

# The JEWISH REVIEW

Oregon and SW Washington's Online Jewish Newspaper

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## Trans Jewish leader proud of both

BY DEBORAH MOON

Congregation Shir Tikvah's new president, Emma Lugo, is likely the first transgender woman to lead a synagogue board in Oregon. Her election coincides with both increased acceptance and visibility of LGBTQ individuals and a dramatic increase in antisemitic and LGBTQ hate crimes.

"I am proud of both of my communities, and that pride gives me strength," says Lugo, who began her presidency in October. "It's a really exciting, thrilling time to be a transgender Jew."

Lugo is also the president of KBOO radio, where she hosts Transpositive PDX, which explores the vibrant activism in Portland reflecting the transgender communities. The show airs at 6 pm the first and third Tuesday of every month. She hopes to feature another prominent trans woman, Jeopardy champion Amy Schneider, on a future episode.

PBS called the 2022 midterms "a historic year for LGBTQ candidates vying for state and federal office," with more than 430 winning election according to the LGBTQ Victory Fund. Oregon Governor-elect Tina Kotek will be one of the first



Shir Tikvah President Emma Lugo.

two lesbian governors in history. It was also a history-making election for transgender candidates running for state legislatures, the PBS report continued.

"Being Jewish and being trans gives me more strength. It doesn't give me fear, even though I know there is reason to be afraid," says Lugo.

See TRANS JEWISH, page 8

## Teen drummer rocks out for charity



Judah Lopkin plays the bucket drums at Pioneer Courthouse Square to support the food bank Feeding America.

BY GABRIEL MALKA

Judah Lopkin, 16, is not your average drummer. The Sunday before Thanksgiving, Lopkin took to the crowded downtown streets to perform on the bucket drums to raise money for the food rescue organization Feeding America.

Bucket drums involve drumming on plastic buckets and other objects to create beats and rhythms.

Why did a high school junior decide to do this? "As much as I enjoy drumming, I felt unfulfilled," says Lopkin. "I really wanted to use my passion for drumming to do something that mattered. I became tremendously inspired by the YouTuber and philanthropist MrBeast, who makes charity fun through entertaining fundraisers and donations. I wanted to combine my passion for drumming with charity in a fun way, and the idea of playing the bucket drums downtown took off from there."

The Jewish concept of *Or L'goyim* (a light upon the nations) was another inspiration.

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# Agency Spotlight



## B'NAI B'RITH CAMP

**SERVICE:** Camps and Youth, Adult & Family Engagement  
[bbcamp.org](http://bbcamp.org) | 503-496-7444

**2022-23 FUNDING:** \$91,200 (\$36,500 in an operations allocation and \$54,700 in One Happy Camper grants)

**MISSION:** BB Camp provides safe, nurturing and fun experiences in a welcoming environment that inspires individual growth and enduring Jewish identity. Youth-centered summer camps and year-round programs for all ages build communities and develop future leaders.

Since 1921, BB Camp's core program has been an overnight summer camp on the Oregon coast. In recent years, BB Camp has expanded to include day camps across Oregon; family camps; adult camps; rentals and retreats; and youth, adult and family year-round engagement programming.

"Based in Jewish values, our agency lays the groundwork for diverse and dynamic experiential opportunities that create community and future leaders," says Chief Executive Officer Michelle Koplan. "BB Camp is proud to be a boundless *kehila* (community) of different ages, denominations, backgrounds, languages and abilities."

"In 2022, our Second Century Capital Campaign was completed, and our entire campus was rebuilt to include modern ADA-accessible buildings, including our brand new Zidell Field House," says Koplan.

BB Camp is nationally recognized for its inclusive culture. In recent years, support and care to campers and staff has ensured camp is a safe space for those with mental, emotional and social health (MESH) needs. In 2023, BB Camp is adding two mental health/community care professionals to its year-round professional team.

Also new in 2023, BB Golfs and BB Adventures join BB Surfs as specialty tracks available for overnight campers. The camp also is constructing a Performing Arts Center to house Jewish music, Israeli dance and performing arts.

"The Jewish Federation's commitment to One Happy Camper grants for first-time campers of Jewish overnight camp has been fundamental in ensuring access to Jewish camp for all families," says Koplan. "As a community that prides itself on inclusion, BB Camp is beyond grateful to the Jewish Federation for making funds available to families choosing Jewish camp for their children."

BB Camp offers a robust volunteer committee structure with more than 190 volunteers creating meaningful experiences in the arts, nature, sports, Judaism and more for camp youth. Volunteer physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants and mental health professionals are also needed for summer overnight camp. To volunteer or for information, email [mkoplan@bbcamp.org](mailto:mkoplan@bbcamp.org).

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## Sherman honored at Hillel Global Assembly

Greater Portland Hillel Executive Director Hannah Sherman received the Richard M. Joel Exemplar of Excellence Award at Hillel International's Global Assembly Dec. 12-13 in Dallas.

The award honors professionals in various stages of their careers whose remarkable passion and outstanding devotion to the Jewish campus community enrich Hillel students' lives and set a standard of excellence.

"I am beyond honored to have been awarded the Richard M. Joel Exemplar of Excellence Award at Hillel International's Global Assembly," says Hannah. "For the last 8.5 years, I've been excited to wake up every day and work with the thousands of Jewish college students between Santa Barbara and Portland." Richard Joel led the effort to transform Hillel from a department of B'nai B'rith to an independent, global organization and then served as the first president and international director of that new entity. The Exemplar of Excellence Awards were established in 1994 and were named in Richard's honor in 2004. Hillel Exemplars represent the attributes that define what a Hillel professional should be.

"I made my best friends working at Hillel, took hundreds of students on five trips to Israel and two trips to Germany, and spent countless hours laughing until I cried, learning and eating bagels," says Hannah. "To all my coworkers, past and present, thank you for being my partners in this work. To all my students, past and present, you are why I love what I do, and you give my work meaning."

The first in-person conference in three years attracted more than 1,000 Hillel professionals and supporters from all over the world.

"The resilience and creativity of Hillel professionals and their commitment to Jewish students stayed strong throughout the last three years," said Skip Vichness, Chair of the Hillel International Board of Directors.

After accepting her award, Hannah said, "To my board and Hillel International colleagues, thank you for being my mentors and guides and trusting me to lead and take risks. This work isn't always easy, in fact it is oftentimes incredibly challenging, but I know there is no place I'd rather be."

The Greater Portland Hillel serves students on campuses across the metro area. For more information, visit [pdxhillel.org](http://pdxhillel.org).



PDX Hillel team from left: Maddie Herrup, Hannah Sherman, Hillel International Campus Support Director Jay Lewis and Linoy Yechieli.

Our community has so much  
to celebrate and still much work to do!



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## Editor

Deborah Moon  
[editor@jewishportland.org](mailto:editor@jewishportland.org)

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Submit photos, news and obituaries to  
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# Chaplain's Corner

## We Are All Going to Die

BY RABBI BARRY COHEN

A significant portion of my time and energy as Community Chaplain is devoted to interacting with people who are dying and with their loved ones who are witnessing this process. After they die, I then interact with family and friends who are processing their traumatic experience.

These interactions have been emotionally charged, draining and humbling. One lesson I have learned is that the majority of us are not prepared to confront death and lack the knowledge and skills to navigate its aftermath.

