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MJCC Holds In-Person Annual Meeting



2022 Bob Silver Volunteer of the Year Award honorees Francine Brown, Elaine Skopp, Sara Slovis, Barbara Hellman and presenter Jonathan Epstein.

Thurs., May 26, 2022, was a night to remember when the Memphis Jewish Community Center held its first in-person Annual Meeting since 2019. It was an evening to celebrate lay leaders, staff, programming accomplishments and new endeavors.

After a pre-meeting reception at which board members, lay leaders, members and staff enjoyed hors d'oeuvres, beverages and mingling, the meeting opened with a call to order and report from MJCC Board Chair Robin Orgel. Orgel was proud to report how successfully the MJCC has weathered the past few years, pivoting to remain relevant in the community and is emerging from the pandemic stronger than before. Among the

highlights mentioned, she announced that MJCC summer camp is projecting 500 campers, a record-high enrollment. Orgel attributed the successes of the Center, especially through the last few tumultuous years, to the phenomenal teamwork of everyone involved. She ended her report with a presentation to outgoing board members and a special acknowledgement in remembrance of board members who passed in the last year, Mimi Grossman and Herm Markel.

The meeting moved into presentation of awards and acknowledgements beginning with former Board Chair Gary Makowsky presenting the Chair's Award to his father, Jerome Makowsky, for his years of support and service to

the MJCC and JCCs worldwide.

Four honorees were presented with the Bob Silver Volunteer of the Year Award for their tireless efforts and dedication to volunteering through Fogelman Jewish Family Service at the Memphis Jewish Community Center.

MJCC President Larry Skolnick's report included exciting announcements and updates with the first being the establishment of The Orgel Family Performing Arts Center and the renovation of the Belz Theater in the coming months. The second announcement was about the enhancements and renovations to the outdoor fields with pickleball courts, a year-round facility for camp and other programs, walking and running trails and a challenge course at the old campgrounds.

Jacob Samuels, Lisa Frisch and Jolie Slovis announced the "Save a Seat!" campaign and with theatrical flair unveiled the new design for the new and improved theater seating, which can be sponsored through the "Save a Seat!" campaign to commemorate an event or honor a loved one. Information about "Save a Seat!" is available at jccmemphis.org.

Skolnick closed out his report with an acknowledgement of the legacy and passing of Ronna Newburger, the first female Board Chair of the MJCC and one of the first women in leadership at JCCs across North America.

Staff anniversaries followed with 10 staff members being recognized for their collective 109 years of service to the MJCC including two employees,

Theresa Powel and Susan Gross, who have worked in the early childcare center (ECC) for 25 years.

Lastly, Skolnick recognized the MJCC Employee of the year. As he began his introduction, you could feel the crowd excitement building as they tried to figure out the identity of the nominee. Jeremy Weiser, MJCC Chief Operating Officer, was awarded for his outstanding work and commitment and received a standing ovation.

New Board members were voted in and installed, and the Board Chair Elect was selected. Judy Bookman, the next Board Chair of the MJCC, will be installed at next year's Annual Meeting.

After the meeting adjourned, the crowd mingled to congratulate new and returning board members and those who were recognized throughout the night. **HW**



Current MJCC Board Chair Robin Orgel and immediate past Board Chair Jenny Herman

Dozens of Arrests but No Casualties Reported After Jerusalem Day Clashes

By Ron Kampeas

(JTA) – Jewish extremists shouted racist slogans and clashed with Palestinians during a heavily policed Jerusalem Day march, but there were no major injuries at an event that last year was among the spurs to a deadly conflict.

Police said 50,000 Jews marched through the Old City on Sunday, Jerusalem Day, the Hebrew calendar anniversary of Israel's capture of the area in the

1967 Six-Day War. A record 2,600 Jews visited the Temple Mount, the holiest site in Judaism, which is also the sight of a mosque enclave among the holiest in Islam.

A number of the Jewish marchers shouted, "Death to Arabs," reports said, and "may your villages burn." Some Palestinians rushed the marchers, and there were fights. There were reports of minor injuries. Media reported police arrested



about 50 people, most Palestinians. Kann, Israel's public broadcaster, re-

Israelis march flags through the Damascus Gate in Jerusalem, May 29, 2022. Credit: Ilia Yefimovich/ picture alliance via Getty Images

ported Palestinians stoning vehicles and Jews attacking Palestinians with pepper spray. There were some minor injuries.

The day culminated with tens of thousands of Jews dancing at the Western

(See Clashes Page 2)

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Beth Sholom Elects Naomi Katz as **President**



Front row: Diana Bresinger, Lindsay Rossen, Naomi Katz, Larissa Kay, Illysa Wertheimer, and Ariel Figueroa. Back row: Wendy Kleinman, Miriam Roochvarg, Michelle Glazer, Mitch Hodus, Amy Hertz, Kevin Bernstein, Jeannie Ashford, and Noah Sabin. Not pictured: Rachel Phelps, Abraham Bendayan, Mark Geller, Mindy Lipson, Keri Unowsky, Susan Levko and Leslie Epstein

Beth Sholom Synagogue members elected Naomi Katz to serve a two-year term as President at the shul's annual meeting on May 22. Katz succeeds Illysa Wertheimer, who now holds the positions of Immediate Past President and Vice President of Development.

In her remarks, Katz thanked Beth Sholom's leaders "for shepherding us through the pandemic safely and thoughtfully. I stand...upon the shoulders of past presidents and board members. Their invaluable contributions have built, literally and figuratively, a strong and solid place for all of us."

After the meeting, Wertheimer said, "Beth Sholom has chosen a capable and dedicated president who will build on the remarkable growth we've achieved despite the pandemic. Naomi will keep us moving forward and strengthening our shul's spiritual and educational offerings while inviting more Jewish Memphians to come under our tent."

Professionally, Katz is well prepared for her new role. She graduated from Brandeis and Boston University Law School and currently works as the Associate Director of Planned Giving and Endowments for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. She is the daughter of Judith Lax, z"l, the first woman president of a conservative synagogue, a national officer of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism and a champion of egalitarian partici-

After she was installed as president, Katz spoke of her mother, who passed away in April. Noting that she could never fill her mother's shoes.

"I hope to honor her legacy by serving this shul, which exemplifies the strength of the conservative movement," Katz said.

In another highlight of the annual meeting, Shelley Robbins and Alla Lubin presented the synagogue with a gift in honor of Katz on behalf of the Memphis Lions of Judah.

Beth Sholom's New Officers

In addition to Katz and Wertheimer, the following officers were installed on May 22: Larissa Kay, VP Education; Mitch Hodus, VP Facilities and Personnel; Rachel Phelps, VP Membership; Lindsey Rossen, VP Programming; and Kevin Bernstein, Secretary/Treasurer.

Newly elected members of the Board of Directors are Diana Bresinger, Michelle Glazer, Amy Hertz, Wendy Kleinman, Noah Sabin and Keri Unowsky. The remaining board members, whose terms expire in June 2023, are Jeannie Ashford, Abraham Bendayan, Ariel Figueroa, Mark Geller, Mindy Lipson and Miriam Roochvarg. HW

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Weekly Torah Portion: Naso

Clashes...

(Continued From Page 1)

Wall, the Jewish holy site that is adjacent to the Temple Mount.

Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said he would not tolerate Jewish extremists who tried to provoke a conflict and had instructed police to arrest rioters. "The overwhelming majority of participants have come to celebrate but unfortunately there is a minority that has come to set the area ablaze, take advantage of the government's strong position against Hamas threats, and trying to use force in order to ignite a conflict," he said.

