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Sept. 20, 2023/5 Tishrei, 5784 Volume 58, Issue 19



Dr. Rick Hodes discusses his work in Ethiopia with listeners at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center Monday, Sept. 11. Dr. Hodes has been working in Ethiopia since the mid 80s and currently is Medical Director in Ethiopia for the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

Ethiopia's 'Jewish doctor'

Dr. Rick Hodes presents on nearly four decades of work in East Africa in pair of Portland appearances

By **ROCKNE ROLL**
The Jewish Review

"I have the largest collection of the worst spine deformities of the world."

That's an unusual self-description, but Dr. Rick Hodes is anything but typical. It's a collection he's amassed over more than 30 years practicing medicine in Ethiopia, work that has led to him being described as "a true Jewish hero."

Dr. Hodes, who spoke at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center Monday, Sept. 11 and at the Eastside Jewish Commons on Tuesday, Sept. 12 at events sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, is Medical Director in Ethiopia for the American Jewish Joint Distribution Com-

mittee. He arrived in the landlocked east African country, home to 120 million people, in the late 1980s and provided medical supervision for Operation Solomon, which evacuated over 14,000 Ethiopian Jews to Israel in 1991. He later worked with the Missionaries of Charity, Mother Theresa's organization, and now with the JDC.

He's treated an enormous variety of afflictions, including rheumatic and congenital heart conditions rarely seen in industrialized countries, but he has become most notable for his work treating spinal cord defects, many caused by spinal tuberculosis.

See **HODES**, page 9

Jacob & Sons shutting down

Henry Higgins Boiled Bagels
takes over bakery, Lefty's Cafe

By ROCKNE ROLL

The Jewish Review

Jacob & Sons, the Jewish food company founded by Portland chef Noah Jacob and known for its lox, bialys and other baked goods, announced its closure last week on social media.

"We set up a model that kind of required us to expand to be able to stay in business," Jacob said. "When the expansion happened much slower than expected, that just kind of crushed us financially."

Jacob & Sons launched in 2020 with a line of traditional products that were available in 40 stores around Oregon. The company had partnered with other local firms, including with the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education to operate Lefty's Cafe at the museum following its remodel. But operating costs caught up with the firm.

"What we wouldn't budge on was how we were paying our employees, the benefits we're giving them," Jacob said. "That really was something that was kind of non-negotiable."

Nor was product quality. After experiencing a shocking amount of difficulty finding salmon supplies for lox, Jacob & Sons ended up going to Iceland to find salmon that was of suitable quality, consistently available, and environmentally sustainable.

"One of the things that we kind of are laughing about now is that we started the business because we figured 'oh, we're in Oregon, there's so much salmon. Why is no one doing lox here?' And it turns out there's no salmon in Oregon," Jacob said.

As part of the company's winding down, Henry Higgins Boiled Bagels has taken over the bakery operations and the management of Lefty's Cafe, as well as retaining six of Jacob & Sons' 10 employees. So despite wearing a new label, Jacob & Sons bialys, challah, babka, rye bread and rugalach will live on and the menu at Lefty's will see minimal changes.

But Henry Higgins will be using their own pickles and tuna salad, among other items, and the last of the Jacob & Sons lox has been sold to Zupan's Markets.

"We suggest people go there and grab it before it's gone," Jacob said. "It'll last two years in the freezer."

While the lox will soon be gone, Jacob isn't going anywhere. Portland is home, he explained, and Jewish deli food has been the central element of his career.

"My wife and I are looking for opportunities to promote Jewish deli culture here in Portland however we can," he said. "Coming back to Portland and having so little of that culture here, that was our motivation for doing this in the first place. Creating some of these products that we couldn't find, or we thought were not good enough, things like the kreplach soup that we made, it was so good, that's just not going to be available anymore. It's heartbreaking."

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Jewish Review Podcast debuts with JFNA chair Julie Platt

The Jewish Review staff

Since its e-newspaper re-launch in 2020, *The Jewish Review* has put the stories of Portland's Jewish community and beyond to the eyes of readers every two weeks. Now it brings those stories to your ears.

"The Jewish Review Podcast" makes its debut today on all major podcasting platforms. Hosted by Jewish Review editor Rockne Roll, the podcast will serve as an extension of the Review's award-winning journalism, covering the personalities and stories that shape Portland's Jewish culture to sharing perspectives on issues that affect local and global Judaism, with more than a dash of humor and fun thrown in.

"A podcast is a natural way to expand the Review's reach and tell different kinds of stories," Roll said. "It offers an opportunity to add depth to the Review's reporting, and I'm honored to help grow the scope of Jewish journalism here in Oregon."

"We are excited to offer this new platform to our Jewish community," Jewish Federation of Greater Portland President and CEO Marc Blattner said. "We are confident Rockne will have interesting and informative guests on a regular basis. We hope you take the time to download and listen."

Today's debut episode features Roll's interview with Jewish Federations of North America Board Chair Julie Platt.

"The team here at the Federation connected with Julie before she visited last month and asked if she would be willing to be the first guest," Roll explained. "It was so gracious of her to say yes, and I thoroughly enjoyed our conversation."

The Jewish Review Podcast will release episodes every two weeks, corresponding with issue dates for *The Jewish Review* newspaper. To hear the latest episode, visit rss.com/podcasts/jewishreviewpdx/ or search "The Jewish Review Podcast" on your preferred podcast platform.

