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# Hebrew Watchman

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11 TISHREI, 5783

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### Federation Taps Jeri Moskovitz to Lead Israel@75 Campaign

Memphis Jewish Federation is excited to announce the hiring of Jeri Moskovitz as Israel@75 coordinator to lead its upcoming, months-long celebration of the 75th anniversary of Israel's independence.

Within the September 2022 – June 2023 window, Jeri will collaborate with Memphis Jewish organizations, synagogues, schools, and the greater Memphis community to coordinate and market Israel programming showcasing Israel's historic achievements and dynamic and diverse society.

Growing up in the small Jewish community of Augusta, Georgia, Jeri's parents helped instill their love of Israel in Jeri by sending her to Israel when she was 15 years old on a BBYO-sponsored trip. Years later, she visited Israel on a Memphis Jewish Federation Mission trip in 2008. To this day, she is fascinated by this small country's achievements in science and technology, education, music, cuisine and so much more.

In her new role, Jeri will conceive and launch meaningful Israel-centric events and initiatives throughout the nine-



Jeri Moskovitz

month celebration. She'll work with Federation staff, lay leaders, agency professionals and community members to design exciting and innovative social, cultural and educational programs that energize relationships with Israel across our community. The celebration will culminate with a show-stopper signature event for the community-wide celebration of Israel, a project that plays to her unique skill set. She will also collaborate with Memphis' partner city of Shoham, Israel, to create a joint project to mark this critical milestone.

"My husband, Mitch, will tell you that my mind is always ON," said Jeri. "I am constantly coming up with new ideas and creative programming for the organizations with whom I work. I am excited that this opportunity became available, to allow me to do something that I already have been doing for years in my committee work throughout the community. I appreciate bringing events to fruition and seeing people enjoy being together around a common cause."

A perfect fit for the new role, Jeri has experience working for the Memphis Jewish community as a volunteer and leader, and she has a deep resume in community event planning and execution. She has served on Memphis Jewish Federation's Board and Community Grants Committee, while also contributing to various committees and subordinate boards along the way. She is currently on the Executive Board of Bornblum Jewish Day School and is the incoming president of the Memphis Jewish Home and Rehab. She's also been involved as a volunteer in city government, working on Mayor Jim Strickland's first campaign and now serving on the Downtown Memphis Commission's Center City Revenue Finance Corporation.

"I feel a strong connection through the convergence of my interests and my passion for event planning," said Jeri. "Some of my favorite events that I helped plan were Federation's Chopped cooking competition event in 2014, Bornblum's (then Solomon Schechter) memorable Dancing with the Stars, and Jewish Family Service's This is Where I Leave You Movie Night fundraiser before the organization bore the Fogelman name. I also love continuing to plan the successful Morris and Mollye Fogelman International Jewish Film Festival annually."

"We are thrilled that Jeri will be leading our banner Israel@75 celebration" said Memphis Jewish Federation Executive Vice President Bluma Zuckerbrot-Finkelstein. "Her passion, energy and creativity will surely enhance our community's efforts to mark this significant milestone in history and Jewish life." **HW** 

### Temple Israel Welcomes New Director of Congregational Engagement



Temple Israel is pleased to welcome Faith Ruch as director of Congregational Engagement.

This new role focuses on creating connections among adults through innovative community-building initiatives and experiences beyond prayer services, adult education and lifecycle moments.

"As we continue to emerge from the

Ruch looks forward to connecting members to one another, from newcomers to multi-generational native families, and across all adult ages and life stages.

"The Temple Israel community has been crucial to my spiritual growth and development, and I feel fortunate to be a part of the Temple family, or 'mishpacha," said Ruch. "I am grateful for the opportunity to nurture a sense of connectedness among my fellow congregants through new programs and events. I cannot wait to get to work!" Prior to joining Temple Israel, she served as a registered nurse for eight years before serving as an expert nurse witness, nurse legal analyst, and consultant for Memphis law firms over the past five years.

Ruch has also served on the Connec-TI leadership team, as a teacher of the Institute of Jewish Rock, and as a volunteer for various Temple events from Purimspiel to Shavuot celebrations. She currently serves as chapter president of

Faith Ruch

pandemic, Temple's commitment to bringing people together in new ways has never been a greater priority," said Rabbi Jeff Dreifus. "We are excited to expand our team with a natural connector whose sole focus will be cultivating community through relevant, approachable avenues." Hadassah Memphis.

"Faith's ease of connecting with adults of all ages and her own personal experience discovering how Temple Israel and the Jewish community can add deep meaning to our lives make her the perfect fit for this position," continued Rabbi Dreifus. **HW** 



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### My BBYO Experience



**By** Jonathan Mintz Regional Aleph Maz / Giz, **Okeon AZA** 

My name is Jonathan, I am in Okeon AZA #1204, and am the Regional Aleph Maz/Giz. I originally signed up for BBYO because my mom wanted me to, but I refused to go to events because of Covid. When I finally went to events, I quickly figured out I had made one of the best decisions of my

life. I love BBYO because it gives me a constant group of friends to hang out with. At this point, almost everything I do is related to BBYO. My friends are BBYO friends, my clothes are BBYO clothes. In fact, while I'm writing this, the hat I'm wearing is a BBYO hat, and the sweatshirt I'm wearing is a BBYO sweatshirt.

As a Regional Board member, I am able to help all kinds of communities get a little bit closer to their full potential. It's fun being able to share my passion for the Maz/Giz positions (especially Maz) with people from all around the region. We're so far apart in Delta Region (New Orleans to Knoxville is a nine-hour, 600-mile car ride). We only have a chance to get together two times a year, and in between, the only way we can connect is online through social media. I'd love to play my part in connecting the region throughout the rest of the year. HW

### **Bornblum Staff, Faculty Members Take on Roles** at Prestigious National **Organizations**

Bornblum Jewish Community School is proud to announce the prestigious leadership achievements of two members of its staff and faculty - Jill Cross, director of curriculum and instruction, and Cynthia Van Gunda, fourth grade teacher.

Members of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum (ASCD) Emerging Leader Alumni Affiliate (ELASCD) voted Cross as the new president-elect. She will take office beginning October 1, 2022.

ELASCD, a national organization, extends a network of support and opportunity for emerging leaders, leverages areas of expertise to strengthen ASCD's areas of focus, and supports existing local affiliates while building leadership capacity for affiliate members.

"The ASCD Emerging Leader program and Alumni Affiliate have profoundly influenced who I am as an educator," Cross said. "Having this network as an integral part of my daily practice and professional growth enables me to harness, amplify, and exhibit my leadership capacity as an instrument for transformation."

With over 20 years of experience in public, charter, and independent schools, Cross continually fosters her passion of supporting teachers and planting seeds of change that can transform education. She is a Colonial Williamsburg Master Teacher, a member of the Teacher Advisory Council for the National Constitution Center, and the co-author of "Living History in the Classroom: Performance and Pedagogy."

