

The JEWISH REVIEW

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My 30-year journey in Jewish journalism

BY DEBORAH MOON

Thirty years ago today, Nov. 9, 1992, I joined the Jewish Review as staff writer.

Editor Paul Haist hired me based on my eight-year experience at a daily newspaper rather than for my Jewish knowledge. I accepted because it seemed like a good fit for the mother of two young Jewish boys.

For 30 years, I've had a firsthand view of the local Jewish community and have reaped the rewards of knowing all this community has to offer. Next summer, I intend to retire and embark on a new journey.



Deborah Moon

Looking back, it has been rewarding in so many ways – the friendships, the colleagues, the connections. I've worked with so many wonderful Federation colleagues – initially led by Charlie Schiffman, z"l, and now Marc Blattner – both *mensch*s. I interviewed many other *mensch*s in the community, including a trio of rabbis who shaped Portland early in the second half of the 20th century – Rabbi Joshua Stampfer, Rabbi Yonah Geller and Rabbi Emmanuel Rose, now all of blessed memory.

I discovered the Jewish programs and resources that helped my sons thrive. Both graduated from Portland Jewish Academy, enjoyed Mittleman Jewish Community Center camps and classes, and participated in youth groups including NCSY.

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Rachel's Well Community Mikvah was designed through community collaboration with the architect. "The shape of the mikvah, and its outer appearance, are graceful and blend in beautifully with its secluded wooded location," says Rabbi Ariel Stone, who chaired the mikvah subcommittee of the Oregon Board of Rabbis during the process. Photo by Josh Partee.

MIKVAH OPEN HOUSES

Rachel's Well Community Mikvah is celebrating its 5th anniversary as a ritual immersion pool serving the Greater Portland Jewish Community. It is open to ALL Jews of ALL genders and ALL backgrounds for ANY transition you want to mark with this restorative, nurturing, accessible ritual.

WHEN: 1:30-3 pm, Nov. 13
2:30-4 pm, Nov. 17

WHY: Visit us to learn more about this special, spiritual, welcoming communal space and help us celebrate.

RSVP and for location: email caron@jewishportland.org.

5-year-old Rachel's Well a jewel

BY DEBORAH MOON

During five years of providing meaningful ritual immersions for diverse individuals marking traditional and contemporary transitions (see story, page 6), Rachel's Well Community Mikvah has become recognized as a jewel – both locally and nationally.

Rachel's Well is owned and operated by the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland with ritual su-

pervision provided by the Oregon Board of Rabbis. The Portland Kollel has been designated by the OBR to be the mikvah's halachic supervisor.

"There is tremendous beauty having a community mikvah that is supported by all sections of the Jewish community and backed by the Jewish Federation," says Rabbi Chanan Spivak, who provides the oversight as head of the Portland

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Agency Spotlight



Hillel staff and student leaders at the New Student Orientation Shabbat.

GREATER PORTLAND HILLEL

Service Area: Jewish community building & education

www.pdxhillel.org | 503-867-3646

2022 Allocation: \$37,200

Mission: PDX Hillel envisions a world where every Jewish student is inspired to make an enduring commitment to Jewish life, learning and Israel. We strive to create a welcoming and safe space on campus for ALL kinds of Jewish students.

The Greater Portland Hillel is expanding its reach beyond its established campus homes and its traditional programming to reach and connect more students on campuses across the metro area.

“Support from the Jewish Federation enables us to expand our growth into our campus communities by hosting more events and building more relationships with Jewish students,” says PDX Hillel Executive Director Hannah Sherman. “We are engaging more Jewish students than ever before, increasing our engagement by nearly 10% over this time last year.”

“We are expanding our reach further into the Reed and University of Portland communities,” she says. “We aim to build bridges between our students at all Portland-area campuses, so that they have a greater sense of connection to one another ... and our PDX Hillel family.”

Focusing programs on social justice has also increased participation. Previously unengaged students are finding ways to participate in Jewish life that are meaningful to them. Programming is led and driven by the students.

PDX Hillel also works to provide a safe environment and to fight antisemitism and anti-Zionism on campus by building strong relationships with university administrators and partners. To support student programs, Hillel staff create Israel programming to expose students to diversity in Israel and improve the campus climate around Israel discussions. Next summer, PDX Hillel will take PSU student leaders to Israel for an immersive educational experience to bring nuance to the dialogue around Israel on campus.

To connect students with the local Jewish community, Hillel offers Jewbur, a free Uber ride to synagogues for services. A new initiative, Shabbat Across Portland, launches Dec. 2 to connect students from all Portland-area campuses with the local Jewish community for Shabbat dinners across town.

To host students for Shabbat throughout the year, please contact Hannah Sherman at hannah@pdxhillel.org.

Answer the call Nov. 13

The funds raised during this year’s Jewish Federation of Greater Portland’s Virtual Super Sunday phonathon will help the community move forward to face the challenges ahead.

“We are asking you to answer your phones on Sunday, Nov. 13, from 10 am to noon and say ‘YES,’” says Jessica Zutz Hilbert, JFGP’s 2023 Campaign Chair. “We know people do not like to answer their phones, but on Nov. 13 please make an exception and make your gift to the [2023 Campaign for Community Needs!](#)”

Reaching the Virtual Super Sunday goal of \$216,000 will enable the Jewish Federation to distribute more money to agencies and programs to engage and bring people together Jewishly.

“No gift touches more lives, and no single gift has more of an impact,” says JFGP Chief Development Officer Wendy Kahn, noting more than 53 local and overseas beneficiary agencies receive the Jewish Federation funds.

The impact of the 2023 campaign will be aided by results from the most comprehensive social research study of our Jewish community in its history that is currently under way. The Jewish Federation and the Cohen Center at Brandeis University will share the results with the entire community in late spring 2023. Study results will help organizations make well-informed, data-driven decisions to benefit the entire community.

“We will be moving to implement our community study outcomes in answer to the community’s input,” says Kahn. “Day in and day out, we work in partnership with our agencies, synagogues and volunteers to keep our community safe, strong, vibrant and financially healthy.”

Gifts made during Super Sunday will go even further thanks to a generous matching grant for new and increased gifts from Scot and Elena Shleifer.

Teen athletes: Information meeting on how to compete in 2023 Maccabi Games

The Mittleman Jewish Community Center will host an information meeting about the 2023 Maccabi Games at 6 pm, Nov. 15.

In summer 2023, 3,000 Jewish teen athletes, ages 12-17 and representing communities from across the globe, will come together to experience the magic of JCC Maccabi, the world’s largest Jewish youth sports event. The Olympic-style Jewish experience features sports competitions, opening and closing ceremonies, travel, community service, social and cultural events, and opportunities to create Jewish connections and memories.

Teen athletes can join Team Oregon July 5-23 in Israel (with scholarships available) or in Ft. Lauderdale Aug. 6-11. Sports include baseball, basketball, ice hockey, girls’ volleyball, boys’ and girls’ flag football, soccer, tennis, swimming and dance. For more information, visit oregonjcc.org/maccabi or contact Saul Korin at 503-452-3427 or skorin@oregonjcc.org.

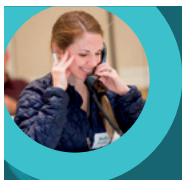
Dignity Grows Sisterhood Pack Nov. 20

The annual citywide Sisterhood Pack for Dignity Grows will be 3-5 pm, Nov. 20, at Congregation Neveh Shalom.

Dignity Grows provides free hygiene essentials packed in a discrete reusable shoulder bag. The Portland chapter of Dignity Grows is part of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland.

CNS Sisterhood is partnering with other congregations’ sisterhoods to pack 250 totes with comprehensive menstrual and hygiene necessities for neighbors in need. Come to get to know each other, the recipient agency for the totes and the connection this cause has with Judaism.

