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THE

Hebrew Watchman

SERVING THE MEMPHIS JEWISH COMMUNITY SINCE 1925

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What is Known and Unknown So Far about Tragic Death of Al Jazeera Journalist in Jenin



People attend a protest in Haifa condemning the death of Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, who was killed during a raid of Israeli security forces in Jenin on, May 11, 2022. Credit: Shir Torem/Flash90

By Yaakov Lappin

(JNS) May 12, 2022 – The Israel Defense Forces’ investigation into the tragic death of Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh last Wednesday in Jenin is ongoing, and no final determination has yet been made over where the shot came from that struck Akleh.

While the identity of the shooter remains a question mark at this time, Israeli military sources did provide details about the counter-terrorism raid that soldiers took part in last Wednesday

morning, as well as the broader context surrounding the nature of the Jenin Refugee Camp where the gun battles raged – and not for the first time in recent weeks.

An IDF spokesperson detailed the core, life-affirming and democratic values that are encoded into the Israeli military’s protocol when he described Akleh’s death as “a tragedy which should not have occurred.” The source also affirmed the IDF’s commitment to

freedom of the press and the sanctity of human life.

The spokesperson declared that “the IDF will never deliberately target non-combatants. These are values reflected in the IDF protocol.”

As a result of those values, the IDF’s General Staff and the entire chain of command, including Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Aviv Kochavi, are involved in the operational investigation into the incident.

The IDF’s request for the Palestinian Authority, whose Health Ministry received Akleh’s body, to hold a joint autopsy and share forensic data has been met with refusal so far, significantly impeding the investigation.

Israel’s counter-terror raid in Jenin cannot be seen as an isolated event, but rather, the result of a violent wave of Palestinian terrorism that has raged in Israeli cities in the past month, which has resulted in the murder of 19 people.

Many of the worst attacks, such as the March 28 Bnei Brak shooting spree targeting civilians, the April 7 attack by a terrorist gunman at a Tel Aviv bar and the deadly May 5 ax rampage through Elad by a two-man terror cell, were committed by people from the Jenin area.

In fact, more than 50 percent of the

IDF’s intelligence alerts regarding terror plots in the midst of formation originate from the Jenin area.

‘There was continuous, indiscriminate fire’

With Jenin resuming its notorious role as a hornet’s nest of attackers (a dubious title the Palestinian city also held during the dark years of the Second Intifada), the IDF has stepped up its activities in the area, acting on intelligence to arrive at the terrorists’ homes before they infiltrate Israel again and arrive on the streets of Israel.

The raid on Jenin last Wednesday was part of that effort, and the objective was to arrest a Hamas member who was planning new attacks. A number of Palestinian Islamic Jihad operatives were also taken into custody.

Jenin is a stronghold of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad members, and its refugee camp has been a place that the P.A. itself struggles to enter.

Once inside the Jenin Refugee Camp, the Israeli units came under massive fire, as multiple videos – released by both the IDF and by Palestinians – clearly reflect.

Dozens of Palestinian gunmen fired at the soldiers without taking much care about their aim, endangering the entire

(See **Jenin** Page 3)

Russian Shelling Damages Jewish Cemetery in Ukraine Where Pogrom Victims are Buried

By Cnaan Liphshiz

(JTA) – A Jewish cemetery in Hlukhiv, Ukraine, was reportedly shelled last Sunday in fighting close to the Russian border.

The cemetery, where about 1,500 Jews are buried, is the latest Jewish site to face damage amid the 10-week-old war that began when Russia invaded Ukraine Feb. 24.

Many of the Jews buried in the cemetery were victims of a 1918 pogrom. Among them are Samuel Nokhimovich



Smoke billows among headstones of a Jewish cemetery that reportedly was bombed in Hlukhiv, Ukraine, May 8, 2022. Credit: Dmitry Zhivitsky/Facebook

Shumyatsky, an older brother of a well-known rabbi, and a shochet, or butcher, named Ber Izrailevich Barkan, according to Ukraine’s Kourier news site.

Ukrainian Minister of Culture Oleksander Tkachenko said in a statement that influential rabbis were also buried in the cemetery.

“This is not only a monument to history, it is a special symbol for the entire Jewish people,” Ukrainian Minister of Culture Oleksander Tkachenko said in a statement. “The proof that all the higher

powers are on our side is that the graves of the chief tsadik [Hasidic spiritual leader] have survived.”

In the past, Jewish sites that have been damaged by Russian shelling have become symbols for the Ukrainians, who are battling the Russians’ false claim that their country is run by Nazis. In the early days of the war, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, who is Jewish, highlighted damage to a memorial for

(See **Cemetery** Page 3)



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My Teen Israel Experience



Nadav davening at sunrise in Israel.

Nadav Weiss, son of Jessica and Dr. Daniel Weiss, is a senior at Cooper Yeshiva High School for Boys. Memphis Jewish Federation’s Lemksy Endowment Fund provided him with a Teen Israel Experience grant to help offset the cost of his NCSY Israel ID program in Israel.

By Nadav Weiss

My NCSY Israel ID Summer experience was one that I will never forget. With everything bad that happened this past year due to Covid, this trip really tipped the scale towards the good.

First, it was my first time in Israel. While I did not expect it to be during these times, I am glad that it was. Second, it was an awesome program with amazing people. I made so many friendships along the way with people who saw Israel the same way I did. During the trip there were many meaningful moments that really made me feel at home and were the highlights of my trip.

The most memorable and meaningful experiences were my trips to the Kotel. I went to the Kotel a total of four times and each one had a distinct perspective for me. The first time we went, I was blindfolded and led to a balcony to take in the sight for the first time; it was truly breathtaking. After my whole life of wanting to be in Israel, wanting to be at the Kotel, I was finally there. When visiting the Kotel for the first time it is customary to rip your shirt and I still have the ripped shirt because looking at it makes me want to go back more.

The second time we went was Friday

night, and the atmosphere and ruach (spirit) of Kabbalat Shabbat was unforgettable and truly spectacular. My third trip to the Kotel was during the fast of the 9th of Av. Singing and mourning with Jews from Israel and all around the world really made my connections to the Jewish people stronger and more meaningful. My last trip to the Kotel was a goodbye one and it really hit me because after that we would be heading back to America.

While it was sad to say goodbye to this life-changing sight, it was not a goodbye forever, and I promised that I would return next year for a yeshiva gap-year.

Also meaningful were the nature activities that we got to do along with exploring and traversing the land. During the last week of the trip, we woke up at 4 a.m. and did a sunrise hike to the top of one of the mountains. Once we reached the top, we took out our tefillin and put them on to daven. When the sun started to rise, I managed to get a beautiful picture of me davening with the sun rising in the background. I keep that picture close to my heart.

Another nature activity was sleeping in Bedouin tents. Just sleeping outside with nature while looking up at the stars was breathtaking and an experience I will never forget. Israel is made up of so many different environments and the uniqueness that each one has really represents the beauty that Hashem (G-d) saw in this land.

My Israel trip was the best summer I have ever had. In the end, the beauty of the land and the meaningful experiences along the way connected me more

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Weekly Torah Portion: Behar

with the land of Israel. I cannot wait to go back to revisit places and to find new ones with ever new experiences.

I am grateful to Memphis Jewish Federation’s Lemsky Endowment Fund for helping to make my summer experience in 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. To learn more and apply, please go to: www.jcpmemphis.org/lemsky-endowment-fund. HW

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Jenin...

(Continued From Page 1)

environment. A number of Palestinians hurled explosives as well.

The IDF is aware of three direct exchanges of fire that morning. In the first, a Palestinian gunman on a rooftop fired on soldiers, and Israeli forces returned fire. In the second, a terrorist hurled explosives, and soldiers responded with live fire. In the third incident, a gunman armed with an M-16 assault rifle was seen approaching the Israeli force from the north, and soldiers fired at the armed man.

“There was continuous, indiscriminate fire at security forces and at the area,” said an IDF spokesperson.

The gun attacks did not prevent the IDF from apprehending the Hamas suspect and leaving the area before distressing reports of Akleh’s death emerged.

A special investigations team is being headed by the IDF’s head of Central Command, Maj. Gen. Yehuda Fox, and the Commander of the Commando Brigade, Col. Meni Liberty.

The IDF spokesperson was more cautious than other Israeli figures who stated that preliminary results from the investigation indicated that the fire did not come from Israel, saying instead that “until we have established the full facts, we are not drawing any conclusions. Hence, we are being very careful.”

He also reiterated that “freedom of the press is a core value of Israel,” telling international journalists: “I acknowledge the importance of your work and express my condolences to Akleh’s family.”

‘The journalist killed was in a combat zone’

The complexities of this operational environment can easily get lost in the online battle of narratives.

