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# Hebrew Watchman

**SERVING THE MEMPHIS JEWISH COMMUNITY SINCE 1925** 

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8 SHEVAT, 5784 J

**JANUARY 18, 2024** 

VOL. 102, NO. 18

## Nathan Lubin's Generosity: Nurturing Generations of Givers



#### Nathan and Alla Olswanger-Lubin

In April of 2018, Nathan Lubin started a family tradition, in hope of inspiring a lifelong commitment to charitable giving in his children and grandchildren. On the date of each of his children's birthdays, he opened a giving fund at the Jewish Foundation of Memphis, naming each child as the advisor to the fund.

The following year, he went one step

further and established a giving fund for each of his grandchildren on their birthdays. In a world where everyone often focuses on their own needs, Nathan Lubin is on a journey to teach his descendants important lessons about caring for others and giving them the means to fulfill the mitzvah of tzedakah. In a recent chat, Lubin shared his motivation for creating these funds and the positive effect for his family.

"We all want the best for our kids, usually based on our own experiences," Lubin says. "Helping others is not just something you should do, but it's also personally fulfilling." He is especially proud of his grandchildren and how they have embraced this gift with enthusiasm. "I think giving my grandkids the chance to help others is meaningful and good for them."

The recent tragic death of his granddaughter, Rose Lubin, brought even more clarity to the importance of living a meaningful life. Although Rose was unable to fully engage with her fund, she gave of herself, making Aliyah and serving in the IDF. Her family has decided to use Rose's fund to accept memorial donations. Grants from the fund will be made in her memory to charitable organizations that celebrate the person she was.

The heart of Lubin's tradition is in the special moments it creates. One child's

worry about plastic bottles in the ocean turned into excitement when they found out they could help an organization tackling the issue. Another child's wish to aid a 10-year-old with a major heart issue led to the realization that they could donate to the hospital, potentially saving more lives. These touching moments show the powerful impact of philanthropy, proving that even small contributions can solve real-world problems.

Lubin gives wise advice to families wanting to create similar traditions. "It's more about the act of giving, not the amount you give," he said.

He also echoes the Foundation's position on being open about supporting causes that matter to them. "It's important for others to know you support a cause, even if it means the value of your gift is public."

For more information on bringing the tradition of multi-generational giving into your family, contact the Jewish Foundation of Memphis at 901-374-0400. **HW** 

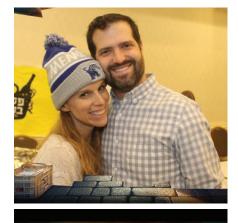
## Young Family Shabbat at Baron Hirsch



rusalem Shuk. Each booth was managed by teens and featured Israeli-themed foods and decorations. While enjoying the delicious foods, families played board games together. The Shabbat concluded with participants feeling a stronger connection to Israel and cherishing the quality time spent with their family members. Baron Hirsch is also gearing 2024 up

with:

- Jan. 19-20 Scholar in Residence Rabbi Allen Schwartz
- Jan. 28 100 Man Minyan
- Feb. 2-3 Atara Segal Weekend
- Feb. 10 Community Siyum Tanach





Last week, Baron Hirsch hosted its third annual Young Family Shabbat. The goal of this Shabbat is to provide an opportunity for the youth at Baron Hirsch to shine, while also fostering meaningful family time during a Baron Hirsch Shabbat meal. Dina and Eitan Selter, the youth directors at Baron Hirsch, chose to center this year's theme around Israel. Participants entered the Baron Hirsch social hall, which had been adorned with Israel-themed decorations.

With nearly 200 participants, families enjoyed a delicious Israel-themed meal prepared by Baron Hirsch members and Torah Mitzion staff. The youth at Baron Hirsch took charge of leading Friday night services and shared insightful words of Torah throughout the meal.

On Saturday night, the Baron Hirsch social hall was transformed into "Machane Yehuda," resembling the vibrant Je• Mar. 15 - Scholar in Residence: Ari Sacher **HW** 



## We Stand with Israel.

There is still so much to be done to help the Israeli people, and Federation is here to help shine a light, provide resources and foster hope. Donate using the QR code. You can also send a message to our brothers and sisters in Shoham, our Israeli sister city by emailing shoham@jcpmemphis.org, and visit our office to pick up campaign yard signs, yahrzeit candles, We Stand with Israel bracelets, and blue ribbons.



# Unlocking the Rebbe's Perspective on Purposeful Living: JLI Introduces Advice for Life Course



Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, of blessed memory.

Advice for Life, a six-week course by the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute (JLI) is set to debut this February. This immersive journey explores the extensive written communications of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, of blessed memory. Through thousands of typewritten letters and transcripts of spoken discourse, the Rebbe interacted with individuals of all walks of life, both from within and outside the Jewish community on matters of work, family, health, and well-being.

The Rebbe's spiritual leadership is the force behind the modern Chabad movement and his wisdom continues to inspire and guide countless individuals on their journeys of faith and personal growth. Starting on Wednesday, February 7 at 7 p.m., participants will take a multimedia voyage through the Rebbe's insights on daily life. Discover how the Rebbe applied Jewish values to serve as a guide for finding deeper meaning in everyday life.

From navigating the "daily grind" to cultivating thriving relationships, the Lubavitcher Rebbe's guidance offers invaluable insights for wholesome living. "Advice for Life is an invitation to delve into ideas that guide us toward mindful growth," notes Rabbi Levi Klein, the dedicated JLI instructor in Memphis, Tennessee. "This course provides practical insights that elevate everyday experiences to meaningful milestones."

Advice for Life welcomes participants from all backgrounds and levels of knowledge, embodying JLI's commitment to making enriching Jewish educational experiences accessible to all.

All JLI courses are open to the public, and attendees need not be affiliated with a particular synagogue, temple, or house of worship.

Interested students may call 901-754-0404 or visit www.JewishMemphis. com/JLI to register or to access other course-related information. JLI courses are presented in Memphis in conjunction with Chabad of Tennessee. HW

## **IDF: Two Slain Al Jazeera** Journalists were Terror **Operatives**



Palestinians at the site of a destroyed building from an Israeli air strike in Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip, on Jan. 7, 2024. Credit: Abed Rahim



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Erev Shabbat, Fri. Jan. 19, 2024 / 9 Shevat, 5784	. 4:56 p.m.
Havdalah, Sat. Jan. 20, 2024 / 10 Shevat, 5784	5:56 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion: Bo Yud Shevat

(JNS) - The Israel Defense Forces last Wednesday presented evidence that two Palestinian journalists killed in Gaza in an Israeli airstrike last Sunday were terrorist operatives, and said that they were operating drones that put soldiers at risk.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, during his Middle Eastern diplomatic swing, called the deaths of Hamza Wael Dahdouh, the son of the son of "Al Jazeera's" Gaza correspondent Wael Al-Dahdouh, and Mustafa Thuria an "unimaginable tragedy." The statement came after "Al Jazeera" reported that two of its employees were killed in the strike on a vehicle in the Rafah area. The Qatari state media accused Jerusalem of deliberately targeting the freelance journalists.

