

790 DAYS - BRING THEM HOME NOW!

THE JEWISH REVIEW

ESTABLISHED

1959

OREGON & SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON'S JEWISH NEWSPAPER

December 3, 2025 | 13 Kislev, 5786 | Volume 60, Issue 23

Dexter apologizes for comparison to Holocaust

The Jewish Review staff

Rep. Maxine Dexter apologized for her remarks on the floor of the House of Representatives last month connecting the Holocaust with the ongoing situation in

Gaza.

Dexter, a Democrat who represents most of East and North Portland along with eastern Multnomah County, northeastern Clackamas County and all of Hood

River County, addressed the House Thursday, Nov. 20 about her decision to cosponsor H. Res. 876, introduced Thursday, Nov. 13, by Rep. Rashida Tlaib, a Democrat from Michigan.

Dexter opened her speech by discussing a recent visit to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. and the origins of the word "genocide," a

See DEXTER, page 2

'Share the light'

Determination, collaboration bring Beaverton menorah lighting to life

By ROCKNE ROLL

The Jewish Review

One of the hallmarks of Chanukah is public menorah lightings. With Chanukah's celebration of light and the *mitzvah* of sharing the holiday's message of Jewish self-determination, setting up a large menorah in a public space, and kindling the light of the season makes perfect sense. Numerous

public lightings take place in the Portland area throughout the festival, typically hosted by the local Chabad – you can find one close to you on the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Chanukah Happenings page at jewishportland.org/ourcommunity/chanukahresources25.

But Beaverton, the second-largest city in Washington

See BEAVERTON, page 9

Lamps come to life during Beaverton's fifth annual Menorah lighting in 2024 at Beaverton City Park. (Courtesy Dana Brookmire)



INSIDE

Security – page 12

Events – page 14

Obituaries – page 14



Family Reset and Refresh – page 5



Koplan wins Amber Award – page 7

**The
Jewish
Review
Podcast**



Next episode Dec. 10



Click the logo above to hear the latest episode of **The Jewish Review Podcast** on the platform of your choice

Guest Column

'Dear community' - An apology

By REP. MAXINE DEXTER

Dear community,

I am reaching out with humility and appreciation that intent and impact can sometimes be quite different, and I recognize and take responsibility for the harm I have done to the trust I have with many in our Jewish community. I am deeply sorry that my recent statement on the U.S. House floor gave the impression that I was equating the Holocaust with the evolving events in Gaza.

I should not have discussed these two things during the same speech. Doing so gave many the impression I was comparing them — and I am clear that the experience of the Holocaust is without comparison. In the aftermath of Hamas' atrocious attack on October 7th and in the face of rising antisemitism that is pervasive in every corner of the world, I am genuinely sorry to have been the cause of further pain.

I hold deep and unwavering care for all our neighbors, which importantly includes a commitment to Oregon's vibrant Jewish community. I also stand firm in my support for a lasting peace in the Middle East, including a continued support for Israel's right to exist.

In all that I do, I am guided by the responsibility I feel as a mother to show my children that integrity and moral courage matter. In this regard, I know that I am accountable for my words. I will work to do better in the future to have more intentionality and sensitivity for how my words may impact our community. I am mindful of the remaining living survivors of the Holocaust and certainly many, many family members of victims and survivors who I may have hurt. I want to apologize to them for how my words may have been hurtful toward them or disrespectful of their loved ones' memories.

It is important to me to be as informed as possible when sharing my perspectives on complicated issues and, clearly, I could have done better. I will continue to come to the Jewish community, those both in support and in opposition to my views, to expand my understanding and sit in honest discourse with you, to hopefully build greater trust and understanding with time.

You have my commitment to standing up against antisemitism and for the needs of our Jewish community today — and every day.

Rep. Maxine Dexter is a member of the United States House of Representatives from Oregon's Third Congressional District.

DEXTER

(continued from page 1)

term created to encompass the scope of Nazi Germany's systematic murder of more than six million Jews in Europe, as her reasoning for cosponsoring the resolution.

"I am deeply sorry that my recent statement on the U.S. House floor gave the impression that I was equating the Holocaust with the evolving events in Gaza," Dexter wrote in part. "I should not have discussed these two things during the same speech. Doing so gave many the impression I was comparing them — and I am clear that the experience of the Holocaust is without comparison." (The full text of her apology appears on page 2)

The apology follows a Wednesday, Nov. 26 meeting between Dexter and community leaders including Jewish Federation of Greater Portland President and CEO Marc Blattner and Chief Community Relations and Public Affairs Officer Bob Horenstein. Horenstein described the meeting as a "candid and difficult discussion" and said that Dexter expressed remorse for her "poor choice of words."

"In the meeting, Rep. Dexter reinforced Israel's right to exist and to self-defense. However, she believed the Netanyahu government went too far and thus would not withdraw her co-sponsorship of the misguided congressional resolution. On the issue of the Holocaust comparison, she listened intently and we believe her apology was heartfelt," Horenstein said. "We look forward to working with her and being a resource to her moving forward."

HAPPY
Chanukah

**The Jewish Federation of Greater Portland
wishes you a Chanukah filled with light, love,
and the joy of togetherness.**

May the Festival of Lights brighten your days!



