We're forming this band, and I know you're a music major. Do you happen to know of any bass players by chance?' He said, 'Yeah, I play bass.'"

"I guess it was meant to be," Menashe went on, following it with the Hebrew translation – *bashert*.

It turned out that Bloom can also sing lead, as can Resnikoff – Gilbert offers backing vocals. They practiced individually through the early days of the COVID pandemic but kept up over Zoom as a means of looking out for one another during isolation.

"When the shots happened, we would practice wearing masks," Gilbert said of the

band's slow progression to in-person practice. "When the booster came, we decided to take the mask off and said, 'OK, the six-foot thing is fine.'"

They decided on their name – which comes from the street just north of Southeast Woodstock Boulevard where Gilbert lived in the 70s when he, Menashe and Resnikoff were hanging out a lot- and started building their repertoire: The Beatles, Tom Petty, R.E.M, The Police, Neil Young and more. Menashe said that basically anything from the 60s through the 90s was fair game. The four blend well together musically and have a common interest in honoring those whose work they cover. They'll practice a song again and again until they get it just right – only then does it potentially go on their set list, the pool for which is at 34 and counting.

"We're not going to just fluff over something," Gilbert said. "It's important that we pay homage to the people who wrote a song and make sure it's done right because people have heard this song many times before."

When they "got out of the basement," as Menashe put

it, and played their first live show in 2023, they donated their services to the Neveh Shalom auction, supporting their synagogue by letting the highest bidder decide their first venue. Since then, they've played numerous private parties, typically for fellow CNS members, as well as the synagogue's Shabbat on the Plaza (where they'll appear again this summer) and the recent fundraiser for the CNS Sisterhood's Torah Fund – on top of a recent gig at The Cider Mill on Southwest Capitol Highway, just up the hill from Neveh Shalom, as a fundraiser for the music program at Ida B. Wells High School, where Menashe's wife works.

Their collective Jewish connection isn't just what brought them together – it's a huge part of their lives. Bloom's three daughters have all celebrated *bat mitzvahs* at Neveh Shalom since Ellis Street formed – Bloom's bandmates have been at each one. The four members are all active with Camp Solomon Schechter. Ellis Street maintains a standing Sunday practice session at Menashe's

continued on next page

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home, and during breaks in the three-hour sessions, the topic of conversation often involves the band's shared faith and heritage.

"It means a lot to us that we're all Jewish," Menashe said. "It's kind of cool when we can play at the synagogue and people that have known us all these years say, 'I

didn't know you guys were a band like this, that you could play like that.'"

"We wanted to be all Jewish," Gilbert said. "It's just a bond we all have."

Catch Ellis Street live at Congregation Neveh Shalom's "Rock n' Roll Shabbat" Friday, July 12 at 6:15 pm. For more information, visit nevehshalom.org/sotp.

STUDENT (continued from page 2)

"The students have been so respectful, so considerate, so thoughtful with their questions. It's been really wonderful to see how open they are to embracing, learning about things," Nelson said. "I had coffee with one of [the teachers] afterwards, they reached out to me after the presentation so impacted by what they heard, and they have been learning more about Judaism since then."

This year's presentations have not been a one-off; Student to Student will be returning next year and is looking for the next group of presenters.

"I would 100 percent recommend it. I wish that this

program had started earlier so I wouldn't have only had one year," Cohen said. "It's such an empowering experience to get to go somewhere where you're respected as a Jew. It is not often that we walk into spaces and talk freely."

Hear more about Cohen and Luria's experiences in "Student to Podcast with Anouk Cohen and Ben Luria" from The Jewish Review Podcast, available on all major podcast platforms. Rising juniors and seniors interested in joining Student to Student next year can learn more and apply at jewishportland.org/studenttostudent.

JEWISH WOMEN PROFESSIONALS
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ROBISON (continued from page 6)

staying with the campus, so something new was required. This story originally began with the Jewish Old People's Home, before the move to Southwest Boundary Street. That move was financed in large part by a donation from the children of Hannah Robison, who had been active with the organization for years, and the new facility was initially named the Robison Jewish Home in her honor. It's a name that's sticking around.

"It's not just a way of honoring the Robison family, even though they certainly deserve it," Millender said, "but it's really a way of honoring all of the families that have donated to Cedar Sinai Park over the years."

