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'...To listen to the people'

Federation group visits Israel for Yom HaZikaron, Yom Ha'Atzmaut

By **ROCKNE ROLL**
The Jewish Review

They had all visited before. When and how many times they had come before varied. For Kyle Mezrahi, it was his fourth trip. Carolyn Weinstein recalled that Laurie Rogoway guessed it was her 25th visit.

But something called to all 13 people on the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's 2025 Israel Mission to return to *Eretz Yisrael*.

"I know other people before me have gone since Oct. 7, and I've been very interested in their response and what it meant to them," Weinstein said. "Everybody had said that the people were so glad that we were coming. I thought that that was important."

Some came early and some stayed after to visit friends and family and see other

sights. But for eight days, these 13 journeyed across Israel together for a common purpose: to stand witness, to mourn, to remember, and to celebrate.

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Following a first night dinner in Tel Aviv, the group headed south into the area close to Gaza. Very close to Gaza.

"There was a fence. I could see right through it," Weinstein recalled. "I was on one side, and Gaza was literally on the other."

They travelled to Kibbutz Nir Oz to visit the grave of Ohad Yehalomi, the brother of Portland's Efrat Avsker. Debbie Plawner, a participant in the trip who is closely connected with Avsker and others in Yehalomi's family in Portland, spoke at his graveside.

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Graves at Mount Herzl National Cemetery in Jerusalem decorated in flowers and flags for Yom HaZikaron - Israeli Memorial Day Wednesday, Apr. 30. (Carolyn Weinstein)

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The Jewish Review Podcast



Click the logo for the latest episode.

Beard nominated as next JFGP board chair

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

For Leslie Beard, volunteer leadership in Jewish Federations is something of a family pursuit.

“I grew up in a federation household,” Beard, who has been nominated to be the next board chair of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, explained. “My dad loved his involvement, and philanthropy was so important to my parents. The Jewish community was so important to them, both their synagogue and their federation. So, I kind of learned by example about how important it is to step into leadership.”

Beard has been stepping into leadership roles since she arrived in Portland – first at Congregation Shaarie Torah, where she and her husband Peter remain members and she serves on the synagogue’s Chesed Committee, and later with the Federation.

“Federation started calling me, and I said, ‘I’m too young to do that.’ My parents did it, but maybe down the road, and so I kind of held them off for a while,” Beard recalled. “But slowly I got involved and I very quickly learned how rewarding it was to do that type of work, and so I feel like I’ve just naturally fallen into it. Now I understand why my parents enjoyed it so much.

Starting out in Women’s Philanthropy, Beard later sat on the allocations committee.

“That was eye opening, just to learn about a lot of things I didn’t know were going on in the community,” Beard said of her time on allocations. “I didn’t know what the Federation was doing as

a whole, and how they were funding all these different agencies. I found that very informative, and it was rewarding.”

This led to a seat on the board, first with then-chair Ed Tonkin and continuing with subsequent board chairs Lauren Goldstein and Mindy Zeitzer. In the last two years, Beard has been campaign co-chair, a role her father once held with the Jewish Federation in Milwaukee.

“My father really enjoyed soliciting. He enjoyed asking people for money,” Beard said. “I remember dad being excited about it and how it’s important. That helped me step in as campaign co-chair, because I didn’t need to be afraid of that.”

Beard’s father was also board chair in Milwaukee – once again, like father, like daughter.

“My father used to say that when somebody asks for help or when you’re asked to step into a role of leadership, you say ‘yes.’” Beard explained.

Federation members will have the chance to say “yes” to Beard at the Federation’s annual meeting on Thursday, June 12, at 4:30 pm at Congregation Neveh Shalom in Portland. Registration is available online at jewish-portland.org/annual25.

“I’m certainly honored about this opportunity,” Beard said. “I think continuing with the growth that the Federation has had in the last couple of years and the momentum that we have from our community study and the programs that we put in place, I feel like it’s a really good time to be part of working with the Federation.”

On The Podcast Zeitzer reflects on three years as chair

Mindy Zeitzer is the board chair of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland – her term will conclude upon the election of her successor at the Federation’s 105th Annual Meeting on June 12. She spoke with Jewish Review editor Rockne Roll about her experiences as board chair and her hopes for the future of Portland’s Jewish community. A portion of their conversation is transcribed below. For the full conversation, check out “Board Chair Banter with Mindy Zeitzer” on The Jewish Review Podcast, available on all major podcast platforms. This transcript has been edited for brevity and clarity.

The Jewish Review: What are you most proud of that you’ve accomplished, or that the Federation has accomplished, in your tenure as board chair?

Mindy Zeitzer: I give all the credit to the professional team. They’re the ones that are in the trenches every day, doing the work. I feel like I take very little credit for any of that. I’m just proud to be part of it and have my name on it, but the work is really done by the incredible professional team.

Some of the things I’m most proud of are the implementation of what we found from the community study. All of the new positions that have started; we have Yosef Rosen, who’s really focusing on Jewish education in our community, and he’s created and developed all of these different outlets for people to just jump in and learn, whether it’s small and about a holiday, or whether it’s big and ongoing, and whether you identify as Jewish or Jew-ish, or whether you have a partner who’s Jewish but you yourself are not. We have Merit in the new volunteer position, that’s something that I’m proud that the Federation has done and implemented, from the beginning. We said we were going to do it, and we did it, and there it is, right? The evidence is there, the proof is in the pudding, and we’ll reevaluate it and see how it goes; we’ll make tweaks and shifts and move from there.

I also think I’m really proud of the advocacy around antisemitism. I think that that has really impacted our community and families and things like that. And I’m in awe, honestly, of the work that you know, Rachel [Nelson] and Bob [Horenstein] and the JCRC are doing every day to tackle it and battle it. Not just the things that are currently happening, but also looking forward to try to prevent it.

JR: What’s some advice, maybe that you would go back and give yourself coming into this role three years ago?

MZ: I think I would tell myself to be more confident in what I know, but didn’t think that I knew. I think coming into the role, I spent a fair amount of time trying to feel things out and figure out the role, and what should I do and shouldn’t I do, and where do I stand with all of this? I would tell myself, ‘Stop second guessing yourself and

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105TH ANNUAL MEETING

2025
REVIEW

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JUNE 12, 2025**

4:30 PM - 6:00 PM

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Rohr receives Rogoway Award

Jewish Federation of Greater Portland Rogoway Committee Chair Sarah Howard, right, and Chief Planning and Engagement Officer Caron Blau Rothstein, left, present the 2025 Laurie Rogoway Outstanding Jewish Professional Award to Congregation Neveh Shalom Youth Empowerment Specialist Sarah Rohr, center, Tuesday, May 20. Rohr will formally receive her award at the Federation's Annual Meeting Thursday, June 12. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

Dorfman's podcast a way to help others

Editor's Note: This article contains discussion of suicide. If you are having thoughts of suicide, contact the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline by dialing 988 from anywhere in the United States or contact the Crisis Text Line by texting "SAVE" to 741741.

By ROCKNE ROLL

The Jewish Review

Mica Dorfman has long been interested in pursuing social justice advocacy. But her story's own harrowing turn has become her platform to help others through the medium of podcasting.

Dorfman's "Perfectly Imperfect" podcast is rooted in a line from the *dvar torah* she gave at her *bat mitzvah* in June of 2021. That speech, ostensibly a discussion of *parshat Korach*, was also the first time she publicly discussed her own mental health struggles.