And yet, it is noteworthy that the P.A. not only rebuffed the IDF’s attempt to hold a joint investigation but also, at the time of this writing, did not respond positively to requests from Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz, who sent a message to P.A. head Mahmoud Abbas saying that “our responsibility as leaders is to maintain security, to conduct ourselves in a way that will prevent further violence and bloodshed and to uncover the truth.”

“We have also communicated with additional countries and officials, including Qatar, where Al Jazeera headquarters are based. We expressed that the findings at this time indicate that there is a reasonable chance that the journalist was shot by Palestinian armed terrorists. This being said, we will conduct an in-depth and comprehensive investigation and deliver our findings to them,” he told the Knesset last Wednesday.

Kochavi released his own statement during the day, stating that Jenin has “a high concentration of terrorists,” and that “during the night, as in many past incidents, Palestinians fired in a widespread manner at our forces – wild and indiscriminate shootings in every direction. Unlike the Palestinians, IDF soldiers open fire in a professional, selective manner. The journalist who was killed was in a combat zone. At this stage, we cannot determine where the fire came from, and we regret her death.”

He vowed to share the results of the investigation “as soon as possible.”

“The soldiers acted under fire, displaying courage and determination to defend the citizens of the country,” he said. “And this is how we will continue, anywhere that is required.” HW

Cemetery...

(Continued From Page 1)

Jews murdered by the Nazis and local collaborators at Babyn Yar, as well as shelling in Uman, a Jewish pilgrimage site, as evidence that Russian forces are trying to obliterate Ukrainian history.

At least one other Holocaust memorial, on the outskirts of Kharkiv, was damaged in the war. Meanwhile, the Hillel in Kharkiv, housed in a historic building in that city’s center, was destroyed early on as well.

The sites have not appeared to have been deliberately targeted but have fallen victim to indiscriminate shelling as part of Russia’s shifting campaign to

control regions of Ukraine.

The pogrom in Hlukhiv, also known in Russian as Glukhov, was part of a series of such events perpetrated during the 1917-1923 Russian Revolution, where some Czarist nationalists and others regarded Jews as a hostile force. State records speak of at least 105 victims in the Hlukhiv pogrom, though reports in the media at the time spoke of several hundred fatalities.

One historian wrote in 1923 about the 1918 pogrom in Hlukhiv: “Blood flowed in the river, they shot at the synagogue and tore the Torah.” HW

Israeli Police Rush Funeral-Goers, Nearly Toppling the Coffin of Al Jazeera Journalist



Police officers clash with attendees of the funeral of Al Jazeera reporter Shireen Abu Akleh in Jerusalem, May 12, 2022. Credit: Amir Levy/Getty Images

By Ron Kampeas

(JTA) – Israeli police armed with batons and stun grenades rushed a crowd of funeral-goers in Jerusalem, nearly toppling the coffin of Shireen Abu Akleh, the prominent Al Jazeera journalist who was killed by gunfire last Wednesday during a clash in the West Bank town of Jenin.

Police said they rushed the funeral-goers last Friday because they “disrupted the public order” by throwing stones. Videos of dozens of troops in helmets rushing the funeral-goers, at one point nearly causing the pall-bearers to drop the coffin, quickly went viral. Abu Akleh, an American citizen, was born and raised in Jerusalem. A correspondent for Al Jazeera for decades, she was seen as a role model to women Palestinian journalists.

Israeli army investigators last Friday said they had narrowed down the cause of Abu Akleh’s death to two possible sources: Israeli troops in a jeep, or Palestinian gunmen firing on Israeli soldiers. They want the bullet, which killed Abu Akleh, to determine whether Israeli troops were responsible, but the Palestinian Authority is refusing to hand it over and is squarely blaming her death on Israel.

Israeli leaders initially blamed Abu Akleh’s killing on Palestinian gunmen but acknowledged within a day that Israeli forces may have been responsible. Biden administration officials have called for a robust investigation. President Joe Biden is due to visit Israel next month.

Israeli troops were in Jenin in part because it appears to be the hometown of several of the terrorists who carried out a spate of deadly attacks inside Israel in recent months.

Clashes in the city, which is under the sway of terrorist groups, with barely any control exerted by the Palestinian Authority, have continued. An officer in the Israeli police’s special anti-terror unit, Noam Raz, 47, died last Friday of wounds sustained in the clashes. HW

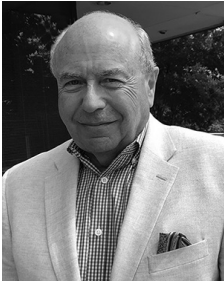
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Did Jewish Theologians Predict Doctor Strange’s Alternate Realities?



Credit: Courtesy of Disney

By Roy Schwartz

This article previously appeared in Forward. Reprinted with permission.

Here’s what the multiverse of Midrash has to say about Marvel’s latest box office hit.

Once the purview of theoretical physicists and comic book diehards, the idea of alternate realities has become the hottest trend in pop culture. In the last few years it’s proved a plot staple in movies like “Spider-Man: No Way Home” and “Everything Everywhere All at Once” and TV shows like “The Flash” and “Star Trek: Discovery.”

Now the multiverse is the linchpin of “Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness,” Marvel’s latest box office hit, in which the hero, also known as Sorcerer Supreme, travels between universes on a quest to save not just one world but several from a malevolent force. In each new reality, he encounters different versions of himself and other characters.

It’s easy to see the appeal of a multiverse. Mirror versions (often dis-

torted ones) of familiar characters and concepts keeps them fresh, tests them and serves as a launchpad for any number of themes and metaphors. In Doctor Strange’s case, it’s that simplest of questions that gets frustratingly harder to answer as we grow older: “Are you happy?” How we might answer if our lives were different?

This concept is especially resonant in today’s culture of alternative facts, fake news and social media echo chambers that allow different people to experience completely different realities. We increasingly spend more of our time in the curated virtual realities of Instagram and video games. Even COVID-19 has made it feel like we’ve veered away from real life and are just trudging along some service road until we can get back.

Before traveling the multiverse, Doctor Strange regularly visited other planes of existence, like the Astral Plane in July 1963’s Strange Tales #110 and the Dark Dimension in issue #126. But these were ethereal “mystic realms.” It

wasn’t until February 1977’s innovative What If? series that Marvel explored alternate realities, usually divergent from familiar canon by just one crucial difference. Issue #18, titled “What If Doctor Strange Had Been a Disciple of Dormammu?” posits that the hero and his arch enemy were actually allies. The series was adapted into a Disney+ animated show last year; now, these alternate realities form the backbone of “Multiverse of Madness.”

But what does Jewish tradition have to say about a multiplicity of creation, either physical or spiritual? Do our sages allow for a multiverse?

Theologically, Judaism doesn’t preclude life on other planets. (Medieval Spanish rabbis actually debated this possibility.) But life with free will, according to Jewish thought, is a gift given by G-d to human beings only. The Talmud explains that even angels were not given free will to overcome the evil inclination, yetzer hara, or choose their faith in G-d. This privilege is reserved for humans alone.

Humans on parallel Earths, like the ones in “Doctor Strange,” are a different question. On one hand, the Talmud states that “G-d rides in eighteen thousand worlds,” which seems to allude to the possibility. Since Jewish tradition teaches that the world was created for human benefit, the existence of other worlds would imply the existence of other humans.

On the other hand, Midrashic and Kabbalistic writers seem to rule this possibility out. The midrash Genesis Rabbah introduces the concept of shevirat ha-kelim, “the shattering of the vessels,” the idea that G-d built and destroyed many primordial worlds before arriving at the best possible one – our

own. Lurianic Kabbalah, describes a multiverse of creation, but the alternate dimensions it envisions are spiritual rather than physical. By this model, the whole of creation was initially infinite, but G-d gradually folded it in a series of contractions, or tzimtzumim, into a finite, singular world.

Following Kabbalistic writings expound that all of existence can be divided into four worlds: Atzilut (World of Emanation), Beriah (World of Creation), Yetzirah (World of Formation) and Asiyah (World of Action – our world), an interpretation of Isaiah 43:7 These aren’t worlds in the sense of planets or physical dimensions, either. They represent a spiritual hierarchy of reality, more like one room with different levels of lighting than separate rooms.

These later writings indicate that ours is the only universe in all of existence, either because it was the last one created, a contraction of an infinite creation or a single reality with different levels of experience. Doctor Strange’s multiverse might have been possible at one point, perhaps, but it isn’t anymore.

So Jewish ontology isn’t entirely clear if there can be an alternate universe in which Eve never ate the fruit, or Moses was never found by pharaoh’s daughter, Bithiah, or Hitler died in his crib, or Mel Brooks isn’t funny.