A number of marchers hoisted Israeli flags when they reached the Temple Mount, something that Hamas, the terrorist organization controlling the Gaza Strip, had warned could provoke rocket attacks. Israel's Iron Dome antimissile system reportedly is on alert.

Hamas used the planned Jerusalem Day celebration last year as among its pretexts for launching rockets into Israel, sparking an 11-day conflict in which more than 230 Palestinians and 12 Israelis were killed.

Bennett, whose governing coalition is hanging by a thread, is eager to stem tensions ahead of a visit next month by President Joe Biden. The region has been roiled by a spate of deadly Palestinian terrorist attacks and unsettled by Israel's recent announcement of new settlement building. **HW**

A California Hate Crimes Bill Separates Nazi Symbols from Hindu Swastikas



Diyas (lamps) in a swastika pattern by a shrine to the Goddess Lakshmi during the festival of Diwali at a Hindu temple in Toronto, Nov. 7, 2018. Credit: Creative Touch Imaging Ltd./NurPhoto via Getty Images

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By Maya Mirsky

(J. The Jewish News of Northern California via JTA) – In what could be a first for an official piece of U.S. hate crimes legislation, California's state Assembly has added language to a bill differentiating the Nazi swastika from

the swastika symbol that has religious meaning for Hindu, Buddhist and Jain communities.

Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, a Democratic California Assembly member representing part of the Bay Area and a member of the California Legislative Jewish Caucus, worked with the Hindu American Foundation to add new language to a hate crimes bill she introduced with fellow state Assembly member Marc Levine earlier this year.

The new language added to the bill in May reads: "It is the intent of the Legislature to criminalize the placement or display of the Nazi Hakenkreuz (hooked cross), also known as the Nazi swastika that was the official emblem of the Nazi party, for the purpose of terrorizing a person. This legislation is not intended to criminalize the placement or display of the ancient swastika symbols that are associated with Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism and are symbols of peace."

The bill, which was sent to the Senate after unanimously passing the Assembly last week, is expected to reach Gov. Gavin Newsom's desk by the end of summer. It aims to change hate crime laws by standardizing the punishment for using various "terror symbols," such as nooses and burning crosses — and swastikas. It would also expand the list of places where the law is applied to include public parks, school campuses, places of worship and cemeteries, among others.

Antisemitic groups such as the Goyim Defense League have distributed flyers with Nazi symbols and other hateful messages in California and other states in recent months.

The Nazi symbol, which most people picture when they think of a swastika, is actually called the Hakenkreuz. Adolf Hitler appropriated the image for his Aryan cause, flipping the direction of its lines and rotating it.

"This has been a misnomer that's very entrenched, and it's going to take a while to get past that," said Samir Kalra,

the foundation's managing director. His group wants people to stop using the word "swastika" altogether when referencing Nazis, though he acknowledges that for Jews, there are decades of trauma connected to the symbol.

"I am pleased that we were able to create air-tight language that is sensitive to these important cultures while at the same time ensuring that those who seek to terrorize in anyway will be held responsible and prosecuted," Bauer-Kahan told J. in an email.

"In traditional Hindu, Buddhist and Jain religions, the swastika has been regarded as a symbol of peace for thousands of years," Bauer-Kahan said. "Unfortunately, we know all too well that Hitler and the Nazi regime stole this symbol and used it as a banner of hate, murder and destruction, and subsequently by Nazi supporters who seek to terrorize our community."

Because hate crimes require the state to show that the accused person had the intent to "terrorize," taking the Hindu swastika off the list won't materially affect any future hate crime prosecution.

Still, the change in wording is a big deal, said Kalra. California is, as far as he knows, the first state to use clarifying language like this in legislation that affects criminal prosecution, although other states have made the same point in other contexts.

"This is a situation where we're actually trying to correct the penal code," Kalra said.

Earlier in May, the foundation wrote to Bauer-Kahan in support of her bill, while suggesting the language be amended.

Just displaying a swastika of any kind, without the intent to intimidate or terrorize, is not in itself prosecutable. But there have been numerous occasions in which Hindus, Buddhists or Jains have faced negative consequences when displaying a swastika, according to Kalra. During the holiday of Diwali, people make patterns using colored powder that often include swastikas. Some people hang swastikas at their front door for luck.

"Hindu residents in certain communities have to prove this is a peaceful symbol," Kalra said. He believes this "can have a chilling effect on religious freedom."

A version of this story was originally published in J. The Jewish News of Northern California and is reprinted with permission. **HW**

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Couple's Shabbat Zoom Sex Stream Raises Eyebrows — and Renews Questions About Online Services

By Jackie Hajdenberg

(JTA) – It was a double mitzvah, the New York Post concluded: A couple tuned in online to Shabbat services at their Minnesota synagogue, then stripped and started engaging in sexual activity.

The tabloid's story about the May 14 incident broke this weekend and immediately went viral among Jews and others who delighted in the writer's use of "Debbie does Deuteronomy." (The week's Torah portion was actually from a different book of the Bible, Leviticus, but who's counting?)

"I'd like to nominate this story as a candidate for journalism's sorely needed distinction in pun-writing prize," tweeted Erin Einhorn, a Jewish journalist in Detroit.

But the incident at Beth El Synagogue in St. Louis Park, a suburb of Minneapolis, is not just a source of levity. It also points to potential risks in the use of streaming technology by Conservative synagogues, which are barred by the movement's religious law authorities from engaging with electronic devices on the Sabbath. In allowing the use of streaming on Shabbat in an emergency measure early in the pandemic, the movement's Jewish law committee stated that any streaming equipment should be "set it and forget it" – teed up prior to Shabbat and not touched once it begins.

That may be the reason why the couple was reportedly able to broadcast themselves for 45 minutes, according to the Post, with no one from the synagogue intervening to stop them or remove them from the Zoom meeting.

"I feel terrible for the couple who've had their name smeared, or at least their images smeared," said Rabbi David Paskin, who works at a Florida synagogue and also consults, as Torah Tech Guy, with Jewish groups on technology issues. "But we're still babies at this, learning how to do this. It's astonishing to me how many people still don't really know how to mute or unmute their microphones."

Beth El declined JTA's request for comment about the incident and the way the synagogue manages virtual services. A synagogue administrator also declined to comment to the New York Post.

But on Twitter, a woman who identified herself as a Beth El congregant suggested that adherence to Jewish law, rather than tech ineptitude, was the reason the incident went as long as it did.

"Nobody would pick up the phone to put a stop to it because it was the sabbath, so it went on for 45 minutes," she wrote. She added, "To clarify – nobody who worked at the synagogue would pick up the phone to monitor Zoom."

That problem is one that could arise only at the subset of Conservative synagogues that employ Zoom as their streaming platform. Orthodox synagogues do not use digital technology on Shabbat and Reform synagogues would not be hamstrung by the inability to intervene if needed.

Some Conservative synagogues stream using passive technology in which only the prayer leaders are seen. But many synagogues prefer a two-way stream like Zoom, since it allows people to recite the Mourner's Kaddish aloud or lead the congregation in prayer.

Rabbi Rachel Ain of Sutton Place Synagogue in New York City, which uses both Zoom and passive streaming to supplement in-person services, declined to comment on the incident at Beth El. But she said Sutton Place, like Beth El a Conservative synagogue, is committed to making sure community members feel included even when they are joining from home – even if that means departing at times from the guidelines set by the movement.

"What we've learned over the last several years is there's all different ways that clergy make decisions for their community," Ain said. "They do it in consultation with the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards, but there's many inputs that make up that decision."

The committee, part of the Conservative movement's Rabbinical Assembly, adopts opinions with the approval of six or more members, but those opinions are not binding for Conservative rabbis and their communities. The 2020

opinion permitting streaming during the pandemic urges synagogues to hire non-Jews to monitor two-way platforms such as Zoom in case participants need to be admitted, ejected or muted. (A second opinion by the same rabbi adopted last year suggests that streaming is likely to outlast the pandemic.)

