



THE

Hebrew Watchman

SERVING THE MEMPHIS JEWISH COMMUNITY SINCE 1925

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Temple Israel’s Rabbi Micah Greenstein Receives the 2022 Memphis Interfaith Award at the Annual Memphis Interfaith Dinner



Dr. Alim Khandekar, Founder of Memphis Interfaith Dinner, Mayor Mike Palazzolo, Mayor of Germantown, and Rabbi Micah Greenstein

Sunday, April 10 marked the 15th Annual Memphis Interfaith Dinner, held during the festival of Ramadan as an opportunity to share rituals and build relationships among the interfaith community. The evening was one of fellowship and spirituality, including a panel discussion on community impacts of the pandemic featuring various faith leaders including Temple Israel Senior Rabbi Micah Greenstein.

Each year, Memphis Interfaith recognizes an individual or organization from the Memphis community for their outstanding work toward strengthening interfaith relations and steadfast community service. This year, the 2022 Memphis Interfaith Award was presented to Rabbi Greenstein by Dr. Alim Khandekar, Founder of Memphis Interfaith Dinner, and Mayor Mike Palazzolo, Mayor of Germantown.

“Rabbi Micah has been with us since the first Ramadan Interfaith Dinner back in 2007,” said Dr. Khandekar. “He enthusiastically joins us every year and shares his insightful comments in our programs, and his outstanding work and dedicated service to the Memphis area for the past 30 years is well known and deeply admired.” [HW](#)

March sees 92% jump in anti-Semitic hate crimes over previous year

(JNS) – Anti-Semitic crimes fell slightly in New York City from February to March, but remain high compared to 2021, according to official statistics from the New York City Police Department.

In the latest monthly report, which was released last week, hate crimes against Jews were up 92 percent, going from 12 incidents in March 2021 to 23 incidents in March 2022. In February, the NYPD reported 56 incidents of anti-Semitism across the city.

The rise in incidents of Jew-hatred comes amid an overall increase in crime across the five boroughs. The NYPD says crime rose more than 36 percent last month as compared to a year ago.

“The NYPD will continue to provide fair, effective and responsive policing that best reflects the needs of the communities we serve,” said Police Commissioner Keechant L. Sewell. “But the NYPD needs the steadfast commitment of all its partners, pulling in the same direction, to realize our goal of public safety for every New Yorker.” [HW](#)

COVID No Match for Fogelman Jewish Family Services Volunteers

“Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night shall stay these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.”

More reliable than the post office, the volunteers for Wendy and Avron B. Fogelman Jewish Family Service have not skipped a beat in the more than two years since COVID changed our world. April is National Volunteer Month, and Fogelman JFS volunteers continue to shine, proving time and again that they

are essential to our work supporting and sustaining Jewish community members.

Every week, despite COVID, Fogelman JFS volunteers continue to mask up and deliver kosher meals, shelf-stable items and fresh produce to Jewish seniors. While this program was needed by many before, the pandemic has only increased its importance, ensuring that vulnerable community members can get essential, nutritious food delivered to their door regularly at no cost to them.

For more than five years, a dedicated team of Fogelman JFS volunteers continues to provide Shabbat programming for Jewish residents at two senior living facilities every month without fail. When the facilities weren’t allowing visitors due to COVID, these volunteers delivered hand-packed gift bags and made longer “wellness calls” to check on program participants.

Fogelman JFS volunteers also augment the Shalom Shuttle service, providing

needed transportation (with COVID precautions) to medical and other appointments, and when needed, personalized assistance with shopping. Other volunteers serve as telephone “buddies,” providing regular and often-lengthy telephone check-ins with community members.

With the recent renewal of the Fogelman JFS Special Needs program, volun-

(See **Volunteers** Page 3)



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My Teen Israel Experience



Morgan and her friends walking through Jaffa, Israel, from left to right: Nicole Feltster, Hannah Schenk, Chloe Teig, Carolie Hecht, Morgan Schrier and Hadassah Sternfeld.

By Morgan Schrier

Morgan Schrier, daughter of Carolyn and Adam Schrier, is a senior at Hutchison School. Memphis Jewish Federation's Lemksy Endowment Fund provided her with a Teen Israel Experience grant to help offset the cost of her BBYO International Leadership Seminar in Israel.

This past summer, I traveled to Israel for the first time on BBYO's International Leadership Seminar Israel (ILSI.) Having studied Israel for years throughout my Hebrew School and youth group career, my expectations were set. I was most excited to see Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, as those are the two places one usually hears when learning about Israel. Looking back on it now, I had absolutely no idea what I was about to jump into. This was no ordinary trip.

Our journey, just like the State of Israel's, began in Sde Boker. On our first full day post-quarantine, we learned about David Ben-Gurion, his time in Sde Boker, and Israel's Declaration of Independence. I felt as if I had a new view of the country and its history. Though our time in the kibbutz was short, it allowed us to transport ourselves into David Ben-Gurion's shoes and immediately understand the importance of Israel's existence.

Next, we traveled throughout the Negev desert and learned about agriculture, rode camels, learned from the Bedouins, slept in their tents, hiked up Masada, and floated in the Dead Sea. We then made our way up to Jerusalem for our first Shabbat in Israel.

I will never forget seeing Jerusalem for the first time. As our bus emerged from the tunnel, everyone went silent, and we all pressed our faces to the windows to take in the sights of the city. I immediately felt drawn to it, as if a

force were pulling me in. The next day we walked throughout the Old City of Jerusalem. There was history and stories everywhere, and I felt my connection to the city grow by the minute.

My reaction to visiting the Kotel surprised even myself. I prayed, put my note in the wall, and listened to others' stories of what they were hoping and praying for. Before I knew it, I felt tears rolling down my face. I do not think I will ever be able to explain why I cried. Most of us were emotional and weeping in each other's arms as we supported one another. I felt so connected to the place and the people. And at that moment, we were not one hundred individuals; we were one community.

We made our way up north; through Galilee, Tzfat, the Golan Heights, and Nazareth. We spoke with Arab-Israeli teens, swam in the Kinneret, learned from a Kabbalistic artist, and so much more. We then went to Tel Aviv, immersing ourselves in the markets, food, graffiti art, and bustling streets, to return to Jerusalem once again.

We took a field trip into the West Bank, to Gush Etzion. With an unspoken fear of where we were, our group sat down in an area, met by Rabbi Hanan. Rabbi Hanan spoke to us about his journey to Israel, and how he traveled from Texas to make Aliyah. Rabbi Hanan introduced us to his Palestinian friend, Noor, who told us of his journey. The two met in the very place we were sitting, engaged in civil conversation, and became friends. Rabbi Hanan and Noor now work with an organization called Friends of Roots, which works to create friendships and mutual understandings between Israelis and Palestinians. I can say without a doubt that this was the

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Memphis Candlelighting Time

Erev Shabbat, Fri. April 22, 2022 / 21 Nissan, 5782.....7:20 p.m.
Havdallah, Sat. April 23, 2022 / 22 Nissan, 5782 8:18 p.m.

Pesach 8th day
Count 8 Omer after nightfall

most eye-opening and impactful part of our trip. Seeing two groups, a part of decades of intense conflict, come together for the greater good was the most beautiful thing I have ever seen.

My summer Israel trip changed me for the better. I became more educated, more open-minded, more connected to my Judaism, and more connected to the state of Israel. I have a forever community with ILSI 2021 and cannot wait to travel back to one of the few places I truly feel at home.

Thank you to Memphis Jewish Federation's Lemsky's Endowment Fund for helping to make my BBYO International Leadership Seminar Israel 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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MJCC Senior Programs

During the next two weeks, The MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club will host four new programs. All programs start at 12:15 p.m.

On Tuesday, April 26, Ginny Oceg- uera, of SRVS will discuss “What does Self Direction Mean!” SRVS is a non- profit, United Way of the Mid-South partner agency. Since their beginning on November 1, 1962, they have main- tained a steadfast commitment to help- ing the people we serve have the best possible quality of life. Mrs. Oceg- uera has given several talks to MJCC Seniors over the past several years. All have been well received.