Full Covid vaccination is required for all attendees. Register at jewishportland.org/dignity-grows-packing-event.



VIRTUAL SUPER SUNDAY

ANSWER THE CALL!

November 13, 2022
10:00 AM to Noon



This year let's
ANSWER THE CALL to both
volunteer to make a difference
by making calls to the
community and be ready to
make your gift to the 2023
Campaign for Community
Needs! Either way, it's easy to
participate from the comfort
of your home.

<https://www.jewishportland.org/supersunday23>



Jewish Federation®
OF GREATER PORTLAND



People in the News

Rose Schnitzer Manor names administrator

On Nov. 4, Cedar Sinai Park announced that Rachael White has been promoted to Administrator of Rose Schnitzer Manor.

For the past five years, Rachel has served as director of Sinai In-Home Care, working diligently to grow CSP's small, but excellent, home-care service. During the pandemic, as chair of CSP's Safety Committee, she managed CSP's evolving system of ordering and tracking personal protective equipment. (An article about that work ran in the [May 25, 2022, Jewish Review](#).)

Prior to joining Cedar Sinai Park, Rachael held leadership roles in other home-care agencies and the Navy.

"Rachael's demonstrated heart, spirit, organizational and leadership skills in her previous director role, position as chair of Cedar Sinai Park's Safety Committee ... and most recently, her interim role as Administrator of Rose Schnitzer Manor, were paramount considerations in her promotion," says CSP CEO Kimberley Fuson.

As part of her new role at Rose Schnitzer Manor, Rachael will continue to be responsible for oversight of Sinai In-Home Care.

Rachael holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Healthcare Administration from Phoenix University and an Oregon Assisted Living Administrator License. In her free time, Rachael loves being with family, paddle boarding, and visiting the coast.

"We are so blessed to have Rachael serving in this most important role," says Fuson, adding that at the in-person meeting with residents and staff to announce Rachael's promotion, the news was received with "warmth and great enthusiasm."



Rachel White

Kesser Israel hires youth programming directors



Rabbi Rafi Sherk

Rabbi Rafi Sherk and Tosha Esterman are the new Youth Programming Directors at Congregation Kesser Israel.

Rabbi Sherk also serves as a Rabbinic Field Representative for Oregon Kosher. He and his wife, Aviva, have lived in Portland since 2016. They have four children and are members of Kesser Israel. Originally from Atlanta, Rabbi Sherk has a master's in education from Johns Hopkins University. He has worked as a camp counselor in day camps in Atlanta and in Israel.

Mrs. Esterman is a Judaics teacher at Maayan Torah Day School, where she has taught five years. She and her husband, Rabbi Yoni Esterman, have lived in Portland almost 10 years and have three children. They have been Kesser members for six years.

"I am looking forward to partnering with Kesser to serve the children of our community by providing them with wonderful programming on Shabbos as well as events throughout the year," says Esterman.

The new directors will be providing new opportunities for the families at the longest established Orthodox Shul in Oregon. Kesser is a diverse and close-knit community of approximately 120 families and singles in every age group. Originally located in the historic Jewish immigrant neighborhood of Old South Portland, Kesser moved in 2008 to its current building in the heart of today's Jewish community in Southwest Portland.



Tosha Esterman

"This is another exciting opportunity for our shul to improve access to high-quality Jewish educational programming both on Shabbat and during the week," says Kesser President Charles Elder. "I hope that not only current but also potential future Kesser families will take full advantage."

Shabbat programming for children will be offered weekly from 10:15-11:15 am beginning Nov. 12. Programs will take place in the Kollel Social Hall except when otherwise announced. For 5-year-olds and up, Rabbi Sherk will lead programming for the boys and Mrs. Esterman for the girls. Ms. Ashley Trollinger will run a program for 3- to 4-year-olds, and Mrs. Esterman is organizing a volunteer moms rotation for 0- to 2-year-olds.

Additional Sunday morning and weekday programs will be announced soon. For more information, visit kesserisrael.org/.

Zurow leads Hillsboro Community Foundation

Last week, Rick Zurow became Executive Director of the 36-year-old Hillsboro Community Foundation.

His goal is to lead the organization to greater success in legacy giving within the Hillsboro Community. Rick, who holds an MBA from the Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University, is well equipped to do just that. He has nearly 30 years of fundraising, financial planning and partnership-development experience. During that time, Rick has worked for the World Forestry Center, Oregon Zoo Foundation, University of Arizona's College of Education, University of California at Berkeley and Portland Community College Foundation.

In addition, Rick served as the founding Executive Director for the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation for nearly 10 years. He also has supported various local Jewish organizations including B'nai B'rith Camp and the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland. In his free time, Rick and his wife, Debbie, enjoy walking their dog Bailee, a cute as a button, soft-coated Wheaten Terrier.



Rick Zurow

Jobs board

The Jewish Review publishes job openings from Jewish agencies and congregations. Submit to: editor@jewishportland.org.

CONGREGATION NEVEH SHALOM

Executive Director

Salary: \$120,000-\$150,000 DOE, plus benefits

The Executive Director serves as the Chief Executive Officer of Congregation Neveh Shalom and works in collaboration with the clergy, assistant executive director, staff, synagogue president and board of directors to fulfill our mission: To foster and preserve an inclusive, authentic and engaging experience of Conservative Judaism. This position directs all aspects of CNS's administrative, financial and business operations including building operations, security and maintenance, and ensuring that operations are consistent with CNS's vision, mission and values.

The position is open until filled. For a full description, visit the Jewish Career Hub (below) or nevehshalom.org/edsearch.

JEWISH CAREER HUB

The Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's job board for the ongoing listing of job opportunities in the Jewish community currently features several openings. See full descriptions or submit openings at jewishportland.org/ourcommunity/jewish-jobs.

Journey (from page 1)

They found their first jobs at the MJCC, Camp Gan Israel and B'nai B'rith Camp. As they grew up, we all created a network of friends and support in Portland's Jewish community. We attended b'nai mitzvah celebrations at most of the community's synagogues, which have grown in number and size since we moved to town. As my sons have aged, I am pleased to see the community adding resources for young adults including Moishe House Portland, PDX Pathways, Moishe Pod-West PDX and OneTable.

I also had the pleasure of visiting Israel twice on Jewish Federation missions (with a third visit planned next March). The beauty of the country and people took my breath away. I was particularly touched by a visit to Neve Michael Youth Village and the support it provides for children whose families can no longer care for them.

In addition to those intangible rewards, I earned several awards during the 19 years I worked for the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland helping Paul produce the Jewish Review as a print newspaper. I earned several Simon Rockower Awards from the American Jewish Press Association for "Excellence in Jewish Journalism," including one for a series on domestic violence in the Jewish community of which I am especially proud.

For my work organizing a Jewish genetic screening (at a time such screening was scarce) as a member of the Federation's Young Women's Division, I received the Song of Miriam Award. Jewish Family & Child Service's TASK program honored me for my long-term support of its disability support services; I remember sitting at the meeting of parents that launched TASK as Treasuring and Accepting our Special Kids in the early 1990s. And I've been pleased to report on the group's expanded role as Treasuring, Accepting, Supporting *Kehillah* (community).

When the Jewish Federation ceased publishing the Jewish Review in January 2012, I became editor of Oregon Jewish Life magazine. For seven years, I edited that Jewish lifestyle magazine learning more about the food, business and arts scenes in Oregon. I had fun interviewing celebrities including William Shatner, Ed Asner and Billy Crystal.

But in 2020, I returned to the Jewish Federation to relaunch the Jewish Review as an e-newspaper. Reimmersing in the organized Jewish community and helping connect people with all it has to offer has been so satisfying. I've heard from so many readers who are grateful to have the Jewish Review back.

When I retire next summer, I want to introduce a new editor to the joys of this community. I'm looking forward to the time I'll have to cycle, travel, garden and volunteer, but I'll miss the camaraderie and regular interactions with community members.