**Jewish Federation
of Greater Portland**

Beit Haverim to host leading scholar on democratic breakdown

By ROCKNE ROLL

The Jewish Review

Lake Oswego's Reform synagogue is bringing one of the world's foremost scholars on Nazi Germany to the area.

Beit Haverim will host Dr. Thomas Weber, a professor of history and international affairs at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland and a visiting fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution, for a discussion of his recent work on propaganda in authoritarian regimes as well as his interviews with Holocaust survivors, Tuesday, Dec. 9, at 7 pm at the synagogue.

Rabbi Alan Berg explained that Weber was first connected to the synagogue through the work of member Judith Kleinstein, z"l, whose memory the event is honoring.

"Judy thought it would be helpful to do a lecture with Tom, so we invited him on Zoom to speak about the Munich Beer Hall Putsch," Rabbi Berg said. "He and I have stayed in touch, and since this is the first year since Judith passed away, I thought it would be ideal to bring Tom in and have him speak on this topic."

With the increasingly authoritarian leanings of leaders at home and abroad, Weber's work has particular relevance today.

"More recently, I've looked at what we

can learn from the past about the present or how, by looking into history, we can also look into the future, and how we can try to make our own democracy more resilient," Weber said. "I'm not entirely sure whether asking the question of whether we're experiencing fascism is the right kind of question because we're comparing the consequences of democratic breakdown. Where the similarities lie is in the drivers of democratic breakdown as the first signs."

Weber explained that, in his analysis, the combination of societal perception of existential crisis and sudden innovation in mass communication technology is what produces the grounds for a breakdown in the function of democratic processes. With the global economic depression of the 1930s and the advent of radio and cinemas, the post-World War 1 Weimar Republic was just such a situation. It is more than just economics and technology, though; approximately 40 percent of democratic governments survived the turmoil of the period, including many of the countries that would go on to be the victors of World War II.

"The question is how people perceive things, whether there's resilience against this or whether they're so scared that they think this isn't just a crisis, this is a world of crises in which collective survival is no longer assured,

where people blame those 'up there' for supposedly having brought us into the crisis in the first place," Weber elaborated. "If that comes together with sudden innovation in the means of mass communication, it's a perfect storm. For whatever reason, it is then false prophets who seem to be far more willing to exploit the opportunities."

Weber will also discuss his soon-to-be-published book, written in collaboration with "Goebbels and The Führer" director and screenwriter Joachim Lang, collecting interviews with Holocaust survivors on their views of the state of the world today. The sentiments they found were surprising.

"We thought that if anything, they would say, 'Calm down. Things are bad, but clearly things are not as bad as they were,'" Weber related. "But they all said that they have not been as worried about the future of democracy and the future of civilization at any time since 1945 as they are now, Leon Weintraub, a Auschwitz survivor who will turn 100 in January, he said that he sees, in the actions of extremist parties such as the Sweden Democrats or the Alternative for Germany, the first step on the road to Auschwitz, to the gas chambers."

Learn more about Weber's appearance at beithav.org.

COMMUNITY SECURITY TRAINING CLASSES @ NOON BY ZOOM - THROUGH FEBRUARY 2026

Awareness

BE AWARE
INTRODUCTION TO
SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

DECEMBER 3
JANUARY 7
FEBRUARY 5

RESPOND

GUARDIAN
EMPOWERING PEOPLE
TO BE "ACTIVE BYSTANDERS"

DECEMBER 4
JANUARY 14
FEBRUARY 12

RISK !

CATT
COUNTERING ACTIVE
THREAT TRAINING

DECEMBER 10
JANUARY 15
FEBRUARY 19

STOP THE BLEED

TRAINING PEOPLE HOW TO
STOP FATAL BLEEDING

DECEMBER 11
JANUARY 21
FEBRUARY 25



DE-ESCALATION
DEFUSE CONFLICT
IN SITUATIONS

DECEMBER 17
JANUARY 8
FEBRUARY 11

CLICK HERE

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER



Young families' Reset and Refresh launches

By ROCKNE ROLL

The Jewish Review

Reset and Refresh, the Shabbat-centered cohort program for mixed-heritage couples to explore Jewish identity and practice, is debuting a family version.

The first cohort of Reset and Refresh for young families, defined as having children ages 0-5, begins Sunday, Jan. 11, 2026. The program's five sessions, featuring three Sunday morning gatherings followed by a Friday night Shabbat dinner and a Havdalah experience Saturday evening, include materials and activities for both parents and their children to explore Jewish practice in a supportive small group environment.

"There was a desire of folks applying who already had children who wanted to have these intentional, deep conversations about what it was like for multi-heritage couples to have a Jewish presence in the home and how to build those traditions," Jewish Federation of Greater Portland Director of Educational Initiatives and Associate Director of Community Relations Rachel Nelson said.

Reset and Refresh was originally developed by Rabbi Samuel Klein in Seattle and has been adopted by numerous communities nationwide. Portland has hosted two cohorts of the program for young couples without children. Federation Director of Jewish Life and Learning Dr. Yosef Rosen, who helped facilitate the second cohort, and Congregation Neveh Shalom Foundation School Director Candace Rothstein, are helping develop the Reset and Refresh program into a format that addresses the specific needs



Participants in the second Portland cohort of Reset and Refresh celebrate havdalah at the conclusion of the program Saturday, May 10 in Portland. Portland will offer a first-in-the-nation young families version of Reset and Refresh. (Rockne Roll/Jewish Review file)

of young families – Portland is the first community to host a family-oriented version of the program.