I want to relate this phenomenon to the TV series Adam Conover created, "Adam Ruins Everything." With this series, Conover addresses common misconceptions through in-depth explorations of various topics. He tackled charitable giving, voting, weight loss, college and the suburbs, among other subjects. Along the way, he presents historical background, interviews with real-life experts and peer-reviewed studies. At the end of each episode, there is a positive takeaway. He doesn't ruin

commonly held beliefs just to ruin them; he breaks them down to replace them with something that is more constructive and healthier.

One of my favorite episodes was "Adam Ruins Death." Here is an excerpt of his opening monologue:

*Here's a challenge. I want you to believe what I am about to tell you. Not just hear it. Not just understand it. But believe it. It's a fact that you know to be true but have never been willing to accept. And it's this. You are going to die. It's difficult to be able to imagine, isn't it? Take a moment and try to picture what it is to not exist. You can't do it. You're imagining darkness, black. But there would be no black. There will be no color because there will be no "you" to perceive it. And your mind recoils from that idea. It's simply unable to conceive of its own nonexistence.*

How many of us have stopped what we are doing, sat down and contemplated our deaths? After I watched this episode, I did

See CHAPLAIN: DEATH, page 5

## RESOURCES FOR DEATH, DYING & MOURNING

### Burial Societies

Portland has two holy societies of volunteers who prepare the deceased for burial according to Jewish tradition: Chevra Kavod haMet and the Portland Hevra Kaddisha.

For questions about preparing for end of life, dying, death and mourning, visit [ChevraKavodHaMet.org](http://ChevraKavodHaMet.org) or email [chevrakavodhamet@gmail.com](mailto:chevrakavodhamet@gmail.com), or contact Michael Rosenberg at the Portland Hevra Kaddisha at [michael@cashcolan.com](mailto:michael@cashcolan.com) or 503-519-2454.

### Hesed Shel Emet

Hesed's mission is to provide a Jewish burial in keeping with the traditions and practices of Judaism for individuals who could not afford it.

[jewishportland.org/ourcommunity/hesed-shel-emet](http://jewishportland.org/ourcommunity/hesed-shel-emet)

### A Jewish Ending: Dying, death, mourning and beyond

Chevra Kavod haMet hosted a Zoom program about how to be prepared to make practical and personal decisions about the time before death, the moment of passing, preparations for burial, internment options, stages of mourning and the afterlife. See a recording at [tinyurl.com/2s3zb8r5](https://tinyurl.com/2s3zb8r5). Those topics were covered in more depth during a spring series that can be viewed at [chevrakavodhamet.org/questions/continued-learning/](http://chevrakavodhamet.org/questions/continued-learning/).

### JFCS Grief Connection

Jewish Family & Child Service hosts a monthly grief-processing group for adults the first Friday of every month at 10 am on Zoom. For details, visit [jfcs-portland.org/grief-connection/](http://jfcs-portland.org/grief-connection/).

### National Jewish Death & Dying Resources

Shomer Collective ([shomercollective.org](http://shomercollective.org)) serves as a concierge, curator, convener and change agent for end-of-life conversations and experiences, guided by Jewish values. See partners: [shomercollective.org/our-partners](http://shomercollective.org/our-partners).

## CHAPLAIN: DEATH (from previous page)

my best to conceptualize the aftermath of my death. No matter how I tried, I could not wrap my brain around the idea of my nonexistence.

I know I am in deep water right now because Judaism has much to say about the afterlife. There is more than one answer to the question, “What happens after I die?” That being said, no one knows for sure what happens to us after we die. And many of us do not even believe in an afterlife; we think that the life we have now is the only life we will ever have.

How are we to come to terms with and accept the reality that we will inevitably decline and that one day, we will take our last breath and die?

In the episode’s opening, Conover continues:

*Your body is a marvelous and intricate machine built out of millions of interconnected, fragile systems, and as you age, each system begins to slowly but surely deteriorate and break down. When one fails, a doctor may be able to repair it, but at some point, there will be too many interlocking failures to proceed, and like a cascade of dominoes, your joints, your eyes, your heart, your lungs, your memory, your entire body will fail. It will happen. And while it’s difficult to hear this truth, it is essential that you accept it because every second that goes by in which you don’t is a second of your precious and finite life that you risk wasting.*

With these words, Conover foreshadows the positive takeaway. It is up to us to maximize the time we have and to make this precious commodity meaningful, positive and memorable.

In general, movies and television shows are not doing us any favors concerning dying, death and mourning. They do not accurately show how the body dies, what happens near death and how we can grieve our traumas.



Rabbi Barry Cohen is the Jewish community chaplain of the Greater Portland area. [chaplain@jewishportland.org](mailto:chaplain@jewishportland.org)

One way to make our lives meaningful and constructive is to understand what happens to our bodies as we age. Sherwin Nuland has written an amazing resource, *How We Die*. He describes, in great detail, what happens when confronted with heart disease, Alzheimer’s, cancer or simply old age. Knowledge is power. The more we know, the more we understand what we can control and what we cannot control. This is vital in preserving our psychological/spiritual health and in determining what kind of care we want to receive (or not to receive).

The bottom line is that life is a precious gift. We have so many ways to celebrate and preserve that gift, but we also have many alternatives about how to let go of that gift.

I am only 54, but I have had to accept the reality that parts of my body are beginning to decline. An unexpected ailment pops up here, heals and then another pops up over there. The more I understand this cold, hard reality of aging, the better decisions I will be able to make now and in the future.

I know I’m going to die. But my important next step is to devote more time and energy to how I am going to live best with the time I have left.

## JFCS shares resources to help you plan ahead

In October, Jewish Family & Child Service hosted “Planning Ahead: A Jewish Imperative to Plan for the Unmentionables” by Jerry Cohen, JD, MPA.

Cohen is a retired attorney and past state director for AARP Oregon. The program focused on end-of-life planning, specifically on Advance Directives.

“From a Jewish ethical perspective, it’s imperative to plan ahead for one’s family and to express in advance one’s personal wishes,” Cohen says. “I expect attendees to leave with a better understanding of advance planning and with the motivation to begin or revisit the next steps to develop or implement such plans. I hope people will take action because of this workshop – for themselves and their loved ones.”

The following resources were shared with attendees to help them plan ahead and provide information to care providers and loved ones about specific, personal desires.

- [wingsoregon.org/get-a-life-plan](http://wingsoregon.org/get-a-life-plan)

This site includes information on Advance Directives, Portable Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST), and other forms and processes related to planning ahead, including for individuals with disabilities.

- [oregonpolst.org/](http://oregonpolst.org/)

The POLST is a medical order between an individual and a health-care professional that specifies medical treatments that the individual would want during a medical emergency. Emergency medical responders and emergency medicine health-care professionals follow these orders, unless there is new information presented by a patient or their legal decision maker.

- [adrcforegon.org/](http://adrcforegon.org/)

The Oregon Aging & Disability Resource Connection provides 24-hour information and assistance to older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers. They can assist with enrolling in government programs, investigating possible abuse, locating adult-care homes and more.

- [evolvingelders.com/](http://evolvingelders.com/)

Cohen and his wife, Ruth, created this website for Evolving Elders. The services are all related to aging, caregiving, planning, etc.