"I'm a big extrovert," she explained to *The Jewish Review*. "When COVID hit, I had a really, really hard time."

Dorfman said that even though she had been to therapy and emotions were something that had been talked about in her home, the isolation of online schooling during the pandemic brought on severe anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation which culminated in a pair of suicide attempts in March of 2021.

"The second one landed me in the hospital, which then landed me in an

inpatient center, which then landed me in an outpatient center," she said. "I remember saying to my parents, 'I would never wish this upon my worst enemy. When I get out of here, I'm going to do something to help people.'"

First, she insisted on going through with her *bat mitzvah* – and using her time on the *bimah* to discuss what she was going through. For many of her family members, it was their first time hearing about her journey.

"I remember being up there and I remember the exact moment when I said the line, 'I tried to end my life.' I paused before and I was shaking, and the tears start coming," Dorfman recounted. "I said it and there was kind of that gasp [from the audience] and it was terrifying. But then I felt proud of myself that I, at one point, didn't think I was even going to make it to my *bat mitzvah*, and I made it, and I shared the most vulnerable part of me. It was super scary and also really rewarding in a way."

She concluded with the line that became her podcast title.

"I worked with Kim Schneiderman for my *bat mitzvah*, and I was trying to think of a way to sum up my whole speech," Dorfman recalled. "'We're all perfectly imperfect' just came to me, and I just love the way it sounds."

Additionally, Dorfman helped develop a logo based on a butterfly – "I've

always loved butterflies, especially during my really hard time; the idea that they kind of like go through this big, hard, weird looking thing and they come out this beautiful creature," she said – and made a batch of sweatshirts to commemorate the big day. She had the idea to create and market merchandise with the logo and give the proceeds to mental health organizations but didn't have a platform to work from.

Last year, the idea of a podcast came together – and a way to create it appeared. Dorfman was speaking on a panel assembled by the inpatient center where she had received treatment to a local scouting group. She mentioned the idea of the podcast and the stars aligned.

"We have a podcast studio. You're welcome to use it whenever," Dorfman recalled them telling her.

The process had its bumps in the road, but she launched the first episode in April.

"I've really wanted to do this," Dorfman said, "and it just felt like the right time."

Three episodes are currently out – the first two are Dorfman, along with her parents, recounting her experiences in 2021.

"The night before I released the first

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"Tree Of Life: On Fire" by Linda Zahavi is part of ORA Northwest Jewish Artists' exhibition at the Beaverton City Library, on display through July 14. (Courtesy ORA)

ORA at Beaverton City Library through July 14

By ROCKNE ROLL

The Jewish Review

While Beaverton and many other municipalities have taken the opportunity to recognize Jewish American Heritage Month this May, the Beaverton City Library is going one step further and putting pieces of American Jewish heritage on display in the form of art.

ORA Northwest Jewish Artists has assembled a gallery of work that is on display at the city's Main Library on Southwest Fifth Street now through July 14.

"They didn't have anything booked, so they just said, 'How long would you like to be up,'" ORA's Eddy Shuldman said. "I said, 'How about a month?' They made it two months!"

The show includes works by Shuldman, Jan Baross, Judith Brown, Diane Fredgant, David Friedman, Jonathon Lietz, Brian Rohr, Amy Solomonson, Simkha Shields and Linda Zahavi.

"A number of folks have similar themes, either a Hamsa or a Tree of Life, so it'll be interesting to see how they interpret those things differently through their art," Shuldman said. "Rather than just Jewish artists making art, it needed to have a Jewish theme."

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Cities, schools, other local bodies mark Jewish American Heritage Month

The Jewish Review staff

Numerous public bodies in the Portland metro area took time to recognize May as Jewish American Heritage Month in 2025.

The City of Tigard's City Council issued a proclamation at their May 15 meeting, specifically recognizing that "Jewish cultural institutions, such as the Tigard Chabad Jewish Center and the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, play a pivotal role in educating the public about Jewish history, the Holocaust, and the importance of tolerance, while actively promoting goodness, kindness, and shared responsibility for the well-being of all humankind."

West Linn's City Council made a similar proclamation at their May 5 meeting. "The City of West Linn embraces the diverse backgrounds and experiences that make our city stronger, and encourages all residents to celebrate the history and contributions of Jewish Americans while promoting unity, understanding, and mutual respect among all peoples," the proclamation read in part.

The Board of Directors of the Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation District, which serves eastern Washington County, issued their own proclamation at their meeting May 14, noting that "THPRD honors Jewish American Heritage Month as a time to reflect on this history and reaffirms its commitment to creating inclusive spaces for everyone, including our Jewish American friends and neighbors."

The proclamation contin-

ued to say that "we recognize the importance of culturally competent education, representation, and policy that reflect Jewish American experiences and address the impacts of antisemitism in our communities."

The Board of Directors for Reynolds School District, which serves the eastern Multnomah Counties cities of Fairview, Troutdale and Wood Village, passed a resolution at their Apr. 23 meeting, stating that "Reynolds School District encourages staff, students, and community members to remember and reflect, celebrate, and educate future generations about the past and current struggles Jewish Americans endure and the importance of their role in communities across our nation."

Oregon City School District board members received a presentation from Civil Rights Coordinator Diana Grindea on Jewish American Heritage Month, as well as the work of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Student to Student program at Oregon City schools, at their May 12 meeting.

Libraries in Beaverton and West Linn also made proclamations or put on programs related to Jewish American Heritage Month.

Jewish American Heritage Month was first proclaimed in May of 2006 by then-President George W. Bush and has been observed annually each year since. The monthlong observance is an expansion of the Jewish Heritage Week first proclaimed by President Jimmy Carter in 1980.

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Tivnu is for 'grown-ups' in four-day June program

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

Tivnu: Building Justice's very first program was a four-day event for adults. More than a decade later, after launching its nationally acclaimed gap year program for high school graduates and numerous other shorter-term programs for young people, Tivnu is getting back to its roots, so to speak.

Tivnu: All Grown Up runs from Sunday through Thursday, June 15-19, in Portland, and features many of the activities that are cornerstones of Tivnu's youth programs. Much of the time will be centered on working at Hazelnut Grove, a transitional housing village in North Portland that Tivnu has partnered with for the past nine years.

"When a group comes in, they're only here for three or four days, but they're the beneficiaries of the deep relationship that we've had for hundreds and hundreds of days," Tivnu Executive Director Steve Eisenbach-Budner said. "We feel very comfortable there and the folks there feel very comfortable with Tivnu."

As with all Tivnu programs, construc-

tion experience is not required – the program will have trainers on hand and there will likely be gardening work to be done as well. In Tivnu tradition, there are also educational elements. One of these is an evening program by Nila Yosha, the founder of Outside the Frame.

"It's an organization that teaches young people who are or were houseless filmmaking skills and helps them make films about their lives and things they care about," Eisenbach-Budner said.

Another is "What Is This Political Moment We're Living Through: Understanding the Right-Wing Ascent and Progressive Responses" by Dr. Gordon Lafer, a professor at the University of Oregon's Labor Education and Research Center and a former Senior Policy Advisor for the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Education and Labor. Tivnu will also present a conversation with housing experts on the country's – and Portland's – affordable housing crisis.

"We'll be doing work, but we'll also be learning about the issues," Eisenbach Budner said. "And we're going to

have fun. We're going to go on a hike in the Gorge, we may have some wine tasting, we're going to go to the Japanese garden."