With a name, a logo designed by local artist David Friedman and an endowment of \$17 million after the sale of the campus was finalized, the foundation is ready to move toward its first goal: distributing \$400,000 of grants in 2025. With support (and office space) from the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation, the application process for the first of those grant cycles is now open.

Called *ChikChok* grants, using the Hebrew term for "quick," these first grants will be up to \$3,000 each to support organizations that are already offering programming on the Cedar Sinai Park campus, as well as to help revive programs that were previously offered but have been discontinued.

"Even though we sold the Boundary Street campus, we are very committed to the residents on that campus," Millender said. "Just to give you an example, there's a wonderful program that brings middle school students from [Portland Jewish Academy] to Rose Schnitzer Manor to do activities with the residents. Every time PJA has to charter a bus just to drive the students, it costs \$200 round trip; over the course of a year, you're talking thousands of dollars just for transportation."

Applications for *ChikChok* grants are open through May 30. Two larger grant programs, the *Kadimah* (moving forward) program offering up to \$50,000 for "new projects and activities or the expansion of existing programs for elders in our Jewish community," and the *Kulanu* (all of us) grants offering larger sums "to encourage collaboration among local agencies to mitigate deficits, close service gaps, and create sustainable solutions to address the needs of elders in our Jewish community," will open later this year.

The Foundation is also in the process of expanding its endowment – in addition to the proceeds from the sale of the Southwest Boundary Street campus, RFJE received four low-income housing developments in Downtown Portland and is looking into financing options for those buildings to generate additional capital – as well as hiring an Executive Director.

"We think it's very important to have an Executive Director who can be kind of a thought leader on issues of aging and how the community can better serve seniors," Millender said. "We want to have an Executive Director who will be working closely with the organizations that we're supporting."

For more information about RFJE and its upcoming grants, visit rfje.org.

NEMER (continued from page 6)

my brothers and sisters, who are struggling in silence in just as much pain as I am in.”

At the time, Kaiser was looking to roll out a mental health first aid program like the one Nemer’s colleague had participated in through his church. Nemer volunteered his division for the pilot program and was open with his team about his challenges – both in the past and in the present. And just as Nemer had experienced a transformation in his own life, he began to see one in his team.

“As the executive leader, when I was saying, ‘I got to go. I’m having an anxiety attack,’ I was just normalizing the topic so that it created the space for everybody else to talk about it and get help,” he said. “People were going to get therapy and people were getting better. And what happened is two years later, we not only had some of the highest employee engagement stats across

the entire nation for Kaiser’s health plan, but we also had the happiest employees in the company. And on every single key customer performance indicator, the Northwest team was number one across the country.”

It’s outcomes like these that bring Nemer to approach mental health literacy as a leadership imperative – not just because it’s the right thing to do, but because, for a business, it’s the smart thing to do.

“Depression has been shown to cause an average productivity dip of 20 percent. That’s a day a week. Last year, University of Oxford’s MBA program found on the opposite end of the spectrum, that people who are happy have a 13 percent increase of productivity over average,” Nemer explained. “I think business leaders in America could take a big bite out of the mental health crisis in America if they just became mental

health literate and in addition to all the other cultural aspects of their company, they say, ‘I’m going to normalize the topic of mental health.’”

Eventually, Nemer left Kaiser and started his own company to bring that message to a broader audience. With this volume, the audience is getting broader still.

“It’s a memoir with a purpose. I walk through my experience, and I bring the reader into my life with me as I lived those 20 years and then I bring them on the journey of how we get better,” Nemer explained. “Then we roll into recognizing the signs that someone is struggling, and we spend a chapter helping someone engaging with someone in a safe, thoughtful, nonjudgmental manner.”

Presale orders for “Simple Mental Health” are available now at adam-nemer.presale.manuscripts.com.

ELECTION (continued from page 7)

antisemitism and hate in our schools.”

“The district has made it clear, ‘this is how you teach controversial subjects; fairly, impartially, from multiple perspectives,’ and that what was being presented is not approved,” Horenstein said of the workshop in Beaverton. “If I were a voter – and I am – I would be asking the candidates, ‘What’s your view of these kinds of so-called trainings?’”