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"How to Respond to Antisemitism" is Sept. 28

Federation partners with agencies to help parents address growing issue

By **ROCKNE ROLL**

The Jewish Review

Schools in the Portland area have resumed following summer vacation. With kids back in school and the broader rise in antisemitism across American society, it's regrettable but unavoidable that somewhere, someday, students will experience antisemitism.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, along with Jewish Family and Child Service, the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education, the Anti-Defamation League, Facing History and Ourselves, the Western States Center and StandWithUs, present "How to Respond to Antisemitism," a conversation on how parents can respond to hate and bullying at school Thursday, Sept. 28 at Congregation Neveh Shalom from 7-8:30 pm.

While "antisemitism" is in the title, Federation Director of Educational Initiatives and Associate Director of Community Relations Rachel Nelson explained that "It's a multifaceted and multi-pronged approach to combating hate in our schools."

"We're seeing more and more of this, and even at a very young age, as young as fourth grade," added Federation Director of Community Relations Bob Horenstein. "We had several instances last year."

Horenstein explained that connecting parents with the resources they need to respond to incidents of hate and bullying when they arise is an important preparation for addressing incidents of this kind. Schools often struggle to deal with these sorts of incidents, particularly regarding antisemitism, because teachers and administrators aren't aware of the resources available. He recounted a situation where a sixth grader was regularly subjected to antisemitic hate speech from older students in the hallways; the younger student didn't know the perpetrators and couldn't see their faces when the incidents occurred. Without being able to identify those responsible, the school didn't see a path to taking action, though they were able to take concrete steps to address the situation after the Federation was brought in to assist.

"They didn't address it on a school-wide basis," Horenstein said. "That would have been an opportunity to talk about hate and bullying in general, and they didn't do that."

The programs co-sponsors will be on hand to highlight the work they each do to combat antisemitism and support those who have experienced incidents of hate, including the professional development programs for local educators put on by OJMCHE, the ADL's No Place for Hate program in schools, StandWithUs' work countering anti-Israel sentiment on campuses that veers into antisemitism and more. Each co-sponsoring organization will be available to talk more in-depth with interested participants individually.

"We will also have a parent whose child was bullied, and he's going to talk about their experience and how we were helpful," Horenstein said.

Laurie Lynch, the ADL's Pacific Northwest Education Director, describes their No Place for Hate program as student driven, tailored to the age grouping of the school and the issues a particular school is experiencing, and a long term, year-over-year process. No Place for Hate has already been rolled out at several schools in the Portland area and throughout Oregon, notably at Ida B. Wells High School in Southwest Portland. The ADL began working with students at the school when it was still known as Wilson High School, and the student No Place for Hate committee was one of the driving forces that led to the school's name change.

"When a school is a No Place for Hate school, it doesn't mean that incidents aren't going to happen," Lynch explained. "What it does is it gives them a context, it gives them some tools, so that when these things happen, we're not scrambling for actions to be taken; they already have a context for, 'oh, this doesn't align with our pledge, this doesn't align with our values.'"

The hope is that by knowing what resources are available, not only can parents draw on support when situations arise, but that they can point their children's schools to those same resources.

"They can say, 'Hey, I've been talking to the Jewish Federation, and you should have a phone call with Bob and or Rachel, because they can help,'" Horenstein said. "We're not going in there saying, 'You're not doing enough.' We're there to say, 'We're a resource. We don't cost anything. Use us.'"

Horenstein also wants parents to be on the lookout for signs that hate speech is occurring. He explained that students will often hide or downplay incidents of antisemitism and other forms of bias for fear of being labeled a "snitch" or for fear of endangering friendships.

"We also want our parents to be our eyes and ears. We want to know what's going on in the schools," Horenstein said. "We're discrete when we work with these situations."

Whatever the cause, it can't be ignored that there's been a major spike in hate incidents in recent years.

"Coming out of COVID, we have seen there's a spike in mental health issues. What we've been hearing is there was unfettered access, especially during COVID, to technology without monitoring from parents," Nelson said. "Some of it may be coming from parents and what's happening in the homes, but I think a lot of it is coming from unrestricted access to social media and radicalization on social media."

To register, visit jewishportland.org/antisemitism23. For more information, email Nelson at rachel@jewishportland.org.



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Challah bake draws mega crowd

Clockwise from top left: Some of the 200 attendees at Chabad's Pre-Rosh Hashana Mega Challah Bake knead their dough at Congregation Neveh Shalom Thursday, Sept. 7; Sandra Lewis adds sugar to begin forming her dough; Maya Aharoni, 2, and mom Ashley Austin bring their dough together; Chaiky Rivkin instructs attendees in both the physical and spiritual elements of challah; attendees stir their dough mixture together. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)



Ben-Ami speaks at Eastside Commons

Jeremy Ben-Ami, Executive Director of JStreet, addresses attendees at a Thursday, Sept. 7 event at the Eastside Jewish Commons. Attendees, which included members of Oregon's Congressional delegation, heard Ben-Ami address "Israel's Crisis of Democracy," which was followed by a Q-and-A session. JStreet describes itself as "organizing pro-Israel, pro-peace Americans" in advocating for a diplomatic solution to conflict in the Middle East. Hear Ben-Ami on an upcoming episode of *The Jewish Review Podcast*; see page 2 for more info. (Howie Bierbaum/Eastside Jewish Commons)



Israel360 brings in PSU student perspectives

By **ROCKNE ROLL**

The Jewish Review

On their aptly-named "Perspectives Trip" to Israel in June, 17 Portland State University students got an up-close view of life in Israel. Now they're sharing their insights with the wider community.