All Grown Up emulates the balance of meaningful work, learning and fun that have made Tivnu's gap year program so popular. It's a model pioneered with that first adult program in Wilsonville with the Oregon Farm Workers Union.

"Since then, we haven't done anything for adults, other than me getting asked many times by adults, 'Can I do the Gap Year Program?'" Eisenbach-Budner said, jokingly adding that "If I had a buck for every time they asked me that, my fundraising days would be over."

All materials are included with the \$875 program registration, as well as kosher meals. Discounts for locals, as well as Jewish communal professionals, are available, as is financial aid. The evening programs with Yosha and Dr. Lafer are also open to those in the area who are interested. For more information about any of these opportunities, visit tivnu.org/all-grown-up or email Eisenbach-Budner at steve@tivnu.org.

ORA (continued from page 5)

Shuldman is excited to have her work and the work of her fellow ORA artists on display at the library.

"The library is gorgeous. I took a little field trip out there with one of the other artists to scope it out, and

it is just a beautiful building," she said. "Every scrap of wall space has basically been designated as a place for art to be."

On top of that, the importance of the public embrace of Jewish art is not lost on her.

"To be accepted and welcomed into a public space, to be acknowledged, and to have that opportunity to

share who we are and for people to see who we are in a different way, it's really a big honor," Shuldman said.

The Beaverton City Library is open from 10 am-7 pm Mondays through Wednesdays, 10 am-6 pm Thursdays through Saturdays and 1-6 pm on Sundays. For more information on ORA, visit northwestjewishartists.org.



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*Dignity Grows
springs into
action at Rose
Schnitzer
packing party*



**Photographs by ROCKNE
ROLL**

The Jewish Review

Volunteers, including Rose Schnitzer Manor residents and local Girl Scouts, packed hundreds of supply totes at Dignity Grows Sunday, May 18 packing party at Cedar Sinai Park in Portland.

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SCAN FOR DETAILS

ISRAEL (continued from page 1)

“It was really an honor to be able to share what I’ve had the opportunity to hear directly from his family, with all of the people on the mission, and we spent quite a bit of time honoring his memory,” Plawner said.

The group was not originally scheduled to tour Kibbutz Nir Oz. Circumstances intervened in the form of the cemetery’s caretaker, who was there preparing the area for the upcoming holiday. He seemed perturbed; sensing this, the group’s guide spoke with him.

“He was offended that we had come all the way to Nir Oz without coming to actually go into the kibbutz and to hear his story,” Plawner recalled. “We gathered as a group, and we said, ‘that is, of course, what we want to do.’ And then we had the opportunity to walk through the kibbutz with him, and I’m so grateful.”

Of 229 homes in Nir Oz, only six were left untouched by Hamas terrorists on Oct. 7.

“You could see these the gardens had been beautifully tended and kept up, both in the common areas and around the houses, very intentionally, I think, to preserve the beauty that had been there,” trip participant Sally Rosenfeld said. But then if you looked more closely at the houses, they were just destroyed.”

“You heard the birds chirping,” Mezrahi remembered of walking through Nir Oz. “To me, it just felt weird walking in a beautiful place where this horrible event happened. It was hard to process.”

The group had a similar experience in Kibbutz Kfar Aza earlier in the morning, when Weinstein could look



The grave of Ohad Yehalomi at Kibbutz Nir Oz. (Carolyn Weinstein)

through the fence and see Gaza.

“The kibbutz had been a beautiful little village. Most of the buildings were white stucco, and many of them had sweet flowers painted around the windows,” Weinstein said of Kfar Aza. “Inside, we saw floors, ceilings and windows totally riddled with bullets. Stuff smashed. All the furnishings destroyed. House after house after house, it was just sheer destruction. It was devastating.”

There was less physical evidence of the devastation wrought on Oct. 7 at the Nova Festival site, the group’s next stop, but the story told by a survivor from the festival who spoke to the group painted the picture.

“She talked about grabbing

three other young women and running across fields to find a safe place. She found a place where they could dig in and cover themselves with branches, and they stayed there for 10 hours, lying still while they could hear Hamas running around looking for them,” Weinstein said.

“She was telling us how she was praying to die from a rocket because she didn’t want to be taken hostage or she didn’t want to be raped by a terrorist,” Mezrahi said. “It’s just like stories that you would hear in a movie that you wouldn’t think it’s possible for a human to go through it, but they went through it.”

She continued to add that she was now speaking about her experiences throughout Europe and beyond and

working to help support other survivors from Nova who are battling depression and survivor’s guilt.

“The thing that hits me is that we always have these aversions to challenge and crisis as humans, and yet the most profound societal innovations happen because there are people who say there’s got to be something we can do and do differently and do better,” Plawner said. “In Israel, it’s the norm that everyone is really trying to figure out how they can bring some light to a very dark time.”

The holiday that the cemetery at Kibbutz Nir Oz was being prepared for was Yom HaZikaron – Memorial Day.

In the United States, Memorial Day is often just a day off unless one happens to have a family member or close friend who was killed while serving in the military. In Israel, a country of around 10 million people with mandatory military service, which has fought no fewer than 19 wars in the 77 years following its establishment, it’s not a question of if one has a friend or close family member who was killed in a war, but a question of how many.

“We’re so removed from generations of people who have sacrificed their lives for us and for our democracy,” Plawner said. “That’s not the case in this young democracy of Israel. Everyone knows someone or is a family member who’s grieving.”

Accordingly, Memorial Day is done differently in the Jewish state.

“Tuesday night, about eight o’clock at night, you hear a siren,” Weinstein said, “and

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you stop whatever you're doing, and you stand at attention. The next morning, at 11 o'clock for about five minutes, the siren goes off. If you're driving in a car, you stop, you get out. If you're in a house, you get out, you stop, you stand still. Wherever you are, you stand at attention, and you pay tribute to all those who have fallen over however many wars there have been in Israel."

As Americans have Arlington National Cemetery, Israelis have Mount Herzl in Jerusalem. Named for the founder of modern Zionism, who is entombed at the summit, the rest of the hill's slopes hold the graves of Israel's war dead. It's understandably crowded on Yom HaZikaron, which the group was visiting when the morning siren sounded.

"You're in this meaningful movement, kind of like if you were in a march. Then the siren happened, and there's no movement," Plawner explained. "Every single person who's there stops."

Tens of thousands of people, moving in waves along the slopes of the mountain – along with millions more, from Haifa to the Negev – suddenly come to a halt.

"That's really profound," Plawner continued. "These people aren't doing this because it's a tradition. It's because this is where their family is buried. They're coming to pay their respects to their family members."

Flowers were distributed for visitors to place at their family's graves – an importation of an American custom, as Jewish grave visitors usually place stones. Mezrahi, who was experiencing his first Yom HaZikaron in Israel, noticed that even in



A home at Kibbutz Kfar Aza, destroyed by Hamas terrorists on Oct. 7, 2023. (Carolyn Weinstein)

death, Israelis ensure that their fellow countrymen are not abandoned.

"There were some people who were like lone soldiers, that didn't have anyone from their family to put a flower on their tombstone," he observed. "There would be a group of people who would be assigned a grave site to go to so they would have a flower, so no one was ever left behind. I thought that was very beautiful."

-

Yom HaZikaron is, quite intentionally, immediately followed by Yom Ha'Atzmaut – Independence Day.

77 years before, by Hebrew calendar reckoning, David Ben-Gurion read out the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel standing underneath a portrait of Herzl. In modern times, the beginning of the celebration is marked with

a torch-lighting ceremony at Herzl's grave atop the mountain which bears his name.

