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# Hebrew Watchman

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## 2024 Annual Meeting to Honor Jason Salomon, Outgoing Foundation Board Chair



Jason Salomon, outgoing Foundation Board Chair.

Jewish Community Partners (JCP) will hold its 2024 Annual Meeting on

Thursday, June 6 at 7 p.m. at the Memphis Jewish Community Center. The program will celebrate the ways Memphis Jewish Federation (Federation) and the Jewish Foundation of Memphis (Foundation), under the management of JCP, have worked with donors and lay leaders to address local and global needs during an unprecedented year.

The meeting will highlight achievements of the past year and will include a special tribute to outgoing Foundation Board Chair Jason Salomon. Meeting attendees will hear from Mr. Salomon, JCP Board Chair Marty Kelman and Federation Board Chair Scott Notowich, as they discuss the successes of each organization over the past year. In addition, Pace Cooper will be presented for election as the next Foundation Chair.

"When we started planning this joint meeting, we wanted to focus on three

key areas – celebrating our donors and leaders, reflecting on our accomplishments, and looking forward with hope," said Laura Linder, JCP President and Chief Executive Officer.

"The tribute to Jason Salomon, led by past Foundation Chairs Charles Jalenak and Anthony Morrison, will perfectly capture these ideas, as we celebrate Jason's leadership, his accomplishments and the path he's provided for a hopeful future."

Mr. Salomon was elected as Foundation Board Chair in 2022, and his term has included the creation of two additional Support Organizations, bringing on Plough Towers as a new partner agency, leading and supporting the Foundation in the aftermath of the October 7 attack and launching the Life and Legacy Plus initiative with the Grinspoon Foundation. "The Foundation has grown in significant ways with Jason as Chair," said Sheri Gadberry, Executive Vice President and Senior Philanthropic Advisor. "We have increased our donor advised fund portfolio, built our Professional Advisory Group to 130 members, and supported the Burton Weil Family Foundation in funding a historic major gift for University of Memphis. None of this could have happened without Jason's leadership. He is a true community leader who makes himself available, no matter the need. His compassion for the Jewish community is inspiring."

The community is invited to attend the meeting – registration is available at jcpmemphis.org. Light dairy desserts will be available at the meeting (dietary laws will be observed). For more information on the Annual Meeting, call 901-767-7100. **HW** 

## Foundation Celebrates Next Generation of Community Philanthropists at B'nai Tzedek Grant Reception



B'nai Tzedek participant Wallis Rogan (right) presents grant award certificate to Audrey Siskind, Hillels of Memphis Advisory Board Co-Chair. Jewish teen philanthropy in Memphis," Schrier began, setting the tone for an evening dedicated to honoring the commitment and hard work of the 24 teens that participated in this year's grant cycle.

The event marked the culmination of months of dedicated effort by teens in the Jewish Foundation of Memphis B'nai Tzedek teen philanthropy program. Beyond the joy of awarding grants, the reception provided an opportunity to reflect on the journey that led to this moment. Laura Kaplan, Vice President of Finance and Operations for Jewish Community Partners, and one of the program's founding members, shared her experiences and insights with the audience. gives me so much joy to see these teens making the commitment to learn about our local agencies and the power of giving. I know we can expect great things from these young leaders, and they give our Memphis Jewish community hope for the generations to come."

The heart of the program lies in its grant-making process, where teens are empowered to make impactful decisions about how to allocate funds within the community. Schrier shared insights into the teens' rigorous process, from reviewing grant applications to conducting interviews with potential recipients.

During the reception, the teens had

Hope and excitement were in the air as Carolyn Schrier, B'nai Tzedek Coordinator, welcomed attendees to the 2024

B'nai Tzedek Grant Reception, held in early May.

"We are here tonight to celebrate

Kaplan said, "As one of the first participants of B'nai Tzedek in Memphis, it the pleasure of presenting checks to the agencies selected to receive grants and

(See Philanthropists Page 3)

## Annual Subscriptions Are the Lifeline of The Hebrew Watchman

By Susan C. Nieman

The Hebrew Watchman is approaching 99 years old in September 2024!

Leo Goldberger and family began the paper in 1925 and later turned the reigns over to his son, Herman. After marrying Bobbie, the couple ran the paper until January 2021, when Herman and Bobbie sold the family business to me.

In the past three years and counting, (OMG, has it been that long?) my husband, Larry, along with daughters Toni Nieman and Rebecca Schudel, and my dear friend, Shoshana Cenker, are keeping this longstanding, well-respected paper alive.

But it takes all of us.

Subscription payments from our read-

ers and advertising dollars from our extremely loyal and consistent supporters keep our beloved **The Hebrew Watchman** going week after week.

During these past three years, we've seen the rising cost of paper and printing. Don't get me started on how many increases we have seen in postage. And it's going up again in July!