However, a document that the IDF posted to social media appears to prove that Thuria was a Hamas operative. The document lists him as a deputy squad commander in a battalion of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, the terror group's "military wing." Other documents found by the IDF indicate that Dadough was a Palestinian Islamic Jihad operative whose specialty is electronic engineering and who previously served as a deputy commander of a platoon in the Zaytoun Battalion. Before his death, he was in charge of a section of PIJ's rocket unit. Additionally, Israel said that Dadough had carried out terrorist attacks against Israel. "Before the attack, the two operated drones in a manner that created a real threat to our forces, who directed ... aircraft to attack the terrorists who were responsible for operating them," the IDF said. The IDF initially said last Sunday that it "struck a terrorist who operated an aircraft that posed a threat to IDF troops." HW

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

Lunch is Monday–Friday at 11:30 a.m. All programs start at 12:15 p.m.

**Classes Restarting at the MJCC Beginning Mah-Jongg Lessons with** Melanie Mann

#### January 25 through February 20 • Thursdays, 6-8 p.m.

Because of the demand, we have started a second Beginning Mah Jongg class on Thursday Nights! Melanie has been teaching this class for quite a while at the MJCC as well as other places around town. Her other class filled up so quickly, you'll need to call the MJCC front desk ASAP at 901-761-0810 to register. The new class number is 10417. Cost is \$72 for members and \$80 for non-members. Bring your friends and learn a new game!

#### **Monday January 22 Team Trivial Pursuit!**

We will split the room up into teams and see who the reins Trivia champions. Questions come from the authorized edition of Trivial Pursuit, mostly from their Boomer edition. Come test your knowledge and have fun!

Wednesday January 24 Speaker: Mitchell Lansky Topic: "Legal Facts for Seniors!"

Mitchell comes from a long line of Memphians dedicated to serving people. In addition to a Law degree, Mitchell has a Masters in Tax Law and is a member of Lawyers with Purpose - a group that specializes in Estate Planning. With 30 years of experience in this field, Mitchell's mind and passion are aligned for details and problem-solving.

Mr. Lansky's talk will center on the problems seniors deal with on a regular basis. The talk is free and open to the public. Come enjoy lunch and stay for this informative talk.

Please join us from Monday through Friday for a delicious kosher lunch from the Kitchens at the Memphis Jewish Home. The cost is only \$2 for seniors. Reservations are required the day before by 1 p.m. by contacting Adult Services Coordinator Steve Kaplan at 901-259-9220 or stevekaplan@jccmemphis.org, or by calling the front desk at 901-761-0810. HW

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## **Fogelman Jewish Family** Service Community Thank You

Dear Community Members,

In November, Wendy and Avron B. Fogelman Jewish Family Service kicked off our annual Thanksgiving to New Year's food drive for the Peggy E. & L.R. Jalenak, Jr. Kosher Food and Baby Pantry. I want to thank you all for your very generous donations! In just 40 days, Fogelman JFS received 2,287 items.

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 2023, Fogelman JFS distributed over 3,000 pantry bags - 1,000 more than in 2022! We are only able to provide this service due to donations like vours.

Thank you for partnering with Fogelman JFS to meet the needs of so many. If you, or someone you know, would benefit from the Peggy E. & L.R. Jalenak, Jr. Kosher Food and Baby Pantry please never hesitate to reach out. We are here to help and only a phone call away, 901-767-8511.

Sincerely,

Rashki Osina, LCSW

Wendy and Avron B. Fogelman JFS Director of Social Services HW

## On Eve of ICJ Genocide Hearing, Netanyahu says Israel has 'No Intention' of Displacing Palestinians in Gaza

#### **By Ron Kampeas**

(JTA) – Under pressure from the Biden administration, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has announced that Israel has "no intention" of removing Palestinians from the Gaza Strip.

"I want to make a few points absolutely clear: Israel has no intention of permanently occupying Gaza or displacing its civilian population," Netanyahu said in English in a minute-long video he

posted last Wednesday to social media. "Israel is fighting Hamas terrorists, not the Palestinian population, and we are doing so in full compliance with international law."

Netanyahu's comments came on the eve of the opening of genocide proceedings against Israel at the International Court of Justice.

They also followed weeks of pressure from the Biden administration to explicitly disavow the statements of far-right ministers, including Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben-Gvir, who have called for the removal of Palestinians in the wake of the war launched Oct. 7 when Hamas invaded Israel and killed about 1,200 people. More than 23,000 Palestinians have been killed since Israel launched counterstrikes, according to the Hamas-run Gaza health ministry, while more than 180 Israeli soldiers have been killed in Israel's ground invasion of Gaza.

Later in the day, after Netanyahu's comments, the U.S. State Department issued a statement saying the charge of genocide lacked merit.

Related: What you need to know about the genocide charge against Israel and how it will respond

"Allegations that Israel is committing genocide are unfounded," said the statement. "In fact, it is those who are violently attacking Israel who continue to openly call for the annihilation of Israel and the mass murder of Jews. Genocide is one of the most heinous acts any entity or individual can commit, and such allegations should only be made with the greatest of care." South Africa, which brought the genocide claim to the court, has cited statements by the far-right ministers and others to make its case. U.S.-Israel differences over the day after the war ends appear to persist, however. Biden has been pushing for Palestinian sovereignty in Gaza as a step toward Palestinian statehood; Netanyahu continues to oppose statehood. "Our goal is to rid Gaza of Hamas terrorists and free our hostages," the Israeli prime minister said. "Once this is achieved Gaza can be demilitarized and deradicalized, thereby creating a possibility for a better future for Israel and Palestinians alike." HW

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## Girls Basketball Coach Fired at NY School Where Players Shouted Antisemitic Slurs at Jewish Opponents

#### By Jackie Hajdenberg

(New York Jewish Week) – A public high school in New York has fired its varsity girls' basketball coach after players on its team uttered antisemitic slurs during a game against a Jewish day school.

A student has also been dismissed from the team at Roosevelt High School in Yonkers following the incident during a game against the Leffell School, a Jewish school in nearby Hartsdale, last Thursday.

Yonkers Public Schools and the city's mayor, Mike Spano, announced the penalties in a statement last Sunday in which they said they "sincerely apologize" and called the antisemitic epithets "painful and offensive." They said an investigation is underway, noting that additional players may be disciplined and that the district would embark on counseling and training in response to the incident.

"Collectively, we do not and will not tolerate hate speech of any kind from our students and community," the statement said. "The antisemitic rhetoric reportedly made against the student athletes of The Leffell School are abhorrent, inappropriate and not in line with the values we set forth for our young people."

The incident comes as Jewish high schoolers in the New York area and beyond have grappled with reports of rising antisemitism since Hamas' invasion of Israel on Oct. 7 and the subsequent war in Gaza. School districts, parents groups and local officials have taken steps to address what they describe as a hostile atmosphere for Jewish students. In the months prior to Oct. 7, multiple high schools had seen displays of antisemitism on the athletic field.