"In the absence of having someone who is not Jewish designated to deal with these issues, there is a very high risk that a Jewish person will step in, and violate not only rabbinic, but biblical prohibitions," states the opinion, called a teshuva. "Therefore it is strongly urged that if these systems are considered 'too important to fail,' that a non-Jewish person be tasked with monitoring them."

While Beth El's leaders did not step in while their bat mitzvah attendees were getting it on, other attendees were apparently less hesitant to break Shabbat rules. Someone called the couple to alert them that they were on tape, according to the Post article.

And someone snapped a screenshot, creating a permanent record of their misadventure that has ricocheted around social media, eliciting schadenfreude and, at times, tongue-in-cheek reflection on Jewish law.

Wrote one Twitter user who saw the New York Post story, "I've never heard a better argument for why you shouldn't use electronics on Shabbat." **HW**

Israel's Weizmann Institute Joins NASA Planetary Defense Exercise

(JNS) – Representatives from the Weizmann Institute's Physics Faculty in Rehovot joined more than 100 astronomers worldwide in a recent NASA planetary defense exercise.

As part of the exercise, David Polishook, a member of the faculty and also director of Weizmann's observatory, deleted a previously detected "near-Earth object" asteroid from the asteroid database, to see if it would be "rediscovered" by observatories, as part of the

Polishook also led the spectral measurements made by the NASA Infrared Telescope Facility (IRTF) in Hawaii, to classify the asteroid's composition and mass, Weizmann said in a statement. He also made observations from the Wise Observatory near Mitzpe Ramon, Israel, to measure another asteroid's shape and rotation rate.

The NASA Planetary Defense Coordination Office maps out future asteroid threats and issues warnings.

A statement by NASA last Tuesday said that the exercise was coordinated by the International Asteroid Warning Network and NASA's Planetary Defense Coordination Office.

"The exercise confirmed that, from initial detection to follow-up characterization, the international planetary defense community can act swiftly to identify and assess the hazard posed by a new near-Earth asteroid discovery," said NASA. HW

God Nisanov Becomes Latest Russian Jewish Billionaire Philanthropist to Face U.S. Sanctions



Russian President Vladimir Putin, left, shakes hands with Russian businessman and billionaire God Nisanov in the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, July 31, 2014. Credit: Sasha Mordovets/Getty Images

By Asaf Shalev

(JTA) – Another Russian Jewish oligarch and philanthropist became ensnared in Western sanctions as the United States announced last Thursday a new round of punitive measures targeting the regime of Russian President Vladimir Putin over its war against Ukraine.

On the latest list of sanctioned individuals was God Nisanov, an Azerbaijan-born real estate developer whom Secretary of State Antony Blinken called "one of the richest men in Europe and a close associate of several Russian officials."

Hours after the announcement, the World Jewish Congress announced that Nisanov had been removed from the organization's leadership because of the sanctions.

"The World Jewish Congress reiterates and reaffirms that no one who is included on any list of sanctioned individuals by the United States, the United Kingdom or the European Union in relation to the conflict in Ukraine can hold any position or play any role in the organization," the announcement said.

"Accordingly, God Nisanov is no longer a WJC vice president and has ceased to serve on the WJC Executive Committee."

Born in Azerbaijan, Nisanov is perhaps the most prominent member of that country's community of Mountain Jews. As the director of the Association of Mountain Jews, he has sponsored various efforts to support the community, including the establishment of a museum and cultural center in Moscow.

He has donated to Jewish schools and other projects and has been affiliated with the Russian Jewish Congress and the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia.

He was honored at the Kremlin in July 2014 when Russian President Vladimir Putin awarded him the country's "Order of Friendship" for his work on economic development projects. That detail was included in a biography that was deleted from the World Jewish Congress website last Thursday.

From the moment the United States and other Western power moved to sanction Russia over its actions in Ukraine in February, several Russian Jewish oligarchs were high on the list of anticipated targets. Nisanov's name, for example, appeared on a list of such targets produced by the Treasury Department back in 2018.

The sanctions on Nisanov come after similar measures were imposed on peers in Russian Jewish philanthropy such as Roman Abramovich, Moshe Kantor and the trio behind the Genesis Philanthropy Group. Kantor resigned as president of the European Jewish Congress after being sanctioned by the United Kingdom in April; that group is the World Jewish Congress's European affiliate. **HW**

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Land of Israel Curriculum Fair at Bornblum



First grade class docents explaining what they learned about the Hula Valley and the birds that migrate through the region.



Visitors exploring the fourth grade Coastal Plains and mosaic. Using different colored tiles, students represented erosion and land elevation in the mosaic.

On Wednesday, May 18, Bornblum Jewish Community School held the Land of Israel Fair. It showcased a yearlong collaboration between General and Judaic Studies teams. Regions in Israel were assigned to grade levels based on curriculum standards. Climate, landforms and plants that characterize each region geographically, historically and in modern times were studied. Classes cultivated vegetation, flowers and trees that represented their region in individual garden beds on campus. They explored technological innovations in

Israel and compared agriculture in the United States and Israel. Students deepened their understanding of how agriculture impacts all aspects of modern life with learning expeditions and visits with experts worldwide.

From art to data analysis to persuasive writing, learning about these regions in Israel permeated every subject area in General Studies. In specials classes, art, design thinking and technology, students explored how to exhibit their understanding in unique ways for their audience.

The fair showcased Israel's extraor-



Students and families were invited to campus during the school year to create pottery pieces with the seven species and flowers from the Land of Israel.



Students rolling pita dough to fire on the saj. Second grade learned all about wheat production in Israel and even made their very own wheat grinder.

dinary land, from the limestone in the Karst Cave to the swamps in the Hula Valley. Students explored the connection between Israel's geography, vegetation, life and geology to the stories of the Torah, the history of the Jewish people and the birth of modern Israel. They learned about the unique characteristics of each region in Israel and responded to their learning through presentations, art, songs and projects.

The fair displayed canvases of the seven species, ceramic art of many common Israeli flowers and trees, bat hous-

es, models of swamps from the Galilee, a hexagon pool model from the Golan Heights and a massive mosaic of the coastal plain.

Students and families had the chance to explore each class's exhibit during the fair, with student docents at each station to explain their learning and the displays. There was also a pita-making station, where students could make pita on a saj while learning about wheat and barley in ancient times. The event also included trivia games, singing about Eretz Israel and enjoying Israeli dancing. **HW**

Jewish Theological Seminary Exhibition Explores History of Marriage, 'Ketubahs'



"To Build a New Home: Celebrating the Jewish Wedding" is on display through August at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City, June 2022. Credit: JTS.

(JNS) – The Jewish Theological Seminary on New York's Upper West Side opened its first exhibition in its newly constructed library.

"To Build a New Home: Celebrating the Jewish Wedding" introduces visitors to Jewish marriages from Talmudic times to the present, including recent innovations as Jewish sensibilities have developed in the context of the world at large.

A selection of rare ketubahs (Jewish marriage contracts) is on display as part of the exhibit, which runs until Aug. 14. Each one depicts the brief but intimate

DEADLINES FOR STORIES AND ADS WEDNESDAYS AT NOON details of Jewish relationships at the time – ideals of marriage, intrafamilial dynam-

ics and how couples advanced with prenuptial agreements in the 12th century. The new JTS space will present exhibits of its holdings year-round. **HW**



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Israel Study Shows at Least 2,000 Species of Reptiles are Threatened



Professor Shai Meiri. Credit: Tel Aviv University.