## Public service

### Get Screened Today!

JScreen offers two at-home genetic testing options: the ReproGEN test screens young singles and couples for over 200 conditions, like Tay-Sachs and cystic fibrosis, and the CancerGEN test screens adults for genetic predisposition to many types of cancer.

[JScreen.org](http://JScreen.org)

[www.JScreen.org](http://www.JScreen.org)



## Obituaries

### VICTORIA REZVANIPOUR

Victoria Rezvanipour, z”l, passed away Dec. 16, 2022. She was the wife of Joseph Khajehzadeh, z”l, and the oldest of six children. She is remembered by her children, Ben Abraham (Libby Jochnowitz) Kahn, Shiva (Dorel) Busuioc, Benjamin (Amy) Kahn and Behyar (Lia Lam) Khajehzadeh; her grandchildren, Yoni (Rebecca) Kahn, Shannel (Elias), Juline, Mathew, Jared and Sydney; and her great-grandchildren, Zolly, Yoshi, Amari and Cairo.

A memorial service was held at Congregation Neveh Shalom Dec. 18.

Submit obituaries to [editor@jewishportland.org](mailto:editor@jewishportland.org)



Portland Lions (from left) Wendy Kahn, Nicole Sacks and Sharon Weil were joined by Portland's Regional Security Director Jessica



Anderson, who was a conference presenter, at the International Lion of Judah Conference in Phoenix.

## Lions share ideals and dreams at conference

BY WENDY KAHN

More than 1,200 mothers, daughters, grandmothers, nieces, long-time friends, new friends, activists, philanthropists and impact makers from across the United States, Mexico, Canada and Israel gathered for the International Lion of Judah Conference Dec. 11-13 in Phoenix to celebrate 50 years of Lion of Judah together.

They were brought together by shared personal values, core principles and philosophical ideals and were gathering in person for the first time since 2019.

"Women's philanthropy is the fastest growing campaign in Jewish Federations," says Jewish Federations of North America board chair Julie Platt. "Jewish Federations are dedicated to supporting and strengthening the role of women in their charitable decision-making, as they continue to inspire the next generation of philanthropic leadership."

I was joined at the conference by Portlanders Sharon Weil, Nicole Sacks and Regional Security Director and conference presenter Jessica Anderson. Jessica was invited to speak because of her role in our community and because she's the only Jewish woman serving as an SCN security director.

"It was an honor to be selected to represent Secure Community Network and Oregon/SW Washington at the conference," says Jessica. "My presentation focused on how the word *Hineni* was so important to me in my work as Security Advisor and the rewards of continuing to serve in this capacity. It is through this work I am saying 'Here I am' to our community no matter what the ask is. It was also wonderful to be around the energy of 1,200 energized and creative women doing amazing things in their communities."

Other speakers included Rep. Kathy Manning (D-NC), Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Academy Award winner Marlee Matlin and award-winning journalist Katie Couric.

One pop-up gathering explored how the mental health of young adults is impacted by OneTable Shabbat dinners. OneTable is a national nonprofit that empowers 21- to 39ish-year-olds to find, share and enjoy Shabbat dinners using a social dining platform. Another pop-up addressed women's health and reproductive health access. One gathering shared how our global Jewish community's work through the JDC, JAFI, JFNA and other agencies has aided the people of Ukraine. Other gatherings included "Reimagining the Tent" about Jewish equity, diversity and inclusion; "A Tree of Life: The Pittsburgh Synagogue" – responding to antisemitism; and a Dignity Grows pack to provide free monthly hygiene items for those in need.

Lions are women who make a philanthropic contribution to the

***One gathering shared how our global Jewish community's work has aided the people of Ukraine. Another explored Jewish equity, diversity and inclusion.***

Jewish Federation's annual community campaign of \$5,000 or more. This gift can be an individual contribution or made jointly with a partner (spouse).

Lions can be identified by their iconic gold Lion pins. But there's so much more to Lions than the physical pin. There's a woman behind each pin. A story. A generation of women on whose shoulders the Jewish community was built. Perhaps a pin was handed down from a grandmother to her granddaughter to inspire the next generation to begin her own Jewish philanthropic journey. Perhaps she didn't have a seat at the board table, but she gathered a group of like-minded women to address the needs of her community.

Fifty years ago, Lions' cofounder Norma Kipnis-Wilson, z"l, chose \$5,000 to become a Lion because that was the cost of resettling a family from the Soviet Union. Today, \$5,000 is still the entry point to become a Lion, and collectively, 18,000 women worldwide are proud Lions. In Portland, we are proud of the more than 90 Lions who inspire generations through their doing and giving.

Recipients of the Kipnis-Wilson/Friedland Award, which honors extraordinary women who have set a high standard for philanthropy and volunteerism, were celebrated during a beautiful tallit ceremony. Sharon Weil accepted the award on behalf of her mother, honoree Elaine Savinar.

Our Portland contingent looks forward to sharing reflections and best practices from other Women's philanthropy communities across the country and creating new stories for the women of Portland – for those wearing a Lion pin, those yet to wear a pin, and all women who want to engage, learn and make a difference in our fabulous Jewish community.

To learn more about the conference visit [lionconference.org](https://lionconference.org).

*Wendy Kahn is the Chief Development Officer and Director of Women's Philanthropy for the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland. To learn about involvement with Women's Philanthropy and the Lions of Judah in Portland, contact Wendy Kahn at [wendy@jewishportland.org](mailto:wendy@jewishportland.org).*

# Portlander cycles Israel for co-existence, environment

BY DEBORAH MOON

Portlander Alan Bacharach cycled 342 miles in five days to raise funds to support the work of the [Arava Institute for Environmental Studies](#), the premier environmental academic and research institute in the region, and Hazon.

The Israel Ride was founded in 2003 by the Arava Institute and Hazon, a U.S.-based Jewish environmental organization. On this year's Nov. 1-7 ride, participants rode from Jerusalem to Eilat, with routes for beginner to advanced cyclists. Riders had a Shabbat rest day in Mitzpe Ramon in the Negev Desert.

Bacharach exceeded his goal of \$4,200 and had raised \$5,803 for the two organizations as of Dec. 15. The 2022 Israel Ride also exceeded its goal of a million dollars, raising \$1,010,076.

"The Arava Institute was far more impactful than I envisioned," says Bacharach. "They do environmental research with field implementation – that's their purpose. The far grander byproduct is Arabs and Israelis collaborating in the institute and afterward, peacefully and even joyfully."

The small student body is one-third Arab, one-third Israeli and one-third foreign, many of whom are American. The Arab and Israeli students meet weekly to share their backgrounds and perceptions of their societies. Many students and alumni supported the cyclists, driving vans and providing food and other support. The cyclists and students/alumni also interacted often throughout the week.

"It's clear the students were very close friends who cared about each other, and many were continuing professionally at improving the broader environment around them – some with science, some with society," says Bacharach. "It's building much more than better use of methane from decomposing matter (another Arava project)."

One of the alumni who spoke with cyclists was Dr. Amer Sweity, who was an undergraduate at the Arava Institute and then became the first Jordanian to receive a doctorate from an Israeli university (Ben Gurion University).

"He was working with the Jordanian ministry of agriculture on a joint project



Portlander Alan Bacharach, foreground, cycles through the Negev desert as part of the Israel Ride to raise funds for the environment and co-existence in Israel.

with Israel," says Bacharach.