In "Healing Perspectives: University Student Leaders' Post-Trip Views on Israel," cosponsored by Israel360, Congregation Neveh Shalom and PDX Hillel, four of the students from the June trip will give an overview of what they learned about the region and how those take aways will affect conversations around Israel on campus. The presentation will take place at Congregation Neveh Shalom Monday, Oct. 16 at 7 pm.

"The goal of this trip was for students to come meet with Israelis, meet with Palestinians, hear from all of the perspectives and make their own decisions about what they feel," PDX Hillel Executive Director Hannah Sherman explained, "And then, again, because we know this is such a hot-button issue on college campuses, to be able to come back and tell their peers, 'okay, it's not as black and white as it seems.'"

Portland State is a campus where issues of conflict in Southwest Asia have reached a boiling point. The student government passed a resolution supporting the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement in 2016 and while there was no practical effect on university policy, it had a strong negative impact on the campus climate.

"Jewish students really did not feel safe," Sherman recalled. "Jewish students were spat on when they were tabling."

Cheryl Livney, one of the leaders of Israel360, remembers those times well – she's a Professor Emerita at PSU and sits on PDX Hillel's Board. When the Perspectives trip – the first from Portland State since the Covid pandemic – returned, it made sense to hear

what they had to say.

"It just seemed natural," Livneh said.

Israel360 seeks to expose Portlanders to a variety of ideas and conversations about the Middle East through monthly programs and discussions.

"We've done everything from Israeli cooking, to having Bassam Eid, who's a Palestinian activist. We've done things on the environment. We've had generals come speak," Livneh said. "We've just tried to bring as many perspectives and the spectrum of perspectives from American Jews."

Of the 17 students that went on the PSU Perspectives trip, 12 are not Jewish. Two of them, as well as two of the Jewish students from the trip, will speak at the Israel360 event.

"I think it'll be really good for [eventgoers] to hear from non-Jewish students about the impact and how they think it may impact their work on campus," Livneh said.

The trip was quite the experience for those who went – and not just due to a lengthy, unexpected delay due to air travel difficulties. In addition to visiting sites like Ramallah, the Dome of the Rock, and Israeli settlements in the West Bank, the group enjoyed Shabbat dinner with the family of PDX Hillel Jewish Agency for Israel Fellow Linoy Yechieli, who staffed the trip along with Sherman.

"It's called Perspectives for a reason. Linoy decided to call it Healing Perspectives, because, really, we saw this as a healing trip," Sherman said. "This conflict not only exists in Israel, it exists here on our college campuses. So, for students to be able to go through this healing process and say, 'it's okay that we disagree on a lot of things, but let's hear each other out,' I think that's what made this really special."

For more information or to RSVP to the Israel360 program, please visit tinyurl.com/Israel360Perspectives.

Corvallis' Beit Am synagogue marks half century

Yearlong celebration for Mid-Willamette Valley multi-denominational community begins Oct. 28

By MICHALA KATZ

For The Jewish Review

Beit Am, the Jewish community located in Corvallis, Ore., means “house of the people” in Hebrew. The synagogue, however, didn’t have any house or facility to call their own for many years. The “house” was purely a metaphor of the close-knit nature and soul of this unique community.

For decades, the Beit Am community operated out of a small house on 36th Street in town and the members quickly outgrew their residential-style space. Today, a beautiful synagogue stands in Northwest Corvallis, complete with a deck overlooking the Oregon Coast Range. Only in 2019, after several years of comprehensive planning, architectural design and working towards honoring the vision of early Beit Am members did the current facility open.

Even before the first Beit Am house opened in 1982, the Jewish community was officially founded in 1974. And before Beit Am existed as an organized center for families, learning, and holiday celebration in Corvallis, a group of strong determined women gathered as a Hadassah group. Their early support and fundraisers for the young State of Israel in the 1950s and 1960s solidified the foundation of incremental growth pre-Beit Am.

Three pillars quickly united the steadily growing Jewish families in the area: Hadassah, Hillel and Beit Am. In the mid-1970s and 1980s, several Israeli families came to Oregon State University to spend their sabbatical. It’s no coincidence that they found Beit Am. Early members such as Uri Singer, enthusiastically spoke about the warm and welcoming backdrop in Corvallis.

“You won’t regret moving [from Haifa, Israel] to Corvallis, Oregon for your two year sabbatical,” Singer said to Stella and Zigi Wenkert.

The Wenkerts are just one Israeli family who assimilated into Corvallis; they took classes at OSU, raised their children, prioritized various extracurricular activities, and of course discovered Beit Am.

“We took Uri’s advice to come to Corvallis and we were introduced to Ze’ev and Mimi Orzech. My two years in Corvallis were so fulfilling,” Stella Wenkert recalled in July 2023 in Haifa.