On Thursday, April 28, join us for the first-ever Team Trivial Pursuit Game! Based on the popular game, Trivial Pur- suit, there will be a Special Guest Host to oversee the game. Teams will be led by Steve Kaplan, Bill Roth and Steve Conroy. Prizes will be awarded for 1st and 2nd place finishers. Please call Steve Kaplan, 901.259.9220 or email stevekaplan@jccmemphis.org to regis- ter for you or your team if you choose to have one!

On Tuesday, May 3, Kristin Miller will speak about “The ABC’s of Medi- care.” Kristin will explain the ins and

out of the various plans available to se- niors on Medicare. Kristin is with Mid- South Aging Consultants. The talk will be appropriate to any senior regardless of who one uses for their coverage.

On Thursday, May 5, Steve Kaplan will talk about “14 Things You Should Never Clean with Windex and Other Tips!” This talk will center on many things seniors can do around the house to make their life easier. There will also be a handout of the items covered.

Please don’t forget our MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club Month- ly Luncheon on April 27 featuring Di- ana Stein on piano and vocals. The cost is only \$5 for lunch catered by the Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab and terrific entertainment provided by Cre- ative Aging.

Please come join us Monday through Friday for a delicious Kosher lunch from the Kitchens at the Memphis Jew- ish Home & Rehab. The cost is only \$2 for seniors. Reservations are required the day before by 1 p.m. Please contact Adult Services Coordinator Steve Ka- plan at 901-259-9220 or email steveka- plan@jccmemphis.org. You may also call the front desk at 901-761-0810 to make a reservation. **HW**

Volunteers...

(Continued From Page 1)

teers have again stepped forward to as- sist with the program, providing needed transportation and enthusiastic program assistance. Soon we hope to renew our in-person “Friendly Visits” and in-per- son “Handy Helper” basic household chore volunteer services.

Community volunteers from Beth Sholom have increased the impact of our food program through their commit- ment to donating fresh produce every week. In addition, during the growing season, those community volunteers pick up boxes of gleaned produce from area vendors. They then sort it for use by Fogelman JFS clients and other com- munity groups serving area residents who are food insecure.

Fogelman JFS volunteers are also often very engaged in other ways in the community – in leadership roles at their shuls, the Memphis Jewish Feder- ation (Federation), the Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab, Plough Towers, Hillel, BBYO, MJCC and other organizations.

They also provide “status checks” and telephone support to isolated seniors referred by the Federation. Several also serve on the Senior Services Collabora- tive to help shape ongoing community responses to the needs of Jewish se- niors.

All of this underscores the high val- ue that Fogelman JFS, our volunteers, and volunteer partners place on the im- portance of relationships and on tikkun olam – repairing our world.

Through the ongoing effort of our incredible community volunteers, Fo- gelman JFS is better able to provide direct service to community members in meaningful and constructive ways, person to person, day by day. Please join with us in saluting our amazing and dedicated Fogelman JFS and communi- ty partner volunteers for all that they do!

For information on current volunteer opportunities with Fogelman Jewish Family Service, please contact Audrey May, Fogelman JFS Volunteer Coor- dinator, at amay@jccmemphis.org or 901-767-8511. **HW**

Boy Scout Troop 25 Archery Event Kicks Off Cub Scout Recruitment

On Sunday May 1, Temple Israel Boy Scout Troop 25, in conjunction with the Chickasaw Council Boy Scouts of America, will sponsor Free Youth Ar- chery in the meadow near the Rose Gar- den at Temple Israel from noon - 5 p.m. No reservations needed.

All instructors are USA Archery cer- tified.

This kick-off event will help restart one of Temple Israel youth groups, Cub Scout Pack 25.

Cub Scout Pack 25 enables youth to meet and socialize with other Jewish youth in the Memphis Jewish commu- nity in a safe, supervised environment.

The Cub Scout program is for boys and girls, K-5th grade and offers fun and challenging activities that promote character development and physical fitness by working with other scouts. Family involvement is an essential part of the program, and parents are encour- aged to play an active role. Cub Scout- ing helps parents make the most of the time they have to impact the lives of their children and maybe even have fun with other adults with Cub Scout-aged children.

Troop 25 and Cub Scout Pack 25 lead- ers will be present to explain to every- one interested what Cub Scouting is all about and distribute information about the next Cub Scout Pack 25 meeting for both youth and their parents. For more information, contact Dr. Mark Clemons, Troop 25 Committee Chairman. markp- clem@aol.com. **HW**

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Hebrew Union College to End Cincinnati Rabbinical Program after Board Backs Controversial Plan



Opponents to Hebrew Union College’s restructuring plan hold a “Rally for our Rabbis” on the school’s Cincinnati campus, April 7, 2022. The school board voted April 11 to approve the plan. Credit: Courtesy of Lew Ebstein

By Andrew Lapin

(JTA) – Hebrew Union College will officially stop ordaining rabbis in Cincinnati, the Ohio city where the Reform seminary was founded in 1875. The seminary’s board of governors voted last Monday in New York City to approve a strategic plan that centers on enrolling all rabbinical students at HUC’s campuses in New York and Los Angeles. The Cincinnati rabbinical program will “sunset” after all currently enrolled students are ordained by the end of the 2026 academic year. The plan was approved by a more than two-thirds majority, according to the school. Its approval comes after years of declining revenue and enrollment at

the school – and months of bitter debate across the Reform community. “We recognize the pain that this decision causes and expect to take the appropriate time and care to implement this decision in a sensitive and constructive manner, in collaboration with our community,” HUC President Andrew Rehfeld said in a statement acknowledging Cincinnati’s renown as the historic center of American Reform Judaism. Rehfeld, board chair Sue Neuman Hochberg and chair-elect David Edelson called the decision a “first step” in an email to the school community sent more than two hours after the vote concluded.

“This vote was a first step toward transformational change for HUC-JIR and the Reform Movement – as we are bound together in the recognition that Judaism must honor its history and tradition while adapting to fundamental changes in the world around us,” they wrote. HUC says it is not closing its Cincinnati campus and will maintain the Klau Library, Skirball Museum and American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati. In the coming years, according to the plan, HUC will also create a new low-residency rabbinical and cantorial program based on the campus. The school’s small doctoral program, which has been based in Cincinnati, will over the coming years be offered at its other campuses, too, Rehfeld told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency last month. The vote was closely monitored by the broader HUC community, including faculty, staff and alumni serving Reform congregations across the United States and beyond. In two open letters that circulated among the HUC community in the weeks leading up to the vote, opponents to the plan outnumbered supporters by a factor of around three to one. Opponents said they would view the plan’s passage as a sign the Reform movement was abandoning non-coastal Jews. They contended the plan would not produce enough savings to justify its implementation; would discriminate against students who are unable to study in cities with high costs of living; and could potentially lead to further closures in Cincinnati. Opponents made several last-ditch efforts to avert the plan’s passage, in-

cluding threatening to withhold individual donations to the school as well as congregational dues to the Reform movement should it pass. Ohio’s attorney general also alerted the school that the plan could be in violation of its non-profit agreement, and thus potentially warrant an investigation. No members of the Cincinnati faculty supported the proposal, and one publicly derided it in a speech in full view of the school’s president. About 100 opponents attended a “Rally for our Rabbis” last Thursday evening in Cincinnati, according to public radio station WVXU, where Louise Bettman, the great-great granddaughter of HUC’s founder, Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, spoke and suggested that the attorney general’s letter might be the group’s last, best chance to stop the plan. Some HUC faculty and alumni supported the plan, which its authors, HUC Provost Rabbi Andrea Weiss and Rabbinical School Director Rabbi Dvora Weisberg, researched by conducting hundreds of interviews over a period of two years. A group of influential Reform rabbis pledged to make up any shortfall in congregational dues incurred because of the board vote. The plan’s backers said it would help the school reorient itself amid its ongoing financial and enrollment crisis. Over the past 15 years, enrollment at HUC’s three American campuses fell by 37%, with the largest drop, 60%, coming in Cincinnati. Meanwhile, the Reform movement has seen dues from congregations fall by two thirds over the same period, reducing the movement’s ability to pad the seminary’s stretched budget. **HW**

