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THE Hebrew Watchman

SERVING THE MEMPHIS JEWISH COMMUNITY SINCE 1925

HEBREWWATCHMAN.COM 5 SIVAN, 5783 MAY 25, 2023 VOL. 101, NO. 35

Memphis Jewish Federation Sponsors Lag B'Omer Day School Collaboration



Bornblum Jewish Community School and Margolin Hebrew Academy students celebrate Lag B'Omer with a Field Day at the Memphis Jewish Community Center

The Memphis Jewish Community Center was extra noisy on May 9 when Bornblum Jewish Community School and Margolin Hebrew Academy collaborated on their first ever Federation-sponsored joint Field Day to celebrate Lag B'Omer and Israel at 75. While planning, the students were divided into either the blue or white team and given a color T-shirt based on the

assigned team. After taking bus rides from their respective schools, (many of the kids had never ridden a school bus), the students joined together and engaged in fun sports activities and relays throughout the JCC gym and social hall with other students in their grades. Both physical education (PE) teachers were involved in planning the day's event. James Nokes, the PE teacher from

Margolin Hebrew Academy commented: "In addition to bringing together the two schools, it was an enriching fitness event. If we hope to build life-long participants in physical fitness, events like this showcase the potential for our students to enjoy an activity they can do for the rest of their lives." Rabbi Yisroel Weiner, the head of school at Margolin Hebrew Academy

added, "It was great to have the opportunity to enjoy some traditional Lag B'Omer fun together with Jewish day school students from throughout the area at the MJCC in honor of Israel at 75. Our students had a wonderful time, and it was fantastic to see the sportsmanship and camaraderie, which emanated from the event." After completing and competing at the stations, the students joined together for cupcakes and popsicles in the social hall before taking the buses back to school. The teachers, parent volunteers, and students remarked on the way out that they cannot wait to have a similar event next year! In thanking Memphis Jewish Federation for its support, Bornblum Jewish Community School Head of School Dr. Daniel R. Weiss remarked, "I am so proud that Memphis' Jewish day school students could come together for an afternoon of fun and games on Lag B'Omer. On a day where we focus on our relationship with one another and remember that we should love our neighbor as ourselves, having the entire community together no matter their beliefs, practices or school they attend is a testament to what our Memphis Jewish community provides." The joint field day was sponsored by Federation's year-long Israel@75 initiative and by a Day School Collaboration Grant from Federation's Annual Community Campaign that supports strengthening partnerships between the two schools. [HW](#)

Yahalom and Bornblum Twin Classes Travel Together



Bornblum Jewish Community School's annual eighth grade Israel seminar included three very special days with students from Yahalom School in Memphis' twin city, Shoham. The students' first stop on their two-week odyssey traveling throughout the Holy Land was their visit to Shoham. There, they met the members of their twin class who they had gotten to know online before the trip. The visit to Shoham was just a few hours before Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Memorial Day)

and Yahalom students gave their Bornblum friends a tour of an exhibit they put together honoring the 80th year commemoration of the uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto. According to Michal Almalem, Bornblum's Jewish Studies principal and trip chaperone, "It was powerful to see how much students in both classes knew about the uprising. Each class understood how the story of the uprising is echoing still today and is helping to shape who we are in 2023." The two schools re-joined each other

for the last two days of the trip. Together, they went to an exhibit called Invitation to Silence where they experienced communicating without voice and hearing. This powerful exhibit demonstrated how when there is no English and Hebrew, communication can still happen. Students also explored the establishment of the first modern Hebrew city – Tel Aviv through the Independence Trail. According to eighth grader Ron Shar-

abi, "Visiting Shoham was interesting. They were very good at explaining to us about the school and their special projects about world environment." Perhaps the most symbolic activity was planting a cedar tree in a community garden right in front of a kindergarten class in Tel Aviv. For Bornblum's Head of School Dr. Daniel R. Weiss, who at-

(See Bornblum Page 2)



My Teen Israel Experience



Yosef Vanderwalde at the Kotel with family

Yosef Vanderwalde, son of Drs. Lindi and Ari Vanderwalde, is a junior at the Cooper Yeshiva High School for Boys. Memphis Jewish Federation's Lemsky Endowment Fund provided him with a Teen Israel Experience grant to help offset the cost of his Mach Hach Ba'Aretz Israel trip last summer. All rising high school juniors and seniors in the Memphis Jewish community are eligible for grants up to \$3,000 to attend a recognized teen summer or semester program in Israel. Applications for Summer 2023 are now available online.

To learn more and apply, visit www.jcpmemphis.org/lemsky-endowment-fund.

By Yosef Vanderwalde

Before this year, I never recognized Israel as anything more than a vacation destination. I've been to Israel with my family twice before: once when I was six and once when I was 10. I wasn't old enough to appreciate all that Israel had to offer that America could not. This visit was very different. I went on a program called Mach Hach Ba'Aretz for five weeks and had the time of my life and grew a new appreciation for the Land of Israel.

I arrived in Israel after a very long flight, was greeted by my old summer camp friends, and then met the people on my bus who I would be spending the next month in Israel. After driving to our hotel in Jerusalem to put our bags down, we headed to the bus again to

take the short trip to the Western Wall. I had visited the Wall before, but this time I felt an incredible connection with the city and the people around me and I was excited to experience Israel again.

Mach Hach Ba'Aretz is a touring program, we went from the Golan Heights in the north to the Red Sea in the south and from the beaches of the Mediterranean in the east to the Dead Sea in the west. We really covered a lot of ground. We went to many cities, including Tel Aviv, Haifa, Tzfat, Tiberius, Eilat, and so many more. Along the way we became friends with other Jewish teens from different countries such as England, France, and Belarus. My counselors were all amazing Americans who made aliyah to Israel after high school and it was very nice to get to know them and learn what made them love Israel.

While on my trip, I learned about what it is like to live in Israel. I really enjoyed being able to eat basically wherever I wanted because there were so many kosher options. It was nice to be in an environment where there were Jews always surrounding me. Sometimes in America, I don't want to wear a Kippah because I am worried that someone will have a problem with me, but in Israel I was able to express my Judaism with everyone around me.