Robison resident loves music

BY SYDNEY CLEVENGER

In 2017, Dan Lipski was in the prime of his career as a concert tour manager.

Dan had just finished working with Joe Jonas, who had announced a concert break. He had recently made Oregon his home base, buying a house in Portland and fixing it up comfortably.

Then his parents, Vicki and Doug, received a call that changed their lives.

"When the phone rang on election night, we initially weren't answering because we thought it was a belated call telling us to vote," says Vicki. "Then we realized it was the American Embassy in Washington."

Dan, 32, had been hit by a bus in Chinatown in Bangkok, Thailand. He was taken to a Chinese-run hospital "where he received excellent care," says Vicki, and had brain surgery. Second and third brain surgeries were performed at an English-speaking hospital in Thailand.

"His injuries were severe," says Vicki. "He was hit on the right side and is hemiplegic on that side."

Doug and Vicki spent five weeks in Thailand to get Dan stabilized and transferred to the United States. Dan was Medivac-ed to OHSU where he remained for a month, undergoing tests and rehabilitating.

"And then we were lucky enough to find Cedar Sinai Park and, believe me, finding a nursing home was a tall, tall order because of his age and physical challenges," says Vicki.

"We tried everywhere," she says. "Someone recommended Cedar Sinai Park and ... we took a look. It's such a lovely facility. Compared to what we had seen, this looked pretty terrific."

Dan was born in Beloit, Wisc., and attended high school in Chicago. He didn't play an instrument, but he adored music. At age 20, he managed an Irish-American punk band for free, sleeping in his car, to get his foot in the door of the business.

"He was very independent and was at the age of trying to find himself," says Vicki.

Dan worked for other bands such as 3OH!3 and Barenaked Ladies. He loved working for Joe Jonas, but wasn't keen on taking a break when Joe decided on a rest.

"That was why he was in Thailand, because Shawn Mendes was playing there, and he went there for a job interview because he wanted to keep working," says Vicki.

Ask Dan, "You like music, Dan?" and he replies, "Oh, my God!"

"What kind of music? Heavy metal?"

Dan just throws back his head and laughs. He favorite bands are Nirvana and Thrice. He likes Major Pain and often wears a DNCE hat. The walls in his



Robison Jewish Health Center resident Dan Lipski enjoys a moment outside with administrative assistant Nina Washburn.

room in CSP's T. Robert and Mitzi Tobias Hall are covered with music memorabilia, and he frequently has music playing or is watching a music video.

"When Dan arrived here, he would only nod and shake his head," says Susie Willard, health information specialist. "Every day, we worked on conversations so he has a voice. Dan has come a long way. He looks you in the eyes and reaches your soul."

Lupe Garcia, CNA, says, "He's such a sweet guy. He always appreciates what we do for him. He asks, 'How do you say thank you in Spanish?' I really care about him."

In April, Willard and Community Life Director Jennifer Felberg took Dan to see singer/songwriter LP.

"It was neat, because his friends are all tour guys, and they hadn't had a chance to see him because they're traveling all the time," says Felberg. "His friends arranged for VIP status and showered him with attention."

"He got to be himself with his buddies, a lot of handshakes and dudes and he even drank a beer," she adds. "It was a magical night and reminded me again of our mission. ... 'Dan could not say 'thank you' enough. It was nice to make the night happen for him.'"

Dan is an avid reader and particularly enjoys the Jewish history books shared by former volunteer and board chair (1993-1994) Ruby Sachter, with whom he still Facetimes.

After four years at Cedar Sinai Park, Vicki hopes that Dan will be willing and able to use a wheelchair at some point so he can go to a group foster home. Pain management is another issue. Until then, Vicki says she feels welcome when she visits Dan every Tuesday.

"I feel like I can get Dan what he needs when he needs it," she says.

"I love you, mom," says Dan.

"I love you," she replies. "See you next week. Bye, honey."

RACHEL'S WELL (from page 1)

Kollel. "The community mikvah is a tremendous showpiece with the highest standards in halachic oversight and in its aesthetics."

"When a mikvah meets halachic criteria, it opens it to all segments of the community," he adds. "It allows the broadest use. It doesn't bar anyone."

Rachel's Well Assistant Manager Sarah Evans says the community has gratefully embraced the resource.

"Over the past five years, many of our users have expressed deep gratitude to Rachel's Well for creating a community mikvah where Jews of every stripe feel welcome – a place where many have come to assert and renew their connection to Judaism and achieve a spiritual shift," says Sarah.

National leaders of the open mikvah movement say Rachel's Well is known as a community engagement tool and model of pluralism. Portland is the only mikvah in the 33-member network that was spearheaded by and is owned by a Jewish Federation.

"Rachel's Well has been seen and celebrated as really meeting the full potential of pluralism," says Lucy Marshall, director of operations for the Rising Tide Open Waters Mikveh network.

"Just as Federations take on support of basic needs, mikvah is a place Federations can step up and recognize that meeting spiritual and emotional needs has the prospect to afford access to more of the Jewish community," adds Carrie Bornstein, the executive director of Maayim Hayyim, the nation's first open mikvah and home of Rising Tide. She says Jewish Federation ownership creates a "psychologically safe place for people to go to mark transitions – celebratory or painful."

The two national leaders have called on Rachel's Well Mikvah Manager Caron Blau Rothstein, JFGP chief Allocations and Engagement Officer, to address conferences and communities planning a community mikvah.

"I did a conference talk about mikvah as a community engagement tool and spoke to a community trying to have their Federation involved," says Caron. Caron commends JFGP President and CEO Marc Blattner for committing Federation staff time and fundraising resources, as well as convening stakeholders, to make Rachel's Well a "really special place."

Lucy calls Caron "an amazing leader in the Rising Tide network." In addition to helping communities move from vision to reality, Caron recognized the potential to create a new resource to spread awareness of mikvah. "She identified there were not children's books about mikvah, and she gathered creative Rising Tide members," two of whom have written a book due for release in March. Caron is impressed by another manuscript by a local author that tells the story creatively from the point of view of the mikvah pool; she hopes it also finds a publisher soon.

To further bring one of Judaism's most ancient rituals to Jewish families, Caron co-facilitated a partnership between Rising Tide and PJ Library, which provides free Jewish children's books to families who subscribe.

"PJ Library has done a good job of introducing a lot of Jewish concepts, holidays and values," says Caron. "They don't have a mikvah book – yet. But it is online (pjlibrary.org/beyond-books/pjblog/may-2022/what-is-a-mikvah)."

For more information about Rachel's Well, visit jewishportland.org/mikvah. To book an appointment, email mikvahpdx@gmail.com.



Devora Fleshler in one of the two preparation rooms at Rachel's Well Community Mikvah. During the height of the pandemic, people had to prepare at home, but now the prep rooms are open again.

Diverse immersions

BY DEBORAH MOON

Since opening five years ago, Rachel's Well Community Mikvah has welcomed guests from nearly every synagogue and every conceivable Jewish demographic to experience the ancient ritual.

"No matter how you affiliate, as long as you identify as Jewish, you are sensitively welcomed at Rachel's Well, says Assistant Manager Sarah Evans, who oversees scheduling for the mikvah. "Because of that, Portland Jews know that they have a safe place to come when they need the embodied ritual of mikvah, for whatever reason they need it. Jews have used our mikvah to observe the mitzvah of *taharat hamishpacha* (family purity), for healing from illness or loss, for conversion, as part of preparation for Shabbat and Jewish holidays, to mark a significant personal achievement, to prepare for a wedding, after preparing a body for burial, preparing for becoming bat/bar mitzvah, for gender transition and more."

Over the past year, Sarah reports, "We have returned to pre-pandemic use statistics; in fact, we've exceeded them. This past fiscal year was our busiest yet, with 397 appointments."