Bacharach says his favorite Arava project was a black water (sewage) filtration box. "It filtered the sewage into usable irrigation water, with no byproduct; sludge was eaten by algae," he says. "It's being field-tested now in the West Bank, a Bedouin village in the Negev and in Jordan. An American intern has some experience in project management, and she's using her economics background to see if the box can be built more economically."

Bacharach is a member of Congregation Kesser Israel, the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Israel Advocacy Committee and Oregon Jewish Community Foundation's Advisors' group. He is on the board of [Israel21c.org](#).

This was the last year that funds from the ride also benefited Hazon, which this year merged with the Pearlstone Retreat Center. While the new organization maintains a commitment to Israel, the Israel Ride is no longer a focus of Hazon's ongoing efforts to promote sustainability within the Jewish community.

For more information on Arava, visit [arava.org](#). Bacharach's page for the ride is [give.israelride.org/fundraiser/3644389](#).

## Life-cycle event

### Anniversary

Arnold & Elaine Cogan

Arnold and Elaine Cogan celebrate their 70<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on Dec. 21, 2022.

The couple have three children, all of whom live in Portland, Mark (and wife, PJ) Cogan, Sue (and husband, Bob) Van Brocklin and Leonard Cogan. They have six grandchildren: Elizabeth, Kate, Meg, Joshua, Annabelle and Rodrigo; and two great-grandchildren, Jovie and Remy.

Arnold was originally from Bath, Maine, and Elaine was born in Brooklyn, N.Y. Both of their families moved to Oregon when they were young.

"Arnold and I met when we were juniors in high school – he at Grant, I at Lincoln – and were married when we were juniors at Oregon State," says Elaine.

Their wedding ceremony was held at Congregation Tifereth Israel, which later merged into the synagogue that became Congregation Neveh Shalom. Elaine was the first woman president of Neveh Shalom, and Arnold became president of the congregation a few years later.

Arnold was the first statewide Director of Land Use Planning under Governor Tom McCall, was a member of the Environmental Quality Commission, and served as the first executive director of Oregon's Land Conservation and Development Commission. He was also the first planning director of the Port of Portland. He was honored as Planner of the Year by the Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association.

Elaine served as editor of the Portland Jewish Review and as president of the League of Women Voters. Elaine is the author of *You Can Talk to (Almost) Anyone about (almost) Anything, a Speaking Guide for Business and Professional People*. She wrote a weekly column for The Oregonian for 15 years and provided political commentary on local TV for several years. She was a close advisor to various elected officials. Mother's Bistro named her a Mother of the Month, during which it shared some of her favorite recipes. In addition to their independent careers, the two served many clients through the consulting firm they cofounded. Elaine and Arnold have always been very active in community affairs through the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education and the Portland City Club. Even in their retirement, they remain engaged in community activities, and are patrons of the performing arts. Mazeltov to the Cogans!



# TRANS JEWISH (from page 1)

National organizations make that reason clear. Anti-LGBTQ legislation remains on the rise, with more than 150 anti-trans bills introduced in states this year, according to the ACLU. The ADL reports antisemitic incidents in 2021 reached an all-time high nationally, with the trend apparently continuing this year.

But for Lugo, pride and sense of responsibility are dominant.

"I see it as a responsibility, not a privilege, to be a good steward of collective Jewish values," she says, adding she is excited to "have the opportunity to serve my community in this way."

She says Shir Tikvah has gone out of its way to create an open and welcoming space. She describes the Torah study Rabbi Ariel Stone leads each Saturday as an opportunity to support people as they explore Judaism in whatever way suits them. With Shir Tikvah now located at the Eastside Jewish Commons, there is space to welcome anyone interested to join the Torah study and other programs.

"My goal is to keep the boat going steady," says Lugo. "Moving here (to the EJC) already rocked the boat."

Congregation Shir Tikvah and Eastside Jewish Commons moved into 13,000 square feet of space at 2420 NE Sandy Blvd. in May 2021.

The move has given the independent congregation the space to grow and to help others explore their Judaism. But Lugo says she misses the small, intimate gatherings when they met in a church basement. The pandemic also changed the congregation, introducing electronics – including Zoom and microphones – to Shabbat observance.

"I want to nurture and foster what we have going," says Lugo. "The work we have done as a congregation belongs to the whole community. We are a socially engaged, Torah-centered, inclusive community practicing Judaism that is both very traditional and very open."

"My goal is to support Rabbi and her important work," adds Lugo, who joined Shir Tikvah about seven years ago.

Lugo moved to Portland with her partner, Nini Thomas, 13 years ago from Minnesota. The two married a year later.

"There are all sorts of different relationships in the Torah," says Lugo, noting that makes Judaism open to a nontraditional approach to relationships.

"When Shir Tikvah started about 20 years ago, it started as an experiment," says Lugo. "It has transformed into a beautiful work of art, and I'm really excited to see what it does in the next five years."



Mitch Goldstein now works full time as Cedar Sinai Park's Life Enrichment Coordinator. Andrea Lonas Photography.

## Second career brings former attorney to Cedar Sinai Park

Covid was a challenging time for many people, and Mitch Goldstein was no exception. Cedar Sinai Park's new Life Enrichment Coordinator was in a private law practice for 35 years until the senior partner passed away unexpectedly in 2020.

"I started clerking for the firm my second year of law school in 1985 and was then offered a job right after I took the bar," says Mitch. "I was expecting to finish out my career there."

With the senior partner deceased, Mitch says the firm was no longer viable. He began winding down the practice for the next few months while taking gerontology classes at Portland Community College.

"I always really enjoyed my older relatives," says Mitch. "I had a close relationship with my grandparents and my great uncles and aunts. So, I started taking classes at PCC and enjoyed them."

Mitch also began volunteering at Cedar Sinai Park, playing Scrabble with residents at Rose Schnitzer Manor. "It is fun being around older people," he says. "They have great stories."

Mitch was offered a paid internship over the summer, and he recently started a full-time position at Cedar Sinai Park while continuing to pursue a professional certificate in gerontology.

"I've met so many interesting people, and you get to help people that are at a stage of life that can be really challenging," says Mitch. "They have so much to share, and I get as much out of it as they do, if not more. It's a win-win."

Mitch's dad was a symphony musician and music teacher in Connecticut, where Mitch grew up, so Mitch can play the oboe and flute. His wife, Mimi, works at Nike in its Innovation Department, and the couple have a dog, Koala. Mitch likes to swim, run and commute to work by bike.

"The draw here is the residents," he says. "I think there is also a nice symbiosis being Jewish, though I would have come here anyway, even if I weren't. I love it here."

## Jobs board

### JOBS BOARD

The Jewish Review publishes job openings from Jewish agencies and congregations. Submit to: [editor@jewishportland.org](mailto:editor@jewishportland.org).

### HAVURAH SHALOM

#### Participation and Publications Coordinator

**Salary range: \$40,000-45,000 plus benefits**

Havurah Shalom is a vibrant, diverse, participatory Jewish community steeped in spirituality, learning and acts of social responsibility. The coordinator helps facilitate Havurah's participatory, communal and spiritual ethos among prospective, new and long-standing members. This position also creates, edits and manages internal and external communications and databases. To apply, please send resume and cover letter to [adela.basayne@havurahshalom.org](mailto:adela.basayne@havurahshalom.org).