"Having children raises a whole slew of new questions around navigating identity, spirituality and religious practice in the home, and if anything, it makes them even more acute," Rosen said.

Rosen and Nelson are adapting the original Reset and Refresh materials, shortening the seven-session child-free program to five sessions, while Rothstein is developing materials for the children of those participating.

"Children learn best through sensory experiences," Rothstein said. "Shabbat is perfect for that. Shabbat is all about the senses. You smell, you taste, you feel, you see things."

Her session planning includes activities, including challah-making and candle-lighting, that are geared

toward every age of participating child – the range of which beautifully mirrors the often mixed ages of siblings who experience Jewish holidays together in many families.

"It's really special that there are different ages of children, who can bring dif-

ferent experiences to Shabbat," Rothstein said.

The timing – both sessions in the day and dates within the year – are built to be family friendly.

"It's at 9:30 AM on a Sunday morning, because that's

See **REFRESH**, page 7

 **Jewish Federation
of Greater Portland**

Hanukkah Webinar

Themes, Moods, and Practices

Whether you're new to Jewish holidays, looking for a refresher, or hoping to see the holiday from a fresh perspective, join this one-hour webinar for an introductory and illuminating exploration of Hanukkah's history, themes, and rituals.

**Wednesday, Dec. 10
8-9 PM**





With Dr. Yosef Rosen, Director of Jewish Life & Learning
Jewish Federation of Greater Portland



Turkeys (and more) to go at JFCS Food Box event



More than 90 volunteers gathered Sunday, Nov. 23 at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center to prepare and deliver more than 160 food boxes to families in need as part of the Thanksgiving Food Box Program of Portland's Jewish Family & Child Service. Now in its 25th year, the program provides the makings of a Thanksgiving dinner - while accommodating recipients' dietary needs - through community food collection efforts throughout November as well as the packing and delivery work of volunteers. (Robyn Taylor/JFCS)

Dolinka joins Tivnu as programs expand

By ROCKNE ROLL

The Jewish Review

Tivnu: Building Justice is ramping up its programs for middle and high school students in Portland and elsewhere, and they've brought a new face on board to help.

Portland's Shawna Dolinka has joined the organization as Deputy Program Director, a role she takes on after a decade at the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

"Seeing that opportunity to go back into the programmatic sphere, creating those immersive experiences, really appealed to me," Dolinka said.

For the first eight years of her tenure at JDC, Dolinka worked in the group's young professional's division, managing group travel for young people to locations where JDC works around the globe. It was experiences like the ones she created there — and will create through Tivnu — that drew her into her Judaism, par-

ticularly a month-long volunteer experience in Nepal through Tevel b'Tzedek.

"I have always liked the details. I like to organize things and make a little bit of sense out of chaos. So that definitely appeals to my personality type," she said. "I grew up in Jewish day schools, but it was not something that I connected with very strongly. It was actually through immersive experiences with a Jewish lens that I found my way back into Judaism."

"We are so happy that Shawna is coming," Tivnu Executive Director Steve Eisenbach-Budner said. "She's terrific. She is super organized, super professional, asks the good questions, takes initiative, all the good things."

Eisenbach-Budner explained that Tivnu had made growing their short-duration programs for high school students, and expanding them to middle-schoolers, part of their strategic plan because not only are they a

fabulous way of getting the word out about Tivnu's core gap year program, they are a good way for the participants and the broader world in and of themselves.

"We do a survey at the end of each of our short programs and the kids write amazing stuff, like they've never worked on tiny house builds before, shoulder to shoulder with a person who had a totally different life experience, often much more challenging," he said.

To do that, they need a larger staff — enter Rabbi Miriam Grossman, the group's Brooklyn-based Director of Partnerships and Outreach who joined last year, and Dolinka. Tivnu just hosted its first program for seventh-grade students in Portland, bringing in students from Yavneh Day School in Los Gatos, Calif. for a week of hands-on work in Tivnu's construction projects.

"The kids embraced everything you put together to make this an educational and

eye-opening week," Louis Kaskowitz, the group's chaperone, wrote in an email to Eisenbach Budner. "I anticipate that these memories will linger for the students for their whole lives, and hopefully it will spur them to action in the future."

Tivnu is also launching programs in Philadelphia titled "Philadelphia: Democracy is a Verb," which brings students together with community organizers, cultural sites and Jewish learning to discuss how to support society's most vulnerable and the institutions that empower them, along with volunteer projects that put those ideals into action.

"We ran our first one in October with two synagogues, one from St. Louis and one from Baltimore, and now we have 3 more groups coming in April and May," Eisenbach Budner said.

For more information on all of Tivnu's programs, visit Tivnu.org.

BB360's Koplan wins inaugural Amber Award

The Jewish Review staff

BB360 CEO Michelle Koplan was honored as one of the inaugural recipients of the Grinspoon Amber Award at last month's Jewish Federations of North America General Assembly.