The atmosphere at last Thursday's game grew hostile early, according to Robin Bosworth, a member of Leffell's team. Bosworth, a senior, wrote in the student newspaper that players on Roosevelt's team were unusually aggressive during the game, leading to injuries on Leffell's squad. She added that they shouted, "Free Palestine" and hurled antisemitic slurs at the Leffell players.

A letter from the town supervisor in Greenburgh, New York, to New York's top education authorities, calling for changes to student-athlete discipline rules, said one Roosevelt player called a Leffell player a "f—ing Jew."

"Attacking a team because of their school's religious association is never acceptable, but especially due to the current war in Israel and the world's rise in antisemitism, this felt extremely personal to me and many members of my team," Bosworth wrote. "I have played a sport every athletic season throughout my high school career, and I have never experienced this kind of hatred directed at one of my teams before."

Bosworth wrote that Leffell's team decided to end the game early. Roosevelt has forfeited the match, according to the "New York Post." Neither the player from Roosevelt High School nor the coach who were dismissed have been identified by the school as of last Monday morning. The school did not return the "New York Jewish Week's" request for comment.

"Antisemitism at any level is unacceptable, as is racism of any sort. It's even more disturbing when it occurs among our young people," Spano posted on social media last Saturday, adding that he will convene a discussion of the incident among local educational, civic and religious leaders.

In an email sent to the Leffell community last Friday afternoon, head of school Michael Kay wrote that Roosevelt High School's athletic director contacted the Leffell School's director of athletics to apologize and assure them both that any followup would be "swift and appropriate." Kay also spoke with Roosevelt's principal about the players or school leadership meeting in person.

He wrote that he was "incredibly proud" of how Leffell's players dealt with the incident.

"The players conducted themselves with midot (ethical values) and grace, and they thoughtfully processed and debriefed the incident," Kay wrote. "Importantly, I would also like to commend the response of my colleagues in the administration of the other school involved."

An activist group of Jewish parents in New York City called attention to the incident, saying that it offered further evidence that city officials to take a stronger stance against antisemitism in local schools. The Yonkers school, like Leffell located in Westchester County north of New York City, is not part of the city school system. **HW** 

## *Israel Opens Investigation after Palestinian Toddler is Killed During Response to Car-Ramming Attack*



Police and security personnel near the scene of a car-ramming in the West Bank on January 7, 2024. Credit: Jamal Awad/Flash90

#### By Eliyahu Freedman

(JTA) – Israeli police are investigating after officers mistakenly killed a 3-yearold Palestinian girl while responding to a car-ramming attack at a checkpoint near the West Bank settlement of Givat Zeev.

The attack outside Jerusalem last Sunday injured a soldier in Israel's Border Police, and comes amid a spike in violence in the West Bank that has accompanied the Israel-Hamas war. Another Border Police officer was killed in the northern West Bank city of Jenin last Saturday, and an Israeli airstrike killed seven people during the ensuing evacuation effort – six of whom the Israel Defense Forces said were terrorists.

Last Sunday's incident has come as Israelis have questioned their forces' open-fire regulations in recent weeks. In particular, instances in which Israeli soldiers mistakenly killed three Israeli hostages in Gaza, and in which an Israeli reservist killed a man who had shot a terrorist, have drawn domestic scrutiny of when soldiers are permitted to shoot. The civilian death toll in Gaza has also prompted international scrutiny of Israel's tactics.

The girl killed last Sunday, according to the Israel Police, was in another car at the intersection where the car-ram-

## Missouri State Rep, Accused of Jew-Hatred, Announces Governor Run

(JNS) – In December, Missouri state Democratic lawmakers kicked Sarah Unsicker out of their caucus, citing the Democrat's antisemitic remarks and conspiracy theories and a photo for which she posed with Charles Johnson, whom the Anti-Defamation League deming attack occurred and was shot accidentally. Magen David Adom, the Israeli emergency response organization, said the girl was brought unconscious to paramedics who were treating the wounded officer, and was pronounced dead shortly afterward. The perpetrator of the car-ramming was shot dead at the site of the attack.

The wave of attacks in recent days follows the assassination last week of top Hamas leader Saleh Al-Arouri, who oversaw terrorist efforts by Hamas and other armed cells in the West Bank.

It also comes as Israel has targeted terrorist infrastructure in the West Bank, including tunnels and bomb-making facilities, following Hamas' Oct. 7 invasion of Israel. In that period, Israeli forces have arrested more than 2,600 Palestinians across the West Bank, including approximately 1,300 allegedly affiliated with Hamas. Since Oct. 7, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry, more than 300 West Bank Palestinians have been killed, a mix of militants and civilians.

Over the [previous] weekend, a Palestinian terror group released a video showing dozens of militants preparing for a future invasion of an Israeli city along the lines of Hamas' attack. **HW** 

that she is running for governor of Missouri, "The Kansas City Star" reported.

"Missouri is the battlefield for the soul of America," she said in her announcement. "I am here to ask for all of America to help me put the heart back in the heartland."

scribes as "a Holocaust denier and altright troll."

Last Monday, Unsicker announced

#### e neur nuna.

She was previously running for attorney general of Missouri but dropped out of that race last month. **HW** 

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## **Estate Planning** Happy New Year! 2024 **Estate Planning Tax Updates**

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

As of January 1, 2024, the financial landscape for individuals considering wealth transfer has witnessed a significant change with the federal lifetime gift and estate tax exemption amount soaring to \$13.61 million per individual. This adjustment paves the way for substantial tax-free transfers during one's lifetime or at the time of death and provides a window of opportunity for strategic estate and financial planning. Married couples can leverage this increase to jointly transfer up to \$27.22 million without an estate tax penalty. In addition, the annual gift tax exclusion amount has also seen a bump, rising from \$17,000 in 2023 to \$18,000 per person in 2024, or \$36,000 for married couples opting to split gifts.

The augmented federal lifetime gift and estate tax exemption amounts offer individuals the chance to shield a considerable portion of their wealth from taxation. With the 2024 exemption set at \$13.61 million per person, there is room for individuals to make tax-free transfers, whether through lifetime gifts or bequests at the time of death. For married couples, this translates into a combined exemption of \$27.22 million – a notable increase from previous years.

Importantly, for those who have already maximized their 2023 exemption of \$12.92 million, the good news is that an additional \$690,000 is now available for gifting in 2024 (\$1.38 million for married couples).

In tandem with the expansion of lifetime gift and estate tax exemptions, the annual gift tax exclusion amount has also seen an upward adjustment. Moving from \$17,000 per person in 2023 to \$18,000 in 2024 (or \$36,000 for married couples opting to split gifts), this annual exclusion provides an avenue for taxfree lifetime gifts to individuals without impacting the overall lifetime exemption limit. This incremental rise enhances the effectiveness of annual gifting strategies, allowing individuals and couples to pass on wealth incrementally over time and avoid taxation issues.



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**Expiration and Future Consider**ations

Despite the significant uptick in amounts and optimism surrounding the current exemptions, these limits are likely not permanent. The increased federal gift and estate tax exemption amounts are set to sunset and expire on December 31, 2025, as dictated by the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. Come January 1, 2026, unless legislative changes intervene, the exemptions are expected to revert to a much lower \$5 million per person, adjusted for inflation. This impending shift emphasizes the importance of current strategic estate and financial planning and timely decision-making.