Ken Burns’ Next Documentary is about the U.S. Response to the Holocaust



Documentary filmmaker Ken Burns filming interviews for “The Roosevelts” in 2014. Credit: Daniel J. White/PBS

By Andrew Lapin

(JTA) – For his next historical deep dive, famed documentary filmmaker Ken Burns is exploring America’s relationship to the Holocaust. Tentatively titled “The U.S. and the Holocaust,” the three-part miniseries set to air Sept. 18-20 on PBS is co-directed and co-produced by Burns and his longtime collaborators Lynn Novick and Sarah Botstein. Burns’ production company says the series “dispels the competing myths that Americans either were ignorant of what was happening to Jews in Europe, or that they merely looked on with callous indifference.” In a 2019 interview with Esquire, the Emmy-winning director said the series would be “all about immigration and who’s an American and who’s not an American.” Like all of Burns’ projects, the documentary has taken years to make. But it will now be the next release from his

production house, as he announced in a promo message that aired last week to accompany his latest PBS documentary, “Benjamin Franklin.” “Our next film is one of the most important we’ve ever worked on,” Burns, the director of such works as “The Civil War,” “Jazz” and “The Roosevelts” told viewers, by way of introducing the series. Burns, whose wife is Jewish, has explored the Holocaust in different ways before. The 2016 documentary “Defying the Nazis: The Sharps’ War,” for which Burns came onboard as co-director and co-producer midway through its production, followed American Unitarian minister Waitstill Sharp and his wife, Martha, in their mission to save Jewish refugees in Europe. His 2007 series “The War,” about America’s entry into World War II, also discussed the Holocaust. **HW**

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Rabbi Abe Schacter-Gampel Taps Memories of His Grandfather for Federation's Yom HaShoah Commemoration



Rabbi Abe Scacter-Gampel will be 'in conversation' with Elisha Wiesel at Federation's 60th Yom HaShoah Commemoration, Thursday April 28. The two share a fascinating connection; Rabbi Abe's grandfather was the first U.S. Army Chaplain to enter Buchenwald after liberation, where he encountered Elisha's then 16-year-old father, Elie Wiesel.

On Thursday, April 28, 2022, at 6:30 p.m., Memphis Jewish Federation's 60th annual Yom HaShoah Commemoration will feature Elisha Wiesel, son of Nobel Laureate, Holocaust survivor, and memoirist Elie Wiesel, "in conversation" with Rabbi Abe Schacter-Gampel of Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab. Advance registration for in-person or virtual attendance is required.

Though Wiesel and Rabbi Schacter-Gampel have only recently personally connected, the two share a fascinating connection. Rabbi Abe is the grandson of Rabbi Herschel Schacter, the first U.S. Army Chaplain to participate in the liberation of the Buchenwald death camp, where Elisha's then 16-year-old father, Elie, was among the survivors.

Rabbi Abe Schacter-Gampel, the first board-certified Chaplain and Director of Spiritual Care at MJHR and rabbi for the Hospice of Hope, fondly recalls childhood memories of his grandfather's remarkable stories from his past. Sadly, they never had the opportunity to explore these memories together as Rabbi Abe's intellectual curiosity blossomed in adulthood.

"My Zayde suffered from Alzheimer's for the last 10 years of his life. By the time I was beginning to ask bigger questions, we were no longer able to effectively communicate," he said. "The family story of his liberation of Buchenwald became the connection and the memory for me when I wasn't able to talk to him. He's brought back alive through these memories and thanks to these opportunities, I've gotten the chance to relearn as an adult who my grandfather really was."

Before enlisting in the U.S. Army in 1942, Rabbi Herschel Schacter was a pulpit rabbi in Stamford, Connecticut. During the war, he served the 3rd Army's VIII Corps and was the first U.S. Army Chaplain to participate in the liberation of Buchenwald on April 11, 1945, an hour after Patton's troops took control of the site. He stayed at Buchenwald for months leading religious services and tending to survivors, including 7-year-

old Yisrael Meir Lau, who grew up to become the Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel. He assisted in the resettlement of displaced persons, like the teenaged Elie Wiesel, and was discharged with the rank of captain. After the war, he served as the rabbi of the Mosholu Jewish Center in the Bronx from 1947 to 1999. His story is told in the upcoming book "The Rabbi of Buchenwald – The Life and Times of Herschel Schacter" by Rafael Medoff.

Of the many books, papers, lectures, and interviews about the Holocaust Elie Wiesel shared with the world, none loom larger than his memoir "Night," which has been translated into 30 languages and has sold 10 million copies in the United States. The harrowing book is based on his experiences at Auschwitz and Buchenwald. About the work, Wiesel once said, "I wanted to show the end, the finality of the event. Everything came to an end – man, history, literature, religion, God. There was nothing left. And yet we begin again with night."

"The Jewish calendar is ingeniously set up to have touchstones throughout the year to remember important things," Rabbi Abe said. "On Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we remember the year ending and think about the year ahead. On Passover we sit around the Seder table and think about freedom then and freedom now. And it's the same with Yom HaShoah. It touches upon something very important to Jewish history. We gather because we have to remember what happened and talk about it, because if we don't, it ceases to exist in memory and present reality."

For health and safety, in-person seating at the MJCC is highly limited and requires registration on a first come first serve basis. In-person attendees are asked to provide proof of COVID vaccination when registering. Registered attendees with special needs may also register for complimentary valet parking. Visit jcpmemphis.org/yomhashoah to learn more. **HW**

Baron Hirsch Pre-Pesach Youth Program



Participants learned about the holiday while crafting an edible seder plate and decorating a kiddush cup.

With the preparation for Passover in full swing, Baron Hirsch hosted a Pre-Pesach Youth Day this past Sunday. The program gave kids and their parents a short break from all of the hectic holiday preparations. The event began with edible seder plate making. Each child received a chocolate seder plate to fill with candies in place of the marror, egg and shankbone. The second activity involved kiddush cup decorating. Each child received a cup to decorate for the four cups at the seder. The final products were spectacular and will surely enhance this year's seder.

The program also included a challenging Pesach trivia using pickers cards, which allowed everyone to par-

ticipate in an interactive and fun way. Parents and children were very eager to answer questions and share their knowledge about the upcoming holiday.

Parents were very appreciative of the event, as one mother remarked, "my kids had so much fun, and it helped me get some quiet around the house to finish up my last-minute Pesach prep."

Baron Hirsch looks forward to the upcoming holiday and the family Chol Hamoed trip to the zoo on Wednesday April 20. Families will enjoy a walk around the zoo as well as a special Pesach-themed scavenger hunt developed by the Baron Hirsch youth department. **HW**

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Memphis Hosts BBYO Delta Region Spring Convention



April 1-3 was Delta Region’s Spring Convention in Memphis, Tenn., and it exceeded all expectations! From the small moments walking through the hallways of the DoubleTree to the big ones, where teens dreamed big about their future and celebrated their accomplishments in BBYO.

Teens hosted a Shuk that put everyone in our Delta swag and raised enough money to hit our ISF goal for the year.

Saturday focused on ‘Repair the World,’ J-Serve offered four different options, offering a variety of ways to

engage in Tikkun Olam.

This year we tried something different and left the hotel, we think it was a perfect addition to the weekend together. It was a perfect day for the zoo, all the animals were out!

Delta Region BBYO Branded Rice-Krispies, Famous Memphis Gibson’s Donuts, a Coffee Truck and so much more, teens loved being able to be in person for their hotel convention. Teens made new friendships from all over our region and memories that will last a lifetime. **HW**

Mazel Tov



Eliza Leigh Roberts and Jacob Seth Itzkowitz

Eliza Leigh Roberts and Jacob Seth Itzkowitz were married on Sunday, November 7, 2021, at The Cadre, in Memphis, Tenn.