"To be recognized in this way is truly an honor. It has always been my passion to serve our Jewish community, fostering Jewish identity through values-based experiential education, and building inclusive connections for our children," Koplan said in a press release. "Supporting Jewish communal professionals allows for the sustainability of vital organizations that breathe life into our Jewish communities."

The Grinspoon Amber Awards, created by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and announced at last year's General Assembly, "honor professionals who have made exceptional contributions to the Jewish world," according to the Foundation's website. "These are individuals whose work has had a profound and lasting impact on Jewish life."

Each recipient receives \$10,000 and the opportunity to nominate a pair of colleagues for \$2,500 Peer Recognition Grants. Also honored in the inaugural cohort were Rabbi Ana Bonnheim, the Founding Executive Director of the Jewish Learning Collaborative, Jeremy Burton, CEO of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston, Jonathan Falk, the Vice President for the Israel Action and Addressing Antisemitism Program at Hillel Inter-



BB360 Executive Director Michelle Koplan, right, received one of the inaugural Grinspoon Amber Awards at the Jewish Federations of North America's General Assembly Tuesday, Nov. 18 in Washington, D.C. (Marc Blattner/The Jewish Review)

national and Elana Frank, founder and CEO of the Jewish Fertility Foundation.

"Michelle's dedication and hard work have inspired BB360 as it has grown into an incredible agency serving the varied needs of members of the Jewish community of all ages, particularly those who might not otherwise have access to all our community has to offer," B'nai B'rith Men's Camp Association Chairman Irving Potter shared in

a press release.

The Grinspoon Foundation is best known for its support of PJ Library, which sends out more than half a million free Jewish children's books each month to families worldwide, as well as JCamp 180 and Life & Legacy programs. Nominations for next year's Grinspoon Amber Awards open Jan. 1, 2026. For more information, visit Amberawards.org.

REFRESH (continued from page 5)

before nap time," Nelson said of the main sessions. Additionally, "we intentionally chose the winter because Shabbat and Havdalah are earlier in the evening, before bedtime."

Applications are now open for the inaugural cohort, which will be limited to 10 families. Rosen explained that participants will come away with the tools to develop their own Shabbat practices – as a family.

"Reset and Refresh is designed in such a way that it is super welcoming. A lot of it is about how we bring in Shabbat. Shabbat is something you bring in. It doesn't just happen," Rosen said, "especially when you're a family."

Beyond resources and conversations, participating families will be able to build connections with each other and with other families in similar spots navigating

Jewish practice and identity.

"We're going to have this cohort of young families who are from different backgrounds and who may not have any traditions around Jewish holidays or Shabbat. This is going to give them the opportunity to have a shared experience with their children, to build these traditions together," Rothstein said. "I think it will create a lot of buy in for both the kids and the parents to keep these

going even after Reset and Refresh is over."

"This is the program I wish I had had when I first had kids," Nelson added. "These are the conversations I am still having at home with my family and my kids. It's practical, it's useful, and we really look forward to it."

Interested families can learn more and apply online at jewishportland.org/resetandrefreshfamily.

SUBSCRIBE: jewishportland.org/subscribe

Dana's Breads opens bakery near Cedar Mill

By ROCKNE ROLL

The Jewish Review

Dana's Hand-Crafted Breads, the small bakery operation run by Dana and Nir Shahar, has opened a brick-and-mortar location in the Cedar Mill neighborhood.

The couple is still in the soft opening phase of their bakery and café at 4062 NW Saltzman Road, offering challah, pitas, creative sourdough loaves and other bread varieties for pickup or delivery as well as pastries (like their Nutella babka), cheeses, kosher wine and other beverages.

Nir Shahar said that his family's journey into baking started a decade ago when he and his wife moved to the Portland area from Israel. An occupational therapist by training, Dana Shahar had picked up baking before the move.

"She did a small workshop in Israel, and she got addicted," Nir Shahar said.

When Dana couldn't practice occupational therapy in the United States due to licensing restrictions, she turned to her baking and launched Dana's Hand-Crafted Breads two years ago. The couple got their kitchen commercially certified and began offering Dana's bread for sale at farmers markets; she also hosted workshops of her own. Nir helps with logistics on top of his own full-time work, and the crew has expanded to a small cadre of employees – Jews and non-Jews alike – as the café takes flight.

Dana's Hand-Crafted Breads is open from 7:30 am until 8 pm most days – they close at 4:30 pm on Fridays and are closed on Saturdays. Hours vary based on production schedule – the latest hours and baking schedule are posted online so customers know when their favorites will be available fresh. The bakery will also be closed for an extended winter break from Dec. 16 through Jan. 12, 2026.

Learn more, see the latest schedule and pre-order loaves for pickup online at danasbreads.com.



One Happy Camper grants available

The Jewish Review staff

Applications for One Happy Camper grants for kids attending Jewish sleepaway camp for the first time are now open.

One Happy Camper grants for local families is entirely funded by the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland for Portland-area families. The program is run by the Foundation for Jewish Camp, a national non-profit that supports Jewish camps and families that participate in what many describe as one of the foundational experiences in their connection to Judaism. FJC provides logistical support for the application process.