Not this year.

Wildfires had sprung up the previous morning in the Judean Mountains west of Jerusalem. Over 6,000 acres were eventually burned. Highway 1, the main traffic corridor between Jerusalem, where the group had been observing Yom HaZikaron, and Tel Aviv, where they were staying and planning to celebrate Yom Ha'Atzmaut, was closed. The group made its way back along another road, packed with evacuees from threatened areas and others trying to get back to Tel Aviv.

"Our guide was very worried about her husband and her son because they were in the path of having to be evacuated," Weinstein recalled. "The smoke around us was just unbelievable."

A few phone calls confirmed that the guide's family was safe. Eventually the Portland group made it back to their hotel for celebrations with other Federation groups that were also visiting.

"Because of the conditions, all of the parties were canceled. Usually, it would be a really big, fun party, but on the beach, there were no parties, but the music was blasting because we were at a hotel on the beach, so that was almost bizarre," Plawner said. "We had a private kind of gathering that had been organized with the other federations. We did have our party, and it was nice to be able to sit and meet other people."

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After the holiday, the Portland delegation headed north. They visited Majdal Shams in the Golan Heights, the Druze village where a Hezbollah-launched rocket killed 12 children in a soccer field. This is not the first time Druze populations have been the victims of militants in the countries along Israel's northern border.

"There had been a delegation of 500 Druze religious leaders who had come covertly; Israel had opened up its borders for them to do a first-ever pilgrimage to their holy site in Israel," Plawner recalled being told. "But their WhatsApp group had been infiltrated, and they were being hunted when they got back to Syria and killed."

Plawner also described the group helping to serve lunch to Israel Defense Forces soldiers at an army base – she had wanted to do a volunteer service trip to the Jewish state in the aftermath of Oct. 7, and the group's guide joked to her that this was her volunteer service. The food

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was prepared by a duo of South Americans – an Argentinian and a Uruguayan – who had moved to Israel immediately before Oct. 7 and were looking for some way to give back to their new home country at one of its most vulnerable moments.

“They decided, ‘well, what we really know how to do is grill some really good beef.’ So, they did their first carne asada barbecue at an army base, and they’ve done 1,600 since,” Plawner said. “The joy that you see in these soldiers, who don’t usually get beef like this, and the sense of unity that you see on the base through sharing a meal was really powerful.”

“They would pile six steaks on their little plate and then go back for more,” Weinstein recalled, awed by the soldiers’ appetites. “We interspersed ourselves among them. All of us heard different stories; where these kids came from, how long they’ve been in the service.”

Conversations like these were what made this trip so meaningful for Weinstein.

“This is not what a first timer would do. You would go to Masada, and you would go here, and you would go there, which is fabulous, but that was not what we were there to do. We were there to listen to the people, to talk to the people,” she said. “It was just a remarkable experience to be able to share time with everyone that we came in contact with. It was just so special.”

“It’s good to hear a perspective and an understanding from someone just talking with them, not just seeing something on the news or on social media,” Mezrahi noted. “Just having those conversations were very meaningful to me.”

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Debris from the Hezbollah attack on the Druze village of Majdal Shams in the Golan Heights, where a rocket struck a soccer field and killed 12 children. (Carolyn Weinstein)

Shabbat is always special – it’s the whole point. But on a trip that was so special, Shabbat was even more so.

The Portland group spent it at Kibbutz Kfar Giladi. Wedged between Lebanon and the Golan Heights, Kfar Giladi is one of the northernmost *kibbutzim* in Israel. Founded in 1916, the *kibbutz* was evacuated for 10 months in 1920 and not again until 2023. A secret arms cachet was dug into a hillside and concealed by a stable – British authorities never discovered the armory during the Mandatory period. Kfar Giladi was evacuated for 17 months after Oct. 7; unusually, the *kibbutzniks* of Kfar Giladi made a point to remain together throughout the evacuation. Most of the residents had returned quite recently and were gathering together on Friday night for the first time the week that Portland’s delegation joined them.

“They were so joyful and so gracious in wanting to

share that experience with us,” Rosenfeld said. “It was like this gift that they were giving to us.”

Mixed in that joy was fiery resolve – most memorably expressed in the words of one elderly *kibbutznik*.

“We heard the head of the kibbutz talk, and he was talking about the 17 months that they had been evacuated, and he hoped that they would never be evacuated again. And a woman stood up, and she said, ‘We will not be evacuated ever again.’ And everybody cheered and clapped for her,” Weinstein recounted.

“They were talking about how great it was to come back and this one woman said, ‘We will never leave again,’ Rosenfeld added. “‘We are never leaving again.’”

Easy enough to say, but with a whole different meaning when uttered in a place where you can go up to the balcony in the guest house and see Lebanon on one side

and Syria on the other.

“They’re in an area where there have been constant bombings, and you hear this kind of verbalization of how important that kibbutz is to them,” Weinstein continued. “It’s just striking.”

It’s an attitude that speaks to one of the core qualities of Israelis – resilience.

“It is meaningful. It’s purposeful,” Plawner said of that resilience. “The alternative of hiding or being depressed about it, it doesn’t seem to be an option. And that doesn’t mean that people don’t have major moments of crisis. I don’t mean to say that they’re super people, but I think that there’s so many experiences around them that spark a reminder; ‘We’re here to live despite this. We’re here to live.’”

-

The trip had one more surprise in store for some of its participants – this one much less pleasant.

continued on next page

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On May 4, a hypersonic ballistic missile launched by Houthi terrorists in Yemen penetrated Israeli air defenses and exploded near Ben Gurion International Airport, injuring eight people.

Rosenfeld, along with Jewish Federation of Greater Portland President and CEO Marc Blattner, were at the airport when the missile landed.

"I was in the airport and was walking towards my gate and I heard the siren. At first, nobody was doing anything," Rosenfeld recalled.

Eventually, people began moving toward a shelter area. Rosenfeld went with.

"We were in a little hallway off of the main walkway to the terminal. It wasn't very big; 10 feet wide and not that deep. People crowded in there and the sirens continued. I don't remember if I actually felt the shaking and heard it. I think we did, but it's kind of a blur."

Rosenfeld's flight left an hour and a half behind schedule, she said. Others were not so fortunate. Weinstein was flying out later that day along with Rogoway, planning an overnight stop in London.

"I was just beginning to dry my hair, and the siren went off," Weinstein said.

She quickly grabbed a robe and headed for the stairwell, which was the hotel's shelter area. Upon getting to the airport, the pair learned that their scheduled carrier, British Airways, was one of the numerous airlines that had cancelled all flights in and out of Ben Gurion. For-



A carne asada cookout for Israeli soldiers at an IDF base north of Tel Aviv. (Carolyn Weinstein)

tunately, they managed to get rebooked the next day on an El Al flight to Boston, continuing to Portland on Alaska Airlines. On the way to the airport the next morning, Weinstein asked the cab driver to point out the blast crater.

"You cannot believe how close it was to the front entrance of the airport. If the Houthis had been more accurate, it would have been hundreds of people killed," she said. "It really brought the whole thing home to us. That's what people live with every day."

That should not dissuade those interested from visit-

ing, however.

"I encourage anybody - Jewish, non-Jewish, whatever - if you're going to travel anywhere this is the country that you will learn the most from," Weinstein said of the Jewish state.