The cost of your subscription in no way compares to the annual cost that it takes to mail your paper to you each week. In fact, an out-of-state paper mailed for 52 weeks costs more than \$125 a year. But your subscription is just \$50 per year. If you live within the Memphis city limits, your subscription fee of \$36 barely covers half the year. If your ZIP code falls outside the city limits, it costs even more to mail.

So, you can see how dependent we are on your annual subscription support.

In the coming months, you'll find an annual subscription notice in the mail. We also try to include a subscription form in the paper at least once a month.

And you may always visit us online at www.HebrewWatchman.com to subscribe and pay online.

If you don't know when the last time you made a subscription payment, you may call 901.763.2215 or email toni@HebrewWatchman.com, and we'll look it up for you. In the meantime, if you have a business and would like to support The Hebrew Watchman with **advertising and/or sponsorship**, please reach out to Larry at 901.299.7376 or me at 901.827.7244.

Thank you so much for your kind words of encouragement. We really enjoy hearing from our readers.

Please join us in thanking our advertisers when you see them. You can find a list of our consistent 2023-2024 advertisers on page 10. (Please forgive any omissions.)

You can reach me any time at info@ HebrewWatchman.com or susan@ jewishscenemagazine.com.

Susan C. Nieman ~ Publisher

## My Teen Israel Experience



Kyra Jalanek, Ella Miller, Amalia Shapiro and Phoebe Kay. By Amalia Shapiro

I thought going to Israel was just another year of summer activities alongside my camp friends, the only difference being that we were in Israel and not at camp. I never expected I would learn so much about myself and what I enjoyed.

Typically, my camp summers consist of the same activities, rules, and dayby-day comfortable schedule. However, when I got to Israel, I quickly realized that this summer was going to be completely different. I knew going into the trip I would be put in situations different than in normal summers, but I never expected the outcome of those situations.

A key part of our trip in Israel was spending time outdoors. More specifically we slept under the stars for a total of six nights. The first time we camped was in the Negev. This section of the trip happened three days in and was required by the whole group to participate. At first, I was not thrilled with the idea of only having a tarp to sleep on and having to hike often. My mind was changed however, when I saw how beautiful Israel was and how unique of an experience I was granted.

Surprisingly, I enjoyed the nights on the rocks because there was no bedtime, and my friends and I could stay up as late as we wanted. This helped me bond with my previous friends and create new friendships that enhanced the rest of my trip. Additionally, the fact that we hiked all day and could stay up so late meant that you were so tired it was not too hard to fall asleep. After the Negev I realized that I did not actually hate hiking and sleeping outdoors and that turned out to be one of the highlights of my trip.

Later in the trip every camper would be presented with an elective activity that would last three nights. You chose this before the Israel trip started but were allowed to change. Most everyone chose Sea to Sea, which was a similar experience to the Negev, but after experiencing the Negev many people quickly opted out of Sea to Sea.

However, this was not the case for me, because I enjoyed the Negev so much. During Sea to Sea, we had a similar structure to the Negev, however Sea to Sea happened in the northern part of Israel and not the desert. During Sea to Sea, I again slept under the stars and hiked all day. I loved Sea to Sea even though it was tough. It was tough because we hiked the entire day and had to cook our own meals during the hikes. This meant our bags were heavier because of the cooking supplies, and our food intake was limited due to a small supply.

This still did not stop Sea to Sea from being one of my top experiences over the summer. Reflecting on this is surprising for me, because on paper Sea to Sea would be something I would never dare participate in, let alone enjoy.

The beauty of my Israel trip was I

Happy Rosh Chodesh!

SIVAN - 5784

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publishers be held responsible for any

6/6/2024

A Memphis Candlelighting Time

errors.

Weekly Torah Portion: Bamidbar

tried something new and came away with a love for something I would not have found without the trip.

I am so thankful to the Memphis Jewish Federation's Lemsky Endowment Fund for helping make my NFTY Jacobs Camp Israel summer opportunity possible. I will remember my experience for the rest of my life.

Amalia, daughter of Virginia Palacio and Todd Shapiro, is a rising senior at St. Mary's Episcopal School. Memphis Jewish Federation's Lemsky Endowment Fund provided her with a Teen Israel Experience grant to offset the costs of her NFTY Jacobs Camp Israel program. All rising juniors and seniors are eligible for grants of up to \$3,000 to attend a recognized teen summer or semester program in Israel. Teen Israel Experience applications for Summer 2024 are open and can be accessed at Lemsky Endowment Fund | Jewish Community Partners (jcpmemphis.org) **HW** 

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

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### **Philanthropists...**

(Continued From Page 1)

were excited to explain the impact of the programs being funded.

This year, as a group, the teens made 13 grants to nine unique agencies. To date, program participants have also donated \$3,700 from their individual funds across 20 organizations.

