

Our thoughts and prayers
are with the
people of Ukraine.
May there soon be peace.



THE

Hebrew  Watchman

SERVING THE MEMPHIS JEWISH COMMUNITY SINCE 1925

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Ukrainian Jews, Scarred by a Bloody History, Find Themselves Refugees Once Again



Jews from Ukraine arrive at a Jewish community center in Chisinau, Moldova, Feb. 25, 2022. Credit: Courtesy of Rabbi Pinchas Salzman

By Cnaan Liphshiz

(JTA) – Across Ukraine, Jews are engaging in a historically Jewish experience: becoming refugees. And hundreds of them from Odessa have headed to an unlikely destination, the impoverished nation of Moldova whose capital, Chisinau, was the site of a major pogrom that became a symbol of Jewish flight Eastern Europe in the early 20th century. As Russian troops pour into Ukraine and bomb its cities, many Ukrainians are on the move both internally and

in an attempt to leave for other countries. Border crossings in the country’s west and south are attracting thousands of prospective exiles, according to the Guardian. There are also at least 100,000 internally displaced persons. Some of the Jews who live in Ukraine – who number at least 43,000 and potentially many more – are part of that unfortunate migration. “We just put many mattresses in the strongest part of the sturdiest building. It will have to do for now,” Moshe Azman,

one of several men bearing the title of chief rabbi in Ukraine, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency about what is happening at the residential compound near Kyiv that Azman and his community first set up in 2014 to aid Jewish refugees fleeing the last Russian invasion. Named Anatevka – a reference to the fictional hometown of Tevye the Dairyman from the famed Broadway musical “Fiddler on the Roof” and the iconic Sholom Aleichem short stories on which it was based – the compound has seen dozens of families arrive from more densely populated areas, Azman said. Many of the internally displaced are from cities, some of which have been hit by Russian armaments over the past 24 hours, and are leaving for places seen as less likely to draw fire and to avoid being in crumbling Soviet-era apartment building during bombings, Azman explained. Anatevka, built at a time of a more limited Russian incursion, has no bomb shelters. More than 100 people have died in bombings and hostilities so far in the war, which has not included significant urban fighting. In one case, one person died and five were wounded when an explosive device detonated near the center of Uman, a city of about 80,000 half-

way between Odessa and Kyiv. Some parts of the city – which in peacetime is a destination for Jewish pilgrims from abroad – were evacuated following the incident, according to some reports. The explosion happened about a mile from the gravesite of Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav, an 18th-century luminary and the founder of the Breslov Hasidic movement. Each year around Rosh Hashanah, about 30,000 Jews gather at the gravesite. Over the years, hundreds of Breslov followers, mostly from Israel, settled in Uman, which today has a year-round Jewish population of about 200. Dozens of them, including some women and children, have left since the invasion, and a video posted to Instagram showed a bus full of Orthodox Jews being transported within the city. But others are staying put, Chaim Chazin, a Jewish resident who moved to Uman from Israel, told JTA. His wife and daughters have been in Israel for several weeks. “The situation is complicated right now,” he said. “All of us, everyone in Ukraine, need to literally keep our heads down until this passes.” Elisha Shlomi, another Israel-born resident of Uman, told JTA that the remnant community intends to stay but

(See Ukraine Page 3)

Shocked Birthright Israel Participants from Ukraine and Russia Receive Ongoing Support While in Israel

Tel Aviv (February 24, 2022) – As news of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine reached Israel, Birthright Israel began working to support participants from those countries who are currently in Israel, offering the option to stay in Israel, or reunite with their families when possible. There are three Birthright Israel groups from Russia and Ukraine currently in Israel, of which 26 participants are from Ukraine. Sixteen Ukrainian



Group from Ukraine traveling in Israel this week. Credit: Courtesy of Birthright Israel.

participants were supposed to fly home last Thursday morning, but while they were sitting on planes, bombing began in Kiev and flights were immediately canceled. Birthright then placed them at a hotel in Tel Aviv. Eighteen Russian participants are staying at another hotel in Tel Aviv, courtesy of Birthright, after their flight to Moscow was postponed. Another 10 Ukrainian young people are currently touring Jerusalem in a mixed Birthright group with 10 partic-

ipants from Russia. Many Birthright Israel participants from Ukraine expressed shock as they anxiously followed the news. Anastasia Bilig, a Kiev resident, said her thoughts are with her friends in the region. “It’s horrible. It’s terrible. And I have no words in my mind to describe it. I feel scared that these things can happen in the 21st century,” she said.

(See Birthright Page 3)

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My Teen Israel Experience



Eli, top right, hangs out with other teens in Israel while on his NFTY Jacobs Camp summer experience trip.

By Eli Lewis

Eli Lewis, son of Sarah and Jeff Lewis, is a junior at Memphis University School. Memphis Jewish Federation’s Lemksy Endowment Fund provided him with a Teen Israel Experience grant to help offset the cost of his NFTY Jacobs Camp program in Israel.

This summer I went on the NFTY Jacobs Camp program in Israel, and it was one of the most incredible experiences of my life. Before I left, I was very hesitant to go on the trip due to concerns of safety and the fact I only knew a few people none of whom I was very close with. I also wanted to stay home and hang with my friends; however, I am so happy my parents encouraged me to go because I had the time of my life.

When I arrived at Newark airport, I began meeting all the people I would be spending a month with. I was a bit nervous we would not all get along, but I am so glad I was wrong, for immediately when landing in Israel we all started to warm up and get to know each other. The first hostel where we stayed was in Jerusalem. I was a bit disappointed because I did not know any of the kids in my room and it appeared all my friends got rooms with someone they knew. However, I think being in a room with a smaller group really helps people get to know each other and become friends.

The next day we met the kids who arrived after us and that is when I met my best friend on the trip. After we stayed in Jerusalem, we camped in the desert, which I can confidently say was the worst part of the trip and probably of my life, but after suffering with everyone together I think it brought us all closer.

We went to Tel Aviv next, and the

place we stayed had animals all over, which was really cool. I really enjoyed going out in the city to the markets to eat food. I really liked the free time we got not only because I got to do what I wanted, but it gives you a sense of responsibility and I felt more like an adult getting to go around on our own in small little groups.

My friends and I did the “Taste of the IDF” together. It was interesting experiencing a little of what it is like to be in the Israeli army. It was rough for me and my friends out in the woods, but just hanging out with them and talking was so much fun. It was amazing when we all met up again in Acre. Acre was my favorite part of the trip because the place we stayed was really cool and had lots to do.

Next, we went to Haifa where we were paired with our Israeli friends. I requested to be in a room with one of the Israeli teens, which led me to making another great friend. It was hard to say goodbye to the Israelis, but I still talk to them. Overall, the trip was great because I learned so much about the culture of Israel and made lifelong friends.

Thank you to Memphis Jewish Federation’s Lemsky Fund for helping me to make my NFTY Jacobs Camp summer experience possible.

All rising high school juniors and seniors in the Memphis Jewish community are eligible for grants up to \$3,000 to attend a recognized teen summer or semester program in Israel. Teen Israel Experience applications for Summer 2022 are now available online. To learn more and apply, please go to: www.jcpmemphis.org/lemsky-endowment-fund. HW

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Memphis Candlelighting Time

Erev Shabbat, Fri. March 4, 2022 / 1 Adar II, 5782.....5:40 p.m.
Havdalah, Sat. March 5, 2022 / 2 Adar II, 5782 6:36 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion: Pekudei

MJCC Monthly Senior Luncheon
Features Food and Entertainment

The MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club is having their March Monthly Luncheon on March 16 at noon, in the Belz Social Hall.

The event will feature the entertainment of Breeze Cayolle, vocals and saxophone. Brian “Breeze” Cayolle’s music is soulful, strong and deeply rooted in the R&B, jazz, and rock and roll traditions of his native New Orleans. Breeze’s recording credits include



Brian “Breeze” Cayolle

numerous albums with many different jazz, blues, Cajun, and gospel recording artists including Gatemouth Brown and the late, great bluesman Junior Wells.

