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'Never did I imagine' Zeitzer concludes three years at JFGP's helm at Annual Meeting

By **ROCKNE ROLL**
The Jewish Review

Organizations often use their annual meetings to celebrate their accomplishments. The Jewish Federation of Greater Portland did just that at its annual meeting, the organization's 105th, Thursday, June 12 at Congregation Neveh Shalom in Portland. But more than just the events of the year, the meeting stood out as a celebration of the people that made them happen.

Among them were the recipient of the Rogoway award (page 5), the two recipients of the Sussman Shenker Scholarships (page 7), and the four outgoing and three incoming members of the Federation's board of directors. (page 12) But the list doesn't stop there, certainly. There were so many other people who played small parts, one person who has played an enormous part

See **MEETING**, page 12



Outgoing Jewish Federation of Greater Portland Board Chair Mindy Zeitzer speaks at the Federation's 105th Annual Meeting Thursday, June 12 at Congregation Neveh Shalom. The gathering highlighted both the year's accomplishments and Zeitzer's three-year tenure as chair and introduced her successor, Leslie Beard. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

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News of the Jews

Rabbi Skolnik to depart Kesser Israel

Congregation Kesser Israel's Rabbi Sholom Skolnik will be stepping down from his post, the Orthodox synagogue announced.

"We are all grateful for Rabbi and Chaviva Skolnik's years of dedication to Congregation Kesser Israel and the Portland Jewish community. We are richer for the times we shared with them and wish them *hatzlacha* (prosperity) and *bracha* (blessings) as they move forward," the congregation's president, Sura Rubenstein, said in an email.

Rabbi Skolnik became Kesser's Rabbi in 2022. The Skolnik family moved to Portland in 2017, and Rabbi Skolnik had previously taught at Maayan Torah Day School and served as rabbi for Congregation Ahavath Achim and director of adult education at the Portland Kollel.

The congregation has not announced their plans for rabbinic transition.

Rabbi Villareal joins Neveh Shalom

Congregation Neveh Shalom has hired Rabbi April Villareal as interim clergy support through 2026, the Conservative synagogue announced.

Rabbi Villareal, who also works as a senior coach and program associate for Pedagogy of Partnership at the Hadar Institute, teaches as adjunct faculty at Hebrew Union College's DeLeT program for aspiring day school teachers and consults nationally with Jewish organizations. She will support CNS's Senior Rabbi Eve Posen and Cantor Eyal Bitton as the synagogue's Rabbinic Transition Committee continues its search for an additional permanent rabbi.

"I am thrilled to welcome Rabbi Villarreal to our clergy team and leadership for the coming year," Rabbi Posen said in an email from the synagogue's leadership. "She possesses a deep love of our sacred texts and community that is highlighted in her vast knowledge of text and ability to teach. She is a gentle presence and true partner in creating community."

CNS also announced the hiring of Shaina Zins as Communications & Marketing Specialist and Shainah Falk Horowitz as Administrative Assistant/Receptionist and Clergy Assistant.

Friedland named Interim ED of PDX Hillel

PDX Hillel has announced that Andy Friedland, the incumbent Director of Jewish Student Life, will serve as Interim Executive Director of Portland's multi-campus Hillel while the organization continues its search for a permanent head.

Friedland will fill in for the departing Hannah Sherman, who is relocating to Seattle to serve as the leader of University of Washington's Hillel.

"We are grateful that Andy has stepped up to ensure that PDX Hillel will continue to fulfill its mission as we search for a permanent Executive Director to take Hannah's place," Board President Barry Benson said in an email. "As Director of Jewish Student Life and in his prior role as substitute teacher at Portland Jewish Academy, Andy has already formed great relationships with key stakeholders across our campuses and community."

The search process is underway for a permanent executive director.

Cantor Bitton ordained as rabbi

Congregation Neveh Shalom's Cantor Eyal Bitton added another distinction to his resume: Rabbi.

Cantor Bitton received rabbinic ordination from Mesifita Adath Wolkowisk Rabbinical Academy on Wednesday, June 11 at the program's annual convocation.

"This meaningful milestone is the culmination of a journey that began years ago—even before Cantor Bitton made Portland his home," the synagogue said in an email. "Pursuing smicha was not a change in direction, but a deepening of his already profound commitment to Jewish learning, leadership, and service. His rabbinic ordination allows him to expand the ways in which he can teach, support, and uplift our congregation."

The academy, operated by Congregation Adas Wolkowisk in Woodmere, N.Y., is a non-denominational seminary program for working adults who wish to pursue rabbinic ordination but are unable to attend a full-time seminary program. The application process is rigorous, and once accepted, each candidate's course of study is independently tailored and completed without a fixed time limit.

Cantor Bitton will continue serving as Neveh Shalom's cantor.

Wren family finds Rose Festival treasure

Congregation Shaarie Torah members Alan, Helene, Jaime and Sammy Wren won the 2025 Portland Rose Festival Treasure Hunt, the Conservative synagogue announced.

Initially launched in 1983 and restarted in 2014, the treasure hunt provides a daily series of clues referencing local history and geography, leading to a medallion hidden on public property somewhere in Multnomah, Clackamas, Clark, Washington or Yamhill counties. The Wrens solved the riddles to find the medallion on top of a stump adjacent to the playground at Pier Park in North Portland. Their success secured a \$1,000 cash prize from the Portland Rose Festival Foundation.

Anthology of Stafford Challenge published

The Stafford Challenge, brainchild of Portland's Brian Rohr, has released a book of the work the challenge created.

"The Stafford Challenge 2024–25 Anthology" includes works by Kim Stafford, Naomi Shihab Nye and CMarie Fuhrman, among others, produced as part of the inaugural Stafford Challenge. The challenge, inspired by the practices of its namesake, former Oregon Poet Laureate William Stafford, asked participants to write a poem every day for a year. More than 1,100 people from around the world participated, with over 200 poems selected for the anthology being published by Wild Poet Press.

Rohr, the founder and director of The Stafford Challenge, describes the anthology as "a powerful tribute to daily creativity, poetic community, and the enduring spirit of the late great William Stafford."

The anthology is now available at wildpoetpress.com/anthology.

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Panama for young adults to take off Dec. 10

By ROCKNE ROLL

The Jewish Review

The place with the highest rate of kosher restaurants per Jewish resident isn't Israel, and it isn't Brooklyn either.

It's Panama. And if you're a young adult, the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland wants to take you there. The Federation's Panama 2025 mission, put on in association with Gil Travel Group, will visit Central America's vibrant Jewish hub Wednesday through Sunday, Dec. 10-14, 2025. JFGP Associate Campaign and Engagement Director Laura Jeser said talking with colleagues at a regional conference for Jewish professionals about pathways to engagement in young adult communities was an inspiring factor for this trip.

"What I heard from my colleagues at different federations was that mission travel is the thing to do," she said. "It's proving to be a pivotal engagement component to their young adult communities."

Meanwhile, Jonathan Kurshan was recalling his experiences on Honeymoon Israel, a trip program that's structured much like Birthright Israel but built for couples. He and his husband had done such a trip in 2017 with a group from San Francisco, where they were living at the time, and signed their *ketubah* (marriage contract) in a small ceremony in Israel. They remain deeply connected to the rest of their group, and while launching Honeymoon Israel in Portland isn't practical now for a variety of reasons, the power of group travel is such that Kurshan started talking with Federation President and CEO Marc Blattner about how to bring those sorts of



experiences to the area.

"The point of the trip, whether it's Honeymoon Israel or this Panama trip, is to create that initial bonding experience and then come back and provide opportunities for the groups to continue to get together," Kirshan said. "The trip is the way to get people to come together and create a unified experience, a shared experience."