The 2024 election outcomes may further influence the fate of federal lifetime gift and estate tax exemptions. Depending on political developments, additional changes to these exemption amounts could be on the horizon. Given this uncertainty, individuals are encouraged to consider taking advantage of the current, higher exemption limits and opt for early-year gifting strategies.

The 2024 Federal Exemption and Exclusion Amounts bring a wealth of opportunities for individuals and couples alike to engage in strategic estate and wealth transfer planning. The increased lifetime gift and estate tax exemption amounts, coupled with the enhanced annual gift tax exclusion, provide a limited window for tax-efficient wealth transfers. With the looming expiration in 2025 and potential changes post-2024 elections, prudence and prompt action are imperative. Seizing the current, more favorable exemptions allows for proactive estate planning and the maximization of available opportunities in the ever-evolving landscape of federal tax regulations. HW

## Yoga for Israel: A Day of Healing

Presented by Memphis Jewish Federation's Women's Philanthropy

#### Sunday, January 28 | 9:00 am to 12:00 pm



#### **Event Chairs** Jeri Moskovitz and Kimberlee Strome

Event is open to ages 14 and up







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## Temple Israel Presents: An Evening of Comedy with Alex Edelman with Special Guest Ariel Elias at the Germantown Performing Arts Center on Thursday, February 8, 2024



#### Alex Edelman By Melinda Lejman

Like many religious traditions, Judaism acknowledges the significance of laughter and joy in human life. While Judaism is often associated with its rich history, rituals, and ethical teachings, it also recognizes the importance of humor in connecting with others, finding joy in everyday life, and even as a form of spiritual expression.

Temple Israel's upcoming comedy fundraiser, "An Evening of Comedy with Alex Edelman with Special Guest Ariel Elias," will bring our community together for a healing experience. More than a fundraiser, this laughter-filled evening will strengthen the Memphis Jewish community's spirit.

The headliner for the evening, comedian Alex Edelman, who has been performing stand-up since the age of 16, has been featured in "The New York Times," on the "Today Show," and on "The Late Show With Stephen Colbert." He recently wrapped an incredible nineweek run of his hit "New York Times Critics Pick" Broadway show "Just For Us" in New York City and is now touring with the show in several cities throughout the U.S.

As the head writer for "Saturday Night Seder," Edelman helped raise over \$3.5 million for the CDC COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund and featured celebrity talents such as Andy Cohen, Billy Porter, Dan Levy, Fran Drescher, Idina Menzel, Jason Alexander, and Rachel Brosnahan.

Edelman has also written for outlets



#### Ariel Elias

such as "The Atlantic" and "The Believer;" written and produced documentaries for the U.S. State Department and ESPN's "30 for 30" series, and spent over a decade working as a speechwriter for the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Boston Red Sox.

Up-and-comer and opening act Ariel Elias is a comedian living in New York City with roots in Kentucky who has been featured in "Rolling Stone," in "The Washington Post," and on "Good Morning America." As a traveling stand-up comedian, she has performed on the set of Amazon Prime Video's award-winning "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel" and was named a "New Face" at the 2021 Just For Laughs Comedy Festival. She has recently been catapulted into popular culture after catching Jimmy Kimmel's attention with a viral stand-up clip that displayed her cool, calm, and hilarious composure. He would go on to invite Ariel to make her late-night television debut on "Jimmy Kimmel Live!"

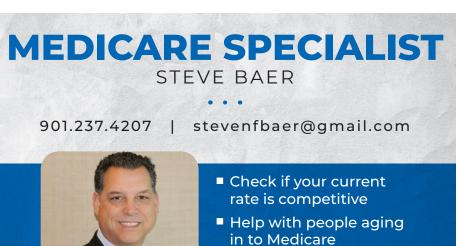
"The name Isaac in Hebrew is Yitzak and means laughter," shares Leigh Mansberg, president of the Temple Israel Board of Trustees. "When he is born, his mother, Sarah, declares, 'God has made laughter for me.' Laughter serves as a bodily response to the unexpected, allowing us to forge ties, build a sense of connection, and uncover joy that makes way for the profound. This event will be such an evening."

More than a night out, this side-splitting comedic event will remind everyone that there is also room for humor and joy in the journey of faith. Join our community on Thursday, February 8, 2024, at 7 p.m. in the Duncan-Williams Performance Hall at the Germantown Performing Arts Center (GPAC) for a night you won't soon forget!

Learn more about these performers and purchase tickets at timemphis. org/comedy. If you have any questions, please contact Jan Reisman at Temple Israel, janr@timemphis.org or 901.937.2781.

The title sponsor of the event is Highland Capital Management, LLC. Event Co-Chairs are Molly and Brian Bernatsky and Jill and Ken Steinberg. **HW** 





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 contact Carolyn Pruitt at cpruitt@jcpmemphis.org or (901)-767-7100.





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## The Value of Hands-On Mitzvah Engagement



Rabbi Akiva Males and his CYHSB Talmud class with the items they delivered to the FJFS Kosher Food Pantry

#### By Rabbi Akiva Males

Even when Halacha allows for Mitzvos to be done through a Shaliach (agent), there's nothing quite like performing that same Mitzvah for ourselves. After all, when we roll up our sleeves and fulfill Hashem's commands in a hands-on manner, we become more invested in those deeds. The Mitzvos we spend time and effort performing take root in our Neshamos (souls) and become part and parcel of who we are.

I'm always on the lookout for meaningful hands-on Mitzvah projects for me and my Cooper Yeshiva High School for Boys (CYHSB) students. One such opportunity came our way on Wednesday, January 3, 2024 – our first day back from winter break. Between Thanksgiving and the beginning of January, Young Israel ran an extremely successful food collection drive in an effort to help replenish the Fogelman Jewish Family Service's Kosher Food Pantry (located at the Memphis Jewish Community Center). A record-breaking amount of non-perishable food and household items had been donated for the cause – 1,251 items to be exact! However, that abundance of collected items now needed to be hauled over to the MJCC.

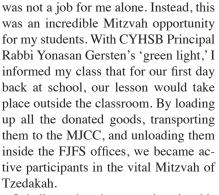
Looking at the many bins filled with donated items, I quickly realized this

## California Man Arrested for Vandalism of Three Jewish Business

(JNS) – In California's San Fernando Valley, Los Angeles law enforcement arrested Edelidio David Wallace, 64, suspected of attacking three Jewish-owned businesses, acts that are now being reviewed as possibly motivated by hate.

Police believe that Wallace, charged with felony vandalism, allegedly threw cement bricks and rocks through the buildings' windows and doors last Monday. Two of the rocks featured the phrases "Glory" and "Pay-up" written on them. All of the crimes took place within a two-mile radius.

The LAPD Major Crimes Division continued its investigations into further acts of vandalism nearby, considering that they may have received damage as part of the same criminal spree. Police have put out a request for more information, seeking other potential victims. **HW** 



I believe that by engaging in this Mitzvah in such a personal manner, the students became more invested in it. Additionally, they gained a better understanding of some of the vital work the FJFS does in our community. After all, most of the boys never knew that the FJFS provided our community with a Kosher Food Pantry. Finally, by playing such an active role in restocking the FJFS' Kosher Food Pantry, the students now better appreciate just how fortunate they are in not suffering from food insecurity.