The full job description is posted on the [Jewish Career Hub](#) (see below).

### 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 description of all openings or submit new openings at [jewishportland.org/ourcommunity/jewish-jobs](http://jewishportland.org/ourcommunity/jewish-jobs).



Moshe and Miriam Carr moved to Portland in August with their four children. Their fifth child was born in September. The couple now are using their diverse backgrounds to share Jewish experiences with NCSY youth and local Jewish women.

## Miriam connects women

Miriam Carr brings a wealth of diverse experiences to her new role as Director of Women's Programming at the Portland Kollel.

She has worked as a technical writer, an NCSY co-director and a life coach. Born in St. Petersburg, Russia, she grew up and graduated college in California before making Aliyah and living in Israel for eight years. She met her husband, Moshe Carr (see related story at right), through a matchmaker. After starting their family, they moved to Calgary, Alberta, in 2018. They moved to Portland in August and had their fifth child a month later.

During her childhood, Miriam says her grandparents and parents identified as Jewish rather than Russian and spoke of persecution and fear. "We had a strong Jewish identity, but not much practice," says Miriam.

In college, she participated in Hillel and Birthright but found more resonance at a Heritage Retreat where she was paired with an observant woman as a mentor. Half of the women at the retreat were observant and half were not.

"I had never seen girls my age really immersed in daily Jewish life," she says. "It was my first exposure to living Jewishly in a very relatable way."

Now she wants to bring her varied perspectives to Jewish women in Portland.

"After Covid, women want to reconnect and have a sense of community," she says, adding she has several programs she looks forward to implementing to achieve that.

She plans weekly Torah learning at the Kollel on Shabbat mornings beginning at the end of this month.

In January, she will begin Kollel's Mommy Talks monthly program for mothers of young children. The program will offer relevant information for mothers and provide opportunities to build community. This program is funded by a grant from Federation's Women's Giving Circle.

She is working to create a variety of "core groups" to create mini communities among women with similar interests such as movement, crafting, being new to Judaism and other shared interests.

Earlier this month, a group of eight Portland women returned from Israel as part of Momentum, a trip that empowers women to connect to Jewish values, engage with Israel, take action and foster unity, without uniformity. With a newborn at home, Miriam couldn't join this trip, but she looks forward to working with this "small but mighty group" over the coming year and leading Portland contingents on future Momentum trips.

For more information on these or other women's programs, contact Miriam at [miriamcarr@portlandkollel.org](mailto:miriamcarr@portlandkollel.org).

## Moshe reaches youth

Rabbi Moshe Carr (he prefers to go by Moshe) became the Portland NCSY Director in August.

"Moshe brings with him years of experience, as he has previously served as the director of NCSY in Calgary, Canada," says Oregon NCSY Director Meira Spivak. "His friendly demeanor and can-do attitude are real assets to our team. We're glad he's joined the team."

Growing up in California, Moshe had trouble paying attention in classrooms at school and Sunday School in the Reform congregation he attended throughout his youth. He liked to be goofy and make people laugh. He still enjoys that role as he works with Portland youth.

Drums were his life (he performed with three bands during college), and he planned a career in music. But two trips to Israel with the Jerusalem Fellowship "opened up a world I never knew existed." After a semester studying at a Yeshiva ("in these classes, I was really awake and focused"), he spent his last year and half at college taking baby steps in Jewish practice – he stopped eating pork and shellfish, didn't mix milk and meat, and began to keep Shabbat.

When he graduated from college in 2010, he returned to Israel "for a year." It turned into eight years, during which he married Miriam and started a family (see related story at left).

The family moved to Calgary, where he and Miriam were co-directors of NCSY. When Covid cut funding, he started teaching at the local Jewish day school while working at NCSY part time.

"I enjoyed teaching, but I saw my strengths outside the classroom," says Moshe. "I really genuinely like meeting people and getting to know people in an organic way."

He uses those strengths to connect with teens at NCSY programs – whether they come for the frozen yogurt or to learn Jewishly. "I can be goofy and have fun and build relationships with kids."

As the Portland NCSY Director, he also runs Jewish Student Unions at nine high schools and one middle school. He says the JSUs have a low bar to entry. He normally visits each school every other week bringing food and an activity such as building sukkahs out of graham crackers and candy.

Next month, he will take a group of teens to Houston over the MLK Weekend for a "relief mission." Teens will rebuild houses destroyed in natural disasters, volunteer at a food bank and celebrate Shabbat at Aishel House, which supports patients and families at the Texas Medical Center.

To get involved in NCSY, JSU or the MLK weekend, contact Moshe at [carrm@ncsy.org](mailto:carrm@ncsy.org) or 971-427-5661.

# TEEN DRUMMER (from page 1)

"I truly feel this is the most important part of Judaism and the beacon that every other Jewish value and tradition points to," says Lopkin.

Choosing Feeding America as the nonprofit to raise money for was a no-brainer for Lopkin.

"Feeding America provides meals for the over 40 million people living at, or below, the poverty line, who can't afford their next meal. Food insecurity is part of a massive challenge, and I wanted to help out as much as possible," he says.

Because the potential audience watching him would be so diverse, he wanted to be sure everyone walking by would be able to understand the cause. "Feeding America is something anyone on the street can recognize and appreciate."

After formulating the plan, Lopkin began training to play for strangers in the city, although the method was a little different than the typical approach to practicing an instrument.

"When you're performing in a concert, the expectation is that everyone watching bought a ticket and traveled out to see you play," Lopkin explains. "But when you're playing on the street, people just happen by with no expectations. I wanted to prepare enough (content) so that maybe someone would stop by, listen for a bit and drop some change in the bucket for Feeding America. I practiced for months putting together different beats and working to improve my hand speed and stamina."

The day of playing for strangers in public finally arrived.

"With butterflies in my stomach, I set up my buckets and began playing my set. After a couple of minutes, people began watching, dancing, taking videos and even donating money to Feeding America."

Lopkin adds it was important to

him to wear his kippah during the performance.

"In light of the recent rise in antisemitism, I felt it was special to go out there while displaying my Jewish pride," he says. "It was really cold and windy outside, but I made sure to be wearing the kippah the whole time. No one said anything about it."

"I was inspired by the concept of 'being more visibly Jewish.' I want to show kids who are scared to wear their kippah in public due to rising antisemitism that they shouldn't be afraid to."

He captured the experience in a video for his followers on YouTube, TikTok and Instagram, @thedrumcell.

"I started posting drum videos in eighth grade and fell in love with the process," he says. "At first, I started off making videos drumming to my favorite songs, and eventually I pivoted to making drum tutorials."

Creating content hasn't been easy.

"I spent hours every day writing, filming and editing my drum videos, but my account stayed stagnant at 11.9k followers for 17 months in a row. I liked making them though, so I spent last summer figuring out how to make the videos as good as possible, and with some research and a bit of luck, the views and followers started to pick up. I was fortunate enough to even get a sponsorship."

So, what's next?

"This experience was incredible. It was amazing seeing strangers help raise money for such a paramount cause. My goal is to continue these performances and make entertaining videos out of them to further help feed people in need. If I can help out at all, I see that as a win."