Both Horenstein and Nelson have been meeting with candidates for races in Portland and Beaverton in the run-up to Tuesday’s election. By and large, those conversations have been positive.

“If nothing else, they have led to developing relationships with people who potentially could be on the school board. They have heard our concerns and they heard the experiences of our part of the community,” Nelson said. “They want to provide balanced perspec-

tives across the community, and they need to hear from their community in order to be able to provide that.”

Those kinds of questions and conversations matter because, as Twain explains, board members should be focused on making the best decisions for students and staff. That’s not always how it turns out, though.

“There are people who run for school board, sometimes they actually have an agenda, and I think that’s important for people to be aware of,” she said. “They might be running to not necessarily focus on the kids and staff but could have some sort of political agenda.”

How is one to tell, though? School board elections are not nearly as well financed, by and large, as races for higher offices, so candidates often struggle to get their message out.

“I think that is the challenge,” Twain said. “There’s the voters pamphlet; some-

times it’s more direct in terms of [candidates’] beliefs and other times you have to read between the lines a little bit. Sometimes you can tell by who’s endorsing them. Sometimes you have to show up for things.”

Numerous organizations have hosted candidate forums in the run up to this election; some of them are available to review online. Many newspapers, including *The Oregonian* and *Willamette Week*, endorse candidates – *The Jewish Review*, as a program of JFGP, does not endorse, support or oppose candidates for elected office in compliance with Internal Revenue Code. But sometimes, one’s own community can be the best way to solve the riddle of who to vote for.

“I encourage people to talk to your neighbors, your Jewish neighbors in particular, because some of the people who’ve been meeting with candidates have more

knowledge than if you haven’t had any opportunity. If all you’re going by is the voter pamphlet, that’s maybe not going to give you a full picture,” Horenstein said.

“I think a lot of us have connections that people might not realize,” Nelson added. “So, utilize the people in your community that you feel close to and you feel comfortable with and you rely on their opinions for other things. Ask them their opinions on this.”

It’s not always easy – such is the nature of democracy.

“People just really have to do their due diligence in terms of understanding who they’re voting for. This is true for anything, not just school board members. What do these people actually believe?” Twain said. “And for me, as it relates to school board, the big question for me is ‘How will you help children? How will you be on the school board help children?’”

Published biweekly by
the Jewish Federation of
Greater Portland
9900 SW Greenburg
Road, Suite 220
Tigard, OR 97223
503-245-6219

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To receive the Jewish
Review in your email
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NEXT ISSUE

Issue date Deadline
MAY 28 MAY 22

Security Corner

This May, Stop The Bleed!

By JESSICA ANDERSON

You're headed to the movies, and there's a car accident in front of you. Your neighbor is mowing the lawn in flip-flops and runs over his foot. Your friend is injured while chopping kindling for the backyard fire pit. These are the everyday occurrences that can turn quickly into life-threatening situations. Minutes count! Someone who is severely bleeding can bleed to death in as few as 5 minutes. That's why bleeding control—keeping the blood inside the body—is the purpose of Stop The Bleed training.

Knowing how to control bleeding from a serious injury is important for everyone. Did you know that bleeding is the number one cause of death following an accident? May is National Stop the Bleed Month, and May 22 is National Stop the Bleed Day. There are several ways to become informed, educated, and empowered.

The core elements of stopping life-threatening bleeding are the following:

- **Apply Direct Pressure:** The first and most immediate step involves applying downward pressure directly to the wound using as much of your body weight to assist.
- **Pack the Wound:** If the wound is gaping and continues to bleed, pack gauze or cloth down into the wound to help control the bleeding. Apply pressure on top of the gauze or cloth.
- **Apply a Tourniquet:** For severe bleeding from arms and legs that does not stop with direct pressure or packing, a tourniquet may be necessary.



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.

Tourniquets are extremely effective, and if in doubt, use one. The phrase “high and tight” will help you remember to apply the tourniquet high on the arm or leg and make sure it's tight enough to stop the blood flow.