(JNS) – A new international study involving researchers from Tel Aviv University and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev has found that 21% of the reptile species on Earth (one in five species), amounting to a total of about 2,000 species, are threatened with extinction.

The findings show that 30% of forest-dwelling reptiles and about 14% of those living in arid areas are threatened, and that 58% of all turtle species and 50% of all crocodile species are in danger of becoming extinct.

The researchers point out that if all of the 1,829 species of turtles, crocodiles, lizards and snakes that have been found to be threatened do become extinct in the coming years, the world will lose a cumulative wealth of 15.6 billion years of evolution. The comprehensive study, published in the journal Nature, was conducted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and included 52 researchers from around the world, including Shai Meiri of TAU's School of Zoology, George S. Wise Faculty of Life Sciences and the Steinhardt Museum of Natural History; and Uri Roll of BGU.

The IUCN has been working on the reptile report for the past 18 years, inviting experts on this taxonomic group from all over the world to participate. In 2004, the IUCN released a comprehensive report on amphibians; a few years later, it issued reports on birds and mammals.

"In general, the state of reptiles in the world is bad," says Meiri. "It's worse than that of birds and mammals, though not as bad as that of the amphibians. And, of course, there are a lot of nuances. We see that turtles are in a worse position than lizards and snakes, but that may be because we know more about turtles. Perhaps if we knew more about snakes, we would see that they, too, are in big trouble."

Either way, he said, "the biggest threat to reptiles is the destruction of their habitats due to agriculture, deforestation and urban development, and less because of direct hunting, which mainly affects turtles and crocodiles. We created detailed maps of these threats. For example, if a particular species is highly threatened in Israel's Arava desert but not in the rest of its habitat range that may span the entire Arabian Peninsula, then globally it is not considered a threatened species. The new assessments, for more than 10,000 species of reptiles, will allow us to understand their conservation needs and hopefully enable us to find far more intelligent solutions for them than we have been able to so far."

Roll adds that "this is important work that forms the initial basis for risk assessment among various reptiles around the world but is certainly not the end of the story. We still lack a lot of information about the various risks facing reptiles. For example, climate change is expected to have significant effects on reptiles. The current assessment that has just been published does not yet include these future threats in its reptile risk assessments. We still have a lot of work ahead of us." HW

Israeli and American Security Officials Meet at White House, U.S. State Department

(JNS) – American and Israeli officials committed to close coordination on issues of mutual interests during a White House meeting last Wednesday, led by U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan and Israeli National Security Advisor Eyal Hulata.

According to a White House news release, the meeting was part of the U.S.-Israel Strategic Consultative Group (SCG) and included senior representatives from both countries' foreign policy, defense and intelligence agencies.

The officials committed to coordinating efforts to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon and to defer its aggressive regional activities.

The participants also "discussed the economic and diplomatic steps to achieve these goals, and reviewed ongoing cooperation between the U.S. and Israeli militaries."

Last Tuesday, Hulata met with U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman. According to a U.S. State Department news release, the two discussed the de-escalation of hostilities between Israelis and Palestinians with Sherman reinforcing "the need to advance towards a reality where Israelis and Palestinians alike can enjoy equal measures of security, freedom and prosperity."

U.S. President Joe Biden is expected to travel to Israel later this month on his first visit to the region as president. **HW**



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Season 4 of Netflix's 'Stranger Things' Filmed in A Lithuanian Prison Where Nazis Jailed Jews



David Harbour in a scene from season four of "Stranger Things." Screenshot

By Philissa Cramer

(JTA) – Now streaming on Netflix: scenes from inside a notorious Lithuanian prison whose inmates have included Jews en route to being murdered by Nazis and future Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin.

Part of season four of "Stranger Things," the teen hero sci-fi series, was filmed inside Lukiškės Prison in Vilnius, according to promotional materials distributed by the Lithuanian capital's tourism board. The prison was used for a century before closing in 2019; it has now been converted into cultural center where guests can stay in a "Stranger Things"-themed cell for 107 Euros (\$114) a night.

During Lukiškės' century of operation, it was the site of imprisonment, torture and executions for political prisoners. In 1941, the first people to be murdered in the Ponary massacre were 348 Jews and others who had been imprisoned at Lukiškės. Nearly 100,000 people, mostly Jewish, would be murdered at the Ponary site near Vilnius, formerly known as Vilna, in the subsequent months.

Lukiškės was also where Begin was imprisoned for eight months in 1940 and 1941 because of his Zionist activity within the Soviet Union. His time there was marked by "extremely cold and hungry conditions," according to a

timeline assembled by the Menachem Begin Heritage Center, and was followed by deportation to a Soviet penal colony. That ultimately may have saved his life, as he was freed when the Nazis invaded the Soviet Union and ultimately was able to make his way to what would become Israel, where he became the sixth prime minister in 1977. Much of his family was murdered.

Another Jewish activist, Jakub Wygodzki, died at Lukiškės Prison when he was imprisoned there after the Nazis invaded in 1941. A physician, Zionist and supporter of Jewish aid groups, he was 84.

Vilna was a hub of European Jewish culture in the 19th and early 20th centuries. During the Holocaust, the Nazis and local collaborators killed more than 90% of Lithuanian Jews; the city is currently home to just one functioning synagogue, which shut down temporarily in 2019 because of security concerns.

"Stranger Things" has been one of Netflix's most popular shows since its debut in 2016. Due to the release's proximity to a Texas elementary school shooting that killed 19 children and two adults, U.S. viewers will see a content card at the start of the fourth season, which was released last Friday, noting that the show "Contains graphic violence involving children." HW

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New Assistant Director of Staffing and Programming Eagerly Awaits His First Summer at Camp Sabra



Joshua (JC) Cuttler

Joshua (JC) Cuttler brings more than 10 years of experience at Jewish summer camps to his new role of Assistant Director of Staffing & Programming at Camp Sabra. His camp experience spans across four camps in a variety of roles as a camper, counselor, unit head, programming supervisor and assistant director. Throughout his many roles, he has worked with every camp age group and is excited to create unique programming for each age unit at Camp Sabra.

"When I first spoke to JC, I realized that he had that something special that we needed. The more our staff got to know him and his skills, the more we knew that he was the final puzzle piece to complete our new admin team at camp," said Camp Director Kim Sloan.

As Assistant Director of Staffing & Programming, Cuttler envisions his role as a mentor, coach, and cheerleader for the staff. Although not a Camp Sabra alum, Cuttler is excited to use his unique

camp experience to expand and refresh Sabra's programming during his first summer at camp. Cuttler grew up as a camper at URJ Camp Newman and then came back to join the leadership staff as unit head. He also was a counselor at Camp Mountain Chai where he was later unit head and upper division programmer. He served as assistant director of Camp JCC at the Raleigh-Cary JCC from 2020-21.

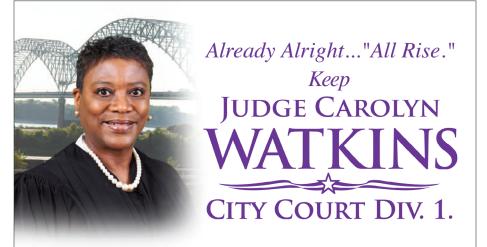
"I could not be more excited to spend my first summer at Sabra. Having the privilege to be part of our camper and staff's experience at camp this summer is an honor. I am counting down each day to a summer that is bound to be filled with ruach, development, and full of Jewish bonds with one another," said Cuttler.

Cuttler's favorite part of his new role at Camp Sabra is cultivating the best experience possible for campers and staff to come as they are and leave camp the best possible version of themselves.

"Our staff is finding him to be a supervisor with a listening ear, a shoulder for comfort, and source of a knowledge from which they can learn, "added Sloan.

