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Federation's Security Briefing Showcases Efforts to Protect **Jewish Memphis**



Stuart Frisch, Secure Community Network (SCN) National Training & Exercise Advisor and former Regional Security Director under the partnership between Memphis Jewish Federation and SCN, spoke to an online audience Tuesday, January 25 during a Federation-hosted Community Security Briefing.

"One loss of life is to destroy the world entire – we believe this as Jews. And to save one life is to save the world entire. Most of our efforts are to keep these threats to Jewish lives out of our buildings," said Stuart Frisch, Secure Community Network (SCN) National Training & Exercise Advisor and former

Regional Security Director under the partnership between SCN and Memphis Jewish Federation.

Frisch was speaking to an online audience of more than 150 households Tuesday, January 25 during a Federation-hosted Community Security Briefing. Mounted in response to the hostage

crisis at Congregation Beth Israel in Colleyville, Texas, the program was designed to inform Memphis Jewish community members about the partnerships with local law enforcement and specialized training programs that keep the people and places of Jewish Memphis safe, through the Federation/SCN partnership. Since launching in Memphis in 2018, the SCN/Federation partnership model has spread to other communities around the nation and is credited in saving lives in Texas.

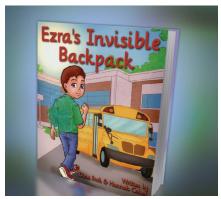
Representatives from Federation, SCN, the FBI, Memphis Police Department, and the Department of Homeland Security spoke about the relationships supporting the web of security measures protecting Jewish Memphis, and shared insight on the role saturated and standardized training played in the escape of all hostages in Texas, as well as its potential to save lives in Memphis in the event of the unthinkable happening

"While Jews represent less than 2% of the population, the very ugly statistic is that almost 60% of faith-based hate attacks target Jews, which is why security is and must remain at the forefront of the collective mind of the leadership of the Memphis Jewish Federation and all of our community institutions," said Craig Weiss, Federation's Vice Chair of Security and an active lay leader and philanthropist in the community. "Federation and SCN's partnership was the first of its kind in Jewish communities nationwide, and in fact among all faithbased communities. We can be proud of how far we've come, from a wide-open community with little to no security infrastructure or preparedness to truly being a model community and an example for others around the country."

"Members of faith communities should not have to worry about the threat of violence at their services or places of worship, spaces meant for sanctuary. It's one of the most heinous acts of violence that can be committed," said Special Agent in Charge Douglas Korneski who heads the FBI's Memphis office. "The unfortunate reality is that we can expect the Jewish community to continue to be targeted by hate crimes and extremist violence from threats that are complex and evolving and forged of

(See **Security** Page 3)

MJCC's JFamily Program Brings Author Hannah Cohen to Memphis February 13



The Memphis Jewish Community Center's JFamily initiative will bring

Hannah Cohen, author of "Ezra's Invisible Backpack," to Memphis for an interactive JFamily Learning program on Sunday, February 13, at 3 p.m. Parents and children of all ages are invited to join Hannah for story time and conversation about inspiring empathy and empowering children to identify and understand their emotions. Each family will also receive a free copy of the book.

"Ezra's Invisible Backpack" is a picture book by Dina Rock and Hannah Cohen that shows us how kindness and communication with those around us can go a long way in making our friends



Hannah Cohen

and classmates feel understood. To the world, Ezra seems like a typical, happy fourth grader, yet making friends and joining groups can be overwhelming for him. His teacher introduces the idea that everyone has an "invisible" backpack with bricks that others cannot see. These bricks represent obstacles, emotions, and worries that people carry with them each day. The invisible backpack is a concrete tool for children to utilize in their daily lives to better express their emotions. It's the perfect book to inspire

(See MJCC Page 3)









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B'nai Tzedek Teens Kick-Off Dignity Grows Chapter in Memphis



On MLK Day, students in the B'nai Tzedek Teen Philanthropy program packed 150 Dignity Grows tote bags with hygiene products to be distributed to Ridgeway High School students, Room In the Inn and the Tiger Pantry at the University of Memphis.

Dignity Grows empowers neighbors in need by providing menstrual and hygiene supplies for everyone who needs them. What started as a grass roots project by a group of Jewish women at the Federation of Greater Hartford in Connecticut is now a national organization with a new chapter in Memphis, under the leadership of Melinda Lejman at the Memphis Jewish Federation, Sarah VanderWalde at the Jewish Foundation of Memphis and Sophie Bloch at Hillels of Memphis.

"Working together to address this critical need in Memphis was a no-brainer," said Melinda, Federation's director of Outreach and Leadership Engagement. "As a Dignity Grows Chapter, we will engage community members who want to get involved through education, volunteering and sponsorship opportunities."

To kick off the Memphis chapter, 10 members of the Jewish Foundation's Teen Philanthropy Program volunteered for a packing party on January 17, a day that area schools are closed to celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

"Launching the Dignity Grows chapter on MLK Day was done purposefully to empower our teens to create solutions to social problems and move us closer to Dr. King's vision of a beloved community," said Sarah, director of the Jewish Foundation's B'nai Tzedek Program. "It also helps that they get an hour of community service."

The MLK Day event began with students learning about period poverty and the need in Memphis from Eli Cloud, executive director and founder of Sister Supply, a non-profit organization in Memphis whose mission is to fight period poverty by providing tampons and pads to menstruators in need.

"We found that teachers and guidance counselors were paying for pads out of their own pockets to help keep their students in school, and this is how we knew there was a need," said Eli, who works to distribute menstrual products to many schools in Shelby County through Sister Supply. She praised the students for coming out on their day off to help those in need and challenged them to ask their schools if there are period products available, and if not, why not.

Following Eli's interactive session, the teens, who attend Bornblum Jewish Community School, Germantown High School, Memphis University School and St. Mary's Episcopal School, packed 150 tote bags with a month's supply of

hygiene products including pads, pantiliners, soap, shampoo, deodorant, a toothbrush, toothpaste and body wipes.

"I really enjoyed the volunteer project that Mrs. VanderWalde hosted," said St. Mary's student Sydney S. "It really showed us that there is a need for these products in Memphis."

After the B'nai Tzedek packing party, 50 tote bags were donated to Room In The Inn for their guests who are experiencing homelessness, with another 50 delivered to Ridgeway High School. More tote bags will be donated to the Tiger Pantry at the University of Memphis, in partnership with Hillels of Memphis.

"I had two students come into my office last week asking for help, because they started their cycles," said Tejwana Y. Hinton, assistant principal and ninth-grade administrator at Ridgeway High School. "The items in the tote bags will definitely be used by our students, and we really appreciate your donation."

"This is just the beginning of the Memphis chapter of Dignity Grows, and I can't wait to partner with more organizations who have a need," said Melinda. "After all, it's the little things that make a big difference in people's lives."

For a gift of only \$15 you can donate a Dignity Grows tote bag. More information can be found online at www.jcpmemphis.org/dignity-grows or you can email Melinda Lejman at mlejman@jcpmemphis.org or Sarah VanderWalde at svanderwalde@jcpmemphis.org. HW



Sarah VanderWalde (c) and Melinda Lejman (r) deliver Dignity Grows tote bags to Tejwana Hinton, Assistant Principal at Ridgeway High School. The tote bags were packed with hygiene products by students in the B'nai Tzedek teen philanthropy program.

B'nai B'rith Bears are Back... Finally!

Members of Sam Schloss Lodge #35 of B'nai B'rith planned to deliver bears to several facilities in Memphis by Rosh Hashanah last fall. Unfortunately, the pandemic and supply chain issues forced a delay. With patience and perseverance, the lodge leadership overcame the issues and took delivery of 576 stuffed bears. Since the project was initiated many years ago, more than 30,000 stuffed bears have been delivered to several community social service agencies.

The residents and staff of Plough Towers recently welcomed a COVID-19 safe delivery by Schloss Lodge leaders Dr. Joel Turetzky and Bernard Danzig.



Plough Towers Professional Service Coordinator Carol Samuels, Dr. Joel Turetzky Plough Executive Director Leigh Hendry, Bernard Danzig and Volunteer Coordinator Audrey Johnson. Credit: Plough Towers Staff



Bears will be delivered to other agencies in the coming weeks.