Not all trips to Israel are the same. This one was unique for its participants in multiple ways: its timing, its itinerary and the unexpected circumstances that are simply realities in a volatile, complicated part of the world. Plawner reflected on this after coming home and having a conversation with a friend who was stridently opposed to Israel's continu-

ing military campaign.

"I spent a week having the opportunity to hear firsthand the stories that don't make it into the media, and I just want you to hold space for the reality of the situation being more complex," Plawner recalled telling her friend.

"Getting up close and personal helped me see how incredibly, even more complex and challenging it is than what I thought," she added.

It can be tough to see all that complexity in one lifetime, much less eight days. But Portland's delegation crammed in a huge swath of it - far more than can be covered in a newspaper article, in both breadth and depth.

"The way our program was set up was very thoughtful and, in a short period of time, created an enormous impression," Rosenfeld said. "We saw such a spectrum of life in Israel."

Lives that continue to be altered by ongoing conflict.

"The main reason it was so meaningful was because it's in a time of war. There are still hostages held in Gaza. There's been a lot of families that are separated and still not at their homes," Mezrahi said. "There's stuff that we're going through here, like on college campuses, but just seeing what they've gone through, some things have been put into perspective. Although [Israelis] were very understanding of our situation and it's a different battle, they're fighting a more life-and-death battle, and I think that just felt very powerful and we just wanted to be there for them and do our part."



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

Anonymous Israeli teacher sues Portland schools, teachers' union, others

The Jewish Review staff

An Israeli Jewish teacher in Portland is suing the Portland Association of Teachers, Portland Public Schools and the Oregon Employment Relations Board over alleged anti-Israel advocacy by PAT.

A 285-page complaint filed in U.S. District Court in Portland Monday, May 19, and originally reported by The Oregonian, alleges that PAT violated the teacher's First Amendment rights to free association and religion by hosting events and publishing materials centered on teaching an anti-Israel perspective of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict while claiming to speak on his behalf. (See "[PAT promotes one-sided narrative on Gaza](#)," The Jewish Review, Mar. 13, 2024, pg. 1) While the teacher filing the suit is not a member of PAT, Oregon's Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act requires that he be represented for collective bargaining purposes by PAT.

"PAT publicly claims to speak for the

District's teachers. It does so in the community at large and in the District's schools. A reasonable observer would associate the Plaintiff with PAT's views," the complaint said.

PAT President Angela Bonilla declined to comment on the matter.

The plaintiff, who is identified as a high school math teacher, is listed as "John Doe" in the suit because of a "reasonable fear for his physical safety should his identity become public." He is represented by Rebekah Schultheiss, James Abernathy and Shella Alcabes of the Freedom Foundation, a conservative think tank based in Washington State that focuses on litigation against public-sector labor unions.

Jewish Federation of Greater Portland President and CEO Marc Blattner said that "The Jewish Federation was not aware of this lawsuit until it was made public and has no role or connection with the plaintiff or the Freedom Foundation."

The suit accuses the district of failing to stop harassment directed at Doe, and

alleges that the PECBA, which is enforced by the state's Employment Relations Board, violates his right to free association. The incumbent members of the Board, as well as members of the PPS Board of Education, are also named as defendants.

The complaint alleges that the teacher's school permitted displays of Palestinian flags, but "when he asked school administrators if he could display a flag of Israel or symbols supporting Israel's right to exist, school administrators denied Plaintiff's request telling him that an Israeli flag or related symbols would be too disruptive."

"Because it only allowed pro-Palestinian flags, symbols, and messages," the complaint continues, "the school failed to maintain any kind of viewpoint neutrality on this issue."

Portland Public Schools declined to comment on the matter.

Emails to OERB's administrative staff from *The Jewish Review* were not answered as of press time.

ZEITZER (continued from page 2)

jump in, because it's fine.'

JR: Learning as you go is a valid strategy.

MZ: Exactly.

RR: I want to go back for a moment and dig a little further into the community study, and what we found and what you found in it that was maybe surprising, maybe really gratifying, maybe confirmed what you knew already, what when we, when we went through that executive report,

MZ: I think one of the biggest things that stood out to me was the how uncomfortable people felt with their Jewish knowledge. There was a piece of me that was like really sad, because we haven't done a good job as a collective. There are so many people that felt uncomfortable walking into Jewish spaces because they don't know what it is they're supposed to be doing. I'll rewind a little bit; I remember being a child and going to some of our friends' homes who were Orthodox, and I did not grow up Orthodox, and I remember being fearful that I was going to do something wrong. Like, when we would go on Shabbat, I was going to turn a light on or turn a light off when I wasn't supposed to. I was just very fearful about doing something that I wasn't supposed to be doing. So I understood that discomfort, and I felt sad that there were so many people in our community that that feel that or feel like they don't have the tools or the education or the terminology to be able to interact in those spaces, and that's preventing people from going into those spaces.

PODCAST (continued from page 4)

episode of my podcast, I thought, 'Oh my God, no one at school is going to speak to me ever again,'" she recalled. "I get to school the next day and everyone's showering me with love. I'd never feel so seen."

More than that, though – Dorfman's work, like her *bat mitzvah*, helped others feel seen.

"There were people in my family that hadn't even told their immediate family about their mental health crises that they had had. It just turned into this whole thing of my family calling me and sharing all these things. I could only imagine if when I was going through the very serious suicidal ideation, if I had known that my family had gone through this, maybe I would have felt less alone," Dorfman said. "So, to hear people say, 'this is the first time I've ever really been seen,' I can't describe that feeling. It makes me so happy because I could only have imagined having those emotions."

The third episode features an interview with school psychologist Calley Ekberg. More are in production, as are materials for teachers to talk about mental health in classrooms and support the mental health of their students.

The merchandise will be coming to – with the opportunity to select the organizations that receive proceeds.

Find "Perfectly Imperfect" on Apple Podcasts or Podbean and on Instagram at @weareall.perfectlyimperfect.

jewishportland.org/subscribe

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NEXT ISSUE

Issue date Deadline

JUNE 18 JUNE 12

Security Corner

Getting back to basics after DC

No one needs a reminder of last week's sad news out of Washington, DC, however, I've been asked by a number of organizations about security postures moving forward. It's made me think that you, as community members, are wondering about your safety as you attend community events. I want you to know that our community leaders to improve security. It's also important to remember that incidents like those in DC are still incredibly rare. Successful community security takes all of us, but security leaders are working to ensure best practices are being put in place.

The incident has galvanized Jewish security organizations, and I'm pleased to say they have been unified in their recommendations and statements. My organization, Security Community Network, in collaboration with Jewish Federations of North America, the Anti-Defamation League, Community Security Service and the Community Security Initiative of New York released recommendations after the event, and these have been shared widely. I'll say they are not particularly groundbreaking. But, sometimes, being reminded of the basics is important and necessary. And one of the worries after such an incident is the potential for copycat activity, particularly in light of propaganda from foreign terrorist organizations calling for violence against Jewish communities. However, no ongoing threat to public safety has been identified, and as always in the wake of an incident, we



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.

urge heightened vigilance and preparedness measures, to include revisiting the following recommendations:

Ensure awareness and coordination with law enforcement and the Jewish security professional serving your community or region.

I'm in regular contact with Portland Police and the local FBI office, and am in contact with every Jewish organization across Oregon and SW Washington. Every organization knows how to use me as a resource for emergency preparedness and law enforcement liaison.

Where possible, seek to extend the protections or security of your event's/facility's perimeter as far as possible.