Beit Am connections last a lifetime. It’s all based on the fundamentally pluralistic and cooperative values of the community. The Orzechs’ legacy as pioneers of Beit Am in the 1970s is cherished both by old and new members. Countless other individuals tirelessly contributed to the inclusive, multifaceted, independent, and powerhouse of a Beit Am that stands strong today.

Community member Amy Buccola says, “Beit Am encourages people to become participants and leaders in the community; we honor each others’ differences. Our inclusive values are at the core of what we do- Beit Am doesn’t ask for any payment or ticket in order to attend High Holy Day Services. Everyone is welcome, no questions asked.”

Today, few charter members and founders of Beit Am are still with us, yet their memory and spirit can be felt in the presence of the building and between interactions and relationships occurring between members. In order to cater to the vast majority of Jews in the mid-Willamette Valley region, Beit Am currently offers a rotation of different denominational traditions and Shabbat services each week. Its post-denominational uniqueness sets Beit Am apart from any other synagogue. Rabbi Phil Bressler offers educational opportunities for Jews of diverse identities and experience levels. He has contributed to the accessible, compassionate, and eclectic vision of Beit Am’s vitality that has never wavered.

“Beit Am has stuck together no matter what. The priority has

always been to stick together as a community despite religious differences. I lead High Holy Day Services in a Conservative manner with Reform influence while using a Reconstructionist prayer book with full liturgy,” says Rabbi Bressler.

In addition to the various religious traditions offered, social and cultural groups have emerged post-pandemic and offer a deep sense of friendship and learning for members. For instance, Jews Who Schmooze, a recurring weekly discussion group centered around Jewish identity was created by Leslie Levy and has grown over this past calendar year.

Rachel Peck, another community member, shares, “Beit Am was such a warm and welcoming community when I moved here in 2005. A community member invited [my husband and I] to a surprise birthday after the first Friday night service we attended. I really value that we work to accommodate everyone in the area.”

Next year, Beit Am humbly celebrates their 50th anniversary. It’s no small feat for the suburban, rurally-influenced college town community. There’s been challenges and obstacles along the years in Beit Am obtaining resources and a safe space for its members. They’ve persevered and are prepared to support a new generation of active learning, such as the children’s Sunday Beit Midrash which has never served a larger demographic than today. Beit Am is a family emphasizing fusion, diversity, and acceptance which has paved the road for many more years of triumph and growth.

Beit Am’s jubilee year will kick off with a family Havdalah service on October 28, 2023 which will include song, dance, and the sounding of the shofar. Community members are invited to share photos, slides, or film from the past 49 years with Ken Krane, Ken Bronstein, Amy Buccola, Joel Garfunkel, Barbara Grant, Sarah Orzech, or Joni Plotkin (members of the 50th Anniversary Planning Group); if you became a B’nai Mitzvot at Beit Am or served as a previous member or board member, please email jubilee@beitam.org to share a special statement. The year-long celebration will lead up to a gala event taking place in November 2024.

Michala Katz is the Zidell Family Ezra Jewish Education Springboard Fellow with Oregon Hillel on the Oregon State University campus. She is also a proud and involved member at Beit Am.

RESPONDING TO ANTISEMITISM IN OUR SCHOOLS

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Jewish Community Relations Council in partnership with

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REGISTER HERE: www.jewishportland.org/antisemitism23



Cedar Sinai Park team members Carmen (left) and Glenda start their day by chatting with our new resident, Alfie, a recent gift from the Rubin family. (Courtesy Cedar Sinai Park)

New feathered resident brings joy at Robison Jewish Home

By SYDNEY CLEVENGER

Cedar Sinai Park

Nine years ago, when Gary Rubin's daughters, Abby and Sarah, were preparing for their bat mitzvahs, they volunteered at the Robison Jewish Home and remember interacting with a delightful parakeet named Gracie, who has since passed.

Today, the Rubins are paying it forward, donating to the Home a now 14-week-old parakeet named Alfie.

"My dad was at the Home this spring and received excellent care," said Gary Rubin. "There are so many health benefits to bird sounds and movement. They are very calming, and we thought the residents and staff would benefit from a bird. Alfie will love all the activity here."

Indeed, Alfie is very social and enjoys people! He especially loves the "Songbirds" singing group on Wednesday mornings to which he adds his voice mightily!

"Hi, Alfie!" says a resident walking by on his way to activities in the Goodman Living Room.

"Alfie sings so prettily!" says an employee, chirping back at Alfie, as the bird hops around on top of his cage in front of a window.

Being a young bird, Alfie has bars on his head that will disappear as he ages and grows yellow fluff. Abby said she likes Alfie's Charlie Brown-like zig-zagged patterned "sweater."

"Alfie has a mission now," said Rubin, who owns a parrot food company and was given Alfie (short for alfalfa) by one of his vendors. "The Home is his mission. We will miss him, but we are happy he is with you. We want him to bring people a lot of joy."