Participant Shoshanah Kaplowitz reflected on her time with B'nai Tzedek, saying. "I have always loved being a part of a group where I could meet all types of Jewish teens who have the same goals of helping and improving the Jewish community through chesed. Being an active member of B'nai Tzedek has improved both my leadership and decision-making skills."

For more information on the Jewish Foundation of Memphis B'nai Tzedek teen philanthropy program, contact Carolyn Schrier at cschrier@jcpmemphis. org or call 901-374-0400. HW

## 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. Monthly Luncheon is at noon.

Monday, June 10 **Team Trivial Pursuit!** 

The room will be split into teams to see who the trivia champions are!! Questions come from the Authorized edition of Trivial Pursuit, most of which come from their Boomer edition. Come test your knowledge. Prizes will be given to the winning team!

### Wednesday, June 12

MJCC will be CLOSED for Shavuot. Enjoy the Holiday!

Monday, June 17

### Special Summer Bingo with the Mah Ani Campers

A fun time will be had by all as the Mah Ani campers join the seniors for games of BINGO!

### Wednesday, June 19 **Team Trivial Pursuit!**

The room will be split into teams to see who the trivia champions are!! Questions come from the Authorized edition of Trivial Pursuit. Come test your knowledge. Prizes will be given to the winning team!

Please join us 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 Steve Kaplan, Adult Services Coordinator, at 901-259-9220 or stevekaplan@jccmemphis. org, or by calling the front desk at 901-761-0810. HW

### Abraham Accords, Moving U.S. **Embassy to Blame** for Oct. 7 Attack, **AOC Says**

(JNS) - Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.), a member of the so-called progressive "Squad" in Congress, agreed with a far-left streamer that the Abraham Accords and former President Donald Trump's decision to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem were responsible for the Oct. 7 terrorist attacks by Hamas in southern Israel.

Hasan Piker said that Oct. 7, the bloodiest day for Jews since the Holocaust, was "a direct consequence of the Abraham Accords and many of Jared Kushner's and Donald Trump's administration's actions, like moving the embassy to Jerusalem."

agreed, Ocasio-Cortez saying "10,000%," "Jewish Insider" reported.

"He is just as responsible for Oct. 7 as anyone else," Piker said. "It directly happened as a direct consequence of him moving the embassy to Jerusalem, recognizing the annexed territory of Golan Heights as Israeli territory, going against international law and also conducting the Abraham Accords, completely sidestepping the Palestinians in the conversation. That is a major reason."

As Piker spoke, Ocasio-Cortez "continued to nod along and said, 'mhm,"" per "Jewish Insider."

Rep. Brad Schneider (D-Ill.) stated that the Abraham Accords "have been the most important step forward toward peace between Israelis and Arabs, and the region as a whole, in more than two decades."

"It is both ignorant and abhorrent to suggest that pursuing peace - recognizing that both Arabs and Jews belong to this land and must find a way to live together in this land - either caused or justified Hamas's barbaric attack on Oct. 7," he added. "If anything, Hamas timed its attack in an effort to thwart movement towards peace and advance its, and Iran's, genocidal ambition to destroy Israel and kill Jews."

"The Abraham Accords, for the first time, fully recognize and put into writing that all people of the Middle East, including Jews and Arabs, are destined to live together, and that by recognizing this, they can help lift each other up and create a better future for themselves and their children." he said.

"Conversely, Iran and its proxies including Hamas, Hezbollah and the Houthis - are hell-bent on destroying any progress towards peace to make their hateful vision of eliminating Israel and Jews into a reality," he added. "My colleagues should all recognize this simple truth and measure their words and statements accordingly."

## Israeli Forces Foil Stabbing North of Jerusalem

(JNS) - Israeli security personnel thwarted a stabbing attack at a checkpoint between Jerusalem and Ramallah in Samaria last Thursday.

According to initial reports, the terrorist advanced towards Israeli troops guarding the Ofer checkpoint while holding a knife.

The assailant was "neutralized," reports said. His condition was not immediately clear.

No casualties to Israeli forces were reported in the incident.

Two Israel Defense Forces soldiers died last Wednesday night after being seriously wounded in a terrorist car-ramming near Nablus (Shechem)

in Samaria, the military announced last Thursday morning.

The slain troops were identified as Staff Sgt. Eliya Hilel, 20, from Tel Zion, and Staff Sgt. Diego Shvisha Harsaj, 20, from Tel Aviv. Both belonged to the Kfir Brigade's Nahshon Battalion.

Earlier last Wednesday, Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich urged immediate government action after Palestinian terrorists fired on central Israel from northern Samaria for the second time this week.

"Terrorism must be eradicated everywhere, even if it means Tulkarem [in Samaria] will look like Gaza looks

today," tweeted Smotrich, who oversees civilian issues in Judea and Samaria in the Defense Ministry.