Blattner connected with Gil Travel, which is also partnering on the Federation's larger suite of Global Travel Experiences announced at Thursday's Annual Meeting. (See story, page 1) Gil Travel has been in the business of facilitating Jewish group travel for more than 50 years, first in Israel and then beyond. Ariel Lipszyc, Gil Travel's Executive Vice President, said that as travel to Jewish communities in the Americas has grown, Panama has become an increasingly popular destination.

"It can be done in a short trip. There's no jet lag. There's no time change if you're coming from the East Coast," Lipszyc said.

Jewish presence in Panama began in the early 1500s with the emigration of Spanish and Portuguese Jews fleeing the Inquisitions. To-

day, 20,000 Jews call Panama home – with 90 percent of them identifying as Orthodox.

JFGP's trip starts with a visit to Kol Shearith, the Conservative synagogue in Panama City, followed by a tour of Casco Viejo, the old walled city that is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Lunch comes with a cooking demonstration from Ayelet Vahnish, the Israeli chef and owner of Lula's and precedes tastings of coffee and chocolate, two of Panama's most famous products. The first day concludes with dinner with the Israeli ambassador at the Aria kosher restaurant.

Friday starts with visits to Panama City's pair of Orthodox synagogues, the Sephardic Shevet Ajim and the Ashkenazi Bet-El and proceeds to volunteering to support ongoing community needs. Lunch comes at Kava, a Kosher dairy restaurant, with alumni of the MASA program, supported by the Jewish Agency for Israel, and is followed by a visit to the Hogar Simjati Jewish senior center, which is supported by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. The group transitions into Shabbat

with services and dinner at Kol Shearith. Experiencing Shabbat together on foreign shores is an important part of the experience for Kirshan.

"Whether you're religious or not, whether you practice Shabbat weekly or not, it is a moment that you are setting aside with a new group of people in a new space and you're all having that experience together for the first time," he said. "I think that's really meaningful and very moving for a lot of people to sort of have that shared experience."

Saturday kicks off with an optional early morning yoga class, then heads off for tours of the Gamboa Rainforest and the Panama Canal, including a VIP experience just three feet away from where ships transit one of the world's most vital shipping corridors before returning to Panama City for a farewell dinner.

While the itinerary is a big part of the experience, the people on the journey are what really make experiences like these meaningful. Jeser recalled her experiences on a sixth-grade class trip and her own Birthright visit to Israel as formative community building experiences that lasted long after returning home.

"You have this very intimate experience with others from your community. You are together all the time and you're sharing such unique experiences together," she said. "It's meaningful to your life and that's going to carry through."

Double occupancy price for the trip (not including airfare) is \$3,000, with single occupancy available for an extra \$680. For more information or to register now, visit jewishportland.org/panama2025.

Rohr's 'sincere care, enthusiasm' honored

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

For Sarah Rohr, her work has always come from her desire to connect with Jewish community. It's a connection she's built in a variety of ways, and one she's now being recognized for by her community.

Rohr, the outgoing Youth Empowerment Specialist at Congregation Neveh Shalom and incoming B'nai Mitzvah and Family Educator at Congregation Beth Israel, received the 2025 Laurie Rogoway Outstanding Jewish Professional Award at the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Annual Meeting Thursday, June 12 at Neveh Shalom.

"Sarah sees herself as a leader in intergenerational spaces, a mother, the partner of a Jewish poet and storyteller and someone who is committed to helping young people discover their own resilience, sacred rhythm and power as changemakers and holy first responders," Sarah Howard said in presenting Rohr with the award. "She does all of this with sincere care, enthusiasm and a gift for making people feel seen, remembered and connected. Sarah Rohr is remarkable, and we are honored to celebrate her as this year's Rogoway award recipient."

Rohr began her life as part of a very tight-knit Jewish community – first in a *hare-di* neighborhood in Chicago, where she recalls 11 rabbis living on her block, and later as part of a Conservative synagogue in Austin, Texas, where she and her family were at the *shul* as many as five days a week. This arrangement didn't last, as in adulthood she made her way to the island of Hawai'i, then to Port Townsend, Wash.,



From left, Rogoway Committee Chair Sarah Howard presents Sarah Rohr with the 2025 Laurie Rogoway Outstanding Jewish Professional Award at the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Annual Meeting Thursday, June 12, at Congregation Neveh Shalom in Portland. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

where she married her husband, Brian.

"While it was lovely and met so many needs, it didn't meet the need of us being in Jewish community," she said of her time in Port Townsend, adding that she and Brian wanted to raise their (then hypothetical) children as part of a Jewish community. That desire brought them to Portland, where Rohr jumped in with both feet.

The family joined Congregation Shaarie Torah, where Rohr started working under then-education director Dorice Horenstein, before joining Neveh Shalom just under a decade ago and working with Mel Berwin, CNS's Director of Congregational Learning.

"Mel is a master educator

and I've been studying, for lack of a better like term, her methodology of inclusion, of 'how do we take the most marginalized students and give them a place in our education container?'" Rohr said. "In Jewish education in decades past, kids who couldn't sit still were just asked to leave. Kids who had Tourettes were asked to leave. Kids who had Down's Syndrome were asked to leave; there wasn't the belief that they could do it."

Her engagement with Jewish community has gone much farther than just her work. Rohr is a volunteer guide at Rachel's Well Community Mikvah and has been actively engaged with the Jewish Community Relations Council, including its Climate Action Commit-

tee and, more recently the JCRC Legislative Advocacy Committee.

"That feels like a gift, to have access, to be able to say, 'These are the issues facing my community. Let's do something about it.' That's an incredible form of empowerment and way of having access in a time that feels like a lot of people feel disempowered by the systems that are in place," Rohr said of her work on the Legislative Advocacy Committee.

On top of volunteering through Federation and her artistic and musical pursuit, Rohr has also found an expression of her love of Jewish community outside of it, working with Cure:PNW

See **ROGOWAY**, page 19



Loaves for Survivors



Photographs by SAMMI WEISS

The Jewish Review

More than a dozen volunteers baked 45 *challah* for Holocaust survivors at the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Wednesday, June 4 challah bake.

PDX PATHWAYS PROGRAM

Applications are now open for this exciting, exclusive opportunity for Jewish young professionals from any occupation, ages 22-40 years old.



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Cohen, Zeitzer awarded Sussman-Shenker

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

Anouk Cohen and Noah Zeitzer were announced as the winners of the 2025 Sussman-Shenker Scholarship at the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Annual Meeting Thursday, June 12.

"Our two recipients this year not only excel academically, but both of them participated in numerous ways to strengthen the Jewish community and build bridges between our community and the rest of Portland," Sussman-Shenker Scholarship Committee Chair Rich Meyer said at the meeting. "The work that they're doing of building relationships in our community is more important than ever, and they are inspiring hope in our community."

Cohen, who graduated from St. Mary's Academy in Portland this month, has been a student and teacher in Congregation Beth Israel's religious school programs, which she has described as a formative experience in her life. Additionally, she's participated in the inaugural cohort of Portland's Student to Student program and participated on student panels for Facing History and Ourselves to discuss antisemitism in schools. Her pursuit of teaching was, in part motivated by her own challenges as the child of an interfaith family.

"I had a really hard time finding accepting teachers because of that," she told *The Jewish Review*. "My whole life, I thought, 'I'm never going to be *madricha* (teacher). I'm sleeping on Sundays. After my *bat mitzvah*, I'm done.' When I had my *bat mitzvah*, I thought, 'What if other people feel the way I felt? How sad would that



Noah Zeitzer, left, and Anouk Cohen, right, receive their award certificates as winners of the 2025 Sussman-Shenker Scholarships from scholarship committee chair Rich Meyer at the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's 2025 Annual Meeting Thursday, June 12 at Congregation Neveh Shalom in Portland. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

be? I'm going to be that person who is more accepting to these kids so that no one else would feel the way I felt growing up.' It was a really impactful experience."

Cohen also found time to manage social media for a number of local political campaigns, serve as a Bill and Melinda Gates Youth Ambassadorship Program Student Ambassador (one of 18 globally) and other leadership programs – alongside a part-time job. She'll be attending Brandeis University.