The proud parents are Jennifer and Joe Roberts of Memphis, Tenn., and Audrey Kent and Eric Itzkowitz of Great Neck, N.Y. Their grandparents are Patti and Stanley Elster of Memphis, Shirley and Ted, z”l, Roberts of Huntsville, Alabama, Beverly and Benjamin, z”l, Itzkowitz of Great Neck, N.Y., Natalie and Albert, z”l, Kent of New York, N.Y.

Eliza wore a custom, beaded lace gown designed by Martina Liana. Her fit-to-flare gown featured an illusion tulle off-shoulder sweetheart neckline and buttons down the back. The delicately placed beading created a shimmer throughout the gown. The one-of-a-kind look was completed with an intricate lace, removable overskirt, and she paired the gown with a chapel-length, cut-edge veil and blusher.

Pre-Wedding celebrations included an engagement party given by the parents of the groom at Strathmore Vanderbilt Country Club in Manhasset, N.Y. The aufruf was held at Temple Israel, Great Neck, N.Y., the groom’s family’s synagogue.

The wedding weekend included many opportunities for the couple’s friends and family to celebrate together. An intimate Shabbat dinner hosted by the

couple’s grandparents at Playhouse on the Square kicked off the weekend celebration. The rehearsal dinner was hosted by the groom’s parents at the Brooks Museum of Art on Saturday evening.

The wedding celebration began with a ketubah signing, tisch and bedeken, followed by a beautiful ceremony officiated by Rabbi Joel Finkelstein and Cantor Aryeh Samberg of Anshei Sphard-Beth El Emeth Congregation. The couple celebrated and danced the night away with their friends and family at the reception held in the nearby, downtown venue, The Columns. Highlights included their first dance, which was to “Better Together” by Jack Johnson, along with a 20-minute Horah!

Eliza graduated from the University of Maryland with a degree in marketing in 2015 and is a Technical Product Owner with Estee Lauder Online. Jake graduated from The George Washington University in 2014 with a degree in Business Administration and from the University of Michigan Law School in 2019. He is a Litigation Associate with Latham & Watkins, LLP.

The couple met on a blind date in Washington, D.C. in 2014. Coincidentally, Eliza and Jake’s parents met on blind dates as well!

The couple lives in New York City and will honeymoon in Hawaii this spring. **HW**

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London’s Dickens Museum Tackles Anti-Semitism in New Program for Students

(JNS) – A museum in London dedicated to British author Charles Dickens has started a new program for schools about anti-Semitism that is focused on the novel “Oliver Twist” and a controversial character in it that is a Jewish villain, reported The Jewish Chronicle.

The initiative by the Dickens Museum comes after the publishing last year of the children’s book “Dear Mr. Dickens,” which tells the true story of Eliza Davis, the Jewish woman who wrote to Dickens about his portrayal of Fagin, the Jewish villainous pickpocket in “Oliver Twist,” and the author’s depiction of prejudice against Jews.

Cindy Sughrue, director of the museum, said: “It was finally giving us something to explore regarding the whole issue of anti-Semitism in Dickens’s writing of ‘Oliver Twist,’ and for us, it was how do we unwrap that knotty topic in a way that we can communicate to the widest possible audience?”

The new program is available for pri-

mary schools in person at the museum or online in an interactive session.

At the museum, children will analyze some of the problematic parts of “Oliver Twist,” thinking about discrimination in their lives and how they might challenge it, according to The Jewish Chronicle. American writer Nancy Churnin, the author of “Dear Mr. Dickens,” will take part in some virtual Q&As as part of the program, added the publication.

The program will also provide resources for teachers including a reading of “Dear Mr. Dickens” by actress Miriam Margolyes, a lesson plan on discrimination, as well as a project for children to write their own letters on speaking out.

After originally standing by his character, Dickens took heed of Davis’s protests and modified references to “Fagin the Jew” in new editions of the book. He also introduced a non-villainous Jewish character, Mr. Riah, in his novel “Our Mutual Friend.” **HW**

‘Lost’ And ‘Watchmen’ Screenwriter Damon Lindelof Gets Emotional Learning about his Family’s Tragic Holocaust Story



Damon Lindelof in an episode from Season 8 of “Finding Your Roots.” Credit: Screenshot

By Caleb Guedes-Reed

(JTA) – Acclaimed screenwriter Damon Lindelof learns that several members of his family tree died in the Bialystok ghetto during the Holocaust on last Tuesday night’s episode of the celebrity genealogy show “Finding Your Roots.”

With help from the archives at Yad Vashem, Israel’s Holocaust memorial and museum, the “Finding Your Roots” team found six pages of testimony detailing the fate of a branch of Lindelof’s family.

Lindelof, who created HBO’s 2019 “Watchmen” series and co-created “Lost,” reads from the show’s compiled pages about his family tree, repeating “circumstances of death: ghetto Bialystok” after several relatives: his great-granduncle – the brother of his great-grandmother – and his wife and their four children.

Lindelof, who had a bar mitzvah and attended synagogue in his native Teaneck, New Jersey, acknowledges that he has visited Yad Vashem, which houses an archive of nearly five million Holocaust victims. But he didn’t know the names of his specific family members who died during the Holocaust.

“I assumed there must be some line of family, but I didn’t know their name,” he tells host Henry Louis Gates, Jr., getting emotional as he explains his reasoning. “I wouldn’t even know where to look before today.”

Lindelof described the discovery as “somewhat of an affirmation of survival

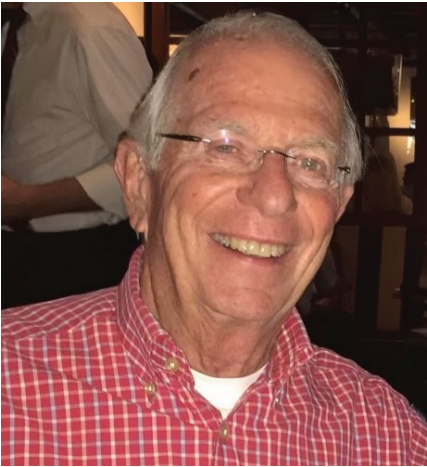
in some strange way.”

Bialystok was a northern Polish city where Nazis set up a Jewish ghetto in 1941, killing thousands of local Jews and deporting thousands of others to concentration camps.

Time magazine listed Lindelof, 48, as one of the 100 most influential people in the world in 2010. Past Jewish guests on “Finding Your Roots” include Pamela Adlon, Dustin Hoffman, Scarlett Johansson and Paul Rudd.

Last Tuesday night’s episode also features actress and director Regina King, who starred in “Watchmen.” [HW](#)

OBITUARIES



Myron Lewis

Myron Lewis, age 84, of Memphis, passed away on April 9, 2022, surrounded by his wife of 58 years, Gail, and his three daughters. He was a native of Memphis, Tennessee, and was born on October 16, 1937, at Baptist Memorial Hospital. He went to Bruce School and Central High School, graduating in the class of 1955. He was a 1959 graduate of Dartmouth College where he received his bachelor’s degree Magna Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa. Following graduation, he earned his M.D. degree at Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York City as a student in the class of 1963. He did his internship and first year residency at Vanderbilt University Medical Center and completed his residency and gastroenterology training at the Cornell Bellevue Division of Memorial Sloan Kettering. Prior to returning to Memphis, he spent two years in the U.S. Public Health Service stationed in Louisville, Kentucky.

Myron joined the staff at Baptist Memorial Hospital in 1970 and remained there until he retired. He served as Chief

of Staff at Baptist Memorial Hospital in 1985. He was most proud of his time as President of the National American College of Gastroenterology from 1987-1988 where he developed close friendships with gastroenterologists from all over the country. He was an Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of Tennessee and was Co-Director of the Gastrointestinal Laboratory at Baptist Memorial Hospital. He became a Master of the American College of Gastroenterology in October of 1992. He was one of the first 12 physicians nationally to receive this honor. He served on the editorial board of the Journal of Gastroenterology and was selected many times by his peers as one of the “Best Doctors in America.”