Federation Director of Educational Initiatives and Associate Director of Community Relations Rachel Nelson explains that for many people, overnight Jewish summer camp is the one time in their lives that they get to live in a Jewish-majority environment.

"There are so few places that we can wholly live Jewishly from the moment we wake up to the moment we go to sleep," she said, "and camp is truly that unique experience of a full Jewish life, an immersive Jewish experience."

Participating campers must have a child attending an FJC-approved overnight camp for their first 12-plus day session; if your camper has done a shorter session previously and is going to a longer session for the first time, they are eligible. The grant covers up to \$1,500 of camp fees. All five Jewish overnight camps in the Pacific Northwest are on FJC's approved list.

For more information, visit onehappycamper.org or email Nelson at rachel@jewishportland.org.

Sussman-Shenker applications open

The Jewish Review staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's college scholarship program is now accepting applications through Mar. 2.

The Sussman-Shenker Scholarship was established in 1981 by Lillian and Gilbert Sussman, z"l, and renamed by their daughter, Lois Shenker, on her husband Arlen Shenker's 85th birthday. The scholarship is awarded to two to five Portland-area graduates who are pursuing undergraduate education in the United States. While academics are a consideration, the scholarship is focused on recognition of involvement in Jewish communal life – in whatever forms that may take.

"We always get such an amazing range of student applications from across our community," Federation Director of Educational Initiatives and Associate Director of Community Relations Rachel Nelson, herself a former Sussman-Shenker Scholar, said. "It's really inspiring to see the next generation wanting to stay connected to the Jewish community."

Unlike many similar programs, the Sussman-Shenker Scholarship is not needs-based and is awarded directly to the student.

Interested students can apply online at jewishportland.org/shenkussussman. Recipients will be notified in April. For more information, email Nelson at rachel@jewishportland.org.

BEAVERTON (continued from page 1)

ton County, lacks a Chabad Center, and had not had a public menorah lighting for decades.

Enter Dana Brookmire.

"I moved here from Atlanta 13 years ago and found out that Hillsboro and Tigard were lighting their own menorahs in their cities, and Beaverton was not," Brookmire said. "I didn't quite understand why."

Eight years ago, she went to ask the city why. They ignored her. That just served as motivation.

"I began to try to push the issue because I don't like being ignored," she said.

Eventually, staff for then-Mayor Denny Doyle met with Brookmire, telling her that the menorah lighting was a religious event, and they couldn't host the event on public property. Brookmire pointed out that the city already hosts a public display of a winter religious symbol in the form of a Christmas tree, but Doyle's office was unmoved.

A year later, Brookmire went back to it, this time with the help of Rabbi Menachem Rivkin of Chabad of

Hillsboro.

"She pulled some strings, and I have to tell you that with Beaverton, it was a little more difficult with the permits and with getting the city involved," Rabbi Rivkin said.

This time, the city cooperated – sort of.

"They wouldn't advertise it anywhere because they said that it was a religious event, but they did say that the mayor wanted to come and make an appearance," Brookmire said.

Brookmire borrowed a menorah from Rabbi Rivkin and bought 15 bags of chocolate *gelt* – 10 of which came home with her after the event, she said. Brookmire recalled Chabad of Oregon Director Rabbi Moshe Wilhelm amongst the small crowd of attendees for the first lighting.

"There were probably six people there that came out," she said. "We lit the menorah for the first time in 50 years in the middle of Beaverton."

A sparsely attended *mitzvah* is a *mitzvah* all the same.

"It was about my children seeing themselves in their community," Brookmire said. "I came from Atlanta. The Jewish community there

was very large, and I didn't have to worry about my children seeing themselves. It was right there."

Just a month after that first menorah lighting, Doyle stepped down and was replaced by Mayor Lacey Beaty. When Brookmire went to meet about continuing the menorah lighting tradition, she received a much different reception from the new administration.

"They said, 'you might actually qualify for a grant to get the menorah,'" Brookmire recalled. "Now they are advertising it. They are reaching out to me now instead of me reaching out to them every year in September. Every year [Beaty] comes, she talks about how important it is to continue to focus on the diversity of our city, and this is just one of many ways to do it. She has just been amazing."

That grant came though, and a 12-foot menorah now lives in Brookmire's garage. The crowds that watch its illumination in Beaverton City Park each winter now number closer to 100. The process leading up to the

annual event has become, in Brookmire's words, a "well-oiled machine," a pun on traditional menorah lamps she acknowledged and apologized for, but an apt one all the same.

"I bring the menorah to the park, I meet the electrician, I arrange for security, I fill out the right forms, I get the right insurance," she explained. "All of that stuff happens seamlessly now."

It is a big undertaking for one *mitzvah*, and Brookmire is happy to chat with anyone interested in helping with the process moving forward. But it's a big, impactful *mitzvah* – a light in the dark days of winter.

"Share the light. Encourage people to add another good deed, another *mitzvah* for everyone," Rabbi Rivkin said. "The way you fight darkness, it's just with a little bit of light; you don't need a lot of light to fight darkness, just a little bit."

Six lights will shine from the menorah in Beaverton City Park this year – Beaverton's menorah lighting is set for the fifth night of Chanukah on Thursday, Dec. 18 at 5 pm.