"Thank you all for keeping the Teddy Bear program going in your community," said Rhonda Love, vice president, programming B'nai B'rith International. The B'nai B'rith Cares for Kids project began in B'nai B'rith as a project of the B'nai B'rith Center for Community Action in the mid-90s. We are grateful that the Schloss Lodge brought the program to Memphis and has been committed to make it a part of their community activity. Over the years we are happy to see how it has adapted to include seniors and anyone in need of a 'loveable huggable.' Congratulations on your efforts to accomplish this during this difficult time."

This year, the program was funded in part by a grant made be Jewish Foundation of Memphis B'nai Tzedek teen philanthropy program. HW



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Security...

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blended ideologies. These threats demand that we work closely together to keep communities safe."

Working closely together is what the Federation/SCN partnership is all about. From their Chicago HQ, SCN analysts and security professionals constantly monitor intel as it comes to them from partners in local, regional and federal law enforcement. This information is shared on a need-to-know basis with security advisors and directors embedded in Jewish communities across the United States.

Regional Security Advisor (RSA) Amanda Braswell fills that role in Jewish Memphis, meeting regularly with SCN analysts, FBI agents, MPD officers and DHS operatives to ensure all agencies share the same vital information. A law enforcement professional with over 20 years of experience, most recently as a detective with the Germantown Police Department investigating financial and computer crimes, child exploitation and digital forensics, Braswell stepped into her Federation/SCN role in 2021.

"The SCN analytics team is the back-

MJCC...

(Continued From Page 1)

empathy and empower children to identify and understand their emotions.

During the program, Hannah will read "Ezra's Invisible Backpack" and lead an interactive activity for families. There will also be snacks, a Q & A with the author, and book signing.

Hannah is an actor and creator based in New York City. She has worked with children her entire life, helping them learn and grow through various artforms. After struggling personally for years with mental health, she was inspired to share this story in hopes of helping children develop a foundation of bone of this whole operation. Their reporting back to RSAs like me are vital to staying ahead of threats," Braswell told the audience. "You may wonder why we need a local response to an event that is happening somewhere else. Locally, we are concerned with the unknown. As something like this is unfolding, we must ask, 'Is this a coordinated attack? Could there be copycat attacks, or attacks by sympathizers of the cause?' We don't know until it can be confirmed that this was an isolated event.

"So, we rally the troops," she said. "I was in touch with every law enforcement agency represented here tonight for the entire day of the attack to anticipate any local threat."

"Amanda can lean on me (when she needs the MPD), and hopefully I've been able to answer her questions or point her in the right direction," said Memphis Police Department Lieutenant Colonel and Jewish Community Liaison Derrick Bernard. "As Liaison, my main focus is making sure the lines of communication are open between the MPD and the Jewish community. I'm Amanda's direct contact that she can reach

positive mental health from a young age.

This JFamily Learning program is part of the MJCC's JFamily initiative, which has brought a series of new engagement programs for young families to the J through Parent & Me classes and JCafe & Play. These programs allow parents with young children to connect with one another and build community in a safe, welcoming environment. The Wendy and Avron B. Fogelman Jewish Family Service and the Center of Jewish Living and Learning at the MJCC have partnered to provide family and parenting resources along with meaningful Jewish

out to and connect her to resources she might need. MPD's partnership with the community focuses on collaboration on trainings, information sharing, community outreach and working together to address the issue of hate crimes. It's all about prevention. But if something were to happen, our command staff is focused and ready."

Frisch addressed the audience toward the end of the program, stressing the importance of wide-reaching and uniform training and sharing information about upcoming trainings for Memphis Jewish community members, both in-person and online.

"While we know that the tent of Abraham and Sarah was open on all four sides, we are still compelled as Jews to balance openness and inclusivity with the need to secure our Jewish facilities, our houses of worship, and our community centers to ensure they are here for the next generation of Jews in North America," said Frisch. "That was proven in tragic fashion a few weeks ago in Colleyville, Texas.

"Our trainings teach security skills as a life skill," he continued. "We train

content for the programs. Families of all backgrounds and faiths are welcome.

This author program is in partnership with the Jewish Book Council, and the book is available for purchase at novel. bookstore in Memphis. JFamily programs are funded in part by a grant from the National Center to Encourage Judaism, which funds programs worldwide geared towards people who don't identify as Jewish to engage, educate, and connect them with Judaism.

To learn more and register for all JFamily programs, visit www.jccmemphis.org/jfamily **HW**

people to not only detect danger before it becomes dangerous, but also how to react to a threat once it's inside of a building. They are location agnostic, which is to say they are not only for houses of worship but for restaurants, movie theaters, our children's schools, gas stations, ATMs. For any public spaces, this training is applicable."

Federation and SCN are partnering on four training sessions in February and March with registrations open and accessible at jcpmemphis.org. Information about other ways to play an active role in security in Jewish Memphis can also be found on the website, including the rollout of a new law enforcement outreach volunteer corps.

"With the Texas incident, I'm not at liberty to get into certain details as there is still an ongoing international investigation," said Frisch. "But I can share some detail, like the rabbi throwing the chair at the attacker allowing the hostages to escape, which is an example of something we talk about in the training. What we saw in the publically available details post-incident is this training saves lives." **HW**

'Camp Auschwitz' Man at Jan. 6 Insurrection Pleads Guilty to Misdemeanor



Robert Keith Packer's shirt, right, was one of many hate symbols present at the storming of the Capitol. Other rioters constructed a noose. Credit: Andrew Caballero-Reynolds / AFP via Getty Images and screenshot from Reddit

By Ron Kampeas

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Robert Keith Packer, the Virginia man who drew attention during the Jan. 6 insurrection by wearing a "Camp Auschwitz" sweatshirt, pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor for trespassing.

Packer, 57, agreed to cooperate with the federal government in its investigations, prosecutors told the U.S. District Court last Wednesday at the plea hearing, the Law & Crime news site reported.

Packer, who is from Newport News, faces a maximum six-month sentence and \$5,000 fine, although many of the people who have pleaded guilty to misdemeanor charges related to the Jan. 6 insurrection have not received jail time.

Packer's sweatshirt read "Camp Auschwitz," along with the message "Work brings freedom" – a rough translation of the message that greeted Jewish prisoners at the infamous Nazi concentration camp. On the back, it read, "Staff." FBI agents who raided his home found Nazi paraphernalia, CNN reported. **HW**

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- L. Carnell
Source: Testimonial Tree

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Baron Hirsch Women's Beit Midrash

Baron Hirsch is excited to announce a new learning initiative for women in the Memphis community. With the completion of the renovations in the building and the opening of the Beit Midrash, Baron Hirsch is inviting all women to learn Torah and be inspired together.

A Beit Midrash, or house of study, is a room or building used for Torah study. In the Talmud, the Beit Midrash is often regarded as holier than the synagogue because of its unique ability to bring people together around Torah.

Through learning Torah, we acquire essential practical knowledge and develop our religious personality. As such, it is viewed as an important value for women to carve out time in their hectic

week to learn Torah. The learning program, which will take place Saturday, February 5, at 8 p.m. will begin with a lecture delivered by Rivki Wiener on the topic of "Becoming Curious About Torah Learning." Women in the community will have the privilege to learn from Rivki and discuss the topic of discovering what area of Torah learning excites and inspires each of them.

The women will then have the opportunity to learn individually or in groups.

This new initiative is creating excitement among the women in the community, and the staff at Baron Hirsch is looking forward to offering a space for women to share Torah and be inspired by one another. **HW**

Barnes & Noble Removes 'The Protocols of the Elders of Zion' From its Site

By Caleb Guedes-Reed

(JTA) – Following a social media outcry, Barnes & Noble has removed "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" from its website.

Twitter users began tweeting Jan. 25 about an online listing on the booksellers' site, which had been offering the famously fabricated antisemitic text for \$24.95. The retailer said in a statement to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that the book was fed automatically to the website from "standard industry databases" and that the company took "prompt action to remove" the title.

Twitter users also objected to the description of the book on the site, which summarized at length the book's fictional description of a Jewish plan for global domination and suggested that its authenticity is still an open question. The description justified its sale as "an interesting book which deserves to be studied in the same way the 'War of the Worlds' radio broadcast duped many thousands.... We neither support nor deny its message, we simply make it available for those who wish a copy."