Mr. Cayolle’s performance is arranged by Creative Ageing of Memphis.

The food will be furnished by Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab. Cost for the meal and entertainment is only \$5 and payable at the door.

Reservations are required and can be made by contacting Steve Kaplan at 901-259-9220, email at stevekaplan@jccmemphis.org, or by calling the MJCC front desk at 901-761-0810.

The New Orleans live jazz of Breeze Cayolle is an energetic performance that all seniors will enjoy. HW



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Ukraine...

(Continued From Page 1)

will move to another country if fighting approaches or erupts in Uman. He declined to share where he planned to go.

As tensions between Ukraine and Russia began escalating in November, some Israeli officials said they were preparing for a wave of mass immigration from Ukraine, where at least 200,000 who are eligible to immigrate to Israel under its Law of Return for Jews and their relatives, according to a 2020 demographic study of European Jewry.

So far, the wave has not materialized on the scale that officials said they expected. But the Israeli embassy, which relocated, along with other foreign embassies, from Kyiv to Lviv in the country’s west, this month has registered appeals from about 3,000 Ukrainians who are not already citizens of Israel to immigrate to it.

Another 5,000-odd appeals connected to reaching Israel came from people in Ukraine who are already citizens, the embassy said, according to Ynet. Most of the non-citizens who contacted the embassy are married to citizens.

On Friday, Yair Lapid, Israel’s minister of foreign affairs, tweeted exit routes from Ukraine that he said were still viable for Israelis living in the country – into Poland, Romania and Hungary, all of which are absorbing an influx of refugees.

In recent days, tens of thousands of people have poured over the border from Ukraine into Moldova, a landlocked country between Romania and Ukraine that is often described as Eu-

rope’s poorest. Among them are hundreds of Jews from the vicinity of Odessa, whose residents normally enjoy one of the highest standards of living anywhere in Ukraine.

The Jews who crossed over to Moldova had more help than the non-Jewish new arrivals, who mostly have come from southern Ukraine, thanks to the mobilization of some Moldovan Jews for their Ukrainian coreligionists.

“The refugees and their children are being housed in motels, and provided with hot food and essential supplies” by the local community, partly thanks to funding of the Nacht Family Foundation, a charity set up by the Israeli entrepreneur Marius Nacht and his wife, Inbar, Moldova’s Chief Rabbi Pinchas Salzman said in a statement last Friday. Salzman said he expected hundreds more Jewish refugees to arrive in the coming days.

They will encounter a rapidly growing infrastructure to accommodate people displaced by the war in Ukraine. IsraAID, an Israeli nonprofit humanitarian aid organization, is sending a team to the region to assist refugees. So is United Hatzalah, the Israeli emergency service that frequently assists in disasters internationally. And the Chabad house in Chisinau is preparing for a first Shabbat with an influx of Jewish refugees, though without the supply of kosher food normally imported from Odessa.

“With more people you have to be ready with food,” Rabbi Zushe Abelsky told the Los Angeles Times from the United States, where he is currently. “Our rabbis over there are also in distress.” **HW**

Birthright...

(Continued From Page 1)

Lola Koktysh, also of Kiev, said she maintains hope despite her sense of shock. “I’m in full shock. I knew the situation was intensifying fast, but no one could predict what would happen today. And right now, everyone is afraid. There is panic, but people are still hopeful. And even in the light of the heartbreaking events, we are staying united,” she said.

Birthright Israel brings close to 5,000 participants from Russian-speaking countries on tours of Israel every year, with the majority coming from Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. Since its inception, more than 55,000 Russian-speaking participants have taken part in a Birthright Israel trip. After a two-year series of suspensions due to Covid-19, trips resumed this month.

“We are committed to assisting all of our participants from Ukraine to get through this challenging time. Currently, they can choose to stay with family

in Israel, return home on a flight through Warsaw, or even join an Onward Israel program for an additional month. Whatever solution works best, we will be there to support and care for them until they can reunite with their families in their hometown,” said Birthright Israel CEO Gidi Mark.

Taglit-Birthright Israel offers a free, life-changing trip to Israel for young Jewish adults between the ages of 18 and 32 and, in doing so, transforms the Jewish future. Its mission is to give every Jewish young adult around the world, especially the less connected, the opportunity to visit Israel on an educational trip. Today, Birthright Israel is the largest educational tourism organization in the world that has given over 750,000 journeys to the state of Israel. Specifically with groups from the FSU, Birthright Israel works in partnership with Genesis Philanthropy Group to provide participants with various enrichment experiences while they are on their trip. **HW**

Siblings of Children with Disabilities May Have Greater Empathy, New Study Finds

(JNS) – Having a child with a disability or a developmental delay is often a stressful experience for a family – for parents and siblings alike. Siblings, especially, may be exposed to greater stress and challenges.

Less research, however, has been done about the positive effects of growing up with a sibling with disabilities. A new study published in Child Development, led by Hebrew University of Jerusalem developmental psychology expert Professor Ariel Knafo-Noam and Anat Perry, examines how growing up

Researchers examined data from the Longitudinal Israeli Study of Twins, which included 1,657 families of twins born in 2004 and 2005.

as a sibling of a child with disabilities may nurture empathy.

It’s one of the first studies to examine the possible positive effects of growing up with a sibling with a disability.

“Our findings indicate that siblings of children with disabilities may have greater cognitive empathy – that is, an understanding of others’ thoughts and feelings – which is important as cognitive empathy is key for social skills,” said Yonat Rum, a postdoctoral researcher at Hebrew University and the University of Cambridge.

Researchers examined data from the Longitudinal Israeli Study of Twins, which included 1,657 families of twins born in 2004 and 2005. Of these, 63 families were identified where one of the twins has a disability and the other is typically developing.

The typically developing twin siblings of children with disabilities were then compared to 404 typically developing twin siblings from the rest of the sample, on measures of cognitive and emotional empathy and pro-sociality, completed when all children were 11 years old.

Participating children were administered a self-report questionnaire to assess their cognitive and emotional empathy, and a computerized task designed to assess prosocial behavior. Further, the participating children’s parents completed a questionnaire to assess their children’s pro-social behaviors.

The data showed that typically developing children who had a twin with a disability scored higher in self-reported cognitive empathy than did typically developing children who did not have a twin with special needs. Contrary to predictions, no differences were found in emotional empathy and pro-sociality.

“These positive effects might be due to the specific ‘advantage’ of cognitive empathy to better understand their sibling with disabilities and to support the sibling relationship,” said Knafo-Noam.

The authors acknowledged the preliminary nature of the findings and called for further research in the field. **HW**

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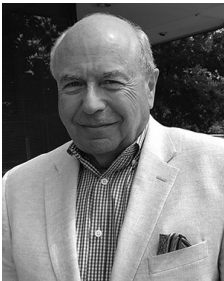
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Ukraine...We Watch. We Want to Help. What Can We Do a World Away?

The world watches in horror, fear, sadness and grief as Ukrainians run for the nearest borders, hunker down in tunnels, or take to the streets to fight for their right to remain a sovereign country.

Outpouring prayers and statements from local and global organizations fill our social media channels as they assess the situation to see where funds and supplies are most needed.

Local Tennessee representatives are speaking out against Putin's war of aggression against Ukraine.

Congressman Steve Cohen (TN-09), a Helsinki Commission Co-Chairman Representative took his allotted time during an Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Winter meeting in Vienna, to state: "How can we debate something with a country or group of people who call Ukrainians Nazis? It offends me to no end. Like me, Mr. Zelensky is Jewish. Nazis killed 6 million Jews and many others... That is not what Ukrainians are for. Mr. Zelensky is Jewish, it makes no sense. They lie. That's the only thing consistent from the Russians is lies... Let's stop KGB propaganda in the 21st Century... and give peace a chance."