Zeitzer is the eldest son of outgoing JFGP Board Chair, Mindy Zeitzer. He also took part in the inaugural Student to Student cohort and has also been active with B'nai Brith Youth Organization, NCSY and the Jewish Student Union at Ida B. Wells High School, which he graduated from this month. He's also involved at Congregation Neveh Shalom, participating in the Hebrew High

School program there.

"I'm not great at public speaking, so it was a little bit nerve-racking, but it was nice to be able to talk about my religion. I'm really proud of it," he said of his Student to Student experience. "It was nice to be able to talk to non-Jews about what it's like and educate them, because most of them had never met a Jewish person before."

Among other activities, Zeitzer has also served as captain of Wells' Cross Country and Track and Field teams. He qualified for the OSAA Class 6A State Championships in Cross Country last fall and posted a personal best time of 15:28.1 over 5,000 meters at the Rose City Championships in October. On the track, Zeitzer won the 3,000 meters at the Therapeutic Associates Cheshalem Classic in April along with a pair of wins in Portland Interscholastic League dual meets at 1,500 meters

this season. He placed top-10 in both distances at the PIL Championships last month, setting a personal best in the 1,500 meters at that meet with a time of 4:02.27. He'll compete at both distances at the upcoming Nike outdoor Nationals in Eugene and in the 3,000 and 5,000 meters at the 2025 Maccabi Games in Israel. Zeitzer will attend Hofstra University, where he plans to continue his athletic career.

"To have the support from my Jewish community pushes me to do better," he said of receiving the Sussman-Shenker Scholarship.

The scholarship was created in 1981 as the Sussman Scholarship; named for its founders, Lillian and Gilbert Sussman, z"l. It was renamed by their daughter, Lois Shenker, as the Sussman-Shenker Scholarship in 2023 to commemorate her husband Arden Shenker's 85th birthday.

JWRT honors 21 at Song of Miriam brunch

Jewish Women's Round Table

The 30th Annual Song of Miriam Awards Brunch was held on Sunday, June 1, at Mittleman Jewish Community Center. The event, put on by the Jewish Women's Round Table, honored 21 outstanding women volunteers. Approximately 275 people attended the event, which recognized:

Mia Birk, Eastside Jewish Commons

Mia Birk was one of the eight founding members of Eastside Jewish Commons in 2017 and was the organization's first Board Chair, leading it through its first five years. She has also served as Executive Director and Treasurer in the past, and continues to lead committees, recruit board members and fundraise.

Rosalind Cooper, Congregation Shaarie Torah Sisterhood

Rosalind Cooper is a lifelong member of Shaarie Torah and currently the Membership Chair and part of the Sharon Scales Scholarship Committee. She is also a team member of Sisterhood's annual hamentaschen baking project. As a fused-glass artist, she donates her work to various fundraising events.

Sheri Cordova, Congregation Neveh Shalom

Sheri Cordova has chaired the Social Action and Education committees and served as Co-Executive Director of the congregation between 1985 and 2000. She then became the administrator of the Oregon Board of Rabbis until 2018. She recently helped create, along with Barb Schwartz, the Hesed Committee, a resource for congregants experiencing challenges in their daily lives.

Rhonda Daniels, Congregation Beth Israel Sisterhood / Women of Reform Judaism

After recently moving to Portland, Rhonda Daniels joined Women of Reform Judaism and became a Co-Chair of the Membership Team, welcoming new members to Sisterhood. She also contributes her guidance to budgeting, leadership training and the Nominating Committee.

Carol Goldfarb, Temple Beth Shalom, Salem

Carol Goldfarb generously shares her expertise in computer science with the Beth Shalom community. She serves as the volunteer editor for its publications



2025 Song of Miriam honorees, pictured at the awards brunch held June 1 at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center in Portland. Front Row, from left: Amy Shapiro, Clarice Wilsey, Emily Polanshek, Wendi Menashe, Mia Birk, Elizabeth Rice, Sharon Klin, Jennifer Yoken, Randi Rosenfield. Back Row, from left: Rosalind Cooper, Rhonda Daniels, Carol Goldfarb, Irina Izakson, Sheri Cordova, Robin McCoy, Aiden Kugelman-Samba, Debbie Rilling, Christel Sanders, Esther Schwartz, Shuli Urenia. Not pictured: Clystie Gustafson. (Courtesy Jewish Women's Round Table)

and has enhanced the congregation's online presence by redesigning its website. She also serves on the Board of Directors.

Clystie Gustafson, Jewish Community of Central Oregon / Congregation Shalom Bayit

Clystie Gustafson has been a member of the Jewish Community of Central Oregon since its founding in 1993. She has served as a religious education instructor and been an active member of JCCO's Sisterhood. She and her husband also spruce up the building's inside and outside spaces every season.

Irina Izakson, Mittleman Jewish Community Center

After immigrating to Portland from Russia in 1978, Irina Izakson and her family received a gift membership to the Center and found a valuable group of fellow immigrants who provided valuable support. Following her retirement, she became one of the initial members of the Center's Volunteer Corps.

Sharon Klin, Havurah Shalom

Sharon Klin's work has transformed Havurah Shalom's Shabbat Service into one of the most inclusive and innovative parts of its community. She also hosts Shabbat dinners for her adult B'nai Mitzvah group and encourages others to gather and try new things.

Aiden Kugelman-Samba, Congregation Ahavath Achim

gation Ahavath Achim

Included in the extensive list of Aiden Kugelman-Samba's contributions to Ahavath Achim are redesigning its website, organizing a women's pre-Purim "henna ceremony" and putting on a young professionals Sephardic cooking workshop. She also served as interim administrator during a recent staffing transition.

Robin McCoy, Jewish Family & Child Service

Robin McCoy, a behavioral and developmental pediatrician for over 25 years, joined the Board of Directors of JFCS in 2020 and has served as Secretary and Vice President. In addition to providing expertise to the organization, she is active in JFCS activities such as delivering Thanksgiving meals and engaging with clients at events.

Emily Polanshek, P'nai Or

Emily Polanshek is an activist for climate justice, immigration rights and vulnerable communities. She works within P'nai Or to help members with food or transport, and in the community, she helped form a neighborhood team working toward climate justice. She also has served as an interpreter at hearings for incoming Spanish-speaking asylum seekers.

Elizabeth Rice, Portland Jewish

See MIRIAM, page 19

Langer, ELOHP exhibits now on display at OJMCHE

By AMELIA LUKAS

For the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education

A pair of new exhibits are now open at the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education through Oct. 23 highlighting experiences both far away and closer to home.

"Berlin: A Jewish Ode to the Metropolis" showcases photographs by Portland photographer Jason Langer. The project is deeply personal to Langer, a reconciliation of impressions of the Holocaust that were seeded in him as a 10-year-old living on a kibbutz in Israel. Even after moving to America, Langer carried a deep fear of Germany, and Berlin, in particular. Years later, he set out for Berlin to confront and capture these impressions in film.

In the five years that it would take to complete the series, Langer learned that Berlin—like so many places, people, and histories—is far more complex than he realized. A city of dichotomies, the Berlin that Langer portrays in "Berlin: A Jewish Ode to the Metropolis" is marked by division and reunification in ways both grandiose and mundane. Deeply personal and prescient, OJMCHE is proud to share Langer's work with our visitors.

Explaining the personal, cultural, and historical complexity of the subject, Langer says, "It's a historical project about Berlin through the eyes of a Jewish person two generations later, and how much that threat of death and annihilation has transferred to my generation and beyond."

"I tried to photograph a history of the city, representing



Photographer Jason Langer discusses images from "Berlin: A Jewish Ode to the Metropolis" during a gallery tour at the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education Wednesday, June 11. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

multiple generations and eras, all the way from medieval times through modernity. By mixing that all together, I wanted to give viewers an experience of what it's like to be in contemporary Berlin, surrounded by the weight of the city's history, for good and bad."