"Like what is even this synopsis?" responded Rachel Kaplan, a San Diego-based writer, on Twitter. "We nei-

ther support nor deny it's message what??"

"Nothing like watching major corporations distributing long discredited antisemitic forgeries for profit," tweeted Jeremy Burton, executive director of the Boston Jewish Community Relations Council.

In their statement to JTA, a representative for Barnes & Noble wrote that the bookseller draws on industry databases and does the "utmost to diligently monitor such submissions for violations of our content policy." According to the statement, the book was never stocked in their bookstores.

"We regret that it was listed inadvertently. As soon as we are made aware of any such offending titles, we take prompt action to remove the offending titles in accordance with our policy, as we did with this title," said the representative.

While Barnes & Noble was the main focus of social media users' outrage, other top online booksellers such as Walmart, Book Depository, Thrift Books and Hudson Books were selling dozens of versions, the Jerusalem Post reported. **HW**

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New Camp Scholarship Fund for Memphis Campers

Chabad Center for Jewish Life is happy to announce the administration of a new camp scholarship fund for Jewish children in Memphis attending any Jewish summer overnight camps in 2022. Thanks to the generosity of a local benefactor, limited scholarships are now available for those who need help paying for Jewish summer overnight camp.

"We are very happy to administer this fund, which is sure to help bring a Jewish experience closer to the reach of those who most desperately need it," said Rabbi Levi Klein, executive director of Chabad. A 2008 study by the Foundation for Jewish Camp found that going to camp is an indicator for Jews to be more involved in an array of Jewish experiences. Adults who attended Jewish camps as children were more likely to go to synagogue, marry a Jew, donate to a Jewish charity, light Shabbat candles and feel attached to Israel.

Funds are limited and will be distributed via lottery, based on the number of applicants. An application can be found at www.JewishMemphis.com/scholarship and should be submitted before the end of February. **HW**

More Than 15,000 Israeli Holocaust Survivors Passed Away Last Year



Holocaust survivors and Israeli soldiers in Herzliya, on Oct. 25, 2021. Credit: Tomer Neuberg/Flash90.

By Noam Dvir

(Israel Hayom via JNS) – Over the past year, 15,324 Holocaust survivors died in Israel, according to data published last Wednesday by the country's Social Equality Ministry.

According to the report, published by the ministry's Holocaust Survivors' Rights Authority on the eve of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, there are currently 165,800 survivors in Israel, 90% of whom are 80 or older. The average age of survivors is 85. Some 31,000, or 19%, are over 90, and over 950 are over 100. Sixty percent of the survivors known to the Authority are women, with the average age among this group being 85.4.

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of known survivors were born in Europe. The largest group, 36% or 59,900, were born in the former Soviet Union, followed by 19,100 born in Romania, 8,900 in Poland, 4,500 in Bulgaria, 2,400 in Hungary and 2,300 in Germany.

The other 36% of known survivors in Israel were born in Asia and North Africa, including 30,600 Moroccan and Algerian-born citizens who suffered under France's Vichy government. These include 18,000 Baghdad natives who were victimized by anti-Semitic rioting in Iraq in June 1941. Another 11,000 were born in Tunisia and Libya and were subjected to race laws and sent to labor camps.

Only 5% of known survivors in Israel made aliyah before founding of the state, while another 11% arrived by the end of 1948. Some 80,500 (48%) made aliyah by the end of the 1950s and over one-third made aliyah starting in 1989 in the big wave from the former Soviet Union. In 2021, an additional 98 survi-

vors made aliyah.

Haifa has the highest number of survivor residents at 11,300, followed by Jerusalem (10,300), Tel Aviv (8,900), Ashdod (8,200), Netanya (8,000), Beersheva (7,050), Petah Tikva (6,700) and Rishon Lezion (6,500).

In 2021, the Authority transferred some 4.1 billion shekels (\$1.29 billion) in stipends and grants directly to survivors. A total of 50,800 survivors who lived through the camps and the ghettos, lived under assumed identities or in hiding, worked in labor camps or were with their parents who worked as forced laborers receive monthly stipends ranging from 2,554-6,412 shekels (\$803-\$2,017), based on their level of disability. Of these, 15,500 low-income survivors receive monthly stipends of up to 11,729 shekels (\$3,690).

An additional 111,600 receive annual grants of up to 6,500 shekels (\$2,044). A total of 3,400 survivors in Israel receive stipends from abroad, and have the amount topped up by the authority to the amount of 2,538 shekels (\$798).

The Holocaust Survivors' Rights Authority also provides monthly stipends to some 18,000 widows and widowers of survivors.

"Our watch is the last watch, and it comes with great responsibility. The average age of Holocaust survivors is 85. These are the last years we have to serve them, allow them to age in dignity and also document as many of their stories as possible, because not long from now, there won't be anyone to tell them," said Social Equality Minister Meirav Cohen.

This article first appeared in Israel Hayom. HW

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'And Just Like That' Holocaust Joke Irks Fans on International Holocaust Remembrance Day



Kristin Davis reprises the role of Charlotte in "And Just Like That..." Credit: Craig Blankenhorn /HBO Max

By Stephen Silver

(JTA) - Longtime fans of "Sex and the City" have been less than enamored with "And Just Like That...," the sequel series that has been airing on HBO Max since late last year. Common critiques include everything from the absence of original cast member Kim Cattrall to forced attempts at discussing modern social justice mores.

Many fans added another complaint to their list last Thursday: the inclusion of a bizarre and questionably timed Holocaust-themed joke.

Spoilers ahead, for those who have yet to watch the episode: Anthony (Mario Cantone), who recently split with his husband, Stanford, (the late Willie Garson), tells Charlotte (Kristin Davis) that he's bringing a date, Justin (Matthew Wilkas), to her Shabbat family dinner that Friday. Justin is a man Anthony is excited about, in part because "he's sexy, smart, always reading — he's read everything that's ever been published."

But when they arrive at the dinner at Charlotte's home, Charlotte mentions a challah. Justin asks if it's a "Jewish dinner," and then blurts out, "you know the Holocaust is a hoax, right?" Anthony immediately reacts by shouting "Get out!"

This particular plot construction one of the characters having a promising romantic prospect, only to be disappointed by the shocking reveal that the man has something very wrong with him — was a staple of the original "Sex and the City" series.

Still, many viewers found it crass, especially in relation to its timing: Jan. 27, International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

In The New York Times' online recap of the episode, writer Ali Trachta said the moment, intended to show that Holocaust denial should be a relationship deal-breaker, was flat-out unrealistic.

"It's hard to imagine that fringe conspiracy theory would be 1) embraced by and 2) brought up by any member of a marginalized community in a Jewish home in the middle of Manhattan in 2022," she wrote.

山 Have Simcha? share with The Hebrew Watchman readers 901.763.2215 info@hebrewwatchman.com

But Trachta did add that she's planning to make it a regular practice to post a gif of Anthony yelling "Get out!" And not everyone hated the joke.

This is far from Charlotte's first runin with Jewish humor. One of the core four of the "Sex and the City" cast, she is a Connecticut WASP who converts to Judaism during the original series in order to marry lawyer Harry Goldenblatt (Evan Handler). In the new series, it's clear that the family is still practicing Judaism — at one point in this week's episode, Charlotte chides her husband for forgetting to take a challah out of the oven. Harry is later shown struggling to eat the burnt Sabbath bread.

And in the same episode, Charlotte's child Rock, who had come out earlier in the season as nonbinary, struggles with the concept of having a bat mitzvah.

"That's why you're having a 'they mitzvah," Charlotte says in one scene.

With one episode remaining in the season, viewers may see that next week.

In another Jewish tidbit, last week's episode featured the character of Seema (Sarita Choudhury) reading Taffy Brodesser-Akner's very Jewish 2019 novel "Fleischman is in Trouble." That book is itself being adapted for a limited series on FX.

Brodesser-Akner expressed her excitement about the scene on Twitter. HW

Memphis BBYO is Back in **Full Swing**

Memphis BBYO chapters are gearing up for a new year and are eager for you to learn all about this amazing teen opportunity.