Sarah also helps recruit and train volunteer guides and mentors people new to mikvah.

RABBIS' PERSPECTIVES

Rabbi Ariel Stone chaired the mikvah subcommittee of the Oregon Board of Rabbis while Rachel's Well was being developed.

"I am most proud of the Oregon Board of Rabbis' insistence on strict adherence to halachic guidelines in the mikvah's construction and use," says Rabbi Stone. "All who seek to use it are able to as a result."

"I have been delighted and honored to guide the immersions of those with whom I study for conversion to Judaism, as well as many other transition moments in a person's spiritual life. ... Those with whom I've talked about it all express the feeling that this is a powerful ritual to support gender transition, transition from menstruating woman to menopausal woman, retirement, significant birthdays and recovery from trauma. I'm so pleased that our mikvah is truly a spiritual space for anyone who seeks to mark the turning of a page in their life."

Rabbi Eve Posen also attends women using the mikvah for formal life-cycle purposes. But she also relishes her own immersion experiences for healing and creating ritual.

"I went when I finished my year of mourning for my father, I went before my wedding, I went before my ordination," she says. "I had wanted to go

Continued on next page

What is an “open mikvah”?

Lucy Marshall, director operations for the Rising Tide Open Waters Mikveh network:

When I think of an open mikvah, I think of it opening in two directions: (1) It honors all the traditional uses and also opens the ancient ritual to mark any meaningful life transition; (2) It ensures mikvah is accessible to all genders, abilities, ages, sexual orientations ... everyone.

Carrie Bornstein, the executive director of Maayim Hayyim, the nation’s first open mikvah:

An open mikvah places the visitor at the center of the experience and is open to the full diversity of the Jewish people. It looks at the person coming in and says, “What does this person need to make the experience meaningful?”



Candi Wuhrman next to mikvah pool with the immersion prayer on the wall in Hebrew, transliteration and English.

IMMERSIONS FOR ALL (continued from previous page)

to mark the moment I weaned my last child, but, alas, Covid-19 changed that plan. Recently, for my 40th birthday, a group of dear friends set up a mikvah visit for me to mark that transition. ... The mikvah brings me a sense of calm and tranquility. It is a hug from the waters of life and a refreshing nourishment of my soul.”

CONTEMPORARY GUIDES

While rabbis often serve as the guide for conversions, most guests are received by volunteer attendants.

Most of the male users visit the mikvah for pre-Shabbat or holiday immersions, but Neil Simon recently volunteered to guide men wanting to immerse for a contemporary transition.

“I wanted to volunteer simply to make sure those men felt most welcome at the mikvah, knowing that Rachel’s Well is everyone’s,” says Neil. “As a guide, my goal is to make sure that the person feels comfortable and welcome to immerse themselves in the mikvah and find their own meaning from the immersion.”

Sarah Rohr volunteers as a contemporary guide for women’s immersions, including pre-wedding, bat mitzvah, conception and miscarriage, and *Rosh Chodesh* observance. Trained as a doula, Sarah says she sees her role as a guide as very similar: “I am present to the needs that the moment calls for to help create a ritual process that resonates. ... Who would think a pool of water shared amongst community for sacred purpose could connect people to themselves and their *kavanah/kavanot* (intention/s)?”

While confidentiality is at the heart of mikvah use, requests sent to volunteer guides do indicate the general reason for visit, though not the person’s name. The volunteer guides come from diverse backgrounds to reflect and accommodate the diversity of users. For instance, when a transgender person requests a time, they are asked what kind of guide they are comfortable with.

As a chaplain who has worked in hospice, contemporary guide Candi Wuhrman says she tries to sign up for people who schedule a visit for trauma, loss or grief.

“I consider part of my chaplaincy to walk alongside people on their journey,” she says.

“I believe these are holy waters and sacred experiences ... a time of renewal,” says Candi. “When I take people through as a guide, I hold that sacred space – even if I don’t say it – whether the transition is health or celebratory.”

TRADITIONAL IMMERSIONS

Mikvah use is very personal for those following the family purity laws requiring a woman to immerse for spiritual cleansing after her period before resuming sexual relations with her husband.

“I am not of their peer group, I’m of a different generation, so they feel safe knowing I’ll be discrete and private,” says Devora Fleshler, who volunteers as a traditional guide for women using the mikvah each month. “Confidentiality and discretion are huge.”

Devora is a certified *kallah* (teacher) trained to meet with brides before their wedding day to teach them the laws of *taharat hamishpacha*. She is also a retired women’s health-care nurse practitioner. It is a combination that serves her well as a traditional guide.

“If they have women’s health concerns, I am able to talk to them about that as well as observance,” says Devora.

Though the experience is focused on the guest, Devora says she also benefits as a guide.

“I get to have a very moving and special interaction with the women in our community,” she says. “Since I retired, I have missed that interaction with women.”

To schedule an immersion, email mikvahpdx@gmail.com at least 1 week in advance of your desired immersion date.

Events

Sundays: Israeli folk dancing

Open Israeli folk dancing now meets every Sunday at the Southwest Community Center from 2:30 to 4 pm. The open dance will be preceded by a beginner Israeli folk dance class at 1:30 pm, Nov. 13-Dec. 18. The Sunday sessions are led by Rhona Feldman, who led Sunday sessions outdoors for the past two and a half years due to pandemic.

Cost for open dancing is \$6 per session, payable at the SWCC front desk. SWCC is at the northwest corner of Gabriel Park, at the corner of SW Vermont Street and SW 45th Avenue.

You can enroll for the Sunday beginning class on the Portland Parks and Rec site at tinyurl.com/3h69mrs6. For questions, email Rhona at rhonaf@comcast.net.

Other ongoing Portland Israeli Folk Dance sessions are 7-10 pm, Mondays, at Leedy Grange with Sue Wendel and Donna Cole; and 7-10 pm, Thursdays, in Burlingame with Allison Victor. For details, visit sites.google.com/site/pifdnews. For questions, contact Sue Wendel at pifdnews@gmail.com.

Nov. 12: Psalms in Search of Home

Co/Lab: Reimagine Jewish presents three poets on Jewish identity and creativity in the 21st Century at 7-9 pm, Nov. 12, at SoMaSpace, 4050 NE Broadway. Award-winning poets will read from and discuss their work. The evening will also feature live music, refreshments, creativity, ideas, discussion, fun and community.

For details, contact Rabbi Josh Rose at rabbijosh@colabpdx.org or visit colabpdx.org.

Nov. 13: Moishe House pizza party game night

Moishe House Portland will provide pizza, drinks and other snacks for young adults to enjoy while playing a variety of games 6-8 pm, Nov. 13. Drop in for a cozy two-player game, unruly group game or to introduce people to your own favorite games.

Sign up at forms.gle/LX6FpMA7iN9tMpRJ6. For questions, email moishehousepdx@gmail.com.

Nov. 14: "Making Sense of the Israeli Election"

Israel360 will host "Making Sense of the Israeli Election" with Lahav Harkov, senior contributing editor and correspondent for The Jerusalem Post, and Rabbi David Kosak.

Israel recently concluded its national elections, moving from one of its most ideologically diverse coalitions to a more right-wing one. Benjamin Netanyahu is set to return as Prime Minister, and the Religious Zionism party saw major gains to become the third-largest party in the new Knesset.

What does all of this mean for Israeli citizens? How will it affect Israel's relationship with the United States and other countries? And what does it mean for us as American Jews? Join us for an in-depth analysis of these questions and many more. Jerusalem Post.

To receive the Zoom link, RSVP at nevehshalom.org/event/israel360-making-sense-of-the-israeli-election/.