She mentors teachers, like Cynthia Van Gunda, who was selected to be part of the Teacher Advisory Council for the National Constitution Center in August.

Through her position, Van Gunda will become part of an extensive network of social studies educators across the country and gain knowledge and resources to help Bornblum students understand the principles behind the systems of government.

"My desire is to teach social studies content through a variety of activities, simulations, and integration to provide my students with an understanding and appreciation for how our past has shaped today," Van Gunda said.

Bornblum Head of School Daniel R. Weiss, Ed.D. congratulated Cross and Van Gunda for going above and beyond their roles while networking with educators and experts around the country.



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Memphis Candlelighting Time

Erev Shabbat, Fri. October 7, 2022 / 12 Tishrei, 5783	.6:18 p.m.
Havdalah, Sat. October 8, 2022 / 13 Tishrei, 5783	7:12 p.m.
Weekly Torah Portion: Ha'Azinu	
Sukkot, Sun. October 9, 2022 / 14 Tishrei, 5783	6:15 p.m.
Sukkot, Mon. October 10, 2022 / 15 Tishrei, 5783	7:09 p.m.
Sukkot, Tues. October 11, 2022 / 16 Tishrei, 5783holiday ends	; 7:08 p.m.

"We nurture a culture of leadership at Bornblum, not only through our students, but our faculty and staff." Weiss said. "Jill and Cynthia are shining examples of continuing their education in order to find the best and most engaging learning opportunities for our students and to spread Bornblum's name outside of Memphis." HW

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Rebecca Lynn Miller and Jeremie Schudel welcomed Miriam Konstantine Schudel into the world on September 14, 2022. Her big brother, Remi Schudel, was excited to meet his little sister. Proud grandparents are Susan and Larrv Nieman, Mike and Jana Miller, Beth and John Grill and Tony and Heather Schudel. HW

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### FREE Medicare Insurance Help Tuesday 10/25/22 • 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Aging Commission of the Mid-South (ACMS) is coming to the MJCC to offer the public their services as Medicare beneficiaries. From October 15 – December 7 each year, you can join, switch or drop a plan. Your coverage will begin on January 1 (as long as the plan gets your request by December 7). Get ready for the Annual Enrollment Period (AEP) for the Medicare State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) assistance for January 2023 benefits. Please call Steve Kaplan, Adult Services Coordinator for the MJCC, at 901.259.9220 to reserve your time on Tuesday 10/25/22 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Appointments are set up every 30 minutes. Couples can arrange two (2) timeslots back-to-back. Please bring a list of all regular medications with you for your appointment. This is a free service of the State of Tennessee. At this time, this is the only day scheduled at the MJCC. **HW** 

### Study: Nearly Half of Israelis Agree Iran Nuke Sites Should Be Attacked Even Without U.S. Support

(JNS) – Forty-nine percent of all Israelis, and 55% of those who are Jewish, strongly or somewhat agree that Israel should attack Iranian nuclear sites even without U.S. support, according to a survey by the Israel Democracy Institute.

The study also found that less than a third of Jewish Israelis (31%) want the next government in Jerusalem to advance the two-state solution as a means of resolving the conflict with the Palestinians. A full 36% of Israelis, including 58% of Jews, do not want this paradigm to be promoted following the Jewish state's Nov. 1 elections (11% of Jewish

Israelis said they were unsure how the next government should proceed).

Regarding the upcoming Jewish New Year, which began on Sunday at sundown, 29% of Israelis believe that next year will be better than the previous one; 30% think it will be about the same; 21% believe it will be worse; and 20% said that they don't know.

The survey of 605 men and women interviewed in Hebrew and 149 in Arabic was conducted on the internet and by telephone between Sept. 18 and Sept. 20, 2022, and has a margin of error of 3.59 at a confidence level of 95%.

### Chabad to Host Grand Sukkah-Fest Family Celebration

Chabad of Tennessee will be hosting its annual Grand Sukkah-Fest Family Celebration on Wednesday, October 12 at 5 p.m. at the Chabad Center for Jewish Life at 2570 Kirby Parkway.

"There will be lots of food, fun and activities," said Rivky Klein, event coordinator. "Dinner includes a full spaghetti and meatball supper with cotton candy and sno-cone desserts.

The event will feature an exotic petting farm, Bounce N' Fun inflatables, holiday crafts, and kids will get to enjoy the new playground. "In addition to the food and fun, it is an opportunity to make a blessing in the newly built enlarged sukkah and shake the lulav and etrog," said Rabbi Levi Klein, director of Chabad of Tennessee. "There will be l'chaim (for the adults) and music to add some joy to the holiday. It is an event with lots of food and fun for the entire family. Everyone should feel free to invite a friend and come celebrate."

The cost is \$15 per person. Please RSVP as soon as possible by calling Chabad at 901.754.0404 or visit **www.** JewishMemphis.com/Sukkahfest HW

### The MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club Happenings

Lunch is Monday–Friday at 11:30 a.m. All programs start at 12:15 p.m All programs and field trips, MONDAY AND WEDNESDAY!!

Monday, October 10 MJCC Closed for Sukkot!

#### Wednesday October 12 Speaker: Elizabeth Barton with Visiting Angels

"Exercise activity for Healthy Adults!" Mrs. Baton is always one of the most-requested speakers. Her discussion with handouts will focus on simple exercises every senior can and should do to remain healthy. She always leaves the group with ideas that are easy to implement and the strategies to do them. Come and enjoy this free and informative talk.

#### Monday 10/17 MJCC Closed for Shemini Atzeret

#### Wednesday October 19 Speaker: RabbiAbeSchacter-Gampel

"Parsha Bereshet: A fresh take on an old story"

Join Rabbi Abe, Director for the Center of Jewish Life and Learning, for one of his informative and always-enjoyable talks. Come learn with us.

#### Wednesday October 26

The MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club Monthly Luncheon will feature The Jeremy Shrader Trio. Jeremy Shrader performs jazz/ swing, big band and blues music with his various combos. He is a trumpeter and vocalist originally from Clarksville, Tenn., but has made Memphis his home since 1995. The songs of Frank Sinatra, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and other great masters live on through his voice and trumpet. He is available wherever good times and great music is needed. The Kosher Lunch and entertainment is only \$5.

Reservations can be made by calling the MJCC Front Desk at 901-761-0810.