River City BBG, Kriger BBG, Peres AZA and Okeon AZA are part of BBYO Delta Region, a home for Jewish teens across the South. Starting now, BBYO is welcoming the newest class of Alephs and B'nai B'rith Girls to their chapters. Do you know any 8th graders that are ready to embark on their BBYO journey?

Reach out to Zoë Goldberg, our BBYO Regional Director at zgoldberg@bbyo.org, for more information.

BBYO is the leading pluralistic Jewish teen movement aspiring to involve more Jewish teens in more meaningful Jewish experiences. As expressed in our core values, BBYO welcomes Jewish teens of all backgrounds, denominational affiliation, gender, race, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status, including those with a range of intellectual, emotional, and physical abilities.

With a network of hundreds of chapters across North America and in 60 countries around the world, BBYO reaches nearly 70,000 teens annually and serves as the Jewish community's largest and most valuable platform for delivering fun, meaningful and affordable experiences that inspire a lasting connection to the Jewish people. **HW**







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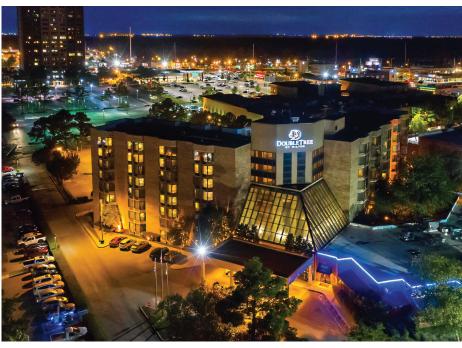
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DoubleTree by Hilton Memphis Completes 19-Month, \$5 Million Renovation



Credit: DoubleTree Memphis

Memphis-based Cooper Hotels, owner and operator of the DoubleTree by Hilton Memphis, has announced the completion of the hotel's \$5 million renovation and redesign. While planning and design work began months before, physical renovation work began in March 2020 on the 264-room East Memphis hotel at 5069 Sanderlin Avenue.

The top-to-bottom project was accomplished in phases, to take advantage of low occupancy during the pandemic and to avoid inconveniences to the guests and event attendees that returned during the final months of work.

"Fortunately, most of our renovation was completed before supply chain and labor issues became as problematic as they are today," said Candace Selecman, general manager, DoubleTree by Hilton Memphis. "Before the renovation ended, leisure guests and smaller event business began returning, and we are seeing increases in business travelers and larger events at our beautifully redesigned hotel."

Guestrooms were first in the renovation schedule. All furniture and amenities were replaced, as well as carpet and wall coverings. Bathroom doors were replaced with space-saving "barn door" entryways. At the same time, complete renovations were done on all hotel corridors and elevator lobbies. These improvements were completed in April 2021.

Renovations to the hotel's 6,000 square feet of meeting and event space began in January 2021 and were completed six weeks later. Improvements included new carpet, wall coverings



DoubleTree Memphis Suite

and new LED fixtures and lighting in the hotel ballroom and prefunction area. Boardrooms also received new tables and chairs. With the increased public interest in outdoor functions and gatherings, a 1,600 square-foot, private patio was created with intricate stamped concrete flooring, new landscaping, new

furniture and a fire pit.

The hotel lobby makeover began in April 2021. New front desk "pods" and illuminated artwork were installed adjacent to a new Made Market offering snacks and beverages. A convenient Connectivity Zone with computers and functional seating was also added. The four public restrooms on the ground floor received new flooring, wall covering, sinks with automated faucets, backlit and full-length mirrors and hardwood walls replacing conventional toilet partitions

The final phase of the renovation project, which began in late June 2021, was the demolition of the hotel's existing restaurant and bar to accommodate a new restaurant, Erling Jensen Small Bites with Topgolf Swing Suites. In the dining area, all new tables, seating, flooring and window treatments were installed surrounding two expansive

Credit: DoubleTree Memphis

Topgolf Swing Suite simulator bays with their own new seating and tables. Massive TV screens were placed in the elevated bar area, which also received new seating and tables, some overlooking the hotel lobby after the removal of an existing wall.

"We believe our DoubleTree by Hilton Memphis is the most contemporary, comfortable and entertaining hotel in the area," said Pace Cooper, president and CEO of Cooper Hotels. "Our plan is to continually provide the capital and resources to keep this hotel as modern and technologically advanced as any luxury hotel in Memphis."

About Cooper Hotels

Cooper Hotels is a privately owned hotel development and management company founded in 1959. In addition to the DoubleTree by Hilton Memphis hotel, the company owns and manages 16 other hotels in five states including 14 Hilton Family of Brands hotels (five DoubleTree by Hilton, three Hilton Hotels, two Homewood Suites by Hilton, two Hilton Garden Inns, one Hampton Inn & Suites by Hilton and one Embassy Suites by Hilton). For more information about Cooper Hotels please visit www.cooperhotels.com. HW



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Fogelman Properties Acquires 35th Property with \$5M Planned Reno



Lincoln at Wolfchase pool facing the clubhouse Credit: Fogelman Properties

By Shoshana Cenker

Fogelman Properties has acquired yet another local apartment complex. This time, it's the Lincoln at Wolfchase, a 408-unit luxury apartment community in Cordova. The Jan. 10, 2022, acquisition is a joint venture with New York-based DRA Advisors. The Fogelman-DRA partnership has acquired 35 multifamily communities totaling more than 11,000 apartment homes. The combined Fogelman and DRA Advisors portfolio now has over 5,300 units.

Lincoln at Wolfchase, which was built in 1998, offers one-, two- and three-bedroom apartment homes with rental rates from \$1,000 - \$1,400. Fogelman is managing the property – it's currently 97% occupied, with just a few apartments available for rent.

Fogelman is planning a \$5 million renovation to begin this spring. The company's in-house construction management and design teams are handling the reno, which is expected to take sev-

eral years. The plans call for community upgrades including renovations to all interior units, the clubhouse and fitness center, plus enhancements to the exterior entry, pool area and signage.

"We're thrilled to expand our footprint in Fogelman's hometown," says Mike Aiken, SVP of Investments at Fogelman. "Memphis remains one of our largest and best-performing markets to date, and we look forward to growing our activity in the area."

Lincoln at Wolfchase' gated community is alongside 32 acres of green space. Its website says the location "minimizes [the] commute to Baptist Memorial, Olympus or the University of Memphis, and optimizes downtime with a resort-style pool, fitness center, and proximity to Shelby Farms Park."

Headquartered in Memphis since 1963, Fogelman Properties manages properties across the Bluff City including The Tennessee Brewery, Thornwood and Bristol on Union. "Memphis has been Fogelman's third strongest market – out of the 28 markets it operates in – over the past 36 months," added Julie Parrotta of BCENE Public Relations.

The company has grown from a local family-owned business to a powerhouse in the multifamily industry, with over \$4B in asset value. Fogelman Properties says it's one of the country's largest, privately owned and fully integrated multifamily investment and property management companies. It specializes in multifamily acquisitions, property management, construction management, and asset management. Nationwide, Fogelman operates 94 multifamily communities totaling more than 28,000 apartment homes across 12 states in the Southeast, Southwest and Midwest. HW



Clubhouse Credit: Fogelman Properties

PA Head Abbas Praises Mother of Six Terrorists: 'You are Our Pride and Glory'

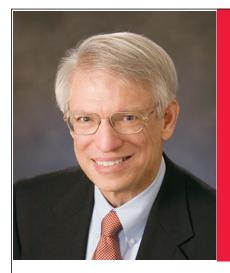
(JNS) – Latifa Abu Hmeid is the mother of six Fatah and Hamas terrorists involved in deadly attacks on Israelis yet is treated by Fatah and Palestinian Authority officials with great respect.

According to a Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) report, P.A. leader Mahmoud Abbas frequently holds meetings and lavishes praise upon her

On Jan. 12, he received Hmeid in his office in Ramallah. He spoke about her son Nasser –ignoring his involvement in the murder of Israelis but mentioning that he has cancer – and accused Israel of neglecting his health. He added that the issue of prisoners is a top priority for Palestinian leadership, which will "never give up their rights, despite all the pressures."