Thank you to Memphis Jewish Federation's Lemsky Endowment Fund for helping to make my Mach Hach Ba'Aretz Israel trip possible. **HW**

Progress on Bill to Create Envoy for Abraham Accords

(JNS) – A proposed law to establish an ambassador-level envoy to work on expanding the Abraham Accords just cleared an important hurdle in Congress.

H.R. 3099 was approved by the House Foreign Affairs Committee through a voice vote without receiving any objections. Numerous legislators emphasized

that the position would be critical for bringing Saudi Arabia into the accords.

Rep. Mike Lawler (R-N.Y.), a co-sponsor of the bill, said that “establishing a special envoy wholly devoted to this purpose will also demonstrate a clear U.S. commitment to cultivating the growth of the Abraham Accords. ...

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Memphis Candlelighting Time

Erev Shabbat, Fri. May 26, 2023 / 6 Sivan, 5783.....7:47 p.m.
Havdalah, Sat. May 27, 2023 / 7 Sivan, 5783..... 8:49 p.m.

Shavuot Ends

ambassador to Israel from 2011 to 2017.

Just as the lawmakers sought to broaden the influence of one Middle East nation they also pushed to limit another. A second bill approved alongside H.R. 3099 would prevent the United States from recognizing Syria as long as leader Bashar Assad remained in power. **HW**

Bornblum...

(Continued From Page 1)

tended the trip as a chaperone, the tree planting at Gan Tzivey Hakeshet (which literally means, the colors of the kindergarten rainbow) was a highlight of the trip. “Our students put their hands into the soil of Israel to plant a cedar tree. The tree will be cared for by the students of the gan. Every time they enter or exit their classroom, play on their playground, or look out of their window, they will see that tree. They will water it. They will care for it. They will plant flowers around it. They will recall our students and the students from Shoham planting something with them.”

According to Almalem, “We will be sure to come back to see our Shoham Memphis partnership tree growing, bringing joy and beauty to the kindergartners every day, and reminding us that whether we are in Memphis or Shoham, we are one – Am Yisrael Chai.” **HW**



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Lawsuit Claims Rudy Giuliani Said, ‘Get Over the Passover. It was Like 3,000 Years Ago.’

By Philissa Cramer

(JTA) – Rudy Giuliani, the former New York City mayor who became an aide to former President Donald Trump, mocked Jews for observing Passover, according to a lawsuit filed last Monday by a former assistant who is accusing him of sexual assault and harassment.

“Jews want to go through their freaking Passover all the time, man oh man,” Giuliani once said, according to the complaint, which was filed last Monday in New York Supreme Court and indicates that the comments were recorded. “Get over the Passover. It was like 3,000 years ago. The red sea parted, big deal. It’s not the first time that happened.”

The statement that Jews regularly observe Passover is accurate. Retelling the story of the Israelite slaves’ exodus from Egypt each spring is one of the most widely observed Jewish practices and is frequently cited as an inspiration by politicians (including the person who holds Giuliani’s old job, New York City Mayor Eric Adams).

Meanwhile, there is no historical record of the Red Sea ever parting. The Torah says that God was able to make the miracle happen with the help of Mo-

ses, who led the Israelites to freedom – but there is no evidence that such a phenomenon has happened before or since. Some have sought to offer scientific explanations for such an event.

The vast majority of the \$10 million suit focuses on allegations by Nicole Dunphy, a former Giuliani associate, that he pressed her into sexual activity without her consent and harassed her continually almost as soon as she began working for him in January 2019.

The Jewish elements of the lawsuit were first reported by the “Forward.” In addition to mocking Jewish observance of Passover, Giuliani is also accused in the complaint of disparaging Jewish men’s penis sizes and commenting about the “‘freaking Arabs’ and Jews.” He also made racist comments about other groups, according to the suit.

Giuliani, who was New York City mayor from 1994 to 2001, and in 2021 was barred from practicing law in New York state due to his repeated false claims about the 2020 election. Through a spokesperson, he “vehemently” denied the allegations last Monday to the Associated Press. **HW**

Mayor of Missouri Town Apologizes after Saying Trash Collectors are ‘Not Trying to Jew Anybody’

By Andrew Lapin

(JTA) – The mayor of a Missouri town has apologized for saying a local trash company is “not trying to Jew anybody” at a recent public meeting, writing in an open letter that the remark was “not in keeping with the beliefs and values” of the town.

Stephen Wright, the mayor of Odessa, made the remark at a Monday meeting [last week] of the local Board of Aldermen, amid a discussion of changes to trash pickup in the town of 5,500. Last Wednesday, Wright posted an open letter on the city government’s Facebook page, addressed “to our Jewish Community” and apologizing for the statement.

“Those statements were not in keeping with the beliefs and values of the City of Odessa,” Wright wrote. “It was not my intent to degrade or marginalize anyone, or any group of people, nor to further any negative stereotypes based upon their heritage or belief.”

Odessa, located 30 miles east of Kansas City, does not appear to have any organized Jewish presence. Joe Spaar, the co-publisher of a local paper, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, “I’ve lived here my whole life, and I haven’t met one Jewish person. “It’s not a thing that’s in your consciousness here,” Spaar said, adding that he assumes Wright also doesn’t know any Jews. “There’s no Jewish community. ... There’s no Jewish church or anything around here.”

The town removed video of last Monday’s meeting from its social media

channels, and the mayor’s apology letter did not specify what he had said. Odessa’s city clerk, Karen Findora, said the city had removed the video because the mayor’s comments had “violated our social media policy.” She would not comment on the mayor’s statement itself but said Wright would likely make a more detailed apology at the next board meeting.

JTA obtained video of the meeting via a public records request.

Referring to getting “Jewed” on a financial arrangement is a classic antisemitic trope referencing the stereotype that Jews are cheap. Other local government officials have gotten into hot water for using similar language: A Tampa Bay, Florida, city council member apologized for using the phrase in 2020 and subsequently met with a local Jewish leader. And last year, two state lawmakers in Kentucky apologized for using the phrase “Jew them down.”

The mayor’s remark did not elicit any audible reaction from the handful of people at the meeting, though one attendee who had been nodding along with him appeared to look away uncomfortably after he uttered the slur.

Some Facebook commenters said they supported the mayor and believed his apology was sincere, while others called for his resignation.

Among those sympathetic to the mayor is Spaar, co-publisher of a publication called “The Odessan.” Spaar told JTA he considered the mayor’s comments at the meeting “a very innocent-type remark. He wasn’t being mean or trying to disparage anyone,” Spaar said. “He was just using an antiquated colloquialism.”

