## DON'T MISS AN ISSUE SUBSCRIPTION FORM ON PAGE 8

# Hebrew Watchman

**SERVING THE MEMPHIS JEWISH COMMUNITY SINCE 1925** 

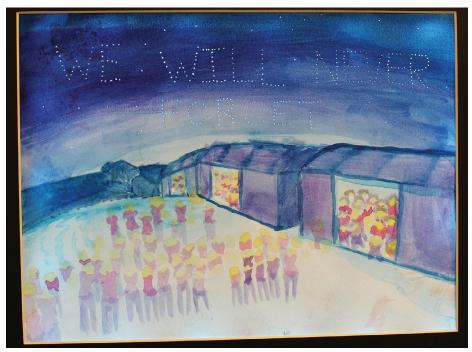
HEBREWWATCHMAN.COM

19 TEVET, 5783

**JANUARY 12, 2023** 

VOL. 101, NO. 16

## Memphis Jewish Federation Launches 14th Annual Holocaust Art and Essay Competition



Last year's winning art entry in Memphis Jewish Federation's Holocaust Art & Essay Contest, Endless Train, was created by Colonial Middle School student Bruce Black. He used LED lights under a watercolor painting dotted with pinholes to evoke "the memory of the Holocaust preserved for future generations." This year's contest is now open. Visit jcpmemphis. org/holocaustartandessay for more information. Memphis Jewish Federation has announced its 14th Annual Holocaust Art and Essay Competition for Mid-South and Tennessee students in grades 6-12.

This year's contest theme is *Courage* and Hope: The Holocaust Through the *Eyes of a Child*. Middle school students in grades 6-8 are invited to submit artwork, and high school students in grades 9-12 are invited to submit essays. Cash prizes for the top winners are made possible by the Kaethe Mela Family Memorial Fund of the Jewish Foundation of Memphis.

Students are invited to consider how children used courage and hope during the horror? How did children survive in hiding and in camps? How were children affected by their loss of education and childhood? How did children resist? Could a child's imagination take them to a beautiful place and away from the harsh reality of living through the Holocaust?

"This annual competition serves to raise awareness of the Holocaust in both the Jewish and broader communities," said Executive Vice President of Memphis Jewish Federation Bluma Zuckerbrot-Finkelstein. "In our current era of rising antisemitism and rampant unfamiliarity with the Holocaust in the general community, this contest is sorely needed."

As in previous years, all artwork entered into the competition will be displayed in the lobby of the Memphis Jewish Community Center.

Contest winners will be recognized at the 61st Annual Yom HaShoah Community Commemoration on Monday, April 17, 2023, featuring Tova Friedman. Tova is one of the youngest survivors of Auschwitz, author of "**The Daughter of Auschwitz**," and featured in many Tik Toks known as Tova Toks telling her story.

The first-place winning essay will be published in the program booklet and the first-place winning artwork will adorn the cover of the program booklet. The winning essay will also be published in *The Hebrew Watchman* and in *JCP Connect*, Jewish Community Partners' online blog (www.jcpconnect.org)

(See Competition Page 2)

## New Report Details Rising Antisemitism in Kentucky

#### By David Swindle

(JNS) – From an attempted murder of a Jewish candidate for political office, to a bomb threat at a Jewish Community Center, to the broad distribution of hateful propaganda by white supremacist groups, Kentucky experienced a notable rise in antisemitism in 2022.

Now, the Kentucky Jewish Council (KJC) is raising the alarm with its first ever report documenting a wave of antisemitism in the Bluegrass State – 30 incidents, to be exact, during the past year. "Unfortunately, this year we have seen antisemitism in Kentucky from a variety of sources," KJC representative Rabbi Shlomo Litvin told JNS. "There



have been some white supremacist incidents, and we have also seen a massive rise in the Black Hebrew Israelite hate cult, which has only intensified in the wake of Kyrie [Irving] and Kanye [West]."

Litvin also noted less overt but still destructive expressions of antisemitism, commenting, "We have also seen repeated issues in the political sphere, as well as in media, though not as bad as the frequent antisemitism in "The New York Times." In January, the Kentucky Black Student Union received a series of fliers with antisemitic tropes and a list of Jewish figures. In February, Quintez Brown tried to murder Jewish mayoral candidate Craig Greenberg. Brown had previously posted antisemitic rhetoric and met with a hateful leader of a Black Hebrew Israelite group.

February also saw state legislators use

Kentucky Jewish Council representative Rabbi Shlomo Litvin Courtesy: Rabbi Litvin The eight-page report goes month by month in chronicling a slew of hate crimes and anti-Jewish harassment in Kentucky. the offensive term "Jew-them-down" and later meet with Jewish leaders in repentance. These politicians were Republicans Rick Girdler and Walker Thomas, the latter who admitted it was

(See Kentucky Page 3)



### MJCC Presents Aging in Place for Your Family!

"Aging in Place" will be presented at the Memphis Jewish Community Center (MJCC) on Tuesday, January 17 at 7 p.m. by Josh Goldin, LMSW with Hope Hospice and Palliative Care.

Josh will focus on how seniors can explore ways to stay longer in their own environment. His seminar on the "5 wishes most seniors have and why they're important" is not only for seniors but for younger family members who might one day be faced with difficult decisions about their loved ones.

There will also be discussion on ways to maximize seniors' free Medicare Benefits. There will be a Q&A period following the discussion. Refreshments will be served. To make a reservation, please call the MJCC at 901-761-0810. The program is free to the general public. **HW** 



Josh Goldin, LMSW, Hope Hospice and Palliative Care

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



#### **Michael Donahue**

On Wednesday, January 18 at noon, the MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club January Monthly Luncheon will feature very special entertainment! Pianist Michael Donahue will entertain guests. Michael is better known as a local journalist for the "Memphis Flyer" and for many years with the "Commer-

#### Competition...

(Continued From Page 1) and shared on social media.

All entries will be judged according to the following criteria: creativity, passion, and relevance to the topic. Full guidelines and resources for entrants are available at www.jcpmemphis.org/ holocaustartandessay and should be carefully reviewed before submission.

Students should email their essays to HolocaustEssayMJF@gmail.com.

#### cial Appeal."

Michael has been playing piano for decades in Memphis. He was the weekly pianist at Cielo Restaurant and has played numerous country clubs, private parties. And he used to play for his mother's nursing home. He is a true native of Memphis – a graduate from CBHS and Memphis State. Michael's musical range includes works by Cole Porter, George Gershwin, show tunes, songs from movie scores and soundtracks, and lots of upbeat pieces that can get people dancing and singing along. He is always happy to take requests.

Come enjoy this terrific pianist and a good kosher lunch from the kitchens at the Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab, all for \$5! The luncheon and Michael start at noon. The lunch is sponsored by Opus East Senior Living and entertainment is provided by Creative Aging Midsouth.

Reservations can be made by calling the front desk at 901-761-0810 or emailing Steve Kaplan at stevekaplan@ jccmemphis.org. **HW** 

.....

Artwork should be dropped off at the Memphis Jewish Federation following the published guidelines including photo of artwork and attachment emailed to HolocaustArtContest@gmail.com.

All entries are due by the close of business on **Monday, March 6, 2023.** Please include entrants' name, grade, school, and contact information.