At a Jan. 4 meeting of Fatah's Revolutionary Council in Ramallah, Abbas praised the Hmeid family for its steadfastness and sacrifice, expressing hope that Nasser Abu Hmeid will make a full recovery and be released from prison.

According to the MEMRI report, the P.A. daily Al-Hayat Al-Jadida recently published several articles lauding Hmeid, calling her a "Palestinian national emblem" and a "heroine" who "nursed her sons on the milk of heroism, honor and pure nationalism until they became unparalleled knights on the path of resistance." HW



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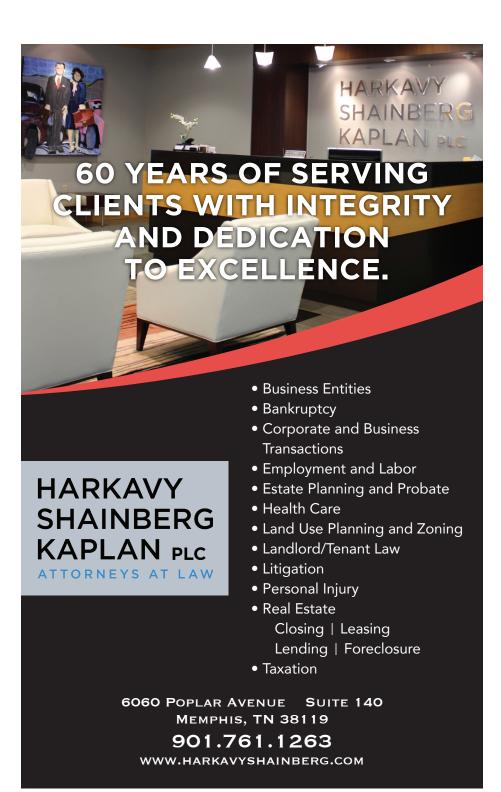
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Charitable Giving Can Be a Family Affair

Provided by Mike Stein, Managing Director - Investments, Wells Fargo Advisors

As families grow in size and overall wealth, a desire to "give back" often becomes a priority. Cultivating philanthropic values can help foster responsibility and a sense of purpose among both young and old alike, while providing financial benefits. Charitable donations may be eligible for income tax deductions (if you itemize) and can help reduce capital gains and estate taxes. Here are four ways to incorporate charitable giving into your family's overall financial plan.

Annual Family Giving

The holidays present a perfect opportunity to help family members develop a giving mindset. To establish an annual family giving plan, first determine the total amount that you'd like to donate as a family to charity. Next, encourage all family members to research and make a case for their favorite nonprofit organization, or divide the total amount equally among your family members and have each person donate to his or her favorite cause.

When choosing a charity, consider how efficiently the contribution dollars are used - i.e., how much of the organization's total annual budget directly supports programs and services versus overhead, administration, and marketing. For help in evaluating charities, visit the Charity Navigator website, charitynavigator.org, where you'll find star ratings and more detailed financial and operational information.

Estate Planning

Charitable giving can also play a key role in an estate plan by helping to ensure that your philanthropic wishes are carried out and potentially reducing your estate tax burden.

The federal government taxes wealth transfers both during your lifetime and at death. In 2021, the federal gift and estate tax is imposed on lifetime transfers exceeding \$11,700,000, at a top rate of 40%. States may also impose taxes but at much lower thresholds than the federal government.

Ways to incorporate charitable giving into your estate plan include will and trust bequests; beneficiary designations for insurance policies and retirement plan accounts; and charitable lead and charitable remainder trusts. (Trusts incur upfront costs and often have ongoing administrative fees. The use of trusts involves complex tax rules and regulations. You should consider the counsel of an experienced estate planning professional and your legal and tax professionals before implementing such strategies.)

Snapshot of 2020

Despite the pandemic and economic downturn, 2020 was the highest year for charitable giving on record, reaching \$471.44 billion. Giving to public-society benefit organizations, environmental and animal organizations, and human services organizations grew the most, while giving to arts, culture, and humanities and to health organizations declined. Giving by source, 2020

Donor-Advised Funds

Donor-advised funds offer a way to receive tax benefits now and make charitable gifts later. A donor-advised fund is an agreement between a donor and a host organization (the fund). Your contributions are generally tax deductible, but the organization becomes the legal owner of the assets. You (or a designee, such as a family member) then advise on how those contributions will be invested and how grants will be distributed. (Although the fund has ultimate control over the assets, the donor's wishes are generally honored.)

Family Foundations

Private family foundations are similar to donor-advised funds, but on a more complex scale. Although you don't necessarily need the coffers of Melinda Gates or Sam Walton to establish and maintain one, a private family foundation may be most appropriate if you have a significant level of wealth. The primary benefit (in addition to potential tax savings) is that you and your family have complete discretion over how the money is invested and which charities will receive grants. A drawback is that these separate legal entities are subject to stringent regulations.

These are just a few of the ways families can nurture a philanthropic legacy while benefiting their financial situation. For more information, contact your financial professional or an estate planning attorney.

Bear in mind that not all charitable organizations are able to use all possible gifts, so it is prudent to check first. The type of organization you select can also affect the tax benefits you receive.

All investing involves risk, including the possible loss of principal, and there is no guarantee that any investment strategy will be successful.

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Italian Police **Arrest Teens Behind Anti-**Semitic Attack on 12-Year-Old **Jewish Boy**

(JNS) - Police in Italy have arrested two teenage girls who are allegedly responsible for the physical and verbal anti-Semitic attack on a 12-year-old Jewish boy in Tuscany.

The boy's parents said the attack occurred over the weekend in a park by their home in the town of Campiglia Marittima, near Livorno in Tuscany, according to a statement by town officials cited in The Associated Press.

A local publication, The Nation, wrote that the assailants told the boy, "You need to be quiet because you are Jewish," and made other belittling re-

They also reportedly called him a "dirty Jew" and said to the young teen "you should die in the oven," a clear reference to the crematoriums at the Nazi concentration camps where Jews were murdered during World War II. The 12-year-old said the teenagers also kicked him and hit him on the head.

The boy's father told The Nation that nobody intervened to help his son during the incident.

The girls will face charges in the Juvenile Court in Florence, reported The Algemeiner.

Campiglia Marittima mayor Alberta Ticciati said last Wednesday, "The boy is in shock. Gestures of this kind must be handled with firmness. They cannot be permitted. It is not explicable."

Anti-Semitic incidents have been on the rise in Italy over the last six years, according to the Milan-based Center of Contemporary Jewish Documents' Observatory on Anti-Jewish Prejudice. HW

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NYPD Arrests Woman Who Told Jewish Siblings: 'Hitler Should Have Killed You All'



Christina Darling, 21, is facing hate crime charges. **Credit: NYPD Twitter**

By Lisa Keys

(New York Jewish Week via JTA) -A woman who allegedly told three Jewish children in Brooklyn two weeks ago, "Hitler should have killed you all," was arrested by the NYPD last Friday.

Christina Darling, 21, is facing hate crime charges, among others, for harassing an 8-year-old Jewish boy on Friday, Jan. 14. The boy was playing with his siblings, ages 7 and 2, outside Kehal Tiferes Avrohom Ziditshov, an Orthodox synagogue on Avenue P in Brooklyn's Marine Park neighborhood.

Darling allegedly told them, "Hitler should have killed you all. I'll kill you and know where you live."

Surveillance cameras also show Darling spitting on the boy.

The NYPD released the footage last Tuesday. Details on how the subject was caught are not yet known.

Darling is charged with menacing and aggravated harassment - both hate crimes - as well as acting in a manner injurious to a child.

"I would hope that she understands the severity of what she did," the children's father, Aryah Fried, told CBS News New York. "To do it to anybody is obviously problematic, but for an adult to do it to a child is just beyond crazy."

Additionally, organizers online identified Darling as a student at St. Francis College, majoring in education, English and psychology. A petition at Change. org to expel Darling from the Brooklyn college was started last Thursday; it also called upon its president, Miguel Martinez-Saenz, to "denounce this horrifying act of racism, bigotry, and harassment against the Jewish people."