In a statement from Congressman David Kustoff (TN-08), he said: “Russia’s unprovoked invasion of Ukraine has threatened the lives of countless civilians and presents a serious threat to global stability. The United States must

come together with our allies to hold Putin accountable and stand strong with the people of Ukraine.”

At the time of this printing, we have gathered a few organizational statements that will direct you to websites with options to help.

Memphis Jewish Federation/Jewish Federations of North America have established a 2022 Ukraine Crisis Fund.

In their statement, they write: Our JFNA overseas partners – JAFI, JDC, World Ort – are all on the ground leveraging their strong presence built up through years of Federation support that is today serving as a critical lifeline to help protect and safeguard Ukraine’s Jewish community.

The Need is Urgent

The estimated 200,000 Jews living in Ukraine have been profoundly affected by the political and economic instability that have wracked the country. Thousands are trapped in conflict zones in the east. Thousands more have fled the fighting. Federations are planning to allocate millions of dollars to our partner agencies on the ground. But the urgent needs continue.

Immediate and short-term needs already total \$20 million and include:

- Helping people make Aliyah to Israel
- Securing the local community and its institutions
- Maintaining critical welfare services

- Assisting internally displaced people in multiple locations
- Launching an emergency hotline
- Securing temporary housing for people in transit

- Purchasing satellite phones to maintain communications across the region

- Securing five Jewish schools and training staff to manage crisis needs

jcpmemphis.org

Chabad has established a Ukraine Jewish Community Relief Fund and says:

Due to the tense and volatile crisis in Ukraine, the Jewish population is living in a state of real fear. The economy has collapsed, and business has come to a standstill. Ukraine is home to 450,000 Jews. Wherever they are, and whatever the needs, Chabad is there for them. Over 170 Chabad couples live in Ukraine, serving 154 communities. This impressive network boasts 49 educational centers, 7 orphanages, and 32 soup kitchens. This is in addition to the regular infrastructure of synagogues, mikvahs, and community centers.

Chabad is at the forefront of caring for the Ukrainian Jewish community in crisis. Despite the real danger there, Rabbis and their families are selflessly leading their communities, providing a comforting shoulder, emergency aid, and inspiration in these trying times. Today more than ever, they need our support. All funds will go directly to assist the Jewish Community in Ukraine. jewishmemphis.com/spe

[cial/campaigns/ukraine/donate.htm](https://www.isracouncil.org/campaigns/ukraine/donate.htm)
Israeli American Council

We are heartbroken and troubled by the terrible images of destruction and loss of life from Ukraine. We pray for our brothers and sisters in the Jewish and Israeli communities in Ukraine that are currently under fire, and for those forced to flee their homes seeking a safe haven. This tragedy highlights how fortunate we are to live in an era where a Jewish State exists. We are inspired by the fact that Israel has the power, determination, commitment, and obligation to make every effort to support and rescue any endangered Jewish community worldwide. We should never take it for granted that Jews everywhere know they have a sovereign state, and a home that will always welcome them. For this and more, we shall continue committing ourselves to steadfast and unwavering support for Israel. Donations can be made at israeliamerican.org/donate

The World Union for Progressive Judaism has set up the Ukraine Crisis Fund for the Ukrainian Jewish Community. Money will be spent on individuals and communities to ensure their safety and well-being. If the conflict escalates further, your money will become crucial and necessary help for many people. If the tension eases, the fund will be spent on the development of the progressive Jewish community in Ukraine. wupj.org/give/ukraine/HW

Ukraine Tries Recruiting Israelis and Other International Volunteers to Fight The Russian Army

By Shira Hanau

(JTA) – Ukraine’s Embassy in Israel tried to recruit Israelis to join the Ukrainian fight against Russia in a Facebook post Saturday.

“The Embassy has begun the formation of lists of volunteers who wish to participate in combat actions against the Russian aggressor,” the embassy wrote in a Facebook post that was later taken

down, according to The Times of Israel. The post asked volunteers to tell coordinators about any “military specialty” they have, something Israelis, most of whom complete mandatory army service after high school, will likely possess.

The call for volunteers from Israel came as Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky, who is Jewish, asked Israel to mediate talks between Russia and Ukraine. Israel is one of the few Western

countries with good relations with both countries and has tried to maintain that status through the early days of the war.

The call for Israeli volunteers also came as Zelensky asked for foreigners willing to join the fight to come to Ukraine and fight alongside Ukrainian soldiers and civilians who have been conscripted to fight Russia.

“Anyone who wants to join the defense of Ukraine, Europe and the world can come and fight side by side with the Ukrainians against the Russian war criminals,” Zelensky said last Sunday, according to CNN.

Powerful photos have circulated in the news and on social media showing people who were civilians a week ago

armed with guns provided by the government, ready to defend their country against the Russian invasion. Civilians in Ukrainian cities targeted by Russia have been asked to prepare Molotov cocktails to use against the Russian army.

Ukraine's foreign minister Dmytro Kuleba also called for foreign volunteers in a tweet last Sunday.

“Foreigners willing to defend Ukraine and world order as part of the International Legion of Territorial Defense of Ukraine, I invite you to contact foreign diplomatic missions of Ukraine in your respective countries. Together we defeated Hitler, and we will defeat Putin, too,” Kuleba wrote. **HW**

Bennett Speaks with Ukraine's Zelensky

(JNS) – Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett spoke with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky last Friday amid the ongoing Russian invasion.

“The two leaders discussed the situation in Ukraine, with an emphasis on the Kyiv region,” a readout from the Prime Minister’s Office said.

Bennett offered the Ukrainian leader Israel's assistance with any humanitarian aid needed and updated Zelensky on the steps already taken in this regard.

The Israeli leader also reiterated his

hope for a speedy end to the fighting, and said that he stands by the Ukrainian people during these difficult days.

Israel's leadership has been balancing its position on the conflict. Bennett did not explicitly condemn Russia's actions in a readout of the call, but last Thursday, Foreign Minister Yair Lapid called Russia's attack a "grave violation of international order."

Israel's Diaspora Affairs Ministry announced last Friday that it will send NIS 10 million (\$3.07 million) in aid to Ukraine's Jewish community. **HW**

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An Annual Mitzvah for Veterans from our Community

By Chandler King, 6th Grade, West Collierville School



Chandler King with Catherine Austin, RD, retired director of Nutrition Services at the VA

For the past nine years, my family and I prepared treat bags for the patients at the Memphis Veterans Hospital.

This year, Temple Israel Rabbinic Assistant Jan Klein and Temple Israel Archivist Jen Kollach provided us with information about those Jewish Service Men and Women who gave up their lives in order to defend America and its Allies. Furthermore, Dick Eiseman, in a printed brochure, pointed out that Temple Israel cemetery contains hundreds or maybe even a thousand interments of congregants and their family members who served in the U.S. Armed Forces during the years 1914-2014. Temple Scouts, on special holidays, place flags on the graves of those who served in the military.

My great-grandfather, Myron Starr, served on Guam while his brother, William, served in Europe and brother-in-law Maurice served on the Philippine Islands. They all returned and used the VA Hospital when they were ill.

A few years ago, our family met Rabbi Jeff Feinstein who served as a rabbi in Vietnam. He conducted a Seder while in a war zone. Seder food and haggadahs were flown in from the States. This was an opportunity to celebrate the Exodus, while serving overseas.

Rabbi Oxman, former principal at the Bornblum school shared stories of when he was in the military. Rabbi showed us his uniform as well as his camouflage kippah.

Remembering our heroes and helping to support our wounded and disabled Veterans is a mitzvah for all. I like doing this mitzvah. [HW](#)

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Matzah Balls.....	\$4/each
Charoset.....	\$15/pint
Gefilte Fish.....	\$3.75/piece
Chopped Chicken Liver.....	\$20/pint

Side Dishes (half pan serves 10-12)

Apple Matzah Kugel.....	\$30/half pan
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Potato Kugel.....	\$30/half pan

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Stuffed Cabbage.....	\$35/half pan (12 servings/frozen)
Stuffed Peppers.....	\$35/half pan (12 servings/frozen)

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To order, please call Jordan at 901.756.3229 or email JShulman@memphisjewishhome.org.