There are amazing stories about people who suddenly found themselves in a situation where they needed to use these skills. Here's one highlighted on the Stop the Bleed website at <https://www.stopthebleed.org/learn-more/arizona-woman-saves-teen-after-e-bike-accident/>: In Gilbert, Arizona, Dawn Cain was on her way to work at an elementary school. Just half a block from the school, Dawn noticed an unfolding emergency. A young teen was lying on the ground, screaming in pain. Nearby, a motorized e-bike was crumpled against a parked car. Dawn immediately pulled over, leaving her car in the middle of the street to create a barrier and protect the scene. As she approached, she saw the severity of the situation: the boy had a compound fracture in his thigh, with bone protruding through his skin and a pool of blood forming. She had taken the Stop the Bleed course years earli-

er. The training had always seemed like a good skill, but until this moment, she had never needed to put it to use. She had a neighbor bring her a towel and call 911 as she applied pressure to the wound. The boy was in terrible pain, and other bystanders helped by talking with the boy until medics came to take over. Reflecting on the incident, Dawn felt a mix of emotions. She was relieved that the boy was recovering but recognized the importance of staying prepared. “I would like a refresher course,” she admitted. “When you're in a high-pressure situation like that, you want to feel confident in every decision you make.”

These skills are as important to know as CPR and basic First Aid. I regularly offer free Stop The Bleed classes via Zoom, and they are open to the public and for sharing with friends and community. I can also schedule in-person training with your group or organization, which includes hands-on practice with tourniquets. My safety and security training calendar can be found on the JFGP website at <https://jewishportland.org/events/security-training> or you can contact me di-

See SECURITY, page 20

Staff Column

The dual meaning of Shavuot

By CARON BLAU ROTHSTEIN

Shavuot is a special holiday celebrating the giving of the Torah to the Jewish people. It often gets short shrift from American Jews since, by the Gregorian Calendar, it occurs in late May, sometimes over Memorial Day weekend, or June, when school is out. It also doesn't have a home-based central ritual like the Passover seder that brings us together over a ceremonial meal, nor does it have us building a hut to temporarily "reside" in over a week like Sukkot.

It is however, like Passover and Sukkot, one of the "*Shalosh Regalim*," one of the three major Jewish festivals/holidays where Israelites made a pilgrimage to the central Jerusalem Temple and offered sacrifices in celebration.

On the eve of Shavuot, one is enjoined to stay up all night and study Torah. Today, if one is lucky enough to be in Jerusalem on erev Shavuot, there is a singular experience combining the pilgrimage aspects of

yesteryear with late night Torah study. Tens of thousands, sometimes in the hundreds of thousands of people walk to the *Kotel*, the Western Wall, the last physical vestige of Temple times. Late at night or early in the morning, people of all ages walk en masse to study, pray and celebrate our receiving Torah at this holy space.

I had the opportunity to be a part of this experience for Shavuot in 1993. I was in Israel for my junior year of college, studying at Hebrew University. I had no idea what to expect, and looking back, even if I did, nothing could have prepared me fully. Pedestrians dressed in white took over the streets of Jerusalem around the Kotel and made their way all together towards the Kotel. The energy was celebratory, intense and sacred all at the same time. It was unbelievable to be a part of this communal observance, and I couldn't help wondering

See SHAVUOT, page 20

OJCF Column

The rise of collaborative giving

Oregon Jewish Community Foundation

Collaborative giving is reshaping the philanthropic landscape, bringing people together to pool their resources and make a collective impact. This model—whether through shared funding, volunteer time, or expertise—not only amplifies the effect of each contribution but also fosters a deeper sense of community and shared purpose. It's changing not just who gives, but how to give—and ultimately, what causes receive support.

Giving circles have been at the forefront of this movement. These groups, which bring individuals together to support shared causes, have grown rapidly, with more than 2,500 active globally as of 2021. They often focus on local and equity-driven organizations, creating opportunities for participants to engage directly with the needs and values of their communities. In addition to the tangible outcomes of their giving, members build strong relationships and experience the joy of meaningful, collective action.

At the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation, we see the power of collaborative giving firsthand. The [Oregon Jewish Community Youth Foundation](#) (OJCYF) engages high school students in raising and granting funds together, helping them learn about leadership, Jewish values, and the power of collective philanthropy. The Jewish Federation of Greater Portland also supports this model through its [Women's Giving Circle](#), which brings together women to support causes they care about.