*Gabriel Malka is a sophomore at the University of Oregon. Malka enjoys eating hamburgers and doing theater improv. He can be reached at [gabrielmalka01@gmail.com](mailto:gabrielmalka01@gmail.com).*



Linda Nemer Singer, Irving Potter and Priscilla Kostiner.

## Milt Carl Way honorees

The community gathered on Dec. 15, 2022, for the second Milt Carl Way Awards presented by B'nai B'rith Camp and Congregation Shaarie Torah. Priscilla Kostiner, Irving Potter and Linda Nemer Singer were this year's well-deserved honorees. Each of these individuals do it "Milt's Way" – they care deeply about the Jewish community and do profound work for numerous organizations.

Each honoree designated a \$1,000 contribution from the evening's proceeds to go to an organization of their choosing, in loving memory of Milt Carl, z"l. Priscilla split hers between Eastside Jewish Commons and the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's Dignity Grows Fund. Irving and Linda designated Portland Jewish Academy and Mittleman Jewish Community Center, respectively.

All three individuals encourage others to enjoy the immense pleasure and mitzvah of giving. In addition, all three honorees are dedicated to bringing the community together to conceptualize and implement amazing results of making something new a reality.

## New B'nai Tzedek Youth Fund Program

Beyond the party, beyond the gifts, the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation can help make a teen's bar, bat or b-mitzvah the most life-changing, meaningful experience it can be. A new program helps make this important rite of passage an introduction to life as an invested member of the Jewish community and a joyful opportunity to practice *tzedakah* (justice/charity).

Shortly before Covid OJCF created B'nai Tzedek Youth Funds, which allows students to be active donors to causes they believe in by establishing a fund for Jewish charitable giving. With an initial \$250 contribution, matched with \$250 by OJCF's Community Endowment Fund, teens can begin their journey as grant makers.

Now an interactive component has been added. The new B'nai Tzedek Youth Fund Program will bring fund holders (ages 12-18) together four times a year to engage in activities to learn about the needs of the community, and how their philanthropy can help others and better our community and the world. Teens use this knowledge to grant 10% of their fund balance annually to any eligible Jewish charity in Oregon, Southwest Washington, Israel or community where they live during or after college.

Enrollment is now open. The first teen gathering, facilitated by Rabbi Eve Posen and OJCF staff, is set for March 2023. For information, email [youth@ojcf.org](mailto:youth@ojcf.org).

## Young adults invited to be Changemakers

Young adults ages 20-25 who want to change the world are invited to apply for the Jewish Federations of North America's Jewish Changemakers Fellowship. The next session will be Feb. 6-April 3, 2023.

The Jewish Changemakers Fellowship is a virtual leadership development experience that focuses on career development, making a difference in the community and connecting with peers. The program begins with a nine-week fellowship, and Changemakers alumni have access to ongoing opportunities for leadership, mentoring, career advancement and community engagement. Through the fellowship and alumni engagement, Changemakers grow their skills and contacts needed for success in a competitive job market.

Participants who achieve the program requirements of approximately 3-5 hours a week for nine weeks earn a \$350 stipend.

For details and to apply, visit [jfeds.org/changemakers2023](https://jfeds.org/changemakers2023).

# 'Legacy' very meaningful to Holocaust survivors

BY JENN DIRECTOR KNUDSEN

On an early December afternoon in Congregation Shaarie Torah's social hall, Jewish Family & Child Service clinicians facilitated an educational and social event for about 40 Holocaust survivors.

"Our Legacy: How Our Stories Create a New Narrative of Hope for the Future" featured a group conversation followed by a catered kosher lunch. The lunch was topped off with traditional Russian sweets like jam-filled pirozhki and a glass of white wine for all – as well as music performed by the three-member Hora Tzigane Klezmer Ensemble.

Missy Fry, LCSW, CAGCS, JFCS' behavioral health social worker, and Douglass Ruth, LCSW, CCTP, JFCS' clinical director, co-facilitated the in-person social and educational event. This was the first event of its kind since the March 2020 start of the pandemic that spelled isolation, particularly for this demographic.

"Legacy" attracted many who were eager to learn and break bread together. The event prompted both personal reflection and joy, goals Missy and Doug hoped to attain in curating the afternoon.

In an email after the event, they wrote, "We are modeling a space of intergenerational connection and relationships that allow survivors to explore their impact beyond the narrow lens of trauma."

"Legacy" discussion topics included one's own mortality, the kind of life one desires to lead, how we want to be remembered and who may have most influenced us during our lifetime. The majority of attendees are from the former Soviet Union. Alla Piatski, JFCS' bilingual case manager, provided translation throughout the group conversation.

Missy and Doug framed the guided conversation around a quote from the ["Legacy Project"](#) that, among other initiatives, highlights purpose in the lives of older adults.

"Legacy (is) an interconnection across time, with a need for those who have come before us and a responsibility to those who come after us," wrote Legacy Project Founder Susan V. Bosak.

At Shaarie Torah, Missy opened the conversation saying, "There are many ways we can think about legacy."

Many participants reflected on "legacy" as related to family. One said, "The most important is what parents leave for their children." Another focused on what their parents left for them. A number of survivors also made oblique references to the hardships they suffered during World War II and in the post-war period under communism.

"When something bad happens, it can help you appreciate good things," one woman offered, to which several peers nodded.

"Research shows that engaging in conversation on legacy allows for us to ascribe meaning to our experiences and, thus, meaning in our lives," Doug and Missy wrote after the event. "For survivors, we find this to be ever more important, as it is a way we can support a voice that others attempted to suppress in the most powerful way."



Holocaust survivors toast *l'chaim* at the first social gathering for the group since before Covid.

Once the audience broke for lunch, legacy remained on their minds.

Mark Shapiro – a grandfather today – learned only recently that when he was 2 years old, his father, Abram Shapiro, z'l, was forcibly taken from their Moldova home by the Russians, interrogated by the KGB and killed four months later in April 1938.

As an adult, Mark set out to research the true story behind his father's very early demise; his research led him to a treasure trove of documents that in 2014 that he turned into a book, *I am telling you: Growing up and surviving in a malicious Soviet time*.

Via his son's book, Abram, z'l, left behind a legacy that endures.

Originally from Ukraine, Sharlota Aginsky, 82, shared that her maternal aunt's kindness always will stay with her. During World War II, Sharlota and her immediate family had been displaced from their apartment; after the war, they had nowhere to go. Her aunt offered the family respite.

"She didn't charge us a dime for food or lodging," said Sharlota, now a great-grandmother.

She continued, "I remember my family; I know what they did for me, and I remember them all," including those in Israel, Germany and on both coasts of this country. "And you have to do the same for them."

Eventually, well after Sharlota and her late husband immigrated to the United States in 1979 and had established themselves and their livelihood here in Portland, she sent her niece \$3,000 toward a car purchase to get a leg up on her young-adult life in New York.

Tina Genesina and Nikolay Veytsman both hail from Odessa, Ukraine, but 30 years ago met here in Portland. Tapping his fingers on the white tablecloth to the klezmer beat, Nikolay, 95, summed up the afternoon: "Being close to your loved ones. This is legacy."

This "Legacy" event was possible thanks to generous funding provided by Jewish Federations of North America's Center for Holocaust Survivor Care and Institute on Aging and Trauma.