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Memphis Jewish Federation Celebrates International Women's Day with Memphis-Shoham Partnership's Kick-Off of Three-Part Webinar Series



Clockwise from top left: Judge Sheryl Lipman, Dr. Sandy Arnold, Dr. Ronit Peled-Laskov, and Dr. Gili Hart will be the panelists for Memphis Jewish Federation's webinar Women Making a Difference, which will be held on International Women's Day, Tuesday, March 8, at noon.

In celebration of International Women's Day, Memphis Jewish Federation's Memphis-Shoham Partnership is presenting *Women Making a Difference*, Tuesday, March 8 at noon featuring four dynamic leaders in their fields. Dr. Sandy Arnold and Judge Sheryl Lipman will represent Memphis, and Dr. Gili Hart and Dr. Ronit Peled-Laskov will represent Shoham, our community's sister city in Israel.

“The Partnership is kicking off our Spring Virtual Series on International Women’s Day by celebrating female business, legal, medical, community, and thought leaders among us,” said Liz

Rudnick, facilitator for the program and member of the Memphis-Shoham Steering Committee.

“From Memphis, the Honorable Judge Sheryl Lipman and Dr. Sandra Arnold of LeBonheur Children’s Hospital will participate, helping Israeli attendees learn more about U.S. law and medicine. Representing Shoham, we’ll hear from biotech startup CEO Dr. Gili Hart and criminologist Dr. Ronit Peled-Laskov. I’m looking forward to joining my community and new friends from Shoham as we hear what unites women at the top of their fields across the globe.”

Representing a diverse array of top-level specification, the four speakers bring impressive credentials and peerless experience to the program.

Dr. Arnold is Division Chief of Pediatric Infectious Diseases, Medical Co-Director of Antimicrobial Stewardship, and Associate Residency Program Director, Pediatric Residency at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital, and a professor at The University of Tennessee Health Science Center. Her experience with clinical research in the areas of vaccines, antibiotics and antivirals, and common infections has made her an invaluable resource during the COVID pandemic for local schools and community organizations.

A Memphis native, Judge Lipman was appointed United States District Judge of the United States District Court for the Western District of Tennessee by President Barack Obama in 2014, prior to which she served as University Counsel to the University of Memphis after years of private practice in Washington, D.C. and Memphis. Off the bench, Lipman is a hard-working advocate for social justice, having served in positions and on boards for the Memphis Race Relations and Diversity Institute, Facing History and Ourselves, the Memphis Child Advocacy Center, the Civilian Law Enforcement Review Board, and the American Civil Liberties Union of Tennessee, among others.

Shoham resident Dr. Hart's Israel-based company, SpilSense, is developing transformative RNA-based treatments for previously untreatable genetic illnesses and pulmonary diseases. Her career sits at the intersection of business and medicine, with extensive experience in global regulatory strategic planning and interactions, partnering with large-pharma. A former Research Fellow at Yale University's School of Medicine, she has published numerous papers and patents, with her work focused on autoimmunity diseases and B and T cell maturation and migration, which can directly affect inflammation and immune conditions.

Dr. Peled-Laskov is a clinical criminologist and Senior Lecturer in Ashkelon Academic College's Department of Criminology. She is the head of the Ethics Committee at Ashkelon College, and an active researcher in fields relating to crime, punishment, and rehabilitation, with special emphasis on white-collar offenders. With a background in therapy-based boarding schools for youths with behavioral disorders exhibiting borderline criminality,

she currently serves as public representative on parole committees and as an official prison controller for Israel's Ministry of Internal Security.

The March 8 program is the first in a three-part webinar series designed to connect Jewish Memphians to residents of Shoham, Israel, exploring a diverse trio of topics – women who make an impact, the role museums can play in social change, and the celebration of holidays through cooking.

"The Memphis-Shoham partnership is all about making authentic connections between the people of both communities," said Keri Unowsky, chair of Federation's Memphis-Shoham Partnership steering committee.

The Partnership's second webinar, *In Commemoration of Martin Luther King's Assassination: Museums as Catalysts for Change*, will take place Tuesday, April 5, the day after the 54th anniversary of Dr. King's assassination in Memphis. Ryan Jones, Adult Education Director at the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis and Temple Israel's Rabbi Micah Greenstein, a board member at the museum, will represent Memphis, while Omer Deutsch, Museum Educator at the Yitzhak Rabin Center in Tel-Aviv, will share her points of view. The program will explore how museums can act as agents for social change and how they keep pace with ever-changing cultural norms while fulfilling their educational missions.

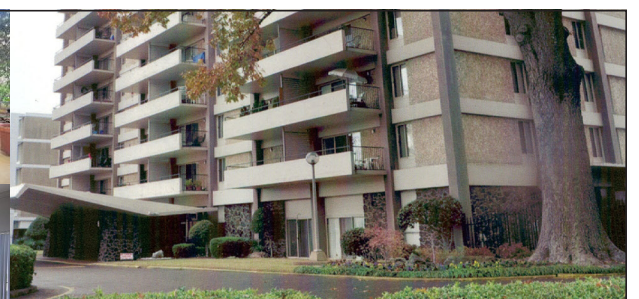
The series culminates on Tuesday, May 22 with *In Celebration of Shavuot: Artful and Creative Holiday Cooking*. Participants will join Memphis artist and gourmet chef Marisa Baggett and a to-be-announced guest from Shoham as they prepare creative Shavuot recipes that can be replicated at home.

The webinars are free and open to the public. To learn more and register, visit jcpmemphis.org/Memphis-shoham-partnership.

Memphis and Shoham are connected through the Partnership2Gether Peoplehood Platform, a program of Federation partner JAFI (Jewish Agency for Israel). Guided by Federation's Memphis-Shoham Steering Committee, the Memphis-Shoham Partnership launched in 2016 to facilitate meaningful connections between Israelis and the Memphis Jewish community through unique programs like school twinning, teen and young adult leadership projects, and programming like this webinar series, which bridge the distance between the two communities with universally relatable content. **HW**

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Memphis BBYO Goes International



More than 30 Memphis BBYO teens are attending the international convention

Concerts, dancing and games. Appearances by celebrities. A menu of Shabbat service options. Days filled with workshops, meetups and hanging out with other teens.

Before March 2020, that would have seemed like a standard, even unremarkable description of an international Jewish youth group conference. Two years later, the BBYO International Conference, which began last Wednesday in Baltimore and ran through the weekend, rates as one of the biggest in-person Jewish gatherings since the beginning of the pandemic.

The non-denominational youth group’s last in-person International Conference, two years ago, drew more than 2,000 teens. This year’s drew 2,500 from around the United States and world; its

theme is “The Power of Us,” and included a roster of speakers ranging from Sen. Jon Ossoff (D-GA) to the actor Simu Liu, who plays the lead in the recent Marvel movie “Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings.”

BBYO CEO Matthew Grossman said that the conference being one of the first major Jewish in-person gatherings of the pandemic “means we’re bringing something back that was lost.”

With more than 30 Memphis BBYO teens present at this event, our teens got the experience of a lifetime. “Meeting friends from all over the world, being exposed to speakers and celebrities and celebrating their Judaism was the most inspirational thing to see,” said Regional Director Zoë Goldberg. [HW](#)



Bat Mitzvah



Anna Ruth Greenberg

Anna Ruth Greenberg, daughter of Shim Greenberg and Leah Fox-Greenberg, will celebrate her bat mitzvah on Saturday March 12, at Beth Sholom Synagogue.