For more information, contact Lorraine Wolf at lwolf@jcpmemphis.org. **HW** 

## Hebrew Watchmai

SERVING THE MEMPHIS JEWISH COMMUNITY SINCE 1925

#### Established September, 1925 By Leo I. Goldberger (1902-1989)

MAILING ADDRESS THE HEBREW WATCHMAN PO Box 770846 Memphis, TN 38177-0846

#### Office: 901.763.2215 Direct: 901.827.7244

#### info@hebrewwatchman.com

Susan C. Nieman Editor and Publisher

Larry Nieman Advertising Sales Director

> Toni Nieman Office Manager

Rebecca Miller Social Media Director Web Development

Herman I. Goldberger Editor and Publisher Emeritus

Barbara B. Goldberger Editor and Publisher Emeritus

THE HEBREW WATCHMAN (USPS #807-360) is published weekly every Thursday for \$36 per year by JEWISH LIVING OF THE SOUTH, Inc. THE HEBREW WATCHMAN PO Box 770846 Memphis, TN 38177-0846 Periodical postage paid at

Memphis, Tenn. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:

THE HEBREW WATCHMAN PO Box 770846 Memphis, TN 38177-0846

#### ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES: Memphis and Mid-South \$36 Out-of-State \$50 Payable in Advance

#### Submissions

Send editorial submissions (calendar items, news releases, event photos, and letters to the editor) at least 9 days prior to publication date to info@hebrewwatchman.com

Advertising For advertising rates and specs, contact Larry at 901.299.7376 or info@hebrewwatchman.com

Simchas Weddings, bar/bat mitzvahs, birthdays, engagement, anniversaries info@hebrewwatchman.com

Obituaries 901.763.2215 info@hebrewwatchman.com

The Hebrew Watchman is a Member of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, and Jewish News Service

#### PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

THE HEBREW WATCHMAN must give permission for any material contained herein to be copied or reproduced in any manner without express permission of THE HEBREW WATCHMAN. The publication of any advertisement in this edition does not constitute an endorsement of the advertisers' product, kashrut or services by this publication. The opinions of contributors do not necessarily reflect those of THE HEBREW WATCHMAN. Nor can the publishers be held responsible for any 1/12/2023 errors.



Erev Shabbat, Fri. January 13, 2023 / 20 Tevet, 5783	4:51 p.m.
Havdalah, Sat. January 14, 2023 / 21 Tevet, 5783	5:50 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion: Shemot





Brian Lurie Broker, Vice-President GRI, RENE, MMDC, CRS

Cell: 901.315.2298 Office: 901.260.4780

Blurie2003@gmail.com BestRealEstateAgentinMemphis.com www.BluffCityBuilders.com

CRYE-LEIKE, REALTORS° LET US HELP YOU BUILD YOUR DREAM HOME

**BLUFF CITY BUILDERS** 



<sup>©</sup> Official Real Estate Agent of The Memphis Tigers

MOVING? PLEASE LET US KNOW BEFORE YOU GO! 901.763.2215 info@hebrewwatchman.com

#### BRIT-MILAH RITUAL CIRCUMCISIONS



Rabbi Levi Y.

Klein

Certified Mohel Pediatrician Recommended Over 20 Years of Experience

Member of the American Board of Ritual Circumcision

Mohel@JewishMemphis.com 901-754-0404

#### Kentucky...

(Continued From Page 1)

"second nature" to him to use such language. Further, the Nation of Islam contacted state legislators and urged them to act against the Jewish community.

In March, the Libertarian Party of Kentucky continued its history of offensive rhetoric and "doubled down on previous antisemitic posts, eventually blocking Jewish leaders and organizations," according to the report. Kentucky's "Courier Journal" published an op-ed by an activist, which compared a local rabbi to Louis Farrakhan and Adolf Hitler, paragraphs that the newspaper later retracted. On March 23, the Jewish Community Center of Louisville received a bomb threat, prompting the building to close for the day.

April saw the distribution of antisemitic fliers by a white supremacist group, which the report noted "had occurred over a dozen times in recent months."

In May, the University of Kentucky Jewish Student Center experienced a threat of violence as one student yelled "kill the k\*\*\*s" at the center's director. In a "Courier Journal" article, an activist group downplayed antisemitic incidents and accused the Jewish community of "crying wolf."

In June, a candidate for the Kentucky State House engaged in Holocaust minimization on Twitter, "making comparisons between Nazi leaders and Kentucky elected officials, and comparing Kentucky policy to Holocaust edicts," the report stated. Additional antisemitic social media activity from Kentucky political leaders surfaced in July, with the Bracken County Republican Party attacking the new director of the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Steve Dettlebach, as a

"Jewish anti-gun activist" and part of a "Jewish Junta."

August saw a Jewish family's Louisville home defaced with antisemitic graffiti. No arrests were made. In September, a write-in candidate for the U.S. Senate launched a website filled with Nazi-inspired rhetoric and published a book titled "My Struggle 2."

In November, with the rise of antisemitic sentiment inspired by rapper Ye (formerly Kanye West) and basketball star Kyrie Irving, one Louisville leader defended Irving's endorsement of a Holocaust denial film advocating violence against Jews. The Black Hebrew Israelite movement held an event at the Louisville Free Public Library, denouncing the Jewish community as "fake Jews."

Finally, December concluded the year with two episodes of antisemitic harassment on campus. One University of Kentucky student was verbally harassed while preparing items at the Jewish Student Center. On Dec. 9, the university's rabbi was threatened with violence when a passing motorist declared "Kanye is right," an increasingly common declaration from antisemites.

In 2021, Kentucky became the first state in America to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) definition of antisemitism.

Litvin offered a two-fold prescription for how to counter antisemitism in his state and more broadly.

"I believe all these issues have the same answer, which lies in education, and promoting a moral society," he said. "Antisemitism cannot take root in a place of morality, and it's much harder to hate those you know." HW

## Moscow's Former Chief Rabbi: 'The Best Option for Russian Jews is to Leave'

#### **By David I. Klein**

(JTA) - Pinchas Goldshmidt, the former chief rabbi of Moscow who fled the country earlier this year, said other Russian Jews should leave before it's too late in an interview with the "Guardian."

"When we look back over Russian history, whenever the political system was in danger you saw the government trying to redirect the anger and discontent of the masses towards the Jewish community," Goldschmidt told the "Guardian." "We saw this in tsarist times and at the end of the Stalinist regime."

He argued that Russia's floundering invasion of Ukraine is starting to foster a similar environment.

"We're seeing rising antisemitism while Russia is going back to a new kind of Soviet Union, and step by step the Iron Curtain is coming down again. This is why I believe the best option for Russian Jews is to leave," Goldschmidt said.

Goldschmidt, who was born in Switzerland but has been serving Russian Jewry since 1989, left the country in June, nearly four months after Russia began its invasion. He said that he was being pressured to support the invasion and feared the impact his refusal might have on Moscow's Jewish community.

"Pressure was put on community leaders to support the war and I refused to do so. I resigned because to continue as chief rabbi of Moscow would be a problem for the community because of the repressive measures taken against



Pinchas Goldschmidt, Former Chief Rabbi of Moscow, attends the 32nd General Assembly of the Conference of European Rabbis in Munich, Germany, May 30, 2022. Credit: Sven Hoppe/picture alliance via Getty Images

dissidents," he said.

However, others in Russia have denied that claim, including the director of Moscow's Choral Synagogue, which reelected him chief rabbi almost immediately after he left.

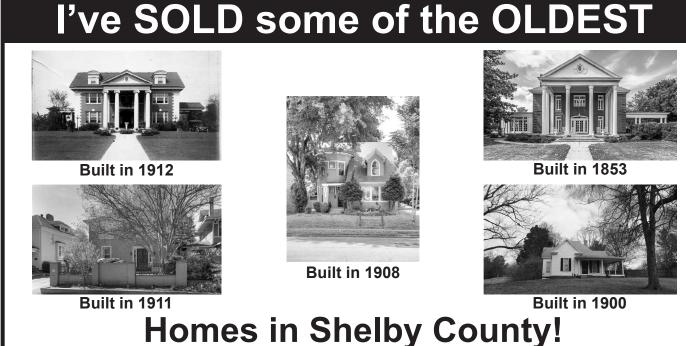
Other Jewish leaders in Russia have remained in the country, such as Berel Lazar, a rabbi affiliated with the Hasidic Chabad-Lubavitch movement who despite long being seen as close to Putin has spoken out against the war.

But Jews, like Russians of all ethnicities, have been fleeing Russia en masse since the war began in late February. In August, it was estimated that more than 20,000 of Russia's 165,000 Jews had fled the country.

"There's a section of Russian society called the creacle, the creative class of business and cultural leaders, intellectuals and artists," Goldschmidt said, "and I think it's safe to say a great percentage of those people have left Russia, which is and will be very detrimental to Russian society."