Jobs Board

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



Incoming youth board member, Fiona Strom Sedita, assembles sack lunches and builds bonds with other Oregon Jewish Community Youth Foundation participants Sunday, Sept. 10 at the Eastside Jewish Commons. Over 100 lunches were delivered to Transition Project's Banfield Shelter Motel. (Courtesy Oregon Jewish Community Foundation)

OJCYF teens and parents pack lunches at kickoff program

By SUSAN BERNIKER

Oregon Jewish Community Foundation

Over 50 teens, parents, and supporters gathered at the Eastside Jewish Commons on Sunday, September 10 to kick off the 21st year of the Oregon Jewish Community Youth Foundation. Highlights included a presentation by Roma Peyser, of Transition Projects, who spoke about the needs of Portland's houseless community members, a related service project—preparing over 100 sack lunches to distribute to the Banfield Motel Shelter (operated by Transition Projects), a conversation about intergenerational philanthropy led by Rachael Evans, Director of Donor Stewardship for the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation and team building activities for the 30-plus high school-aged youth board leaders.

"We have such an enthusiastic group of board members this year, and it is evident from this meeting that we are going to accomplish a lot when it comes to Jewish youth philanthropy," said Kees Visser, an incoming Leadership Council member, adding, "We got started right away with a service project supporting our local un-housed community."

The youth board will meet monthly during the school year to learn about the needs of both the Jewish and secular community, fundraise to support local non-profit organizations and put their values into action by participating in *tikkun olam*. (repairing the world)

OJCYF is the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation's award-winning Jewish teen philanthropy program. For information about the program contact youth@ojcf.org.

HODES

(continued from page 1)

"If you go into a shoe store, what's the first thing they do? They say hello, then they look at your shoes," he said at the beginning of a story about one of his thousands of patients. "If you meet Rick Hodes, I'm a spine doctor, so when you meet me, you say hello and I somehow check out your back."

Dr. Hodes' first spine patients ended up becoming his adopted children – when he first saw them, there were no doctors outside the United States who would treat them. It occurred to him that the only way he could get them life-saving surgery would be to legally adopt them and add them to his health insurance. Under Ethiopian adoption law, he would be obligated to them for life. The decision was challenging.

"I looked up and I said to the Almighty, 'what do you want me to do?' There was no answer," he recalled. "Three days later, I actually got an answer. And it was if he sent a fax to my brain, and the answer was this: 'I'm offering you a chance to help these boys. Don't say no.'"

Hodes said he's experienced numerous moments of divine intervention over the course of his years practicing in Ethiopia. One instance he recalled was seeking radiation treatment for a boy with Hodgkin's Lymphoma, a procedure that was not available in Ethiopia at the time. Later that same day, he was asked to give a presentation to a visiting delegation from the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit.

"Whenever I'm giving a talk in Ethiopia, I ask, 'Are there any medical people in the room?'" Dr. Hodes recalled. "One guy raises his hand."

It was Dr. Jeff Foreman – a radiation oncologist. Dr. Foreman arranged for the patient to receive treatment in Detroit and has worked with Dr. Hodes on other cases.

Born into a fairly secular upbringing on Long Island, Dr. Hodes has become more observant over the years. His efforts at observance have paid



Dr. Rick Hodes, Medical Director in Ethiopia for the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, discusses his work with a full ballroom at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center Monday, Sept. 11. (Rockne Roll/The Jewish Review)

dividends for his patients, as he recalled when he was visiting Minneapolis, while searching for treatment options for a woman with an advanced brain tumor. He woke up too late one morning on a business trip to put on tefillin, so between meetings, he asked the person showing him around the city to drop him off at a synagogue so he could pray. As he was donning his tefillin, the black leather boxes worn during certain prayers, he struck up a conversation with the man sitting next to him.

"I said, 'What do you do here in Minneapolis?'" Dr. Hodes recalled. "He said, 'Well, that's very specific, I'm a skull-based neurosurgeon.'"

The doctor operated on Dr. Hodes patient, who made a full recovery, now lives in Minneapolis and recently had a child.

"So if you ever don't know what to do about some aspect of life, go to synagogue, go to your house of worship, whatever it is, say hello to the person next to you," Dr. Hodes said. "You never know where it's going to lead you."

In a country that is roughly two-thirds Christian and 30 percent Muslim, Dr. Hodes is often known as "The Jewish

Doctor." While there remains a small Jewish population in Ethiopia today, the vast majority of Dr. Hodes' patients are not Jewish. He recalled a particular patient whose father came from a village where "Israel" was used interchangeably with "hell" – the son needed reconstructive surgery following a hyena attack that was only available in Israel. They went to the Israeli embassy in Addis Ababa to get the paperwork sorted out for their journey, and met with the Ambassador, who asked them to wait while she gathered clothing for the son from her own child's wardrobe.

"The guy said to me, 'Doctor, what kind of ambassador gives you clothes from her own kids?'" Dr. Hodes recalled. "And I said, 'a Jewish mother.'"

The young man received nine weeks of treatment at Galilee Medical Center in Nahariya.

"He came back with more clothes than Imelda Marcos," Dr. Hodes said. "And he was a new kid. The [father] went on television and he said, 'You wouldn't believe this country. Israel is the greatest country in the world.'"

Today, Dr. Hodes is seeing hundreds of new spine patients

every year, referring cases to Ghana for treatment. He hopes, along with JDC, to build facilities and train Ethiopian physicians to perform these services in Ethiopia in the coming years.

"We're changing people's lives left and right," he said. "I want to thank you so much, because really, we're one team. I'm in Ethiopia. And you're 10 time zones away, almost on the other side of the world. But I can't do anything that I do without the interest of the support of the American community."