The idea for this one is to have your perimeter be as wide as you're logistically able to monitor. This may mean changes to what you see at your local organizations, but it also might not. Most organizations have clearly identified perimeters that have been established with thought and deliberation.

Only open events to identifiable individuals and pre-screened invitation lists (e.g., no mass emails to the broad public).

This is fairly well estab-

lished for nearly all our community's events. Organizations may have email distribution lists and advertise on social media, but individuals still need to seek out these platforms and actively join to get announcements. Organizations can call me to discuss additional practices that can enhance the screening of visitors.

Particularly for events open to the public, registration and verification of registrants are required.

This is an excellent best practice that many of our organizations already employ. Aside from getting a head count on expected attendance, it allows organizations to know who to expect and provide guidance on who might need additional vetting.

Provide details of location, time, and other information only upon confirmed registration.

Consideration for the release of details prior to registration should be made with care, as there may be logical reasons to release some elements.

Have access control (locks and entrance procedures) to only allow known, confirmed

See SECURITY, page 20

Community Endowment Fund awards 17 grants totaling \$187k

Oregon Jewish Community Foundation

The Oregon Jewish Community Foundation Community Endowment Fund awarded 17 grants totaling \$187,190 for Fiscal Year 2025. The average grant size was approximately \$11,000.

The Community Endowment Fund supports vital and impactful community organizations and initiatives in Oregon and SW Washington. The fund has been seeded largely through generous legacy gifts, with the goal of making a continued impact on the organizations that serve our community.

This year, the Community Endowment Fund focused on supporting collaborative and innovative programs that address one or more of the following categories: Dialogue and Discourse, Antisemitism, Intergeneration Philanthropy and Jewish Continuity and Connection.

CEF grants provide organizations with additional funding to address issues they see as vital to the vibrancy and continuity of our community. The grants also help organizations pursue new opportunities and create new access points for those seeking to engage with our community.

2025 Community Endowment Fund Grant Awards include:

- BB360 - \$2,000 to support the BB360 overnight campers to learn about philanthropy and make grants to organizations in Lane County.
- BB360 and Kol Ami - \$10,000 to support the establishment of BB360

summer camp at Congregation Kol Ami in Vancouver.

- Chabad of Oregon - \$7,500 to support Morah Rochel's Shabbat Hugs, a volunteer program packing and delivering Shabbat packages to the community.
- Co/Lab - \$19,400 to support Art/Lab: A 9-month creative laboratory for Portland area contemporary Jewish artists that explores the intersection of art and Judaism.
- Congregation Shaarie Torah - \$5,000 to support the Jewish Learning Experience: A Jewish education experience for high school students discussing topics such as Introduction to Community Dialogue and Introduction to History, Culture, and the People of Israel. Participating students are eligible to receive college credit.
- Eastside Jewish Commons - \$10,740 to support collaboration with two theatre companies to present a series of staged readings of Jewish-themed plays and/or plays by Jewish playwrights.
- Jewish Family & Child Service - \$15,000 to support Arts Generation Engage: A program to support intergenerational events focused on addressing isolation, mental health, and strengthening community bonds through art.
- Jewish Federation of Greater Portland - \$35,000 to support community wide security initiatives.
- Jewish Federation of Greater Portland - \$5,000 to support Reset and Refresh, a seven-session program that invites young couples of mixed-heritage into a welcoming space for self-discovery, rejuvenation, deepening relationships.
- Jewish Federation of Greater Portland and Co/Lab - \$12,000 to support a "Day of Jewish Renaissance": A collaboration of Co/Lab and Jewish Federation of Greater Portland that brings the Portland community together to celebrate Jewish learning, artistry, and culinary traditions.
- Jewish Federation of Lane County - \$4,950 to support the senior brunch program: enabling social and educational interaction for Jewish community seniors and engaging community volunteers in Lane County.
- Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education - \$10,000 to support an exhibit that highlights the intersection of lesbian and Jewish stories while exploring the powerful ways Eugene's lesbian community carved out a life and culture that profoundly altered Oregon history.
- ORA Northwest Jewish Artists - \$3,600 to support of The Modern Mishkan - a unique art installation with a menu of activities and educational programming opportunities for community members to

See OJCF, page 19

Volunteer

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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Oasis honors Stan Penkin on Lag BaOmer

The Jewish Oasis

The Jewish Oasis, the Chabad in Portland City Center, community came together to celebrate Lag BaOmer in style, with a vibrant event featuring a rhythm circle led by Hillel Petersen, Jewish Oasis Director of Special Programs & Music Leader, and a delectable Jewish Deli pop-up crafted by Chef Tim.

The deli offered a mouthwatering array of traditional favorites including melt-in-your-mouth pastrami sandwiches, matza ball soup, fresh salads, rugelach, babka, and more. The evening was further enhanced by the warm atmosphere of the wine bar, hosted by Jeffrey Weitz.

A highlight of the evening was the recognition of Stan Penkin's outstanding contributions to the community. Stan Penkin, a respected community leader, has made a lasting impact since moving from New York City to the Pearl District in 2003. He has served on numerous boards and committees, including as president of Oregon Children's Theatre, the Pearl District Neighborhood Association, and is currently working on bringing the James Beard Market to Portland.

Stan now serves as an ambassador to a special nonprofit which serves children with cancer. He is also the co-founding chair of HomeShare Oregon, an innovative nonprofit that helps match people looking for housing with empty rooms. Penkin is a dedicated philanthropist and community leader. His tireless work and selfless efforts have made a profound impact on countless lives.

In honor of his dedication, the Jewish Oasis presented Penkin with a stunning antique oil lamp, over 3,000 years old, unearthed in Israel and preserved for over 50 years. This meaningful gift symbolizes the "light and soul" that Penkin brings to the community, reflecting the ancient Torah's value of shining brightly in today's world. The Jewish Oasis had recently received this beautiful oil lamp as a gift from Steven Berliner, following the vandalism to its front door's mezuzah.

Rabbi Chayim E. Mishulovin, director of the Jewish Oasis,



Rabbi Chaym Mishulovin presents Stan Penkin with a 3,000 year old oil lamp at the Jewish Oasis Lag BaOmer party. (Courtesy Jewish Oasis)

noted, "The good acts of light are continuing to light up the world. Stan inspired me as a man who is always looking to help others. Everyone can be part of this light by spreading kindness, love, and positivity. Those looking for ways to get involved and make a difference are invited to stop by the Jewish Oasis and talk."

The positive acts and kindness of the Jewish people to help and uplift each other and the world around them is a light for all. This is the direction being taken to bring Moshiah – by continuing to do a part in spreading love, kindness, and light.

The event was a fitting tribute to Penkin's remarkable dedication, and the community gathered to celebrate his achievements and express gratitude for his tireless efforts. Mazel tov to Stan Penkin on this well-deserved recognition! The Jewish Oasis is open to all who wish to learn more about its beautiful heritage and get involved.

YouTube Rabbi Friedman to visit Jewish Oasis June 19

The Jewish Oasis

In honor of the 31st Yahrtzeit of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, z"l, the Jewish Oasis is proud to host a special lecture by Rabbi Manis Friedman, a renowned scholar and YouTube personality, Monday, June 19 at 7 pm. Rabbi Friedman, with over 100 million views on YouTube, has built a massive following worldwide, and his visit to Portland is a rare opportunity for the local Jewish community to hear from one of the world's most respected and beloved rabbis.