But seeing as “there are 70 faces to the Torah,” who’s to say there aren’t 70 worlds?

Roy Schwartz is a pop culture historian and the author of “Is Superman Circumcised? The Complete Jewish History of the World’s Greatest Hero.” Follow him on royschwartz.com and Twitter, Instagram and Facebook @ReaRoySchwartz. HW

Explosives, Antisemitic Literature Found at Home of German Teenager Suspected of Planning School Attack



The Don Bosco high school in Essen, Germany pictured in 2013. In 2022, a student of the institution was arrested in suspicion of planning to bomb it. Credit: Wikimedia Commons

By Cnaan Liphshiz

(JTA) – German police found explosives and antisemitic, far-right literature at the home of a teenager they suspect of planning a terrorist attack at a school.

Federal officers took the 16-year-old suspect, who was not named in the German media, into custody last Thursday, the Tagesschau news site reported. He is suspected of planning to bomb a high school in Essen, a city about 250 miles west of Berlin.

Separately, German police are investigating a suspected arson at a Jewish cemetery near Cologne. Both incidents closely followed the release of a report indicating a 28% rise in antisemitic hate crimes in 2021.

In the incident in Cologne last Wednesday evening, an unidentified person poured a flammable substance on the wall around the Jewish cemetery of Bocklemünd, a western suburb of Cologne, Rundschau Online reported. Police are investigating whether the incident was an antisemitic hate crime, the report said.

The report published last Tuesday by the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community recorded 3,027 antisemitic incidents in 2021 – a 28% increase over the 2020 tally.

That increase occurred amid a drop in other forms of hate crimes, according to the report, titled “Politically-motivated Criminality in the Year 2021.”

In the same report, the ministry recorded a decrease in the number of other types of hate crimes, including anti-Muslim crimes (a decrease of 28% to 732 incidents); anti-Christian crimes (down 22% to 101 cases) and anti-foreigner hate crimes (down 10% to 4,735 cases).

Also last Thursday, the office of Berlin’s police commissioner declined to authorize a protest rally planned by pro-Palestinian activists seeking to commemorate what they call Nakba Day. Nakba in Arabic means catastrophe and is used to describe the aftermath of the Arab defeat during Israel’s independence war of 1948.

Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians left or were driven out of their homes in what is today Israel in that war.

The police said they blocked the gathering due to the likelihood of antisemitic speech and incitement at the event, based on previous rallies. The organizers are appealing the police’s decision with the court system, the Der Tagesspiegel newspaper reported last Friday. HW

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New Baron Hirsch Program Unites Community Seniors with Students



Inaugural Dor L’Dor program at Baron Hirsch just in time for Mother’s Day.

Baron Hirsch hosted its first Dor L’Dor program this past Sunday. Dor L’Dor is a new intergenerational program started by the Baron Hirsch Youth Department with the help of Anat Kampf. The goal of the program is to connect seniors in our community with middle schoolers.

The program was well attended and was very meaningful for the seniors and school children.

A “Get to Know You Bingo Game” encouraged participants to share different facts and stories about themselves.

Some grandchildren were paired up with their grandparents and remarked that the game taught them new facts about one another. “I didn’t know baseball was my grandma’s favorite sport!” commented one middle schooler.

Next, each group was given a vase and modge podge to create their own vases and bouquets for Mother’s Day.

“This was such a meaningful program,” shared one senior attendee. “I really enjoyed sharing old stories about growing up in Memphis. Working together on the art project was also really enjoyable, the children are so kind!”

At the end of the program Anat Kampf told the children, “Next time you see the participants at kiddush on Shabbat you’ll feel more comfortable going up to one another!”

Baron Hirsch Youth Director Dina Selter expressed how important the program is for the community.

“Connecting the different generations in our community deepens understanding and appreciation for one another and creates a stronger community as a whole,” she said.

The Baron Hirsch youth department is planning to offer more events for the Dor L’Dor program after the summer. **HW**

Sam Schloss Lodge #35 Continues its Longtime Community Service Bear Project



Harold (Hesch) Steinberg and grandson Solomon Conroy present Sherri Bowie Spain of The Bowie Center with 36 stuffed bears.

Sam Schloss Lodge #35 recently delivered 36 stuffed bears to The Bowie Center as part of its longtime community service project.

Schloss Lodge member Harold (Hesch) Steinberg and his grandson, Solomon Conroy, a junior at the school, presented the bears to Head of School Sherri Bowie Spain. Solomon is a “Child of the Covenant” and will become a B’nai B’rith member on his 18th birthday.

“Memphis and surrounding areas are overflowing right now with children needing immediate foster care,” said Ms. Spain. “On a daily basis, the DCS (Department of Children’s Services) is trying to arrange foster care, feed the children that have been picked up, and

arrange for clothing. Many times the children are not allowed to go back into their homes for personal items, so ‘comfort friends’ are very important. This is where these precious teddy bears will be so special! These bears can be personalized and given to a child needing a cuddle friend to help get through the present transition.

“Threads of Hope, which is a ministry in the White Station Church of Christ, is headed up by Anna Barber,” she continued. “This ministry is there to provide clothing, toys, and comfort friends, as well as emergency gift cards for getting the child the first meal. Threads of Hope will be so excited to share these cute bears!” **HW**

Auschwitz Survivor, 98, Wins Simon Wiesenthal Prize for Holocaust Education

(JNS) – A survivor of the Auschwitz concentration camp who became a social-media celebrity thanks to her great-grandson was one of four people to win a Simon Wiesenthal Prize.

Lily Ebert, 98, was born in Hungary in 1923 and deported in 1944 to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where her mother, younger brother and sister were killed. After four months in the camp, Ebert and two of her other sisters were transferred to a labor factory. She was liberated by U.S. troops and eventually moved to the United Kingdom.

Her great-grandson, Dov Forman, created a TikTok account for her several years ago so she could tell young people today about her experiences. Ebert has since garnered more than 1.9 million followers.

Last fall, the British citizen published her memoir Lily’s Promise: How I Survived Auschwitz and Found the Strength to Live, co-written by Forman.

The other winners are Zwi Nigal, who fought in the British army against Nazi Germany; Austrian journalist Karl Pfeifer; and Holocaust survivor Liliana Segre, president of Italy’s special committee against intolerance, racism and anti-Semitism.

All four individuals were shortlisted for the award.

“The Simon Wiesenthal Prize jury decided to give the prize money to all the nominees as a way to honor their collective life’s achievements,” said Katharina von Schnurbein, the European Commission coordinator on combating anti-Semitism. **HW**

Jillian Devorah Tochner



Bat Mitzvah

Jillian Devorah Tochner, daughter of Lauren Bender Tochner of Germantown and Paul Tochner of Palm Beach, Florida, will celebrate her bat mitzvah Saturday, May 28, 2022, at Beth Shalom Synagogue. To mark the occasion, Jillian will lead the service, read from Parshat Bechukotai in the Torah, chant the Haftarah, and deliver a D’Var Torah.

Jillian is a seventh-grade Honor Roll student at Bornblum Jewish Community School, where she just completed her term as president of the school’s

National Junior Honor Society chapter. She is also involved with JYG (Jewish Youth Group) through Temple Israel, which connects middle school age kids throughout the Memphis Jewish community. She attends Camp Ramah Darom in Clayton, Georgia, where she will be spending her fourth summer this year.

She is the granddaughter of Mitchell Bender of Germantown, Tenn. and the late Marsha Bender, and the late Joni and Max Tochner of North Palm Beach, Florida. **HW**





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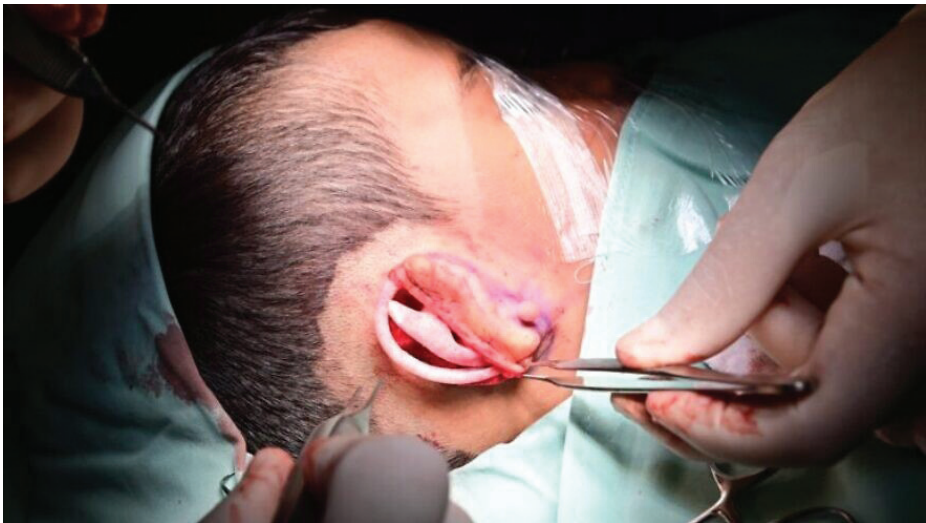
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Israeli Surgeons Print an Ear to Correct Boy's Deformity



A 3D-printed prosthetic ear being attached to a six-year-old boy. Credit: Courtesy of Galilee Medical Center

By Brian Blum

(Israel21c via JNS) – Israeli doctors 3D-printed an ear and attached it to a 6-year-old boy born with microtia, a deformity that stops the development of a baby's ear in the womb, usually during the first trimester of pregnancy.