Cuttler brings his experiences at other Jewish overnight camps and a fresh set of eyes to Camp Sabra. He also has ideas that will directly impact and boost the staff morale at Sabra, like staff training and appreciation.

Cuttler grew up in California and received his Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences from the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, where he was an active participant in Alpha Epsilon Pi and Hillel. HW



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High Inflation: How Long Will It Last?

Provided by Mike Stein, Managing Director - Investments, Wells Fargo Advisors. Questions for Mike? You may reach him at 901.761.8151 or Michael.Stein@wellsfargoadvisors.com

In March 2022, the Consumer **Price Index for All Urban Consumers** (CPI-U), the most common measure of inflation, rose at an annual rate of 8.5%, the highest level since December 1981. It's not surprising that a Gallup poll at the end of March found that one out of six Americans considers inflation to be the most important problem facing the United States.²

When inflation began rising in the spring of 2021, many economists, including policymakers at the Federal Reserve, believed the increase would be transitory and subside over a period of months. One year later, inflation has proven to be more stubborn than expected. It may be helpful to look at some of the forces behind rising prices, the Fed's plan to combat them, and early signs that inflation may be easing.

Hot Economy Meets Russia and China

The fundamental cause of rising inflation continues to be the growing pains of a rapidly opening economy - a combination of pent-up consumer demand, supply-chain slowdowns, and not enough workers to fill open jobs. Loose Federal Reserve monetary policies and billions of dollars in government stimulus helped prevent a deeper recession but added fuel to the fire when the economy reopened.

More recently, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has placed upward pressure on already high global fuel and food prices.³ At the same time, a COVID resurgence in China led to strict lockdowns that have closed factories and tightened already struggling supply chains for Chinese goods. The volume of cargo handled by the port of Shanghai, the world's busiest port, dropped by an estimated 40% in early April.4

Behind the Headlines

Although the 8.5% year-over-year "headline" inflation in March is a daunting number to consider, monthly numbers provide a clearer picture of the current trend. The month-over-month increase of 1.2% was extremely high, but more than half of it was due to gasoline prices, which rose 18.3% in March alone.⁵ Despite the Russia-Ukraine conflict and increased seasonal demand, U.S. gas prices dropped in April, but the trend was moving upward by the end of the month.6 The federal government's decision to release 1 million barrels of oil per day from the Strategic Petroleum

Reserve for the next six months and allow summer sales of higher-ethanol gasoline may help moderate prices.7

Core inflation, which strips out volatile food and energy prices, rose 6.5% year-over-year in March, the highest rate since 1982. However, the monthover-month increase from February to March was just 0.3%, the slowest pace in six months. Another positive sign was the price of used cars and trucks, which rose by more than 35% over the last 12 months - a prime driver of general inflation - but dropped 3.8% in March.8

Wages and Consumer Demand

For the 12 months ended in March, average hourly earnings increased 5.6% - not enough to keep up with inflation but enough to blunt some of the effects. Lower-paid service workers received higher increases, with wages jumping by almost 15% for nonmanagement employees in the leisure and hospitality industry. Although inflation has cut deeply into wage gains over the last year, wages have increased at about the same rate as inflation over the two-year period of the pandemic.9

One of the big questions going forward is whether rising wages will enable consumers to continue to pay higher prices, which can lead to an inflationary spiral of ever-increasing wages and prices. Recent signals are mixed. The official measure of consumer spending increased 1.1% in March, but an early April poll found that two out of three Americans had cut back on spending due to inflation.10-11

Soft or Hard Landing

The Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) of the Federal Reserve has laid out a plan to fight inflation by raising interest rates and tightening the money supply. After dropping the benchmark federal funds rate to near zero in order to stimulate the economy at the onset of the pandemic, the FOMC raised the rate by 0.25% at its March 2022 meeting and projected the equivalent of six more quarter-percent increases by the end of the year and three or four more in 2024.¹² This would bring the rate to around 2.75%, just above what the FOMC considers a "neutral rate" that will neither stimulate nor restrain the economy.¹³

These moves were projected to bring the Fed's preferred measure of inflation, the Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) Price Index, down to 4.3% by the end of 2022, 2.7% by the end of 2023, and 2.3% by the end of 2024.14 PCE inflation — which was 6.6% in March tends to run below CPI, so even if the Fed achieves these goals, CPI inflation will likely remain somewhat higher.15

Fed policymakers have signaled a willingness to be more aggressive, if necessary. The FOMC raised the funds rate by 0.5% at its May meeting — the first half-percent increase since May 2000 — and there may be more to come. The Committee also began decreasing the Fed's bond holdings to tighten the money supply.16 New projections in June will provide an updated picture of the Fed's intentions.

The question facing the FOMC is how fast they can raise interest rates and tighten the money supply while maintaining optimal employment and economic growth. The ideal is a "soft landing," similar to what occurred in the 1990s, when inflation was tamed without damaging the economy. At the other extreme is the "hard landing" of the early 1980s, when the Fed raised the funds rate to almost 20% in order to control runaway double-digit inflation, throwing the economy into a recession.¹⁷

Fed Chair Jerome Powell acknowledges that a soft landing will be difficult to achieve, but he believes the strong job market may help the economy withstand aggressive monetary policies. Supply chains are expected to improve over time, and workers who have not yet returned to the labor force might fill open jobs without increasing wage and price pressures.18

The next few months will be a key period to reveal the future direction of inflation and monetary policy. The hope is that March represented the peak and inflation will begin to trend downward. But even if that proves to be true, it could be a painfully slow descent.

Projections are based on current conditions, are subject to change, and may not come to pass.

- 1, 5, 8–9) U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022 2) Gallup, March 29, 2022
- 3, 7) The New York Times, April 12, 2022
- 4) CNBC, April 7, 2022
- 6) AAA, April 25 & 29, 2022
- 10, 15) U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2022 11) CBS News, April 11, 2022
- 12, 14, 16) Federal Reserve, 2022
- 13, 17) The Wall Street Journal, April 18, 2022 18) The New York Times, March 21, 2022

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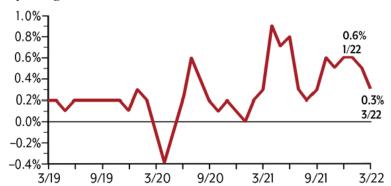
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Slower at the Core

Core inflation, which removes volatile food and energy prices, slowed in February and March.

Monthly change in core CPI



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022 (March 2019 to March 2022, seasonally adjusted) HW

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Netflix Releases Photos of Bradley Cooper Wearing Prosthetic Nose to Portray Leonard Bernstein, Reigniting Jewish Representation Debate



Bradley Cooper as Leonard Bernstein on the set of "Maestro." Credit: Netflix By Gabe Friedman

(JTA) – As Netflix released the first stills from the set of "Maestro," Bradley Cooper's upcoming biopic film about Leonard Bernstein, there was one thing most fans could agree about.

Cooper looked utterly unrecognizable, especially in one image as an elderly version of the iconic Jewish conductor.

But as legions of angry social media users pointed out last Monday, part of Cooper's transformation involved a prosthetic nose, something that many found to be antisemitic – especially since Cooper is not Jewish.

"There's no reason to believe that the decision to wear a fake nose is a deliberately antisemitic act," wrote James Hirsh, a co-host of the Menschwarmers podcast about Jewish athletes, in the Canadian Jewish News. "Cooper is presumably interested in exploring the life of a great composer whom he admires. A number of Jews are involved in the production. And the prosthesis arguably helps with the resemblance.

"But this is Cooper's third time portraying a historical figure on screen," Hirsh added. "No prosthetics were used to play American Sniper's Chris Kyle or Licorice Pizza's Jon Peters. He didn't use them to play the Elephant Man on Broadway."