Spaar lamented that the city removed the video.

“They should’ve just taken their lumps,” he said. “They’ve got to realize that if you make a public comment, it’s public.” **HW**

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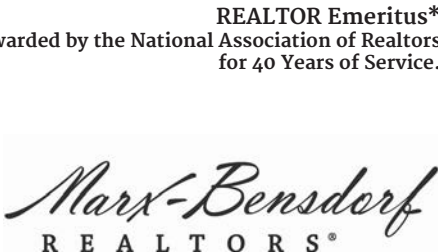
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Joy on Jerusalem Day as Tens of Thousands March in Capital



Jews dance outside the Damascus Gate to the Old City during Jerusalem Day celebrations, May 18, 2023. Credit: Yonatan Sindel/Flash90.

By Shimon Sherman

(JNS) – Celebrations were underway across Israel last Thursday for Jerusalem Day, the national holiday commemorating the city’s reunification in the Six-Day War. The main feature of the celebrations is the annual flag march in which tens of thousands of people waving Israeli flags walk through the streets of Jerusalem to symbolize the city’s unity. This year the parade followed the traditional route, departing from downtown and proceeding along King George and Agron streets before reaching the walls of the Old City. After this, the march splits, with females continuing through Jaffa Gate and males going through Damascus Gate before meeting up again at the Western Wall.

The march does not continue to the adjacent Temple Mount complex, the holiest site in Judaism, due to restrictions on Jewish presence there. This year’s march had tens of thousands of Israelis of all ages and backgrounds marching with flags and dressed in the traditional blue-and-white attire, singing religious and patriotic songs together. “This is my third time coming to this march and it just has incredible energy, you can really feel the nation coming together,” Yotam Ariel from Petach Tikvah told JNS. “Every year I bring my whole family because it is important for the kids to feel connected to this city.” There is an overwhelming number of young people mixed into the crowd at

the march, all celebrating the capital of the Jewish state. “I just got out of the army for the weekend, and I immediately headed down to Jerusalem to be in the march. This city is the heart of our country, and we have to show that,” Nadav Richter from Ariel told JNS. Several terrorist groups issued a number of threats against Israel in the days leading up to last Thursday’s celebrations. Last Wednesday, an official from the Palestinian Authority said Israel is “playing with fire.” Later that day, Salah al Bardwil, a member of the Hamas political bureau, warned that “the march of the Zionist flags will not pass and the response will inevitably come.” Police deployed 3,500 police officers, with 2,500 working exclusively along the planned route. Last Thursday, the police said that the march was unfolding in a peaceful and non-confrontational manner. “There have been a few young kids here or there that have caused trouble, but we quickly approached them and calmed down the situation. Other than that, there is a very enjoyable atmosphere with everyone having a good time. At the end of the day this march is about celebration,” Police international spokesperson Master Sgt. Dean Elsdunne told JNS. “We want to dispel the idea that this is about instigation or provocation; this is a festive event in which almost everyone is acting respectfully and cooperating with the police,” he said. A few non-Jewish people came to show their support. “We are just here on vacation, but we

heard about the flag march, and we just wanted to join. This city is the center of the world, and it is good that it is undivided as the eternal capital of the Jewish people,” Monica Bilber, a member of an evangelical Christian community who is visiting from Nashville, Tenn., told JNS. Many members of the Israeli government also took part in the march, including Cabinet ministers, members of Knesset and local officials. Finance Minister Bezael Smotrich headed a group of fellow Religious Zionism MKs including Simcha Rothman, Michal Waldiger, Ohad Tal and Zvi Sukkot. National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir was mobbed by throngs of supporters along the route. “There are tens of thousands of people here, thank God. Jerusalem is ours forever,” he said. Jerusalem Deputy Mayor Fleur Hassan-Nahoum, who was also taking part, said: “It is wonderful to see young and old celebrating the reunification of our eternal capital. “Jerusalem is not just our modern capital, it is also the reason we became a united people 3,000 years ago,” she told JNS. Hassan-Nahoum criticized attempts to mar and politicize the march. “Certain foreign elements still do not recognize the reunification of our capital and so they try to villainize what is happening here,” she said, adding that “99.9% of people are marching in love and in song and in celebration. “Unfortunately, there are a few bad apples that the press focus on to characterize the celebration as a radical nationalistic one, but that is not the spirit of the march,” Hassan-Nahoum said. **HW**

Jason Schwartzman is a Cantor and Carol Kane is his Bat Mitzvah Student in Comedy ‘Between The Temples’



Jason Schwartzman seen in New York City in 2019. Credit: Stephen Lovekin/Variety/Penske Media via Getty Images

By Gabe Friedman

(JTA) – Jason Schwartzman is starring as a cantor who takes on an adult

bat mitzvah student played by veteran actress Carol Kane in an upcoming comedy film.

Shooting for “Between the Temples,” a self-described “anxious comedy,” has already wrapped, “Variety” reported last Wednesday, but no release date was given. The film was written and directed by Jewish filmmaker Nathan Silver, whose past films include the well-received indie comedies “Thirst Street” and “The Great Pretender.” “It’s the story of a cantor who is locked in a crisis of faith and finds his world turned upside down when his grade school music teacher re-enters his life as his new adult bat mitzvah student,” “Variety” reported. The news comes two weeks after Netflix announced that another Jewish actor, Adam Brody, would play a “charming rabbi” in a comedy series that co-stars Kristen Bell. Netflix also debuted its “Jewish Matchmaking” dating series earlier this month to acclaim. Schwartzman – the son of Jewish film producer Jack Schwartzman and actress Talia Shire, and nephew of famed director Francis Ford Coppola – is well known as a recurring face in Wes Anderson films and other indie movies and shows. He has played Jewish characters

before, including one loosely inspired by Philip Roth in the 2014 comedy-drama “Listen Up Philip.” Kane, who is also Jewish, has had a long career on stage and screen that ranges from 1975’s “Hester Street,” about Jewish immigrants in New York City’s Lower East Side – for which she was nominated for an Academy Award – to “Hunters,” the Amazon series about post-war Nazi hunters that debuted in 2020. Other “Between the Temples” cast members include Caroline Aaron, the Jewish actress who has played the protagonist’s mother-in-law on “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel,” the Jewish former “Saturday Night Live” writer and Adam Sandler collaborator Robert Smigel; and Dolly de Leon, who is gaining late-career acclaim for her recent performance in the Oscar-nominated film “Triangle of Sadness.” “Variety” noted that the film is produced and financed by Ley Line Entertainment, which co-produced this year’s Oscar winner “Everything Everywhere All at Once” and a few other acclaimed indie films since its founding in 2018. **HW**

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MHA-FYOS Junior High Students Visit Washington, D.C.