Using a 3D printer, staff from the plastic surgery department at Galilee Medical Center in Nahariya created a synthetic prosthesis resembling cartilage and then covered it with skin.

Reconstructing an ear using cartilage and prosthetics is not unusual, but 3D printing that cartilage was a breakthrough.

The entire procedure took three hours, and the boy was released from the hospital several days later. His grateful parents were moved to tears.

Unfortunately, the ear is not functional, because microtia causes blockage of the ear canal, a complication that is not fixable through surgery.

Still, the synthetic prosthesis "reduc-

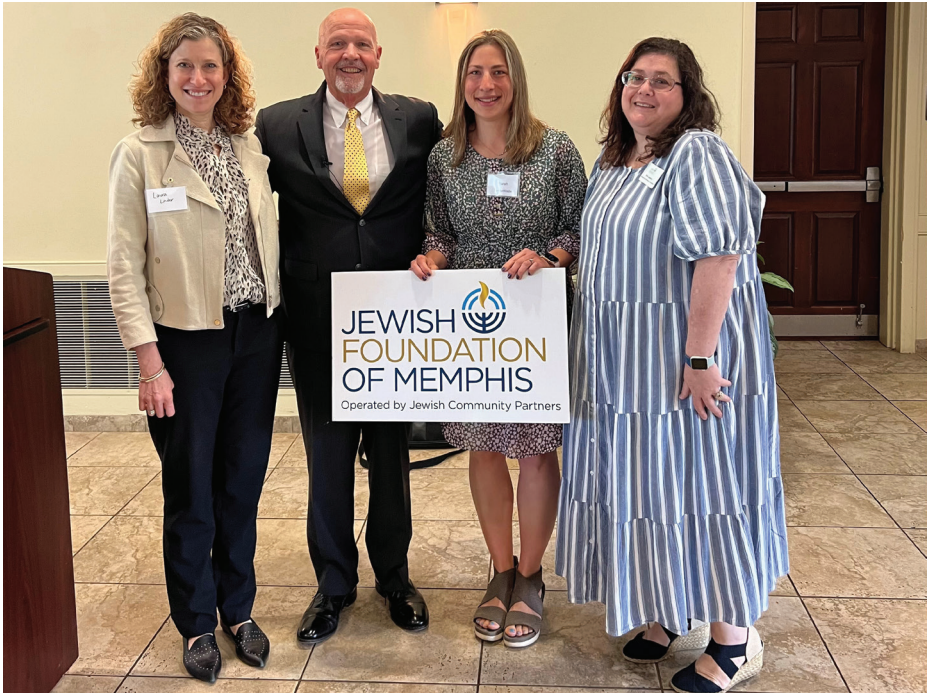
es pain and complications that could be caused in the area from which the cartilage is extracted," Dr. Amin Abu-Jabal, who led the surgical team, told Ynet. It offers "maximal accuracy and aesthetic in the highest level."

While microtia affects babies before they're born, corrective surgery cannot be performed until a child is 6 years old, at which point the ear reaches about 85 percent of its full size.

Microtia is usually not hereditary and, in most cases, affects only one ear. Approximately one in 6,000 to 8,000 babies are born with the condition and the cause is not known. People with microtia may have only a small ear or no ear at all.

Researchers at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology and Sheba Medical Center previously developed a way to 3D print the "scaffolding" required for ear reconstruction. This development was not connected to the reconstruction in Nahariya. [HW](#)

Jewish Foundation Offers Continuing Education Credits to Local Professional Advisors



Jewish Community Partners CEO Laura Linder; Eddie Thompson, founder of Thompson & Associates, a values-based estate planning firm in Nashville; Director of JFOM Programs Sarah VanderWalde; and Jewish Foundation of Memphis (JFOM) Executive Vice President Sheri Gadberry. Eddie spoke about high propensity donors and why planned giving is so attractive to donors today to an audience of professional advisors and non-profit staff at the Memphis Botanic Garden on May 5, 2022.

"Which is more important – the ability to give financially or the propensity to give? One might think it's the person who drives a fancy car and has disposable income," said Eddie Thompson Ed.D. of Thompson and Associates, however his research over the last 30-plus years has shown the opposite.

Sarah VanderWalde, director of programs at the Jewish Foundation of Memphis and vice president of the Planned Giving Council of the Mid-South welcomed everyone to a two-hour seminar on May 5, 2022 at Memphis Botanic Garden that provided continuing education credits to an audience of professional advisors and nonprofit staff. Carlisle Dale, estate planning attorney at Patterson Bray and president of the Planned Giving Council introduced renowned national speaker Eddie Thompson, an expert on the subject of values-based estate planning who has planned thousands of estates, which has generated billions of dollars to charity.

After sharing some personal stories including ones of his parents who were very poor, yet generous, Eddie asked "who is rich?" The first person to respond in the room of 50 advisors was Sandy Blockman CPA, an active member of the Jewish Foundation of Memphis' Professional Advisory Group (PAG). Sandy answered with a quote from Pirkei Avot, "He who is happy with his lot." And Eddie agreed, saying "wealth is relative."

Memphis is fortunate to have many experts in law, estate planning, accounting, finance and insurance. This dedicated group of people make up the Jewish


Foundation's Professional Advisory Group or PAG. Instituted in 1999, the PAG has almost 100 members.

Continuing in the session was the discussion of why planned giving is so attractive to donors today. Planned giving, also referred to as gift planning or legacy giving, is any major gift made in lifetime to an endowment fund or at death as part of a donor's overall financial and/or estate planning. These include gifts of equity, life insurance, real estate, personal property or cash.

"The Jewish Foundation of Memphis is the trusted partner for charitable giving in the Jewish community. These events are an example of the resources we provide our advisors, including the opportunity to receive continuing education credits," said Jason Salomon, PAG chair.

Eddie closed the seminar by highlighting that today is the golden age of planned giving. Baby boomers represent 21.19% of the U.S. population but are the sources of 43% of charitable dollars. This is the time for boomers to give and for nonprofits to seek those legacy gifts.

The Jewish Foundation of Memphis is here for the Jewish community to do just that. The staff focuses on facilitating legacy giving, supporting endowment development of its partner agencies, and maintaining relationships with local professional advisors to encourage philanthropy with the mission of building and sustaining Memphis Jewish community. If you would like to work with the Jewish Foundation to leave a legacy gift to support Jewish Memphis, call 901-374-0400 to setup a meeting. [HW](#)



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Federation’s Yom HaShoah Commemoration and Facing History Help CBHS Teens Understand Judaism, Antisemitism



CBHS seniors in Dr. Keith Wood’s Facing History and Ourselves class virtually attend Memphis Jewish Federation’s 60th Annual Yom HaShoah Commemoration in April. Wood takes pride in the a-ha moments the curriculum delivers to his almost exclusively non-Jewish students, guiding them to reexamine their relationships with Jewish friends and neighbors and making them lifelong allies.

A comfortable place to be uncomfortable.

That’s how Christian Brothers High School Social Studies educator Dr. Keith Wood describes the Facing History and Ourselves class he has taught to an almost exclusively non-Jewish group of students for 18 years. Last month, he encouraged his Facing History and Ourselves class to come back to school on a Thursday night to watch the Memphis Jewish Federation’s 60th Annual Yom HaShoah Commemoration via Zoom, where they heard the conversation between Elisha Wiesel, son of Elie Wiesel, and Rabbi Abe Schacter-Gampel, grandson of Rabbi Herschel Schacter, a U.S. Army chaplain and liberator of Buchenwald death camp where Elie Wiesel was a 16-year-old boy at the time of liberation.

“More than half of my Facing History students came back for the program,” said Dr. Wood. “I don’t have any Jewish students this semester, and participating in Yom HaShoah is a really unique thing for them. At the end, one of my kids who is Catholic said, ‘Wow, we have a lot more in common than I knew.’ I love conversations where a light switch is flipped for these boys. If we had more a-ha moments, antisemitism would be on the downturn and not on the uptick.”