A hearty Yasher Koach goes out to everyone who participated in one way or another in this great Mitzvah. In the merit of helping restock our community's Kosher Food Pantry, may none of us ever need to make use of it!

Young Israel of Memphis' Rabbi Akiva Males also teaches Torah at the MHA's Cooper Yeshiva High School for Boys. He can be reached at rabbi@ yiom.org **HW** 





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## Tax-Loss Harvesting Offers Chance at Silver Lining

#### 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

Stock market downturns can be rough on your portfolio's bottom line, but they may also offer the potential to reduce your tax liability and possibly buy shares at a discount. When an investment loses money, it's often best to look beyond momentary price swings and hold it for the long term. Sometimes, though, you may want to sell a losing investment, which could help offset gains from selling an investment that has appreciated or reduce your taxable income even if you do not have gains.

Whether this strategy – called taxloss harvesting – is appropriate for you depends on a variety of factors, including your current portfolio performance, your long-term goals, and your current and future taxable income. Keep in mind that capital gains and losses apply only when investments are sold in a taxable account.

#### Gains and losses

Capital gains and losses are classified as long term if the investment was held for more than one year, and short term if it was held for one year or less. Long-term gains are taxed at a rate of 0%, 15%, or 20% depending on your income. Short-term gains are taxed at your ordinary income tax rate, which may be much higher than your capital gains rate. High-income taxpayers (with modified adjusted gross income above \$200,000 for single filers or \$250,000

for joint filers) may also be subject to a 3.8% net investment income tax.

For tax purposes, capital losses are applied first to like capital gains and then to the other type of gains; for example, long-term losses are applied first to long-term gains and then to shortterm gains. Up to \$3,000 of any remaining losses can then be applied to your ordinary income for the current year (\$1,500 if you are married filing separately). Finally, any remaining losses can be carried over to be applied to capital gains or ordinary income in future years. For most taxpayers, the biggest benefit comes when applying losses to short-term gains or ordinary income.

#### 2023 Income and Capital Gains Tax Rates

Taxable income		
Income tax rate	Single filers	Joint filers
10%	Up to \$11,000	Up to \$22,000
12%	\$11,001 to \$44,725	\$22,001 to \$89,450
22%	\$44,726 to \$95,375	\$89,451 to \$190,750
24%	\$95,376 to \$182,100	\$190,751 to \$364,200
32%	\$182,101 to \$231,250	\$364,201 to \$462,500
35%	\$231,251 to \$578,125	\$462,501 to \$693,750
37%	Over \$578,125	Over \$693,750
	Taxable inco	me
Long-term capit	al	
gains tax rate	Single filers	Joint filers
0%	Up to \$44,625	Up to \$89,250

rate Single filers Joint filers Up to \$44,625 Up to \$89,250 \$44,626 to \$492,300 \$89,251 to \$553,850 Over \$492,300 Over \$553,850

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#### Let's Connect

#### Selling, buying, and washing

Some investors sell losing investments with the idea of harvesting the tax loss and then buying the same investment while its price remains low. To discourage this practice, the IRS has a wash-sale rule, which prohibits buying "substantially identical stock or securities" within 30 days prior to or after a sale. This also applies to securities purchased by your spouse or a company you own.

Under the right circumstances, harvesting a tax loss and then buying the same security at least 30 days later (i.e., after the wash-sale period expires) could potentially result in a lower tax liability when you sell that security later at a gain. This is most likely if you repurchase the security at a similar or lower price, and you are in a higher tax bracket at the time you take the loss than at the time you take the gain – for example, if you take the loss while working and sell when you are retired. Any year in which your taxable income falls within range for the 0% capital gains rate may be an opportune time to take gains, and any losses in that year would be applied to short-term gains or ordinary income.

Tax-loss harvesting is a complex strategy. It would be wise to consult your financial professional before taking action.

All investing involves risk, including the possible loss of principal. There is no guarantee that working with a financial professional will improve investment results, or 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. © 2023 Broadridge Financial Solutions, Inc.

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## Rocket Barrage Hits Kiryat Shmona City as Biden Envoy Visits Beirut



Israel Border Police officers look for fragments after a rocket from Lebanon hit Kiryat Shmona, Jan. 8, 2024. Credit: Ayal Margolin/Flash90.

(JNS) – Air-raid sirens blared repeatedly in the largely evacuated Upper Galilee city of Kiryat Shmona and surrounding towns last Thursday afternoon amid a heavy rocket barrage from Lebanon.

There were no injuries from the Lebanese terror rockets, which were intercepted or struck open areas, the Israel Defense Forces said, but shrapnel caused Iran-backed Hezbollah has been testing the waters in recent months, initiating a series of fire exchanges as the Jewish state fights Hamas terrorists to the south. Since Oct. 7, four Israeli civilians and nine IDF soldiers have been killed in attacks near the northern border.

Earlier last Thursday, Israeli Air Force fighter jets and IDF Artillery Corps units attacked a series of Hezbollah targets in Lebanon, IDF Spokesperson Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari said. Among the targets were military compounds and lookouts. The army also returned fire after anti-tank missiles were fired from Lebanon towards the northernmost Israeli town of Metula. Hezbollah last Thursday announced the death of two of its operatives in IDF retaliatory attacks on Southern Lebanon, bringing the total number of Hezbollah terrorists killed since Oct. 7 to at least 161. In an interview with "The Wall Street Journal" published last Sunday, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said that while Israel is not seeking a war with Hezbollah, "80,000 people need to be able to go back to their homes safely," and so if all else fails, "we are willing to sacrifice. "They see what is happening in Gaza," Gallant warned. "They know we can copy-paste to Beirut." HW

#### Mike Stein

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

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Wells Fargo Advisors is a trade name used by Wells Fargo Clearing Services, LLC, Member SIPC, a registered brokerdealer and non-bank affiliate of Wells Fargo & Company. © 2022 Wells Fargo Clearing Services, LLC. CAR-0822-04792 property damage in Kiryat Shmona.

The latest rocket attacks led to power outages in several cities and towns, including Kiryat Shmona, Moshav Margaliot, Kibbutz Manara and Kibbutz Misgav Am.

The attacks came as Amos Hochstein, U.S. President Joe Biden's point man for dealing with Hezbollah, touched down in Beirut to push for a diplomatic solution to the situation on the Israel-Lebanon border, in a bid to prevent the Israel-Hamas war from expanding into a regional conflict.

During a meeting with Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati, Hochstein stressed "the necessity of working to calm the situation in Southern Lebanon, even if it is not possible to reach a final solution agreement," the country's staterun "National News Agency" reported.

Hochstein was scheduled to meet later last Thursday with Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, a powerful ally of Hezbollah.

## 'Sit This One Out,' Fetterman Tells South Africa, of Israel Genocide Accusation



Sen. John Fetterman (D-Pa.) on Jan. 5, 2024, near Valley Force National Park in Blue Bell, Pa. Credit: OogImages/Shutterstock.