Hirsh was far from alone in calling out the prosthetic.

Even though actors frequently adapt their bodies while playing historical figures, conversations about how many non-Jews play Jewish characters in Hollywood – and on what scale that should be allowed – have circulated for years.

But the "Jewface" debate received a boost last year, especially after non-Jewish actress Kathryn Hahn was cast as the outspokenly Jewish comedy pioneer Joan Rivers (in a series that was eventually dropped). Comedian Sarah Silverman made headlines by berating the casting, saying "Right now, representation f*ing matters" on an episode of her podcast.

The Bernstein biopic discourse has been particularly charged since 2018, when Cooper and Steven Spielberg – who was first slated to direct "Maestro," before it became Cooper's directorial follow-up to his 2016 hit remake of "A Star Is Born" – beat out the actor-director team of Jake Gyllenhaal and Cary Fukunaga in securing the music rights from Bernstein's estate.

In talking about the Bernstein sweepstakes in an interview last year, Gyllenhaal – who like Spielberg is Jewish – mentioned Bernstein's Jewishness in admitting defeat.

"Sticking your neck out, hoping to get to tell the stories you love and that have been in your heart for a very long time is something to be proud of. And that story, that idea of playing one of the most preeminent Jewish artists in America and his struggle with his identity was in my heart for 20 some odd years, but sometimes those things don't work out," he told Deadline.

Some fans resurfaced the possibility of a Bernstein played by Gyllenhaal in their swipes at the on-set images of Cooper.

Production on "Maestro," which costars Carey Mulligan as Bernstein's wife Felicia Montealegre, started this month. The film will likely be released in 2023. **HW**

Church Moves in and Renovates Former Anshei Building

By Shoshana Cenker

One City Church, the organization that bought the former building of Anshei Sphard-Beth El Emeth Congregation, is already getting to work on the property. The sale closed on Tuesday, May 17. Rather than tear down the building at 120 N. East Yates Road, the church is embarking on a multiphase three-to-five-year renovation plan.

"We were looking for a building that we could locate in the center of the city, so we'd have the ability to reach inside and outside of the city at the same time. That type of location is incredibly difficult to find," said Pastor Chris Conlee who cofounded One City Church with his wife, Karin. "Conner Walker, vice president at Cushmand & Wakefield Commercial Advisors, suggested we go look at the building. When I walked into the sanctuary, I fell in love with it – it had a complete wow factor. I've been in virtually every church and synagogue in the city – there's nothing else like it. It's so unique."

The church is planning to keep the building intact and "enhance its beauty." They especially like the sanctuary's acoustics and in-the-round shape of its seating and how it fits in with the church's vision of "we are one." The congregation of about 200 core families loves the space and location, which coincides with their efforts to "unify the city."

"We exist to prove love works, and when you prove love works, it shows that G-d wants his people to be unified. Hence the name, One City," Pastor Conlee said. "Financially, the building was far beyond our means, so we began to pray. And we have seen financial miracles. There's no other explanation. Not only from people within our city who gave generously, but people from around the country have given in ex-

traordinary ways."

Pastor Conlee says he has love and respect for the Jewish people. As the church begins renovations, he wants "to learn more about the history of the synagogue and its people to honor the heritage of the Jewish community."

The first phase of the renovation project, which began last weekend, is a deep cleaning throughout the building. It needs new AC units and a new roof, among other repairs, to get it operational. Eventually, crews will come in to do some construction, including renovating the bathrooms and kid's areas. There are also plans to have a historical marker placed on the site.

"I'm very happy and grateful that the ASBEE building will become a place where people can gather – and appreciate its historic and iconic space – yet it is bittersweet that the ASBEE Congregation is no longer there," said longtime Anshei member Lynnie Mirvis. "I'm thrilled that it was recognized and placed on the National Historic Register, where its history will live on, and I appreciate all the people in the neighborhood and beyond who worked to prevent the building from being torn down."

Eventually, the church will have a parent's day out program, seminars, conferences and leadership teaching events, in addition to Sunday services. There's also plans to open a coffee shop and bakery, with an outdoor screenedin patio, which'll be open to anyone. Depending on supply chain issues, the church hopes to begin holding services sometime between Thanksgiving and Jan. 1, 2023. "We believe this building is a blessing to everyone," noted Pastor Conlee.

For more info: OneCityMemphis. org $\mathbf{H}\mathbf{W}$

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Fathers, You're Never Too Old to Inspire



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

I used to be a father. I still am, and now I'm a grandfather, too. But it's a load I can handle because the job description is just about identical. It calls for inspiration – of young minds and young hearts; especially grandkids who are remote and therefore consider themselves safe from my constant inspirational messages. I guess they never heard of the Post Office. And I'm sure they don't know that we Jews used to be called "the People of the Book."

Yes, despite TV and video games and blackberries and cell phones and an environment humming with electronic messages – we Jews honor and cherish words printed upon paper. We still are the People of the Book.

So, I write a lot of letters to my grand-kids. For only 44 cents, [how long ago was that?!] you're allowed a large number of words written on paper. And a wise grandfather, besides council, advice and family gossip, can include a candy bar, a stick of gum, a newspaper clipping, or a baseball card to lure the young mind into the civilized joy of correspondence. What teacher ever taught successfully without incentives? It's a trick I learned years ago from the Crackerjack people. They marketed candy with cheap, frag-

ile toys. I sell family pride.

Legend tells us that Socrates – you've heard of the Socratic School – kept a big jar of black olives beside his desk to reward precocious students. Incentives are necessary to learning.

I use wiles of all kinds to encourage my younger kin to rip open their envelopes with frantic enthusiasm. "Wonder what he sent this time? Maybe if I write back today, he'll send me another Hershey bar."

Yes, Hershey bars are great. Nice and flat – but they have their disadvantages in July unless you live in Nome and your granddaughter hangs out with her kids in Anchorage. Kids love letters with or without sweet bonuses. They love their name in big, bold letters on the envelope. They love the ritual of sorting through the mail and throwing the discards on the floor before finding THEIR letter.

And like I say, I rarely write without including something that is either amusing, edible or ethically fortifying. My favorites are clippings from my local newspaper (human interest stories, we used to call them). So educational! Encourages kids to read and observe the world outside of home and school. And if you pick your stories with care, you can package amusement and even morality in your envelopes. For example, I just mailed off to eight grandkids a story of a 65-year-old lady who wrote a confession to her high school principal; she cheated in a high school writing course 47 years ago! My small audience loved it and marveled at her delayed, but full confession.

They were full of questions: "Did she have to take the class over? Did she get a punishment? Did they send her a new report card?" I assured them she was not punished and maybe – because of her honesty – they renamed the auditorium in her honor.

But my kids usually award the family Pulitzer Prize to the vignettes I call "Pet Saves Family:" the collie who pulled Jamie out of the river. The cocker spaniel who barked and alerted the family to their smoldering home. And, of course, the whole category of dog-finds-missing-child story. We humans, even after we've lost the glow of childhood, still have a soft spot for animal rescue stories. It goes back in history to the gabbling geese who saved Rome. A story probably told in a grandfather's letter of 300 BCE.

We don't always need burning homes and swollen rivers. Kids of the right age (say over 3 and under 10) love any animal stories. Naturally. They love animals. There's a kinship there of smallness, innocence, helplessness that we just don't understand.

Just this month I mailed out a tearjerker that couldn't fail to warm the juvenile heart. A two-column report of a 3-legged dog – yes, a handicapped mutt who had lost a race with a truck and forfeited one of his four limbs – found a lost child. The sheriff and an army of searchers failed, noted the article, but the dog, only 75% effective, found the missing child.