Judea and Samaria saw a dramatic rise in Palestinian terrorist attacks in 2023 compared to the previous year, with shootings reaching their highest level since the Second Intifada of 2000-05, per IDF data.

Between Oct. 7 and Jan. 15, Rescuers Without Borders first responders recorded more than 2,600 Palestinian attacks targeting Israelis in Judea and Samaria, including 760 cases of rock-throwing, 551 fire bombings, 12 attempted or successful stabbings and nine vehicular assaults. HW



## **567 South Yates**

This is the 65th listing of MINE that I have sold over the years in the immediate area of White Station, I-240, Poplar and Walnut Grove. Extend that area towards Highland in East Memphis and it's #154! So, if you or someone you know is thinking of selling and want to know how to put your property into a "Bidding War" situation, you can talk to 2-3 real estate Brokers...but...l...know the secret! Remember...

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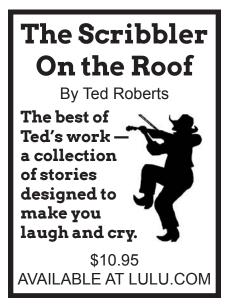
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On April 14, StopAntisemitism named Piker its "Antisemite of the Week." HW



## Israel Baseball Announces Fantasy Camp Featuring a Lineup of Baseball Legends

Baltimore, MD – May 29 2024 – Israel Baseball announced the launch of its highly anticipated Fantasy Camp, set to take place at the Spring Training home complex of the Miami Marlins in Jupiter, Fla., November 3 -10, 2024. The championship game will be played in Clover Park, Port St. Lucie, spring training home of the New York Mets.

This unique opportunity offers baseball enthusiasts the chance to live out their dreams of being treated like a Team Israel Baseball player preparing for the next World Baseball Classic. Fantasy Camp proceeds go to furthering the mission of Israel Baseball, ensuring a strong pipeline of talent for Israel's national team, promoting and sustaining the organization as they prepare to compete in the next World Baseball Classic in 2026 and the 2028 Olympic qualifier.

The camp will be led by current and former Israel Baseball players, coaches, managers, and training and clubhouse staff, ensuring that every participant receives top-tier instruction and a memorable experience. For the duration of the week-long camp participants will stay at the WBC hotel in Palm Beach Gardens where they will have MLB facility access, receive personalized uniform and apparel sets, run through big league drills, hone the fundamentals of hitting, fielding, catching, throwing, pitching and base running.

Evening activities offer a diverse range of experiences, from team dinners where players and coaches can mingle and relax, to grand, big-league-style celebrations that capture the excitement and camaraderie of baseball. These events provide an opportunity for participants to unwind in a variety of settings, each designed to enhance team spirit and create lasting memories. The experience will culminate in multiple games on professional fields, allowing campers to put their skills to the test and forging new relationships with a common bond.

"I am excited to manage one of the teams in the upcoming Israel Baseball Fantasy Camp. Bringing together our passionate fanbase with the guys who have worn the Israel Jersey in the World

## Israel Launches Electronic Travel Authorization for Visa-Exempt Countries

New York, NY – May 28, 2024 – Beginning with a pilot phase on June 1, travelers from the United States and Germany can apply for the Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA-IL), which will speed up online confirmations and allow for a simplified, stress-free, entry process through electronic check-in machines when visiting Israel. Travelers from all Visa-exempt countries will be able to take advantage of the pilot program starting July 1, and on Aug. 1, 2024, it will officially be instituted as the new entry protocol for all incoming travelers from Visa-exempt countries.

Once approved, travelers will be able to stay in Israel for up to 90 days, with the approval remaining valid for up to two years, or until their passport expires. During the pilot phase between June 1 - July 31, the application fee will be waived. Beginning on Aug. 1, the application fee will be ~\$7 USD. Applications for the ETA-IL can be made at israel-entry.piba.gov.il/.

"As a tech-forward county, streamlining the entry process with the new online ETA-IL application is a natural progression, and will allow for smoother arrivals and more time for travelers to enjoy all Israel has to offer," said Eyal Carlin, Commissioner of Tourism to North America, Israel Ministry of Tourism. "While we are currently in a challenging time, we encourage those with an interest in visiting the country to take note of the new entry process as they continue their travel planning."

For more information about Israel's tourism offerings, visit israel.travel.

About the Israel Ministry of Tourism The Israel Ministry of Tourism (IMOT) is Israel's national tourism agency responsible for planning and implementing marketing and promotional initiatives to position Israel as a preferred travel destination. IMOT aims to increase tourism traffic to contribute to Israel's economy, and to enhance and diversify the visiting experience. IMOT works to promote Israel's impressive assortment of historical, cultural, culinary, and religious attractions - each the perfect blend of tradition and modernity. IMOT offices in North America are located in New York, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Chicago and Toronto. For details on upcoming events and attractions in Israel, visit IMOT's website at israel. travel. Follow us on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram to receive the latest updates. HW

Baseball Classic (WBC) and the Olympics promises to be a once in a lifetime experience," commented Kevin Youkilis, former MLB 1st and 3rd baseman who primarily played for the Boston Red Sox.