During the interview with the "Guardian," Goldschmidt, who is also the president of the Conference of European rabbis, additionally discussed other issues facing European Jewry, such as rising antisemitism around the world, and how the state of European Jewry compares to the situation for Jews in the United States.

"For many years, Jews in the U.S. believed that it was an exception, that whatever happened in Europe and other countries could never happen there," Goldschmidt said. "But over the past



No Brag. Just Fact! But, I've also sold some of the NEWEST and everything in-between! So, whatever the age, location or style (and I've had some doozies), if you or someone you know is thinking of selling, talk to 2-3 real estate Brokers but make sure that I am one of them. Find out how my highly successful Strategic Marketing Program can make the difference in whether you sit or SELL! Remember...

## When you want the job DONE, call Shel-DONE!





Sheldon Rosengarten,

**REALTOR Emeritus\*** \*Awarded by the National Association of Realtors for 40 Years of Service.



Marx-Bensdorf REALTORS

Life Member, Multi-Million Dollar Club **Memphis Area Association of Realtors**  Office 901.682.1868 • Cell 901.483.0546 shelrose@memphisrelocate.com

three years there have been more attacks on Jews there than in Europe.

"What is changing is the political system is much more polarized but also the discourse has been upended by social media. The polarization we're seeing has made antisemitism much more acceptable.'

During the interview, Goldschmit also praised Ukraine's Jewish community, denying Putin's line that it is Nazi state.

"Show me another country that is in the grip of Nazis where the Jewish community is thriving," Goldschmidt said. HW

THE HEBREW WATCHMAN **Serving the Memphis** community for 97 Years

## Meet Amichai Chikli, Israel's New Diaspora Minister, Who **Opposes BDS and Reform Judaism**



Amichai Chikli, the new head of Israel's renamed Diaspora Affairs and Combat Antisemitism Ministry, attends a committee meeting at the Knesset, the Israeli parliament in Jerusalem, Dec. 6, 2022. Credit: Olivier Fitoussi/Flash90

#### By Andrew Lapin

(JTA) - The Israeli ministry responsible for engaging with the half of the world's Jews who don't live in Israel has gotten a new name - and a leader who disdains the values of many American Jews.

Amichai Chikli announced during his swearing-in ceremony last Monday that his ministry was changing its name from the Ministry of Diaspora Affairs to the Ministry for Diaspora Affairs and the Struggle Against Antisemitism. The name change is a sign that Chikli could plan to focus on the problems of the Diaspora more than his predecessors, who have focused largely on promoting Israel to Diaspora Jews.

Chikli is the son of a Conservative rabbi who lives on a kibbutz founded by the Conservative movement of Judaism, which he defends but says he no longer identifies with. He vaulted into prominence within Israel last year when he became the first member of the Knesset, Israel's parliament, to break with then-Prime Minister Naftali Bennett over Bennett's decision to form an alliance with left-wing and Arab parties.

Though Chikli holds some views promoted by Diaspora Jews, he is disdainful of Reform Judaism, the largest denomination in the United States, and

## Looking for a caregiver for an older woman. 7 a.m to 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday Need references. 901-421-0023



of the politics of American liberals, including President Joe Biden, who won a wide majority of U.S. Jews' votes. He has said he believes the Pride flag is an anti-Zionist symbol and also equates public criticism of the Israeli government with antisemitism, a position that American Jewish groups have been fastidious about saying they do not hold.

"I have a problem with the trend of Reform Jews seeking to assimilate and affiliate themselves with groups who are anti-Israel," Chikli told the "Forward" last year.

"The Reform movement has identified itself with the radical left's false accusations that the settlers are violent, so they have earned the criticism against them, and I cannot identify with them," he told the "Jerusalem Post," also last year. "They are going back to their roots in Germany of anti-Zionism and anti-nationalism. It's a tragedy that they are going there."

Chikli's appointment comes as Israel inaugurates a right-wing government that includes extremist parties, as well as one minister who has been convicted of inciting violence. The government and its priorities have drawn sharp criticism from Diaspora Jews, including from hundreds of U.S. rabbis who have pledged not to invite any members of extremist coalition blocs to speak to their communities.

Unlike some of his colleagues in the new government, Chikli says he believes there should be a space for egalitarian prayer at the Western Wall, a priority for many Diaspora Jews. He also criticized a haredi rabbi's condemnation this week of Amir Ohana, a gay ally of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu who is the new Knesset speaker, saying on Twitter, "There is no disease more dangerous than baseless hatred."

But he appears to be on the same page as some of the extremist politicians about the propriety of LGBTQ demonstrations, calling Tel Aviv's Pride Parade a "disgraceful vulgarity" in a Facebook post this summer. (He said he believes sexual identity should be "subdued.") He also shares their disdain of Reform Judaism, a frequent target for some of the Religious Zionist politicians who are part of the governing coalition.

In his new role, Chikli faces the task of winning over American Jewish leaders who may well be skeptical of or dismayed by Israel's rightward shift. With his coalition seeking to narrow the definition of who is considered Jewish. make it harder to move to Israel, and strip rights from minority groups within Israel, including LGBTQ Jews, Israeli Arabs and non-Orthodox Jews, that task could be quixotic. One area of ideological overlap, though, is in the fight against antisemitism, which watchdogs say is on the rise in the Diaspora. Israel has gotten more involved in fights over antisemitism and anti-Zionism in the United States in recent years, appointing actress and activist Noa Tishby as its first ever "special envoy for combating antisemitism and delegitimization" last year. Tishby's travels have included visiting the campus of the University of California-Berkeley in the

midst of a student anti-Zionist controversy at that school, and making appearances as a talking head on Fox News.

Chikli has indicated that colleges and universities are an area of special interest for him. "I am very worried about what is happening on the campuses," he said in the "Jerusalem Post" interview. "It is heartbreaking to see Jewish young people who concede their connections to their people and their heritage in order to connect to the latest fashionable movement that they are calling woke."

The Israeli government also involved itself in recent legal negotiations that resulted in regional rights to ice-cream maker Ben & Jerry's being sold to an Israeli company after the Ben & Jerry's U.S. board attempted to halt the sale of its products in "occupied Palestinian territories."

Like U.S. Jewish leaders (and Biden), Chikli vociferously opposes the movement to boycott, divest from and sanction Israel, known as BDS. He believes that anti-Israel sentiment is inherently antisemitic, issuing a stern warning to American Jews in his "Forward" interview.

"Don't think that joining anti-Israel movements will help you with anything," he said. "In the end, the folks from the BDS movement will attack you and your children because it's not Israel that they hate, they hate Judaism."

Last Wednesday, Chikli accused Yair Lapid, the opposition leader and past prime minister, of being "the spearhead of the BDS movement" because Lapid plans to speak critically to U.S. audiences about the new government.

"What Lapid is doing now as an outgoing prime minister is a disturbing irresponsibility," Chikli said in public comments that he also tweeted. "He does not understand that when he tells the whole world that this is a 'dark' government, the world does not make a separation between government and state. That's exactly how BDS does its work."

Chikli's predecessor, Nachman Shai, met early in his tenure with the heads of the Reform, Conservative and Orthodox movements in the United States to push the message that Israel would embrace all denominations of Judaism equally.

On the occasion of the new government, Shai recently said that Israel could soon become hostile to Reform and Conservative Judaism.

Exactly how Chikli plans to engage with Diaspora Jews in his role, and when, is not yet clear; he did not respond to a request for an interview last Thursday. But he has started his tenure by taking action – canceling a 5 million NIS (\$1.4 million) contract with a nonprofit group that Shai had struck shortly after the election. Chikli said the group, which has ties to Israel's left, was "political" but that he was canceling the contract because it was inappropriate to strike one when the ministry's leadership was set to change. Another plan approved shortly before the election also faces an uncertain future: a \$2.3 million contract with the Reform and Conservative movements in the United States to improve Israel's image among young and liberal American Jews. HW

#### PEDIAI

Michael Blen, DDS 6363 Poplar, Suite 110 Memphis, TN 38119 www.DrBlen.com (901) 415-Blen (2536) Fax: (901)415-6292

## SERVICES AVAILABLE

- **Driver**—Courteous and reliable person to take you anywhere you need to go in Memphis and surrounding areas: Dr's appointments, Shopping, Errands, Airport. Available weekdays and weekends.
- House Sitting and Dog Sitting—

Responsible adult available to stay with your dogs while you are away. I love dogs!