According to the NYPD Hate Crimes Dashboard, there were 198 confirmed incidents of hate crimes against Jewish people in New York last year; Jews were targeted more than any other group. Among those incidents, 58 arrests were made. HW

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Schumer Proposes Doubling Nonprofit Security Grant Funding to \$360 Million



Nathan Diament, the Orthodox Union's executive director of public policy, speaks alongside Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer at a New York City press conference calling for an increase in funding for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program to \$360 million, so more synagogues, other houses of worship and nonprofits at risk of attack can improve building security, Jan. 26, 2022. Credit: Orthodox Union.

(JNS) - Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) announced during a press conference last Wednesday in Midtown Manhattan that he is proposing to double the funding of the Nonprofit Security Grant Program from \$180 million to \$360 million.

The announcement comes a week after Jewish communal organizations called for the grant's increase following a rabbi and worshippers being held hostage at gunpoint during a Jan. 15 Shabbat services in Colleyville, Texas.

Joining Schumer at the announcement were numerous faith leaders, including representatives from the Orthodox Union, which was one of the groups calling for the grant to increase.

"We did not imagine living through a nightmare in the United States of not one, not two, but three synagogues being the sites of domestic terrorist attacks, and that's what we've now lived through," Nathan Diament, OU executive director of public policy, said during the press conference. "In my 25 years of working in advocacy for the synagogue community, I didn't imagine that I would turn on my phone after Shabbat and the first call I would get would be from the Secretary of Homeland Security telling me about another synagogue terrorist incident."

The additional funding would be included in an omnibus spending package

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being put together by appropriators in Congress ahead of the February expiration date of the government's current Continuing Resolution.

Since its creation in 2005, the grant's funding had been steadily increased. However, in light of recent attacks on religious centers, supporters believe that more funding is needed due to the fact that despite the 2021 fiscal year's funding of the program at \$180 million - the largest-ever amount so far - more than half of the grant applicants were denied.

The program is administered by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. It provides grants of up to \$150,000 to synagogues, other houses of worship, communal centers, Jewish day schools and other nonprofits at risk of attack. The money may be used for building security improvements, and for the training and hiring of security guards.

"We will not stand idle as our community is preyed upon yet again," OU president Mark Bane said in a news release. "We at the Orthodox Union are working to do all that we can to keep the Jewish community and other faith communities safe at all times, and especially in their houses of worship."

Schumer himself called for the program's funding to reach \$360 million two years ago, though he was not the majority leader at the time. HW

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RFK Jr. Curbs His Enthusiasm for **COVID Holocaust Analogies Following Prompt from Wife Cheryl Hines**



Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and actress Cheryl Hines arrive at the Los Angeles premiere of 'A Bad Moms Christmas' at Regency Village Theatre in Westwood, California, Oct. 30, 2017. Credit: Axelle/Bauer-Griffin/FilmMagic

By Ron Kampeas

WASHINGTON (JTA) - Robert Kennedy Jr., a notorious vaccine skeptic, apologized last Tuesday for invoking Holocaust diarist Anne Frank at an anti-vaccine rally - shortly after his wife, "Curb Your Enthusiasm" actress Cheryl Hines, publicly took him to task.

Hines, the fictional ex of Jewish comedian Larry David on the HBO show, may have curbed her husband's enthusiasm for Holocaust analogies.

"Even in Hitler's Germany, you could cross the Alps into Switzerland, you could hide in the attic like Anne Frank did," Kennedy had said at the rally on Sunday, Jan. 23, in Washington D.C. "Today the mechanisms are being put in place that will make it so none of us can run, none of us can hide."

The first statement from either of the couple about Kennedy's remarks came from Hines. Last Monday evening, she tweeted, "My husband's opinions are not a reflection of my own," in response to a rebuke by the Auschwitz Memorial, which called Kennedy's remarks a "sad symptom of moral & intellectual decay."

"While we love each other, we differ

on many current issues," Hines said.

By last Tuesday morning, Kennedy was also dialing back his rhetoric.

"I apologize for my reference to Anne Frank, especially to families that suffered the Holocaust horrors," Kennedy said in a tweet last Tuesday morning. "My intention was to use examples of past barbarism to show the perils from new technologies of control. To the extent my remarks caused hurt, I am truly and deeply sorry."

The Associated Press, reporting the apology, noted that Kennedy has used Holocaust analogies multiple times in his crusade against vaccines.

If it wasn't already clear that Hines thought her husband's Holocaust analogies were pretty, pretty bad, she followed up last Tuesday morning, barely 20 minutes after Kennedy tweeted his

"My husband's reference to Anne Frank at a mandate rally in D.C. was reprehensible and insensitive," she said. "The atrocities that millions endured during the Holocaust should never be compared to anyone or anything. His opinions are not a reflection of my own." HW

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School Days: Cantor Levine and Miss Smith



Editor's note: This story is being reprinted in memory of Ted Roberts in appreciation of his longtime service as a newspaper columnist.

By Ted Roberts

Miss Smith, my third-grade teacher at Vollentine Grammar School, stood facing the class with her arm around my shoulders. She was a large woman, bigger than two or three of today's fashion models, with gray hair pulled back from a ruddy, round face. All I knew of her personal life was that she was unwed but mothered 25 of us third grade kids. And she lived in a small neighboring town famous for its horse farms.

She looked out to her students, her eyes focused above them. I looked down. I had just finished reciting a poem to the class and before I could return to my desk, Miss Smith was at my side. "Children, Teddy is Jewish. And I like Jewish kids. Teddy's people have made some major contributions to the South. How many of you know of Dr. Joseph Goldberger who cured Pellagra? How many of you know about Pellagra?" Not one kid knew of Goldberger or Pellagra, whereupon Miss Smith went on to tell her class how the Jewish doctor had deduced that this scourge of rural America was caused by a dietary deficiency. She was a good storyteller and told the tale of Goldberger's medical sleuthing with gusto. "But his people (meaning mine and Dr. Goldberger's) are having a bad time, 'specially in Germany, because

of an evil man named Hitler – a fiend in human form. Let's show Teddy that we're proud to live in America, where we'd just send the dog catcher to pick up a flea hound like Hitler." The Anti-Christ had come to destroy the faithful, she told the class, and naturally, he had started with the Lord's people, the Jews. It was Armageddon time.

This talk made me nervous. I'd never heard of Joseph Goldberger, either. I was only Teddy Roberts, 3rd grader in Vollentine Grammar School; not the visible representative of the Lord's people or the Jewish race or even one of the major contestants in the battle of Armageddon.

"I like Jewish kids," she repeated. "It's a shame we don't have more of them in our class."

The classroom was full of giggles because of Hitler and his fleas, I hoped, and not at me and the fact that in Tennessee Jews like me were as rare as polar bears. Miss Smith's speeches made me uncomfortable – like singing Christmas Carols. Why couldn't she just take me into the cloak room and explain my uniqueness - a Jew in Tennessee. But I did like the feel of her big hand on my shoulder. And maybe Miss Smith's praises helped me with Betty Lou McKintosh, the prettiest girl in the third grade, whose blue eyes opened wide as she looked at me and Miss Smith at the head of the class. Afterwards, we sang America the Beautiful and took the Pledge of Allegiance. I wasn't uncomfortable at all.

We Jewish kids of the 30s and 40s occupied a narrow niche in Southern juvenile society. We attended the same public schools as our Christian playmates, since Hebrew day schools were several decades in the future. In our double life, we went to their parties, and we played neighborhood games with them – these kids in our grammar school classes. But we spent our Sunday mornings and three afternoons a week at "Hebrew" School with a different social set.

The Hebrew School term of imprisonment, as my friends and I saw it, was six years. Five years until Bar Mitzvah – then a year of post graduate studies. It was obligatory. There was no parole – no time off for good behavior – no community service substitutions. Only the Jubilee could save me, and it wasn't due for 32 years.

Mr. Levine, the warden of this institution, was my favorite teacher. He was also the synagogue cantor. Hebrew School teacher and cantor – it took two hats to make a living in those days. He always carried a ruler, though the only thing he'd ever measure in his life was the Hebrew vocabulary of his forgetful students. That ruler was for little boys with big mouths; and young athletes who were sleeping off – in his classroom – the fatigue of the lunchtime baseball game.