The announcement of Israel Baseball's Fantasy Camp is the latest addition to the organization's robust programming that launched this year. Israel Baseball Americas offers on and off field programming for Team Israel players and fans of all ages from youth camps to travel teams and showcases.

"We are thrilled to offer this one-of-akind opportunity for fans to engage with Israel Baseball in such an immersive and hands-on way," added Adam Gladstone, COO of Israel Baseball. "It will be so meaningful when these campers experience the same camaraderie and sense of belonging that our WBC and Olympic teams felt once they entered the Team Israel clubhouse."

Israel Baseball's Fantasy Camp registration is officially open today and accepting participants. For more information and to register, visit israelbaseball. org/fantasy-camp or contact fantasy. camp@israelbaseball.org.

About Israel Baseball Americas (IBA):

Israel Baseball Americas is a non-profit organization that aims to provide people with a common outlet for their interest in Israel Baseball and create a pipeline of talent for the Israel National Team Program. Israel Baseball Americas handles all U.S, Canada and Latin America operations for Israel Baseball and is significant financial supporter of the IAB.

About Israel Association of Baseball (IAB):

The Israel Association of Baseball was founded in 1986 and has overseen the growth of the sport in the country ever since, culminating with Team Israel's historic appearance at the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo. The IAB is a member of The Israel Olympic Committee, the World Baseball Softball Confederation Europe (WBSC), Major League Baseball International (MLBI) and Little League. **HW** 

## Toronto Leaders Rally at Jewish School Where Shots were Fired Over Shabbat

### By Jackie Hajdenberg

(JTA) – Toronto's mayor and other local officials joined a rally at a local Jewish girls' school that was hit by gunfire on Shabbat.

No one was at Bais Chaya Mushka, which is part of a network of Chabad-Lubavitch schools, at 5 a.m. last Saturday morning when two masked suspects emerged from a dark vehicle and fired multiple shots at the building. The gunfire left a bullet hole in a window of the building and caused other minor damage, but no injuries were reported.

Last Monday, as Bais Chaya Mushka was open for classes, a crowd turned out for a rally in support of the school.

"It was pretty shocking, it was something that's totally unexpected," Rabbi Yaakov Vidal, principal of Chaya Mushka Elementary, told the "Canadian Jewish News." "But we've got to move forward and make sure the kids can come back to school."

He added, "Parents are concerned, but we're grateful to have all the security we have here, the police force, and the reassurance that they're going to be here with us until safety is restored."

Representatives from the school did not respond to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency's request for comment. Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow attended the Monday rally along with a number of other provincial and city officials as well as Jewish leaders. Chow called the shooting a "despicable, antisemitic act," adding, "it was a disgusting attempt to intimidate the community, to fill people with fear." the shooting, including hate crimes investigators, the Toronto Police Service said in a statement. Police have not yet determined whether the incident is a hate crime. Police released video of the suspects' vehicle and said there would be "an increased police presence in the area, as well as outside of schools and synagogues."

Bais Chaya Mushka had recently spent roughly \$180,000, partially from government grants, on security upgrades including armored glass, according to "CJN."

The shooting follows a reported rise in antisemitic incidents in Canada according to an audit published last month by Jewish advocacy group B'nai Brith Canada. In November, shots were fired at two Orthodox Jewish schools in Montreal.

In March, a Jewish film festival in Hamilton, Ontario, was postponed due to fears of antisemitism, despite objections from the local Jewish federation. Last Sunday, at Montreal's McGill University, activists hanged an effigy of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu wearing a black-and-white horizontal stripe uniform above the main

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Law enforcement are investigating

campus gates.

"As Jews, we know that violent words lead to violent actions," Daniel Held, the Toronto Jewish federation's chief program officer said at the rally. "This weekend's shooting was the predictable consequence of seven months of Jews and Israelis being dehumanized, being discriminated against, being demonized right here in the city." **HW** 



## ASBEE World Kosher BBQ Contest and Festival Returns Aug. 25 at Baron Hirsch



### By Amara Levine-Reich

Mark your calendars: The enticing aroma of kosher barbecue will again fill the air in East Memphis as the renowned ASBEE World Kosher BBQ Contest and Festival makes its comeback Sunday, Aug. 25 at Baron Hirsch Congregation.

The 2024 event continues a beloved tradition of more than three decades that was started by the legacy Anshei Sphard-Beth El Emeth Congregation, which recently merged with Baron Hirsch. As in years past, the contest will feature judged team competitions for best barbecued beef ribs, brisket, chicken wings and beans, as well as for creativity in team name and booth design and theme.