Facing History and Ourselves, a global nonprofit with a branch in Memphis, uses lessons of history to challenge a network of over 100,000 middle grade and secondary teachers and their students to stand up to hate and bigotry in all its forms. Annually, they receive a grant from Memphis Jewish Federation’s Annual Community Campaign.

Facing History teachers, who are faculty members at public and private middle and high schools all over the world, are trained in a standardized way to educate students not only about the history and reality of brutal injustices, but also about rising trends in bigotry and hatred, like data showing that while Jews make up less than 2% of the U.S. population, they are the targets of almost 60% of faith-based attacks.

“I grew up in Schenectady, New York, where my friends were Italian, Irish, Polish, Jewish and African-American. One of my best friends was a 6-foot 5 guy who played basketball and was in the band, and was Jewish,” said Dr. Wood, who, like most Facing History educators, was drawn to the organization by his passion to fight back against bigotry, hate, and injustice, a characteristic that makes them what Facing History calls Upstanders.

“Once I said something I had heard said by my father, something antise-

mitic. And my friend was like, ‘Do you realize what you just said, dude? Are you serious?’ I had to take a step back and think about why I had said it to my friend,” said Dr. Wood. “I had an a-ha moment. I hope that Facing History delivers a-ha moments to these boys. It’s a safe space to have conversations so that we can make these mistakes and immediately grow from them and move forward.”

This semester, Dr. Wood offered his Facing History seniors the opportunity to virtually attend Yom HaShoah and write an essay instead of taking the final exam. From the contents of the essays, it’s safe to assume the a-ha moments were abundant.

“I got a glimpse at the spiritual connection that Jewish people have. Their community has withstood an insane amount of discrimination throughout history and to see two Jewish men have this connection without knowing each other was very exciting,” wrote Andrew Doggett. “Before this talk, when I thought about Jewish people I thought of the Holocaust. Now I think of what it really means to be Jewish and how they (strive to) overcome discrimination just to be themselves. Overall, this conversation gave me more insight into Judaism than (about) the Holocaust and it has changed my perspective on the Jewish faith. Being able to see the Jewish community interact (in this way) was something that a book could never have taught me.”

“I know a couple of Jewish individuals and what I learned from Rabbi Schacter-Gampel and Mr. Wiesel only

fortified my beliefs on how strong and united they are. I will understand the events after the Holocaust by listening to my Jewish peers and hearing how they have handled antisemitism and how they respond with prayer and faith instead of violence and rash behavior,” wrote Anthony Larizza. “(Yom HaShoah) widened my understanding of the Holocaust and the tsunami effect it has had on the second and third generation survivors.”

“Throughout my Facing History and Ourselves class, I have learned about perspectives, obligations, the way we treat people, and the horrors of mistreatment. No class has made me think about things as much as Facing History has,” wrote Ben Evangelisti. “I have learned new perspectives and have been taught new ways to think about situations. This talk between Elisha Wiesel and Rabbi Schacter-Gampel was icing on the cake of a very interesting and eye-opening class.”

“The last talking point that Elie Wiesel and Rabbi Abe Schacter-Gampel covered was standing up for other Jews. Elisha kept mentioning taking small steps rather than big ones. Big steps are hard to take alone but small steps are easy and if everyone can take them together, we can all stand up for the Jewish community,” wrote Erik Martinez.

“In my decades-long search for answers about inequality, I’ve found that I have a voice and I can’t be silent. I try to always be an Upstander. I may not be liked, I may lose friends over it, but I can’t sleep at night when I know bigotry happens without constantly playing an active role against it,” said Dr. Wood. “At Christian Brothers I’m having these conversations about antisemitism and about racism in our city with the boys that are going to be the power brokers in this city politically and economically. Hopefully, these boys will now be asking different questions earlier, and confronting ideas they inherited, and will be in a better place to shape our city’s culture differently in the future.”

“Memphis Jewish Federation is grateful for its partnership with Facing History and with courageous and forward-thinking educators like Dr. Wood who are in the trenches of educating against antisemitism and hate,” said Bluma Zuckerbrot-Finkelstein, Federation’s executive vice president. “We look forward to strengthening community partnerships in order to educate and raise awareness of these scourges.” **HW**

Israel’s Ministry of Defense Launches Future Combat Soldier Program

(JNS) – The Israeli Defense Ministry and Elbit Systems announced last Tuesday the start of a new program to equip combat soldiers with high-tech operational equipment to improve the ability of infantry personnel to perform in challenging combat settings, particularly in urban warfare.

The “Edge of Tomorrow” innovation program is run by the Defense Ministry’s Directorate of Defense Research and Development.

The program “strengthens the synergy between dismounted combat soldiers and their teams, and enables optimal operational value,” stated the ministry. It will employ research, simulation and live field scenarios to explore the utilization of new technologies for improved mission capabilities.

The equipment is expected to boost lethality, situational awareness, survivability, stamina, cognitive load, exposure of enemy locations, performance analysis and simulation, command and control, and more among combat soldiers, according to the statement.

It will further incorporate digital network technology such as Elbit’s Torch-X battle management system, augmented-reality goggles and a computerized assault rifle. It will also feature a digital head-mounted display sys-

The “Edge of Tomorrow” Innovation Program will see high-tech systems improve situational awareness and lethality in urban-warfare settings.

tem, hostile fire-detection technology, a location-tracking system in GPS-denied environments, tactile (wearable) sleeves for navigation and command transmittance, and a voice command system, according to the statement.

Haim Delmar, executive vice president at Elbit and general manager of the C4I and Cyber Division, said: “The purpose of this program is to equip combat soldiers, teams and platoons with innovative capabilities that will significantly improve their survivability and transform their mission effectiveness.” **HW**



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Planning to Quit Your Job? What to Know Before You Go

Questions for Mike? Reach him at 901.761.8151 or Michael.Stein@wellsfargoadvisors.com.

About 4.3 million U.S. workers quit their jobs voluntarily in December 2021, after a record 4.5 million quit in November – the largest number since the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) began recording voluntary job separations in December 2020.¹

There are plenty of theories about why people are quitting in droves, including a strong job market and pandemic-induced worker burnout. Regardless of your reasons, here are a few important considerations to keep in mind before you join the employment exodus.

Your Plan Should Reflect Reality

Unless you already have a new job lined up, be realistic about how long it might take to re-enter the workforce. According to the BLS, almost one-third of individuals who were unemployed in December 2021 had been out of work for 27 weeks or more.² Could you afford to maintain your current lifestyle without being paid for six months or even longer? You might need sufficient savings to cover your expenses for at least that long.

You May Incur New Expenses

Voluntarily leaving your job can affect your financial security in other ways, too. For example, you might lose important workplace benefits, such as typically more affordable group life, health, and dental insurance, and access to an employer-sponsored retirement plan.

Maintaining these benefits while unemployed could be financially burdensome at best – or impossible at worst. Before giving notice, assess your entire range of financial needs and the potential consequences of quitting.

It Can Pay to Stay

Because hiring and training new workers can be time-consuming and costly, some employers may be more willing to make concessions to keep the employees they already have. Whether you want a higher salary, new responsibilities, or a different work/life arrangement, this could be an ideal time to make your case to your employer. Consider listing examples of the current and future value you bring to your job. Then schedule a meeting with your manager to discuss those points and make a proposal. It could turn out to be a win-win proposition.

1–2)U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022
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Nearly 800 Rioters Arrested on Temple Mount During Ramadan Unrest



Palestinians wave flags and shout slogans as Muslim worshippers attend the last Friday prayers of the month of Ramadan at the Al-Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem's Old City on April 29, 2022. Credit: Jamal Awad/Flash90.

(JNS) – A total of 781 rioters were arrested on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem during the Ramadan unrest in the city, the Israel Police said last Monday. According to the figures, shared by Cmdr. Nathan Gur, head of the Jerusalem Police David sub-district during a meeting of the Knesset Public Security Committee, 425 rioters were arrested in a single day. Gur added that 223 suspects had received an order prohibiting them from entering the Temple Mount for six months. “We are continuing to gather evidence, and I assume more arrests will be

made. These are not the final figures,” Gur told the committee, according to the Knesset website. Adv. Galit Shoham of the State Attorney’s Office said 120 cases have been opened and more than 25 indictments filed against 35 people who were arrested for disorderly conduct, rioting and assault during Ramadan. In addition, dozens of administrative arrests were made all across the country to prevent further violence, said Shoham, though she noted that in most of the cases the State Attorney’s Office is asking for prison sentences. The Public Security Committee is chaired by Knesset member Merav Ben-Ari of the Yesh Atid Party, and its meeting last Monday focused on steps taken by police to quell rioting at the Temple Mount. Ben-Ari said international media outlets had provided “distorted” coverage of the events. “The holiest place has become the most explosive and dangerous place. There were disturbances at the Temple Mount despite the fact that there were no Jews there,” said Ben-Ari. “Tens of thousands of worshippers come to pray there, and there are inciting elements that are making the situation at the site intolerable.” [HW](#)

Joe Biden Won't Budge on This Make-or-Break Iran Deal Issue, and Progressives are Furious



IRGC military personnel stand on Israeli and American flags during a rally commemorating the International Quds Day, in downtown Tehran, April 29, 2022. Credit: Morteza Nikoubazl/NurPhoto via Getty Images

By Ron Kampeas

WASHINGTON (JTA) – An extraordinary debate took place recently in the Senate about whether the United States should remove the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps from its list of designated foreign terrorist organizations.