As someone who had the privilege of serving as a personal translator for the Rebbe at his public talks, Rabbi Fried-

man brings a unique perspective and depth of understanding to his discussions about the Rebbe's teachings.

The will be about the Rebbe's revolutionary vision: From Victimhood to Empowerment and will explore the Rebbe's groundbreaking approach to Jewish identity and how it challenged conventional thinking. Rabbi Friedman will discuss how the Rebbe's teachings emphasized Jewish pride, self-worth, and responsibility, encouraging Jews to take ownership of their heritage and become active participants in shaping their own destiny.

Moreover, Rabbi Friedman will highlight how this approach is also the most

effective way to deal with anti-Semitism. By focusing on empowerment and pride, rather than victimhood, the Jewish community can rise above hatred and persecution, and instead, shine a light of hope and resilience. This powerful message is more relevant than ever, and Rabbi Friedman's talk is sure to inspire and educate audiences..

The event is hosted by Rabbi Chayim E. and Simi Mishulovin at the Jewish Oasis in the Pearl District. Appetizers and drinks will be served.

There are limited tickets available at JewishOasis.com/Manis for \$50 per person until June 15 and \$60 per person after that.

"Choose..." takes off at Neveh Shalom

Dorice Horenstein speaks at the pre-launch event for her second book, "Choose to Be Your Own Champion," Thursday, May 22, at Congregation Neveh Shalom in Portland. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)



Savoring Tradition, Building Community

MJCC's monthly Shabbat dinners continue this summer

By BESS BUTTERWORTH

Mittleman Jewish Community Center

The Mittleman Jewish Community Center (MJCC) has begun hosting monthly Family Shabbat Dinners on the third Friday of each month. Families and friends gather to celebrate the beauty of Shabbat together in an event designed to create intergenerational connections and provide opportunities to make new friends, fostering a sense of belonging and community. These dinners are subsidized for the year by a generous donation from an anonymous community member. The cost is only \$15 per family or \$5 per individual.

The evening begins with the traditional *Hamotzi*, the blessing over the challah, a moment of shared gratitude and reflection. As we break bread together, we embrace the spirit of Shabbat, setting aside the week's hustle and bustle to appreciate the present moment.

Each month, rotating song leaders guide us in uplifting melodies, weaving familiar tunes with new harmonies (from *Hineh Ma Tov* to the ever-popular Shabbat Dinosaur song). PJA Parent Rikki Kass, who led the songs and prayers during the March Shabbat Dinner, even found, learned and sang a song dedicated to Shabbat Family Dinners at the J.

Recognizing the energy and enthusiasm of our youngest participants, the MJCC provides designated spaces where kids can play, socialize with peers and run around. The MJCC also offers PJ Library books, Shabbat themed coloring sheets and hula hoops for their youngest guests while their parents relax and enjoy the shared meal and conversation. It's a space where new friendships blossom and lasting memories are made.

Whether a long-time member of the MJCC or new to the area, all are welcome to join! According to J member, Steve "Sudsy" Friedman, last month's Shabbat Dinner at the J "was a highlight of our week. I brought my kids, my mom, my sister, niece and nephew and their baby. The Shabbat service and atmosphere was outstanding, and the food was terrific. Unbelievable value and a great sense of community that we all enjoyed so much. We will be back!"

Registration opens the first business day of each month and is required to attend. Registration info can be found at oregonjcc.org/culture.

Join the community on these upcoming dinners: June 20 | July 18 | August 15

JFCS Senior Social Hours begin June 18 at CNS

Jewish Family & Child Service

Have you heard about Senior Social Hour—JFCS's new community program for adults 60 and up?

These monthly gatherings are a welcoming space to laugh, learn, and connect with others. Each event offers something new, from inspiring art tours and interesting presentations to lively happy hours and fun outings.

The first, titled "Protecting Your-

self from Financial Fraud," is set for Wednesday, June 18 at 2 pm at Congregation Neveh Shalom in Portland. Light refreshments will be provided at this event sponsored by JFCS, Financial Beginnings, Neveh Shalom, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland.

Whether you, or a senior you know, are looking to meet new people, engage with community, or simply enjoy a

change of scenery, Senior Social Hour is a great way to stay active and connected. Events are free to attend, and we'd love to see you there! To learn about – and register for – upcoming Senior Social Hour, visit jfcs-portland.org/senior-social-hour. To subscribe to the Senior Social Hour e-newsletter and stay informed of upcoming events, email Robyn at rtaylor@jfcs-portland.org.



Four recognized amidst festivities at Day for The J



Photographs by ROWDY WEBB PHOTOGRAPHY
For the Mittleman Jewish Community Center

The Mittleman Jewish Community Center celebrated their annual Day for the J Sunday, May 18, with an open house and awards ceremony honoring Harry Glickman Scholar Athlete Award winners Meredith Rubenstein and Noah Zeitzer (top left, from left), Oregon Jewish Sports Hall of Fame Inductee Marshall Glickman (top right, second from left) and Pillar of Excellence Award Recipient Stan Blauer. (top right, third from left)



Events

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

(Shavuot events highlighted)

May 28: 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.

June 1: Sephardi Shavuot at CAA

Services, dinner and Torah study beginning at 5:30 pm at Congregation Ahavath Achim. Pre-registration required at ahavathachimpdx.weebly.com/shavuot.html.

June 1: The Marianne Wollstein Mah Jongg Madness Brunch and Tournament

Mah Jongg tournament and Brunch at Congregation Neveh Shalom at 11 am. \$40. Register at members.nevehshalom.org/form/mah-jongg-2025.html

June 1: Israeli Folk Dancing at SWCC

Class at 2:30 pm, open dancing at 3:30 pm each week. Learn more at sites.google.com/site/pifdnews.

June 1: Jewish Yoga for Shavuot

Yoga class focused on Shavuot at 4 pm at Atrium Yoga in Southeast Portland. \$20. Register at docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfdRkVcR1dCUHYL-Ns-SqXt2fzM Y w M W h -

3FQVaweCxPmD6284xQ/viewform.

June 1: CNS Shavuot

Family and adult Shavuot programs at Congregation Neveh Shalom beginning at 4 pm. Learn more at nevehshalom.org/event/shavuot-5785.

June 2: Shavuos 10 Commandments & Dairy Buffet

Dinner and reading of the 10 Commandments at Chabad of Southwest Portland at 5 pm. Tickets at tickettailor.com/events/jportland/1698222.

June 4: QUEERLY JEWISH OY GAY

Art exhibit opening at Eastside Jewish Commons at 6:30 pm. Free. Pre-registration required at ejcpdx.org/events.

June 5: Navigating the Emotional Rollercoaster of Long-Distance Grandparenting

Webinar by Jewish Grandparents Network at 4 pm. Register at jewishgrandparentsnetwork.org/event/navigating-the-emotional-rollercoaster-of-long-distance-grandparenting.

June 5: Parents Night Out

Fundraiser for Jewish Teens of Portland at 6 pm at the Eastside Jewish Commons. Register at shirtikvahpdx.org/event/parents39-night-out.html.

out.html.

June 8: Using Social Media for Genealogical Research

Webinar at 10:30 am by the Jewish Genealogical Society of Oregon. Learn more at jgsoregon.wixsite.com/home.

June 8: EJC Unplugged

Fundraising brunch at 11 am at Eastside Jewish Commons. \$108. Tickets available at ejcpdx.org/events.