Nov. 15: PDXBIZ: "What's Next for Portland"

The 2022-2023 Mittleman Jewish Community Center #PDXBIZ Business Series kicks off at noon, Nov. 15, with "What's Next for Portland After the Election?" The lunchtime event will meet in Portland State University's Native American Student Center.

Panelists will include City Commissioner Carmen Rubio; Marcus Mundy, executive director at the Coalition of Communities of Color; and David Yaden, from PSU and Portland 2.0.

Created in 2017 as an in-person business breakfast, the series transitioned to a lunchtime Zoom program in 2020. In June 2022, the series resumed in-person gatherings but continued to meet at 8 Jewish Review Nov. 9, 2022

noon. Cost is \$36. Lunch will be served with kosher lunches available on request. RSVP at oregonjcc.org/pdxbiz.

Nov. 16: Tivnu gap year information meeting

Learn more about the Tivnu: Building Justice gap year program on Zoom at 5 pm, Nov. 16. Parents, students and youth educators are invited to hear about the Portland-based gap year program from alumni, a parent of an alum and Tivnu staff.

Tivnu gap year participants connect with Jewish life and social justice through individualized internships, discover the Pacific Northwest and create a home together in Portland.

Apply by Jan. 1 for a \$4,000 discount for the 2023/24 Tivnu gap year. RSVP to Tivnu Operations and Outreach Coordinator Leanna Parsons at Leanna@tivnu.org for the Zoom link.

Nov. 18: Moishe House Friendsgiving Shabbat

Join Moishe House Portland for festive fall food and good vibes 7-9 pm, Nov. 18. Moishe House residents will create their own versions of the classic recipes and hope you bring your versions, too! You don't have to bring anything, but food is always welcome.

RSVP on OneTable at bit.ly/3TgU7hk. If RSVPs have maxed out on OneTable, email moishehousepdx@gmail.com.

Nov. 18: EJC noon concert features Trio Tsuica

Eastside Jewish Commons hosts [Trio Tsuica](https://www.trio-tsuica.com) for a free concert at noon, Nov. 18. Pack a lunch or stop by one of the many pods at 24th and Glisan, bring your food in (no pork or shellfish please), and come and hear the music at the Commons, 2420 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland, ejcpdx.org. No RSVP needed.

Tsuica is Romanian brandy made from plums. The band brings a fiery distillation of music from eastern and central Europe, played on violin, accordion, bass and cimbalom.



Nov. 19: Mini Mensches Tot Shabbat

Welcome Shabbat with singing, dancing and sweetness at Congregation Beth Israel's Mini Mensches Tot Shabbat at 9 am, Nov. 19. Gather in CBI's Pollin Chapel to sing Shabbat songs and end with a parade with our stuffed Torahs. Following the parade, kids can enjoy challah and juice with plenty of space and toys for them to play while parents have time to spend together getting to know one another (and enjoying some coffee). Mini Mensches is geared toward kids ages 0-5 and welcomes the entire community.

For more information, email chelsea@bethisrael-pdx.org or visit bethisrael-pdx.org/community/mini-mensches/.

Nov. 20: Family Research Hebrew

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Oregon presents "A Very Short Course in Hebrew for Family Researchers" via Zoom at 10:30 am, Nov. 20.

The free program will include tips and cheat sheets for deciphering information. It is presented by Rony Golan, an Israeli genealogist and attorney, and Vivian Kahn, JewishGen's Hungarian Research Director. All JGSO Zoom meetings feature closed captions.

This presentation will provide a brief introduction to the Hebrew alphabet and the words and terms that most commonly appear in

Continued on next page

inscriptions and other family documents. Participants will receive handouts that will help non-Hebrew speakers identify given names and parents' names, decipher dates, and recognize other clues on headstones and in common records such as ketubot (marriage contracts) and yahrzeit cards.

To receive the Zoom link, register at tinyurl.com/mvf6vryc.

Nov. 20: "The Juderia of Rhodes"

The Next Generations Group will host Estelle Golden speaking on "The Juderia of Rhodes: Then and Now" at 4 pm, Nov. 20, on Zoom.

Diana Golden, z"l, Estelle's mother, was born on the Mediterranean island of Rhodes in 1922. The island's Jewish quarter, referred to as Juderia, was home to Sephardic Jews for 2,300 years until the 1944 deportation of the Jews to Auschwitz.

Her daughters, Estelle and Elaine Golden, visited Rhodes last May to discover any remnants of their mother's home and any remaining aspects of Jewish life there today. Estelle will share her travel experience and show historical and current photos, as well.

Estelle is a member of the OJMCHE Speaker's Bureau, sharing her mother's story of life in Rhodes and survival in the Auschwitz death camp. She serves on the board of Women of Reform Judaism at Congregation Kol Ami in Vancouver, Wash.

The Next Generations Group consists of descendants of/and Holocaust survivors, refugees, heroes and anyone interested in, or impacted by, the Holocaust who wants to help keep the personal histories and lessons learned alive and relevant. To receive the Zoom link, email suemwendel@gmail.com.

Nov. 21: Moishe Pod Dead Sea Spa

Moishe Pod-West PDX hosts Dead Sea Spa Night 7-9 pm, Nov. 21. Young adults are invited to an evening of tranquil relaxation, including face masks with mud straight from the Dead Sea. Learn about the religious, cultural and geological aspects of this fascinating liquid landmark. Moishe Pods – a two-person Moishe House – are designed to help young, innovative Jews create Jewish communal space through grassroots programming.

RSVP: moishepodwestpdx.com or email Shelly Zeiser at moishepodwestpdx@gmail.com.

Waiting list set for March women's weekend

A waiting list has been started for Camp Solomon Schechter Women's Getaway Weekend happening March 3-5, 2023. This will be the Jewish camp's first women's retreat in several years.

"So many women were asking for us to start doing them again," says Leah Conley, Camp Solomon Schechter development director. She adds that the focus is welcoming Jewish women of all ages and stages to experience Solomon Schechter for themselves. All 150 slots have been reserved by women who range from first-timers to camp to mothers of campers and CSS alumni.

The weekend will feature programming dedicated to meeting with old friends and new, experiencing the magic of Shabbat at camp, and relaxing and having fun. Falling just before Purim, the retreat will include *hamantaschen* baking and other Purim activities. Women can lounge by Lake Stampfer, take on the challenge course or hike on the 170-acre campground near Tumwater, Wash.

Email lconley@campschechter.org to join the waiting list.



OPEN HOUSE

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 13 1:30 PM-3:00 PM

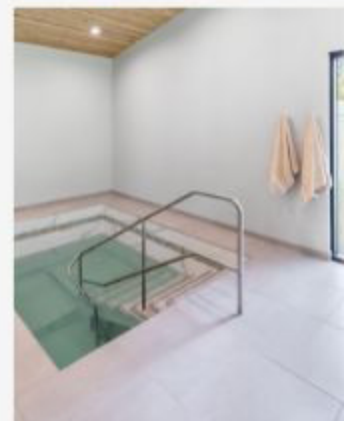
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17 2:30 PM-4:00 PM

Rachel's Well Community Mikvah is celebrating its 5th anniversary as a ritual immersion pool serving the Greater Portland Jewish Community.

Visit us to learn more about mikvah and help us celebrate.

RW is open to ALL Jews of ALL genders, and ALL backgrounds for ANY transition you want to mark with this restorative, nurturing, accessible ritual.

EMAIL CARON@JEWISHPORTLAND.ORG TO RSVP AND FOR ADDRESS





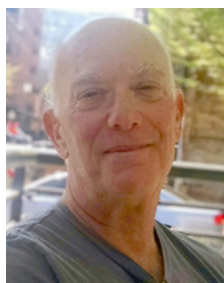
“Illuminated Letters” preview sparks future gatherings

More than 100 participants enjoyed each other and the interactive exhibition “Illuminated Letters: Threads of Connection” on temporary display Sept. 8 in a Southeast Portland warehouse. Artist and innovator Sara Harwin, who dedicated years of study to the development of this work, is now hosting, with husband Fred, a series of small gatherings at Harwin Studios. This upcoming series will include local and regional speakers discussing how we are all connected, and how that connection is individual *and* universal. Attendees will be able to view a few of the panels and other representations from this 2,000-square-foot work that was exhibited in full in September. For more information about attending a gathering, email info@harwinstudios.com.