The returns from my young readers have been overwhelmingly enthusiastic about this theme. More! they cry. They

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want more. But that's not so easy. I'm at the mercy of the newspaper industry which is attracted to war, corruption, crime, and disease rather than the uplifting genre of "Pet Finds Child."

Besides the inspirational value, there's a selfish payoff to my letter writing campaigns: I like the return mail. And maybe decades from now when I'm old and my pen trembles on the paper; and my poor old grinders are loose and wobbly, my mail will be full of attentive notes sweetened with easy to chew Hershey Bars. Bread on the waters, you know.

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

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

INSIGHTS FROM ISRAEL What Ben-Gurion Learned from Churchill

By Howard Weisband

PS: It's still relevant today.

In an excellent May 23 article in Mosaic, "What Ben-Gurion Learned From Churchill," Neil Rogachevsky describes David Ben-Gurion's 10-month unanticipated stay in London in 1940-41, as World War II was approaching British shores and Winston Churchill became Prime Minister.

Rogachevsky relates that as bombs fell, Ben-Gurion had time to read Greek classics and closely watched Churchill's statesmanship. We are informed that "these months in London were crucial for Ben-Gurion's political education."

The author continues: "Less than ten years later, in the spring of 1948, Ben-Gurion's own Churchillian moment would come."

The circumstances of course would be very different as Israel was to declare statehood, resist terrorism, and prepare for a War of Independence. However, what Ben-Gurion, who would become Israel's first Prime Minister, took to heart was Churchill's determined resolve and ability to address his people in order to build and maintain their confidence, while rallying them to take action and defend the homeland.

BG, as Ben-Gurion was affectionately known, further learned from Churchill that unified action would be required to defeat multiple Arab armies. Heretofore, the Zionist movement was "governed" by several international organizations. In Rogachevsky's words: "... it needed a recognized single chain of command to supplant the competing and overlapping institutions and cliques that had always vied for authority since Herzl's day. In the spring of 1948, this was not merely inefficient but dangerous. To win the war, the Jews needed a central government. And, in April 1948, Ben-Gurion and his allies created that government from within the existing structures of the international Zionist movement."

Jump to 2022 and Israel's fractured political system. While we have a strong, highly capable army and superb security organizations, we face continuing terrorism and a potential existential threat from a nuclear Iran. However, important national policies and legislation are handcuffed by competing political parties that put their own power desires ahead of interests of the State.

Opposition parties have announced that their exclusive goal is to bring down the existing Government, therefore they are voting against bills of national importance, and which speak to their own parties' interests. For instance, providing full university tuition to soldiers leaving the army and extending legisla-

tion that would renew Israeli civil law for Israelis living in the West Bank. To some degree, the same is happening within the coalition itself.

As I write on June 1, the situation is quite murky and may even be at a crisis point politically. When you read this column, we will know if we are headed again for new elections or if the coalition has managed to remain in place in its attempt to successfully govern.

Ben-Gurion favored the parliamentary form of government, but would not have imagined that the system could produce such fractured interests, inordinate powers invested in small parties, and especially a total disregard for national unity as learned from Churchill... all resulting in governmental gridlock.

There is a certain irony in this situation. Churchill definitely was a model for Ben-Gurion, the long-time leader of the Labor Party. But likewise, Churchill is a hero for the leader of today's opposition, former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, leader of Likud; it was Bibi who replaced Ben-Gurion in the history books as Israel's longest-serving Prime

The same author, Neil Rogachevsky, on December 21, 2021, described an interview with Netanyahu by writing in his introduction: "What's next for Net-

anyahu? Though clearly pining to return to the big job, Netanyahu seems to want to emulate one of his heroes, Winston Churchill, by spending some time out of office reflecting on his own career and the history of his times."

Bibi himself in the interview spoke of his fondness for Churchill, his support of Zionism and for the establishment of a Jewish State. He describes his respect for Churchill's greatness: "There is no doubt that Churchill changed the mindset and the direction of the war. It's clear as day that he changed it."

Ironically, while Churchill's leadership was an important symbol for both a strong Labor Prime Minister and later an intense Likud Prime Minister, I dare say that neither of them, Ben-Gurion nor Netanyahu, would look to the other as a political role model.

Perhaps, however, that was the genius of Churchill.

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

OBITUARIES

Malcolm Jay King



Malcolm "Jay" King, 62, died on May 31, 2022. He is survived by his daughter, Celia King, his brother, Ronnie (Pam) King and his two sisters, Fran (Steve) Twersky and Terri King. He was preceded in death by his parents, Arthur and Rosalind Rosenblum King, and his beloved son, David Marsh King, who died on January 9, 2011. He is also survived by numerous nieces and nephews whom he loved very much, cousins who were like brothers and sisters to him, and his aunt, Maureen Rosenblum.

Jay was born on November 22, 1959, in New Orleans, Louisiana, where he lived until the family moved to Memphis in 1974. He graduated from Ger-

mantown High School and was president of Okeon AZA. He obtained his Bachelor of Science degree in accounting from the University of Memphis in 1983.

Jay worked as CFO with his family business, Designer Optical. Jay began flight lessons and soon after, he purchased the flight school, Downtown Aviation. With his entrepreneurial spirit, leadership and passion, "Jay Air" was born. The flight school has grown to become the biggest and best flight school in the area, and Jay is beloved in the aviation community.

Jay had many passions in his life. He loved flying, boating, fishing, skiing, traveling, family and rescuing people and dogs. His greatest love was for his children, Celia and David. Jay was known by all as a sweet, kind soul who would help anyone in need. Jay was an amazing man who will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

Funeral services were held Friday, June 3, 2022, in the Sam Abraham Chapel at Baron Hirsch Cemetery in Memphis. The family would ask that family and friends make donations to K9 Air Rescue, Memphis Humane Society and Baron Hirsch Synagogue or a charity of their choice in lieu of flowers. HW

Belgian Woman Who Saved Jewish Children from The Holocaust Dies at 100



Andrée Geulen-Herscovici with one of the Jewish child survivors of the Holocaust. Credit: Yad Vashem.

(JNS) – A schoolteacher and a member of the Belgian Resistance during World War II and the Holocaust, Andrée Geulen-Herscovici died on June 1 in Ixelles, Belgium, at the age of 100. As a member of the clandestine Committee for the Defense of Jews, she assisted in the rescue of almost 1,000 Jewish children during the Holocaust, risking her own safety to do so.

Geulen was honored in 1989 with the title of Righteous Among the Nations, and in 2007, was granted honorary Israeli citizenship in a ceremony at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. Upon accepting the honorific, she said, "What I did was merely my duty. Disobeying the laws of the time was just the normal thing to do."

When Geulen noticed one of her students at the Gaty de Gamont School in Brussels wearing the yellow star mandated by the Nazis to identify Jews, she instructed all of her students to wear aprons in order to shield her Jewish students from humiliation. After learning the fate of those Jews captured by the Nazis, she assisted a Jewish friend at the Belgian Jewish Defense Committee in hiding Jewish children at school.

The principal, Odile Obart, also helped. He and his wife were arrested after a raid on the school and sent to German concentration camps, where they both died, and were later recognized as Righteous Among the Nations as well.

Geulen warned Jewish students not to return to the school before going undercover for more than two years, providing them with false identities and stealing them away to hideouts in Christian homes and monasteries, returning occasionally to check on their welfare.

Most of the parents of the children Geulen saved were murdered during the Holocaust. Geulen kept coded records of each child's original name and their places of shelter to enable those who still had family remaining to reunite with them after the war. Between the spring of 1943 and fall of 1944, Geulen escorted more than 300 Jewish children to safety.