In closing, Dr. Hodes quoted Maimonides, who wrote that the greatest mitzvah, or path to holiness, is to free a hostage.

"The way I think of my work now is freeing hostages," Dr. Hodes said. "They're captives of their own bodies."

For more about Dr. Hodes life and work, visit rickhodes.org. To learn more about JDC's global relief efforts, which is supported by the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland and includes ongoing work in Ukraine and Morocco, visit jdc.org.

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Chaplain's Corner

Catharsis, joy and healing

By RABBI BARRY COHEN

Yom Kippur at its best can be a healing, cathartic experience. But the process that leads to this result is not easy.

Myths about Yom Kippur: It is a day of sadness. It is a day of self-mortification. It is a day when all our sins are forgiven. Instead, Yom Kippur is a day that can culminate in joy. As we read in Mishna Ta'anit 4:8, "There were no days as happy for the Jewish people as the 15th of Av and Yom Kippur." (The 15th of Av is the Jewish version of Valentine's Day.)

Yom Kippur can be a time of reconciliation on multiple levels: with family and friends, with God and with ourselves. Happiness stems from granting forgiveness, receiving forgiveness and achieving a state of "at-one-ment." But this requires us to ask many questions: How do we apologize? How do we forgive? Are we required to forgive someone who does not seek forgiveness? How do we forgive someone who has died? How do we receive forgiveness from someone who has died?

I don't have enough column space to answer all of these questions, but I can offer ideas.

The Jewish jury is still out concerning whether we should forgive someone who has wronged us but never shown remorse, has not provided restitution and has not apologized.

Rambam clearly teaches that in the absence of any efforts by the wrongdoer to seek forgiveness, we have no obligation to forgive. Why? Because this violates the core value that we are to be held accountable for our words and actions.

But what if the harm that was inflicted upon us has become toxic? What if we have internalized the pain and developed a grudge that only hurts ourselves? We can become fixated upon this injustice and fall into the trap of a hurt that keeps hurting.

To protect ourselves, Judaism teaches that we must find a way to heal. This does not entail completely forgiving those who harmed us but never sought our forgiveness. But it does challenge us to transcend the pain they inflicted upon us.

This is no easy task.

I can think of one person in particular who many years ago inflicted a great amount of pain upon my wife and me. It has taken me years to get to a better place, to find a way to compartmentalize the feelings of betrayal, manipulation and deception. As a result, I have taken back control from the person



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who hurt us.

Another way to facilitate forgiveness? Be empathetic. We can strive to get a better awareness of why that person hurt us. I am not saying that our empathy should extend so far as to completely absolve those who hurt others. For example, I would never say that a spouse should use empathy to completely forgive their partner for domestic violence.

Granting forgiveness can sometimes feel like walking a high wire without a net. On the one hand, we need to forgive to heal ourselves, but on the other hand, we can feel that forgiving others prevents them from being accountable for the pain they inflicted or from changing their ways to prevent hurting others in the future.

What does Yom Kippur teach about how to seek forgiveness? One tradition instructs that every evening of the year we can ask ourselves, "Have I hurt or injured anyone today, either by acts of commission or omission?" Then we must plan to make amends. We need not wait until the High Holidays. We can begin by apologizing to those we have wronged, but then follow these words with action. This may require us to perform an act of restitution, such as returning what we stole or paying money for any damages.

The highest act we can perform is teshuvah. We can define this as "returning to the vision of our highest self." When we undergo teshuvah after hurting someone else, we express a fundamental transformation of our value system and our behavior. It is never too late to perform teshuvah. We can do this to heal a wrong we inflicted upon someone who is still alive or someone who has passed away.

This is the beauty of Yom Kippur: It is never too late to change.

I want to wish everyone a *Shana tova u'm'tukah*, a good and sweet new year. May this year be filled with healing and transcendence for ourselves, our families and our diverse communities.

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Clergy Corner

The Power of Negative Thinking

By RABBI JOSH ROSE

As we head into the New Year, let's be on guard against positive thinking.

We live in difficult and dangerous times. I've noticed in myself a desire to ignore the increasingly terrible news, to look away from the crises. Human beings are bent on happiness, and we'll often seek the easiest ways to it: denial or escape. We all have our strategies: aesthetic and bodily pleasure, therapeutic acceptance, spiritual transcendence. These are all ways of telling ourselves "It's really all ok" so we can feel more positive about things.

But the real answer is something, well, negative. My Jewish path has been a wandering, sometimes swerving and thrilling road that has introduced me to kabbalists, intellectuals, *frum* (traditionally observant) Jews, once-a-year-ers, infidels, atheists and everything in between. I've concluded that the Jews' most valuable gift - to ourselves and to the world - is the power to say "No."

Think about it. Abraham said "No" to idolatry. Moses said "No" to Pharaoh and Egypt. Our Prophets said "No" to our own leaders - and to us! And of course, the Torah's Unknowable is all 'No-ing': existing in pristine perfection. God said "No" to a world without humans. And then repeatedly said, "No!" to this chronically misbehaving creation that needed to be goaded toward goodness.