He was a virtuoso with a ruler. It was his baton that orchestrated a dozen or so hooligans into a functioning class. We learned, but it was like teaching walruses to play a harmonica. Nothing was farther from our natural instincts than this 3,000-year-old language that had no relationship to Joe Dimaggio, Hank Greenberg, Sid Luckman: or the girl next door who, due to some enchantment in our brain and body, we just noticed was more than a substitute second baseman.

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The Scribbler On The Roof

By Ted Roberts

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I was not a model student. I was a Philistine – a Canaanite who knew every detail of Babe Ruth's record but couldn't tell you whether the Rambam had lived and studied in Memphis or Babylon. And what DID he do? Contribute to the Talmud? Sell dry goods? Or make the freshest bagels in New York City? Find me a nine-year-old boy in Memphis, Tennessee, in the 1940s who knew, and I'll tell you when the Moshiach is coming.

Nobody liked Hebrew School. What was to like? Your Christian friends were on the playground kicking up dust and you were learning to say "David sees the tree" in Hebrew. But I'll never forget Cantor Levine – or Miss Smith, either.

The syndicated humor of Ted, the Scribbler on the Roof, has appeared in newspapers around the U.S., on National Public Radio, and numerous websites. **HW**

Please check out Jewish Scene Magazine and The Hebrew Watchman on Facebook • Instagram • JewishSceneMagazine.com • HebrewWatchman.com

Insights From Israel *Zionism 2022*

By Howard Weisband

I studied in Israel in 1969-70, 10 months of Jewish study and living a Jewish calendar, in order to bolster my background in Jewish texts and the Hebrew language. I arrived with a strong Jewish identity and left on my way to graduate school with those goals accomplished, plus an unanticipated equally strong Zionist identity.

That having been my first experience in Israel, I developed an "Ahavat Yisrael," a Love of Israel. Even more, not surprising in retrospect, I learned what Zionism is all about. Being intrigued as to how the modern State of Israel was created, I began reading voluminously Zionist history and ideology, plus accounts of the 1948 War of Independence and what was then available on the 1967 Six Day War. I walked Jerusalem in the footsteps of Israeli soldiers. When I went to the Kotel, the Western Wall, I envisioned myself at the surrounding wall of the Holy Temple some 2000 years prior, plus emotionally and physically I put myself in the same place two years earlier when the IDF liberated the Old City and the Kotel.

With awe and wonderment, I still do the same today, in 2022. It is one of the many Jewish and Zionist historical moments that I often internalize in fulfilment of the timeless teaching in our Passover Haggada: "In each generation, each person is obligated to see himself or herself [lirot et atzmo] as though he or she personally came forth from Egypt."

I returned to the United States in 1970 thinking that one day I should make Aliyah, and I began my graduate studies while developing a personal philosophy that Judaism and Zionism should be integrated within my thought processes and my daily lifestyle. The key word is integrated, not experienced separately but woven together as much as possible in my thinking and living. Home and synagogue each have to be infused with Jewish practice and elements of Israel. The Israel experience, whether for a teen or an adult must be structured with Jewish and Israel learning and involvement that can be internalized and brought back home. Such was the core of our Federation Israel Missions.

As I read and studied, I had to ask myself which Zionism did I follow? Was it the political Zionism of Theodor Herzl, founder of modern-day Zionism and author of "Der Judenstaat," "The Jewish State?" Or Ahad Ha'am's cultural and spiritual Zionism? What about the revisionist, more vigilant Zionism of Ze'ev Jabotinsky and later Menachem Begin? Perhaps the diplomatic Zionism of Chaim Weizmann, who was to become

the first President of Israel? How could I neglect the more-focused Zionist ideology of David Ben-Gurion, State builder and founding Prime Minister of Israel?

The answer is of course that some of each has been incorporated within my own philosophy.

Happily, my reading, exploration, and thinking continues to this day. However, based upon contemporary realities often the style of writing has changed, at times becoming more populist in nature, and simultaneously often looking for "quick fixes" to current complex, difficult issues such as assimilation, anti-Semitism, and "Israel bashing," the latter better termed as the delegitimization of Israel.

Some of the most recent writings are those of Gol Kalev, former investment banker and chairman of the America-Israel Friendship League Think Tank. He contributed an op ed to The Jerusalem Post in April 2018 "Theodor Herzl vs. Ahad Ha'am today." In January 2022, he wrote the cover story for The Jerusalem Report magazine, "Judaism's transformation to Zionism, countering the Israel-bashing movement." The latter article serves as a prelude to and publicity for his book "JUDAISM 3.0," just published and launched in Jerusalem in January, the cover of which includes in

smaller type above and below the title respectively: "THE STATE OF JUDA-ISM" and "JUDAISM'S TRANSFOR-MATION TO ZIONISM."

Is Kalev suggesting that Zionism supplants Judaism? I trust not, since his Jerusalem Report article concludes: "Increased Jewish passion and pride augments other connections to Judaism one has, including through Jewish learning, tradition and faith. Indeed, recognizing the transformation would fuel vibrancy into the full spectrum of Judaism and fulfill Herzl's vision: Zionism is the return to Judaism.

Having purchased Kalev's book, I will be looking for a thorough understanding and presentation, wherein Judaism and Zionism are integrated in daily life, not one in which Zionism even partially is replacing Judaism.

Howard Weisband served as Assistant Executive Director (1975-77) and Executive Director (1977-84) of the Memphis Jewish Federation. Following Aliyah with his family in 1986, he served as Secretary General of the Jewish Agency for Israel through 1997, and then in other senior professional positions in Israel. Now retired, he and Kayla live in Jerusalem. He can be reached at hweisband@gmail.com HW

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OBITUARIES



Miriam "Mimi" LeeVine Alabaster

Miriam "Mimi" LeeVine Alabaster, loving wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, passed away peacefully at her home at the age of 93 on January 23, 2022, surrounded by her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Born in Memphis, Tennessee, on March 27, 1928, she married her husband, Jake Alabaster, of 67 years upon his return from WWII. Mimi raised and treasured her children, enjoyed traveling extensively with her family and friends, had a passion for tennis, and enthusiastically attended all the children's sports games and events. She avidly read her Danielle Steel and James Patterson novels, played mahjong every Tuesday with her loyal friends for 65 years, spoiled everyone with their favorite Jewish and Southern specialties, and provided unlimited back-scratches and bottomless candy bowls to everyone she loved.

She was predeceased by parents Isadore and Lena LeeVine, her devoted husband, Jake Alabaster, her sister, Rose Silverman, and her brother, Avery LeeVine.

She is survived by sons and daughter Dr. Steven (Perla) Alabaster, Dr. Michael Alabaster, Judy (Peter) Felsenthal; six grandchildren Scott (Abby) Felsenthal, Andrew (Madison) Felsenthal, Stephanie (Adam Gilbert) Alabaster, Kelsey Alabaster, Jason Alabaster, Julian Alabaster; and two great-grand-daughters Mollie and Rosie Felsenthal.

The family would like to graciously thank caregivers Alex Benton, Alexis Benton, Detra Ford, Danielle Smith and Amy Stevens; Dr. David We and Methodist Hospice Care, for their love and dedication to our beloved Mimi and the family.

Memorial service were held on January 24, 2022, at Temple Israel Cemetery.

Messages of condelence can be sent to

Messages of condolence can be sent to AlabasterFamily123@gmail.com. **HW**

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Stewart P. Cannell

Stewart P. Cannell, born February 13, 1952, son of the late Jean and Daniel Cannell, passed away peacefully with his loving wife, Dee Cannell, at his side on January 22, 2022, at the age of 69. He leaves his brother, Dr. M. Barry Cannell (Rene Lewis), sister Judy (Stan) Weiss, children Carey Saunders (Jason), Laurie Mehlman (Ross), grandchildren Sophie, Carter and Olivia, his brother and sisterin-law, Diane and Irwin Evans, as well as a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, countless dear friends and colleagues.

Stewart, born in Chicago, moved to Nashville, Tennessee, and lived there throughout his teenage years. He was very involved with family and friends and began his long career with the B'nai B'rith Organization. His accomplishments were many, including the highest honor of Regional Aleph Godol from 1969-1970. Cannell graduated from Hillsboro High School in 1970.