"The ASBEE Kosher BBQ Contest is truly the world championship of such events," said Eric Mogy, who ran the event for more than 10 years. "Other cities have attempted to replicate the formula we developed in Memphis over 30 years ago, but ours remains the original and the highest honor. The BBQ Contest is the rare occasion that brings people together from across the spectrum of our community to celebrate our Jewish and Southern culinary traditions and enjoy some friendly competition."

The festival will also offer fun activities for the whole family, including a three-on-three basketball tournament and shooting contest, petting zoo, bounce house, train rides, face painting and more. (Admission will be free, though some activities will cost a nominal amount.) Kosher barbecued beef and chicken sandwiches, hamburgers and other delectable offerings will be available for purchase at the Cowsher Café throughout the event.

"After a hiatus due to COVID and last year's scaled-down Pitmasters' Prelude event, this year we're thrilled to present the full BBQ Contest that everyone has come to know and love," said Ryan Lubin, who is co-chairing the event with Alex Sukhodolsky. "Aug. 25 promises to be an exciting day of great food, entertainment and camaraderie. We look forward to welcoming more than 40 teams of competitors and hundreds of community members of all ages to the new home of the ASBEE World Kosher BBQ Contest and Festival at Baron Hirsch."

Details on event sponsorship and volunteer opportunities, team registration and more will be posted in the coming weeks to the Baron Hirsch website at www.baronhirsch.org. **HW** 

## Campaign Adviser for Michigan Rep. Slotkin Posts Support of Farrakhan



Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan on July 4, 2020. Credit: MEMRI.

(JNS) – An adviser for Rep. Elissa Slotkin's (D-Mich.) Senate campaign has previously expressed support for antisemitic Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan. Slotkin, who assumed office in 2019, is Jewish.

On Feb. 29, 2017, Terra DeFoe shared photographs of herself at the Nation of Islam's "Savior's Day Convention," including two of her on a giant screen, addressing the gathering.

"Its [sic] been a full week supporting the Nation of Islam and the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan," DeFoe wrote.

Another of the photos featured DeFoe smiling as she stood next to Farrakhan, who said on Feb. 28 that Israel would no longer exist and defended suicide bombers.

"The whole world right now is enslaved – and America is the greatest enslaved nation – by the synagogue of Satan," said Farrakhan, invoking a common antisemitic trope drawn from the Book of Revelation.

In 2019, DeFoe welcomed Tony Muhammad – who has emerged as one of the antisemitic group's more prominent spokesmen and carries the title "State Representative for Minister Louis Farrakhan and Minister of Muhammad Mosque No. 1" – onto her talk show. Muhammad has worked in recent years to integrate the NOI into the broader anti-vaccine pseudoscience movement, appearing with independent presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. in a March 2021 webinar.

From July 2023 through March 2024, Slotkin's campaign employed DeFoe as deputy political director, paying her almost \$60,000.

The Slotkin campaign had not offered a response by press time. **HW** 

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## Man Charged with Hate Crimes after Driving Car at **Orthodox Jews in Brooklyn**



NYPD vehicles in a religious neighborhood in Brooklyn, November 6, 2022. Credit: Luke Tress

### **By Luke Tress**

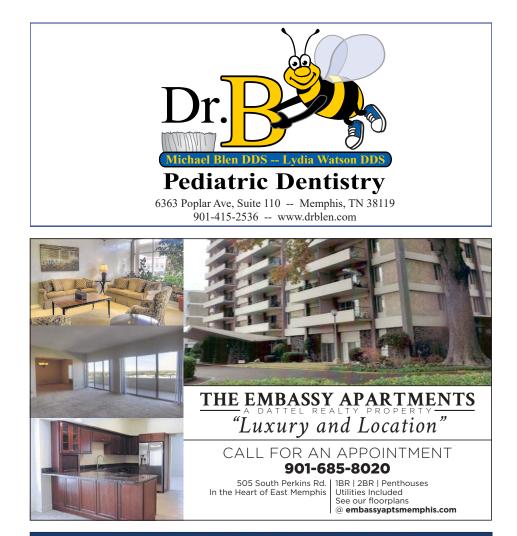
(New York Jewish Week) - A man was arrested on hate crimes charges after aiming his car at Orthodox Jews in Brooklyn last Wednesday.

The incident in Canarsie came as antisemitism has spiked in New York City and drew condemnation from Mayor Eric Adams and Gov. Kathy Hochul.

Video posted by the Flatbush Shomrim, a Jewish neighborhood watch group, showed the white sedan jumping a curb and driving onto a dirt yard toward several Orthodox Jewish men, who scrambled out of the way. A second clip in the video showed the vehicle screeching to a halt next to several Jewish men on a sidewalk.

Flatbush Shomrim said in an accompanying social media post that the man had shouted antisemitic slurs during the attack.