Contact Rick Danzig: 901-337-6009

The Hebrew Watchman publishes obituaries as a service to the Jewish community at no charge.

Rabbi Levi Klein

Rohr Jewish Learning Institute, head-

quartered in Brooklyn, New York, which

has a sterling reputation for producing

high-quality and engaging courses.

Over 400,000 people have participated

in JLI's courses since the organization

Rabbi Klein says he isn't promis-

ing students overnight expertise on the

works discussed in the course. "But I

can assure them it will be an enjoyable

and intellectually engaging journey,

giving us valuable context for all our

As with other JLI programs, the

course is designed to appeal to people at

all levels of knowledge, including those

without prior exposure to Jewish learn-

ing. All JLI courses are open to the pub-

lic, and attendees need not be affiliated

with a particular synagogue, temple, or

For more information and to sign up

for the course, visit www.MyJLI.com or

call Chabad at 901-754-0404. HW

Book Smart was developed by The

istic text from the Zohar."

was founded in 1998.

future Jewish learning."

house of worship.

### Young Israel Helps Restock **Memphis FJFS's Kosher Food** Pantry



YI's Rabbi Akiva Males presenting collected items to FJFS' Teresa Hughes

#### By Rabbi Akiva Males

In the weeks between Thanksgiving and January 3, Young Israel of Memphis proudly ran a very successful campaign to help restock the Kosher Food Pantry at Memphis' Fogelman Jewish Family Service (FJFS). It was inspiring to see how generously the Shul responded to this important cause during these challenging times.

Young Israel extends a hearty Yasher Koach to everyone who participated in this great mitzvah!

An appreciative note from Rashki Osina - FJFS Director of Social Services - can be read below:

Dear Young Israel of Memphis,

On behalf of Wendy and Avron B. Fogelman Jewish Family Service I want to thank you for your very generous donation for the Peggy E. & L.R. Jalenak, Jr. Kosher Food Pantry.

Young Israel has always been such a vital partner in stocking our food pantry. It is because of this type of generosity that we are able to serve those individuals in need of assistance. Each week we have the privilege of providing pantry bags with shelf stable food for our clients. In 2022, Fogelman JFS distributed over 2,000 pantry bags. We are only able to provide this service, due to donations like yours!

Thank you for partnering with Fogelman JFS to meet the needs of so many. Sincerely,

Rashki Osina

Fogelman JFS Director of Social Services **HW** 

### U.S. Accuses Israel of 'Exacerbating Tensions' which Could 'Lead to Violence'

(JNS) - U.S. State Department spokesperson Ned Price last week accused Israel of actions that could provoke Palestinian violence.

"We are deeply concerned by the visit of the Israeli minister at the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. This visit has the potential of exacerbating tensions and lead to violence," Price said.

Last Tuesday, Israeli Minister of National Security Itamar Ben-Gvir visited the Temple Mount.

U.S. Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) responded to Price's statement via Twitter, saying, "If the Biden Administration is concerned about violence in Israel, they should condemn the Palestinian terrorists causing it. Not our Israeli friends."

Ben-Gvir remained undeterred by the Islamist terror group's threats of violence. He tweeted last Tuesday (translated from Hebrew), "The Israeli government of which I am a member will not surrender to a vile murdering organization. The Temple Mount is open to everyone and if Hamas thinks that if it threatens me it will deter me, let them understand that times have changed. There is a government in Jerusalem!" HW

### **Ambitious Course to Cover 33 Centuries of Jewish Literature** Rabbi Levi Klein to Explore Eight Genres of Jewish Literature with a **Diverse Group of Memphis Jews**

To study the history of most cultures, you need to learn about wars and empires, warriors and city builders, and great works of art. But the history of Judaism is overwhelmingly a history of books. Books form the core of Judaism's culture. But even if they're known as "the People of the Book," much of Judaism's classic literature remains closed to contemporary Jews.

This month, local Memphis Rabbi Levi Klein will open Jewish literature to a contemporary audience. He's leading a class of Jews of many affiliations and backgrounds as they explore the history, authors, and content of Judaism's most important titles in a new course entitled Book Smart.

"It's an ambitious undertaking," Rabbi Levi Klein says, "I'm excited because I think the course will give us a richer understanding of what Judaism meant throughout the centuries and what it can mean for us today."

When Book Smart's first 90-minute session kicks off on Wednesday, January 25 at 7 p.m. at the Chabad Center, students will begin their six-week survey of traditional Jewish literature, covering; Torah, Talmud, Midrash, halachah, ethics, and philosophy, as well as kabbalah and Chasidic mysticism. "We'll meet the authors behind the big ideas of Jewish history over a period of 33 centuries," Rabbi Klein says.

The history of Jewish literature is a broad subject, but Rabbi Klein says the course will also go deep. "We're not just going to learn why these works were written. We're actually going to get a taste of what it's like to participate in a Talmudic debate, unpack a philosophical conundrum, and decipher a kabbal-

Have a Simcha?

share with The Hebrew Watchman readers 901.763.2215 info@hebrewwatchman.com





Omri Ceren, national security adviser to Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas), responded, "Team Biden has strong opinions on where elected Israeli government officials walk around in their own country."

When Ben-Gvir's intended visit was announced last Sunday, Hamas proclaimed that violence could result, threatening it would "blow up the situation." Hamas spokesperson Abd al-Latif al-Qanou insisted that the "criminal Ben-Gvir's announcement of his intention to storm Al-Aqsa Mosque reflects the arrogance of the fascist settler government and its premeditated intentions to escalate incursions and attacks on Al-Aqsa Mosque with the aim of dividing it."

Numerous Muslim countries, including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates and Turkey also issued condemnations of the visit. Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas vowed he would demand a Security Council resolution on the matter.

#### Watch Them Thrive with In-Home Care

The specially trained caregivers at Comfort Keepers provide meaningful, in-home care so seniors can live independently. From providing companionship to caring for those with dementia, we're here to help your loved one thrive and give you peace of mind.

Ъ

#### 901-207-8209

Home + Life + Care | ComfortKeepers.com Comfort Keepers of the Mid-South, 5668 S Rex Rd #200, Memphis, Tennessee 38119

#### In-Home **Care Services**

- Personal care
- Companionship and housekeeping
- Dementia and Alzheimer's care
- Respite care
- Safety solutions

Cattle to Spy on

Israel Trained

## In Netflix's 'You People,' Jonah Hill is a Jewish Guy Who Finds Love with a Farrakhan Follower's Daughter



David Duchovny as Arnold, Julia Louis-Dreyfus as Shelley, Jonah Hill (Writer-Producer) as Ezra, Lauren London as Amira, Eddie Murphy as Akbar, and Nia Long as Fatima in "You People." Credit: Parrish Lewis/Netflix

#### **By** Andrew Lapin

(JTA) – Were Jews the "OG slaves"? Can American slavery be compared to the Holocaust? And who gets the last word on Louis Farrakhan?

These questions have spurred very serious debates over time - and now will be getting a raunchier take in the new Netflix comedy "You People" that hits streaming Jan. 27.

Starring Jewish funnyman Jonah Hill, who also co-wrote the script with "Black-ish" creator Kenya Barris, the film stars a visibly tattooed Hill as Ezra, a young Jewish man who falls in love with Amira, a Black woman played by "Without Remorse" actress Lauren London.

In a new trailer for the movie that opens with a scene shot at the Skirball Cultural Center, a Jewish institution in Los Angeles, Hill's Jewish parents, played by Julia Louis-Dreyfus and David Duchovny, seem to immediately bless the union following some awkward comments about hair and rappers.

It's Amira's parents, Akbar and Fatima (played by Eddie Murphy and Nia Long), who prove a tougher sell - particularly once Akbar, who says he identifies as "Muslim," tells them he is a follower of Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, whose antisemitism is longstanding and well known. If Murphy's character is following in the long tradition of adopting zany antics to try to prevent a marriage, it's not clear in the trailer, where he tells Ezra's mother that his hat was a gift from Farakkhan.