Langer lends a poetic sensibility to classic views of Berlin, including historical remnants of the Holocaust and Jewish life, as well as intimate glimpses that tell specific, individual stories. It's the juxtaposition between the broad strokes of a horrifying history and the smallest intricacies of daily life that Langer brings to the attention of the viewer. The photographs themselves seem timeless, characteristic for Langer's work. His

photographs are formally composed, rich and moody, favoring darker tones.

"There's a death, rebirth and renewal idea that runs through the exhibit. It still seems miraculous, really, that life continues even after that level of genocide. My children and I are living examples of the ability to come through that and to continue life in a positive way."

OJMCHE will host and produce a variety of programs and community gatherings throughout the exhibition's run, including a talk and book signing with Langer, as well as guided tours of the exhibition led by the photographer.

"Outliers and Outlaws" showcases the vibrant history of Eugene's lesbian community from the 1960s

through the 1990s. This groundbreaking project, developed through the Eugene Lesbian Oral History Project and shared with many as a museum exhibition, digital exhibition, digital archive, and full-length documentary film, captures the stories of 83 women who were instrumental in shaping the city's social and political landscape.

The exhibition highlights an extraordinary period when Eugene was known as a "lesbian mecca," creating a unique community that challenged traditional societal norms. At OJMCHE, visitors can dive into the history of the Jewish-lesbian "Balabustas" community, including memories from the 1992 Freedom Seder organized around the opposition to the antigay Oregon ballot measure 9, which was eventually rejected by voters.

"Museums are essential spaces for fostering dialogue and deepening understanding. At OJMCHE, we are committed to educating our community and celebrating the rich intersectionality of identities. We firmly believe that LGBTQIA+ rights are fundamental human rights," said Alisha Babbstein OJMCHE's Director of Collection and Exhibitions.

Outliers and Outlaws was coordinated by Judith Raiskin, an associate professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at the University of Oregon, and Linda Long, Curator of Manuscripts at the University of Oregon Knight Library Special Collections and University Archives.

"This story is a model of how to face hard times with courage, creativity and stamina. I hope that the

See **MUSEUM**, page 10



Portland-area Holocaust Survivors, pictured at Jewish Family and Child Service's Holocaust Survivor Day luncheon Thursday, June 5, at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center in Portland. (Rowdy Webb for Jewish Family & Child Service)

Holocaust Survivor luncheon rooted in appreciation and hope

By SIMA BORSUK

Jewish Family & Child Service

June 4, 2025, marked the fifth annual Holocaust Survivor Day. On June 5 at the MJCC, Jewish Family & Child Service hosted a deeply moving luncheon, celebrating the Survivors of our community. The event brought together almost 40 Survivors along with their friends, family and other community members.

The program emphasized appreciation for what Survivors teach us, how the community steps up to support our Survivors and the responsibility to ensure that the lessons we learn will resonate for generations to come.

Sue Wendel and Dan Sharp, representing the Next Generations Group and 3GPNW, reflected on the enduring impact of Survivors' experiences and the responsibility of the following generations to carry these lessons forward. Keynote speaker David Fuks, longtime Jewish community leader and a child of Survivors, spoke about the unique strength and resilience of Survivors, and our appreciation for all we have gained from the Survivors in our community.

As a touching tribute, each Survivor received a personalized certificate proclaiming that a tree was planted in the Jerusalem Forest in their honor. David Fuks referenced the story of an older man who is planting a carob tree. Someone walked by and asked, "why are you planting a tree that takes 70 years to bear fruit, if you won't be around to benefit from it?" The older man replied, "I benefit from trees that were

planted from those who came before me, and I will plant this tree for the generations that come after me." JFCS chose to plant trees in Israel as a testimony to our Survivors' resilience and the enduring hope they inspire— a unique legacy that we receive from the Survivors who live in our midst.

After Survivors were gifted with their certificates, in perhaps the most poignant part of the program, all Survivors in attendance posed for a group photo. Some were holding back tears of emotion as they smiled at the camera. With Am Yisrael Chai playing in the background, it couldn't have been a more fitting time to capture a photo of our community's pillars of strength. The Jewish community will continue to thrive, and continue to be strengthened, when we reflect on the powerful lessons of resilience that our Holocaust Survivors teach us.

This event was made possible through a generous grant from Seed the Dream Foundation. Thank you to Kavod Shef for its support to Portland Holocaust Survivors. Thank you to the ongoing support of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany for funding the JFCS Holocaust Survivors Services program. Thank you to the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland for their partnership and support, and for volunteer-baked challahs to be distributed at the event to all Survivors in attendance.

JFCS appreciates all the staff and volunteers who assisted at this event, and all the guests who attended, becoming a vital link in promoting the mission of Holocaust Survivor Day.

MUSEUM (continued from page 9)

exhibit does justice to this history by curating the collection and suggesting fruitful approaches for scholars, researchers, students, high school and college teachers, and queer young people who are curious about their cultural history. Envisioning a future depends on knowing the past. The young women who came to Eugene are now lesbian and queer elders whose hard-won wisdom

can offer us guidance," said Raiskin.

The women featured in the exhibition were not just residents, but transformative figures who influenced Oregon's political landscape, challenged discriminatory policies, and created rich cultural spaces including theaters, music bands, and community organizations. *Outliers and Outlaws* connects Oregon Jewish history

with the diverse lived experiences of LGBTQIA+ people in Oregon, highlighting the importance of inclusion and the richness of our community.

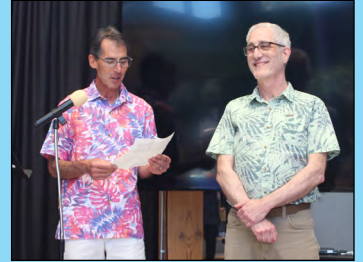
"This exhibition is about more than just telling a story—it's about creating space for all LGBTQIA+ individuals, including Jewish lesbians, who have often been overlooked," adds Babbstein.

The Museum will host and produce a variety of programs and community gatherings throughout the exhibition's run, including a screening of Courtney Hermann's documentary film, "*Outliers and Outlaws*," which was produced in conjunction with the exhibition. Details on all upcoming programs and events will soon be provided at ojmche.org/calendar.



EJC unplugs for second gala

A festive atmosphere welcomed guests at the Eastside Jewish Commons' second annual gala, "EJC Unplugged," featuring China Forbes and honoring retiring Executive Director Howie Bierbaum, below right. (Alana Cogan for the Eastside Jewish Commons)



Shaarie Torah sets sail to celebrate 120 years

Congregation Shaarie Torah

Nearly 200 happy people "boarded" the S.S. Shaarie Torah on Sunday, June 8 for the festive gala event Cruisin' Into the Next 120 Years! The three-hour tour allowed passengers explore the thoroughly transformed shul building, enjoying a variety of cruise-inspired experiences.

After entering through the Grand Atrium, replete with crystal chandelier and opulent floral display, passengers had their embarkation photos taken, tempted lady luck at the "onboard" casino, requested tunes and sang along in the swanky Piano Lounge, and contemplated which high-value basket raffles to enter.

Of course, a cruise isn't complete without a lavish buffet, and Century Catering's team did not disappoint. Four themed stations offered a sumptuous array of tasty morsels, while wait staff circulated with specialty bites. The large central bar served icy drinks non-stop, including a tropical signature Cabin Cooler cocktail. For those needing a little respite from the noise and action, the Ocean Breeze Café provided casual seating in a fun, nautical setting, or the Crow's Nest offered yet another place to sit and schmooze.