Whether you're a teen looking to make an impact, a family wanting to give together, or someone interested in starting or joining a giving circle, there are many ways to get involved. To learn more about collaborative giving opportunities in our community, contact Oregon Jewish Community Foundation at (503) 248-9328 or info@ojcf.org. Together, we can strengthen our Jewish future—one gift, one relationship, and one circle at a time.

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.

Volunteer

May 18: Dignity Grows Packing Event

Hygiene supply tote packing at Rose Schnitzer Manor Assisted Living from 1-3 pm. Preregistration required at jewishportland.org/dignitygrowspackmay.

June 4: Volunteer Challah Bake

Young adult baking event to benefit Holocaust survivors at 5:30 pm at Congregation Beth Israel, in partnership with Moishe Pod West. Learn more and register at jewishportland.org/moishepodchallahbake.

Learn more at jewishportland.org/ourcommunity/volunteering



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BB360 annual fundraiser brings in \$222k

By NOA RUBIN

BB360

On April 26, nearly 200 guests gathered at Avenue in Portland for the annual BB Bash, a gala celebrating the impact of BB360 and raising vital funds for its year-round community programs. BB360 supports a wide range of initiatives, including adult camps, B'nai Mitzvah education, BBYO, PJ Library (beyond Portland), and, of course, BB Camp's summer programs.

This year's event raised over \$222,000, highlighting the community's strong commitment to BB360's mission. Guests enjoyed an evening of delicious food, meaningful connection, and joyful music, featuring a special performance by PNW Songleaders and musicians Josh Niehaus, Kim Schneiderman, Tim Ribner, Ben Sandler, and Michael Galen—bringing the spirit of camp to life in the heart of Portland.



BB360 celebrates its annual BB Bash fundraiser Saturday, Apr. 26 in Portland. (Noa Rubin/BB360)

Shaarie Torah celebrates 120 years on June 8

Congregation Shaarie Torah

The traditional birthday wish of “*Ad Me’ah v’Esrin* – until 120” is especially fitting for Congregation Shaarie Torah as the historic Portland synagogue celebrates its 120th anniversary this year. Founded in 1905, Shaarie Torah has seen many changes since the early days as the First Street Shul, erecting not one but two impressive buildings in the 1960s. The overall trajectory of Shaarie Torah has also changed multiple times, from its origins as an Orthodox shul to Tra-

ditional practice under the long leadership of Rabbi Yonah Geller, z”l, through to its transition into Conservative Judaism and formal affiliation with United Synagogue in 2014.

The shul has continued to evolve creatively since Rabbi Gary Ezra Oren’s arrival in 2021, expanding egalitarian davening and exploring multiple ways to spread learning within the community. The *kehilla*’s signature warmth cements Shaarie Torah’s reputation as the most *haimische* place

in town.

To mark this year’s monumental milestone, a festive cruise-themed gala event *Cruisin’ Into the Next 120 Years!* will be held on Sunday, June 8 at 5 pm at the synagogue. The community is invited to set sail with us and toast to the next 120 years.

Led by Board member and Development Chair Mimi Berlin, a seasoned event planner with over 35 years of experience (and a deep love of cruising), the evening promises to combine

the very best parts of cruising. Highlights include live casino gaming, interactive piano bar, sumptuous buffets, tropical drinks and high value raffles. Among the top prizes is a week at an exclusive resort in Puerto Vallarta.

"Onboard berths" are limited, so be sure to reserve your passenger tickets or sponsorships now at shaarietorah.org/120gala.

For questions please contact CST Executive Director, Jemi Kostiner Mansfield: executivedirector@shaarietorah.org.

Jobs Board

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

Jewish Oasis to celebrate Lag Ba'Omer

By DEANNE PEREZ

The Jewish Oasis

Lag Ba'Omer—the 33rd day of the Omer count between Passover and Shavuot—is a joyful pause in an otherwise solemn season. It's a day infused with light and spirit, traditionally marked by bonfires, music, and joyous gatherings.

This year, Jewish Oasis brings that joy to life with Drums, Deli & Deep Connection, a vibrant celebration on Friday, May 16th from 3-5 pm, blending rhythm, flavor, and soulful connection.

From the lively Unity Rhythm Circle to the nostalgic tastes of fresh pastrami sandwiches prepared by Chef Tim, the event is designed to bring the community together through sensory and spiritual experiences. The rhythm circle is open to all ages and musical backgrounds, creating a

welcoming space where the beat builds a sense of unity and joy. This year's rhythm circle invites participants of all ages and musical abilities to join in a collective beat, building a sense of shared energy and purpose.