Please join us from Monday through Friday for a delicious kosher lunch from the Kitchens at the Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab. The cost is only \$2 for seniors. Reservations are required the day before by 1 p.m. by contacting Steve Kaplan, Adult Services Coordinator, at 901-259-9220, at stevekaplan@ jccmemphis.org or calling the front desk

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### Reeling from Hurricane Fiona, Puerto Rican Jews Prepare for a Post-Storm Rosh Hashanah — Again



Jeff Berezdivin, left, and Diego Mandelbaum, right, of San Juan's Congregation Shaare Zedek distribute pallets of bottled water to flooded residents of Loiza devastated by Hurricane Fiona. Credit: Courtesy of Diego Mandelbaum

#### **By Larry Luxner**

(JTA) – September 23, 2022 – When Rosh Hashanah begins on Sunday night, Temple Beth Shalom in San Juan, Puerto Rico, plans to be holding services – whether or not power has been restored after Hurricane Fiona devastated the island Sept. 18, leaving devastation in its wake.

"Thank God the temple has solar panels," said Salatiel Corcos, the synagogue's past-president. "They're not in very good shape because they were damaged, but we will have services on Sunday night."

A devastating hurricane. Power blackouts. Catastrophic flooding, yet a shortage of drinking water. Massive relief efforts underway. If Puerto Rico's Jews feel a sense of déjà vu, there's ample reason: The same scenario played out exactly five years ago, when Hurricane Maria – a Category 4 storm packing winds of 160 mph – forced the island's three synagogues to cancel High Holiday services even before its arrival.

Striking Puerto Rico on Sept. 20, 2017, Maria killed about 3,000 people in its wake, left an estimated \$90 billion in damages and sparked an exodus of residents to the U.S. mainland, including some of the island's 2,500 or so Jews. It took nearly a year to restore electricity amid a fiscal crisis exacerbated by

a magnitude-6.4 earthquake in January 2020 and a collapse of public finances.

By comparison, Hurricane Fiona – which struck southwestern Puerto Rico Sept. 18 as a Category 1 storm – has been less destructive. It killed eight people on the island, largely sparing the San Juan metropolitan area.

Yet extensive flooding has washed away countless roads, bridges and buildings in Arecibo, Caguas, Ponce and Mayagüez – destroying the island's coffee, sugar and banana crops and potentially setting back the fragile Puerto Rican economy for years to come. Making matters worse, the U.S. commonwealth is in the midst of a brutal heat wave and extreme humidity that's pushing the daytime heat index to between 105 and 109 degrees.

"This wasn't as bad as Maria, but 75% of the island is still without electricity, and more than half are without water," said Corcos, who runs a construction firm in the San Juan suburb of Guaynabo. "I don't have power, water or internet, so I'm using my cellphone as a hotspot and have a generator that runs on gasoline. Since we're an island, very few gas stations are open and lots of people are running out of diesel fuel."

Drinking water will quickly become a serious health issue if the power grid

isn't restored soon, Corcos said.

"In the worst-case scenario, we will have to go to rivers or creeks to look for fresh water," said Corcos, 33, who like 60% of Temple Beth Shalom's members is a convert to Judaism rather than a Jew by birth. "Probably we'll do that again. I know people who are getting drinking water from creeks, but it's not very safe because it might be contaminated, so you have to boil it. Most of the houses have gas stoves, but when the gas runs out, it's going to be a big problem."

Jewish groups from the mainland and beyond are contributing personnel, supplies and money to a relief effort that is swelling as Fiona's consequences become more apparent to those outside of Puerto Rico. On the ground, too, local Jews have been working to share resources with Puerto Ricans more affected by Fiona's wrath, both because of geography and poverty.

Diego Mandelbaum, the full-time religious director of Congregation Shaare Zedek, a Conservative synagogue in San Juan's upscale Miramar neighborhood, had just returned from distributing 30 pallets of water to flooded residents in eastern Puerto Rico.

"We were lucky because we still have enough diesel for several days. We are using donated funds to help six communities in Loiza," said Mandelbaum, who said Shaare Zedek expects between 150 and 200 worshippers for Rosh Hashanah services this weekend.

Established in 1952, Shaare Zedek is the oldest of Puerto Rico's three synagogues. Most of its members are native Spanish-speakers who emigrated from Cuba after Fidel Castro came to power in 1959, though Mandelbaum – a lawyer by profession – is from Argentina.

"We're OK and our synagogue suffered no physical damage," Mandelbaum said. "The only problem we face right now is that many of our members are without electricity. We do have a generator that's running as we speak, but we don't have any idea when the grid will be back online."

Anita Wagner, who along with her husband, Sammy, is a longtime member of Shaare Zedek, left for Miami a few days after Fiona's landfall, having already planned to spend the High Holidays with their children in South Florida. "Puerto Rico's electrical grid is very fragile, so we of course we knew there would be no power," said Wagner, 77. "Anybody who can afford it now has a generator. We are fine, but the problem is in the mountains and the countryside, because all the rivers flooded their banks – and we were having rains for the week before the hurricane, so the sand was saturated. That's why so many bridges collapsed."

The Wagners, who fled Cuba in 1962 and built up a successful chain of 33 department stores in Puerto Rico, plan to return to the island in time for Yom Kippur.

"A lot of people have left before, after Maria and then the earthquake. Some have come back, but I don't think it's enough to make up for those who left – especially the younger people," she said. "Everybody's praying for a quick recovery. That's all we can do."

Rabbi Mendel Zarchi, who has run Chabad-Lubavitch of Puerto Rico since 1999, offered a similar perspective.

"As we speak, the electricity is still off, so that's five days and counting. And those without electricity have no water because the water pumps depend on electricity," said Zarchi, the island's only full-time rabbi. "Yet all this is minor for us, relative to the great impact on those who only just started recovering from the historical earthquakes that decimated southwestern Puerto Rico for over a year."

Some 120 families now belong to Chabad – which has a 12,000-squarefoot synagogue complex in suburban Isla Verde – thanks to an influx of U.S. mainland Jews attracted to Puerto Rico by recently passed tax incentives that encourage investment on the island.

In fact, Chabad now maintains a small satellite shul in the coastal resort of Dorado, west of San Juan – marking the first-ever Jewish presence outside the capital city in Puerto Rico's history.

"In these challenging times, it's even more meaningful when we get together and reflect on the blessings granted to us. As a community, through good and bad, we always need to lean on each other," Zarchi said, noting the devastation that Fiona has already visited upon Puerto Rico. "We wish this was not the case. However, we don't get to choose what comes our way." **HW** 

### Iranian President Calls to 'Deal Decisively' with Protests

(JNS) – Iran must "deal decisively" with protests that have engulfed the country for over a week following the death of a woman arrested by Tehran's "morality police," President Ebrahim Raisi said last Saturday.

people have been killed in a government crackdown on unrest that has erupted throughout the Islamic Republic, with analysts saying the number of deaths is much higher than the official tally. agency reported last Saturday.

Raisi said that Tehran must "deal

#### At least 41 people have

According to the report, at least 41

At least 1,200 people have been arrested, the state-backed Tasmin news

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decisively with those who oppose the country's security and tranquillity."