In addition to his professional accomplishments, he volunteered as a physician at Church Health, which he continued to do even after his retirement. He was also a member of the Germantown Rotary and a former board member of Opera Memphis. He loved his time on the tennis court, watching the Memphis Tigers play basketball, and traveling. The beach in Florida was his favorite vacation spot. He was a devoted husband and father, always putting his family first. He leaves behind his wife, Gail, and his three daughters, Robin Wallace and her husband Jeff, Tracey Lewis and Joelle Rogin. He is also survived by his four grandchildren, Jordan Wallace, Connor Wallace, Wallis Rogin and Evans Rogin. He was laid to rest at Temple Israel Cemetery next to his son, Jeffrey Todd Lewis on April 12.

The family wishes to thank Shay Roberson for her loving care.

Memorial donations may be sent to Temple Israel, Church Health, or the charity of one’s choice. [HW](#)



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What’s the Difference Between Medicare and Medicaid?

Provided by Mike Stein, Managing Director - Investments, Wells Fargo Advisors. Questions for Mike? Reach him at 901.761.8151 or michael.stein@wellsfargoadvisors.com

It’s easy to confuse Medicare and Medicaid, because they have similar names and are both government programs that pay for health care. But there are important differences between the programs. Medicare is generally for older people, while Medicaid is for people with limited income and resources.

What Is Medicare?

Medicare is a fee-for-service federal health insurance program that provides reasonably priced health insurance for retired individuals, regardless of their medical condition, and for certain disabled individuals, regardless of age. It is managed by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

What Is Medicaid?

Medicaid is a health insurance assistance program that is jointly administered by state and federal governments. Medicaid serves financially needy individuals who are also elderly, disabled, blind, or parents of minor children.

Who Is Eligible for Medicare?

You are eligible for premium-free Part A (hospital insurance) if you are age 65 or older and you (or your spouse) worked and paid Medicare taxes for at least 10 years. If you (or your spouse) did not pay Medicare taxes while you worked, and you are age 65 or older and a citizen or permanent resident of the United States, you may be able to buy Part A. Medicare coverage also may be available for disabled individuals and people with end-stage renal disease.

While most people do not have to pay a premium for Part A, everyone must pay for Part B (medical insurance) if they want it. This monthly premium is deducted from your Social Security, Railroad Retirement, or Civil Service Retirement benefit.

Who Is Eligible for Medicaid?

Each state has different rules about eligibility and applying for Medicaid. To qualify, you must be a resident of the state in which you are applying and a U.S. citizen (or have qualified immigration status). While eligibility varies by state, federal law requires states to cover certain groups of individuals. Low-income people, families and children, qualified pregnant women, and individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are examples of mandatory eligibility groups. In addition, a financial eligibility requirement must be met. The individual must be financially needy, which is determined by income and asset limitation tests.

What Does Medicare Cover?

Currently, Medicare consists of four parts: Original Medicare Part A helps cover costs related to inpatient care in a hospital, a skilled nursing facility, hospice care, and home health care. Original Medicare Part B helps cover services from doctors and other health-care providers, outpatient care, ambulance services, lab tests, physical therapy, durable medical equipment

(like wheelchairs, walkers, and hospital beds), and many preventive services such as screenings and vaccines. Medicare Advantage (Part C) replaces Parts A and B and enables beneficiaries to receive health care through managed care plans such as health maintenance organizations and preferred provider organizations. Medicare Part D helps cover the costs of prescription drugs.

Tip: Medicare and Medicaid were signed into law in 1965 to help provide health care to older individuals and those with financial need.

What Does Medicaid Cover?

Each state administers its own Medicaid program within broad federal guidelines. Thus, states determine the amount, duration, and types of benefits that Medicaid will provide. Typical Medicaid programs cover inpatient and outpatient hospital services; physician and surgical services; lab tests and X-rays; family planning services; preventive care, including immunizations, mammograms, colonoscopies, and other needed care; mental health care; and services for pregnant women. There are also numerous optional benefits that states may offer.

Can You Be Covered by Both Medicare and Medicaid?

Some people who qualify for both Medicare and Medicaid are called “dual eligibles.” If you have Medicare and full Medicaid coverage, most of your health-care costs are likely covered.

What About Long-Term Care?

Most long-term care isn’t medical care, but rather help with basic personal tasks of everyday life, called custodial care. Medicare does not pay for custodial care. However, Medicare may pay for skilled care (e.g., nursing, physical therapy) provided in a Medicare-certified skilled nursing facility for up to 100 days. States have considerable leeway in determining benefits offered and services provided by their respective Medicaid programs. Generally, if you meet your state’s eligibility requirements, Medicaid will cover nursing home services, home and community-based services, and personal care services.

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What if I Hadn't Slept in? A Gunman Shot up My train this Morning



Credit: Jacob Kornbluh

By Jacob Kornbluh

This story previously appeared in Forward. Reprinted with permission.

The 36th Street subway station where 10 people were shot and wounded during last Tuesday morning's commute is a place I pass through nearly every day.

It is one stop from the Orthodox neighborhood of Borough Park, where I live, and on my commute to Lower Manhattan I often switch at that station from the D train to the R or the N, the line on which a man I can only describe as a terrorist set off a canister of smoke and opened fire at 8:24 a.m. I might well have been right there, right then, had I not felt a little lazy this morning and rolled back under the blanket.

But I am just one of the millions of New Yorkers who rely on the subway system who have spent the day thinking "It could have been me." The victims of this shooting, five of whom are in critical condition, literally could have been any of us who walk onto the subway each day assuming we will get to our destination. The shooting, along with a recent stabbing at the Wall Street Station – the other end of my commute – and other incidents over the past 12 weeks show us we are not actually safe at all.

We just don't have any other choice. News reports say the man's gun jammed during the shooting, likely saving the lives of many passengers on that fated train. (An additional six people were injured in the rush to escape.) But the man escaped and remained at large as of early Tuesday evening, although a suspect has been identified. It's all a reminder that a daily routine can turn into a nightmare within split seconds and with no way of preventing it.

Last Tuesday started like every morning. After several attempts at snoozing my alarm clock, I woke up at around 7 a.m. It was still rainy, and with no set interviews or events on my calendar, I decided to start the day a little late – shhh, don't tell my editor.

I was absorbing the news of New York's lieutenant governor, Brian Benjamin, being arrested for campaign-finance fraud when I first saw reports of the shooting on Twitter. Yes, of course, I immediately thanked God I wasn't on that train. But what if?

What if I hadn't stayed in bed those extra minutes? What if I had an early meeting at the office? What if there were no trains running at my regular stop in Borough Park and I walked to

the 36th Street station instead? My phone immediately flooded with text messages from friends, locally and abroad, asking If I was OK and safe. Those were followed by calls from Israeli news outlets who know that I speak fluent Hebrew and can speak on their air about anything happening in New York. But I did not want to be interviewed. I'm a reporter. I immediately got dressed and started the 25-minute walk to the scene. About a block from the station, all I managed to see was a heavy police presence, including not just NYPD officers but those from other local agencies and federal ones.

It was unclear where the suspect had fled to, what his motives were, and whether footage taken inside the station – since the security cameras were unfortunately broken – would shed further light on the incident. The NYPD only released a phone alert and social media message at 10:57 am – more than two-and-a-half hours after the incident – warning the public to avoid the area.

In a news conference at 12:10 p.m., the governor and police commissioner did not provide any details beyond what was already known to the media: They shared a description of the suspect, and the news that 10 people suffered from gunshot wounds, including five in serious but stable condition. The police also determined that it was not an act of terrorism. They were either clueless or not willing to share what they knew about the nature of this terrifying incident. Was there a political or ideological motive? A more personal protest or psychotic break? A random targeting of civilians or part of a wave of crime that is disrupting life across the city?