"The circle is about more than music—it's about connection," said Hillel Petersen, Jewish Oasis director of special programs and music leader. "You come in as strangers and leave with a rhythm in common."

What is Lag Ba'Omer, and why celebrate it this way? Lag Ba'Omer commemorates two powerful moments in Jewish history: the end of a devastating plague that claimed the lives of thousands of Rabbi Akiva's students—attributed to a breakdown in mutual respect—and the passing of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, a mystical sage who revealed deep spiritu-

al insights that continue to shape Jewish thought.

As Rabbi Moshe Wilhelm, Executive Director of Chabad of Oregon, explains so beautifully, "The word 'LaG' is made up of the Hebrew letters lamed (ל) and gimel (ג), which together have the numerical value of 33. 'Ba'Omer' means 'of the Omer.' It's a moment of uplift—a spark of light in the Omer's solemn stretch—meant to remind us of the power of unity, resilience, and spiritual renewal."

Lag Ba'Omer is a day that, to me, celebrates the enduring spark of the Jewish soul. With music, food, and friendship, my hope is that we create a space where everyone feels uplifted, united, and inspired.

"Lag Ba'Omer is not just a celebration—it's a call to awaken the joy within us, to connect with one another beyond words, and to let our

collective spirit shine," says Rabbi Chayim Mishulovin. "When we gather to drum, to dance, and to break bread, we honor the unbreakable thread of Jewish unity and the enduring spark in every soul."

Whether you're coming for the beat, the bites, or the blessing of being together, the event promises to be a memorable fusion of tradition and togetherness. Guests will indulge in a Jewish deli tasting featuring warm pastrami and classic sides, as the rhythmic energy of the drum circle stirs hearts and souls alike. Security arrangements are sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland.

With only 65 spots available, don't wait—RSVP is a must! Secure your place at JewishOasis.com/Lag. Let's come together to celebrate the enduring spark of the Jewish soul.

Kesser Israel hosts mental health panel May 21

By MIRIAN CARR

Congregation Kesser Israel

Have you ever taken a "mental health" day? Well, they didn't exist when I was growing up, or at least I never knew about them. When I finally had a mental breakdown in high school, the counselor (whom I visited for the first time) suggested I take "a day off."

Massive chocolate milkshake and journal in hand, I cautiously proceeded to my local island of refuge: Barnes & Nobles. I browsed through the self-help section with increasing excitement, finally picking up a small, purple book, graced by a disgruntled, wet-looking owl on the cover. It was entitled,

"The Book for People Who Do Too Much" (by Bradley Treavor Greive, you're welcome).

I hurriedly plucked it from the shelf and snuck away to a deliciously sunny corner by the window. I binge-read it from cover to cover, crying with relief. I also laughed. It felt good to sit in the sun, judged by no one, not even myself. None of my problems were solved that day, but it was pretty epic to miss school for "no reason." I felt better for the day.

How many of us would like to take a "mental health day," or how about, "week," or dare I say it...life? Many feel that life has escalated into a major juggling act,

where each ball dropped is a major crisis, whether in reality, or just in our own minds. Unfortunately, "handling what life throws at you" was not a subject taught in school (nor in college, though nowadays YouTube has some pretty compelling tutorials.) But jokes aside, it's clear that many of us were simply never taught the sacred art of juggling life's challenges amidst the chaos within and all around.

If you were intrigued by or resonated with the story above, or have your own thoughts to share, please join us for a "Jewish Community Mental Health Panel" Wednesday, May 21 at 6 pm. - an evening to connect

and learn from each other and the mental health professionals in our midst.

The Torah says, "Guard your soul very much" (Deuteronomy 4:9) - this evening is an invitation to strengthen your soul and give yourself the "mental health" break you deserve. Relax, become inspired and informed of all the resources that are available to you and those you love. Registration is free and mandatory to receive the event location: www.kesserisrael.org/event/mental-health. Looking forward to seeing you there! (And your future, less-anxious self will thank you. Just sign up!) For more info, contact me at mcarr@kesserisrael.org.