The president "stressed the necessity to distinguish between protest and disturbing public order and security, and called the events ... a riot."

The demonstrations began in northwestern Iran at the funeral of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old Kurdish woman who died after falling into a coma following her detention by "morality po-

### died in a crackdown on the demonstrations.

lice" who were enforcing rules requiring women to wear a hijab and dress "modestly."

The protests are the largest in Iran since one over fuel prices in 2019, when an estimated 1,500 people were killed in a crackdown on demonstrators. **HW** 

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### No. 1 on Adam Sandler's Bucket List? Going to Israel for the First Time.



Adam Sandler is seen on the set of Netflix feature film, "Hustle" in Philadelphia, Aug. 27, 2021. Credit: Gilbert Carrasquillo/GC Images

#### By Gabe Friedman

(JTA) – In 2008, Adam Sandler gave Hollywood one of its most memorable Israeli characters ever: the Zohan, an Israeli Defense Forces operative with superhuman abilities who leaves the anti-terrorism grind to become a hairdresser in New York. "You Don't Mess with the Zohan" was a blockbuster hit.

But Sandler has never actually been

#### to Israel.

In an interview with AARP published last Wednesday – at 56, Sandler recently entered the group for older Americans' historic membership demographic, and he has been using a cane for an ailing hip – the Sandman was asked what's on his bucket list after so much success.

"Well, I haven't been to Israel, and I'm the Zohan, for God's sake. I'm excited to get there," he said. He also said he'd like to get better at playing guitar and to learn to "speak another language, like fluent Hebrew."

Sandler is currently in Canada filming his next Jewish-themed flick, "You Are SO Not Invited to My Bat Mitzvah!" – which is based on a young adult coming-of-age novel of the same name. He's there with his entire family, and some of them will reportedly show up in the film, including his 84-year-old mother Judy.

The AARP interview also touches on Sandler's foray into more serious roles over the past several years, including his lauded performance as a Jewish Diamond District salesman in "Uncut Gems." Sandler says in the interview that comedy will always be his favorite mode, but "Uncut Gems" fans need not worry – Sandler's set to star in a science fiction drama called "Spaceman" next year, and he's previously confirmed that he's working on another film with Jewish "Uncut Gems" directors Josh and Benny Safdie (who don't really do comedies). **HW** 

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### **Progressive Jewish Group Launches Think Tank to Counter** Spread of Right-Wing Ideas

#### By Asaf Elia-Shalev

(JTA) – Progressive Jewish leaders have launched a new think tank meant to counter what its founders see as an effort by a few billionaires to flood the Jewish world with conservative ideas.

Emor, the Institute for Bold Jewish Thought, is a project of T'ruah, an advocacy organization of rabbis dedicated to promoting human rights and social justice. In Hebrew, "emor" is a directive meaning "speak."



#### Rabbi Jill Jacobs, CEO of T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights Credit: Courtesy

The think tank will fund research, host events with scholars, and publish essays that draw on Jewish traditions and teachings to influence public discourse and policy around issues such as racism, immigration and LGBTQ rights in the United States. Emor will also provide a forum for scholars and thinkers



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"The right has put significant resources over decades into thought leadership," said Rabbi Jill Jacobs, the CEO of T'ruah. "In the Jewish world, we have Tikvah Fund and the Maimonides Fund and others who are investing very heavily in putting out conservative ideas that are cloaked in Jewish language and who are claiming authenticity. Emor is a response to the need for the progressive Jewish world to go really deep into our texts in our traditions and in our history and respond to the biggest questions of our moment."

Ahead of its official launch, Emor dipped its toes in the work of think tanks, linking up scholars for conversations about "democracy, nationalism and human rights in a Jewish state" and helping set up a symposium on democracy and Judaism.

In the spring, Emor plans to publish a single-issue magazine called Freedom that "reclaims the idea of freedom from those who seek to use it in order to compromise the safety, security and rights of others," according to a press release.

Over the past two years, progressive Jewish leaders such as Jacobs have watched with dismay as ideological rivals have rolled out a series of intellectual initiatives that have drawn attention inside and beyond Jewish communities. Last year, for example, saw the launch of Sapir, a journal of ideas edited by conservative commentator Bret Stephens on behalf of the Maimonides Fund. For its part, the Maimonides Fund rejects that it is pushing a conservative agenda, and Stephens has said Sapir seeks to publish a range of views, including those to the left of his own (though drawing a line at anti-Zionism and support for the BDS movement). (Maimonides is a supporter of 70 Faces Media, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency's parent organization.)

Soon after the launch of Sapir, a new group known as Jewish Institute for Liberal Values, organized an open letter to warn of "social justice ideology," as a "pernicious" force that is "antithetical to Judaism."

More recently, the right-wing Tikvah Fund featured Republican politician Ron DeSantis, the governor of Florida, as the keynote speaker at its Jewish Leadership Conference, where he and other conservatives railed against the left and argued that Judaism is more compatible with conservatism.

Jacobs said that what distinguishes Emor from these conservative initiatives, besides ideology, is how it's being funded. She said that while right-wing ideas are being promoted in the Jewish world by just a relatively small number of ultra-wealthy donors, Emor is collecting smaller donations from a larger number of supporters.

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"This broader base of funding reflects that the majority of the Jewish community is not where those conservative publications are and is actually committed to human rights," she said. **HW** 

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### Jewish NBA, WNBA Owner Robert Sarver Cites 'Faith' and 'Atonement' in Announcing Decision to Sell Teams After Scandal



PHOENIX, ARIZONA - OCTOBER 13: Phoenix Suns and Mercury owner Robert Sarver attends Game Two of the 2021 WNBA Finals at Footprint Center on October 13, 2021 in Phoenix, Arizona. The Mercury defeated the Sky 91-86 in overtime. Credit: Christian Petersen/Getty Images

#### **By Jacob Gurvis**

(JTA) – Robert Sarver, the Jewish owner of the NBA's Phoenix Suns and WNBA's Phoenix Mercury, announced last Wednesday that he will seek buyers for the two franchises as he serves his one-year suspension for misconduct.

Sarver, a real estate businessman with a net worth of nearly \$1 billion who purchased the teams in 2004, received the NBA's maximum fine of \$10 million after an investigation found a pattern of inappropriate and abusive behavior including racist remarks and sexual harassment toward employees. Sarver reportedly used the N-word multiple times.

"As a man of faith, I believe in atonement and the path to forgiveness," Sarver said in a statement last Wednesday, according to ESPN. "I expected that the commissioner's one-year suspension would provide the time for me to focus, make amends and remove my personal controversy from the teams that I and so many fans love."

The 60-year-old Tucson native, who





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Sarver told the Arizona Jewish Post in 2011 that he has served on the board of and held fundraising roles at the Jewish Federation of Southern Arizona and its Desert Caucus political action committee, and has been involved with the Tuscon Jewish Community Center and Jewish Family & Children Services.