The event culminated with the High



Rick Cohen flashes a winning smile from the Blackjack table at Congregation Shaarie Torah's 120th anniversary celebration Sunday, June 8. (Courtesy Garry Weiner via Congregation Shaarie Torah)

Seas raffle drawings, which included baskets valued as much as \$3,000 featuring gift cards, sporting events, hand-crafted items, diamond jewelry, and even a High Holiday parking spot in the CST lot. The Grand Escape Raffle was won by Rabbi Gary Ezra Oren and Allison Fowler, who will be booking their stay at the luxurious Garza Blanca Resort & Spa in Puerto Vallarta. Satisfied sailors "disembarked" back to dry land and a beautiful Portland June night.

Overseeing the entire flow of the event was Mimi Berlin, dubbed Fleet

Commander for being everywhere all at once and steering her able-bodied Cruise Crew to ensure everyone had a fabulous time. "Our intention was to bring people together in a unique and novel way, completely different from what most of us have experienced at community events," she says. "We didn't want people sitting at assigned tables, listening to speeches and waiting for the inevitable Mitzvah Moment paddle raise. Instead, we wanted to provide a fun and Community-building opportunity. We achieved that, and reinforced that our reputation as the most haimisch place in Portland is well-deserved."

Thanks to a long list of generous sponsors and in-kind donors, Cruisin' Into the Next 120 Years! sailed past its fundraising goal and certainly broke the mold for what future events will look like. The Shaarie Torah Board is now thinking about 2030 and the 125th anniversary celebration. Watch for a Save the Date soon!

The donation portal will remain open through June for those who wish to contribute towards CST's bright future at shaarietorah.org/120gala. For questions, please contact Jemi Kostiner Mansfield, Executive Director, at executivedirector@shaarietorah.org.



Federation elects Davey, Prosen, Weinstein to board

Jewish Federation of Greater Portland members unanimously elected Elana Hutter Davey, left, Robin Weinstein, right, and Kyle Prosen to the Federation's board of directors at their annual meeting Thursday, June 12. The Federation also recognized outgoing board members Rochelle Abitz, Lauren Goldstein, Hank Kaplan and Stuart Kirschner. Goldstein was previously board chair. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

MEETING (continued from page 1)

over the last three years, and another person who's biggest part is just beginning.

Board Chair Mindy Zeitzer, presiding over her final annual meeting in that role, gave what she described as a "very abbreviated" list of the Federation's accomplishments in the 12 months since she had stood at the podium in the Stampfer Chapel. Each of those accomplishments had people behind them – often many people.

Some of these groups involved large numbers of individuals. There were the over 100 preschool educators who participated in JFGP's day of learning, the 116 women involved in the newest networking group launched by Women's Philanthropy, and the more than 300 people who attended the joint Purim/Holi celebration held at the Conestoga Recreation Center in Beaverton. There were also smaller groups – the 10 mixed-heritage couples that participated in the Reset and Refresh program, the 18 people that travelled to the nation's capital for the Federation's Joint Civil Rights Mission with Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church, and the 11 individuals who traveled to Israel for the 76th birthday of the Jewish state during some of her most perilous hours in the last 30 years – peril which may yet continue, as President and CEO Marc Blattner announced mid-meeting that Israel Defense Forces aircraft had struck nuclear sites in Iran.

This is an abbreviated version of an abbreviated list. Every accomplishment – mentioned here or otherwise – has a face and a story behind it, not least among them Zeitzer's.

"I'm so proud to have represented this organization that oversees the entire Jewish community of Portland and really is looking out to help maintain its vibrancy for years to come," Zeitzer said.

Many of those faces aren't publicly visible, but their roles are essential – they're the donors to the Federation's annual



Federation President and CEO Marc Blattner addresses JFGP's Thursday, June 12 Annual Meeting. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

campaign. "It's important to note that our community's communal organizations really depend on the allocations and the campaign success of the Jewish Federation," Blattner said. "In my 15 years here at the Federation, this has been by far the most challenging and I'll also say rewarding campaign we've ever had."

The challenge came in the form of individuals either passing away or leaving the Portland area who had contributed a combined \$430,000 to the previous campaign.

"This is why an endowment campaign is so important to the Jewish community of Portland, and something we hope to talk about more in the future," Blattner continued. "But I

continued on next page



Above left: From left, incoming Board Chair Leslie Beard and outgoing Board Chair Mindy Zeitzer listen as Zeitzer's husband, Mark Zeitzer, recognizes his wife's three years of service as board chair. Above right: Mark Zeitzer walked attendees through his wife's "Jewish journey" in a slideshow presentation. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

continued from previous page

have to tell you that what made this year so special is that, because of the work of Jack Birnbach, our Campaign Co-Chair, Leslie Beard, our Campaign Co-Chair, all the campaign volunteers, the Campaign Cabinet, the solicitors, our professional team of Wendy Kahn, Laura Jeser, Jacob Rich-Levin, who's our database administrator and Julie Alvarez in our finance department, we really did something remarkable."

That something is measured in dollars – 3,961,000 of them, which is the total amount the 2025 annual campaign raised. But that amount also represents the people who contributed it, including the 68 percent of campaign donors who increased their contributions by at least 10 percent and the record number of donors at the crucial \$5,000-10,000 contribution tier. It represents the 49 members of the Ben Gurion Society; young adults who contributed at least \$1,000 to the campaign. And it represents the more than 200 people who contributed to the Federation for the first time this year.

"Someone said to me a long time ago, early in my career, that it's not about how much money you raise, because things happen during the year," Blattner said. "It's really the number of donors that's a referendum on 'Is what you're doing getting across to the people in the community and do they want to support that?' So we're really grateful to everybody who's a new donor."

Additionally, the three-year campaign to raise a million dollars for the Zidell Family's Catalyst Fund challenge grant to support initiative stemming from the 2023 Community Study is 98.5 percent complete in its first year.

"We have \$15,000 in two more years. I think we can do it, so thank you," Blattner said. "These funds are used to implement a whole array of new initiatives, and what makes me so proud is literally, in the past 12 months, we have made every single one of these happen."

There are people behind each of the Community Study-driven initiatives, too. Sometimes they're more recognizable –

Federation Director of Jewish Life and Learning Dr. Yosef Rosen and Volunteer Coordinator Merit Pinker, for example. Some will be more recognizable soon, like Shiri Greenfeld, who will be Portland's first Israeli community *shliach* (emissary) in 35 years when she arrives in the Rose City later this summer. Some are less recognizable – the participants in the 12 focus groups held to provide a qualitative perspective on the study's quantitative data, the 72 participants in Resetting the Table's dialogue on Israel, or the many beneficiaries of Federation's Gather Grants program to create small-scale Jewish community. Some aren't even in Portland, like the teams from Moving Traditions and BeWell that are supporting teen mental health. There's plenty more – again, this is an abbreviated accounting of an abbreviated list.

"I can't tell you how proud I am that we heard what people wanted us to do, we raised the money to do it, and we made it happen in a very short period of time," Blattner said.

There's yet more to come: a massive Jewish community festival set for the summer of 2026, and a three-year Global Travel Experiences program to connect Portland Jews with their each other and with Jewish communities around the world.

"Jewish travel is important and makes a difference. There are connections, there are bonds that get built, and at the same time, you get to see people in a whole different light than you do back at home, and you get to explore and understand Jewish life around the world," Blattner said. "We have a three year calendar of destinations around the world open to anybody in our community, and we hope that you'll join us."

Though it has taken countless people to make the Federation's accomplishments and goals come to life over the last year, Mark Zeitzer took to the podium next to recognize the person who has been the face of that work for the last three years.

"Let's take you through Mindy's Jewish journey," Zeitzer

continued on next page

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said to begin his tribute to his wife, outgoing board chair Mindy Zeitzer, in an acknowledged homage to The Jewish Review Podcast's standard opener.

A slideshow played on the wall of the chapel, narrated by Mark.

"When she was 10, she discovered earrings. When she was 11, she discovered hair ties, and at 12, she discovered braces, and she went on her first trip to Israel," he said.