Free online subscription: jewishportland.org/subscribe



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Events

More upcoming community events online at jewishportland.org/community-calendar

May 14: When Grandparents Get Canceled (And What to Do About It)

Webinar from Jewish Grandparents Network at 4 pm. Register for free at jewishgrandparentsnetwork.org/event/when-grandparents-get-canceled-and-what-to-do-about-it.

May 14: Jewish Wisdom for Great Life Questions

Adult education class every two weeks at 7 pm on Zoom, presented by Beit Haverim. Learn more at beithav.org/form/Spring2025AdultEd.

May 15: Mommy & Me Spring Edition

Gathering for moms and babies 6 weeks- 18 Months at The Gan Preschool at 8:45 pm. RSVP at jportland.com/register

May 15: CNS Israeli American Lag Ba'Omer Celebration

Potluck barbecue hosted by Congregation Neveh Shalom at 5 pm at Shute Park. RSVP at members.nevehshalom.org/event/LBO25.

May 15: Sklamberg Lurje Judelman Trio

Klezmer concert at the Eastside Jewish Commons at 7 pm. Part of the Portland Jewish Music Festival. More

information and tickets at ejcpdx.org/portland-jewish-music-festival.

May 16: Diane Chaplin Solo Cellist Share

Free concert at the Eastside Jewish Commons at noon. Part of the Portland Jewish Music Festival. More information and tickets at ejcpdx.org/portland-jewish-music-festival.

May 16: Lag Ba'Omer Deli

See story, page 17.

May 16: Lag Ba'Omer Family Celebration

Celebration at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center at 3:30 pm, presented by Chabad of Southwest Portland. RSVP at ticketailor.com/events/jportland/1690118.

May 16: Shabbat with Congregation P'nai Or and PDX Nigun Circle

Kabbalat Shabbat service at the Eastside Jewish Commons at 7 pm. Free. Part of the Portland Jewish Music Festival. More information and tickets at ejcpdx.org/portland-jewish-music-festival.

May 17: The Magid Ensemble

Yiddish folk music concert at 2 pm at the Eastside

Jewish Commons at noon. Part of the Portland Jewish Music Festival. More information and tickets at ejcpdx.org/portland-jewish-music-festival.

May 17: Jake Shulman-Ment Duo with Brivele

Klezmer concert at the Eastside Jewish Commons at 7 pm. Part of the Portland Jewish Music Festival. More information and tickets at ejcpdx.org/portland-jewish-music-festival.

May 18: Day for the J

Open house and community awards at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center from 10 am – 3 pm. More information at oregonjcc.org.

May 18: Beware! The Enchanted Forest

Presentation by the Jewish Genealogical Society of Oregon at 10:30 am on Zoom. For more information or to register, visit jgsoregon.wixsite.com/home.

May 18: JFGP at Sunday Parkways

Tabling and craft project station Parkways hosted by the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland at Portland's Sunday Parkways from 11 am-4 pm in Multnomah Village neighborhood.

May 18: Yankl Falk &

The Carpathian Pacific Express

Modern Klezmer concert at the Eastside Jewish Commons at 7 pm. Part of the Portland Jewish Music Festival. More information and tickets at ejcpdx.org/portland-jewish-music-festival.

May 20: Taste of Judaism

Class on modern Jewish identity at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center at 5 pm. \$12. Register online at oregonjcc.org/arts-culture/upcoming-events.

May 21: "In the Wake of Madness"

Book presentation by author Bettie Denny at Congregation Neveh Shalom at 1 pm. Register at nevehshalom.org/WofM.

May 21: Jewish Community Mental Health Awareness Panel

See story, page 17.

May 21: Poetry Reading at EJC

Readings from Judy Nahum, Ahuva S. Zaslavsky and Daniela Naomi Molnar at the Eastside Jewish Commons at 6:30 pm. Free. Register online at events.humanitix.com/poetry-reading-judy-nahum-ahuva-s-zaslavsky-daniela-naomi-molnar.

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PRUDENCE STEINER

Congregation Neveh Shalom is saddened to share the news of the passing of Prudence Steiner, z"l, mother of Elizabeth Steiner and Josh Steiner (Antoinette Delruelle), and grandmother of Mira Hayward, Emerson Steiner Hayward, Raphael Steiner, Margot Steiner, and Clara Steiner.