JFCS encourages “Mindfulness in Aging”

Mindfulness is not only for Gen Z. It is a powerful tool for people of all ages, older adults included.

On Nov. 18, Jewish Family & Child Service presents “Mindfulness in Aging” by David Molko, LCSW, who was JFCS’ senior services director from 2005 to 2012 and who specializes in working with older adults. The free group discussion – from 11 am to 12:30 pm at the MJCC – focuses on mindfulness related to aging. Light refreshments will be served.



David Molko

sion more curious and willing to ask more questions and think about aging from a new perspective. The session is drawn from his curriculum that he has used for a series he has facilitated for 20 years for Rose Schnitzer Manor residents.

“David has a deep history in his work with JFCS and this community, and there’s no one quite like him,” says Missy Fry, LCSW, CAGCS, JFCS’ behavioral health therapist. “Whenever David is involved with a group like this, we know we’re in for a treat.”

“We know that mindfulness has been shown to have many health benefits, and for this session we will share thoughts and feelings around change, transition and adaptability, as well as the importance of developing and exercising our ‘resilience muscle,’” she adds.

This opportunity is thanks to generous funding provided by Jewish Federations of North America’s Center for Holocaust Survivor Care and Institute on Aging and Trauma.

To RSVP or for details, contact Missy Fry at missyry@jfcs-portland.org or 503-226-7079, ext. 133.

Law vs. antisemitism conference March 26-27

The [Second Annual Law v. Antisemitism Conference](#) will be held March 26-27, 2023, at Lewis & Clark Law School in Portland. Early-bird registration rates are available through Jan. 6, 2023.

“This conference is to our knowledge the only conference dedicated to the intersection of antisemitism and the law,” says Lewis & Clark Professor David Schraub, who is one of three conference conveners.

“Obviously, recent events – such as Kanye West’s antisemitic tirade and its amplification by prominent media voices like Tucker Carlson – underscore the need for events dedicated to antisemitism,” says Schraub. “But even before those incidents, the tremendous response we had gotten already demonstrated the deep demand for an event like this, both in the Jewish community and the community of legal scholars. We will have nearly 40 speakers including professors, practitioners and Jewish community professionals hailing from across America and four countries, comprising an unprecedented confluence of diverse voices and perspectives united around the need for rigorous scholarly inquiry into the intersection of contemporary antisemitism and the law.”

Keynote speakers are Eric K. Ward, executive director of the Western States Center and one of the nation’s foremost experts on the connection between antisemitism and White supremacy, and Steven M. Freeman, vice president of civil rights and director of legal affairs for the Anti-Defamation League.

In addition to Schraub, conveners are Robert Katz (Indiana University) and Diane Kemker (Southern University). It is presented in association with the *Lewis & Clark Law Review* and the Law vs. Antisemitism Project. Sponsors include Solomon’s Legacy of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland and Greater Portland Hillel.

American law has been used to fight antisemitism through constitutional separation of church and state, and anti-discrimination and “hate crimes” laws. Despite these laws, anti-Jewish violence and antisemitism has recently resurged. What does this tell us about the efficacy of law in combating antisemitism?

For more information, visit go.lclark.edu/law-and-antisemitism or email dschraub@lclark.edu or lawvsantisemitism2023@gmail.com.

Vendors and musicians sought for second Jewish Makers Market

Moishe House Portland is hosting another Jewish Makers Market this year and has open vendor and musician spaces available for those who want to connect with Jewish young adults.

The young residents of Moishe House Portland create and host events every month for their peers in their 20s and early 30s. Moishe House is a global nonprofit that builds peer-led Jewish communities for young adults around the world. Portland has had a Moishe House since 2008. Last year’s event was the first time Moishe House hosted such a large event.

We’ll be holding our market on Dec. 17 in Southeast Portland; time is TBD. If interested, please fill out an application at tinyurl.com/MoHoMarket

Help JFCS get its gobble on

As we look to the celebrations of Thanksgiving, Chanukah, Christmas, Kwanzaa and more, we know that for many, the celebratory spirit can be hard to come by.

Jewish Family & Child Service provides an antidote: this month, the agency continues its 21-year tradition of brightening the season for families and individuals of all ages, including greater Portland's Holocaust Survivors, experiencing tough times.

JFCS Thanksgiving Food Boxes and Family-to-Family programs give hundreds of people who are struggling hope and reasons to celebrate.

Food boxes

JFCS partners with many local synagogues and community organizations to collect nonperishable food items and \$25 gift cards for more than 150 households, which means Thanksgiving goodies for at least 600 people. Thanksgiving meal boxes include a turkey, potatoes, yams, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie and more. Appropriate products are provided for vegetarians, those with gluten-free diets and those who keep kosher. JFCS staff and community volunteers help pack and deliver boxes. Please see below for details on how to donate and volunteer.

Family-to-Family

JFCS adds joy to holiday celebrations in December by providing gift cards to clients so they can meet their own needs, most often by purchasing household items, clothing and toys for children. Cards will be distributed the week of Dec. 5, coinciding with the runup to Chanukah (beginning Dec. 18) and this season's many festivities.

Want to help?

Visit jfcs-portland.org/holiday-giving-2022/ to make a secure donation to the holiday programs.

To volunteer on Sunday, Nov. 20, to pack food boxes at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center or to deliver the assembled food boxes to recipients, sign up at jfcsportland.galaxydigital.com/. If you have any questions, contact JFCS Volunteer Coordinator Sammy Monk at volunteer@jfcs-portland.org.

Apply for Sussman scholarship

Sussman Fund applications reopen this month for the 2023-2024 academic year.

The Sussman Fund was established in 1981 by Lilian and Gilbert Sussman to provide grants to Jewish students from the Portland metropolitan area toward their higher education. Students pursuing undergraduate studies toward a degree in an accredited college or university in the United States are encouraged to apply. Awards will be given to two to five recipients per year in the amount of \$1,000-\$1,800. Recipients will be notified in April 2023.

The application deadline is March 1, 2023. In addition to the application form, applicants must submit a resume or student employment record and two letters of recommendation. Apply at jewishportland.org/sussman. For questions, contact Rachel Nelson at rachel@jewishportland.org or 503-892-7415.



Students from the Mensch Learning Center stock a new Little Free Library.

Shaarie Torah dedicates diverse Little Free Library

On Oct. 30, students from Shaarie Torah's Mensch Learning Center helped dedicate a Little Free Library on the congregation's NW Portland campus.

Rabbi Gary Ezra Oren led the attendees in singing *Shehechyanu* (a prayer to mark special occasions) as the children "cut" the ribbon and then filled the library with books. As stewards of this library, the congregation is responsible for maintaining and stocking books that are focused primarily on diversity and inclusion. The initial supply of "Read in Color" books includes titles by authors Trevor Noah, Ibram X. Kendi, Hena Khan and Cherie Dimaline.

The congregation was approached by Positive Charge! PDX over the summer to consider becoming stewards of the library. The library is part of the Compassion Through Literature project conceived by PC! PDX in response to growing concerns over acts of intolerance being witnessed in schools, communities and on social media. PC! PDX, a nonpolitical, nonreligious, all-inclusive, humanitarian-focused organization, began this project with a simple idea: Could we encourage people to take a walk in someone else's shoes by sharing and reading books about You, Me and Us through diverse little lending libraries? Could such reading open the pages of their eyes

and hearts by increasing understanding, tolerance and compassion for each other while decreasing assumptions, stereotypes, fear and hate in

our world? More and more Diverse LFLs are being launched throughout the metro area, currently totaling 11. The goal is to locate them in LFL "deserts," places where there were known issues of racial, antisemitic or LGBTQIA+ hate incidents, and places where many people gather. All are located where stewards

showed a strong commitment to providing a vehicle of diverse voices to the communities around them. Find libraries at positivechargepdx.org/compassion.