An NYPD spokesperson told the "New York Jewish Week" that the suspect's name is Asghar Ali, and he was



charged with more than 10 crimes, including attempted murder as a hate crime.

Hochul said the New York State police were coordinating with the NYPD to investigate the incident.

"Hate crimes have no place in New York and will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law," she said in a post on X.

Adams said the suspect appeared "to have been emotionally disturbed" and was quickly arrested, and that the incident was being investigated as a possible hate crime.

"There's no room for hate in the city, and the police department is going to respond accordingly," the mayor said in an interview [last Wednesday]with the 92.3 FM radio station.

The UJA-Federation of New York thanked the NYPD and district attorney's office for their handling of the incident.

"All steps must be taken to preserve the safety and well-being of our community," the federation said on X.

There have been at least 285 antisemitic incidents reported to police since the start of October, far higher than the 153 incidents during the same period last year, according to preliminary police data. Jewish security groups say many attacks likely go unreported.

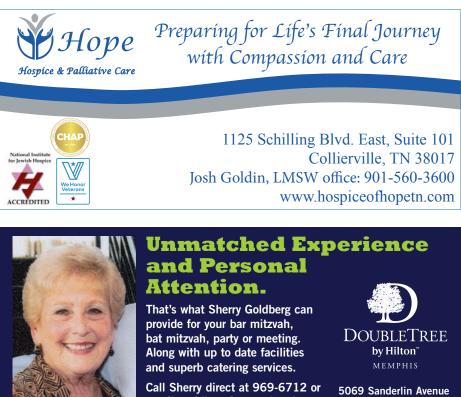
Both before Oct. 7 and since, Jews have consistently been targeted in more hate crimes than any other group in New York City. Between the start of October and the end of March, Jews were the victims of 62% of all hate crimes, according to NYPD data.

Recent years have seen waves of street harassment and attacks against Orthodox Jews in Brooklyn. According to the ADL's audit of antisemitic incidents last year, "visibly Orthodox" Jews were targeted in 31 out of the 51 antisemitic assaults the group recorded in New York City.

In a separate case, Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg last Tuesday announced a hate crimes indictment against Skiboky Stora, 40, for attacks on Jews and others.

In November, according to the indictment, a Jewish couple was walking its dogs in Union Square in downtown Manhattan when they witnessed Stora tearing down posters of Israeli hostages held by Hamas in Gaza. The couple took a photo of Stora, who then followed them while shouting antisemitic remarks, including "Die, Jews, Die!"

In addition, since October, Bragg's office said, Stora has harassed or assaulted several non-Jewish people while making discriminatory remarks. Stora was charged with assault in the third degree as a hate crime, stalking in the third degree as a hate crime and aggravated harassment, Bragg's office said in a statement. HW



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## Maher: 'Antisemitism Afoot in this Country We Haven't had in a Very Long Time'



### American comedian Bill Maher. Source: YouTube.

(JNS) – Longtime leftwing American comedian Bill Maher took some shots at his own side during a podcast where he also defended Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

In last Monday's installment of his "Club Random" podcast, Maher jousted with actor/comedian Sandra Bernhard, who is Jewish and known for her roles on such shows as "Roseanne" and "American Horror Story" as well as the films "Hudson Hawk" and Martin Scorsese's "The King of Comedy," which starred Robert De Niro as a lousy comedian desperate for a big break.

Maher rejected Bernhard's claim that antisemitism came primarily from the political right, saying that side of the spectrum included "The 'Jews will not replace us' nonsense" but that "the leftwing is even worse."

The "Real Time with Bill Maher" host argued that antisemitism today flowed "from elite colleges who see everything only through a racial lens."

Maher declared "they are stupid. They don't know history. They think everything is about colonizers and racists, and how awful America is."

Further dissecting the motivations of the protesters at top-ranked universities, Maher said the conflict was "not any more complicated to most of these college kids than the Palestinians are brown and poor, and the Israelis are rich and white."

Shifting gears in an attempt to regain common ground, Bernhard challenged Maher on Netanyahu, declaring the Likud leader "solidly to blame for everything that's happening right now."

Invoking his long-established opposition to organized religion, regarding faith as a prime mover in human misery, Maher responded that Netanyahu "is so not to blame for everything that's happening. That's the fault of the Palestinian people and the religion of Islam, which gets lost in all of this."

Expanding his indictment, Maher said that the war in Gaza "is happening because for years Hamas took aid money and instead of buying food with it and building buildings and hospitals, they bought bombs and made tunnels." **HW** 

## House Committee Asks SJP for its Funding Documents



Rep. James Comer (R-Ky.), chair of the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability, speaks to reporters after visiting a tent camp on the George Washington University campus on May 1, 2024. Credit: Aashish Kiphayet.