He then attended the University of Tennessee Knoxville graduating in 1974 with an undergraduate degree in communications. During college, he continued his involvement as a member and leader of the Alpha Epsilon Fraternity becoming a life member in 1974. It was during that time that he met the love of his life, Dee Evans, whom he married in 1975.

His professional career began with an advertising firm in Nashville, and soon thereafter, he transitioned to outside sales. His true calling was in sales, manufacturing and management in the label industry, beginning with Wurzburg Brothers and completing his career with All American Label.

Throughout his professional career, he continued his philanthropic volunteering by mentoring countless teens on how to maneuver forward in their teenage years for over 30 years. In 2008, he was awarded one of the highest honors from the Cotton State Region of the B'nai B'rith Organization for his unselfish volunteer work. At the same time, he continued his involvement with his peers in the B'nai B'rith Men's Lodge where he was honored with the President's Award in 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001.

While his life was taken much too soon, he was blessed with the riches of a wonderful family, countless friendships and relationships made. A quiet, compassionate soul, who will always be remembered as a gentle giant, so caring and who will be greatly missed. The family requests that any memorials be sent to B'nai B'rith Youth Delta Region (https://BBYO.org/donate), Temple Israel or to the charity of the donor's choice. May his memory be for a blessing. HW

Rita Thomas Robins

Rita Thomas Robins, 98, died Sunday, January 16, 2022, at St. Francis Hospital of complications from COVID. She was born in St. Louis and received her BS from the University of Missouri, Columbia, and her RN from St. John's Hospital, Springfield. She got her MA at the University of Memphis. As a registered nurse, Mrs. Robins served as an Ensign in the Navy during World War II. She was on her way to Guam when the war ended. Mrs. Robins became a psychiatric nurse and taught Special Surgeries at the UT School of Nursing before being appointed director of nursing at the City of Memphis Hospital. She was also a medical consultant at the Center for Reproductive Health.

Mrs. Robins married Axel Robins of blessed memory in 1966, shortly after being set up on a blind date by Dr. Larry Wruble. They were married 35 years. She was the sister-in-law of Helga Robins Cornell, who died in 2017.

She is survived by her two nieces, Gloria Cornell Felsenthal (Edward) and Bunny Cornell Burson (Charles) five great nieces and nephews and 11 greatgreat nieces and nephews.

She is also survived by very special friends, Joy and Charles Auerbach, Julie Sandine, Caroline Roberto, Bruce Kramer, Brittney Pulliam, Andrae Willis, Brian Meyers, Lenora Jones, Emma Parrot and Carol Blackburn.

A private service was held graveside at Temple Israel cemetery. Donations may be made to Temple Israel, Church Health, CHOICES or a charity of choice. **HW**



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BOOK REVIEW

Boors, Clowns, Crazies, Weirdos, A Pet Parakeet – and Other Hazards of Online Dating for a Mature Jew

"Maybe It's Me: On Being the Wrong Kind of Woman" By Eileen Pollack

By Julia M. Klein

This originally appeared in Forward, reprinted with permission.

It was the title essay, about Eileen Pollack's late-life romantic struggles with boorish men, that first drew me to "Maybe It's Me." Pollack's riffs on online dating, admittedly an easy target, are hilarious. And her rueful observations about the challenges smart, accomplished women face in heterosexual relationships are even more resonant.

But there are other pleasures, too, in this essay collection by the former director of the University of Michigan's creative writing program. Among them are examples of unconventional travel writing, about a solo jaunt to Israel ("All of Us, We All Are Arameans") and another trip, with a longtime partner, to Poland ("Righteous Gentile").

Other pieces touch on Pollack's childhood in an Orthodox Jewish home in the Catskills, her early schooling, a traumatic summer punctuated by violence, a class for the vocally challenged, her leftist son ("I Tried to Raise a Jew and He Turned Out a Communist"), and an unusual Jewish cemetery in Detroit. An essay titled "The Jewish Shah" is an intriguing speculation on the origins of the Pahlavi dynasty, but also a rumination on fathers and daughters.

The organization of "Maybe It's Me" is roughly chronological, giving the book the feel of a memoir. Because each essay is self-contained, there is some repetition. There are also lacunae. Through much of the book, the reasons for the breakup of Pollack's two major romantic relationships, with her "kind, brilliant, handsome" scientist husband

and her adventurous Polish Catholic partner, Marian, remain mysterious. The title essay ultimately sheds light on the divorce. Pollack remains purposely vague about the second split, though she says one incompatibility involved Marian's insistence that she "share his pleasure in sampling cultures not my own."

When Pollack can let loose without harming others, she is disarmingly candid. She confesses to bulimia, extensive therapy, and moving to New York from Michigan at 60 to fish from a larger pool of available single men. Recalling her past sexual gusto, she bemoans a celibacy she fears will become permanent. Online dating, for all its risks and indignities, gets her back in the game.

Pollack's prose is exact and lucid, devoid of self-conscious flourishes. She doesn't write pretty sentences; she tells stories that tend to meander and often end with a wry kicker. "I became a writer precisely because I wanted to get down in words how pleasurable and painful life can be," she writes.

For Pollack, pleasure and pain are often intertwined. Her great childhood joys, for instance, included sweets, a pet parakeet she named Ish Kabibble, and an affectionate grandmother who lived in the attic of the family ranch house. But Pollack was the daughter of a dentist, and the sweets were strictly rationed. The burdensome parakeet was offloaded to the family cleaning lady, who herself may have been a victim of domestic abuse. The beloved grandmother began suffering from dementia and was consigned, against her will, to a nursing home.

Pollack, as she tells it, was a gifted child at a time before gifted education

was mandated, so school could be a trial. But she failed a school psychologist's test that would have allowed her to skip a grade. The friends she craved and admired bullied her at times.

At Yale, Pollack earned a bachelor's degree in physics, an especially rare feat in its day. "I was too angry and confused and lacking in confidence to go on to physics grad school," she writes. Instead, she earned an MFA from the Iowa Writers' Workshop and wrote both fiction and nonfiction. (Her well-reviewed 2015 memoir, "The Only Woman in the Room: Why Science Is Still a Boys' Club," describes how and why she detoured from science.)

Pollack's storytelling gifts are on full display in her travel writing. She is the epitome of a half-hearted traveler, dragged to Poland by her boyfriend, Marian. She avoids Auschwitz but visits the site of the Warsaw Ghetto and Krakow's Jewish Quarter, "creepily devoid of Jews," and encounters antisemitic graffiti.

But the trip really goes awry when her intestines rebel at the heavy food. She ends up in a crowded, nightmarish Polish hospital, with no privacy or toilet paper, facing the threat of surgery for a cancerous tumor she knows doesn't exist. It takes him a while, but Marian eventually rescues her, proving himself the "Righteous Gentile" she needs him to be.

Marian also plans a trip to Israel, but the relationship crumbles two weeks before their departure. Having repaid him for her airline ticket, she decides to do the trip on her own. Economically strapped, and politically torn, she nevertheless succumbs to Israel's geographic, cultural, historic and archaeological charms. "If not for the violence," she writes, "everyone in the world would be clamoring to live there."

"Maybe It's Me" is the most fun of Pollack's essays. It may also be the saddest. The truth, she writes, is, "I wanted to find true love before I died." She hoped that "men in New York might not find me as intimidating as men in the rest of the country." But even there, she reports, the men she meets mainly want women who will laugh at their jokes and ignite their banked sexual fires.

Pollack's dates become kindling for her dry wit. One man, in his seventies, complains that he doesn't feel "fireworks" with her. She responds: "Fireworks? Seriously? Those fireworks of yours have been lying in a moldy basement for seven decades. You think the gunpower might have gotten a little damp? Maybe you should be content with sparklers?"

Discouraged, she frets that perhaps she should never have left her marriage, which faltered over the unequal division of housework and child care. She ends up dating clowns, sometimes real ones. Online dating unearths a string of crazies and weirdos, often far older and shorter than they claim. But she doesn't renounce hope. "I don't want to blow my one life," she writes, "without knowing what it is to be loved by someone who loves my mind as much as he loves my body."

Julia M. Klein, the Forward's contributing book critic, has been a two-time finalist for the National Book Critics Circle's Nona Balakian Citation for Excellence in Reviewing. Follow her on Twitter @JuliaMKlein HW



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