Robison Foundation awards \$341k in fall grants

Robison Foundation for Jewish Elders

The Robison Foundation for Jewish Elders is proud to announce more than \$341,200 in grants awarded through its Fall 2025 cycle, supporting programs that enrich the well-being, dignity, and connection of Jewish older adults across Greater Portland. This brings the amount granted by the Foundation in its inaugural year to over \$360,000.

This funding supports

organizations providing essential services, meaningful Jewish engagement, intergenerational connection, spiritual support, and culturally rooted community-building. The awards reflect RFJE's continued commitment to ensuring that Jewish elders are cared for, included, and honored.

"Our elders deserve community, belonging, and the dignity that comes from being seen and supported," said Michael Millender, Presi-

dent of the Robison Foundation for Jewish Elders. "This year's grantees embody those values through programs that reduce isolation, nurture Jewish identity, and meet critical needs for older adults across our region."

A committee of community members met to review the applications and make recommendations to the Robison Foundation board. "The diversity of initiatives funded this cycle—from emergency financial assistance to spiri-

tual care to intergenerational learning—shows the depth of commitment our community has to its elders," said Michelle Gradow, Grant Committee member. "We are grateful to all the organizations whose creativity, compassion, and expertise make these programs possible."

Eastside Jewish Commons: \$56,000 for strategic service expansion for Jewish elders.

Chabad of Northeast Portland: \$50,000 for Chesed

See GRANTS, page 10

Northwest cadre attends JNF Global Conference for Israel

By JENNIFER MILTON

Jewish National Fund USA

A delegation from the Pacific Northwest was among the nearly 3,000 attendees who united for Israel's future in Hollywood, Fla., from Oct. 23-26, 2025, at Jewish National Fund-USA's Global Conference for Israel. This four-day event celebrated resilience, Zionist pride, and the enduring connection between the Jewish community and the land and people of Israel.

The sold-out conference — one of the largest Zionist events of its kind in the world — brought together local community members, as well as philanthropists, college students, young professionals, clergy, mayors from Israel's North and South, social media influencers, and global allies of the people of Israel for a gathering of inspiration, education, and impact.

"At a time when Israel and the Jewish people face unprecedented challenges, our voices rose together in solidarity, purpose, and hope," said Jewish National Fund-USA CEO Russell F. Robinson. "This was not just a conference — it was a movement. Together, we are building Israel's future, from the Negev and Galilee to every corner of the Jewish world."

"This was my first Jewish National Fund-

USA conference and I'm so glad I went!" said Margie Starnes. "It was both educational and inspiring. It was truly a special feeling to be amongst so many like-minded people of many diverse backgrounds, and the speakers and workshops were all engaging. The biggest issue I had was choosing which ones to go to since there were so many excellent choices!"

The conference's main-stage sessions featured emotional and thought-provoking moments. There was also a fireside conversation with journalist and New York Times Bestselling Author Douglas Murray, along with addresses from international broadcaster Erin Molan and messages of support from the President of Israel, Isaac Herzog, and US Rep. Ritchie Torres.

The event closed with the "Dreams for Tomorrow" main-stage session, where Robinson urged the crowd to keep building, giving, and leading: "Our story is not one of survival — it's one of revival," Robinson said. "Every person in this room is part of Israel's tomorrow."

Next year's Global Conference for Israel will take place November 12-15, 2026, at the Gaylord Pacific Resort and Convention Center in San Diego. To learn more, visit jnf.org/global.

GRANTS (continued from page 9)

Connection/Shabbat Hugs senior visits and volunteer engagement.

Jewish Family & Child Service: \$50,000 for wraparound senior services.

Jewish Family & Child Service: \$35,000 for emergency financial assistance for Jewish elders.

Nehamah Jewish Chaplaincy Services: \$50,000 for community-wide spiritual care and support for elders.

BB360: \$46,000 for new programs for elders, including musical intergenerational programming and a spiritual retreat.

Jewish Association for Death Education (JADE): \$18,000 for L'dor v'Dor End-of-Life Learning Cohort

Jewish Federation of Greater Portland: \$18,000 for Elder-led relational engagement program.

Tigard Chabad: \$6,000 for twice-monthly senior community gatherings.

Chabad of Southwest Portland: \$3,000 for Story Time with Seniors, connecting seniors with preschoolers.

Chabad of Gresham: \$3,000 for senior gatherings and Shabbat meal deliveries.

Chabad of Hillsboro: \$3,000 for From Our Heart to Your Home holiday outreach.

Jewish Federation of Greater Portland: \$3,000 for Jewish Grandparents Cohort.

Jewish Association for Death Education (JADE): \$2,600 for Memory Shabbat gatherings.

Chabad of Southwest Portland: \$1,800 for Chanukah celebrations in senior living communities.

Chabad of Southwest Portland: \$1,800 for Purim celebrations in senior living communities.

Chabad of Lake Oswego: \$1,800 for holiday gatherings and warm community connections for seniors.

RFJE launches elders survey

Robison Foundation for Jewish Elders

The Robison Foundation is launching a year-long listening effort to better understand the real needs of Jewish adults 65+ and those who care for them. As we prepare future rounds of grantmaking, we want to ensure that our resources strengthen programs and services that truly improve lives.

We're hoping to hear from Jewish adults age 65+ and adult children, partners and caregivers supporting someone 65+.