By Jessica Baum Sukhodolsky

In early May, the Margolin Hebrew Academy-Feinstone Yeshiva of the South Junior High students embarked on an impactful and unforgettable trip to Washington, D.C. Over four days, 21 students and six chaperones enjoyed a packed itinerary and soaked in the sights of our nation's capital. Incredibly, the trip was completely free of charge for the group, thanks to a grant secured by MHA-FYOS Executive Director Brandy Flack.

Throughout the course of the trip, the group visited historic sites such as Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument, Ford Theatre, and the National Archives, and toured the Air and Space Museum and National Archives, and had fun at the National Zoo and a Washington Nationals game. One of the high-

lights of the trip was a moonlight trolley tour of the city.

Additionally, they had the unique opportunity of touring the inside of the White House and the Capitol Building, thanks to the special arrangements made by MHA-FYOS Past President Pace Cooper.

The students were particularly affected by their visit to the National Holocaust Museum, which gave them new insights and information about the atrocities of the Holocaust. After their tour, they shared their reflections on the museum with each other. Eighth grader Toby Gescheit said, "It was so touching to see that many non-Jews sacrificed their lives to save Jews. I felt deeply connected to the victims because of the pictures and artifacts. It was a very pow-

(See MHA-FYOS Page 7)

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MHA-FYOS...

(Continued From Page 6)

erful experience.”

The trip was designed as an extension of their Social Studies curriculum but truly proved to be a cross-curricular adventure. At each meal, a different student delivered words of Torah to his/her classmates. The students also discussed how lucky they are to be American Jews, a notion that was reinforced by their visit to the Holocaust Museum.

“Our Junior High Washington D.C. trip was a very valuable educational experience for our students. The museums and activities were all engaging and interesting. The students bonded, and at the same time were able to see their American History class come to life,” said Middle School Assistant Principal Anat Kampf.

“We had exhilarating fun, we bonded and grew together, and we learned so very much through our experiences,” added Head of School Rabbi Yisroel Weiner. “More than anything, this trip afforded us the opportunity to realize how thankful we as Jews must be for the freedoms afforded us by this great country.”

The entire trip was masterfully planned by Middle School Assistant Principal Anat Kampf. The students and chaperones all had an amazing time and look forward to many more impactful trips and activities with MHA-FYOS! [HW](#)

British Historian Under Fire for Saying Left to ‘Replace’ Holocaust with Slavery

(JNS) – It was the Tweet heard around parts of the United Kingdom. Then it disappeared. Now it’s back.

“The reason the left has such ire for the Jews is jealousy. They want to replace the Holocaust with slavery in order to wield its legacy as a weapon against Western culture,” said David Starkey, a British historian and television presenter, in a talk last week at the National Conservatism Conference in London.

Starkey, a specialist in Tudor history who is not new to controversy, was part of a panel titled “History and Heritage.”

The conference’s official account tweeted Starkey’s quote, removed it and then reposted it. The statement drew criticism, including from Daniel Sugarman, public affairs director of the Board of Deputies of British Jews.

Sugarman tweeted that the board “supports the building of a Holocaust Memorial by Westminster and a permanent memorial to the victims of Transatlantic Slavery. If this quote is accurate, such pathetic attempts to drive a wedge between communities will not work.”

In a 2020 interview, Starkey claimed that the transatlantic slave trade was not a genocide, using offensive language for which he later apologized and called a “bad mistake.”

Earlier this month, Starkey said in a media interview that British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, who is of Indian heritage, is “not fully grounded” in the culture of the United Kingdom. He later claimed his criticism was not racist, but that Sunak is part of a “highly technical elite.” [HW](#)

OBITUARIES

Mae Brucker

Mae Brucker passed away peacefully on May 12, 2023, at the age of 101. She was born on May 4, 1922, in New York City to parents Cornell and Anna Dreier. Mae is preceded in death by her husband of 78 years, Isidor Brucker, her sons, Alan (Ruth) Brucker and Barry Brucker, and her siblings Stanley Dreier, Buddy Dreier, Shirley Lerner, Corrine Burstein and Minnie Black.

Mae is survived by her sons, Michael (Leslie) Brucker, Ed (Mindy) Brucker, her grandchildren, Sette (Clark) Butcher, Elayne (Rocky Polk) Brucker, Abby (Scott) Felsenthal, Phillip Brucker and Penny Brucker; and her six great-grandchildren.

A private funeral service was held at Baron Hirsch Cemetery on Sunday, May 14. [HW](#)



David Michael Okeon

David Michael Okeon passed away in Naples, Fla., on the evening of Saturday, May 13, 2023, at the age of 84. Born on January 25, 1939, in Memphis, Tenn., David was the only son of Sam and Estelle Okeon of blessed memory and brother to his three beloved sisters: Myrna Klazmer of blessed memory; Elaine Rosenberg (Ronnie); and Doris Jackson (Don). In David’s youth, the family lived in South Memphis and ran grocery stores. David, his parents and siblings lived in back of the store. He often referred to the hard work and dedication he witnessed, watching his parents run the stores day in and day out. His father went on to have a career in real estate, a move that permanently and positively impacted David

and the Memphis real estate landscape. The family attended Baron Hirsch Congregation and later moved close to the synagogue in the Vollintine-Evergreen neighborhood. David attended Vollintine Elementary, then Snowden School and Central High School from which he graduated. In his teen years, David attended a party at the home of another teen, Mickey Brown, yet another decision that would impact the rest of his life. He reported seeing Mickey’s little sister, Pat, walk out the back door of the house, and it was love at first sight. He spent the rest of the evening trying to talk to Pat. He was successful and the two later began to date.