On the one side was Antony Blinken, the U.S. secretary of state, arguing that Iran was not taking the necessary steps to remove one of its principal militias from the list. Arguing on the other side, that putting the IRGC on the list in the first place was counterproductive, was ... Antony Blinken.

“The gain was minimal and the pain was potentially great,” Blinken said at a hearing last month. “The designation does not really gain you much because there are myriad other sanctions on the IRGC.”

The two-minute video outtake from Blinken’s appearance quickly circulated among congressional staffers and lawmakers who are closely tracking how or whether the Biden administration plans to reenter the Iran nuclear deal, congressional insiders said. Former President Donald Trump pulled out of the deal – which in 2015 rolled back sanctions on Iran in exchange for restrictions on its nuclear activity – in 2018.

Delisting the IRGC from the U.S. terrorism list, after it was put there by Trump in 2019, has become a make-or-break issue in the nuclear deal negotiations in Vienna, Iran’s team has made clear.

Those negotiations, which until recently seemed nearly complete, have come to a standstill because Biden is loath to capitulate on the issue. The IRGC is a major component of Iran’s military, designated as the protector of Iran’s Islamic identity forged after the 1979 revolution. But the militia goes far beyond preparing for combat; it has over the decades become a quasi-governmental institution, overseeing parts of Iran’s economy, industry and energy sectors. It regularly calls for Israel’s destruction, and it backs terrorist groups and insurgents around the world with money, training and guidance.

Along with Republicans, many moderate Democrats, already wary of rejoining the nuclear deal they say goes too easy on Iran, are urging Biden to stand firm on the IRGC. Biden, a foreign policy moderate himself, is believed to be personally resistant to delisting, in part because he met Iraq war veterans through his late son, Beau, and heard vicious stories about IRGC-trained militias. But Biden also vocally supported reentering the deal prior to his coming

into office, seeing it as the best means of keeping Iran from going nuclear.

Blinken’s back and forth underscores how fraught the issue has become in the administration: on the one hand, keeping the IRGC on the list looks tough but potentially scuttles the deal; on the other, delisting the group achieves a key foreign policy goal but looks weak on international terrorism.

“The IRGC is a terrorist organization, and it should be designated as such,” Rep. Elaine Luria, a Jewish Navy veteran and House representative from Virginia, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in an email. “They have fired missiles at a U.S. consulate, supplied weapons that killed thousands of American soldiers, and continue to destabilize the Middle East.”

Adding to the pressure, Biden is about to visit Israel next month for the first time as president. Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett has made clear that discussing the IRGC is very much on their agenda.

“I am sure that President Biden, who is a true friend of Israel and cares about its security, will not allow the IRGC to be removed from the list of terrorist organizations,” Bennett said in his statement announcing the Biden visit. “Israel has clarified its position on the issue: The IRGC is the largest terrorist organization in the world.”

In his remarks, Blinken said that the core sanctions that getting placed on the U.S. terrorism list adds are travel restrictions, and “the people who are the real bad guys have no intention of traveling here anyway.” Placement on the list also makes it illegal for U.S. entities to deal with the IRGC in any financial way.

The IRGC is the only state military on the U.S. Foreign Terrorism Organizations list, something that infuriates Tehran.

But U.S. progressives are also furious, because they argue the FTO debate is a meaningless obstruction in the way of a foreign policy priority. Congressional insiders say progressives in and out of Congress are pressing Biden to lift the designation.

Matt Duss, foreign policy adviser to Sen. Bernie Sanders, said Biden has fallen into a political trap set by Trump.

“The Trump gang was pretty clear that the point of this entirely symbolic designation was to raise political costs for rejoining the JCPOA,” Duss said, referring to the Iran deal’s formal name, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. “They were betting that a future admin-

istration would be too scared to take the necessary steps to get back to the deal. They are being proved correct.”

After Trump exited the deal, Iran retaliated by ending some of the agreement’s provisions and is now believed to be closer than ever to enriching nuclear fissile material to near weapons level.

“The Iran nuclear agreement successfully blocked off Iran’s pathways to a nuclear weapon – until President Trump recklessly withdrew America from it,” Rep. Ro Khanna, a leading progressive Democrat in California, wrote in an email. “All of us in Congress should support U.S. Envoy Rob Malley’s efforts [in Vienna] to peacefully guard against a nuclear-armed Iran and another war in the region, and not let politicized bluster get in the way of what may be our last chance to get that done.”

The problem, according to a Democratic congressional staffer who is closely monitoring the talks, is that there is no political upside to lifting the designation, especially if an American soldier dies in an Iranian-backed attack.

“Some poor kid is gonna get killed by an Iranian drone and that kid will be the face of every television commercial for the next three years,” said the staffer, who asked for anonymity to speak freely.

One possible compromise, the staffer added, is to keep the IRGC’s Quds Force, its external operations arm, on the terrorist list while delisting the broader organization. It’s not clear if this would appease Iran’s negotiating team.

J Street, the liberal Jewish Middle East policy group, which backs reentry, said that fears of political blowback are

Speakers at Quds Day Rally in Dearborn, Mich., Advocate Violence Against Israel

An International Quds Day rally in Michigan featuring speakers who advocated violence against Jews and Israel was streamed live on the Dearborn.org Facebook page, April 29, 2022. Credit: MEMRI.

(JNS) – At an International Quds Day rally in Dearborn, Mich., organized by the Al-Quds Committee, several speakers promoted violence against Israel.

According to the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) report, the rally took place on April 29 and was streamed live on the Dearborn.org Facebook page.

The rally moderator called for a “noble, honorable [and] brave armed resistance” in Palestine and for its “complete liberation.”

Michigan author Fatima Najdi recited a poem about how she could see the “quivering fear” of the “cancerous entity” that is Israel and hear the “final rasping breath of those Zionists.”

OBITUARIES

Rabbi Nathan Greenblatt

It is with profound sorrow that we share the news of the passing of our beloved Rav Nota Greenblatt, z”l / Rabbi Nathan Greenblatt, of blessed memory.

The funeral took place in New York on Sunday, May 1, 2022, at Mesivta Tiferes Yerushalayim on the Lower East Side of Manhattan.

We send our sincerest condolences to his wife, Rebbetzin Miriam Greenblatt, and their children: Rabbi Dovid Greenblatt (MHA ‘65), Rochel (Greenblatt) Lapidus(MHA ‘68), Leah (Greenblatt) Fink (MHA ‘71), Rabbi Jacob Greenblatt (MHA ‘72) and Joey Greenblatt (MHA ‘74).

May the entire Greenblatt family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem, and may Rav Nota’s memory and guidance continue to inspire us all.

Please note: an article about the extraordinary life of Rav Nota Greenblatt, z”l, will appear in the May 19, 2022, edition of The Hebrew Watchman. HW

.....

unmerited.

“Poll after poll shows that not only a majority of voters overall but a super majority of Democrats and a super majority of Jewish Americans want the deal restored, and it’s important to remember that not one lawmaker who voted for the deal in 2015 lost their seat to someone who opposed the deal in 2016,” said Dylan Williams, J Street’s senior vice president for policy, noting that at the time, some figures close to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee predicted electoral consequences for Democrats who favored the deal.

“I think it’s also clear that Republicans will attack any outcome, whether there is a deal or no deal,” he added. **HW**

A Fable: Adam Sees the Light



*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

Can you imagine Adam – G-d’s first human creation in Eden’s green meadow? See him, newly minted. His fresh body gleaming and his mind totally empty of facts, attitudes, and opinions – as empty as Eden is of thorn bushes – ready to begin its lifelong task of accumulation of data and weaving that data into an intellect. He turns slowly 360 degrees, a full circle, and takes in grass and forests, and flowers, and mountains, and brooks, all covered by a blue dome.