Sarver further explained his decision to sell his two basketball franchises: "But in our current unforgiving climate, it has become painfully clear that that is no longer possible – that whatever good I have done, or could still do, is outweighed by things I have said in the past. For those reasons, I am beginning the process of seeking buyers for the Suns and Mercury."

Immediately after Sarver's suspension was announced, several NBA stars, including the Suns' Chris Paul, criticized the league for what the players deemed an inadequate punishment. Some called for Sarver to sell the team, or to face a lifetime ban.

Sarver's suspension echoed that of Washington Commanders owner Dan Snyder and former Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling, both of whom also happen to be Jewish and who similarly were accused of using their positions of power to mistreat their employees. **HW** 

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### **Consider These Three Suggestions if You Inherit a Trust**

Provided by Mike Stein, Managing Director - Investments, Wells Fargo Advisors Ouestions for Mike? You can reach him at 901.761.8151 or Michael.Stein@WellsFargoAdvisors.com • fa.wellsfargoadvisors.com/michael-stein

David "Chico" Esparza, Senior Fiduciary Advisory Specialist with Wells Fargo Private Bank, remembers meeting two clients, a brother and sister whose parents had passed away. "Unfortunately, their parents had not discussed their estate plans with the adult children. When the siblings learned they were the beneficiaries of a sizable trust," Esparza recalls,

"they had no idea what to do next." The brother and sister had many questions. Who handles the estate? What are the terms of the trust? And what should their next steps be? "Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., was the trustee, so we explained the timeline and process for settling the trust estate," Esparza says. "It helped to ease their minds to know that professionals would be handling everything."

As Esparza's clients found, stepping into the role of beneficiary can feel a bit like stepping into the unknown. Here, Esparza offers three suggestions to ease the process.

#### 1. Build an advisory team

A good first step for the beneficiary is to meet with the trustee who is tasked with executing the terms of the trust. It may be an individual, such as a CPA or lawyer, family member, or a corporate trustee.

"There will be a lot of questions, so it's important to establish a communication plan and a general timeframe for how long it will take to settle the estate," Esparza says.

In some instances, once the estate is settled, a new trust is funded with the beneficiary's share of the estate; in other cases, assets will be distributed outright to the beneficiary. If the assets will be retained in trust, the trustee typically collaborates with an investment advisor to help manage the assets according to the terms of the trust.

"The trustee and investment advisor will create a plan that is based on the terms of the trust and considers the needs of the beneficiary," Esparza says. "Beneficiaries also should consider seeking the guidance of a tax consultant regarding tax implications related to trust distribution."

**2. Understand the terms of the trust** One of the first questions a beneficiary might have for the advisory team is, "What does the trust mean for me?"

Esparza explains that a trust is a useful tool for holding, managing, and distributing property as outlined by the trustor(s) – the creator(s) of the trust – in the trust agreement, but each trust is unique in how assets can be distributed to beneficiaries. It is important to understand the terms of the trust. Some key trust aspects to discuss include:

• Beneficiary or beneficiaries: Is

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Mike Stein Managing Director -Investments there a sole or several beneficiaries of the trust? How do the terms address the rights different beneficiaries have to distributions from the trust?

• Age restrictions: Does the beneficiary have to reach a certain age before accessing some or all of the trust?

• Distribution restrictions: Can beneficiaries access the principal or just the income from the trust? Does the beneficiary need to provide the trustee with proof of the beneficiary's own income and expenses to receive distributions? What categories of expenses can the trust cover for the beneficiary? For what reasons may distributions be adjusted?

• Lifetime of the trust: Does the trust terminate once the beneficiary reaches a certain age, or is it meant to last the beneficiary's lifetime? Is any portion of the trust designated for future generations?

"Trusts are an opportunity to build generational wealth, not only for the trustor but also for the beneficiary," Esparza says. "For that reason, the trustee should be thoughtful in administrating the trust to help the funds last not only through beneficiary's lifetime but also potentially for future generations."

3. Ask questions before taking distributions

"Before taking a trust distribution, some beneficiaries find it useful to inquire about the potential tax consequences. That's where a tax advisor should provide guidance," Esparza says. "Beneficiaries also may consider consulting with the trustee and investment advisor about additional considerations or impacts a trust distribution may have." In addition, beneficiaries should consult with their own legal counsel if they have specific questions regarding their rights with respect to a trust or the possible impact of a trust distribution.

Esparza shares the story of a young beneficiary who wanted to use her trust fund to purchase a luxury car when she turned 16. "As trustee, I posed this question: 'Would a less-expensive car meet your transportation goals and preserve trust assets for the long term?" he says. "It is important for beneficiaries to stay connected with the trustee and to ask clarifying questions so they understand the impact certain distributions may have to the trust. As a fiduciary, a trustee is there to educate and can help the trust sustain longer term financial well-being for the beneficiary."

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#### **OBITUARIES**



#### Paul G. Harmel

Paul G. Harmel, age 82, passed away surrounded by family on September 20, 2022, at Belmont Village in Memphis, Tennessee.

Paul was born in Youngstown, Ohio, the first of three siblings. Albert and Jane Harmel, his parents, moved the family to Memphis, Tennessee, in 1950, where they all grew up and chose to make Memphis their home.

Paul graduated from East High School and went to Memphis State and enjoyed auditing classes throughout his lifetime to pursue many of his interests. He spent the earlier part of his career working at Farber Brothers Company. Afterwards, he went on to work in retail helping to manage the patio and outdoor service areas at Central Hardware and HQ, and later as a worker and greeter at Wal-Mart.

Upon his retirement, he spent his time on his creative passions, including continuing education, Jewish learning, music, photography and volunteering in the community. Paul continued to play piano at multiple retirement communities, strictly as a volunteer to help spread happiness through his music. He also volunteered to help with the senior lunches at the Jewish Community Center. He thrived on playing his music, helping others and living his life making the world a little bit better place having been in it. He was constantly concerned about the world news and people suffering all over. He wrote tirelessly to his Congressional Representatives, the President, Governors, Clergy and more to ask for their help in making people's struggles across the world less challenging. He also gave to scores of charities every year, making sure he helped those in need wherever and whenever he could.

He was described by several of his admirers as a man who was always comforting to be around and as a special person that has impacted a lot of people in his quiet, unassuming way. To Paul, everyone was seen as good and equal, and he always perceived and interacted with the world in a uniquely wonderful 'Forrest Gumpian" way. "Uncle" Paul was a truly righteous mensch. He is survived by his beloved family including his sister, Lee Harmel Malkin (Tim), his nieces and nephews, Amy Malkin Filderman, Laura Malkin Tanenbaum (Alan), Arthur Malkin (Andrea), Benjamin Harmel and Emily Harmel Kass (Moshe).