Thanks to the support of Sallie Cohen and other members of PC! PDX, the new library at Shaarie Torah is open for business and welcomes donations of new or gently used books.

Mensch Learning Center students brought books and enthusiasm to the dedication, showing a deep understanding for the importance of expanding connections with other people through reading.

For information about the Mensch Learning Center (K-5th grade) or Mensch Academy (6th-7th grade) at Shaarie Torah, visit shaarietorah.org/youthed/.



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and obituaries to
editor@jewishportland.org

Chaplain's Corner

A prescription of two ancient traditions

BY RABBI BARRY COHEN

When I moved to Portland about four and a half years ago, I was warned about “seasonal affective disorder.” A number of people recommended I purchase a light therapy lamp. I nodded and thanked them for their advice. But I was thinking, “What in the world are you talking about? Seasonal disorders? Therapy lamps? Really?”

I am beginning to realize there was some merit to that advice. Just look at this year. We went to bed one day when skies were blue and temperatures were in the 70s. The next day, the sun disappeared, and the temperature dropped 20 degrees. Ever since then, it has been chilly, rainy and dreary. Talk about weather whiplash.

While I have yet to experience seasonal affective disorder, I can imagine what it must feel like. The stresses and strains related to local, national and international politics have only made me feel worse. And we all know that Covid (and the flu) remain an ever-present possibility.

Too often in the past weeks, I have felt unsettled, anxious, nervous and afraid. Luckily, these emotions do not linger. For the most part, I feel positive emotions. But every once in a while, I feel as though I am tumbling down the rabbit's hole.

Fortunately, we can turn to a number of resources to navigate these trying emotional times. We find one source of wisdom in this week's Torah portion, *Vayeira*, starting with Genesis 18:1. This portion begins in the days after Abraham circumcised not only his sons, but himself. He was recuperating in the shade of his tent. The portion begins in a confusing way. At first, we read that the Eternal appears to Abraham. Then we read that Abraham looks up and sees three men standing by him.

One way of interpreting this curious beginning is that God was visiting Abraham in the form of three men ... messengers ... *melachim*. Why were these messengers there? To engage in *bikkur cholim*, visiting the sick. They were there to accompany Abraham in his healing.

But Abraham responds in an unexpected way. Despite his weakened state, he enthusiastically welcomes them. He invites them to wash their feet, drink and eat. In this way, Abraham is modeling the value of *chachnasat orchim*, or hospitality.



Rabbi Barry Cohen is the Jewish community chaplain of the Greater Portland area.
chaplain@jewishportland.org

During these dark, dreary, cold and rainy days, we can take these lessons to heart. We can engage in *bikkur cholim*, whether literally or virtually. The *cholim* come in a variety of forms. We can be sick with a virus; we can be recuperating from surgery; we can feel lonely or isolated; we can be anxious or depressed; or we may just be feelings “the blahs.”

A phone call, facetime or a personal visit can make all the difference. We can bring with us a home-cooked meal, a coffee from Dutch Bros or just ourselves.

We can also engage in *chachnasat orchim* by opening our doors to others. So many of us are longing for some kind of human connection – three-dimensional, in person. Granted, many of us must remain vigilant for a number of reasons. Covid has not disappeared. Our immune systems may be weakened because of chronic illness or medications. I am not recommending that anyone put themselves in harm's way. For those of us who are healthy and fully vaccinated, we can push beyond our comfort zones. We can invite friends and family into our homes, or we can meet at a favorite restaurant or coffee bar. By sharing a dessert, coffee or a meal, we can strengthen the bonds of relationships that have been weakened by realities beyond our control.

Through the simple acts of *bikkur cholim* and *chachnasat orchim*, we can be *melachim* and strengthen relationships. By fostering human connections, we can heal our body, spirits and souls. And we may not only lessen the symptoms of seasonal affective disorder, but avoid it altogether.

JEWISH REVIEW 2022 ISSUES

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Rabbis' Corner

Hakhel: Gather and Inspire

BY RABBI AVROHOM DYCE

The new year we have entered is special – one that can have a truly positive, long-reaching effect on years to come.

In the year following the *Shemittah* (sabbatical) year in ancient Israel, the entire Jewish people were commanded to come together for a gathering meant to resemble the divine revelation at Mount Sinai.

Called *Hakhel* (assembling), this gathering of all Jewish men, women and children would take place during the joyous festival of Sukkot in the holy space of the *Beit Hamikdash* (Temple) in Jerusalem.

As the time came closer, one could hear the *Cohanim* (members of the priestly tribe) stationed throughout the holy city blaring golden trumpets with the sounds traditionally used for the shofar – *Tekia! Terua! Tekia!* – signaling for all to gather in the *Beit Hamikdash*.

After the people gathered, the king of Israel, flanked by the members of the *Sanhedrin* (tribunal of elders) and sages, would read out inspiring passages from the Torah scroll, including the *Shema Yisrael* prayer, encouraging the people to be in awe of Hashem and recommit themselves to the fulfillment of the mitzvahs.

The feeling of true unity of every Jew, of all types and sizes, assembled together and the excitement of gathering for this sacred purpose filled the people with a sense of meaning and inspiration that was felt throughout the next seven years until they would gather again for the next *Hakhel* year.

Though we await *Moshiach* (messiah) to celebrate *Hakhel* again in all of its grandeur, its energy is accessible to us this year – just like all biblical ideas continue to be spiritually and personally relevant. The Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, z”l, called for the year of *Hakhel* to be used as a time for people to come together to be inspired to higher purpose.

Every individual – man, woman and small child – has a sphere of influence, whether in regard to family members, friends, work associates or community members. People are affected by the things we do and say. We can use this capacity to be a positive

influence and share the inspiration of the Torah and its wisdom.

Hakhel isn't complicated; we can use occasions when people are gathered in any case. Family dinners, parties, outings or even a walk are perfect times to spark a discussion about an upcoming Jewish festival, discuss the *parsha* (Torah portion) of the week or our favorite personality from the Torah.

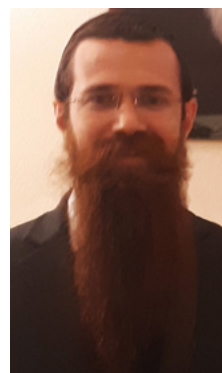
Regarding the mitzvah of *tzedakah* (justice/charity), the Torah says that the pauper is also obligated to give, for even the most impoverished person can find a way to help his fellow pauper. The same applies to spiritual charity. There isn't anyone who can't, in some way, influence their fellow Jews and bring them closer to Hashem.

On this note, the Rebbe would often quote the lovely Chasidic saying: “If only you know *aleph* – teach *aleph!*”

As to the absence of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, we are told that G-d abodes in the heart of every Jew, and when we elevate our homes and business spaces through study and prayer, they become like a mini-beit hamikdash radiating light to its surroundings.

Let's not forget to involve the young children. Share with them about their birthright heritage. The obligation of the *Hakhel* celebration was incumbent on the children just as on the adults. Children can be a source of inspiration to other children and even to adults with their pure genuine nature.

At a time of so much divisiveness and loneliness, after years of isolation, *Hakhel* couldn't have come at a better time.



Rabbi Avrohom Dyce serves as rabbi and co-director of the Gresham Chabad Jewish Center. Together with his wife, Cheina, and three children, they are excited to celebrate our beautiful heritage with their growing local Jewish community.

Did you know?