#### **By Andrew Bernard**

(JNS) – South Africa, which brought genocide charges against Israel at the International Court of Justice, a U.N. body in The Hague, should "sit this one out," Sen. John Fetterman (D-Pa.) said last Wednesday at an Orthodox Union lunch on Capitol Hill.

The Pennsylvania Democrat, who has developed a reputation as one of Israel's staunchest supporters in Congress, said that Hamas's terror attack on Israel on Oct. 7 cannot be compared to Israeli self-defense and critics of the Jewish state should not accuse the latter of asymmetrical response.

"Who are they really fighting? It's a group of cowards. They hide in tunnels. They hide behind civilians. They attack, kill and mutilate children, women," he said. "Stop talking about 'proportion.""

The senator, who is known for flouting conventions, including the Senate's dress code, then turned his attention to South Africa.

"Let's also talk about that now that we're talking about 'genocide,' and now South Africa is bringing that to trial," he said. "Maybe South Africa oughta sit this one out."

South Africa presented its case to the International Court of Justice last Thursday that Israel's military campaign against Hamas constitutes genocide against the Palestinians in Gaza.

Israel has argued that the case is legally and factually baseless, and Israel's Foreign Ministry accused South Africa of acting as the "legal arm of the Hamas terrorist organization."

Israel was scheduled to present its side of the case to the court last Friday.

A clip of Fetterman's comments criticizing South Africa went viral on social media overnight, with right-wing accounts that have large followings suggesting that Fetterman was referring to attacks on white farmers in South Africa as genocide.

"Did John Fetterman (D) just call out the white genocide in South Africa?" wrote an account called End Wokeness to its 2.1 million followers. Elon Musk, who owns X, shared the End Wokeness post with his 168.9 million followers. "He is right," Musk wrote.

"A great deal of South Africa's best farmland is owned by white farmers, as a result of the eviction of black farmers when the country was ruled by a white minority," Fox News reported.

"Although South Africa now has majority rule, land ownership remains a contentious issue, with parties like the leftist Economic Freedom Fighters mobilizing supporters and urging the government to seize white-owned land without compensation and return it to black families," it added.

Others have claimed that black South Africans aim to commit genocide against white South Africans, and on Aug. 22, 2018, then-President Donald Trump posted, "I have asked Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to closely study the South Africa land and farm seizures and expropriations and the large scale killing of farmers. 'South African Government is now seizing land from white farmers.'"

The Anti-Defamation League calls the theory "a longstanding (and false) white supremacist claim."

"For decades, white supremacists globally were cheerleaders for the institutionalized white supremacy of apartheid in South Africa. They have reacted bitterly to the end of the racist policy, and to the progress South Africans have made in pursuit of racial equality and reconciliation," the ADL wrote.

"White supremacists have seized upon some of the farm-related violence in South Africa since the end of apartheid to peddle a propaganda campaign that exaggerates and distorts the situation to imply that South African whites are imperiled," it added.

A spokesperson for Fetterman told JNS that the senator was not talking about the "white genocide" theory.

Fetterman told JNS that South Africa should pay attention closer to home. "The entirety of my point was this: South Africa should instead focus on the spiraling humanitarian crises on its own continent – like Sudan, where more than 7 million people have been displaced with widespread atrocities," he said.

'The last man standing

In 2015, the South African government allowed former Sudanese dictator Omar al-Bashir to depart the country after he attended an African Union summit in Johannesburg despite a South African court ordering that he be detained over charges of genocide against him at the International Criminal Court.

A South African appeals court ruled in 2016 that then-South African President Jacob Zuma's decision to let al-Bashir depart was unlawful and "disgraceful." Fetterman has emerged since Oct. 7 as one of the most vehemently pro-Israel voices in the Democratic Party.

In an interview with "Politico" in December, Fetterman said he is willing to continue standing with Israel even as a growing number of fellow Democrats call for a ceasefire in the war against Hamas.

"I would be the last man standing to be absolutely there on the Israeli side on this with no conditions," he said.

At last Wednesday's OU event, Fetterman also hit back at anti-Israel protesters demanding a ceasefire. There will never be a permanent solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict until Hamas is eliminated, he said.

"Protests all around the nation. They're blocking tunnels. They're blocking roads. Why?" Fetterman asked. "Why aren't they protesting: 'When will we get the hostages home?' Why aren't they protesting Hamas? Why aren't they protesting the systemic rape and torture of Israeli women and children? I will never get it."

"Hamas is anathema to peace," he added. "We'll never have a stable, twostate solution, we'll never have any peace for Israel until they are fully eliminated." **HW** 

### Canadian Biker Who Spits, Spews Antisemitism, Arrested Within Hours



*Toronto Police Chief Myron Demkiw, Jan. 11, 2024. Source:* 

to. He has been charged with public incitement of hatred after he allegedly marched in a demonstration waving a flag of a listed terrorist group on Jan. 7 in downtown Toronto.

Toronto Police Chief Myron Demkiw also said that a recent series of anti-Israel demonstrations on the Avenue Road and Highway 401 overpass next to a predominantly Jewish neighborhood will no longer be permitted and that "people can expect to be arrested if necessary."



#### Toronto Police Service.

(JNS) – In Vaughan, Ontario, a group of four Jewish adults returning home from their synagogue allegedly experienced antisemitic harassment from Kenneth Jeewan Gobin, 34, as he rode by on an electric bicycle.

York Regional Police said that last Saturday, the victims "felt intimidated by the manner in which the suspect operated the bike in their presence." Soon an argument began that escalated into Gobin allegedly spitting at the Jews and hurling antisemitic insults their way before leaving the scene.

Gobin was arrested within hours. He received two charges of assault and breaching his probation. Canada previously convicted Gobin in 2007 for carjacking, and the judge at the time said that the perpetrator "demonstrated no remorse."

In related news, the Toronto Police Service said it had arrested Maged Sameh Hilal Al Khalaf, 41, of ToronOn Jan. 3, a Jewish-owned grocery store in Toronto bearing the initials "IDF" on its signage experienced a firebombing and vandalism. **HW** 



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# Joseph Goldberger and his Gift to the Southland



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

#### Ted Roberts

I wasn't surprised the other day to see a list of the hundred greatest Synagogue Garbage Committee Chairmen of the millennium. (I was 59th.)

Around the turn of the last century, there were millennium lists of everything. "The Rochester Jewish Ledger," as well as other Jewish papers, ran a list of one hundred acclaimed Jews picked by the readers of the "Jerusalem Report." Among significant notables like Einstein, Salk, and the Baal Shem Tov, there were minor leaguers like Danny Kaye, Sid Ceasar, Abbie Hoffman, and Marilyn Monroe (remember, she converted when she married Arthur Miller?). Small potatoes among the giants of Judaism, I say. Nowhere on the list was Dr. Joseph Goldberger.

Who was Joseph Goldberger, do I hear you ask?