"Are you familiar with the minister's work?" Murphy asks Louis-Dreyfus. "I'm familiar with what he said about the Jews!" she replies.

Other awkward moments abound in the trailer, including a dinner-table argument about comparing slavery to the Holocaust. ("Our people came here with nothing like everybody else," says Louis-Dreyfus's character, to cringes.) It's all in a day's work for Barris, whose series of sitcoms are known for prompting uncomfortable conversations about race and culture, and who – in the recent aftermath of antisemitism controversies involving Kanye West, Kyrie Irving and Dave Chappelle - has found quite the moment for a "Guess Who's Coming To Dinner"- style comedy about Black-Jewish relations.

An earlier trailer for "You People," featuring only Hill and Murphy, had made no references to the film's Jewish content. The new trailer's density of Jewish jokes is sure to fuel an ongoing debate over "Jewface," or whether it is appropriate for non-Jewish actors to be cast as Jewish characters. While Hill is Jewish - the star recently petitioned to drop his legal last name, Feldstein, because he has never used it professionally - his on-screen parents are not. But Duchovny and Louis-Dreyfus do have Jewish fathers, as does London. HW

## Palestinian Village, Says PA Daily



**Palestinian Authority leader** Mahmoud Abbas heads for a meeting of the P.A. leadership in Ramallah. May 7, 2020. Credit: Flash90.

(JNS) - A Palestinian village elder fabricated a story about Israeli livestock participating in spying activity, which the official Palestinian Authority daily news outlet "Al-Hayat Al-Jadida" published as reality, according to a report by Palestinian Media Watch.

"On the neck of each cow, they hang a medallion with an eavesdropping and recording device on it, and sometimes cameras, in order to monitor every detail" in the village, the elder said.

The P.A. daily further claimed that a Palestinian village elder spotted Israeli cows that are actually "recruited and trained" spies. Rushd Morrar, a Khirbet Yanun village elder, told "Al-Hayat Al-Jadida" on Dec. 27, "These are recruited and trained cattle, as on the neck of each cow they hang a medallion with an eavesdropping and recording device on it, and sometimes cameras, in order to monitor every detail in Khirbet Yanun large and small."

The Elder added that "settlers release herds of wild boars" to destroy Palestinian crops. HW







Hospice & Palliative Care



Preparing for Life's Final Journey with Compassion and Care



\*

1125 Schilling Blvd. East, Suite 101 Collierville, TN 38017 901-560-3600 www.hospiceofhopetn.com

## Memphis Jewish Federation Jewish Camp Scholarships

**Camp Scholarship Application Now** Online! jcpmemphis.org/what-we-do/scholarships

Submit camp scholarship applications by February 14, 2023

Jewish Camp Scholarships are available to rising 4th grade students through 12th grade students who will be attending Jewish overnight camps under Jewish auspices.

For more information or questions, please contact Carolyn Pruitt at cpruitt@jcpmemphis.org or (901)-767-7100.

## **Estate Planning** Will My Family Pay an Estate Tax?

#### By Benjamin I. Wachtel, Esq. and David L. Mendelson, Esq. Mendelson Law Firm

Well, we've discussed incapacity and probate, but what about estate and inheritance taxes? As we begin a new year and as new federal legislators are sworn in, it is important to understand the current laws surrounding death taxes and how those laws may change in the near future.

In the U.S., there are two levels of taxes that may apply to an estate -(1) the Federal Estate Tax and (2) a state level estate or inheritance tax.

Estate taxes are paid by a decedent's estate *before* assets are distributed to heirs and are imposed on the overall value of the estate.

Inheritance taxes, on the other hand, are remitted by the recipient of a bequest from the estate and are based on the amount distributed to each individual beneficiary – not off the top from the estate itself.

Fortunately for Tennesseans, as of 2016, number (2) above does not apply as Tennessee does not currently levy a state level estate or inheritance tax. Thus, currently, unless a Tennessean owned property outside the State of Tennessee in a state that does levy an estate or inheritance tax, the Federal Estate Tax is the only estate or inheritance tax of concern.

It is important to note that because the current Federal Estate Tax rate is forty percent (40%!) of an overall estate, when applicable and assessed, the Federal Estate Tax is significant and can take a heavy toll on one's legacy. Fortunately, as explained below, due to the Federal Estate Tax Exclusion, the Federal Estate Tax does not apply to many estates.

#### **Federal Estate Tax Exclusion**

The Federal Estate Tax does not apply to many estates because the tax is currently levied only against large estates. In 2011, Congress established a \$5 million exclusion or threshold before the Federal Estate Tax kicked in and was levied against an estate. The threshold remained at that \$5 million or so level through 2017.

In December of 2017, via the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, Congress doubled the exclusion amount and adjusted it for inflation. Thus, the current exclusion amount for an individual is just over \$11 million.

Even if one's estate exceeds this amount, one does not have to be concerned about transfers to a spouse because there is an unlimited marital deduction that enables one to transfer any amount of property to a spouse free of taxation so long as they are an American citizen.



901-763-2500 mendelsonfirm.com bwachtel@mendelsonfirm.com dm@mendelsonfirm.com



#### MICHAEL LURIE

WINDOW WORLD OF MEMPHIS

memphis@windowworld.com office: 901-684-6670 mobile: 901-233-2921 4899 Summer Ave. Suite 104 Memphis, TN 38122 **WindowWorldMemphis**.com

Windows • Doors • Siding

#### THE JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MEMPHIS & THE MID-SOUTH SUMNER LEVINE SPEAKER SERIES

PRESENTS 2023 PROGRAMMING AT THE MEMPHIS JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER



Genealogy/ Researching Family Histories Sunday, January 15 12:30-3:30 pm CT

Strategies for Jewish genealogical research with noted genealogist Karen S. Franklin of New York.



The Jews & The Blues

Sunday, February 19 2-3:15 pm CT

67-minute film shown in partnership with the Morris & Mollye Fogelman International Jewish Film Festival.



Children of Beale Street

#### Sunday, April 16 2-3:30 pm CT

Panel of Memphians will share memories of their parents' and grandparents' stores on Beale Street.



Egg Cream & the New York Jewish Food Experience Sunday, May 7 2-3:30 pm CT

16-minute documentary, panel discussion, & New York-inspired Jewish food tasting.



Free & open to the public • In person only • Post-event recordings available on jhsmem.org

RIDAY



DR. GARY P. ZOLA AT SHABBAT SERVICES

6 PM | Temple Israel | "Black-Jewish Relations: Lessons from History"

The key point to note here for planning purposes is that even if one is not currently close to or over the Federal Estate Tax Exemption threshold, Congress can lower the threshold amount at any time. In fact, by its own terms, the \$11 million or so threshold established in 2017 is set to "sunset" in 2026 and revert back to the 2011 \$5 million threshold. Further, the Biden Administration has proposed lowering the threshold amount even further - to \$3.5 million or below. Thus, as always, proper planning is paramount whether or not one's net worth is currently close to or over the current threshold. HW

MOVING? PLEASE LET US KNOW BEFORE YOU GO! 901.763.2215 info@hebrewwatchman.com SATURDAY

## JANTORAH STUDY \*LIVE\*14"TEMPLE ISRAEL'S RABBI FINESHRIBER'S COURAGEOUS 1920SFIGHT AGAINST THE KKK" WITH DR. GARY P. ZOLA

9-10 AM | Temple Israel + Zoom Sponsored by the Temple Israel Archives

#### **VOICES OF COURAGE: SOUTHERN RABBIS AND BLACK CIVIL RIGHTS**

4 PM | Tour of Righteous Among Men: Rabbi James A. Wax, A Life Dedicated to Social Justice Exhibit

4:45 PM | Presentation by Dr. Gary P. Zola, Dr. Dana Herman, and Rabbi Micah D. Greenstein Sponsored by the Temple Israel Museum

#### LEARN MORE AT TIMEMPHIS.ORG

Special thanks to the Rabbi James A. Wax Fund for Social Justice at Temple Israel for making possible the Dr. Zola and the American Jewish Archives MLK, Jr., Shabbat Weekend.