The details ranged from the humorous – her parents dressed as Gumby for her *bat mitzvah* – to the essential – how she had not wanted to participate in the ritual as a form of rebellion against her Jewish heritage but later became deeply involved with Jewish community throughout high school and college, where the couple met, and into their time in Philadelphia.

"She started making challah. Really good Challah. And then this happened," Mark Zeitzer said, as the slideshow displayed a picture of their eldest son, Noah, "and then she made some more challah."

Eventually, pictures of their other two sons, Ari and Ezra, appeared on screen, followed by another picture of a sweet, eggy loaf with the words, "and then she made some more challah."

"Somewhere along the line, she had time to volunteer for Federation. I still haven't figured this out, but she's done it," Zeitzer said. "She got involved with allocations, and allocations is notoriously known as a lot of work, but she really got to know the community, and she loved it, and she continued her volunteer work."

"One of the greatest joys of my job," Blattner said, "is that every two to three years, I get a new best friend and that's the Jewish Federation chair."

"[Mindy Zeitzer] makes time for everything, for every meeting, for every call, whatever needs to be done" Blattner continued. "She's thoughtful. She always wants to do what is right, not always what is most popular, and that's what leadership is all about."

As a thank you for her service, Blattner presented Zeitzer with a custom Seder set crafted by local artist Eddy Shuldman.

"Never did I imagine standing up here in front of the Jewish community having concluded a three year term of being board chair," Zeitzer said. "I really could not be more proud to be part of this organization, to lead the board, to work with the incredible professional team and to partner with Marc."

Zeitzer had a gift of her own for Blattner – a bag full of Cadbury Curly Wurly bars, an approximation of the Marathon bars that Blattner had mentioned being his favorite childhood candy when the two travelled to the Jewish Federations of North America's General Assembly during Zeitzer's first year as chair.

"I probably owe you a challah, since in these three years, I haven't made you a challah. So with all my newfound time, name the flavor, and it's yours," she added.

She also thanked her fellow board members, the rest of the community, her children and her husband.



Incoming Federation Board Chair Leslie Beard addresses JFGP's Thursday, June 12, Annual Meeting. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

"Thank you for being my rock, my ultimate cheerleader, my partner in every sense of the word, your unwavering support, your steady calmness when I was freaking out or doubting myself," she said. "Because let's be clear, you're the calm one."

A four-word phrase marked the turning of the page from one chapter of JFGP's story to the next.

"Leslie, it's your turn," Zeitzer said.

The last stage of the annual meeting marked the installation of Leslie Beard as the new chair of JFGP's board. She's the sixth woman to lead the Federation, and her election to the role makes Portland the first and only of America's 30 largest Federations to elect three consecutive women as board chair.

"I know that she will bring such thoughtfulness to this role," Zeitzer said of her successor. "She comes from a dedicated Federation family in Milwaukee, where her father served as chair of the board and her mother as campaign chair. I know how proud they must be of you."

"I'm just truly honored to be the new Board Chair," Beard said. "And thank you to the board and to Mindy for your confidence in me. I look forward to building on the board's cohesiveness and accountability."

She also thanked Birnbach, with whom she has co-chaired the last two annual campaigns, as well as Rich Meyer, who will succeed her in that role.

"[My parents'] legacy of Jewish leadership in Milwaukee, Wisconsin continues to guide me, and I hope to carry that forward now, building a legacy for my own family and for our community here in Portland as chair," she said. "I want to thank each of you for your support for the Federation. None of us can do this work alone, but together, we can make a real difference."

A recording of the annual meeting is available online at jewishportland.org.



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Editor

Rockne Roll

editor@jewishportland.org

Associate Editor

Caron Blau Rothstein

Assistant Editor

Rachel Nelson

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NEXT ISSUE

Issue date Deadline

JULY 2 JUNE 26

Security Corner

More tragedies, more questions

By JESSICA ANDERSON

In my previous column, I provided updated guidance to community organizations and members following the murder in Washington, DC of two Embassy of Israel employees. I never thought I would follow that up with another column addressing appropriate responses to these ongoing crimes against the Jewish community (those occurring in Boulder, CO) and now the possible aftereffects of Israel's attack on Iran. We remain aware of the possibility of copycat incidents or that people may feel emboldened by seeing others take action. The situation calls for proactive, layered security strategies due to a collective increase in risk.

I've received questions from community members on recommendations for personal weapons and concerns about Iranian intelligence officials retaliating against Jewish communities. For me, this speaks to the fear that some are feeling, and I want to acknowledge that. At the same time, I want people to know that their individual risk remains extremely low, and the data of reported incidents in Oregon bears that out. I'm not denying that it only takes one person to do terrible damage, but the events in DC and CO are extremely rare, and it's important to find a healthy balance between paying attention and living in fear.

In Oregon, I've not been made aware of any specific or credible threats to any locations or events. Our partnerships with law enforcement are strong, and



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.

I'm comfortable knowing that if we needed to know something, they would share it with us. In the absence of that, national organizations like the Secure Community Network (SCN) and others focused on security in the Jewish community are encouraging the community to continue gathering and hosting events. However, they also urge the highest level of attention to the security protocols in place at Jewish gathering spaces. These follow-on recommendations were released on Friday, June 13th, and highlight the importance of taking concrete steps and that organizations are aware of the elements within their control.

Reporting is a critical piece of sharing information. I've directly asked organizations to ensure they report unusual, suspicious, or potentially biased activity to me. The goal of this effort is to continue to develop a shared feeling of responsibility within our organizations. If something happens or is observed in SW, it may be relevant for someone on the East Side to know. Incident reporting should be made to me by email, phone, or our incident reporting form, lo-

cated on the JFGP website: <https://jewishportland.org/security>.

Ensure organizational safety plans, protocols, and measures are reviewed and implemented. This may mean reviewing registrants for events, establishing a wider safety perimeter, and re-addressing protocols for entrances and exits.

The regular schedule and rhythm of gatherings can create situations where we may let our guard down – stay mindful of this natural human tendency. If you're having a special event, please let me know, and I will inform the Portland Police or the local police department. All safety agencies are eager to be a strong partner and always want to know if large gatherings are happening, particularly those that are publicly advertised.

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

Outdoor events pose unique challenges that should be re-evaluated. This is not an admonishment against having them but acknowledges

See SECURITY, page 18

FJC: Jewish camps need your help this summer!

Approximately 1,000 Israeli staff members who were expected to work at Jewish day and overnight camps across North America this summer are still in Israel, and it remains unclear when—or if—they will be able to travel.

Camp changes lives of campers AND staff—and right now, camps need you! Jewish camps across North America are urgently looking for amazing young adults to step in.

Working as a counselor,

specialist, educator or unit head at camp is a meaningful (and fun!) way to be in community and create a sense of belonging and pride in Jewish young people.

Whether you are available to work one week or a full

summer, the team at Foundation for Jewish Camp will connect you to an amazing camp for a summer of connection, growth, purpose, and joy!

Apply today at jewish-camp.org/work/

Guest Column

Jewish professionals, our work matters

By MICHELLE CAPLAN

In recent weeks, each new attack on our Jewish community has weighed heavily on my heart and left me searching for words. Each time I see another post, I feel the urge to respond—or to share something myself—but the words don't come easily. The grief is heavy; the pain runs deep—and I know many of you feel it too.

Still, every day, we show up. We lead, educate, support, and nurture our communities with quiet strength and unwavering commitment, laying the foundation for a future rooted in resilience, connection, and hope. Even as we carry our own pain, we put on a brave face for those we serve. In moments of tragedy, that truth can feel distant—but it's in these very moments that our work holds its most profound meaning.

The heartbreaking loss of Sarah Lynn Milgrim and Yaron Lischinsky just two weeks ago shook us to our core. These two vibrant young professionals were murdered in a horrific act of antisemitic violence outside the Capital Jewish Museum, following an AJC event meant to celebrate Jewish diplomacy and unity.