Oh, only the medical researcher who cured Pellagra in the South. Today, when we preach that less is better, gastronomically, it's hard to remember that just over our shoulder in time – two generations ago – our parents and grandparents suffered from under consumption. Victims of poverty, they were harvested prematurely due to under consumption. Diet deficiencies like Scurvy and Pellagra were death weapons, especially in the rural South.

But Goldberger's fame was victim of his victory. Like a wound that heals without a scar – who remembers Pellagra? It is yesterday's banished assassin – thanks to the good doctor.

So, don't feel bad that you recognize Sid Caesar, but not Joseph Goldberger. Nobody else, outside of medical historians, has any idea of his gift to undernourished, poor people everywhere – but especially the rural South. He did most of his work in the 20s – not a great economic decade for maintaining a balanced diet if you were a maid or sharecropper in Mississippi or laid around your room all day and thumbed through classified ads because you were unemployed.

Paul DeKruif, the famous historian and popularizer of medical science, tells of Goldberger in his 1926 book – "The Hunger Fighters."

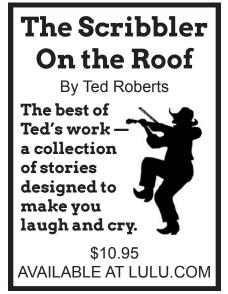
Goldberger was born in Austria, Hungary, and came to New York with his family in 1881. After his medical education at Bellevue Hospital Medical College, he joined the Public Health Service – basically a band of "microbe hunters" as they were called. It was an exhilarating era in public health history. Syphilis, Typhoid Fever, and Tuberculosis were under siege. "Identify the bug and kill it" was their modus operandi.

In 1912, the Surgeon General took note of soldier Goldberger who was battling infectious diseases around the U.S. and the Caribbean. He assigned him to Pellagra, the "Scourge of the South," which flourished like the Boll Weevil in Dixie's cotton fields. It was a killer of the poor. Gout was for rich folks, Pellagra fed on poor folks. And it fed well in those years. In 1915 thousands died in Mississippi alone.

The good doctor took a long look around the South before he unpacked his laboratory test tubes. Pellagra stalked the land hand-in-hand with poverty. Its host was poor folks whose diet had three major elements; cornbread, cornmeal, and corn on the cob. Maybe sweetened up with molasses for Sunday dinner - or an entrée of white lard. So, contrary to his "microbe hunter" philosophy, the Jewish researcher decided that there was no bug - no infectious side to this malady. You didn't catch it by sharing a bologna sandwich with Betty Lou McElhaney. It was a failure of nutrition. He noted that eating cornbread, molasses, and pork fat practically invited the disease into your ill-nourished frame. And, with a keen Talmudic eye he registered that institutionalized orphans fell victim, but the staff who had a separate dining room, was as healthy as a show hog at the County Fair.

In 1915, with the permission of the governor of Mississippi, he conducted a landmark experiment at Rankin Prison Farm down in Mississippi. The control group were fed the typical diet of the Southern poor while the experimental group lapped up meat, fresh vegetables, and milk. As he suspected, the malnour-ished inmates came down with Pellagra.

More experiments followed at orphanages, prisons, and mental institutions; facilities where large numbers of people were fed under controlled conditions. It was always the same. No milk and meat resulted in first, sore mouth and red rash. Then the rash crusted and reddened into flaming sores. And stomach pain wracked the victims. The Red Death, they called it. Of those afflicted,



40% laid down their cares and woes.

Goldberger announced his discovery – the linkage of diet and disease. The medical community, obsessed with infectious diseases, snickered. He didn't spend much time debating the issue.

Instead, he injected himself, his wife, and assistants with Pellagra-tainted blood. In all, he played Russian roulette seven times with self-induced Pellagra. But it never took. He and his staff thrived on a balanced diet. Finally, Goldberger discovered that a daily yeast tablet – cheap enough for the poorest of the poor – would defeat Pellagra. After his death in 1929, it was found that the missing nutritional element was Niacin; both a prevention and cure. A nice gift to the Southland from a Jewish doctor.

If I made up a Jewish millennium list, after placing by wife around 20th, I'd put Dr. Joseph Goldberger somewhere after Einstein, but stratospherically above Abbie Hoffman, Marilyn Monroe, and that crowd.

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** 

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## ISRAEL INSIGHTS Political Warfare within War, Why?

#### By Howard Weisband

I am not a military expert. However, I believe that I am a well-read, well-informed observer in general of IDF operations including the current war with Hamas. I have felt from October 7 that this would be a long war, carried out in several phases, and that the Israeli political and military determination to elimiwas a certain amount of uproar from the far right within the coalition, which had pushed through the judicial reform, former Justice Minister, though not a member of the current Government, Ayelet Shaked was quoted on January 2 in the "Jerusalem Post" as saying: "Tonight the Supreme Court ruled that it rejects a basic law. The same court gave the basic laws their constitutional status.... This is a weak ruling from a legal point of view... and against the backdrop of the situation in the country... when our soldiers are united at the front and expect similar unity at the rear – there was no place for such a hasty publication of such a controversial court ruling." Shaked points to the timing question of the actions of the Supreme Court. In a January 1 "Times of Israel" op ed, David Horovitz explains that former Supreme Court President Esther "Hayut formally retired in October, as did another justice, Anat Baron... (thus the Court) issued their decisions... under procedures by which justices can rule on cases they have heard for three months after their retirement."

The second occurrence was a January 4 Cabinet meeting during which by IDF Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Herzi Halevi announced, apparently surprisingly, an internal IDF probe of the IDF failures that led to the October 7 Hamas cross border vicious attack, massacre, and taking of hostages. On January 5, Tovah Lazaroff

and political machinations. Those are tea leaves I know how to read. But in all my readings, nowhere did I find that the Chief of Staff cleared the establishment of his internal IDF investigation with the Prime Minister, who as head of the civilian Government oversees the military. And further, I agree with the conclusion of a January 8 "Jerusalem Post" editorial, which opines that the Prime Minister "needs to rein in his cabinet ministers in a more forceful way." As I have stated in prior columns there will be an appropriate time for pinpointed independent investigations of both the political echelon and the military infrastructure, in order to examine the intelligence and operational failures that led to October 7.

nate Hamas militarily and politically has been the correct goal.

The IDF has made significant progress toward that goal, and has entered an important phase of "mopping up," as it was recently referred to by Maj. Gen. (res.) Yaakov Amidror. Because there remains a network of underground tunnels in which a large number of terrorists and their leaders are still hiding, using hostages as human shields, this phase of the war may take several more months.

The unity within Israel that currently exists in support of the war effort, which I've applauded in previous columns, continues to exist albeit in a fragile condition. Two recent occurrences lent themselves to threatening that unity.

First were the two decisions of the Supreme Court, without going into detail here, that overturned the contentious decisions of the current Netanyahu Government regarding "reasonableness" clauses within Israel's Basic Laws. While there

Therefore, the Court rushed to decide on politically contentious issues, testing national unity, during a highly sensitive time while the country is at war. reported in the "Jerusalem Post," as other media sources did likewise, of Cabinet leaks, which described a raucous response especially on the part the coalition's far right ministers.