## Donor-Advised Funds Combine Charitable Impact with Tax Benefits

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

A donor-advised fund (DAF) is a charitable account offered by sponsors such as financial institutions, community foundations, universities, and fraternal or religious organizations. Donors who itemize deductions on their federal income tax returns can write off DAF contributions in the year they are made, then gift funds later to the charities they want to support. DAF contributions are irrevocable, which means the donor gives the sponsor legal control, while retaining advisory privileges with respect to the distribution of funds and the investment of assets.

Donors can take their time vetting unfamiliar charities and exploring philanthropic opportunities. They can wait to take advantage of matching fund campaigns, have money ready to aid victims when disaster strikes, or build up funds over multiple years to make one large grant for a special purpose. Grants can generally be made to any qualified tax-exempt charitable organization in good standing.

Under current law, there are no rules about how quickly money in DAFs should be granted. However, legislation has been introduced – the Accelerating Charitable Efforts (ACE) Act – that would impose a 15-year limit on the donor's advisory privileges, among other changes. You may want to watch for future developments if you are interested in using donor-advised funds to execute a charitable giving strategy. (Any legislation passed in 2022 likely would not take effect until 2023.)

#### Tax-Efficient Timing

Gifts to public charities, including donor-advised funds, are tax deductible up to 60% of adjusted gross income (AGI) for cash contributions and 30% of AGI for non-cash assets (if held for more than one year). Contribution amounts that exceed these limits may be carried over for up to five tax years.

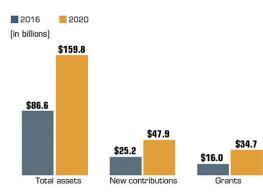
DAF contributions can be timed to make the most of the tax deduction. In an especially high-income year, for example, a larger contribution might keep a taxpayer from climbing into a higher tax bracket or crossing a threshold that would trigger Medicare surcharges or the net investment income tax.

Now that the standard deduction has been expanded (\$12,950 for single filers and \$25,900 for joint filers in 2022), many taxpayers don't benefit from itemizing deductions, including those for charitable donations. But with advance planning, it may be possible to bunch charitable contributions that would normally be donated over several years in a single tax year, ensuring that itemized deductions surpass the standard deduction.

A similar approach may appeal to pre-retirees in their peak earning years. Those who expect to be in a lower tax bracket and/or might claim the standard deduction during retirement might consider making deductible contributions to a donor-advised fund while they are still working.

#### **Growth in Donor-Advised Funds**

Contributions to DAFs accounted for about 10.1% of total U.S. charitable giving in 2020.



Source: National Philanthropic Trust, 2021 Gifting Appreciated Assets

Contributions to a donor-advised fund can be made with cash, publicly traded securities, and more complicated assets such as real estate, valuable art and collectibles, or a stake in a privately held business, offering a convenient way to gift appreciated assets. Fund sponsors typically have experience in evaluating and liquidating donated assets (a qualified appraisal may be needed). This way, a donor can make a single contribution to a DAF that eventually benefits multiple charities, including smaller organizations that are not able to accept direct donations of appreciated assets.

Giving appreciated assets to charity can provide lucrative tax savings. A donor may qualify for a tax deduction based on the current fair market value of the contribution, while helping reduce capital gain taxes on the profits from the sale of those assets. This strategy may be helpful when family businesses or shares of privately held companies are sold, or any time a larger tax deduction is needed.

DAFs have fees and expenses that donors giving directly to a charity would not face. All investing involves risk, including the possible loss of principal, and there is no guarantee that any investment strategy will be successful.

This information is not intended as tax, legal, investment, or retirement advice or recommendations, and it may not be relied on for the purpose of avoiding any federal tax penalties. You are encouraged to seek guidance from an independent tax or legal professional. The content is derived from sources believed to be accurate. Neither the information presented nor any opinion expressed constitutes a solicitation for the purchase or sale of any security. This material was written and prepared by Broadridge Advisor Solutions. © 2022 Broadridge Financial Solutions, Inc.

Investment and Insurance Products are:

Not Insured by the FDIC or Any Federal Government Agency

Not a Deposit or Other Obligation of, or Guaranteed by, the Bank or Any Bank Affiliate Subject to Investment Risks, Including Possible Loss of the Principal Amount Invested **HW** 

Help Keep Memphis Jewish Journalism Alive Subscribe Today and Don't Miss an Issue

### THE HEBREW WATCHMAN

In-Town \$36 • Out-of-town \$50 P.O. Box 770846, Memphis, TN 38177-0846 info@hebrewwatchman.com or online at jewishscenemagazine.com/subscribe

Send Paper To:

WELLS FARGO

Advisors

## Changing jobs, switching employers, or retiring?

Don't leave your 401(k) or 403(b) unattended

Name

Address	
City	
State	Zip
Phone	
Email	
If a Gift s	Subscription, From:

#### Mike Stein

Managing Director – Investments 6075 Poplar Ave Memphis, TN 38119 Direct: (901) 761-8151 michael.stein@wellsfargoadvisors.com

Wells Fargo Advisors does not provide tax or legal advice.

Investment and Insurance Products: NOT FDIC Insured NO Bank Guarantee MAY Lose Value

Wells Fargo Advisors is a trade name used by Wells Fargo Clearing Services, LLC, Member SIPC, a registered broker-dealer and non-bank affiliate of Wells Fargo & Company. © 2020 Wells Fargo Clearing Services, LLC. All rights reserved. CAR-0720-04236

## Barbara Walters, Groundbreaking Jewish TV Host, Dies at 93

#### By Gabe Friedman

(JTA) – Barbara Walters, the iconic newswoman and celebrity interviewer who made history for women and Jewish anchors on mainstream American news television, died at 93 last Friday.

ABC News, where Walters regularly appeared on shows such as "20/20" and "The View," shared the news without giving a cause of death.

Before becoming one of the most enduring and talked about news hosts in the world from the 1970s through the 2000s, Walters was raised by parents descended from Jewish immigrants who fled antisemitism in Eastern Europe. Her father, Lou, founded a chain of nightclubs and moved the family from Boston to Miami to New York, earning and losing fortunes along the way.

In 2006, Walters told "The Washington Post" that her parents were not religious, and she never celebrated Jewish holidays while growing up. But she noted that her father would always come home from his Latin Quarter clubs on Friday nights, which she saw as a nod to a family Shabbat tradition. As an adult, she began buying Christmas trees each year, proclaiming she loved the holiday.

Walters was married four times, to three different Jewish men. She had one child, with theater impresario Lee Guber, who demanded that their daughter attend Hebrew school. While married to producer Merv Adelson – from 1981-84 and then from 1986-92 – they celebrated Jewish holidays "because it was important to him," she told the "Post."

Walters worked her way up through the ranks at NBC in the early 1970s, becoming the first female co-host of "The Today Show" in 1974. In 1976, she moved to co-host what was then the "ABC Evening News." She became a longtime contributor to "20/20," ABC's primetime TV news magazine show that competed with CBS' "60 Minutes," and co-founded and co-hosted "The View," starting in 1997.

Walters was known for her candid interviewing style – "She invented intimacy on television," an ABC producer once said – but also hit her subjects with blunt, cutting questions. Some of her most famous interviews included Jewish figures, including Monica Lewinsky, who Walters called her biggest "get." She asked Lewinsky if she would tell any future children about her affair with President Bill Clinton, which rattled Washington in a way few other scandals have.

"Mommy made a big mistake," Lewinsky replied.

"And that," Walters said in an often-quoted response, "is the understatement of the year."

Walters also scored the first joint interview with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, before they finished negotiating a historic peace agreement in 1979. In 1977, she had also interviewed Sadat on his flight to meet with Begin in Israel.