And then, just this past Sunday, another attack—this time in Boulder, Colorado. A man armed with Molotov cocktails hurled them into a peaceful crowd of people who were advocating for the release of Israeli hostages in Gaza. Eight people were hospitalized, and four others sustained minor injuries. The victims, ranging in age from 52 to 88, included a Holocaust survivor.

Each of these horrific acts is more than an assault on inno-

cent lives—they are attacks on all of us, on the very heart of Jewish professional life. They are painful reminders of the risks we face simply by being visibly Jewish or by standing in solidarity with our community.

After more than three decades as a Jewish professional and volunteer, I still show up each day with deep gratitude—for the community I serve and the sacred responsibility of building and sustaining Jewish life. I've long known this is where I'm meant to be. And in the face of rising antisemitism and growing fear, I remain unwavering in my commitment: to stand against hate, to nurture the soul of our community, and to protect our people with strength and purpose.

If you're reading this and are not a Jewish professional but are part of the Jewish community, consider reaching out to local organizations and asking how you can help. Maybe volunteer to greet at a service or assist at an event—small acts of support go a long way. And if you're not Jewish but have Jewish friends or colleagues, check in on them. We are all processing these horrific attacks in different ways, but a simple message of care and solidarity mean more than you know.

What we do is deeply meaningful. We mourn together, we persevere together, and we honor each victim by standing strong and refusing to back down. As a colleague back east recently said: "I see you, and I am here for you."

-
Michelle Caplan is Assistant Executive Director of Congregation Neveh Shalom in Portland.

OJCF Column

Intergenerational Giving: Passing Down Philanthropy

Oregon Jewish Community Foundation

At the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation (OJCF), we're proud to support families in passing down the values of philanthropy through donor advised funds and other charitable vehicles. These funds offer a simple and meaningful way for families to come together in support of causes they care about. By involving children and grandchildren in

philanthropic decision-making, families can cultivate a legacy of generosity rooted in Jewish values.

OJCF partners closely with our fundholders, providing personalized guidance and resources to support intergenerational conversations about impact, responsibility, and community. This collaborative approach ensures that the spirit of giving remains a shared family tradition.

To learn more about fostering intergenerational philanthropy in your family, please reach out to Rachael Evans, OJCF Director of Stewardship, at rachaele@ojcf.org or 503-248-9328.

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

BSD Parents: Stopping hate a moral imperative

By NIR MEGNAZI, RACHEL NELSON, and EVA N.

We believe deeply in the foundational rights to free speech and access to public education. These values are essential to a functioning democracy and a thriving, inclusive society. However, there is a critical distinction between exercising free speech and allowing hate speech, inflammatory rhetoric, and debunked propaganda disguised as “fact” to take root in our schools, our school districts, and among members of our school board.

Two weeks ago, a group of Jewish and Israeli parents, educators, and community members attended the Beaverton School Board meeting to provide public comment regarding the safety and well-being of students in our district. We came in good faith, hoping to express our concerns about the sharp escalation in anti-Jewish hate and bias and the growing fear among Jewish students and families in Beaverton.

Instead, we were met by a group of individuals waving Palestinian flags, holding signs that denigrated Israel, and presenting a one-sided, often false narrative about a distant geopolitical conflict. To further demonstrate that Israeli and Jewish students are not welcome in Beaverton, many of these individuals were holding handwritten signs on Oregon School Employees Association posterboard. While all international conflicts are far beyond the scope or jurisdiction of any local school district, ripple effects of many different geopolitical conflicts are being felt acutely by families right here in Beaverton. This particular conflict impacts both Jewish and Muslim families in our schools and neighborhoods.

The Jewish community’s comments focused on issues of safety within our schools—the fear of openly identifying as Jewish or Israeli, and the anxiety heightened by two recent

violent attacks in the U.S. targeting individuals perceived to be Jewish. Our children deserve to feel safe and supported in their learning environments, not silenced or targeted based on their legally protected identity.

In contrast, many of the comments from those opposing our presence centered on “free speech” and unilateral calls to end the war in Gaza. While we support the right to advocate for peace and justice, we cannot ignore that the rhetoric in the room—and later, outside the building—crossed a line.

After public comment concluded, as families and community members exited the district building, we were immediately confronted by a crowd loudly and proudly chanting for global *Intifada*—a term that, in this context, evokes calls for violence and has historically been associated with brutal attacks against Jewish civilians. As one individual proclaimed with a smile, “I am Hamas; we’re all Hamas.” This experience was deeply unsettling and made many of us, including children, feel unsafe, unwelcome, and physically terrified.

We call on the Beaverton School District, its leadership, and our broader community to take these concerns seriously. Safety, inclusivity, and respectful dialogue must be protected for **all** students and families, regardless of background. Standing against hate in any form is not a political statement—it is a moral imperative.

-

Nir Megnazi, Rachel Nelson and Eva N. are parents of students in the Beaverton School District. The Jewish Review has agreed to redact Eva N.’s full last name due to credible concerns for her safety. Nelson is Assistant Editor of The Jewish Review.

SECURITY (continued from page 16)

that they are more difficult to secure and pose elevated safety concerns. Take the time to review your plans and consider if they should be moved.

We’re sometimes so focused on physical security that we overlook cyberse-

curity in these instances. The Federation has recently upgraded its cybersecurity program, and I’d be happy to share the resources we’re using. Notify your IT point of contact of suspicious emails or attempts to gain access to data systems.

Lastly, training is a way to boost your confidence in handling all kinds of situations, and we know that training in one area (like an Active Threat class) creates an improved ability to respond to a variety of situations in other areas of your life.

Safety and security classes are offered year-round, both in-person and over Zoom. Check out the Zoom class schedule at the security page of the JFGP website: <https://jewishportland.org/events/security-training>.



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

MIRIAM (continued from page 8)

Academy

Elizabeth Rice has been a class representative and a PJA ambassador and participated in “visioning” work for the MJCC/PJA campus plan. She has co-chaired the Kehillah (community) Committee for two years, where she organized and designed PJA teacher-appreciation weeks and spearheaded improvements to the staff room.

Debbie Rilling, Congregation Kol Ami, Vancouver

Debbie Rilling has been involved in the Kol Ami religious school, where she helped organize a student/parent choir and co-founded Kol Ami’s youth group, KAST. She served as congregation Treasurer and participated in hiring Kol Ami’s first Rabbi and administrator and in finding its first permanent home.

Randi Rosenfield, Jewish Federation of Greater Portland

Randi Rosenfield is co-chair of Federation’s Israel Advocacy Committee. She participates in Federation’s response to antisemitism and anti-Israel sentiment in K-12 public schools and on college campuses by writing letters, attending meetings with public officials and developing strategies to counter manifestations of anti-Semitism.

Christel Sanders, Beit Am, Corvallis

Christel Sanders has served on the congregation Board and New Building Committee. Known as Beit Am’s “kitchen maven,” she designed the new building’s kitchen and keeps it organized. She also creates the chanting schedule for services. As an artist, she has led silk-painting classes for Torah Study kids and adults.

Esther Schwartz, Beit Haverim

Esther Schwartz is a member of the Shabbat-Services team and is the Social Justice Chair at Beit Haverim. She was co-chair of the Interfaith Gratitude Service that works with Lake Oswego United Church of Christ and the Muslim Educational Trust. In the broader community, she works in many sustainability and anti-racism causes.

Amy Shapiro, Cedar Sinai Park

A singer and songwriter, Amy Shapiro, has taught and performed at the Robison Home and around the world for over 40 years and has led High Holiday and Pesach services at Cedar Sinai Park for 26 years. She worked with the state Legislature in the 1990s to change racially insensitive lyrics in the official state song.