Anna is in the seventh grade at Lausanne Collegiate School where she is active in theater and on the volleyball team. Anna is passionate in her love of musical theater and dance. Besides plays

at Lausanne, she has also been featured at Germantown Community Theater and even a local indie production or two.

For her mitzvah project, Anna is raising money for the Actors Fund. Throughout the year Anna will help fund this amazing program that helps actors (both on Broadway and off) with grants so that they can thrive even when unable to work. The Actors Fund kept Broadway alive during the COVID-19 closure and sustained an entire industry for over a year.

Sharing in the celebration service will be Grandmother Kathie Fox and Grandfather Andy Fox (z”l of blessed memory) and Aunt Sharon O’Guin of Memphis as well as countless friends and family.

A brunch Sunday morning will be hosted by family friends Alison and Scott Blen, Paul Engelberg and Simone and Will Coyle. [HW](#)

Keshet Studios, Disney to Produce Series on Woman Who Sheltered Anne Frank

(Israel Hayom via JNS) – Keshet Studios will produce a limited series for Disney+ about Miep Gies, the Dutch woman who sheltered Anne Frank and her family during World War II.

“A Small Light” will be told from the perspective of Gies, who was also the one who found Anne’s diary after the family was arrested by the Nazis and guarded it until Otto Frank – Anne’s father and the only family member to survive the war – shared it with the world.

Keshet Studios, the Israeli production studio’s Los Angeles branch, will

create the series in cooperation with ABC Signature, an American television production studio that is a subsidiary of Disney, with “Grey’s Anatomy” writers Joan Rater and Tony Phelan.

Gies, who passed away in 2010 at the age of 100, famously said: “I don’t like being called a hero, because no one should ever think you have to be special to help others. Even an ordinary secretary or a housewife or a teenager can, within their own small ways, turn on a small light in a dark room.”

This report first appeared in Israel Hayom. [HW](#)

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Help Wanted: Why Can't Businesses Find Enough Workers?

Provided by Mike Stein, Managing Director – Investments, Wells Fargo Advisors. Questions for Mike? You can reach him at 901.761.8151.

The headline U.S. unemployment rate fell from 6.7% at the end of December 2020 to 3.9% in December 2021 – the biggest one-year improvement in history.¹ While many workers took advantage of this strong rebound in the job market, companies large and small have been struggling with labor shortages.

A conspicuous lack of workers has snarled corporate supply chains; resulted in delayed and cancelled product orders; left working parents without access to child care; upended air travel; and forced restaurants, retail stores, and other businesses to shorten their hours or close understaffed locations. A recent spike in outbreaks from the Omicron variant worsened the situation.²

Since the pandemic began, unpredictable demand shifts have exposed pre-existing mismatches between the knowledge and skills of available workers and the tasks for which they are needed.³ But the sheer number of available jobs is also running well above the number of unemployed job seekers. Employers reported 10.6 million job openings on the last business day of November 2021, even though there were the 6.8 million unemployed persons in November and 6.3 million in December.⁴

COVID-19 may have kicked off a severe labor shortage, but longer-term demographic trends are partly to blame for this highly unusual job market.

A Workforce in Flux

At the onset of the pandemic, the labor force participation rate – the percentage of Americans age 16 and older who are working or actively looking for work – plummeted from 63.4% in February 2020 to a record low of 60.2% in April 2020. By December 2021, the rate had recovered only partially to 61.9%.⁵ About 2.3 million people have dropped

out of the workforce entirely since the pandemic began.⁶ Some may have left temporarily, but others are probably gone for good.

Early retirements. The baby boom generation (born 1946–1964) is very large, and birthrates have declined in recent decades. The labor force has been aging and shrinking, and retirees' share of the U.S. population has been growing. Economists have long expected this wave of boomer retirements, some of which may have been accelerated by the pandemic. By one estimate, there were 2.4 million "excess retirements" due to COVID-19 (as of August 2021). Higher retirement account balances and home values made it feasible for some people to retire earlier than they would have otherwise.⁷

Immigration slowdown. It's estimated that declining immigration may have removed as many as 2 million potential workers from the current U.S. labor pool. Net migration to the United States has dropped steadily each year, from a peak of 1.05 million people in 2016 to 595,000 in 2019 and 247,000 in 2021. The most recent and drastic annual decline (July 2020 through June 2021) was due in part to travel restrictions associated with the pandemic.⁸

Pandemic repercussions. In December 2021, about 1.1 million people reported that the pandemic had prevented them from seeking work.⁹ This subset of missing workers includes those who still have child-care challenges or health concerns, including those who are contending with long-COVID symptoms.

On a positive note, pandemic relief measures helped many households strengthen their finances. Trillions of dollars in excess savings were accumulated thanks to stimulus payments, student loan pauses, and reduced spending while most people were stuck at home

during 2020. This extra money gave many workers the breathing room to rethink their careers, and/or care for children or elderly parents, instead of working.

Economic Effects

A smorgasbord of open positions provides job seekers with more choices and more leverage. U.S. workers quit their jobs at record rates in 2021, in many cases to join new employers offering higher pay, lucrative benefits, better working conditions, or more flexibility – such as the option to work remotely.¹⁰

In fact, more intense competition for workers drove wages up 4.7% for the year ending in December 2021. Shortages have been more acute for lower-paying, in-person jobs, resulting in larger wage increases for workers in the leisure and hospitality, transportation and warehousing, and retail industries.¹¹

Workers only benefit when wage gains outpace inflation, because it cuts into their buying power. And unfortunately, real wages, which are adjusted for inflation, dropped as prices spiked in 2021.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose 7.0% in 2021 – the highest annual rate in nearly 40 years – as many businesses passed higher labor costs on to their customers.¹² In December, the Federal Open Market Committee voted to speed up the tapering of the Fed's bond-buying program, setting the stage to begin raising interest rates more aggressively in response to persistent inflation.¹³ The dilemma for Fed officials is that they don't want to raise interest rates too fast and risk cooling the economy if labor shortages and other supply-chain issues will fade in time. But they must also be ready to act if it looks as though wage increases could fuel a dreaded wage-price inflationary spiral.

Labor shortages ranked as the number-one external factor that U.S. CEOs think will have the greatest impact on their businesses in 2022. Rising inflation followed closely in second place.¹⁴ The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has

called on the federal government to reform and expand the legal immigration system so employers can fill jobs in labor-strapped industries, arguing that it could help cool inflation.¹⁵

In the coming months, some sidelined workers could be more motivated to seek employment when their savings are depleted or after their pandemic-related worries subside. Higher wages might also help draw some early retirees and stay-at-home parents back into the workforce.

However, labor force participation may never return to pre-pandemic levels, which means employers might need to change their hiring practices, reduce experience and education requirements, or provide training programs, opening the door to better-paying jobs for more workers. It's possible that automation technologies will also help fill the gap. Even so, it remains to be seen whether technology investments can boost productivity enough to offset a smaller workforce and maintain economic growth.

1, 4–5, 9–13) U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021–2022
2) MarketWatch, January 11, 2022
3, 14) The Conference Board, 2022
6) S&P Global, 2022
7) Federal Reserve, 2021
8) U.S. Census Bureau, 2021
15) U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2022

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The Lev Tahor Hasidic Sect is Bouncing Around The Balkans, Attracting Attention Wherever They Go



A Lev Tahor member shown in a video taken in North Macedonia. Credit: Telma/Screenshot from YouTube

By David I. Klein

(JTA) – Members of Lev Tahor, the Hasidic group that is often described as a cult and has been chased across continents in the wake of a child abduction scandal, were sighted in a remote town in Bosnia and Herzegovina last month and in North Macedonia this month, as they bounce around the Balkans in a continual attempt to avoid scrutiny.

The group reportedly moved on from Bosnia in early February, but not before causing a media storm in the small country.