#### **Charlotte Serenco Levitch**

Charlotte Serenco Levitch was born June 3, 1932, in Paris, Tennessee. Charlotte graduated from Central High School and attended LSU.

She was predeceased by her parents, Abe and Gertrude Serenco and Stanley Levitch. Charlotte is survived by her brother, Irvin Serenco, sister-inlaw Deanna Serenco, daughter Leslie Levitch Siegel, son Gary Levitch, two grandsons, and a loving extended family.

Charlotte lived most of her adult life in Springfield, Missouri, where she nurtured her family and participated in many community and charity events; often as the chairperson. She returned "home" to Memphis to complete her life journey. Charlotte was a member of Temple Israel and attended regularly. She enjoyed the symphony, movies and dinners with friends and spending time with her local family. She also loved her time in San Diego with her daughter and family as well as time in Florida with her son and his wife.

A private funeral service for the family was held with burial in Beth Sholom Cemetery. The family requests that any memorials be sent to Temple Israel, Beth Sholom Synagogue or a charity of the donor's choice. **HW** 

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#### Sanford Victor "Sandy" Lichterman

Sanford Victor "Sandy" Lichterman, 86, passed away on September 23, 2022, at The Villages Hospice House in The Villages, Florida. Sandy was born on June 18, 1936, in Detroit, Michigan, to his parents Arthur Otto Lichterman and Diane (Levine) Lichterman.

Sandy and his loving wife, Rae Jean, moved to The Villages in 2007 from Memphis, Tennessee, and prior to that moved to Memphis in 1971 from Detroit, Michigan.

Sandy and was a member of Temple Israel of Memphis, as well as attended The Chabad House – Center for Jewish Life and Learning of Oxford, Florida.

Sandy began his career after college as a fourth-grade teacher. After just one year, he began working in the insurance industry, first as an agent and then working his way into management. He started with New York Life as an agent and then went to work for Union Central in Memphis as an agent/manger.

All through his life he was an entrepreneur in several businesses that he expanded and improved due to his hard work and conviction. Sandy had served The Salvation Army for over 50 years both in Memphis and in Leesburg, Florida. He always thought of others first and how to improve circumstances of those less fortunate. Sandy is survived by his loving wife of 65 years, Rae Jean Lichterman, of The Villages, Florida; his daughter, Alyse Evans (Phillip) of Cordova, Tennessee; his son, Jefferey Lichterman of Nolensville, Tennessee; his brother-inlaw, Sidney Blatnikoff of West Bloomfield, Michigan; loving cousins Sondra Nisenbaum of Florida, Harvey Wagner of Connecticut and Bobby Newman of Florida; nine loving grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren and several loving nieces and nephews. Funeral Services were held at Temple Israel Cemetery at the Levy Cooper Chapel in Memphis, Tennessee, on September 28. Online condolences may be made at www.pagetheusfuneral.com. HW

### Ukraine: Israel Provided 'a Little Intel' on Iran's Support for Russia



An Iranian Saegheh-2 drone on display at the Eqtedar 40 defense exhibition in Tehran, Feb. 5, 2019. Credit: Hossein Mersadi/ Wikimedia Commons

(JNS) – Israel delivered "a little bit of intelligence information" about Iranian weapons being supplied to Russia for use in its war against Ukraine, a senior Ukrainian official says.

However, "we need much more than that," *Kan News* reported the official as saying last Saturday.

Kyiv has begun a significant downgrading of its diplomatic ties with Tehran in recent days, in response to its

#### The official added, however, that his country needs much more help from the Jewish state.

supply of armed unmanned aerial vehicles to Russia. As part of the cooling in relations, the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry last Saturday announced the cancellation of credentials afforded previously to Iran's ambassador to Ukraine and a substantial decrease in the size of the diplomatic staff in the Iranian Embassy.

Tehran expressed regret over Ukraine's decision and called on it to "not be influenced by elements seeking to sabotage ties between the two countries," *Kan News* reported.

Also last Saturday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said his military has been able to down eight Iranian-made UAVs thus far. **HW** 



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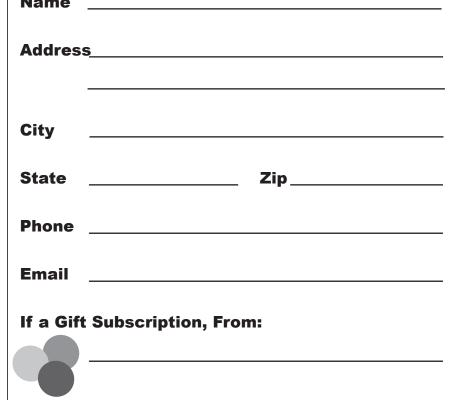
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He also thought the world of his four great-nieces and four great-nephews. Uncle Paul never missed a family event and was considered to be more of an additional grandparent than a mere great-uncle.

The funeral was held in the Levy-Cooper Chapel at the Temple Israel Cemetery.

Messages of condolence may be sent to the family at: paulharmellove@ gmail.com.

The family welcomes donations to the Memphis Jewish Community Center Senior Programs (6560 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38138) or Temple Israel (1376 E. Massey Rd., Memphis, TN 38120) as an expression of sympathy instead of flowers or food. **HW** 



### **Amos Goodheart**



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**

It is important to remember that our bible says that deeds are the primary currency of Judaism. Not faith, not meditation, not even worship. First bring your sick neighbor a bowl of soup. Then pray. But first, the soup.

No one understood this better than Amos Goodheart. Those who believe in the power of good deeds love to tell his story.

One day in early spring Amos, a wealthy merchant, received a summons to appear before his King. So, next morning, dressed in his finest apparel, Amos the Righteous stood before the throne. Solemnly, the King told him that he must prepare for a journey to another Kingdom. Tomorrow, said his ruler, he must depart. "Be at the throne room at dawn, and I will show you the way. And be prepared for your journey," he cautioned.

A thousand questions, like the lights that flashed in the huge candelabra over the throne, danced in Amos's mind.

But before he could turn doubts into questions the King spoke. "Amos, you may only take with you what cannot be carried." The voyager was left with his unanswered questions. But one did not interrogate the King.

Not much time, thought the apprehensive traveler. By dawn tomorrow he must be provisioned for a trip of unknown duration to a foreign destination. But what to carry in the light of the puz-

#### zling riddle?

What was necessary for life in a new land but "cannot be carried"? After consultation with his advisors, he deduced that his Ruler intended him to carry whatever bundles did not require the labor of his hands and arms. Aha, he would fill his pockets. But due to his many possessions what voluminous pockets they must be.

First, gold. He must bring his gold coins. A new enterprise in a new land would require much capital as well as credit. Gold had universal value. And there was his lock-box full of contracts, documents of legal ownership, and titles. He must bring his titles. But wait – what about provisions for the trip?