After graduating high school, David attended the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in Champaign, Ill., where he studied psychology. He returned home to attend Memphis State University (now the University of Memphis) and to be closer to the love of his life, Pat, who attended East High School. The pair married on September 23, 1962, and went on to have four daughters: Mindy Okeon Wagerman (Howard); Jenny Okeon; Beth Okeon; and Molly Okeon, as well as four grandchildren: Eve Sorin; Isaac Lurie (Nykkoa); Troy Lurie; and Elijah Beau Sorin.

In his early career, David worked for Wurzburg Brothers where he learned much about the world of business and sales. Following in his father’s footsteps, he entered the world of real estate in 1968 by joining Marx-Bensdorf, a company that then had mortgage, insurance and real estate divisions. In the 1980s when the company was going bankrupt, David and his soon-to-be business partner, O.K. “Mike” Earp, decided to buy the rights to the real estate division because both men saw value in having the name of the oldest real estate firm in Memphis and the 11th oldest company overall in Memphis. Founded in 1868, Marx-Bensdorf remains the city’s oldest real estate firm, currently celebrating 155 years of service. David spent 40 years at Marx-Bensdorf, culminating as the firm’s longtime broker-owner alongside his partner, Jimmy Reed. David was a charter life member of the Memphis Area Association of REALTORS(r) Multi-Million Dollar Club. Throughout his life, David pointed out


to his wife, children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews all of the properties in which he was involved whether it was the first house he ever sold (on Oak Grove in East Memphis) or the land that later became the locations for Temple Israel and Baron Hirsch Congregation. His positive influence on this city is immeasurable and known only to those closest to him.


After 40 years of being at the helm at Marx-Bensdorf, David fulfilled his lifelong dream of retiring to the beach at his Naples, Fla., residence with his wife. The couple regularly welcomed their children, grandchildren, extended family and friends to their Florida home, which they lovingly called “Paradise.” David was happiest in the sun, doing absolutely nothing, something a 40-year veteran of real estate never gets to do during their career!

David often joked that he had no hobbies and that his favorite pastime was spending time with his family. Nicknamed Buga by his oldest niece, he could often be found playing games, cards, doing a crossword puzzle or taking a spontaneous nap on the nearest bench, the ground or an odd piece of furniture, whether in public or private. For decades during his career, David wore a boater hat that resembled one worn by one of his childhood heroes, his grandfather. David also had a beard, grew his hair out, wore a ponytail and simply didn’t care what anyone thought of any oddities that he felt suited his unique personality.

Born with a heart defect that would impact him forever, David had numerous open-heart surgeries and other procedures to extend the longevity and quality of his life. At birth, the doctor told his mother he might not make it to 10 years old. David went on to defy nearly every odd put in front of him. He turned 10 years into nearly 85; a chance meeting at a carport party into a life partner; a bankrupt real estate company into a thriving beacon of integrity and trust; and a pipe dream of a beach home into a reality. He will be missed by friends and family alike for eternity.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to Baron Hirsch Congregation or the charity of your choice. [HW](#)





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Business Owners: Should You Organize as an LLC?

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

There’s a certain amount of risk that comes with owning a business. Accidents can happen no matter how well a company is run, and a lawsuit could prove to be devastating if the business is found to be at fault.

A limited liability company (LLC) is a business structure that offers many of the same legal protections as a corporation. Establishing an LLC creates a separate legal entity to help shield a business owner’s personal assets from lawsuits brought against the firm by customers or employees. In theory, the financial exposure of the owners (members) would be limited to their stake in the company, but exceptions may include any business debt they personally guarantee or misdeeds (such as fraud) they carry out. Just like a corporation, an LLC can lose its limited liability if the owner does not follow formalities that continue to exhibit the separate existence of the business – which is known as “piercing the veil.”

Beyond liability protection, there are some additional benefits associated with LLCs.

Tax efficiency. An LLC is a pass-through entity for tax purposes, so a firm may pass any profits and losses to the owners, who report them on their personal tax returns. Members can elect whether the LLC should be taxed as a sole proprietorship, a partnership, an S corporation, or a C corporation, provided that it qualifies for the particular tax treatment.

Credibility. Starting an LLC may help a new business appear more professional than it would if it were operated as a sole proprietorship or partnership.

Simplicity. In most states, an LLC is easier to form than a corporation, and there may be fewer rules and compliance requirements associated with operating an LLC. The management structure is less formal, so a board of directors and annual meetings are not usually required.

Flexibility. Being registered as an LLC may facilitate growth because it’s possible to add an unlimited number of owners and/or investors to the business, and ownership stakes may be transferred easily from one member to another. LLCs

Partners Prefer LLCs

Percentage of sole proprietorships and partnerships that indicated LLC status on tax returns



8.8%
Sole proprietorships



71.5%
Partnerships

Source: Internal Revenue Service, 2022 (most recent data from 2019)

may also be owned by another business.

The specific rules for forming an LLC vary by state, as do some of the tax rules and benefits. A written operating agreement that outlines the division of ownership, labor, and profits is a common requirement. It generally costs more to form and maintain an LLC than it does to operate as a sole proprietor or general partnership, but for many businesses the benefits may outweigh the costs.

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The Adam Sandler Bat Mitzvah Movie is Coming to Netflix Soon



Courtesy of Netflix

By Lior Zaltzman

This originally appeared on Kveller. Reprinted with permission.

We finally have a release date for Adam Sandler’s upcoming Netflix movie “You Are SO Not Invited to my Bat Mitzvah” – and some very exciting first photos.

If you haven’t heard the good word yet, yes, Adam Sandler is making a bat mitzvah movie for Netflix. I repeat, Adam Sandler is making a bat mitzvah movie and playing a Jewish dad opposite “Uncut Gems” co-star and Jewish mom extraordinaire Idina Menzel.

And if that wasn’t enough (DAY-ENU!), the movie, which is based on the most excellent 2008 middle grade novel “You Are So NOT Invited to My Bat Mitzvah” (which my colleague Evelyn Frick called “a masterpiece of its time”), it also stars Sandler’s daughter, Sunny, as movie heroine Stacy Friedman, his wife, Jackie, and Jewish “Saturday Night Live” cast member Sarah Sherman, to name but a glorious few.

For those of you who keep calendars, I urge you to put a big old star on August

25, 2023, when the movie’s release date is set. It’ll make for a lovely late summer family movie night (maybe even an outdoor screening if you’re fancy!). We suggest including a post-screening hora.