Lev Tahor members were sighted in Hadžići, a town about 12 miles west of Sarajevo. In the largely Muslim town of about 20,000, the group stood out due to their traditional dress. They later relocated to a predominantly Bosnian-Serb neighborhood of Sarajevo known as Ilidža. There they stayed in a building owned by a member of the national assembly of Republika Srpska, the ethnic Serb enclave within Bosnia and Herzegovina.

According to Igor Kozemjakin, the cantor and de facto spiritual leader of Sarajevo’s sole synagogue, the country’s small Jewish community only heard about their arrival as other locals did, via media reports.

But he and other members of the Jewish community quickly found themselves called on to explain the group as their neighbors started learning more and more about their background.

“The media was speculating, they didn’t know who they were, so they called us. But we didn’t know they were in the country either, they didn’t call us,” Kozemjakin told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. “They didn’t make any connections with the Jewish community here, their way of life is very closed.

“I learned from the media that they were here, when I saw their pictures, it was understood they were Jewish, but I had to learn about them as well,” he added.

The group, whose name means “pure heart” in Hebrew, was founded in 1988 by an Israeli rabbi, Shlomo Helbrans. They follow an extreme interpretation of Hasidic Judaism, requiring women to be covered from head to toe, in garb not dissimilar to a burqa. They also eat a diet of mostly fruits and vegetables, considering almost everything else not sufficiently kosher and eschew all Jewish texts beyond the Torah and Helbrans’ own books. According to one former member of the group, Helbrans and later his son, Nachman, held almost complete control over its 300 or so members, even in matters of life and death.

By 1990, Helbrans and his followers had relocated to Williamsburg, Brooklyn. There, Helbrans served prison time

for abducting a boy who had been sent to study with him as a bar mitzvah student. After their troubles in New York, they relocated to Canada. But in 2014, after allegations of child abuse and neglect, most of the group fled to Mexico and Guatemala.

Helbrans reportedly died in Mexico in 2017, drowning in a river he was using as a mikvah for ritual immersion, leaving the group in the hands of his son, Nachman.

Nachman Helbrans and his righthand man, Meyer Rosner, were arrested in Mexico in 2018 and extradited to the United States, where they were convicted by a U.S. court in November for a scheme in which they tried to force a 14-year-old girl into a sexual relationship with a 19-year-old as part of an arranged marriage.

By then, Lev Tahor’s leadership had fled Mexico and Guatemala and arrived in Iraqi Kurdistan hoping to enter Iran, after applying for asylum and pledging allegiance to Iran’s Supreme Leader Ali Khomeini.

Interviewed during their stay in Bosnia, members of Lev Tahor said that they were detained by Kurdish security for days and held in harsh conditions. Ultimately they were turned back and deported to Turkey, from which they traveled to Romania, and onto Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As their neighbors in Sarajevo became aware of more of their history, they became increasingly uncomfortable with the group’s presence.

One Bosnian media outlet reported that neighbors were put off by what they described as “rituals throughout the night” and hearing children’s voices singing from the building at all hours.

“The media portrayed them as child kidnappers, so people got scared in the neighborhood. But ultimately they un-

derstood they are a closed community, who don’t interact with the locals,” Kozemjakin said.

Under Bosnian law, as citizens of the U.S., Canada and Guatemala, they were legally permitted in the country for 90 days.

According to the Times of Israel, on Feb. 3, ahead of Shabbat, 37 members of the group crossed over Bosnia’s southern border into Montenegro. A man who had serviced the apartment building they had been living at, suggested they may be planning on heading to Bulgaria.

“Not that I was worried too much, but I’m happy that they left because now the media can focus on local issues, this was just a distraction from the real problems in our society,” Kozemjakin said.

He said that an unfortunate result of the group’s presence was that the media flurry around them began on Jan. 26, just before International Holocaust Remembrance Day, drowning out other local coverage of the day.

Since their departure from Bosnia and Herzegovina, the group made similar headlines in another former Yugoslav republic, North Macedonia, where the

group surfaced in the city of Kumanovo, about a half hour’s drive northeast from the capital Skopje.

Lev Tahor members told local media that they have been harassed in the town.

“We want to feel safe, but at the moment I do not know how to feel safe,” one member told a reporter from the North Macedonian outlet Telma. He said that the house they were staying in was pelted with eggs and stones the night before.

But as in Bosnia, Macedonian authorities reminded local residents that the group had entered legally on American, Canadian, Belgian and other passports and posed little threat.

“These people respect the laws of the Republic of Northern Macedonia, are completely legally residing here, and are temporarily residing in our country,” the Macedonian interior minister said in a statement. “[Kumanovo police] informs the citizens of Kumanovo that the said group does not pose any danger and appeals for tolerance and solidarity towards them.”

Nonetheless, for security reasons the group was moved to the capital, Skopje, where they stayed in a hotel. **HW**

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Who Could Refuse A 7-Candle Soul?



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

Leah was old and Leah was sick. That's why she lifted her head from the pillow and called out – in her heart – to her G-d. To be more specific, she called out for the Malech Hamoves, the Angel of Death. With her entire being, she pleaded – Take me. Take me. And G-d and his angels heard. After all, this was Leah Rizenberg. A 7-candle soul on the ethical scale. A soul as sweet smelling as the aroma of the Shabbos challah she baked every Friday until she was stricken. Leah Rizenberg's Mitzvah percentage was a sterling 92%.

However, it must be admitted that Leah suffered from one slight imperfection. She procrastinated, she delayed. Why burden today with tomorrow's obligation. "Why rake leaves today – they'll blow away tomorrow," she often said. And she loved Gin Rummy, too. Once, she lost the pushki money to her neighbor, which naturally brought her down several points on the Mitzvah scale.

When the angel on duty that night heard the call, he immediately dispatched the Malech Hamoves to collect this priceless soul and begin the preparations necessary to receive her illustrious

Neshoma; and "turn her around" as they say in the Transition Division, upstairs. The soul must be refitted for a newborn – it was the ultimate in recycling.

Luckily, the Malech Hamoves was already on earth attending to business, which was excellent.

Never since the first half of the 40s had he been so busy. There was famine in Africa and bloody wars in the Balkans. The Angel of Death was in a great mood – he liked to stay busy – when he arrived in New York City to pick up Leah.

He came to her as she struggled through an uneasy sleep. "Leah, it's me," he whispered. "You called me – the friend of the sick and the sufferers."

Immediately, she was awake. "Ah," she gasped. "You're a prompt old bird. You couldn't have waited 15 minutes?"

"You call – we haul," replied the visitor, who was accustomed to malignment. "After 82 years, 73 days, and approximately six hours, what's the significance of another 15 minutes? ANOTHER goodbye to your family? ANOTHER pill? Come – you're as old as stone – take my hand. The Transition Division tells me there's an impatient infant in the womb of a lovely mother – her first. A perfect fit for your Neshoma. They await you in a quiet suburb of Lisbon – you'll love the summers."

Leah waved a crooked finger in the Dark Angel's face. "Wait a minute, wait a minute. Not just yet. I'm feeling a little better. How 'bout a quick hand of Gin? You know, next week I'll be a great-grandmother."

The angel, who had been through eons of final scenes like this, knew it was best to humor the reluctant ones. He considered it unprofessional to drag them off wailing as they clung to the bedposts. A messy scene – bad for his reputation.

"One game of Rummy – only one, I'm in demand all over the world. I really can't give each client much more than a few moments. They're calling me from Darfur. And my Asian Regional Manager tells me that business is booming in India – plenty of Muslim and Hindu customers. We've got 'em lining up to take a number."

The petitioner listened, but said nothing. She dealt the first hand and although she wasn't at the top of her game, she easily subdued her impatient guest. But not by so much that he didn't consent to a second game. The stakes? "OK, OK, if I lose, I'll go today – right now," agreed Leah.

As she picked up the deck and skillfully built a hand that would catch her foe with a handful of pictures she prattled, "who was the family in Lisbon that awaited the Neshoma? Did you know that my own granddaughter in Queens is scheduled to deliver, G-d willing, NEXT week? I'd love to see her. So why couldn't I..."