## 17th annual Weekend in Quest returns to the coast

The 17th annual Weekend in Quest returns to Astoria for a weekend of study and community on the Oregon coast Friday evening through Sunday noon, March 3-5, 2023.

Scholar in Residence Professor Mika Ahuvia will present four sessions on Angels in Ancient and Modern Jewish Culture. She is the director of the Stroum Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Washington. Professor Ahuvia is the author of *On My Right Michael, On My Left Gabriel: Angels in Ancient Jewish Culture*.

The Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education presented the program virtually in 2021 and 2022 and is pleased to return to the coast in 2023.

Registration of \$195 includes all study sessions, three ko-

sher-style catered meals, Shabbat and Havdalah services on Friday evening and Saturday morning led by Eddy Shuldman, optional Saturday afternoon program, and an entertaining Saturday evening program. Lodging is not included, but discounted rooms are available at the Holiday Inn Express, where all sessions will be held. Call 503-325-6222, ext. 0, and request the special Weekend in Quest room rate.

Register by Feb. 3, 2023: [ojmche.org/events/weekend-in-quest-2023-angels-in-ancient-and-modern-jewish-culture/](https://ojmche.org/events/weekend-in-quest-2023-angels-in-ancient-and-modern-jewish-culture/).

If you prefer to pay by check or have questions about Weekend in Quest, please contact Gail Mandel at [gmandel@ojmche.org](mailto:gmandel@ojmche.org) or call 503-226-3600, ext. 104.

# Rabbi's Corner

## Between a Dreidel and an Ornament

BY RABBI EVE POSEN

The old joke goes “What day is Chanukah? The 25<sup>th</sup> of Kislev, just like every year.” And Christmas is the 25<sup>th</sup> day of December, every year.

Let’s start with the similarities: They both start on the 25<sup>th</sup>. Both have elements of light in a dark time, and both involve a religious story of faith and survival. There might be more, but let’s leave it here for now.

One holiday, Chanukah, celebrates the victory of the Maccabees over the Greeks. It lasts eight days because the Jews had missed Sukkot during the war and rededicated themselves to their faith – and, maybe because of the miracle of the oil, too. Christmas is a celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. The holidays originated hundreds of years apart, Chanukah in 516 B.C.E. and Christmas, well, A.D.

Whether you are in a family constellation of united faiths or varied faiths, it is certain that each family and individual has their own traditions. Coming together can be tricky and requires dedicated and thoughtful work.

As a Rukin Rabbinic Fellow at 18Doors, I have had the privilege and honor of learning some best practices in starting these conversations and honoring unique and varying traditions in individual places. Here are some conversation starters:

- It can be helpful to start by sharing how you each celebrated the winter holidays growing up. What childhood memories do you have of celebrating the winter holidays? What was the most meaningful, memorable and/or fun part of the holidays for you? Did you see the holidays as religious, spiritual, cultural or something else?

- Take a minute to reflect on how you would like to

celebrate now that you’re an adult. Do you hope to replicate parts of the holiday experience you grew up with? What aspects and why? How important is it to you that your partner shares in your holiday celebrations with you?

- Being in an interfaith relationship brings us joys and challenges. What is the most meaningful or fun thing about celebrating the winter holidays that your partner grew up celebrating? What is challenging for you about it? What is it like celebrating your partner’s holidays in your home versus celebrating at their parents’, other relatives’ or friends’ homes?

- It can sometimes be difficult to manage family dynamics as an interfaith couple. How do you feel about talking to your parents and your partner’s parents about the decisions you and your partner are making about your own choices regarding holiday celebrations?

- For Jewish and Christian couples: How do you feel about having a Christmas tree in your home? Do you think that your answer will be different if you have kids? What does a Christmas tree represent to you (e.g., a religious symbol, a fun memory from childhood with no religious significance, etc.) and why? Do you think that Chanukah and Christmas can be celebrated together (“Chismukkah,” a Jewish star on top of a Christmas tree, etc.), or should they be kept separate? You can read more about this topic at [18doors.org/how-to-talk-about-christmas-trees-in-an-interfaith-relationship/](http://18doors.org/how-to-talk-about-christmas-trees-in-an-interfaith-relationship/).

In the spring, I will be running Couples in Conversation, a dynamic and interactive four-class session for couples building an interfaith family together. For more information on the classes, email me at [eposen@nevehshalom.org](mailto:eposen@nevehshalom.org).

**Both holidays have elements of light in a dark time, and both involve a religious story of faith and survival.**



*Rabbi Eve Posen is associate rabbi of Congregation Neveh Shalom. She is one of 15 U.S. rabbis in the third cohort of a two-year Rukin Rabbinic Fellowship with 18Doors, a national nonprofit that provides resources to interfaith families.*

### Chanukah continues with more events

For details on the following events, visit the Community Chanukah Calendar at:

[jewishportland.org/  
community-calendar/  
chanukah-happenings](http://jewishportland.org/community-calendar/chanukah-happenings):

**Dec. 21: CANCELLED:**  
Chanukah Story Hour with Eric Kimmel.

**Dec. 21:** Latkes and lighting  
5 pm at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center

**Dec. 22:** Tigard Car Menorah Parade 4:30-5:30 pm, downtown Tigard.

**Dec. 22:** Lights and Latkes community party in Tigard at 5:30 pm. RSVP required: [jewishtigard.com/latke](http://jewishtigard.com/latke).

**Dec. 24:** 7th Night Spin at the Eastside Jewish Commons 7-11 pm.

# CHANUKAH HAPPENINGS



**CHECK OUT OUR HOLIDAY RESOURCES GUIDE!**



SCAN ME

<https://qrco.de/bdZfBf>

 Jewish Federation OF GREATER PORTLAND

 HERE FOR YOU

# Events beyond Chanukah

## Dec. 23: Moishe Pod Shabbat Shalom-Mein

Chinese food on Christmas: is there a better Jewish tradition? We'll order too much, eat more than we need and dig into this Chinese food feast a few days early. Moishe Pod-West PDX hosts events for Jewish Portlanders in their 20s and early 30s.

RSVP: [moishepodwestpdx.com/events](https://moishepodwestpdx.com/events).

## Dec. 25: Movie morning at the MJCC

Come see "Full Court Miracle" at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center at 9:30 am, Dec. 25. Includes a morning candle lighting to celebrate Chanukah. Sponsored by the MJCC and MJCC Day Camp. RSVP required: [skorin@oregonjcc.org](mailto:skorin@oregonjcc.org) or 503-452-3427.



New Year's Eve at Noon balloon drop marked the the end of 2019.

## Dec. 30: Erev New Year's at Noon

The Mittleman Jewish Community Center will host its annual Family New Year's Eve event. Erev New Year's will feature a bouncy house, face painting, games, music and a countdown with a beach ball drop at noon.

The celebration will be 11 am to 12:30 pm at the MJCC, 6651 SW Capitol Hwy.

RSVP by Dec. 26: [oregonjcc.org/newyears](https://oregonjcc.org/newyears).

## Jan. 8: Reading the Holocaust

Explore some lesser known writings on the Holocaust, with a focus on diarists, especially by local survivors in the Portland area at 2-4 pm, Jan. 8. There'll be a chance to read excerpts together and discuss our reactions. Since 2009, David Rutiezer has been a docent, docent trainer and speaker at schools and at the Oregon Holocaust Memorial in Portland.