The stakes are high, and only the courage of "No" can keep away despair. We have to say "No" to a culture that takes as an imperative the maximization of its corporation's profits and as a luxury its citizens' flourishing. "No" to the view that human dignity is a cheap joke and that wealth and ambition have Divine sanction. "No" to a society that turns its head in loathing and disgust from those who roam our streets with addiction and mental health-sized holes in their hearts. "No" to the unquestioned assumption that wealth entitles those who have it to wield power over public and communal institutions. "No" to proto-fascism and revanchist reactionaries and all those who make way for them through complicity or cowardice; "No" to the replacement of dignity and culture with technocratic ideologies; "No" to whatever is accepted as awful but inevitable.

Maybe that all sounds terribly... negative for a New Year's message. But "negativity" is the only way to make sure we don't give up on this world. The twin dangers of blind positivity and resigned acceptance are the Scylla and Charybdis of Jewish life (to make a distinctly non-Jewish comparison). Each presents the same danger: a seductive "Yes" to the world as it is. This "Yes" is antithetical to what Jews - from the most religious to the most atheistic - must hold dear: a vision of a more beautiful world.

So, during these holy days and the time afforded by them to go inward and reflect, let's avoid simple acceptance of the world as it is. Remember the power of "No." The world desperately needs to hear it.

Jews are optimists. We believe - and must act as though - the world can be better. Always. But optimism without negation is cowardice. So, whether we approach the New Year as Reform Jews or Conservative, Orthodox or atheists, or whichever label others use to try to define us, let's unite in the power of "No," of looking around and saying "No, it must not continue like this." The power of being "negative." It's the Jewish starting point of everything positive.

Rabbi Josh Rose is founder of Co/Lab.

The Jewish Review regularly invites local clergy to share their insights with the community. These opinions do not necessarily reflect the views of the Review, the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, or its staff.

Events

jewishportland.org/community-calendar

Sept. 21: Abortion Law from a Jewish Perspective

Hear from Rabbi Abby Cohen, palliative care chaplain, Providence Health and Services, as part of Rose Schnitzer Manor's September Lecture Series Thursday, Sept. 21 at 7 pm at the Manor on the Cedar Sinai Park campus. For more information, email Sydneyclvenger@cedarsinainpark.com

Sept. 21: Cafe Shalom Israeli Folk Dancing

Weekly open Israeli dance session Thursdays, 8-10 pm at CHCC, 8936 SW 17th Ave in Portland. All experience levels and ages welcome. Enjoy dancing in a welcoming and friendly atmosphere of dancers at all levels. Learn new dances and practice favorites and classics from long ago. \$7. For more information, contact Allison Victor at allisuev@gmail.com.

Sept. 22: JFCS Mental Health Spotlight

JFCS offers Mental Health Spotlight Friday, Sept. 22 from 10-11 am on Zoom, to shine a light on areas where all people - children through older adults, including self-identified disabled members of our community - struggle and can seek help. For more information or to register, visit jfcs-portland.org/services/counseling/mental-health-spotlight/.

Sept. 26: Yoga for Renewal with Sido Sirkus

Come and enjoy/explore your inner self in "Yoga for Renewal," a gentle yoga class each Tuesday from 10-11 am at the Eastside Jewish Commons designed to help bring you back to yourself. This class is appropriate for both beginners and seasoned mature yogis. For more information or to register, visit ejcpdx.org/events.

Sept. 26: EJC Presents the Art and Practice of Hebrew Scribing

Traditional Hebrew scribing is equally a visual art practice and a spiritual practice. In this weekly 2-hour class beginning Tuesday, Sept. 26 at 7 pm at the Eastside Jewish Commons, we will learn the basics of Hebrew scribing from within the thousands year-old tradition. For more information or to register, visit ejcpdx.org/events.

Sept. 28: Understanding Houselessness

Hear from Rabbi Ariel Stone, Congregation Shir Tikvah, as part of Rose Schnitzer Manor Assisted Living's September Lecture Series Thursday, Sept. 28 at 7 pm at the Manor on the Cedar Sinai Park campus. For more information, email Sydneyclvenger@cedarsinainpark.com

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Obituaries

IRENE HECHT

Congregation Neveh Shalom regrets to announce the passing of Dr. Irene D W Hecht, z"l, on July 31, 2023 at the age of 90. She was preceded in death by her husband, Ron Saroff, z"l, and is survived by seven children: Frederick "Rick" (Anne Lown) Hecht, Matthew (Mary Olson) Hecht, Maude (Lenny Loftin), Tobias (Isabel Balsario), Stephen (Margaret) Montsaroff, Matthew (Sharon) Saroff, and Daniel (Ineke Ceder) Saroff, as well as 10 grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. A memorial service was held Sunday, Sept. 10.

MADELLE VINES

Madelle Rita Vines, daughter of Sam and Ida Rosenberg, died Aug. 1, 2023. She was born in Portland, Ore. on June 4th, 1925. Her family moved to the San Francisco Bay area when she was four years old with her brother Wally. She returned to Portland after marrying Morton Vines in a beautiful wedding ceremony at San Francisco's historic Fairmont Hotel in 1945.

Predeceased by her husband Morton and daughter Loren, Madelle is survived by six children and one grandson: Gail, (Jim Fuller), Jerald and Ida Vines of Portland, Valerie Vines Magee (Jim Magee) of Nehalem, Harold Vines of Manzanita, Mitchell Vines (Lee Bantle) of Brooklyn, and grandson Dustin Dybvig of Portland.