Jewish Free Loan began “in the neighborhood”

This marks Jewish Family & Child Service's 75th year. In the run-up to JFCS' celebratory event on May 18, 2023, this space offers looks back at agency history our community may – or may not – remember.

Jewish Free Loan once was a program of Jewish Family & Child Service. Before that, it was the word-of-mouth effort of a few Jewish immigrant women in Old South Portland to assist neighbors in need – a few coins at a time.

According to Stuart Director, his maternal grandparents, Dinah and Nathan Rosen, owned a small grocery store across the street from the original Shaarie Torah location on SW 1st Street. Originally from Ukraine, Dinah – known by family as “Baba Rosen” – and a few fellow countrywomen who had relocated to Portland in the early 1910s and 1920s, spearheaded a very grassroots effort to help support folks in their tight-knit Jewish immigrant community.

Dinah and Nathan owned the neighborhood's only telephone and had some extra space in their apartment, which was located above their store. The couple sometimes provided short-term lodging to freshly arrived friends and relatives from the Old Country, and they likely overheard neighbors' *tsuris* (woes) via the phone.

Dinah and her lady friends would hear of someone down on their luck and collect some money to give them. The interest rate was 0%, and the expectation was full reimbursement by some future date. The ladies ran their Hebrew Free Loan program, as they dubbed it, through the Depression of the 1930s and beyond, Stuart said – “with zero loan defaults,” he added.

Growing older, Dinah passed along the expanding Hebrew Free Loan program to her youngest daughter, Nettie (née Rosen) Director, who kept it operational for decades until demand outpaced her ability to operate solo. In the 1970s, Nettie – with thousands of free-loan dollars in hand – approached Jewish Family & Child Service. JFCS then ran what had morphed into the Jewish Free Loan program through the late-1990s.

Stuart recalled people approached the free-loan program with requests to help defray costs associated with Jewish Community Center membership, medical and moving expenses, books and tuition, bus fare, housing and more.

Six years ago, Jewish Federation of Greater Portland relaunched the [Jewish Free Loan](#) program, combining available funds with those remaining from JFCS' initial program.

Rabbis' Corner

The Jewish Review offers space for the community's rabbis to share their thoughts on the week's parsha or current events. Rabbis are invited to schedule a date to submit a 500- to 600-word piece: email editor@jewishportland.org.

Zooms show education can ease discrimination

Recordings of two October Zoom programs that address discrimination – and the power of knowledge and education to change society for the better – are now available on the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland website at jewishportland.org/pastevents:

- “[Chronicle of Racism](#)” a talkback with Jeffery Robinson, producer of the documentary “Who We Are: A Chronicle of Racism in America”

- “[Lunch and Learn Zoom](#)” with Gadeer Kamal-Mreeh, Israel’s first Druze *shlichah* for The Jewish Agency for Israel.

The film “Who We Are” (available on Netflix) and the talkback with Robinson are a continuation of the Black/Jewish collaboration between the JFGP Community Relations Council and the Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church. The two groups organized a civil rights mission to Georgia and Alabama this past April.

“The trip was powerful, emotional and inspiring, just like the film that we’ll be discussing tonight,” said Bob Horenstein, JFGP Community Relations Director. “The two communities have many shared interests, including combating hate and discrimination and insidious efforts to erase or at least obscure our country’s history of racism and slavery. So this evening, we are thrilled to have with us Jeffery Robinson.”

Robinson said, “A false narrative about the role of White suprema-

cy and anti-Black racism in the United States has led to our failure to make significant, lasting progress on the issue of racial justice. Knowledge can change people’s views, people’s opinions and their behavior.”

Similarly, Kamal-Mreeh credited education as “the most important tool to connect people.”

“It’s trendy to criticize Israel,” she said. “Educate yourself and others about what is really happening in Israel.”

As a minority within a minority – an Israeli who is not a Jew, an Arab who is not Muslim – Kamal-Mreeh said she “symbolizes the complexity and beauty of Israel society.”

Noting she respects her country as the ancient homeland of the Jewish people, she said she does have a problem with “what is not written in law.”

While Israel’s Declaration of Independence ensures “complete equality ... of residents irrespective of religion, race or sex,” the Supreme Court has ruled the guarantees are “guiding principles,” not law.

“It is important to be able to talk about Israel, wars and all,” she said. “There are solutions. We are a young state that is learning.”

“We are still a vibrant democracy with legitimate tools to stabilize the system,” she said.

Obituaries

LEORA LILY WERNER

Leora Lily Werner (Stein), z”l, died Oct. 28, 2022, at age 35 due to complications from bacterial meningitis in her hometown, Portland. She is survived by her husband, Ben Werner; children, Lilah (age 4) and Asa (9 months); sister, Joanna Stein; mother, Shera Sinell; father, Randy Stein; stepfather, Andrew Ehrlich; and stepmother, Susan Steindler.

A memorial service will be at 1:30 pm, Dec. 4, at Havurah Shalom.

Leora was born Nov. 23, 1986. She lived a rich and beautiful life pursuing her passions for family, music, good food, the environment and gardening. Her smile and open-hearted nature drew people to her, and she had a gift for nurturing loving relationships, with many friendships lasting decades. Leora adored building a joyful home with Ben for Lilah and Asa, filled with love, music, singing, laughter, cooking and silliness. Leora was an accomplished violinist and avid cyclist.

After graduating from Whitman College, Leora’s career began with AmeriCorps, working to combat food insecurity, and progressed to Marketing Manager at Whole Foods Market and finally Marketing Director at FLO Analytics. Leora was a beloved colleague who made countless contribu-

tions to her community. She served as a board member for the Portland Fruit Tree Project, volunteered with Zenger Farm and sang in the ViVoce Choir to name but a few.

MELANIE GOODMAN ECKSTEIN

Melanie Goodman Eckstein, z”l, passed away Oct. 30, 2022, at the age of 99½. She is loved and remembered by Congregation Neveh Shalom members; her son, Jerome (Lisa) Eckstein; and her granddaughter, Laura Eckstein.

LORRY LOKEY

Lorry Lokey, z”l, died Oct. 1, 2022, at his Atherton, Calif., home. He was 95. He is survived by daughters, Basya Lokey, Miriam Khaka and Ann Lokey; seven grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren.

Lokey was born in Portland Oct. 27, 1927.

Lokey was a longtime supporter of the Harold Schnitzer Family Program in Judaic Studies at Portland State University. He played a hugely significant role in the development of the program at a crucial moment of growth. Not only did he create the Lorry I. Lokey Chair in Judaic Studies at PSU, held by Natan Meir since the establishment of the position, he also established two other very important funds in Judaic Studies at PSU, one for library acquisitions and the other to enable students and faculty to study and do research in Israel. His generosity has had a huge and lasting impact on the work of PSU’s Judaic Studies department.

At the University of Oregon, his gifts

for academic programs and facilities ultimately totaled more than \$150 million. He embarked on a rescue mission in 2004 that led him to jump-start six urgently needed building projects. Although he was never a student there, Lokey treated the UO as generously as his alma mater Stanford University and three of Israel’s leading universities.

Lokey attended Stanford University, from which he attained a bachelor’s degree in journalism in 1949. He also served in the U.S. Army during World War II. One constant in his life was his love of journalism, from being an editor of the Stanford Daily to his work on the Pacific Stars & Stripes to an early job for United Press. Combining his journalism and public relations experience led him to start Business Wire.

Over the years, Lokey gave hundreds of millions of dollars to charity, much of it centered on education, medical advances and the Jewish community. His largesse stemmed from the success of his company, Business Wire, a press release distribution service he founded in San Francisco in 1961. The 2006 sale of that company to Warren Buffett’s Berkshire Hathaway for \$600 million allowed Lokey to become one of the Bay Area’s most generous philanthropists.

SUBMISSIONS

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