Her opponent threw down his cards. "Don't even think it!" he screamed. "It is NOT done. You're assigned to Lisbon, not New York. And I can't wait a week for you."

As he ranted, Leah drew her card; and quietly, almost apologetically whispered, "Gin."

INSIGHTS FROM ISRAEL Modern Mysteries to Theodor Herzl?

By Howard Weisband

"In 1897, a few days after the First Zionist Congress concluded in Basel, Herzl wrote in his diary that he had "founded the Jewish state:"

If I said this out loud today, I would be answered by universal laughter. Perhaps in five years, and certainly in 50, everyone will know it.

"In 1947 – 50 years later – the United Nations endorsed a Jewish state in Palestine. Six months after that, David Ben-Gurion proclaimed its independence in Tel Aviv – a city that did not exist in 1897 – under a massive photograph of Herzl, flanked by two flags identical to the one Herzl had hung in Basel."

The above is not a mystery. It is well known, repeated here from a January 2021 article in Mosaic, an online magazine, titled "The Mystery of Theodor Herzl," by Rick Richman, a scholar at American Jewish University.

For Herzl, who died in 1904, a mere seven years following his founding of the Zionist Movement, it would not have been a mystery that the establishment of Israel as the Jewish State occurred 50 years hence. Perhaps only the immediate setting as described in Tel Aviv would have been somewhat mysterious to him.

Today, in 2022, I prefer to look at Richman's title from an imaginary perspective: what may be modern mysteries to Theodor Herzl, looking at both historical and contemporary events leading to and following the establishment of Israel.

Herzl was driven by anti-Semitism and saw a Jewish state as a political solution.

Richman describes the major event in Herzl's birthplace, his beloved Vienna,

that threw him onto his course of Zionist action:

"At the end of March 1895, Herzl spent four days in Vienna visiting his family, and he thus witnessed Vienna's April 1 municipal elections, in which Karl Lueger's Christian Social Party finished first. Lueger's movement wasn't just anti-Semitic; it made anti-Semitism a central plank of its platform. It was the beginning of a process by which Vienna would soon become the first major European city with an overtly anti-Semitic government."

In 1886 Herzl published "The Jewish State." He followed that in 1902 with a utopian novel, "Altneuland, The Old New Land." The novel is described as follows in Wikipedia: "A Jewish organization officially named the "New Society" has since risen as European Jews have rediscovered and re-inhabited their Altneuland, reclaiming their own destiny in the Land of Israel... it presents a model society which was to adopt a liberal and egalitarian social model, resembling a modern welfare society."

Jump into the 1930s. Based on the transformation he witnessed in Vienna, would Herzl have found the rise of Hitler and Nazism to be a mystery? Probably not, but certainly the enormity of the Holocaust would have been overwhelming.

1948. Herzl's Jewish State, Israel, is established, founded by political parties and a political system emanating from the First Zionist Congress. Not a mystery to Herzl.

Neither Israel itself nor the region resembles a utopian society. It would be a mystery to Herzl why Israel would have to fight a War of Independence and then several more wars to maintain its existence.

Add to the mystery the constant vigilance and battle with terrorism.

Jump again into 2022. It is a Middle East of states and entities unimaginable to Herzl. Yet Israel has peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan, and most recently normalization agreements with additional Arab states. A path toward a utopian society? Perhaps. Herzl would smile at that concept; not a mystery.

Yet there remains no such formalization or normalization of relationships with other Arab countries, especially not with Lebanon and Syria on Israel's borders. Nor a similar understanding with a Palestinian Authority that exists geographically between Israel and Jordan. That would constitute a modern mystery to Herzl.

More timely, Herzl knew a Russia and a Ukraine that existed on a map side by side, and shared similar cultures. He no doubt would be mystified as of this writing as to why Russia has sought to invade Ukraine.

However, Herzl would not see it as a mystery that Ambassadors and Embassies of Israel exist in both capitals, and most importantly, they are working to bring Russian and Ukrainian Jews Home to the Jewish State. That's reality. Herzl's Zionism in real time.

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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So, the angel, not accustomed to defeat by mortals, agreed to one final match. If she won, she could hang around a full week and provide the soul of her own great-grandchild. A loss, she agreed, meant a clasp of the Angel's cold hand and prompt transition to Lisbon.

It was a classic encounter – like Jacob and the angel. Leah just didn't get her cards. And the Malech Hamoves played with the intensity of the fiend that he was.

I won't tell you who won, but here's a clue; 25 years later in Queens, New York, there was a heckuva Gin Rummy player named Leah who cherished the memory of a great-grandmother whose life overlapped her own by one day.

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**

Tunisia Joins Other Countries in Boycotting Israeli Actress Gal Gadot's Latest Film

(JNS) – Tunisia has pulled from all movie theaters across the country the new film "Death on the Nile" starring Israeli actress Gal Gadot.

Movie theaters in Tunisia began screening the murder mystery earlier in February but after protests that accused the country of "normalization" with Israel, the country's ministry and visual arts authority decided to ban the movie, activists and Tunisian media said last Wednesday.

Cinemas in Tunisia confirmed to AFP that they will no longer screen "Death on the Nile."

The film by British director Kenneth Branagh, which is an adaptation of the popular Agatha Christie novel of the same name, is already banned in Kuwait and Lebanon for the same reason.

Gadot, who completed two years of mandatory service in the Israel Defense Forces, received backlash last summer for expressing support for Israel during its conflict with Hamas terrorists in the Gaza Strip. In 2014, she was criticized for saying she hoped Israeli soldiers stayed safe while fighting Hamas.

"The main actress in the film is Israeli, was trained in the (Israeli) army and supports the colonization of Palestinian territory," said Kaouther Saida Chebbi, head of an anti-Zionist woman's movement.

Tunisia hosted the Palestinian Liberation Organization from 1982-1994 and is a longtime supporter of the Palestinian cause, AFP Noted. The country also banned Gadot's film "Wonder Woman" in 2017. **HW**

OBITUARIES

Leslie Mann Landau



Leslie Mann Landau, 84, passed away Tuesday, February 22, after a three-year battle with cancer, which she fought with grace and style as she did in all her endeavors. Her husband, Nathaniel Landau, was by her side, as he always was throughout their 64-year marriage.

Leslie was born in Brooklyn, grew up in Belle Harbor, New York, and is the daughter of the late Harold and Mildred Mann. She attended Beaver College and graduated from the University of Memphis (then Memphis State University) with a Bachelor of Science in education and an master’s degree in early childhood education.

Leslie was a woman who was all about the seven F’s: family, faith, food, flowers, fashion, favorite 50s show

tunes, and fight. She was happiest when she and Nat were with their three sons, Reed (Shelley Robbins), Bruce (Suzanne), and Gregg (Lynn), and their four grandchildren traveling, baking, or doing projects that would create beauty. She loved to garden, arrange flowers and centerpieces for charity, and entertain.

Leslie grew up a block from the Atlantic Ocean and loved the water as it reminded her of her childhood. Later in life she loved doing water aerobics at the Memphis Jewish Community Center pool with her friends.

She was a docent for the Memphis Zoo for 35 years and was a member of their Zoo Action Patrol, a tutor at Wells Station School, and a volunteer with

Memphis Literacy Council. She was a member of Beth Sholom Synagogue and Temple Israel. She was a member of Beth Sholom’s choir for 60 years, Decorating Chair of Beth Sholom’s Sisterhood for seven years and Recording Secretary of its Religious School.

Leslie was a Life member of the Memphis Jewish Community Center, a Life Member of Temple Israel and a Lion of Judah with Memphis Jewish Federation.