In the first image (top left), we get a glimpse of the Friedman home. You can see Sunny as Stacy, with Lydia Katz (Samatha Lorraine), her frenemy, standing in front of her parents, Bree (Menzel) and Danny (Sandler), the former donning some badass Doc Martens, while the latter is in his Jewish dad uniform of basketball shorts and Hokas. Sitting along with them is Stacy’s sister, Ronnie, (in the book, she has a brother) and her friend, Zara, (Zaara Kuttemperoor). Their house is brimming with books, cute trinkets and crafts, including an alarmingly adorable green monster and many great family photos.

The second photo, (top right), shows Andy Goldfarb (Dylan Hoffman), Stacy’s big time crush, donning a kippah, chatting with a rapt Lydia as a contemp-



Courtesy of Netflix

tuous Stacy looks on. It takes place in a classroom at a Jewish day school, where discerning eyes can spot some hamsa decorations and a few copies of the “Graphic Novel Haggadah.” The educational posters and the neon decor are very transporting.

The movie has some really delightful Jewish clergy representation (we really have a lot to look forward to in that department!). SNL, “Bubkis” and “Sandy Wexler” writer Dan Bulla will play Cantor Jerry, while Sarah Sherman will play Rabbi Rebecca, gender swapping the book’s male rabbi.

Of course, no real bat mitzvah movie is complete without a DJ. Actor Ido Mosseri will play DJ Schmuley. You may know him as Oori in “Don’t Mess with the Zohan” and Yuri from “Sandy Wexler.” I personally adore him for his many comedic roles in Israeli shows, including Ben-Gurion in “The Jews Are Coming,” and as the brother of iconic Israeli kids TV host Tal Mosseri.

Jackie Sandler, the mama of the Sandler clan, will play Gabi Rodriguez Katz, Lydia’s mom. Other incredible cast members include Jewish legend of screen and stage Jackie Hoffman, Luis Guzmán, Dean Scott Vasquez (“In The Heights”) and Miya Cech (“The Darkest Minds”). There’s also an exciting cast of newcomers who play fellow teens.

Alison Peck (“Work It”) has written the screenplay based on the book by Fiona Rosenbloom – the pen name for author Amanda Stern. This movie is directed by Sammi Cohen, and it will be her second feature length film, following the 2022 queer teen Hulu film “Crush,” where the filmmaker proved she can make exciting, funny and relatable coming-of-age tales.

And if that’s not enough (did I already say dayenu??) the movie will also be scored by Este Haim – of HAIM sister band fame – and Amanda Yamate. What. A. Team.

The movie was shot in Canada last summer, and one of its locations was the beautiful Beth Tzedec synagogue in Toronto. You’ve gotta love a location synagogue shoot!

For those hoping to revisit the book ahead of the movie, we have some bittersweet news. “You Are SO Not Invited to My Bat Mitzvah” is not currently in print... but a new printing is coming out on July 25, a month ahead of the film’s release.

We can’t believe that Netflix is giving us a bar/bat mitzvah movie two summers in a row (is it time for another dayenu?) and we’re so excited for the release of “You Are SO Not Invited to My Bat Mitzvah.” You are SO very invited to kvell with us about it. **HW**

White House Celebrates Jewish American Heritage Month

(JNS) – Addressing a packed White House East Room on May 16 to celebrate Jewish American Heritage Month, U.S. President Joe Biden trotted out several Jewish references.

He said that at the dinner table, his father taught him about the “Shoah,” using the Hebrew term for the Holocaust. He thanked “Michelle” – evidently Israeli-American James Beard-winning chef Michael Solomonov – “who ensured that today is both delicious and glatt kosher.” And he said, “The Talmud says, ‘It is not your duty to finish the work, but neither are you at liberty to neglect it.’” (The quote actually comes from the Mishnah.)

Stars of the Broadway show “Parade,” which addresses antisemitism and has drawn antisemitic protests, were on hand for the event. The pool report noted that at one point, an “up-tempo, klezmer-type version of ‘Hevenu Shalom Aleichem’” played. “No hora dancing was seen, but then it was pretty tight in the room.”

Biden said that Jewish “Wall Street Journal” reporter Evan Gershkovich is being detained in Russia “because he shed some light on the darkness in Russia.” The president also said he is proud of his and his colleagues’ support for Israel’s Iron Dome, “which has intercepted thousands of rockets and saved countless lives.”

He also repeated the claim – at odds

with some reporting – that neo-Nazis and white nationalists marching in Charlottesville, Va., at the “Unite the Right” rally in the summer of 2017 inspired him to run for president.

“Antisemitic incidents are at a record high. This is hard to believe,” Biden said.

Those who attended the event included second gentleman Douglas Emhoff; Attorney General Merrick Garland; and Deputy National Security Advisor for Cyber and Emerging Technology Anne Neuberger, all of whom are Jewish, as well as first lady Jill Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris. **HW**

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The Power of Torah



Ted Roberts

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

On Shavuuous, lovers of Torah never fail to tell the old midrash of Rebbe Avram and his beautiful Torah.

The Rabbi lived by himself in a one-room, wood frame structure that held a table for studying, a bed for sleeping, and a stove for cooking. “What else do I need?” he asked his friends and students.

One night the Rabbi looked up to see the door swing open. A menacing figure stood in the doorway; a robber armed with a knife that flashed in the candle-light as he waved it to and fro.

“Your money. Quick. Your money, old geezer, before my knife takes your few remaining years.” Amazing, the Rebbe thought. I am unafraid. What evil can befall a man as he studies the words of Moses?”

“I have no money, no gold, no coins. In fact, no possessions except the bare furniture of this room.”

“Liar, there must be something of value here.”

“Oh there is,” said the Rabbi. “Far exceeding rubles.”

“Get it,” said the man with the sword.

“But it’s already there right in front of you. I didn’t mention it as a possession since it is not exclusively mine and it cannot be exclusively yours. The Torah is a part of the Creator’s world like hills and rivers. Like love and truth. Owned by all and none.”

In front of Reb Avram, on a bare table, sat the object of his admiration. A Humash. And what a Humash it was. Bound in garnet red velvet, its pages were edged in gold. It stole all the light from the dim room and caught it in red and gold fire on the gray table.