Community members are invited to begin by completing a brief survey, which may be followed by an interview, a focus group discussion, or a longer survey. Some participants may also be invited to join an ongoing Advisory Panel that will help guide this work throughout the year.

This project is not sales or fundraising. All information is confidential and used solely to inform community research and future funding priorities.

Lived experience—your challenges, your insights, your hopes—is the most powerful tool we have to shape meaningful support for older adults in the Portland Jewish community. The more voices we hear, the better we can invest in programs that reflect what families actually need. Sign up here: <https://tinyurl.com/RobisonSurvey> by Jan. 1, 2026.

Please contact the Robison Foundation at info@rfje.org or 503-974-3849 with any questions.

CHANUKAH HAPPENINGS

CHECK OUT OUR
HOLIDAY CALENDAR &
RESOURCE GUIDE

CLICK HERE 



Jewish Federation
of Greater Portland

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

Editor
Rockne Roll
editor@jewishportland.org

Associate Editor
Caron Blau Rothstein

Assistant Editor
Rachel Nelson

Circulation

To receive the Jewish Review in your email inbox, fill out the form at
jewishportland.org/subscribe

OPINIONS printed in the Jewish Review do not necessarily reflect those of the Jewish Review, the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, its governing board or the staffs of either the newspaper or the Federation.

Jewish Federation of Greater Portland online
Website: jewishportland.org
Instagram: [instagram.com/jewishfederationpdx](https://www.instagram.com/jewishfederationpdx)
Facebook: [facebook.com/JewishPDX](https://www.facebook.com/JewishPDX)
Jewish Review:
jewishportland.org/jewish-review

NEXT ISSUE

Issue date **Deadline**
DEC 17 **DEC 11**

Security Corner

Save a life - Learn to use an AED

By JESSICA ANDERSON

In any community, knowing how to respond in a moment of crisis can improve the chances of positive outcomes. This is especially true when it comes to cardiac arrest, as almost 2200 people a day suffer heart attacks in the US. Statistically, at some point, you will know someone who has one. Across the country, automated external defibrillators—commonly known as AEDs and found in most public buildings—have become an everyday tool in saving lives before professional help arrives. For a Jewish community—one that values *pikuach nefesh*, the preservation of life—learning how to use an AED is both a practical skill and a reflection of shared responsibility. If you are a reader of my column, you know this is a common theme in my efforts to encourage community training.

My message is timely because more people suffer heart attacks in December and January than at any other time of year. Winter months carry more susceptibility due to cold temperatures and seasonal illnesses, which increase inflammation and cardiovascular strain. Holiday stress and changes in how we eat and consume alcohol are also contributors. Lastly, we tend to exercise less in the winter, and with busy schedules, we often delay medical care. All of this means that you might be a person who needs to use an AED. They are simple to use, and my goal in this article is to add this skill to your toolbox.

An AED is a portable de-



Jessica Anderson is the Portland-area Director of Community Security. She was previously an FBI agent for 24 years. This position is funded by SCN (the official safety and security organization of the Jewish community in North America) and a local three-way partnership of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, Oregon Jewish Community Foundation Endowment Fund and multiple Jewish organizations in the region.

vice designed to analyze a person's heart rhythm and deliver an electric shock if needed. AEDs are intentionally built for everyday people who may find themselves in a moment where a quick response matters. Many synagogues, community centers, and schools in Portland already have AEDs installed. As you visit the spaces you frequent, take a moment to identify where the AEDs are located.

The first step in using an AED is to recognize when it's needed. If someone collapses, is unresponsive, and is not breathing normally—or is only gasping—they may be experiencing a cardiac arrest. Call 911 right away or direct someone else to do so. 911 will also help you navigate this scenario.

Next, begin CPR if you are able: push hard and fast in the center of the chest at a quick pace. While CPR keeps blood flowing, the AED addresses the underlying heart rhythm problem. Have another person bring the AED if one is available nearby. Most devices are stored in clearly marked cabinets in hallways, lobbies, or near gathering spaces. Some have alarms that will alert

when the cabinet is opened.

When you open an AED and turn it on, a voice will tell you what to do. The device will guide you step-by-step. They are very “idiot-proof”! You will want to expose the person's chest area and attach the adhesive pads as shown on the diagrams, usually on the pads (see image). The AED will then analyze the heart rhythm automatically and will tell you if you need to press a button or not. Make sure no one is touching the person during the shock. After the shock—or if no shock is advised—continue CPR until emergency responders arrive and take over.

Using an AED is an important skill. First, early defibrillation dramatically increases survival rates. For every minute without CPR or defibrillation, the chances of survival drop significantly. In a community setting where help may be minutes away, bystanders become the first line of response.

Second, learning AED skills strengthens community resilience. When members of communities are equipped with this knowledge, it reflects a shared

See SECURITY, page 13

Guest Column

Write a letter to say 'Rom, you are not alone'

By MIRIAM REED

The living hostages have been released but some – perhaps many – may still be tormented by the memories of what they endured. This includes 21-year-old Rom Braslavsky, who was reluctant to leave the hospital where he was surrounded by people who cared for him. Without that support, he was afraid he might go crazy.