As he registers every throb of the new creation in the lush, green grass of Eden and wonders at his consciousness – as flimsy as the few white clouds that sail above him. He looks closer and sees the songbirds. And look, there are small creatures in the grass and larger ones hopping and bounding amongst trees. Truly, a brave new world full of creatures unlike himself that are necessary for him to understand – he who at birth has no identity and a head full of inexperience. Then he chances to stare into that copper disc that illuminates his new

world. It beams over all.

Still sitting on the green Savannah and swiveling his head in all directions, because the Lord of creation has put a potion called curiosity into his bloodstream; unappreciated at the time by Adam, but destined to nourish his intellect. So much to see that it took many hours to inscribe it all in his heretofore blank brain like the honeybee fills his comb with nectar.

Then among his recording of his surroundings, he made an alarming observation. That bright orange thing was no longer straight ahead. The trees on the far horizon appeared to consume it. And he could no longer see the sharp outlines of trees and mountains. In fact, the creatures that had been joyfully bounding in the woods were no longer visible to him. Darkness was replacing light. He trembled. Even a partially stocked brain knew that somehow darkness meant blindness and blindness was death. And as the trees pulled more and more of the light below the horizon, Adam’s blindness increased. He chose to run to escape this danger, but he fell over a large boulder. He rose, only to run into a tree. He resumed his running – somewhere there must be light and he must find it. He was cold and blind and fearful all at once.

And the Lord G-d saw his fear and took pity on him. Ah, we need a light for the night, thought the mind of G-d wherein dwells all the mechanisms of the uni-

verse. Therefore, he flung the full moon into the midnight sky. Adam stopped. Only a small improvement. Now at least he could see the river, which lay in his path. But still the garden’s beauty seemed blurred in dusky yellow. So, the Lord flung millions of points of light into the sky. They helped but a little.

The good Lord, who made the heart of Adam, understood the heart of Adam. This fear of nighttime blindness needed more than moon and stars.

The Creator spoke in Adam’s ear the secret of day and night. How they revolve like all things in nature; life and death, the seasons, the great architecture of the galaxies. But Adam’s mind could not accommodate the voice of his maker. It was like talking to the beasts. He needed one of his own kind. The ragged hole of fear in Adam’s soul could only be filled by a helpmate. Thus, Adam slept and G-d made Eve.

She stood beside him and pointed to the horizon where the Earth had swallowed the sun. Her eyes expressed no fear, only wonder. They sank to the grass in each other’s arms – huddled like two babes. Neither knew anything except the warmth of the other. They watched and waited. Their fearful eyes focused on the Pine tree where they had last seen the sun. Would it ever return to bless them with light and warmth? They dozed, frightful, but full of the need to sleep. Then Eve, feeling a warmth

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at her back and noticing the lightening of the black sky, laughed the first exultant laugh of creation and put her hand to Adam’s face in order to turn it to the life-giving light behind them. “It returns, it returns,” she whispered with awe; “but not where it was eaten by the Earth.” They stand, they face the rising sun, and then they lift their faces to heaven – wherein the laws of nature are made – to thank He who gave them life and light and warmth. Around them all living things hummed a hymn of hope.

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 Shaky Confidence

By Howard Weisband

When is no-confidence fraught with no-confidence?

The answer to this riddle lies within the Israeli political system. Especially when a sitting Government with barely a majority of Knesset members is under constant attack from the opposition, always looking to submit a no-confidence motion that would dissolve the Government and push the Knesset and the country into new elections.

Such is the current situation, heightened and more focused with Prime Minister Bennett’s “majority” down to a mere 60 (of 120 Members of Knesset) after one defect/resignation a few weeks ago from his own party and from the coalition. Bennett and Alternate Prime Minister Lapid have to fight off no-confidence vote attempts led by former PM Netanyahu and the Likud. He and Lapid did so recently, by keeping the Ra’am United Arab List within their coalition.

Remember that Israel has a Parliamentary system based upon the British model, wherein elections every four years are not etched in stone as in the United States. Rather, the Government is subject to no-confidence measures

that can bring about new elections at any point.

Multiple matters swirl about a Government. Political leaders are dealing with all of the following and more: the national budget and the economy, COVID numbers, confronting terrorism, Temple Mount sensitivities and recent violent clashes, ideological issues intertwined with the location of new housing starts, the Iranian nuclear threat, and ongoing diplomatic negotiations in the Middle East and internationally.

Opposition leaders will seize any hot-button issue to fuel a no-confidence motion, if they believe they can influence a few from the ruling coalition to vote with them.

That’s what happened this month. The Likud felt that the Temple Mount tensions would attract some members of the Ra’am party, members of the coalition, to vote against the Government.

But politics is all about power and party interests.

It was shaky for several hours while Bennett and Lapid met with their partners. Finally, Ra’am announced that they would vote with the Government.

Likud had no choice but to pull their no-confidence motion off the agenda or suffer defeat of the motion thus limiting their ability according to Knesset rules of procedure to introduce the motion again within the forthcoming six months.

Gil Hoffman, the Jerusalem Post’s political journalist, covered the May 11 press conference in which Monsour Abbas, head of Ra’am (not to be confused with Mahmoud Abbas, head of the Palestinian Authority), announced as follows:

“We reached understandings for the betterment of Arab society and Israelis in general. We decided to come back and give an opportunity for the coalition agreements to be implemented. We think it is a mistake to go now to elections that would almost certainly return Netanyahu to power, which would destroy our accomplishments for Arab society. We initiated a political partnership to give solutions to Arab residents. Ra’am took this initiative and responsibility to help them and to stabilize Israeli politics after four elections.”

Hoffman adds that Abbas said Ra’am

joined the government to help improve the lives of Israeli Arabs on issues like housing and fighting crime.

No need to read between the lines here. It’s about a party maintaining power in order to deliver services to its constituency.

And, while the former Prime Minister has promised his constituents that they would soon return to power, it is clear that the country is still strongly divided along pro-Bibi and anti-Bibi lines.

Thus, for now, the current Bennett-Lapid Government will retain power. It’s a shaky confidence that they can continue to hold their coalition together in order to repel what will surely be further efforts in no-confidence.

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

The MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club Events

Note: All daytime programs presented by MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club programs start at 12:15 p.m.

On Thursday, May 19, at 7 p.m. HOPE Hospice & Palliative Care will present “Planning for the Future,” presented by Joe Pennel and Josh Goldin.

As we age, there is a greater need to prepare for the future. From Healthcare to Spirituality there are several aspects of life and death where we can prepare for ourselves and families.

Josh, a social worker and Joe, a patient volunteer, have many years of experience guiding friends and family through the later stages of life. Join Josh and Joe at the Memphis Jewish Community Center while they deliver a message of HOPE and answer any questions about how to best prepare for the later stages of life.

On Tuesday, May 24, Ginny Ocegüera, of SRVS will present “Dealing with Conflict!” SRVS is a nonprofit, United Way of the Mid-South partner agency.

Since their beginning on November 1, 1962, they have maintained a steadfast commitment to helping the people we serve have the best possible quality of life. Mrs. Ocegüera has given several talks to MJCC Seniors over the past several years. All have been well received. Just recently her talk was terrific!

On Thursday, May 26, Rabbi Joel Finklestein will present “Wandering in the Desert, The Book of Numbers.” Rabbi Finklestein has been the head rabbi of Anshei Sphard – Beth El Emeth

Congregation since 1997. A question and answer period will follow.

Please join MJCC seniors each 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. and can be made by contacting Steve Kaplan, Adult Services Coordinator, at 901-259-9220 or stevekaplan@jcc-memphis.org, or by calling the front desk at 901-761-0810. HW

'A Visit to Moscow'

Past Memphian writer tells a story about a story in her graphic novel

By Abigail Klein Leichman

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This is a story about a story about a story.

Passing along stories is Anna Ols-wanger's passion as a literary agent and children's book author.

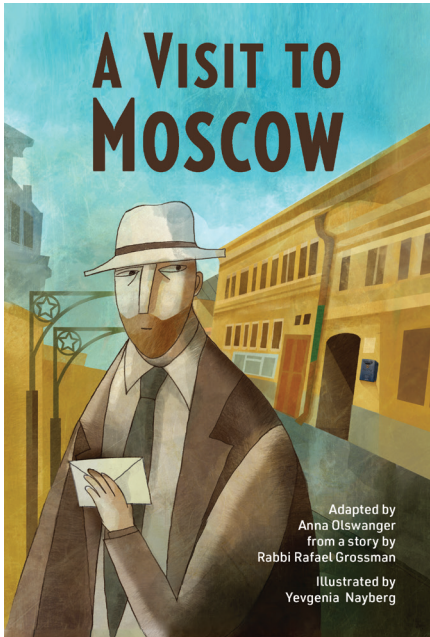
The story she passes along in the forthcoming graphic novel "A Visit to Moscow" is a work of historical fic-tion, based on a story that Rabbi Rafael Grossman told her in the 1980s.