Sliding scale donation \$6-\$36. Register: [ejcpdx.org/events-1](https://ejcpdx.org/events-1)

## Jan. 9: Talmud study group at Neveh Shalom

A Talmud study group is forming at Congregation Neveh Shalom. The first meeting is Jan. 9 from 7:30 to 9 pm then weekly Mondays. Begin the tractate *Bava Metzia*, using the Koren edition (vol. 25: Bava Metzia Part 1, Hebrew/English). Anyone interested may attend. For details, email Jerry Brem ([jerrybrem@comcast.net](mailto:jerrybrem@comcast.net)).

## Jan. 12-March 16: Jewish storytelling class

Professional Jewish Storyteller Brian Rohr will lead a three-month journey. Open to beginner and experienced performers, the class will meet 6-8 pm, Thursdays, Jan. 12-March 16.

Brian will teach the art and skill of performative storytelling, exploring the ancient stories, personal narratives and techniques on how to discover your own unique storytelling voice. The series will conclude with a public performance. Tuition: \$200 CNS members/\$250 nonmembers. For more information and to register, visit [nevehshalom.org/storytellingclass](https://nevehshalom.org/storytellingclass).



Partygoers getting into the PJA Beach party theme included (from left) Sam Harwin, Naomi Harwin, Michelle Kashinsky, Nadine Gartner, Josh Kashinsky and Ben Olds.

## PJA auction a success

Folks dressed in colorful Hawaiian shirts and flip flops, fab 60s' garb and as undersea creatures mixed with an elegantly dressed quartet from the 1760s at the Portland Jewish Academy Beach Party Auction on Dec. 11.

With more than 200 guests in the room and another 45 households online, it was a wildly successful night for PJA, raising more than \$730,000!

Many people embraced the beachy vibe, showing off their PJA pride in a multitude of creative ways. Attendees enjoyed tasty beverages and appetizers and a delicious buffet meal by Century Catering. While most of the bidding was online this year, the live auction became quite competitive with both in-person and virtual attendees going to battle for some highly sought-after items ranging from tropical beach vacations to custom-made skis.



Auctioneer Ian Lindsay, left, and emcee Josh Kashinsky.

Auctioneer Ian Lindsay and emcee Josh Kashinsky were on stage, live, for the first time. Josh had previously co-hosted virtual auctions in 2020 and 2021, while Ian has been PJA's stellar auctioneer for seven years running. They, too, embraced the beachy vibe, drinking out of pineapples and wearing matching Hawaiian shirts, custom-designed with images of Aish, the PJA mascot.

Attendees also heard from Principal Merrill Hendin and Executive Director Steve Albert, who welcomed guests and recognized some of the many volunteers, staff and donors who made the event possible. Attendees included several board members, executives from other Portland Jewish organizations, PJA alumni, Dor L'Dor Society members, and many current families, alumni and alumni parents.

Before the night even began, PJA had a huge outpouring of support from 97 sponsors, who helped raise over \$113,000! Those dollars, as well as all of the Mitzvah Moment donations, were generously matched at 50% by Steve Rosenberg and Ellen Lippman, and 100% by Jay and Diane Zidell. PJA is incredibly grateful for the generosity of these two families, who, for many years, have inspired waves of giving across the community, ensuring that PJA has the resources it needs to continue to provide outstanding opportunities for their students.

# Ahavath Achim ready to welcome community

BY DEBORAH MOON

With renovations complete, Congregation Ahavath Achim has brought in historic elements from its former synagogue and is now ready to welcome the community to experience Sephardic culture in its new home.

"We brought our heart with us as we left our building behind," says Vice President Renee Ferrera, adding that the congregation "brought over to our new location the many pieces of art that made our Barbur location so special."

To introduce Jewish Portland's predominantly Ashkenazic community to Sephardic culture and philosophy, the congregation invites all interested to its annual Sephardic Film Series, its Community Sephardic Shabbat Dinners the first Friday of the month and Shabbat morning services (see box).

The monthly multi-course Shabbat dinner offers an introduction to Sephardic cuisine, traditions and philosophy. The rabbi introduces a topic over appetizers and invites diners to discuss it during the meal. Over dessert, the rabbi leads a discussion.

"The topics share with the community how Sephardic thinking is a little different than Ashkenazic thinking," says Renee.

The synagogue now features a sanctuary, social hall, kosher dairy and meat kitchens, office, three bathrooms (one of which is ADA accessible) and storage in 3,065 square feet at 6686 SW Capitol Hwy.

Ferrera says the congregation also makes its new kosher kitchens and social hall available to the Jewish community at large to rent for events when not in use by the congregation. Oregon Kosher supervision is required for kitchen rentals.

This is the third home for the Sephardic congregation founded in 1910.

When urban renewal forced the congregation to leave Third Avenue and Sherman Street, they attempted to move the building, which was constructed in the early 1930s. Assured by the moving company the move would be easy, most religious items and art were left inside. When the foundation cracked during the move, the city condemned it and tore it down the next day. Renee says some young members of the congregation snuck in and recovered a few of the most important relics, but the majority of the congregation's belongings were destroyed. Money from the insurance and eminent domain sale allowed the congregation to build its second home on Barbur Boulevard in 1962 without a mortgage.

When TriMet bought that building for a planned light rail project, which was later rejected by voters, the congregation leased it back while its third home was remodeled. This time, the congregation was able to move the Torah, the Ark, the *Ner Tamid*, carved sanctuary doors, historic photos, memorial boards and many pieces into its new home.

For information on renting the space, contact Renee at [pdxrenee@aol.com](mailto:pdxrenee@aol.com). For more information on events or membership at Ahvath Achim, email [info@ahavathachim.com](mailto:info@ahavathachim.com), call 503-227-0010 or visit [ahavathachim.com](http://ahavathachim.com).



Wood sculptor Leroy Setziol, z"l, carved these doors for Ahavath Achim's Barbur synagogue that now open from the congregation's new sanctuary to the social hall.

## EVENTS AT AHAVATH ACHIM

### Community Sephardic Shabbat Dinner

Join Ahavath Achim for a short Sephardic Kabbalat service, Shabbat dinner and discussion led by Rabbi Villarreal at 5:30-7:30 pm, Jan. 6. \$20/adult, \$10/child or college student. RSVP: [info@ahavathachim.com](mailto:info@ahavathachim.com).

### 16th Annual Sephardic Film Festival

One film each month through May. Free. Discussion and Sephardic desserts follow each film. Next up: Jan. 11, 7 pm, "Empty Boxcars." More than 50,000 Jews from territories under Bulgarian control in Greece and Macedonia survived in World War II when Bulgarians from many walks of life rose up in protest. RSVP requested: [info@ahavathachim.com](mailto:info@ahavathachim.com).

### Shabbat Services

Saturday morning at 9 am followed by kiddush lunch.



Renee Ferrera, a life-long member of Ahavath Achim who served as project manager for the renovations at the congregation's new home, points to the *Ner Tamid* (eternal light) that artist Stuart Luxemburg redesigned to fit in the smaller sanctuary.



A wall of historic photos decorates Ahavath Achim's new social hall near Hillsdale.