I find it amazing that he is still sane. Even more amazing is that Braslavsky, 19 when kidnapped on October 7, could have prevented possibly fatal torture by agreeing to convert to Islam, but he refused. "I was born a Jew, and I will die a Jew," he told the guards from Islamic Jihad.

Except for 48 hours with another hostage, Rom endured 17 months of being confined alone, blindfolded much of the time, and deafened by the plugs inserted into his ears. He was allowed to relieve himself three times a day, times set by his guards, not by his need. His water ration was reduced to about a pint a day. He was given so little food that he lost up to fifty percent of his body weight and was at risk of organ failure. Then he was tortured. His guards punched him in the head and beat his

ankles with a metal whip until both of his legs were swollen. His agony was filmed by his captors and shown to the Israeli public as propaganda to encourage Israel to pull troops out of Gaza and release Palestinian terrorists before he, and other captives receiving similar treatment, died.

After reading all that, I felt I had to reach out to him to stay sane myself. I wanted him to know that even a woman in a city in Oregon, on the west coast of the United States, knows and cares about him and celebrates his faith and courage. I sent him a letter and so did nine other members of my Portland congregation, Ahavath Achim.

After the first batch of letters went out, I saw a video of Rom being ushered into a restaurant where everyone in the place stood up and applauded. He seemed hesitant but took the hands reaching out to him. Then my son sent a second video. Rom had made an impromptu speech to a gathering at Hostage Square in Tel Aviv. The hundreds listening cheered and chanted. And he nearly danced in response.

But the clouds have not all disappeared. He still faces the nights alone – and the nightmares. I like to think

he can turn on a bedside lamp and find comfort in what we send. I am hoping for an avalanche of letters from all over the world saying, "Rom, we love and need you! You are not alone!"

When we write, let's honor the almost unbelievable sacrifice he made for the Jewish faith and for us, the Jewish people. Here in the diaspora, we are slowly regaining the courage to wear a *kippah* or other signs of Jewish identity in public, despite the possibility of being attacked, or ostracized, or just made uncomfortable in our workplaces, our schools, our social venues. We're beginning to understand how much is lost when we keep our mouths shut to avoid destroying the friendships we established with non-Jews before October 7 turned the world upside down. Now let's think again about the choices made by our brother Rom.

Letters can be sent to:

Rom Braslavsky
Care of Gaya Peri
Hostages and Missing Families Forum: Bring Them Home Now
Leonardo da Vinci Street 13
Tel Aviv-Yafo, Israel 6473315
Miriam Reed is an author and former news reporter.

SECURITY (continued from page 12)

commitment to mutual care and having trained individuals nearby increases safety for everyone.

As with all training, becoming familiar with AEDs helps reduce fear. Many

people hesitate because they worry about doing something wrong. Yet AEDs are designed to be easy to use and prevent further injury to the victim; they will not deliver a shock unless it is

medically necessary.

Learning to use an AED is more than a technical skill – it is an act of responsibility and compassion. Please take time to understand these devices so our community

continues the values of caring, preparedness, and safeguarding life. Empowered with knowledge, any one of us could become the person who saves a life when it matters most.

Jobs Board

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

Check out Portland's Chanukah celebrations at jewishportland.org/ourcommunity/chanukahresources25

Obituaries

Submit obituaries to The Jewish Review's online form at form.jotform.com/JFGP/jr-obituary

ZELDA BLOCK

Congregation Beth Israel mourns the loss of Zelda Block, z”l, who passed away on Nov. 17, 2025 at the age of 86.

Zelda is survived by her children, Nadine Block (Patrick Vennebush) and Robert Block (Letty Reyes Block); her brother, Harvey Miller (Eleanor); grandchildren, Alex and Elijah Vennebush; and nieces and nephews, Natalie Mendelsohn, Erin Miller, Rachel Miller, Alyson Miller-Foulk, and Fred Zeller. Zelda is preceded in death by her husband, Julian Block, z”l; her sister, Evelyn Miller, z”l; and her parents, Minnie and Murry Miller, z”l.

A funeral was held Wednesday, Nov. 19 at Congregation Beth Israel. Donations in Zelda's memory can be made to 92NY, Hunter College and The Yiddish Book Center.

BERT ROGOWAY

It is with deep sadness that Congregations Shaarie Torah and Neveh Shalom announce the passing of Bert Rogoway, z”l, beloved husband of Laurie Rogoway. Bert passed away on Monday, Dec. 1, 2025 at the age of 95.

He leaves behind a loving family: Laurie, his wife of 61 years; children Susanne (Michael) Wendrow, Allen (Alli) Rogoway and Edie (Nathan) Rogoway; and 9 grandchildren: Aisha, Rael, Levi, Sethen, Mayson, Ruby, Shay, Ozzie and Georgia.

A private burial will be held at Shaarie Torah Cemetery. A public memorial service will be held on Thursday, Dec. 4 at 2 pm in Zidell Hall at Rose Schnitzer Manor. Shiva minyan and reception will immediately follow the service.



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

Community Calendar

The Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Community Calendar contains information on local events, speakers, webinars, the arts, information for young families and much more!

MON TUE WED THUR

4 5 6 7

11 12 13 14

18 19 20 21

25 26 27 28

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Jewish Federation of Greater Portland