An avid reader and Scrabble player, she loved to knit and crochet, and enjoyed baking and bowling. She was passionate about music and language and her children inherited that love. Madelle was a bright, caring, intelligent, fun-loving person. A longtime resident of Northeast Portland, she loved living in Seaside, Ore., for almost five years before moving back to Portland last year. She was buried at River View Cemetery in Portland.

JONATHAN SCHWARZ

Jonathan Schwarz died Aug. 7, 2023. Born in 1943 in Bridgeport, Conn., he was an extraordinary man of wide-ranging interests who succeeded in squeezing three lifetimes of experience into one.

Jonny loved travel and his proficiency in several languages made travel all the more interesting and fun. Music was also a large part of his life, and he enjoyed playing the guitar, piano and bass. He was also an avid photographer whose photos attempted to capture the mood and essence of the subject. His love for the arts led him to his work in the film industry where he appeared in several movies, "Animal House" being his favorite.

Design was another field in which he was greatly involved. In the 70s, when his hair was past his shoulders, he lived for a time in a school bus that he lovingly and painstakingly refurbished with hand-carved furniture and stained-glass pieces. His bus was featured in the book, "Rolling Homes: Hand-made Houses on Wheels" by Jane Lidz.

Although Jonny's career path began as a college English teacher in Connecticut, his interest in collecting antiquities evolved into a business buying and selling fine art, jewelry, exotic rugs and watches.

Jonny was fun loving, describing himself as a "not so serious guy." Joyce, his life partner of 18 years, recalls that if there was a party or gathering and you wanted to find Jonny, listen for the laughter and see Jonny surrounded by a crowd.

Jonathan suffered a late life development of Parkinsons with optimism, fortitude and good humor. As ill as he was, he never lost his sensitivity and concern for others' well-being. Jonny passed at Cornell Landing, an assisted living facility in Portland, Ore., with Joyce by his side.

Jonny has joined his parents, Selma and

Herman Schwarz; and sister, Ellen in the family cemetery in Rodeph Sholom in Fairfield, Conn.

SUSAN SUTHERLIN

Congregation Neveh Shalom regrets to announce the passing of Susan Sutherlin, z"l on Sept. 5, 2023. She is lovingly remembered by husband Randal Sutherlin; son Bruce Sutherlin; mother Ruth Hoffman Mendelsohn; brother Larry (Joyce) Mendelsohn; nieces Rachel and Alexis Mendelsohn; and nephew Daniel Mendelsohn.

HOWARD COREY

With sorrow, Congregation Kol Ami shares news of the death of Howard Corey, the grandfather of Daniel Smith Wednesday, Sept. 13. Daniel reports that he died peacefully this morning after an amazing life of 102 years. He is survived by his three daughters, eight grandchildren and thirteen great-grandchildren whom he loved dearly. Funeral and shiva took place in Chicago.

ARLINE GREENBLATT

Congregation Beth Israel mourns the loss of Arline Elconin Greenblatt, who passed away on Wednesday, Sept. 13.

Arline was deeply admired by friends and family for her acerbic sense of humor, razor sharp wit, and unsparing observation of life. She loved the beach, desert, music and mahjong.

Arline was born in Milwaukee, WI in 1932, and moved to Portland in 1963 with her husband Charles Leon Greenblatt and their three children. She is survived by her children Jim and Cathy Greenblatt and her grandchildren Leo, Sasha, and Sarah Greenblatt, and predeceased by her husband Charles and oldest son Jon Greenblatt.

A memorial service was held Tuesday, Sept. 19. Donations can be made to Maui United Way. Condolences may be sent to the Greenblatt Family, 1234 SE Taylor Street, Portland OR 97214.

EVENTS (continued from page 11)

Oct. 1: OMJCHE Free First Sunday

The Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education offers free admission on the first Sunday of every month. Visit ojmche.org for information on current exhibits.

Oct. 1: Israeli Folk Dancing at SWCC

Enjoy Israeli folk dancing at the Southwest Community Center with session leader Rhona Feldman Sundays, 2:30-4

pm. More information at sites.google.com/site/pifdnews.

Oct. 2: Israeli Folk Dancing at Leedy Grange

Enjoy Israeli folk dancing Mondays, 7:30 - 10:30pm with this friendly group in Cedar Mill (now in our 10th year). The session, run by Sue and Donna, starts with easier, classic dances and moves on to newer forms, couples' dances, line dances, and teaching, too.

Find us on Facebook at "Israeli Folk Dancing in Portland, OR."

Oct. 3: Wondering Jews Podcast

Portland-based co-hosts Josh and Roy drop a new podcast at 6 am Tuesdays every two weeks focusing on Jews and cannabis. wonderingjewspodcast.com

Oct. 4: Exploring End-of-Life Conversations and Rituals in Your 20s and 30s

As any Barbie or Ken knows, talking about death can be hard. But we can – and should – have these brave conversations. Join Recustom and Shomer Collective for a guided exploration Wednesday, Oct. 4 at 4:30 pm on Zoom for people in their 20s and 30s to take the first steps toward end-of-life conversations and planning, grounded by Jewish wisdom and rituals.

Register at tinyurl.com/42jp-5d3j. For more information, email info@recustom.com.