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant (Likud) and Minister Benny Gantz (National Unity), formerly an IDF Chief of Staff himself, who joined the Cabinet within the war effort, defended Halevi, with Gantz referring to the far-right ministers as engaging in "a politically motivated attack in the middle of a war."

Netanyahu reportedly told Halevi he must listen to the ministers, particularly defending his far-right coalition members. This he had to do to hold his Government together. Two days later, on Saturday night in an address to the nation, the Prime Minister called for calm and national unity above all else while the war rages in Gaza.

While I am not a military expert, I do have years of experience in governance

Meanwhile Israel cannot afford political warfare during a critical time of war.

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** 

# TOP23of2023

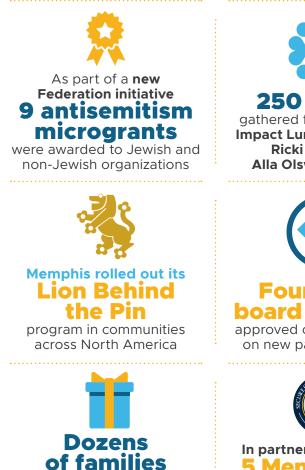


At Federation's Israel Solidarity Gathering, **500+ community members,** Mayors from Memphis and Germantown, the Memphis Chief of Police, elected officials and community rabbis stood together in response to the October 7 massacre

Collaborated with 9 community partners and welcomed 3000 intergenerational attendees to Federation's first Pajamakkah Party



40 women representing every Memphis denomination went on a Federation spiritual journey to Vienna, Prague and Berlin



Launched a groundbreaking campaign for the Morris S. Fogelman Jewish Student Center at the University of Memphis





approved criteria for taking on new partner agencies



In partnership with SCN, 5 Memphis law enforcement



Provided over 24,000 senior meals through congregate and home-delivered programs

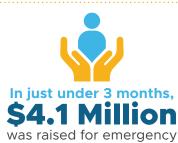


Shuk, Rattle and Roll drew a crowd of **300+** to cap off a year-long

celebration of Israel's 75th anniversary



\$16.3M in grants awarded to 3,000 charitable organizations from Foundation donor funds



### Foundation's Latke + Vodka event celebrated 150 donors and advisors for their philanthropic commitments



Memphis and Shelby County mayors joined more than 400 attendees

#### staff to create new planned gifts as part of their estate plans

worked with Foundation

## traveled to Israel

humanitarian needs in Israel

## at Federation's annual **Yom Hashoah** commemoration



Foundation's B'nai Tzedek program celebrated **two decades** 

of Memphis Jewish teen philanthropy



Partnered with Tennessee Federations for a second year to secure \$750,000 from TN state budget for House of Worship Security Grants

#### Burton Weil Family Foundation's

first year of grantmaking included major investments in **University** of **Memphis** and **UT Health Science Center Medical School** 



Temple Israel leaders and donors collaborated with Foundation staff to create the Temple Israel Cemetery

**Sustainability Fund** 



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## Feds to Investigate Teaneck, NJ, School District Where Students Held Pro-Palestinian Walkout



A youth-led, interfaith dialogue is held at Teaneck High School to discuss the Middle East, Teaneck, New Jersey, Nov. 5, 2023. Credit: Aristide Economopoulos for The Washington Post via Getty Images

#### **By Andrew Lapin**

(JTA) – The U.S. Department of Education has opened an investigation into a New Jersey school district that has come under fire for what Jewish parents allege is an antisemitic climate since Oct. 7.

The case at Teaneck Public Schools, a diverse district in a heavily Jewish suburb of New York City, adds to a growing slate of federal Title VI civil rights investigations involving alleged discrimination of Jewish or Arab students in the months since Hamas attacked Israel. Other investigations have been opened at universities and K-12 school districts across the country.

The education department does not say why it has opened an investigation, and the district superintendent's office did not return Jewish Telegraphic Agency requests for comment.

Teaneck, which has significant Jewish and Muslim populations living in un-

usually close proximity, has been divided since Oct. 7. "I have been here for 35 years, and I have never seen this type of tension," Noam Sokolow, the proprietor of a local kosher deli, told the "Washington Post" in November, shortly after debate over a resolution condemning Hamas divided the town's governance committee, spurred skirmishes and led to the resignation of most members of a municipal inclusion committee.

The tensions rippled through the local school district starting with the superintendent's response to Hamas' attack on Israel, continuing with a contentious board meeting at which Jewish speakers say they were unfairly silenced, and culminating in a pro-Palestinian student walkout that administrators sent mixed communications about.

"I think that the superintendent's actions, the first letter that he wrote, and the fact that he allowed this walkout where there was hate speech on school grounds, it shows a complete lack of understanding about what antisemitism is," Hillary Kessler-Godin, a Jewish parent who filed a Title VI complaint against the district, told JTA.

Local Jewish leaders, including rabbis and officials at the Jewish federation, encouraged parents to file the complaints with the federal education department's Office of Civil Rights.

Naomi Knopf, chief impact officer at the Jewish Federation of Northern New Jersey, told JTA that she didn't know which complaint the department took up in its investigation. But she said the federation was heartened that an inquiry had been opened.

"Jewish Federation is very pleased that the Department of Education is taking these incidents seriously," Knopf said. "The rights of Jewish students matter just as much as everyone else's, and it's our job and the federal government's job to make sure that all students have access to a safe educational environment."

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination based on criteria including "shared ancestry." The department, which does not comment on active investigations, focuses its inquiries on whether the school should have done more to protect students. It has said that opening an investigation does not mean the complaint has merit.

Days after the Oct. 7 attack, Teaneck Superintendent Andre Spencer emailed out a message of support that did not include mention of Israel, Hamas or terrorism, instead employing phrases such as "unfortunate situation" that Jewish parents felt did not match the severity of the moment.

At a subsequent school board meeting, Jewish parents and community members who attempted to describe the barbarity of the Hamas attacks were shut down, with the school board informing them that there were children present. The same board did not stop speakers who used in some cases identical language to describe Israel's treatment of the Palestinians, prompting a complaint by the free-speech group FIRE. Tensions came to a head in November, when the superintendent appeared to at first endorse a planned student "walkout for Palestine."

"It is essential to recognize that our scholars have the First Amendment right to express themselves," Spencer wrote in an initial communication about the walkout.

Local Orthodox rabbis, responding to the walkout organizers' allegation that Israel was committing "genocide" in Gaza, issued a statement opposing the demonstration, calling it "grotesque and overt antisemitism" and a "blood libel." Hundreds of local Jews – including several Orthodox community leaders with no children in the district – organized a pro-Israel rally the night before the walkout. (Most local Jewish parents send their children to Jewish day schools.)

Following the criticism, Spencer issued a second statement condemning antisemitism and noting that any students who participated would be given zeros for the classes they missed. About 100 students ultimately walked out.

Another Title VI civil rights investigation was announced last week at Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District in Orange County, California. A district representative did not disclose details of the investigation to JTA, citing student privacy concerns, but said in a statement, "Unequivocally, our school district condemns all forms of discrimination and does not tolerate this kind of behavior on our school campuses." **HW** 



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