Services for Leslie were held at Beth Sholom Synagogue with burial at the Beth Sholom cemetery. The family requests that donations be made to the Memphis Jewish Home and Rehab, the Memphis Jewish Community Center, or a charity of the donor’s choice. [HW](#)

Greg Meyer



Greg Meyer, also lovingly known as “Chief,” was a man who was always concise and knew exactly what to say. There are no words to describe the larger-than-life personality and the joi de vivre of this humble man. At age 61, he passed away from an unexpected heart attack on February 21, 2022, in Memphis, Tenn. A beloved father, husband and son – he valued his family more than anything (but the Tennessee Volunteers took a close second). A man who had an adage for everything, he was the greatest confidante and a source of unwavering support, comfort and guidance to family and friends.

The simplest pleasures in life brought joy to Greg. He loved being home comfortable on the couch next

to his family. He had an uncanny ability to bring laughter and joy to every moment. With Chief in the room, you knew you’d be laughing and having fun. Greg proudly served as president of the Big Orange Club of Memphis, on the Alumni Executive Board at Memphis University School, Temple Israel Brotherhood and United Way. Greg founded, owned and operated Commercial Carpet Maintenance for nine years before proudly selling the business.

He was preceded by his parents Dr. Alphonse Meyer and Janis Meyer.

Greg is survived by his adoring wife, Elise, and his children. One of his greatest joys in life was being a father to Max and Sam, and stepfather to Ari and Anna.

He never missed a single opportunity to support his family and celebrate every occasion, no matter how big or small. His cheerful attitude and sense of humor will be missed by his family, friends and every single person with whom he came in contact.

He also leaves behind his in-laws, Dr. and Mrs. Avron Slutsky; his brothers Andrew Meyer of Atlanta, Ga., and James McIntosh of Holly Springs, Miss.; and his sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Marc and Jan Hanover.

A private graveside service was held on Thursday, February 24 at Baron Hirsch Cemetery with a reception at Temple Israel. In honor of Chief’s memory, please enjoy your favorite sporting event with the ones you love. [HW](#)

Joan Mathias Ungerman



Joan Ungerman, a loving mother, nana, sister, aunt, cousin and friend, was born on May 23, 1945, in Memphis, Tennessee, and passed away at age 76 on February 16, 2022, in Dallas, Texas.

Joan had a passion for education, teaching, working at the YMCA Casa shelter and most recently working with her dear friend Carol Gene Cohen (of blessed memory) as a college counselor. She spread so much joy, happiness and confidence to all she touched. She was the world’s greatest nana and truly saw the best in everyone. She was fiercely independent. She loved sports, doing newspaper puzzles, traveling, playing Mah Jong and spending time with her children and grandchildren. She had a great outlook on life and was always the optimist. Joan will be missed by all who knew her.

Joan is survived by her children, Julie Ungerman, Marni Fligel (Andy) and Drew Ungerman (Kelly); grandchildren, Hayley and Harper Fligel and Maxwell and Maya Ungerman; brother, Mark Mathias (Marcia), and many cousins, nieces, nephews and friends.

Pallbearers were Julie Ungerman, Marni Fligel, Drew Ungerman, Larry Weissman, Andy Fligel and Noah Light. Funeral services were at Temple Emanuel.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be sent to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) or a charity of your choice. [HW](#)

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How Putin and Trump Loyalists are Illegitimately Redefining the Word Legitimate (and Language Itself)

By **Aviya Kushner**

This first appeared in Forward, reprinted with permission.

The word “legitimate” is suddenly hot – and it’s being increasingly used to justify the unjustifiable. In the recent rare and unified front of Republicans and Democrats, rushing to sanction Russia as it begins an invasion of Ukraine, it may be convenient to stop thinking about the Republican National Committee’s statement that the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol was “legitimate political discourse.”

That’s the kind of language choice that appeals to Vladimir Putin, who recently gave an hourlong televised speech that rewrote history and redefined legitimacy. The speech made Putin’s views on the Ukraine clear. But it also did much more.

“What he’s saying is something far wider: Ukraine is not a legitimate state. Ukraine is Russia. It should never have existed as anything else,” David Patrikarakos, a contributing writer at Politico Europe and the author of “War in 140 Characters: How Social Media is Reshaping Conflict in 21st Century,” told Time.

“If you do not accept the idea of Ukraine, then you clearly by implication do not accept the idea of Georgia, the Baltic States, Moldova and everything else,” Patrikarakos said.

Now, China is chiming in with that same “legitimate” framing, this time with regard to Russia’s behavior toward Ukraine.

“China did not explicitly endorse Moscow’s latest moves toward Ukraine

but still recognized last Tuesday what it called Russia’s legitimate security concerns, in Beijing’s latest tightrope act over the crisis in Eastern Europe,” Lily Kuo wrote in The Washington Post.

Let’s take a moment to consider what “legitimate” means.

The first known use of the word “legitimate” was in the 15th century. It meant, according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, “accordant with law or with established legal forms and requirements.”

In fact, “legitimate” is rooted in the Latin word for law.

“Legitimate” made its way to us via the Middle English *legitimat*, which came from the medieval Latin legitimates. The “past participle of *legitimare* to legitimate, from Latin *legitimus* legitimate, from leg-, lex law,” Merriam-Webster explains.

“Legitimate” has been in the news as an adjective, but it’s possible to use “legitimate” as a verb, too.

While the Cambridge Dictionary says that “legitimate” as an adjective means “allowed by law” and “reasonable and acceptable,” the verb “legitimate” means “to make something legal and acceptable.”

Let’s focus on “make” and all its sordid possibilities.

Language can easily be deployed to make the unacceptable acceptable. In his famous essay “Politics and the English Language,” George Orwell warns about the dangers of “meaningless words” and – wait for it – words with “variable” meanings.

“In our time, political speech and writing are largely the defense of the indefensible,” Orwell wrote in that April 1946 essay, which increasingly feels like it was written this week.

“Political language,” Orwell added, “is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind.”

Unsurprisingly, “legitimate” is currently in the top 1 percent of dictionary lookups at Merriam-Webster. But “legitimate” has been in Putin’s top 1 percent of framing choices for a while.

Scholars have been on alert to the potential misuse of this word and have responded to the “legitimacy” campaign by considering whether any law justifies Putin’s actions.

As you might expect, the answer is: “No.”

Dr. Björn Alexander Düben, who teaches Conflict and Security Studies at King’s College London, wrote a post explicitly titled “The Legitimacy of Russia’s Actions in Ukraine” for the London School of Economics blog. Düben was commenting on Putin’s 2014 moves – but his remarks are even more relevant now, with an estimated 190,000 Russian troops [readied] to pounce on Ukraine.

“The Russian government has consistently defended its startling moves in Ukraine, denying all accusations that its encroachments on the country’s sovereignty have been illegitimate. Does it have any valid grounds for doing so?” Düben wrote.

“From a legal perspective, the answer

is clear: Having forcibly occupied parts of a sovereign country’s territory, having formally annexed the occupied territory, and having flooded another part of the country with heavy weaponry and irregular combatants (‘volunteers’ who were permitted to cross the border in large numbers, as well as regular soldiers), Moscow has acted in violation of some of the most basic principles of international law.”

But let’s think beyond the law, for a moment.

“Legitimate” has other meanings besides “legal” that have become more popular since the 15th century and possibly most relevant to us right now.

I’ve been rereading Definition 2a in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary in recent days – “being exactly as intended or presented: neither spurious nor false.”

Putin is trying hard to frame his claims as not false, which is not surprising for a former KGB agent. The problem is that we’re in an era where the false is presented as true.

On February 23, former Secretary of State Madeline Albright wrote an Op-Ed in The New York Times titled “Putin Is Making a Historic Mistake.”

Putin, she wrote, is “sure that Americans mirror both his cynicism and his lust for power and that in a world where everyone lies, he is under no obligation to tell the truth.”

Exactly. Our growing acceptance of lies has not gone unnoticed. Let’s hope this unified front of Republicans, Democrats, and NATO also moves to protect the greatest battleground – the truth. **HW**

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