The robber scooped it up and turned to leave. But an unexpected shout from the Rabbi stopped him at the door. “Wait,” said the victim. “Beware, the Humash has power. The Book under your arm has both uplifted and destroyed nations and individuals. This is power and it always will be, forever and ever.”

The robber laughed. “THIS is power and it always will be forever and ever, old man,” he said as he swung his sword within a whisker of the old man’s head. And he was gone with his loot to the village where he lived with a wife and small daughter.

For several weeks he tried to swap or sell his prize, but the typical buyers had no interest in books of any kind. And the Jews he contacted had qualms about a “hot” Torah. Even Labe, the butcher, who once bought and resold a case of stolen Tallithim, wouldn’t touch this deal.

For years the Humash laid on the table with a jumble of stolen goods that

were never exchanged for rubles. Many a violent plot was conceived in that room. Drunken brawls and licentious acts were commonplace.

But the brigand’s eight-year-old daughter also noticed the big book in the corner. It was open at a picture of Jacob, with Dinah at his side, blessing his sons. She loved the parade of strange characters pictured in the book, and the camels, donkeys, and palm trees so alien to the flat lands of Poland. They set her mind on fire. To open it was to enter another world.

One day, around the time of her 10th birthday, this daughter began to tell her simple and good mother of the book in the corner. She told her the stories. And she told her the rules imposed on humanity by the Creator. The mother, a kind but ignorant woman who dutifully served her violent husband, slowly awoke to the nature of his rude and lawless life. She, too, opened the book.

Often the thief saw his daughter engrossed in the red velvet book. “Good,” he said, “read and read some more.” It must be said that the thief loved his daughter. Such things are possible. Saul, the bloodthirsty soldier with rage in his heart towards David, loved his Jonathan. Even the slave master Pharaoh, it is written, loved his son. And it is well known that the human heart has sections like an orange.

The brigand talked to his daughter as though she was a son. “We are not put here to live in a hut and eat fish and dark bread. Power is our ladder to climb out

The Scribbler On the Roof

By Ted Roberts

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of this pit. I use what I have – strength and rage. “This is power,” he shouted as he waved his sword. “And it always shall be. But you are only a woman. So read the red book.”

Meanwhile, his fortune grew and it attracted many followers. His small band grew to an army of criminal rabble that controlled the countryside. Many rubles filled the treasure of the bandit chief. And he rode upon pure blooded steeds and wore silken clothing. But his life was barren because his good wife and daughter had fled, taking with them the book with the red velvet cover. They left a note. “This is power and it always will be forever and ever.”

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

London Firefighters Scold British Synagogue for Lighting Holiday Bonfire Indoors

By Gabe Friedman

(JTA) – London’s fire and rescue service gave a statement reminding Jewish congregations to keep holiday bonfires outdoors after the city’s Jewish News outlet shared video of a synagogue celebrating Lag B’Omer with an indoor fire last week.

The video showed a fire raging inside

Beis Medrash Beis Shmuel, a haredi Orthodox synagogue in Golders Green, a heavily Jewish neighborhood of London.

The congregation purportedly started the fire indoors because of rainy local conditions on the holiday.

Under traditional Jewish law, Lag

B’Omer is the one day in the mourning period between Passover (often in April) and Shavuot (often in late May or early June) on which observant Jews can do certain things such as get a haircut or hold weddings. Bonfires are often used to mark the celebratory day.

“Though we are keen to see com-

munities enjoying the festival of Lag b’Omer, we don’t want to see anyone harmed as a result. You should never build a bonfire indoors,” the London Fire Brigade told the Jewish News. “It’s easy for fires to quickly spread out of control, putting properties and people’s lives at risk.” HW

ISRAEL INSIGHTS 1,478 and Counting

By Howard Weisband

From May 9 to May 13, Islamic Jihad fired 1,478 rockets and mortars from Gaza into Israel, while the IDF hit the terror group 422 times, including 278 completely distinct targets. (IDF summary)

And then there was (another) cease-fire.

We’ve heard this story before, and we’ll hear it again. Is there no way to put an end to it?

On May 10, the “Jerusalem Post” editorialized with the following conclusion: “Until there is a fundamental change in the Hamas-controlled territory, we have no choice but to resign ourselves to that cycle and thank Israel Defense Forces and other security agencies that have the ability to target our enemies before they carry out their heinous acts against the Israeli people.”

Which raise the question, is “a fundamental change in the Hamas-controlled territory” really possible?

In a follow-up opinion piece on May 11, the newly appointed “Jerusalem Post” Editor in Chief Avi Mayer opined: “What to do about Gaza.”

I encourage you “to Google” this well-written oped and read it. Avi (I know him as a young man who was raised alongside our own children in our

community in Jerusalem) summarized the history, geography, culture, economy, and political intrigue that envelops Gaza.

He writes inter alia that: “Egypt occupied Gaza following Israel’s War of Independence but held the territory at arm’s length, refusing to fully annex it while also withholding any meaningful self-rule. While Israel seems to have explored handing Gaza back to Egypt after taking control of the territory during the 1967 Six Day War, there is general agreement that Egypt was not at all interested.”

Here I remind the reader that the immediate aftermath of the Six-Day War was quite different. Militant Palestinian nationalism and its related terrorist factions had not yet emerged. Probably Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in 1967 and then in 1978 was not interested because he wisely did not want the economic or political burden connected to Gaza responsibility.

Remember that following Sadat’s historic visit to Jerusalem the Camp David negotiations took place in 1978, with Presidents Carter and Sadat and Prime Minister Menachem Begin. Here I can add an historical insight.

A few years ago, after terrorism had

raised its ugly and murderous head, I asked an acquaintance, a former legal advisor at Israel’s Foreign Ministry who had been a part of the team advising the Prime Minister at Camp David, if the subject of Gaza being returned to the Egyptians had occurred, even more if Mr. Begin might have said “take it back or there is no deal.” I was told that it was not then an issue, that Gaza was not considered at all in that context.

Again, hindsight is 20/20. Israel certainly didn’t need Gaza. But we had it.

And then came 2005 when Prime Minister Ariel Sharon (he was known as “The Bulldozer”) pushed through the Knesset that Israel would pull out of the Gaza Strip. That brought Hamas and Islamic Jihad to Israel’s immediate border. I believe if Sharon were alive today he would have apologized for that 2005 decision after seeing Israeli citizens continually facing barrages of rockets, running to shelters, not knowing when the next sirens will be heard.