What, I, and presumably other reporters, demanded to know: what were the authorities doing to keep New Yorkers safe? With no other way to get to work, with no way of identifying the next offender equipped with a knife or a gun, with no visible police presence in the

subway stops I traverse daily, what are we supposed to do?

I am not the only one sounding the alarm and I do not mean to instill more fear in the millions of New Yorkers riding the trains alongside me. But I would be lying to myself if I hadn't shared my frustration at the lack of public safety measures that would stop the next attack – whether that is a homeless person with mental issues getting into a brawl, an individual with hate motives targeting individuals based on their color of skin or ethnicity, or some other terrorist looking to wreak havoc on the city.

As it happens, I attended an ethnic media roundtable on Friday with Janno Lieber, CEO of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. It was one day after a terrorist killed three people at a bar on Tel Aviv's Diezengoff Street, part of a wave of deadly attacks by Palestinians and Israeli-Arabs over the past two weeks.

And it was just as the NYPD released statistics showing that the city experienced nearly double the number of reported antisemitic hate crimes this March as last, continuing a months-long trend.

With all this in mind, I asked Lieber when the city would implement a public-safety plan that includes the increased presence of police officers in subway stations and on platforms.

His answer wasn't comforting. "We are asking a lot of the police," Lieber said. "It may take a while for you to see it, but they are responding."

Apparently, they were not responding quickly enough.

Gov. Kathy Hochul expressed this frustration at the media briefing last Tuesday in Sunset Park. "We are sick and tired of reading headlines about crime," she said, "whether they're mass shootings or the loss of a teenage girl or a 13-year-old. It has to stop."

Hearing this, I thought of a passage in Psalms 127:1, and recited it to myself: "Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain." **HW**

OPINION

People Actually Prefer Live Jews, Really

By Rob Eshman

This story previously appeared in Forward. Reprinted with permission.

Gerda Weissmann Klein, a survivor of three concentration camps, wrote in her autobiography that one of the ways she persevered was by imagining "a world of beauty and love."

When I reread that quote upon Weissmann Klein's death this week at age 97, I thought, "Uh-oh, what would Dara Horn think?"

Horn is the author of "People Love Dead Jews," which last Wednesday received a 2021 National Jewish Book Award. It's a deeply researched, powerfully written and provocative book, deserving of its runaway success and awards.

It's also a book that's been bothering me ever since I read it.

The book's premise is that people memorialize dead Jews in ways that prevent us from understanding the reality of their suffering and blind us to the real issues living Jews face today.

Exhibit A for Horn is Anne Frank, whose story is taught to schoolchildren emphasizing her famous quote about still believing that people are good at heart. But, Horn points out, Frank wrote that line before she was captured and sent to Bergen-Belton, where "she met people who weren't."

When Horn recounts her visit to a vir-

tual museum of a destroyed Damascus synagogue – or rereads "The Merchant of Venice," or visits a bizarre theme park in Harbin, China, memorializing the Jews who once lived there – she returns to the point that Jewish history is often repackaged in a way that is uplifting, leaving out the bloody, brutal end of the story.

Horn doesn't stop to consider that mythmaking and meaning-making is what people do in the absence of real knowledge or experience. What do movies, books and National Park gift shops teach us about Native Americans? "People Love Dead Indians" would be a multivolume book.

But Horn seems to assume this is just a Jewish issue. A visit to a for-profit high-tech museum exhibition on the Holocaust drives the point home for her. At the conclusion of the exhibit, survivors come on screen and talk about the need for people to love one another.

Horn claims that in all her readings of Holocaust survivor accounts in Yiddish, she never heard the word "love" – and argues that the exhibit there is an example of how society uses the Holocaust not to tell the truth of Jewish suffering, but to paper over the horror with uplifting lessons.

"And I find myself furious being lectured by this exhibition about love," Horn writes, "as if the murder of millions of people was actually a morality play, a bumper sticker, a metaphor."

The problem is that the people who spoke of love were the survivors themselves. And unlike Anne Frank, they were well aware of how the story ended. The museum didn't manufacture their messages. I've interviewed dozens of survivors, and when asked to come up with lessons, they often alight on the importance of tolerance, understanding and love.

"The salvation of man is through love and in love," writes Viktor Frankl, who survived Auschwitz, in "Man's Search for Meaning."

I don't know what Horn would make of Frankl, or of Weissmann Klein, but I do know their quotes don't neatly fit her conclusion. What Horn dismisses as a saccharine attempt to prettify dead Jews is, for many survivors, the most profound lesson of the camps.

That's one example where Horn rushes by evidence that doesn't fit her argument, but the most egregious one comes when she turns her prose to living Jews.

American Jews are at a dangerous moment in history, she tells us, when the lessons of the Holocaust have receded from society's memory and with them the taboo against persecuting Jews.

"Antisemitism is once again the next big thing," she writes, adding later that hating Jews is now normal. "And historically speaking, the decades in which my parents and I had grown up simply hadn't been normal. Now, normal was

coming back."

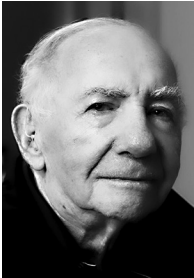
This is the book's most resonant take-away, helping the title become a hashtag. After three Israelis were murdered by Palestinian terrorists last week, a professor of Jewish studies tweeted, "Hello void, it's been hours since the news broke, where is the outrage?! #peoplelovedeadjews."

But here's the misleading part: the vast majority of people like living Jews, they really do. As Horn acknowledges, governments and the public stood by Jewish communities when they faced attacks in Pittsburgh, San Diego, Monsey and elsewhere. The rise in online antisemitism and actual violent attacks should alarm us, no question, but Jews are far from alone in fighting back.

By numerous measures, negative feelings toward Jews were actually higher in the years Horn thinks of as normal. When a 2017 Pew Research Forum survey asked Americans what faith group they felt warmest toward, 67% said Jews, more than any other group. In America, in 2022, hating Jews is deeply abnormal.

I get it: "People Like Live Jews More Than Any Other Religious Group" is a terrible book title. But it's a fact, and Horn's morbid focus on all the ways society has failed Jews may be electrifying, but ignores the more complicated truth that in America and, by the way, Israel, we are nowhere near the end of the story. **HW**

Pesach Visitation



*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

Did your rabbi ever tell you the tale of the thirty-six Tzadiks who secretly circulate in our world? They look like me and you but inside, they glow with righteousness. To put it plainly, they are the spies of G-d; and their mission is surveillance of the human heartscape. Every Pesach they take the ethical pulse of Humanity. Then they report to the Creator. This determines the fate of the world the following year. If all is ethically well; the harvest is bountiful, the S&P 500 index zooms, the Winter is mild and the Summers are balmy. Except for death and taxes, bliss reigns.

But the Berg family at 2822 Mendel Circle in Fairlawn, New Jersey, had no time for rabbinic tales. They were busy planning their Passover. They would have a guest this year, they decided – some homeless stranger. A real Mitzvah it would be.

The next morning found Sarah Berg dialing around to several Jewish agencies until she found her man. Sure, they had a candidate. A young, rootless fellow passing through town.

What a glorious Passover it would be, thought Sarah. A sumptuous meal, the Seder ceremony, and the added Mitzvah of the indigent guest. Just as the Hagaddah says; “let all who are hungry come and eat.” But so much preparation and post-meal cleanup. She cringed at the thought of dirty dishes piled in the sink, crusted with the remains of five courses. She’d get a maid. A small luxury.

Now, it’s Seder night. The doorbell rings. It’s him, the guest. He’s in torn jeans, plaid shirt, and a Bull’s sports cap.