A chartless journey of indeterminate length? He would need food: many wheat cakes flavored with sesame oil and honey. But he recalled the King's riddle. He could "only carry that which could not be carried." And pockets were only pockets; there were hard choices to make.

He summoned his tailor. "Make me a suit of clothing, immediately!" he commanded, "with many pockets. Huge pockets. Deep and wide. For tomorrow our ruler is sending me on a lengthy journey to a faraway Kingdom."

Late that night the tailor returned with his creation. The merchant smiled. It was made exactly to his specification. A row of pockets lined the front and back of the pants. And the coat – by use of the lining – was one gigantic pocket. Tomorrow thought the merchant, he would load up and appear before his Master.

And so, he did. But he was a ludicrous figure. His pockets, stuffed with gold coins, oily wheat cakes, and reams of titles, deeds, and letters of credit, pulled him down like an invisible hand. His pants, had he not clutched them with both hands, would have descended below his knees. Even worse than his sagging pants, his weighty coat slumped his back and shoulders. His dignity had fled. This was no way to appear before the King. Amos the Righteous was now Amos the clown.

But what could he do? Every pocket held a commodity that could mean survival in a new Kingdom. Loaded like a mule, he stumbled to the palace.

The throne room was empty. Vanished was the jeweled candelabra. It was as dim as a moonless midnight when only a single star glitters between the clouds.

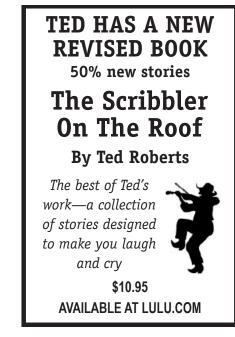
Where was the King? How to reach the new Kingdom without the guidance of the Master Navigator? He was surrounded by shadows. Behind him, unreachable, lay his former home. Ahead, there was only a foreboding mystery.

Amos Goodheart slumped on the dirt floor that once was graced with a rug of the purest fleece. A gust of wind chilled his face like the breath of the Angel of Death. Instinctively, he looked up to direct his lamentations to the Master before whom he kneeled. Now he saw that there was no solid ceiling in the throne room. He was in a deep well of time. Above him only a pale light, like dawn, silhouetted shadowy figures, half-human, half-mist.

"Help me, please help me," sobbed Amos. "The King is gone, and I don't know the way to the land over the mountains."

Suddenly over the hum of the wind, he heard voices. First a child. "Amos Goodheart, have no fear. You paid the doctor to straighten my leg. I chased the rabbits in the meadow, thanks to you."

Then an older couple: "Amos, you were a loving son to us. You brought gratitude and loyalty, like sweet music, to our union."



A pale woman said, "When I was sick you brought me meat broth. Hunger and loneliness, you banished from my life."

"You helped me one cold winter night, pull my donkey from the ditch," said a neighbor. "And inspired me to do the same for others."

"And I'm the beggar boy. Every day on your way to the Minyon, a coin you put in my cup. I grew up without bitterness because of you."

Benedictions from a life of good deeds anointed the head of Amos Goodheart. He stood tall. His clown clothes dissolved at his feet. And he smelled like honey clover in the meadow.

"Here, here is the way," they said. And they all set off together on the longest journey a man can make. Amos the Righteous carried nothing except his good deeds.

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** 

### INSIGHTS FROM ISRAEL Generally Generals

#### By Howard Weisband

We are in the midst of the High Holiday season when the sound of the shofar is prevalent. Throughout history the shofar has represented multiple purposes: inspiring spiritual reflection, announcing the new month, beginning battle and ending hostilities, and anointing a new king.

The latter shofar blasts may be especially meaningful to a particular class of politicians: the retired generals who have entered politics and seek new leadership positions in democratic societies. Former American generals who commanded armies later became president of the United States, George Washington and Dwight Eisenhower for example. In Israel, three former generals who had been chiefs of staff became prime minister: Yitzhak Rabin, Ehud Barak, and Ariel Sharon. Others such as Moshe Dayan and Yigael Yadin rose to significant ministerial positions in government. Minister of Defense Benny Gantz, also an ex-chief of staff, served recently as deputy and then alternate prime minister. He currently heads the National Unity Party, an alliance between Gantz's Blue and White and Justice Minister Gideon Sa'ar's New Hope political parties.

gust, he successfully brought a successor with the IDF, former Chief-of-Staff Gadi Eisenkot, to join him and Sa'ar, adding further military intrigue to the political process.

In 2019, Guy Ziv, assistant professor, American University School of International Service, wrote: "The participation of retired generals in Israeli politics is nothing new. The Israel Defense Forces, or IDF, has always been the country's most revered institution, and it has been common practice for generals to enter the political arena upon retirement." Ziv went on to analyze the results of the 2019 elections: "... the unified list of three former IDF chiefs - Benny Gantz, Moshe Ya'alon, and Gabi Ashkenazi - who teamed up in February to unseat the prime minister was without precedent.... (but) the generals did not capitalize on their security credentials by offering a real alternative to the government's policies, especially the government's hard-line policies toward the Palestinians. Instead, their "Blue and White" ticket chose to turn this election into a referendum on Netanyahu's character. In doing so, they failed in their effort to create a new centrist, non-ideological bloc that would replace Netanyahu's ruling right-wing bloc."

their opponent instead of creating a wise, marketable political strategy.

Netanyahu and his Likud Party won that election. Later Bibi out-maneuvered Gantz politically, blocking him from rotating to become prime minister, moving instead to new elections.

Dr. Noa Balf subsequently wrote of Gantz: "His military CV did not give him the political wisdom and experience to be able to compete with Netanyahu's ability to bargain, cajole, and deliver political results - an ability directly rooted in experience, connections, and institutional knowledge." However, now it's 2022, and Benny Gantz, the former general, may have learned through his own political experience to be a better politician. Gantz is trying. In New York recently, at the highly watched Jerusalem Post Annual Conference, he took a page from the Bibi play book. Armed with Israeli intelligence available to him, he revealed in a public speech a map showing more than 10 different facilities in Syria's that are used by Iran to produce advanced missiles and weapons for its proxies. Then at the United Nations in a meeting of diplomats covered by the media, he proclaimed that Iran has vastly increased the number of its advanced centrifuges capable of enriching weapons-grade uranium, saying that the world needs to prepare sanctions against Tehran.

And as indicated above, he's built political alliances. The latest news in that regard is his taking a page out of the Lapid-Bennett play book, claiming that following the November 1 elections, he will be able to build a coalition of 71 seats, ranging from ultra-Orthodox parties on the right to Labor and Meretz on the left, plus the Ra'am Arab party.

There is no doubt that Benny Gantz desires to be prime minister. In Au-

Interpretation: the generals attacked

Frankly, at this point, indications are that such coalition conjecture at best may be political-speak, or bluster at worst.