Her style was often debated, including by some critics who thought she ushered in the era of news as entertainment, and parodied by the likes of Gilda Radner on "Saturday Night Live." In 2014, she appeared on "SNL," proclaiming that it was an honor "to see my groundbreaking career in journalism be reduced to a cartoon character with a ridiculous voice." **HW** 

## British Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis is Knighted

#### By David I. Klein

(JTA) – Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, chief rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Commonwealth – commonly referred to as the United Kingdom's chief rabbi – can now add a "Sir" to his title.

Mirvis will be named a "knight commander of the order of the British Empire," according to King Charles' New Year Honours list. Since 1890, the U.K. has announced new knighthoods and other chivalric honors only twice a year, on New Year's Day and on the birthday of the ruling monarch, which in the past was April 21 for Queen Elizabeth II but going forward will be Nov. 14 for King Charles III. "I am enormously honoured and deeply humbled by this award. It will be particularly moving for me to receive this award from His Majesty The King, in his first year as our monarch," Mirvis said, according to the "Jewish Chronicle."

"He has been an advocate for greater inclusivity in Orthodox Jewish life, appointing Britain's first female halachic adviser and establishing greater opportunities for female leadership and scholarship," the list noted. "In the field of education, the Chief Rabbi has championed the cause of faith schools and Jewish education and issued a guide on the well-being of LGBT+ pupils in Orthodox Jewish schools – the first of its kind anywhere in the world."

#### **OBITUARIES**



Jeanette Schneider Silberberg

Jeanette Schneider Silberberg, 92, a proud native Memphian passed away in her home on December 23, 2022. She was surrounded by family and her beloved Schnauzer, Gus. Jeanette was born January 23, 1930. She is survived by her children, Dr. Marc Silberberg (Eva), Amy Silberberg, Sharon S. Hanover (Scott), six grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.

She was a graduate of Central High School and Highland Manor Junior College in New Jersey. After returning to Memphis from college, Jeanette was introduced to David Silberberg and soon after they married and started a family. They shared their lives together for 53 years.

As a parent, Jeanette was extremely supportive and involved with her children's schools and activities. For many years she worked in the kitchen at the Memphis Hebrew Academy updating their equipment and developing lunch menus. She was also a member of the school's PTA. When the community needed a leader for the Jewish Community Center's Girl Scout troop, Jeanette stepped up and was troop leader for several years, a responsibility she always looked back on fondly and proudly. Whether for dance or art classes, little league baseball, whatever her children had a passion for she supported and made certain that they participated.

Jeanette was an avid gardener and took great pride in the landscaping design of her home. Over the years with her husband, David, they planted almost every tree, shrub and flowering plant gracing their home. She also loved cooking and baking coming from a family of excellent cooks and bakers. Her friends and family often called on her for advice on recipes and questions about cooking.

She was a devoted fan of the University of Memphis basketball team as well as the Memphis Grizzlies. If she couldn't go to the game, she was watching every single one on the television or



Mark David Wender

Mark David Wender, 66, passed away after a long and courageous battle with cancer on the 28th of December 2022 surrounded by his loved ones.

Mark, a lifelong Memphian, was born on April 21, 1956, to Razelle (Margolin) and Stanley Wender. His life was defined by his deep commitment to family, public service, community, Jewish life, and all things Memphis.

Mark graduated from Boston University, where he met the love of his life, Sally Klein. Together they built a life filled with love and warmth that only grew brighter with the birth of their three children.

Mark's passion, dedication, and intelligence were the hallmark of his expansive career. Mark began his career at his family's business, National Mortgage Company, where he served as COO.

He then founded his own video production company, Lunar Productions. He brought his business background and love of community to the non-profit world. As CEO of the Soulsville Foundation, he spearheaded the construction of a new high school building. During his tenure, Mark was instrumental in ensuring a 100% college acceptance rate.

His final position was as COO at Jewish Community Partners, where he led the effort to create a Hillel at Rhodes College. Mark worked with the FBI to increase security awareness at all local Jewish institutions.

Mark was a pillar of the Memphis Jewish community. He had a deep love of Judaism and Baron Hirsch Congregation, where he was a lifelong member and past president and long-term board member. Mark served on the board of the Memphis Jewish Home, the Memphis Jewish Federation, the Center for Southern Folklore, and Freedom Prep Academy.

Mark's passions extended to an eclectic taste of music, following the Grizzlies and Tigers, southern "wrasslin," and cooking. Mark was a devoted and loving husband, father, son, brother, grandfather, uncle, cousin, and friend. He was the happiest when surrounded by family and friends. He treasured his relationship with his nieces and nephews and extended family. Being Poppy to his grandchildren was a highlight of his life. He is survived by his adoring and adored wife, Sally, his children, Brian (Jessica) Wender, Rebecca (Joshua) Chubak, and Kevin (Susie) Wender; his beloved parents, Razelle and Stanley Wender; his siblings Jill (Paul) Friedman, Elliot (Penina) Wender, and Margo (Todd) Gruen; and his grandchildren Olivia, Jacob, and Henry Chubak, and baby boy Wender. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Baron Hirsch Congregation, Memphis Jewish Federation, Soulsville, the Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab, or an organization of your choice. HW

Though Mirvis' most recent predecessors, Jonathan Sacks and Immanuel Jakobovits, had also received knighthoods during their terms as chief rabbi, the title has not always been a given.

King Charles' list noted Mirvis' work in the field of interfaith dialogue and his advocacy for Uyghur Muslims suffering under oppressive policies in China. The list also noted Mirvis' efforts to make the Orthodox world more inclusive of women and LGBTQ Jews. Maurice Ostro, vice president of The Council of Christians and Jews, a British volunteer group, said the honor "underlines how the establishment has started to recognise the importance of interfaith engagement as well as the vital contributions of our faith communities and the important role they play in making our country a truly great Britain."

Alongside Mirvis, several other British Jews received honors on the list, including Vernon Bogdanor, a noted political scientist; British Ambassador to Ukraine Melinda Simmons; television presenter Rachel Riley; Julian Lewis, a member of parliament since 1997; and Marie van der Zyl, president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews.

"This is a true honour and a great surprise. It is a tribute to all the work we do at the Board of Deputies to represent and advocate for our Jewish community," van der Zyl said. according to the "Jewish Chronicle." **HW**  listening on the radio.

┢

Jeanette was preceded in death by her parents, Joe and Rose Schneider, her brother, Harry Schneider, and other beloved family members and friends.

Services were held Monday, December 26 at the Sam Abraham Chapel with burial in Baron Hirsch Cemetery. **HW** 



Ъ

## The Love Story in Our Bible



Editor's note: This story is being eprinted in memory of Ted Roberts in appreciation of his longtime service as a newspaper columnist.

Ted Roberts

"The whole world is not worth the day on which Song of Songs was given to Israel."

~ Rabbi Akiva

Our Bible is remarkable. Rulebook, poetry book, history book. It wins the "what-book-would-you-rather-have-ona-desert-island" contest, every time. (A "dummy's guide to shipbuilding" only comes in second.)

But our holy book is full of surprises – as though you opened your shipbuilding manual and found a meatloaf recipe next to the chapter on carving a mast out of a Palm tree.

Nothing is more startling than the book we call Song of Songs – written by Solomon, say the rabbis. And that makes sense; since Song of Songs is voluptuously, anatomically correct, and unfit for kids. It's a PG-13 love story that could only have been written by a man with a thousand wives or else a guy who lived in the redlight district of Sodom and Gomorrah with lots of free time.

There's much argument, you know, about the authorship of some of the books of the Tanach. Scholarship, not royalties, is involved. (Although there is a group of Jonah's ancestors – you remember his book – who are trying to get Elliot Spitzer to represent them in court. Guess how many copies have sold since 300 BCE?)

But Song of Songs or Shir Hashirim – as it's known in Hebrew – clearly was written by Solomon, an amazingly energetic man who had time to please a thousand wives while he was building an empire; and in his spare time wrote the spectacular poetry of Shir Hashirim. It's a shame he didn't have time to call in the Royal Copyright Counselor and register his book. His heirs (us) would be wealthy.

Well, he didn't; so, you can buy yourself a bible at the local library book sale for half a buck. (That's another one of the world's hidden mysteries; why bibles, at book sales, are 50 cents and the latest top ten novel – the one that's just the right color to match your couch pillows - is 22 bucks.)