But the Bergs welcome him into their home with smiles. Uncomfortably, they make small talk as the stranger sits stiffly at the table. They proceed with the Seder, but he seems to have no understanding of the service. Nor is he interested in Daniel Berg’s Passover anecdotes directed at both him and the children. “When do we eat?” he says as they pass the matzoh and moror sandwiches around the table.

The guest eats steadily as the family participates enthusiastically in the service. They talk of ancient miracles as he enthusiastically devours the brisket and roast chicken. The children swing their heads from the derelict to their parents in silent wonder at the sullen guest.

In the middle of this tension there is a horrible crash of china from the kitchen. The floor is littered with the shards of Sarah Berg’s wedding china; a gift from

her mother, who had died two months before.

The elderly maid had slipped and upset the card table holding the dirty dishes. She stared down at her clumsy handiwork. A silent tear ran down the old lady’s cheek as Sarah looked at her mother’s heirloom, now splintered china, all over the kitchen floor. A great sadness seized her heart. The failed holiday, the memory of her mother, this incompetent human being who couldn’t even clear the table without disaster. But she swallowed the lump in her throat when she saw the remorseful tears in the eyes of the old lady.

“That’s OK, that’s OK.” She patted the shoulder of her Passover helper as the maid swept the remains of Sarah’s mother’s Lenox china into a brown paper grocery sack.

Sarah returned to the table determined to crown the evening with ceremony appropriate to the holiday. Fitfully, they resumed the singing. And soon, mercifully, the evening came to an end. The maid, still red-eyed, was paid handsomely, in deference to the holiday, and sent home early with a plastic bag full of roast chicken. The kids – sleepy, irritable, and appalled by the rude guest – were ordered upstairs to bed.

The family went upstairs to an uneasy sleep where Sarah’s dreams were strangely lighted by the bright tearful eyes of the clumsy maid. A miserable night.

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Ah, but what a golden year followed for the Berg family: and the world they inhabited. A warm wind blew over the face of the earth and unlocked the cold heart of humanity. The earth smiled and her harvests were plentiful. The S&P 500 index zoomed, and the Winter was mild and the Summer was balmy.

And all for the price of a pat on the shoulder, a plastic bag full of leftover chicken, and a set of dishes. Who would suspect that a Tzadik’s duties included sweeping the kitchen floor?

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 Unbelievable

By Howard Weisband

The recent Negev Summit, hosted by Israel’s Foreign Minister Yair Lapid, was held in Sde Boker, the Negev home and burial site of Israel’s Founding Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion. Given that it was Ben-Gurion who publicly read Israel’s Declaration of Independence in May 1948, the location was deliberately chosen as an explicit recognition of Israel’s existence as a Jewish State.

Participating in the Abraham Accords related Summit were the Foreign Ministers of Bahrain, Egypt, Morocco, and the United Arab Emirates, alongside U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken.

The flags of the six nations alongside the six national officials warmly embracing were powerful images for all those genuinely interested in Mideast Peace.

During the Summit, the online newspaper Israel Hayom (Israel Today) published a poignant political cartoon. The flags of the six nations stood beside the graves of the Ben-Gurions, with a one-word statement emanating from David Ben-Gurion’s resting place: “Unbelievable.”

For Ben-Gurion to have witnessed such a meeting at all, yet alone in his beloved Sde Boker, it certainly would have been unbelievable. He died in December 1973. Outside of some secretive talks with the King of Jordan, he knew

only Arab terrorism aimed at murdering Jews and wars that were planned to destroy and eliminate the State of Israel.

Yet, something also tells me that Ben-Gurion was whispering simultaneously “not so unbelievable” and “I told you so.” Why so?

The week prior to the Summit a terrorist attack occurred in Beersheva... during the meetings another took place in Hadera, a third followed in Bnei Brak, then in the heart of Tel Aviv. Fourteen Israelis were murdered, including an Olympic athlete, Arab and Druze security officers, and two Ukrainian refugees. Once again families were torn apart and orphans created.

The terrorists, some Arab citizens of Israel, extremists with ISIS affiliations, were all eliminated.

The Israeli Government and all the intelligence and security services are on the highest alert, and taking immediate action, realizing that what journalists are calling the “Ramadan Intifada” may be underway. Prime Minister Bennett and other security officials announced as of this writing (April 13) that multiple planned terrorist attacks have been thwarted via dozens of arrests and confrontations.

What’s happening? Arab extremists: ISIS, Jihadists, Hamas, Hizbollah, all

Iran proxies and even Iran itself, are afraid that the Peace Train is leaving the station. They’re right.

Who notably didn’t attend the Summit? The Jordanians and the Palestinian Authority (PA). Jordan, like Egypt, has a peace treaty with Israel and recognizes the State of Israel. But more than 50 percent of its population is Palestinian. King Abdullah, although supportive of the Abraham Accords, knew that he could not offend half of his Hashemite Kingdom by going to a summit without the Palestinians.

The PA cooperates with Israel on security matters, even joint patrols at times, but politically still separates itself from Israel and the Abraham Accords, demanding a return to the pre-1967/post-1948 lines of demarcation. That of course is a non-starter.

Most interesting was watching all of the participating Arab Foreign Ministers in the Negev Summit during their statements in the concluding press conference. Each expressed his support of the Palestinian cause and his condemnation of the terrorist attack that took place in Hadera while they were visiting Israel.

Significantly, Foreign Minister Lapid announced that the Summit will result in a permanent, regional forum. “This new architecture, the shared capabilities

we are building, intimidates and deters our common enemies – first and foremost Iran and its proxies,” Lapid added.

What’s next is the critical question now being asked.

Suggestion: lay the groundwork over the next few months and reconvene the summit, this time with the participation of Jordan and the Palestinian Authority in a manner that has the support of Palestinian influential individuals and organizations in the peace camp.

Work to isolate Iran and the extremists while maintaining a very high level of security intelligence and necessary action.

Easier said than done, no doubt. A simple solution to a very complex situation, for sure.

But a bold and courageous initiative by a wide Middle East Forum is necessary.

That would be “Unbelievable!”
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**

Israel Hopes to Step in as Europe Looks for Alternatives to Russian Energy

(JNS) – Europe is looking to end its dependence on Russian gas, oil and coal by 2027, according to European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen. Among the options for alternative energy sources is Israel, which could supply natural gas to Europe via pipelines through Greece or Turkey, as well as Egypt, according to an AFP report.

Former Israeli energy minister Yuval Steinitz said the Jewish state “could definitely be a serious factor in creating more independence and a wealth of energy sources for Europe,” according to the report. Israel could even export via Greece, Turkey and Egypt at the same time, he added, because “we have enough gas to export through the three channels.”

According to Orit Ganor, director of natural gas international trade at the Energy Ministry, the option of building a pipeline to Turkey was evaluated in 2016, but the project stalled, “mainly due to economic reasons.”

The EastMed pipeline, which would supply Israeli natural gas to Europe via Greece and Cyprus, “is still an option,”

said Ganor, adding that Poseidon, the company in charge of the project, was in the final stages of geophysical and geotechnical surveys of the pipe’s route.

He said there was also agreement with Cairo on a seabed pipeline from Leviathan to Egypt’s liquefaction plants that would allow for greater exports to Europe, according to the report. **HW**

Gilbert Gottfried, Whose Foul-Mouthed Comic Persona Concealed a Content Jewish Dad, Dies at 67



Gilbert Gottfried at SiriusXM Studios in New York City, Feb. 3, 2020. Credit: Slaven Vlasic/Getty Images for SiriusXM

By Ron Kampeas

(JTA) – Gilbert Gottfried, the comic with a grating persona whose boundary testing got him canceled more than once, has died.

His family announced Gottfried’s passing “after a long illness” last Tuesday on Twitter. He was 67. Various outlets reported he suffered from a heart condition related to myotonic dystrophy.

A 2017 documentary revealed that contra his foul-mouthed routine, Gottfried was a sweet and loving Jewish dad.