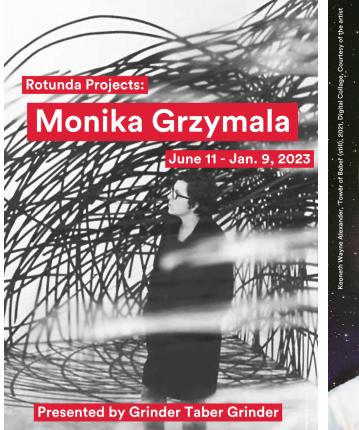
But such is the nature of a political campaign, who can outdo the other. Meanwhile, both Lapid and Netanyahu are very active within their own updated play books.

The real game will be played on November 1.

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** 

# Memphis Brooks Museum of Art

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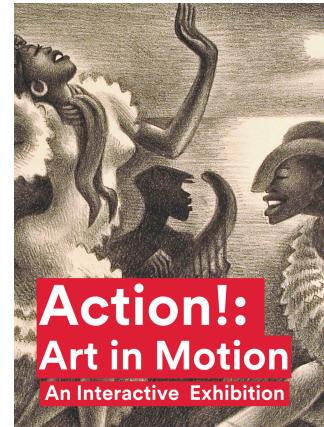


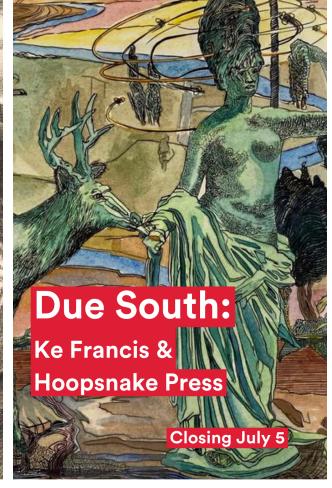
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Memphis Brooks Museum of Art

### In 'Blonde,' Arthur Miller is Marilyn Monroe's Jewish Husband, and We All Know What that Means (don't we?)



Adrien Brody as Arthur Miller and Ana de Armas as Marilyn Monroe. Courtesy of Netflix By PJ Grisar as such, Bobby Cannavale plays "Joltin"

This originally appeared on Forward. Reprinted with permission.

A few months ago, Joyce Carol Oates, as is her wont, tweeted something baffling:

"When I was first married to my (Jewish) husband two Jewish women friends of mine took me aside and said with wry smiles: 'Welcome to the club.' Soon, I knew what they meant.

No one was entirely sure what Oates meant. Her attempt to clarify (a captionless photo of her late husband on a bridge near a backdrop of snow-dappled mountains) did little to help. But watching "Blonde," the fitful, NC-17 fever dream of Oates' best-known novel, about Marilyn Monroe (née Norma Jeane Baker), I couldn't stop thinking of what she – and filmmaker Andrew Dominik – meant to say with their portrayal of Arthur Miller.

While Oates' novel lightly obscures key names with titles like "Ex-athlete" and "the Playwright," Dominik's film – a punishing Hollywood martyr story – is more direct. Though never named as such, Bobby Cannavale plays "Joltin' Joe" DiMaggio and Adrien Brody is Arthur Miller. The two men serve as polarized totems of Norma Jeane's love life.

Marilyn (Ana De Armas) divorces DiMaggio, who is possessive and physically abusive. Miller, introduced spilling a stackful of pages near the Astor Place subway entrance, makes for a too-perfect romantic foil.

The brutish, ethnic athlete is replaced by a rangy, bespectacled, ethnic writer type, who wistfully handles a snapshot of a former love. "Magda, Magda," he repeats. We soon learn that Magda is not just Miller's "own first love," an immigrant who spoke broken English, but a role in his new play. Imagine Miller's surprise when he arrives at a reading to see Marilyn Monroe in the part.

"Magda – her?" Miller says, in his familiar "Boy Grew in Brooklyn" accent. But by the end of the play, he's in tears. After the reading, Miller and Marilyn

sit down for coffee and discuss the role. Miller is shocked by her insights – the connections she makes to Chekhov's "Three Sisters." He is absolutely bowled over that she realizes that Magda, who is probably illiterate, is just pretending to read the writing of the character Isaac. (By way of fictional elements, I don't think this is a real play, though it, like Miller's once-mentioned, invented ex, "Esther," seems pointedly Semitic.)

This note is a breakthrough that sends Miller reeling and, eventually, makes Marilyn a vessel for his lost love.

At this point in the film we are entering some potentially hazardous territory, with an avatar of tender-hearted, New York Jewish erudition (the sort that won't raise a hand to you), wooing the picture of peroxided goyishe beauty. Monroe's own conversion to Judaism is duly glossed over. In a montage of their prenuptial press tour, a reporter asks what kind of wedding they'll have. "Very quiet I hope," Marilyn replies.

Life with Miller is quiet, shifting to a sort of perfume commercial presentation, as she calls to him, "Daddy, I don't ever want to leave."

Of course, trouble comes to paradise. While Miller is largely solicitous, he has a mild Hitchcockian urge to mold an icy blonde to his liking and use her in his art. She is not Magda or Marilyn but Norma in their home, and yet, like every man in her life, he betrays her. One day, Marilyn goes up to his home office, lovingly surveying pages laid out on a desk, only to find lines of dialogue ripped from a discussion they had. The discussion concerns a pledge he made to never write about their relationship. Oops.

It's a relief that Miller's behavior doesn't fall into something Svengali-esque or predatory. His trespasses are the most venial of all of Norma's beaus, their breakup largely framed as the result of a miscarriage. (There is a scene where the fetus speaks to her; out of context, a number of sequences here could play well as pro-life propaganda.)

In the final reckoning, Miller is the partner who best understands her. He alone appreciates her intellect. He embodies common stereotypes of a Jewish husband: educated, attentive, and a good provider, if a meek one not equipped for crisis. He's the sort of person who won't tread on your toes or take control when you're clearly spiraling into drug use. Who seems only the tiniest bit concerned when you trash your bedroom. "What can I do to help you, darling?" he'll ask, but he won't really help.

Dominik's film, in all its bewildering toggles in aspect ratio and black and white to color also ends with a final double exposure: the fractured identity of Norma the victim and Marilyn the pinup. While skipping the steps leading up to a pivotal transformation, "Blonde" wants to tell us about the roles we play and the constructs we fit into.

In the end, the role Miller plays, as yet another surrogate for Norma's missing father, is fungible. After crashing her car into a tree, Norma staggers into their home and, seeing Miller there, asks "Who are you?" Miller's face blurs in and out as he says, "Norma, I'm your husband."

Norma doesn't register what that means in the moment. But the larger point, in all its glaring banality, is we can never really know a person if we insist on simple classifications like "Jewish husband," "ex-athlete" or "blonde." Oates should know that too – she wrote the book on it. **HW** 



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