Shulamit Urenia, Congregation

Kesser Israel

Shuli Urenia is part of the Shabbos Kiddush team and organizes and stocks the shul kitchen. She has led a challah-baking fundraiser and collected items for soldiers in the Israeli Defense Forces (where her daughter served). She also has a Kosher catering business, Kashrootz Catering.

Clarice Wilsey, Next Generations Group

In addition to being an active member of the Next Generations Group (which strives to keep personal Holocaust histories alive), Clarice Wilsey authored a book based on her father’s experience as a physician treating survivors of Dachau concentration camp after its liberation. She currently relates his story as a speaker about the Holocaust in Oregon and Washington.

Jennifer Yoken, Greater Portland Hillel

Jennifer Yoken served as Board Chair of Greater Portland Hillel for two years, guiding it through the challenging times following the events of Oct. 7 in Israel. In that role, she worked to ensure students on the seven campuses that Hillel serves felt seen, supported and safe.

ROGOWAY (continued from page 5)

to address all kinds of ideologically driven violence, including antisemitism, and helping provide a Jewish perspective to the group’s efforts. (See “Antisemitic violence and Oregon,” *The Jewish Review*, Jan. 8, 2025, pg. 6) But her deep passion for education comes from her own experiences with learning disabilities as a child and the commitment her parents had to finding an educational setting that helped her thrive, which came in the form of a Montessori school in Austin. Her experiences there, introduced her to how supportive and powerful the teacher/student relationship could be – which has been reaffirmed repeatedly, including one particular exam-

ple she recalled with one of those kinds of students she described earlier who, as a kindergartener, had trouble navigating conventional classroom environments.

“There was this offer that I put out to the class; it was based on a Yiddish folk story, and it was this idea that the universe could open up and anything you wish for could be granted, like a wish-granting genie situation. I said, ‘What would you ask for?’ And this little hand goes up and this little boy says, ‘I wish everyone everywhere had everything they needed.’ And I said, ‘I need you to stand up and I need you to shout that at the top of your lungs so the entire building can hear,’” Rohr said.

Eventually, years later, the same student approached Rohr at an event.

“He came up to me, and he’s very looking official and he’s practiced and something’s about to happen,” Rohr recounted. “He said, ‘Will you lift the Torah at my *bar mitzvah*?’ I just burst into tears because it was so completing of a cycle, and also of watching a student who didn’t find it easy to be in classroom spaces really thriving; just the joy of that, as an educator, to watch both his family coming up with tools to help support him and him being resilient in himself.”

Moments like those speak to the core of Rohr’s work. It’s work that even extended to her acceptance speech at

Thursday’s annual meeting, which she used to lead attendees in singing *Oseh Shalom* – the words translate to “One who makes peace in one’s heights, may one make peace upon us and upon all Israel.”

“There are so many people I want to thank and praise and lift up and honor and recognize; so many people who have guided me to guide others, and my guidance said at this moment, at this sacred impasse, take a moment to sing together,” Rohr said Thursday. “I would ask that you all join in with me, because the thing that our community needs, the thing that our surrounding area needs, that our world needs at this moment is the deepest levels of peace.”

JUDITH MAGID

Congregation Neveh Shalom is deeply saddened to share the passing of long-time member Judith Magid, z"l, who died on June 2 at the age of 83. She was the beloved wife of Robert Magid, devoted mother of Adam (Dawn) Magid and Jennifer Magid (Zach) Schiller, and cherished grandmother to Maddie, Luke, Brynley, Sarah, and Samuel. The funeral was Thursday, June 5, at Ahavai Shalom Cemetery.

JACK CORDOVA

Congregation Ahavath Achim regrets to announce the passing of Jack Cordova, z"l.

Jack was the Secretary Emeritus of the Seattle Sephardic Brotherhood. He is survived by his sons Jeffery (Andrea) Cordova, David (Michelle), and daughter Lynne Cordova-Coveny. He is also survived by his brother in our Portland community, Lee (Sheri) Cordova.

Jack also leaves behind his loving grandchildren Shaina Cordova (Jason Schauer), Jace (Madelaine) Cordova, Adam, Jeremy and Lucas Cordova. He also is survived by his great grandchildren Evelyn and Josie Schauer and Jack Cordova.

Funeral services for Mr. Cordova were held Sunday, June 8, at the Seattle Sephardic Brotherhood Cemetery in Shoreline, Wash.

MICHAEL LIETZ

Congregation Neveh Shalom is deeply saddened to share the passing of Michael Paul Lietz, z"l, on June 4. Michael was the beloved brother of Jonathon (Elaine Coughlin) Lietz, Kathleen Nowak, and Linda Rich, and the devoted father of Abraham Lietz, Aaron Lietz, and Amber Lietz.

PHILLIP BLOOM

It is with deep sadness that Congregation Shaarie Torah announces the passing of Phillip Bloom, z"l.

Phillip passed away on Monday morning, June 16, 2025 just two days shy of his 91st birthday.

He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Rosalyn, sons Aaron (Kristin) Bloom, David (Trudi) Bloom and Paul (Karen) Bloom, eight grandchildren: Jonah, Hannah, Seve, Mira, Sarah, Willa, Natalie, and Emma and by his older brother, Jerry Bloom. He was predeceased by parents Carl and Rose Bloom, z"l, and brothers Sanford and Gilbert Bloom, z"l.

The funeral will be held on Wednesday, June 18, 2025 at 1 pm at Shaarie Torah Cemetery. The service will be livestreamed on Zoom.

Donations in Phil's memory may be made to Congregation Shaarie Torah, The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research and The Yiddish Book Center.

Events

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

June 19: Victimhood to Victory

Presentation at the Jewish Oasis at 7 pm. Tickets at JewishOasis.com.

June 20: EJC Noon-time Concert - Jet Black Pearl

Free concert at the Eastside Jewish Commons at noon. More information at ejcpdx.org/events.

June 20: Family Shabbat Dinner at the J!

Community Shabbat dinner at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center at 6 pm. \$5, \$15 for families. Preregistration required at oregon-jcc.org.

June 22: BB Camp Friends and Family Day

Camp tours and activities at BB Camp in Lincoln City from 11am-3 pm. Free.

Registration at bb-360.org/friendsandfamily

June 22: Israeli Dancing for Everyone with Allison Victor

Open Israeli dancing at the Eastside Jewish Commons at 1 pm. \$6. For more information, visit ejcpdx.org/events.

June 22: Israeli folk dancing at SWCC

Weekly class with instructors Rhona and Sue from 2:30-3:30, open dancing at 3:30 at Southwest Community Center in Portland. More information at sites.google.com/site/pifdnews.

June 22: Longest Day Comedy Night

Alzheimer's awareness comedy show at Rose Schnitzer Manor at 6:30 pm. Free. RSVP at thelongest-daycomedynight.rsvpify.com.

June 24: Poetry reading with Davit Rutiezer and Carter McKenzie

Free poetry reading at the Eastside Jewish Commons at 7 pm. For more information and to RSVP, visit ejcpdx.org/events.

June 26: The Sound of Music Family Sing-a-long

Family film screening at the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education at 7 pm. Free. Preregistration required at ojmche.org/events/family-movie-nights-the-sound-of-music-family-sing-a-long.

June 29: Mending with Intention

Workshop with artist Zac Banik on garment (and psychological) mending at the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Edu-

cation at noon. \$10. More information and tickets at ojmche.org/events/mending-with-intention-workshop-with-zac-banik.

June 29: Sephardic Day at Camp

Activity day at Sephardic Adventure Camp in Cle Elum, Wash from 2-5 pm. Free. Registration at zeffy.com/ticketing/sephardic-day-at-camp.

June 29: Farbrengen in Honor of the Rebbe

Celebration hosted by Chabad of Southwest Portland at 8pm. For more information, email shalom@jportland.com.

June 30: Send a Kid to Camp Golf Tournament

Golf tournament hosted by BB Mens Camp at Langdon Farms Golf Club. Register at secure.ggiv.com/event/golf25.