Gottfried was reluctant to let that truth get out. “I was too much of a wimp to say no” to the filmmaker, Neil Berkeley, he told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

Gottfried, who affected a high nasal voice for his comic appearances, was a boundary crosser, and it got him into trouble at times. In 1991, Fox apologized after Gilbert, hosting the Emmy awards, kept joking about fellow comic Pee-wee Herman’s recent arrest for masturbating in an adult movie theater.

That dampened Gottfried’s career – for a while. He continued to score gigs in movies, on talk radio (frequently with Howard Stern), on sketch shows and

sitcoms, and as a voice on cartoons. He was the funny animal sidekick, Iago the parrot, in Disney’s “Aladdin.”

Then he famously told perhaps the first joke about the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, just a few days after terrorists piloted airplanes into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. (At a roast for Playboy Magazine founder Hugh Hefner, Gottfried said he had to catch an early flight for Los Angeles because the only one he could find had “to make a stop at the Empire State Building.”)

He lost the audience – for a moment. He recovered with one of the raunchiest-ever tellings of the notoriously raunchy joke that has “The Aristocrats” as its punchline.

“I’ve always said tragedy and comedy are roommates,” Gottfried told Vulture in 2019. “Wherever tragedy’s around, comedy’s a few feet behind them stick-

ing his tongue out and making obscene gestures.”

Aflac, the insurer whose trademark duck Gottfried voiced and which was his most lucrative gig, dropped him in 2011 after he made jokes on Twitter about the tsunami in Japan. (Gottfried’s self-inflicted wounds seemed to be timed by decades.) “I don’t regret the joke,” he told JTA. “I regret losing the money.”

Sometimes the raunch found Gottfried. In 2020, during his daughter’s bat mitzvah, held on Zoom because of the pandemic, a 70-year-old woman unwittingly removed her bathing suit and took a shower in full view of the other participants.

Gottfried credited his wife for turning him around from a notoriously parsimonious bachelor into an attentive dad who walked his two kids to Hebrew school. He met Dara Kravitz, a music executive, in the late 1990s at a Grammys party he was attending because of the free food. She dropped food on the table, and he picked it up and put it on his plate.

Gottfried grew up in secular Jewish home in Brooklyn – he told JTA his Jewish knowledge was limited to

“I know that if we’re ever rounded up again, I’ll be on the train.” When he and Dara married in 2007, she insisted on a wedding under a chuppah and raising their children with a Jewish education.

Dara Gottfried adored her “gentle genius” and was bemusedly frustrated by his shyness when not performing. “Open up a little, Gil!” she chided him during a 2013 New York Times interview.

But Gottfried’s kindness was his own: The documentary tracks Gottfried accompanying his sister, street photographer Arlene Gottfried, to chemo sessions. She died of cancer in 2017.

In a 2014 interview with The Guardian, Gottfried, perhaps unwittingly, revealed his own gifts in explaining why he admired his sister so much.

“Someone else couldn’t see the funny or odd or touching thing, and capture it,” he said.

His family, in their message, appealed to the public to keep Gottfried’s love for humor in mind.

“Although today is a sad day for all of us, please keep laughing as loud as possible in Gilbert’s honor,” the message said. **HW**

Shooting At Miami-Dade JCC Leaves 1 Dead in What Police Called an Act of Domestic Violence

By Shira Hanau

(JTA) – A woman was killed at the Michael-Ann Russell Jewish Community Center in Florida’s Miami-Dade County on April 4 in what police are calling an act of domestic violence.

Police said the woman was killed by her husband while she attended her daughter’s swimming lesson. In a statement, the community center said police believed there to be “no known threat to the Jewish community.”

Across the country, Jewish community centers are widely used by Jews and non-Jews alike. A different shooting at an Indianapolis JCC in February stemmed from a dispute during a basketball game and did not involve Jews or represent a threat to the Jewish community, authorities there said.

The statement by the Miami-Dade JCC also credited the safety trainings taken by the organization’s staff for keeping others in the building in the building safe.

“Thankfully, years of drills and numerous safety protocols ensured the safety of our members, staff, and community,” the statement said. **HW**

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Rare Finds Online: Haggadot Connect Jews to Passover and Family History



Amsterdam Haggadah, Holland, dating from 1738. Credit: Courtesy of the National Library of Jerusalem.

By Judy Lash Balint

(JNS) – Veteran Haggadah collector Ariel Winer was delighted when he learned that Israel’s National Library (NLI) is making some of the world’s most important and exquisite Haggadot available for download at no cost. “They should have done it a long time ago,” he told JNS from his home in Lima, Peru.

The NLI’s holdings include both traditional and non-traditional versions of the story of the Exodus from Egypt that is recounted at the annual Passover seder. Among the collection are hand-writ-

ten manuscripts with stunning illustrations, rare and early printings, as well as modern adaptations.

While the NLI with 15,000 Haggadot has the world’s largest collection, Winer has amassed some 1,500 Haggadot himself and is happy to share them on his website.

He is enthusiastic about them, which he says are a special way to look back into Jewish history. “It’s the same book that has been written and read for thousands of years, but at the same time each one can tell a completely different story,” he says. “It gets you involved in what Jews were going through at any particular time.”

“Every Haggadah tells a story; we don’t need to focus just on the rare ones,” explains Winer. “Our story becomes their story and the story of the whole Jewish people; we’re connected through time and through the Haggadah. Each Haggadah will mean something to somebody. It doesn’t have to be special because the paper’s nice or because it’s so old; each one is special to someone because of the personal connection.”

Winer uses some of his Haggadot in presentations at one of the local Jewish schools in Lima. He recounts how he tells the students to look at one from 1557: “I tell them that the Incas were around when this was printed. They’re gone, but our story is still the same. It’s an amazingly powerful teaching tool.”

Holocaust Haggadot are particularly

moving, notes Winer.

In fact, that’s how he and I connected. Winer posted online some pages from the Gurs Haggadah he recently acquired and offered to share them with anyone interested. The Haggadah was written from memory by a rabbi interned at the Gurs Camp in southwestern France and used during Passover 1941. That was the penultimate Passover my maternal grandparents celebrated before they were sent from Gurs via Drancy to their deaths in Auschwitz in September 1942. It’s a Haggadah that has a special place at my family seder table.

‘Connected to the Exodus from Egypt’

One of the Haggadot available for download at the NLI site had been in the hands of the Rothschild family in Northern Italy since the 15th century. Stolen by the Nazis during the Holocaust, it disappeared for many years and was eventually returned to the Rothschilds who donated it to the National Library.

Winer believes that collecting and showing the various Haggadot in his and the NLI collections turn Passover into a much more meaningful and real experience. “Knowing that Jews have on their table something that’s been in use by Jews for so many generations keeps us connected to the Exodus from Egypt,” he says.

Winer’s paternal grandfather was a survivor who lost many family members in the Holocaust and eventually

made his way to Bolivia. His maternal grandmother, who died several years ago, survived Auschwitz and was the last survivor in Bolivia. “Sometimes, it’s enough to be connected to your grandparents through the Haggadah,” he reflects.

Winer’s collection started decades ago when he organized an impromptu seder and realized that he had no Haggadot. A search on eBay to buy them for the next year found an Israel Defense Forces Haggadah from 1973 for \$5. “It was nothing special, but I thought it was fantastic. It gave me such a feeling of connection that I bought one more and another – and here we are,” he exclaims.

Winer keeps his collection at home in a climate-controlled storage cabinet.

Among the Haggadot available for download at the NLI site are the 1556 Prague Haggadah, an early printed version of the classic text of which only two copies have survived; the colorfully illustrated 1738 Amsterdam Haggadah; and an 18th-century Haggadah printed in Hamburg with Yiddish translation.

Dr. Yoel Finkelman, the curator of the Haim and Salomon Judaica Collection, says: “The National Library of Israel works tirelessly to make sure that our vast collection gets out of the ivory tower and out into the public. Making these Haggadot freely available for use at anybody’s seder, the NLI fulfills its mission as the Library of the State of Israel and the Jewish people.” **HW**



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