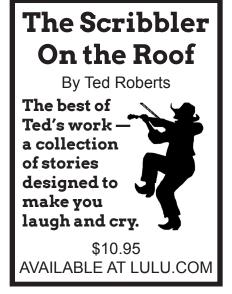
But the son of David and Bathsheva did more than write poetry.

Evidently, after supper and before conjugal visits with his covey of concubine cuties, Schlomo worked on the Temple. Remember, he built the first temple. It stood for about five centuries.

As I read the rabbis and scholars and plain ol' kibitzers, the authorship of Song of Songs is a no-brainer. It was somebody who knew what he was talking about. Somebody who had been there and done that and knew how to talk to the ladies. "Behold, thou art fair my love; behold, thou art fair, thou has dove's eyes." This line would work with Catherine Zeta Jones. Can you imagine Elijah, or Amos, or Samuel talking that way? Nope. It was Solomon who plucked a thousand flowers for his personal garden.

But the bigger puzzle – the one that keeps scholars up all night - is; how the heck did this lascivious lullaby get in our holy book – in the official rule book of Judaism? What does "let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth" have to do with Torah - our ethics, our history? It's a question that, as Tevye, in Fiddler on the Roof says, "would cross a rabbi's eyes." So, don't ask me, ask your rabbi. The traditional rabbinic answer is to call the carouse in Shir Hashirim an allegory. G-d and Israel. Two lovers joined together, forever, with covenant as their ketuba. In support of this answer, consider that the bible loves allegory. It is rich with symbols - G-d as lover, Israel as Harlot, as in Hosea.

But I have another explanation. It's the big meeting on a nice spring day in early June. Hundreds of rabbis have assembled to codify once and for all – our bible. Everybody is talking. They've agreed on 38 books that comprise the divine blueprint of Judaism. Then, that little guy in the back of the room (he existed even then) says; "Hey, have I got a book for you." He makes his way down to the conference table and slaps Song of Songs on the stack of books already OK'd. The rabbis, as fractured then as now, shout their approval and their disapproval. (Some never even



read it; was it not banned in Galilee?) But the little guy calms the crowd and makes an eloquent speech emphasizing the one theme in Judaism that everyone in the room agrees on. Life! L'Chayim. Choose life – the anthem of Judaism that drowns out all differences! Celibacy and monasticism are not our virtues. Life, that's what Song of Songs is about; and Judaism sings of the passion put in our mind and body that makes life. This love story belongs between the same covers as Genesis and Isaiah. The motion carries. It's official.

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 Help Keep Memphis Jewish Publishing Alive To Subscribe to The Hebrew Watchman or Jewish Scene Magazine, Visit jewishscenemagazine.com/subscribe To Advertise 901.763.2215 • info@HebrewWatchman.com

## **ISRAEL INSIGHTS** Patience is a Virtue

#### By Howard Weisband

A new Government has been sworn in, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu again leading the coalition and the Cabinet. He has returned to his former office, but this time at the head of a far-right coalition rather than a center-right configuration.

What seemed to make the most news even before the Government was sworn in was many people in positions of Jewish leadership throughout the world, mainly from the United States, swearing that they themselves would have little or nothing to do with the Government of Israel still in formation. Most grievous was a week before the Government took its place, when the JTA on December 22 reported that "More than 330 American rabbis" circulated an open letter, which says "they will not invite members of the (Religious Zionist) bloc to speak at our congregations and organizations. We will speak out against their participation in other fora across our communities. We will encourage the boards of our congregations and organizations to join us in this protest as a demonstration of our commitment to our Jewish and democratic values." The story was picked up in the Washington Post.

not invite."

While I concur that to my sorrow the Religious Zionist party of today is not the National Religious Party (NRP) of vesteryear, that of the late Yosef Burg and others such as Zevulun Hammer, not even that of recent vintage led by Naftali Bennett, I want to see how they govern, how they will be tested with national leadership responsibilities. I know that Netanyahu, Bibi, is a strong politician who understands diplomacy and, yes, what he desires his legacy to be. So, I'll be patient and give his new Government time to prove itself. So to some extent was Abe Foxman patient, when the JTA and the "Forward" reported on December 2, three weeks earlier, that the former National Director of the ADL, said in interviews, "If Smotrich and Ben-Gvir get their way, Israel will lose me and American Jews." Yes, a strong statement, frankly, too much so for my liking, but he went on to explain a similar belief about Bibi: "I think he's sensitive and smart enough to listen, to see the very serious concerns that American Jews have." Foxman refers mainly to issues such as the Law of Return and conversions. Similarly, on January 1, after the Government was sworn in, leadership of the Jewish Agency and the Jewish Federations of North America sent a responsible, supportive letter to the Prime Minister in which they expressed: "It is our duty to share with you our deep concern regarding voices in the government on issues that could undermine the long-standing status quo on religious affairs that could affect the Diaspora."

Further, there are more local serious matters of concern. Already on December 3, Ben-Gvir, now a member of the

ter but an important one.

Aryeh Deri, returning to a Ministerial post and eventually to the Finance Ministry, is serving a suspended sentence for tax fraud, guilty as charged, as a plea bargain result. Will the State Attorney and the Supreme Court allow his return to politics as a Minister?

All of these issues and others are noteworthy, some certainly more critical than others. Now that the new Government is in place, let's be patient and give it time to function. The Government was democratically elected. It was not the result, thank goodness of a coup nor a forced takeover, nor will it be. Israelis are not leaving Israel. Israel will not lose us. Democratic processes are in place and will remain so.

Not "if" they cause the Government to act against our Jewish and democratic values, but unconditionally "they will Government, visited and walked about the Temple Mount with a security detail, without outwardly praying. The day prior he met with PM Netanyahu who apparently set guidelines.

The podcast comment of the same date by David Horovitz, editor of "The Times of Israel," was that Ben-Gvir "made a provocative gesture in an unprovocative manner."

On a larger scale geopolitical issues abound. Most recently, during the last week of December, the leaders of Iraq, Egypt, and Jordan met as the Baghdad Conference of Cooperation and Partnership, in Jordan at the Dead Sea. How will that play out? Good or bad for Israel?

There are also health issues turned political. The new Government apparently will cancel a tax on sugary soft drinks, proven to be a cause of diabetes. The cancellation of the tax is a demand of the ultra-Orthodox parties in the coalition. Relatively speaking, a micro matWe read that the proverbial expression "patience is a virtue" means that patience is a skill worth learning and a valuable tool in life. It is a sign of character and demeanor.

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

## January 20 - February 19 Mid-South Scholastic Art Awards Exhibition

## Presented by the Brooks Museum League



Adele Ferguson, 'Pax', 2022 Best Senior Portfolio Award

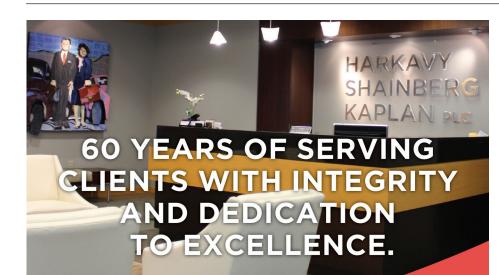


Open in Overton Park BrooksMuseum.org HARKAVY

**SHAINBERG** 

KAPLAN PLC

ATTORNEYS AT LAW



- Business Entities
- Bankruptcy
- Corporate and Business Transactions
- Employment and Labor
- Estate Planning and Probate
- Health Care
- Land Use Planning and Zoning
- Landlord/Tenant Law
- Litigation
- Personal Injury
- Real Estate
  Closing | Leasing
  Lending | Foreclosure
- Taxation

6060 Poplar Avenue Suite 140 Memphis, TN 38119 901.761.1263 www.harkavyshainberg.com



A Fresh, New Approach to Senior Living

Experience the art of senior living. Call today to schedule your visit.

901-763-6371 | OpusEastMemphis.com/Watchman

Want more news throughout the week? Check out The Hebrew Watchman on Facebook



## 901.300.3938 MisterTree.com

Locally Owned & Operated | Free Estimates