June 8: Final Concert of the 50th Anniversary of the Jewish Community Orchestra

Orchestra concert at 3 pm at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center. \$20. For more information, email mltjpn7214@gmail.com.

June 8: Cruisin' into the Next 120 Years!

Fundraiser at Congregation Shaarie Torah at 5 pm. Tickets at shaarietorah.org/120gala.

June 9: OJMCHE 2025 Annual Meeting and Luncheon

Museum annual meeting at 11:30 am. For more information, email gmandel@ojmche.org.

June 10: Jewish Women Professionals' Networking Meetup

Dinner and networking at Fresh Love Café in Northeast Portland at 5:30 pm.

Register at jewishportland.org/gncmeetupjune.

June 12: Jewish Federation Annual Meeting

Federation annual meeting at 4:30 pm at Congregation Neveh Shalom. Register at jewishportland.org/annual25.

June 12: Kenahorror! Behind the Evil Eye

Class on Jewish magic at the Eastside Jewish Commons at 7 pm. \$7. Register at ejcpdx.org/events.

June 15: Father's Day Fun Day

Fundraising celebration at Maayan Torah Day School at 10 am. Register at maayanpdx.org/fathersdayfunday.

June 16: OJCF Annual Meeting

Foundation annual meeting at 5 pm at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center. For more information, email noahr@ojcf.org.

June 17: Understanding Preplanning for Death

Webinar by Jewish Association for Death Education at 5 pm. Learn more and register at lu.ma/yu3nwz64.

June 18: Protecting yourself from Financial Fraud

See story, page 17.

June 20: Family Shabbat Dinner at the J!

See story, page 17.

OJCF (continued from page 15)

- gather and actively explore their religious connections and values.
- PDX Hillel - \$5,000 to support the Jewish Women's Retreat, bringing college aged-women together from all Portland universities, University of Oregon, and Oregon State

- University, to recharge, connect, celebrate sisterhood, creativity, and empowerment.
- PJ Library - \$12,000 to support the delivery of free Jewish children's books to families every month, which forges connection between parents

and children.

- Temple Beth Israel, Eugene - \$15,000 to support a lecture series that will engage Jewish community locally and globally, exploring cultural identity and antisemitism through in-person events, live-streams, and podcasts.

- TischPDX - \$15,000 to support of the Emerging Jewish Leadership Incubator, a program that focuses on the emerging landscape of DIY Jewish organizing and community building by young and marginalized Jews primarily in East Portland.

DOROTHY URBACH

Congregation Beth Israel mourns the loss of Dorothy Urbach, z"l, who passed away on Friday, May 9 at the age of 98.

Dorothy is survived by her daughter Susie Urbach and her partner Kai Clancy; daughter Robyn Urbach and her husband Bruce Melzer; grandson Greg Peterson and his partner Yvonne Shay; granddaughter Katy Lee and her husband Brendan Lee; and great grandchildren Xander, Silas and Rowan Lee.

Dorothy was preceded in death by her husband, Lawrence Urbach, z"l, her brother Robert Weil, z"l and sister Beverly Miller, z"l.

A Celebration of Dorothy's Life was held in Seward, Alaska on Tuesday, May 13. Donations in Dorothy's memory can be made to the Congregation Beth Israel Social Action Fund.

ILYA GAMEL

It is with heavy hearts that Sephardic Adventure Camp mourns the passing of dedicated SAC parent and former camper Ilya Gamel, z"l. Ilya was a light to our SAC community and brought joy to all.

Condolences to Ilya's wife, Cynthia, children, Shimon, Joe, and Paulina, and to their entire family. May HaShem comfort them.

The funeral was held Friday, May 16, at the Sephardic Brotherhood Cemetery in Shoreline, Wash.

MICHAEL LOUIS ROGERS

Michael Louis Rogers, z"l, of Portland, originally from Erie, Penn., died unexpectedly on May 6, 2025 at the age of 57.

A lifelong learner, devoted friend, incredible brother, and quiet force for good, Mike brought humility, intelligence, and a dry sense of humor to everything he did. He spoke five languages and held finance positions at B'nai B'rith, Population Services International, Mercy Corps and, most recently, Multnomah County.

Mike volunteered for over a decade as an English teacher for Spanish-speaking immigrants and freely gave his time to organizations, including Whitman-Walker Clinic, Oregon DECA, Imago Dei Central City, and Portland's Neighborhood Emergency Team. He served quietly and wholeheartedly,

never seeking attention—only to make a difference.

He earned a bachelor's in Accounting from the University of Pittsburgh and an MBA and a master's in international relations and information technology from the University of Maryland. Mike believed education was a lifelong journey, meant to be shared and used to serve others.

As an adult, he converted to Judaism and embraced his faith with sincerity and heart. While living in Washington, D.C., he was an active member of Bet Mishpachah, the city's LGBTQ+ synagogue—a spiritual home that reflected his values of inclusion and belonging. He later traveled to Cuba on a mission with his synagogue, a reflection of his commitment to global service and connection.

Mike was preceded in death by his father, Michael Louis Rogers, Sr., z"l. He is survived by his mother, Judith Holland Bien; stepfather, Jerome Bien; sisters, Abigail Matz Janowski (Jeff) and Kim Gardner (Dale); and nieces, Chloe, Aubrey, and Ashley—along with a wide and loving circle of friends, colleagues, and community members—whom he loved deeply, and who were better because of him.

Mike's life will be celebrated on Sunday, June 8, at 2 pm at Enso Urban Winery in Portland. Friends are warmly invited to attend. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to DC's breadforthecity.org—or, as Mike would have preferred, roll up your sleeves, lend a hand, and quietly make someone's day a little better.

HARRIET DIETZ

Congregation Beth Israel mourns the loss of Harriet Dietz, z"l, who passed away on Saturday, May 17 at the age of 78.

Harriet is survived by her daughter Julie Braunsten, her son Scott Braunsten, and her daughter Michelle Cahill; along with her grandchildren Hannah Peterson, Annika Peterson, Zev Peterson, Micah Braunsten, and Ari Cahill. Harriet was preceded in death by her loving husband, David Dietz, z"l.

A funeral was held Wednesday, May 21, at Beth Israel Cemetery.

Donations in Harriet's memory can be made to the OHSU Brain Institute Research and the Democratic Party of Oregon.

SECURITY (continued from page 14)

registrants/attendees into the facility/event.

Access controls are one of the most important best practices for an organization. It may not be possible to prevent someone from entering and doing harm, but unlocked, unattended doors are an absolute “no.”

Remain vigilant and report suspicious activity.

Ensure your community is trained in situational awareness and knows who to re-

port unusual activity to.

Consider armed on-duty or off-duty law enforcement, private security, and/or volunteer teams as additional layers of protection.

Visible security can be a useful deterrent. A review of real-life incidents shows perpetrators make changes to their plans if they sense they'll be challenged or thwarted. Place security personnel at entrances and throughout your facility.

Additional considerations are to ensure you have security and emergency plans and evaluate your communication needs. Make sure your staff and volunteers know your emergency plans and provide ways for them to practice the skills through drills. Walkie-talkies provide excellent communication in an emergency. Many organizations rely on texting during events, but in an emergen-

cy, texting will be nearly impossible. Secure your Zoom or livestream feeds with passwords and don't share the links publicly.

As a community, we'll continue to meet the challenges these times have created. As always, I'm available to work with organizations to tweak and improve security practices and can be reached at janderson@securecommunitynetwork.org or 872-273-9214.