Israeli Ambassador to Belgium Emmanuel Nahshon was saddened upon learning of Geulen's passing, saying: "She was a true hero of humanity, and we will carry her memory forever. She was an amazing and wonderful woman who saved many Jews during World War II."

A statement from the Belgium Jewish community read: "We received the news of Andrée Geulen-Herscovici passing with deep regret. We are all orphans because we just lost a lady who showed exemplary behavior in the face of Nazi barbarism. She did not look away when the Jews needed help, and she saved them from death. If there were more women and men like Andrée Geulen-Herscovici, the world would be a better place." HW

Oldest Concentration Camp Survivor Dies at Age 108



Boris Pahor, June 20, 2015. Credit: Claude Truong-Ngoc via Wikimedia Commons.

(JNS) – The oldest known survivor of a Nazi concentration camp, Boris Pahor, died last Monday in the Italian city of Trieste at the age of 108, reported Deutsche Welle.

Pahor was born on Aug. 26, 1913, in the city of Trieste, which belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the time. He was part of the Slovenian minority in the city and fought with the Slovenian resistance against the Nazi occupation during World War II.

He was arrested by the Nazis in 1944 and deported to Dachau, which he survived along with four other Nazi concentration camps: Natzweiler-Struthof, Dora-Mittelbau, Harzungen and Bergen-Belsen.

Pahor published the autobiographical novel Necropolis in 1967 about the horrors of the Holocaust. He also wrote Flowers for a Leper (2004) and Piazza Oberdan (2006) about the brutality of Italian fascists towards the Slovenian minority in Trieste, and A Difficult Spring (1978), based on his experience of moving to Paris after the war.

The Holocaust survivor was a recipient of Slovenia's highest award for cultural achievement in 1991 and was appointed to the country's Academy of Sciences and Arts.

In one of his last public appearances, he talked about the importance of remembering the Holocaust, saying, "I wanted to testify and explain what I experienced so that others can learn how and what can happen."

Italian President Sergio Mattarella praised Pahor as a "witness and victim of the horrors caused by war, by inflated nationalism and totalitarian ideologies."

The country's culture minister, Dario Franceschini, paid tribute to Pahor saying, "we have lost a great writer, a giant of the 20th century who was able to tell the horrors of the concentration camp with skill and clarity, pulling no punches." HW

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Orthodox Rabbis Don't Enter Churches. So Why Did Britain's Chief Rabbi Attend Service at One? By Cnaan Liphshiz

(JTA) – Most Orthodox interpretations of Jewish law conclude that Jews are forbidden to enter churches, even if no prayer will be taking place.

So why was British Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis present last Friday at St. Paul's Cathedral in London, where he attended a prayer service in honor of Queen Elizabeth II's 70-year anniversary on the throne?

The answer dates back to a ruling from the 1970s by the London Beth Din, the Orthodox rabbinical court, which allows rabbis to attend Christian religious ceremonies only if the rabbi's presence is requested by the monarch.

And Mirvis' presence was indeed requested at St. Paul's, where he joined a select group of dignitaries and clergy for The Queen's Platinum Jubilee 2022 – a four-day bash to celebrate the legacy of the longest-serving monarch in British history.

Mirvis was among 2,000 elites attending the Service of Thanksgiving Friday at St. Paul's, a massive 17th-century English Baroque-style structure that is the top church of the Diocese of London.

All eyes were naturally on Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan Markle, whose attendance was the first time in over two years since they moved to California amid a rift in the family over allegations by Markle, whose mother is Black, that she was subjected to racist treatment by top members of the royal family.

Queen Elizabeth, 96, was absent from the ceremony. In a statement by Buckingham Palace, the Royal House said that she is sitting the service out with "great reluctance" after considering the "journey and activity required." She did take part in a beacon-lighting ceremony last Thursday evening.

Whether Jews may enter churches has been the subject of debate for centuries. Many rabbis who have considered the issue have concluded that churches are the site of "avodah zara," or idol worship, which is strictly prohibited under Jewish law. But others, including in the Conservative movement in the United States, have taken cues from a 13th-century rabbi who decided that Christians were not idol worshippers and decided that entering churches can be permissible – opening the door to interfaith relations.

In the United States, some controversy arose over Rabbi Haskel Lookstein's participation at the inaugural church services for President Barack Obama, where the Orthodox rabbi recited a non-denominational prayer. He faced criticism from one Orthodox group, but rebuffed it by citing British rabbis' attendance at events in Westminster Abbey.

In the United Kingdom, the issue of what to do about royal events was resolved in the 1970s, according to Herschel Gluck, a haredi Orthodox rabbi in London.

"It's pretty much consensus at this point" that rabbis should not enter churches, he said. But, he told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, "the only exception is when the monarch requests it."

Previous chief rabbis may have been even more lenient on this point.

The late Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits, who had held Mirvis' position for 25 years until 1991, explained his approach in a 1995 book. "After consultation with the [London] Beth Din, my own practice is occasionally to attend Church services on royal and state occasions to represent the Jewish community," he wrote. "But I never actively participate, nor do I wear cap and gown. I find that my Christian hosts usually show under-

standing and respect for this attitude and its reservations."

He did not mention a royal invitation as a prerequisite to attending such events.

Part of the reason for the consensus around the concession may be connected to the presence of the royal family in Jewish worship in the United Kingdom.

Since 1801, when the first siddurs, or prayer books, were printed, British Jews have been reciting a prayer for the monarch each Shabbat and on other holy days as part of Shacharit, the morning prayer service. (Dutch Jews have been doing so for even longer, since 1642 at least, and reciting a prayer for the country is common in many countries.)

The current wording of the prayer, from 1962, 10 years after Queen Elizabeth rose to the throne, begins with: "Our Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth (II), Elizabeth the Queen Mother, Philip Duke of Edinburgh, Charles Prince of Wales and all the Royal Family. May the supreme King of kings in his mercy preserve the Queen in life, guard her and deliver her from all trouble and sorrow."

Mirvis, the chief rabbi, authored a special prayer for the Jubilee, in which he wrote: "Seventy years have passed since Her Majesty the Queen ascended the throne. Together with all our fellow citizens, we fervently pray that she be granted many more years of blessing so that she may continue to bring honour and glory to the Crown and to all her people.

The Jews' relationship with the British royalty hasn't always been this harmonious. In 1290, Edward I signed an edict of expulsion for all of the kingdom's Jews. They did not return until the 17th century, though the politics be-

hind the de-facto lifting of the expulsion are disputed.

Fast forward a few centuries, though, some of Britain's best-known Jewish persons were prominently present at the Jubilee event for the cameras and behind the scenes.

Marie van der Zyl, the president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, had front-row seats. She wore a darkblue dress along with, per the informal dress code, a matching hat, decorated with a white satin fabric.

For most Britons, the main event of the jubilee celebrations is yet to come in the Platinum Jubilee Pageant scheduled for June 5 at Buckingham Palace.

A free event, it will offer "all the excitement and spectacle of an international parade and carnival" with "street arts, theatre, music, circus, carnival and costume to celebrate Her Majesty's unwavering duty, love of the natural world and dedication to the Commonwealth," the event's website says.

The man responsible for that bit of magic is a Jewish Londoner named David Zolkwer, a 56-year-old professional show director and chief producer of the Jubilee festivities.

He worked on the 2011 wedding of Kate Middleton and Prince William and the 1997 handover ceremony in Hong Kong.

He wouldn't have gotten to where he is if it were not for the Jewish yet pluralistic upbringing that he received from his parents and at Manchester's King David Jewish school, he told the Jewish Chronicle.

"I'm grateful that my parents made that call," he said of the school, "because it was about opening my eyes to a broader community and a broader picture of what society is like." **HW**

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