The funeral took place Thursday, May 1, in New York City.

HENRY BODZIN

Congregation Kesser Israel member Henry Bodzin, z"l, passed away Wednesday, Apr. 30, at age 78, after a long illness.

A graveside service and burial was held Friday, May 2, at the Kesser Israel cemetery.

Henry is survived by his wife Barbara, daughter Dena Philips, son Jay Bodzin, sister Cherna Kowalsky, brother Eugene Bodzin, and two grandchildren.

MAXINE USHER

It is with deep sadness that Congregation Shaarie Torah announces the passing of Maxine Usher, z"l, beloved wife of Stanton Usher. Maxine passed away on Sunday, May 4, 2025 at the age of 78.

She is survived by her husband, Stanton Usher, her sister,

Marsha Lowenthal of New York City, two nieces, Maureen Nicholson and Lynne Usher, and many cousins.

The funeral was held Thursday, May 8, at Neveh Tzedek Cemetery.

MICHAEL SIGELL

Congregation Beth Israel mourns the loss of Dr. Michael David Sigell, z"l, who passed away on Thursday, Apr. 24, at the age of 84.

Michael is survived by his children, Julie, Lisa, and Todd; his grandchildren, Lauryn, Kaden, Grayson, and Paxton; his brother Leonard; and his Cousin Joyce Loeb. Michael is preceded in death by his parents, Rose Sigell, z"l, and Edward Sigell, z"l, and his wife, Janice Sigell, z"l.

Friends and family are invited to the funeral Sunday, May 18 at 11 am at Beth Israel Cemetery. For those who would like to join, but are unable to attend in person, a broadcast of the chapel service can be found at us02web.zoom.us/j/86063273002.

Donations in Michael's memory can be made to The Oregon Symphony Orchestra and the Portland Youth Philharmonic Orchestra.

SHAVUOT (continued from page 15)

if this is what it felt like in ancient Temple times to be in Jerusalem for Shavuot, Sukkot or Pesach.

Shavuot has many different names including two of which are agricultural. *Yom HaBikkurim*—day of the first fruits and *Chag Hakatzir*—festival of the harvest. The holiday has some of its origins as a festival celebrating the wheat harvest. In the Temple period, the first fruits of the harvest were brought along with two loaves of bread made from the new wheat as offerings.

Four years after my late-night Jerusalem Shavuot experience, I had the privilege

of being in Israel for Shavuot again. The experience was very different, but also incredibly impactful and related to the agricultural side of the holiday.

I was in Israel with my fellow students in my graduate program in Jewish professional leadership. When I saw that our trip included Shavuot, I assumed we'd be in Jerusalem and was incredibly excited to repeat my 1993 Shavuot experience. I then learned that we'd be staying at a kibbutz in Israel's north, not at all what many of us had presumed. We were leery of the choice our trip leaders

had made but ultimately I had another experience of a lifetime.

The kibbutz was not an overly religious one, however like many kibbutzim they were centered on agriculture. That made Shavuot THE absolute perfect time to be there. Everyone dressed in white with floral garlands in their hair, music was playing and the children helped to bring in the first fruits from the kibbutz's own harvest for a festive celebration unlike anything I'd ever experienced. It was a call back to another time when Israel was an agrarian society and its holidays were steeped

in marking agricultural milestones. We were in fact celebrating just like the ancient Israelites in bringing forth the first fruits, even if it wasn't as part of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

I treasure these two Israel Shavuot experiences and am reminded by them that Jewish tradition, Jewish observances, Jewish experiences are multi-faceted.

Hag Sameach—Happy Shavuot!

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SECURITY (continued from page 14)

rectly at janderson@securecommunitynetwork.org or 872-273-9214. Additionally, check out Stop The Bleed's website at stopthebleed.org. You'll find online courses, resources, and how Stop

The Bleed is helping people across the US.

Don't forget! It's vitally important to report antisemitic incidents and experiences, large and small, so communities, law enforce-

ment, and state agencies can track their prevalence and allocate sufficient funding to investigate. To report an incident, contact Jessica directly or use the reporting form from the JFGP secu-

rity page at (securecommunitynetwork.jotform.com/form/223354509223148). Learn more about JFGP's security program on the JFGP security page, jewishportland.org/security.