Returning to Avi Mayer, he hopefully, optimistically concludes: “Israel has stated its desire to dramatically improve the lives of the people of Gaza. All it asks in return is a sustained period of calm and an end to attacks targeting Israelis. The ball is in Hamas’s court and

there are those who can force the group to pick it up. Whether or not Hamas will pick it up tells us if the quiet at the end of the current round of hostilities will last.”

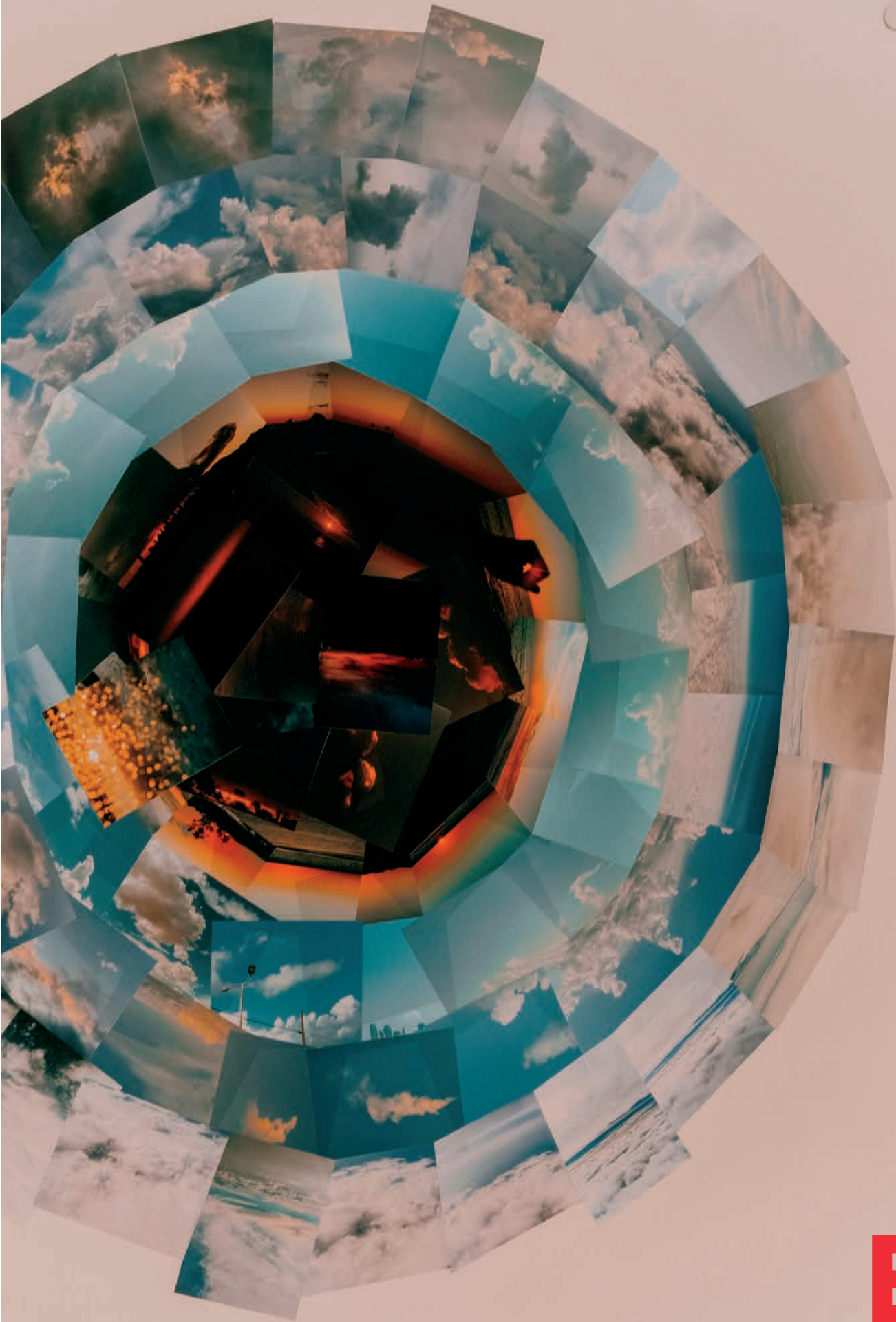
Taking a somewhat different, more realistic macro approach, David Horowitz, the editor of “The Times of Israel,” wrote on May 10: “At its root, the current face-off between Israel and its people’s army, on the one hand, and the Gaza terror groups and their vicious allies and sponsors, on the other, reflects the still-widespread rejection in our region – rejection currently led by the ayatollahs in Tehran – of Israel’s very right to exist, of the Jewish nation’s right to restored sovereignty in its ancient homeland.”

To be continued... double entendre intended!!

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

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**Jerusalem Will
Soon Be Israel's
First Million-
Denizen City**

(JNS) – Jerusalem is on track to become Israel’s first city with more than one million residents, according to data published ahead of last Thursday’s celebrations marking 56 years of a reunified capital.

The Central Bureau of Statistics report published last Wednesday shows that 984,500 people currently call Jerusalem home, with one in 10 Israelis residing in the Jewish state’s most populous city.

A total of 595,100, or 60.8%, of Jerusalem’s residents, are defined as Jewish and other non-Arab populations while 39.2% are Arabs. About 29% of the city’s residents are haredi Jews – around half of the city’s Jewish and other population. One out of every four haredi Jews in Israel lives in Jerusalem.

During 2022, the city’s population increased by 13,200 residents.

About 20,200 were added to the population naturally (births minus the deaths) and another 8,500 were added due to international migration. But a net 15,500 Jerusalemites left the city as 27,700 persons left for other localities while 12,200 new residents arrived from elsewhere in Israel.

Beit Shemesh, Tel Aviv and Bnei Brak were the main cities seeing migration to Jerusalem. Beit Shemesh, Tel Aviv and Givat Ze’ev were the main places people moved to from Jerusalem.

The fertility rate in Jerusalem was 3.86 children per woman, higher than the national average of 3. For Jewish and other women the rate was 4.39 compared to the national average for Jews and others of 3, and for Arab women it was 3.09 versus the national average for Arabs of 2.85. **HW**

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