Ms. Olswanger, who grew up in Memphis, was a member of Rabbi Grossman's Baron Hirsch Synagogue there. (Much later, they both moved to Bergen County. She lives in Fair Lawn; he lived in Fort Lee and then Engle-wood before making aliyah toward the end of his life.)

"Rabbi Grossman and I began collab-orating on writing projects in the early 1980s," Ms. Olswanger said.

During one of their sessions, he told her that in 1965, he'd been one of nine rabbis who went to the Soviet Union on a trip organized by the Rabbinical Council of America. The Orthodox rab-bis went to visit Jewish victims of gov-ernment-sponsored antisemitism. Rabbi Grossman met a Holocaust survivor there with a young son – Ms. Olswanger named him Zev in her novel – who had spent his first 11 or 12 years hidden in-side the tiny apartment where he was born.

The parents explained that they want-ed Zev to live as a Jew and not to be per-secuted or harassed by the Communists. But the price was steep: no school, no



friends, no outside interactions whatso-ever.

With the help of the late Represen-tatives James Howard (D-N.J.) and Emanuel Celler (D-N.Y.), and Senator Clifford Chase (R-N.J.), Rabbi Gross-man managed to get the family to Israel, seven years before the Brezhnev-Ko-sygin government granted the first exit visas to Soviet Jews.

Rabbi Grossman even visited Zev and his family in their new homeland. "Ev-ery time I visited him, he was smiling," Rabbi Grossman told Ms. Olswanger. He saw them for the last time in 1992. Later that year, Zev was killed in action in Lebanon at the age of 37, leaving a widow and young children.

Ms. Olswanger intended to include this poignant story in a novel she and

the rabbi started writing together, but the book never was finished. She didn't see the manuscript again until Rabbi Grossman died in 2018. His daughter, Aviva, who lives in Englewood, sent Ms. Olswanger a box of work they'd done together. And that prompted her to dig up her old notes from their original conversation.

"I was always so taken with that par-ticular story of the little boy who nev-er went outside," Ms. Olswanger said. "And I couldn't let go of it. Over the years, I thought it could be a short story or an illustrated children's book. Now I knew it could be a graphic novel."

In September 2018, Ms. Olswanger contacted award-winning illustrator, painter, and set and costume designer Yevgenia Nayberg of Brooklyn, who immigrated from Ukraine.

"She's done a number of picture books that I had sold for her as an agent," Ms. Olswanger said. "I thought, not only was her style perfect, but just the fact that she was a Jew from the former So-viet Union felt perfect. So I asked her if she would illustrate Zev's story, and she said yes."

Ms. Olswanger had never written a graphic novel before and felt "it was im-portant to find an artist who could com-municate the starkness of Soviet Russia alongside the emotional narrative of 'A Visit to Moscow.'"

It was necessary to write it as a fic-tional account because there were many details – including the names of the family – that she hadn't preserved in her notes.

"Someday I hope to discover the boy's name and where in Israel his fam-ily is living," she said. "I would like to share 'A Visit to Moscow' with them and tell the boy's children how much I admired their father and grandparents for withstanding Soviet repression and for trusting in Rabbi Grossman."

About a year after the initial contact between Ms. Olswanger and Ms. Nay-berg, West Margin Press accepted the manuscript for publication.

"I thought it was a middle-grade book because it's short, but the publisher thought it would be best for ages 12 and up, which means it's a young adult and adult book," Ms. Olswanger said. "It's



a crossover. And that's fine with me. I would love for adults to read this book. I think it's complex and rich because of Yevgenia's illustrations. She's done a phenomenal job."

Another of Ms. Olswanger's books, "Greenhorn," is based on an incident in Rabbi Grossman's childhood and set against the backdrop of the Holocaust. She is also the author of "Shlemiel Crooks," a Sydney Taylor Honor Book and PJ Library book, which she wrote after discovering a 1919 Yiddish news-paper article about the attempted rob-bery of her great-grandparents' kosher liquor store in St. Louis.

The Moscow story, she said, "encom-passes for me what Rabbi Grossman was and what he stood for, which was that life is here, and it is joyful, that no matter what, we are a joyful people. He always said that's what Hashem wants for us. He talked to me about how happy Zev was in Israel, that he bore no resid-ual sadness from having lived in a room in isolation for however long it was – I think 11 or 12 years until they left the Soviet Union.

"Many of us relate to a feeling of iso-lation, especially from our childhood," she continued. "This story builds on the hope that we can end the loneliness and isolation by connecting to a wider com-munity."

She believes the book also has the potential to spark new interest in the historical events surrounding Soviet re-fuseniks and the more than two decades of grassroots movements needed to free them.

"A Visit to Moscow" will be available as of May 24 in local and online book-stores.

This story first appeared in the Jewish Standard, which covers northern New Jersey and Rockland County, and in the New Jersey Jewish News. HW

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‘Funny Girl’ Snubbed, but ‘Lehman’ Stock Rises, in Tony Nominations



Beanie Feldstein as “Fanny Brice” during the opening night curtain call for the musical “Funny Girl” on Broadway at The August Wilson Theatre in New York City, April 24, 2022. Credit: Bruce Glikas/WireImage

By Andrew Lapin

(JTA) – Some of the biggest Jewish names on Broadway weren’t shining so bright in this year’s Tony nominations. The much-anticipated revival of “Funny Girl,” with Beanie Feldstein in the Barbra Streisand role as pioneering Jewish comedienne Fanny Brice, came up almost empty-handed, despite Feldstein’s star status and the fact that the book was revised and updated by stage and screen legend Harvey Fierstein. The show received only one nomination in total, for featured actor Jared Grimes, leaving Feldstein and Fierstein (and other top draws like co-star Jane

Lynch) in the cold. “Funny Girl” debuted last month to mediocre reviews. Critics said Feldstein drew a poor comparison to Streisand and that the entire show’s packaging felt dated. Also snubbed: “Plaza Suite,” a revival of the Neil Simon play starring real-life Jew-ish couple Sarah Jessica Parker, the child of a Jewish father who identifies as culturally Jewish, and Matthew Broderick (Jewish-descended mom), only garnered one nomination, for costume design. Jews and Jewish-themed shows were

more successful elsewhere across the nominees, however. “The Lehman Trilogy,” an epic multi-generational history of the infamous Jewish family of financiers, received eight nominations, including best play; all three lead actors were also nominated, including Adam Godley, who is Jewish. “Girl from the North Country,” a jukebox-style production built around Bob Dylan’s songbook, received seven nominations, including Best Musical and Best Book of a Musical; the Great Depression-era orchestrations of Dylan’s tunes were also recognized. “North Country” was the second musical to be built around Dylan’s songs, but reviews and ticket sales have indicated it was far more successful than a much-maligned first attempt, “The Times They Are a-Changin’.” In addition, “North Country” star Mare Winningham was nominated for lead actress. Winningham was raised Catholic, but converted to Judaism in her 40s, writing and performing a “Convert Jig” for the occasion. “Mr. Saturday Night,” Billy Crystal’s musical comedy based on his 1992 film about a fading TV comic, received five nominations, including best musical and best actor for Crystal. He also co-wrote the nominated book with Jewish writing duo Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel. Featured actress Shoshana Bean, who is Jewish, was also nominated, as were the Jewish writers of the show’s music, composer Jason Robert Brown and lyricist Amanda Green.

While “Funny Girl” failed to light up the revival circuit, several other Jewish-adjacent revivals did. “Company,” a gender-swapped restaging of the Stephen Sondheim classic, scored nine nominations, including best revival of a musical; the show was initially intended to be timed to Sondheim’s 90th birthday, but COVID-19 delays resulted in it not opening until after his death this past November at 91. “Caroline, or Change,” Tony Kushner’s Civil Rights Era-set musical about a Black maid who works for a Southern Jewish family in 1963, received three nominations, including for best revival of a musical. And “American Buffalo,” a revival of caustic Jewish playwright David Mamet’s 1975 play about a junk shop, was nominated for four Tonys, including best revival of a play, as was “Take Me Out,” an exploration of a professional baseball player coming out as gay, by Jewish playwright Richard Greenberg. “How I Learned to Drive,” a revival of the Pulitzer-winning 1997 play dealing with taboo topics such as pedophilia and incest, was nominated for three Tonys, including best revival. Its author, Paula Vogel, had a Jewish father and has also written other Jewish-themed plays. It’s been a rough year overall for Broadway, which returned after a two-year pandemic hiatus and saw multiple logistical hiccups as some cast members contracted COVID-19. Many shows had scrambled to premiere in time for the Tony deadlines. The 75th annual ceremony will air June 12 on CBS and Paramount Plus. [HW](#)

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