(JNS) – National Students for Justice in Palestine has until June 12 to provide the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability with documentation of its communications related to Oct. 7 and its funding sources, according to a letter that the committee chair sent last Wednesday.

The request includes providing "all documents and communications, regardless of topic, created on or sent between Oct. 6, 2023 and Oct. 8, 2023, inclusive," Rep. James Comer (R-Ky.), chair of the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability, wrote.

Comer also requested all documents about SJP's funding, efforts to ensure it isn't receiving terror-linked financing, comments about Oct. 7 and "the promotion by National SJP of illegal activity or activity providing material support to terrorist organizations including, but not limited to, Hamas."

"The committee is particularly concerned that organizations promulgating pro-Hamas propaganda and engaging in illegal activities at institutions of higher education might be receiving funding or other support from foreign or domestic sources, which support the aims of Hamas or other foreign terrorist organizations," Comer stated.

In the letter, Comer wrote that National SJP "is founded and controlled by American Muslims for Palestine," a nonprofit that he said has "substantial ties to Hamas via its financial sponsor, Americans for Justice in Palestine Educational Foundation."

Jason Miyares, the attorney general of Virginia is currently investigating the latter nonprofit, AJP, "for violating state charitable solicitation laws and 'benefitting or providing support to terrorist organizations," Comer wrote. He added that current board members of American Muslims for Palestine "have been involved in fundraising for Hamas charities." **HW** 



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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

Given the potential for stock and bond markets to fluctuate widely, it's easy to see why many near-retirees come to appreciate fixed annuities – insurance contracts that guarantee a specified rate of return. A fixed annuity maintains its value regardless of market conditions, and yields on these products have risen in response to the higher interest rate environment.

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value of the premiums paid, the annuity's compounded return, and the length of the payout period (or your life expectancy). Thus, the longer you defer your annuity, the higher the payout can be.

Unlike tax-advantaged workplace plans and IRAs, annuities have no annual contribution limits, so they present an opportunity to save as much as you want for the future on a tax-deferred basis. When annuities are purchased with after-tax dollars, only the earnings portion of withdrawals is taxable as ordinary income. (Early withdrawals prior to age 59½ may be subject to a 10% penalty.)

Annuitization options

Converting the funds in an annuity to an income stream is called annuitization. A deferred annuity contract will specify the date at which you can annuitize and begin to receive payments as defined in the contract, but generally you are not required to do so at that time.

Before annuitization, you can withdraw some or all of the annuity funds in a lump sum or a series of distributions. However, surrender charges typically apply if you withdraw more than a specified amount before the end of the surrender period. If you die before annuitizing, your heirs would receive the funds accumulated in the annuity.

Whether you purchase an immediate or deferred fixed annuity, you'll have options for the income stream you will receive during the annuitization period. A straight, guaranteed lifetime income will provide the highest monthly payments and help protect against the risk of outliving your savings. But payments will typically end when you die, with no funds going to your heirs. A "period certain" provides income for a fixed number of years and will go to your heirs if you die before the end of the period, but you risk running out of income if you live beyond the period. "Life with a period certain" guarantees you a lifetime income along with a window of time in which it can pass to your heirs, but payments are generally lower.

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### **OBITUARIES**



### Lois Myrle Baer

Lois Myrle Baer was born on November 17, 1929, in St. Louis, Mo., the youngest child of Robert and Ida Levine. Raised in St. Louis, she graduated from University City High School in 1947. She met her charming Jake on a set-up blind date in Memphis. A quick courtship and they were married in 1950. They settled with Jake's family in Turrell, Ark., where in the next nine years, four beautiful children were born. In 1960, the family moved to Memphis where they resided for the next 35 years. Lois and Jake retired to Atlanta in 1995 to be closer to the family.

Jake passed away in 2005 and Lois spent her remaining years at Hammond Glenn Retirement Community in Sandy Spring, Ga., surrounded by her children, grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

Lois was known for her vivacious personality, big sense of humor and love of family. She never knew a stranger, and everyone loved her. Even the staff at Hammond Glen said she always made them laugh. While in Memphis when not raising her children, she worked as a teaching assistant at the Jewish Community Center. She also volunteered as a Pink Lady at St. Francis Hospital. Always active she loved to play tennis, walk, and exercise.

She was predeceased in death by her parents, husband Jake, sister Eunice Siegel, brother Norvel Levine, and tragically daughter Judith Ann at the young age of 18. She is survived by daughter Janie (Sid) Sukloff, son Billy (Ellen) Baer, daughter Susie (Joey). She is also survived by grandchildren Jodi (Jay) Murnick, Kenny (Molly) Baer, Jill (Jason) Kaplan, Bryan (Caroline) Baer, Cindy (Andrew) Ackerman, Judy Moskowitz, Neal (Brittany) Moskowitz and Scott (Christine) Moskowitz and 15 great-grandchildren.

Graveside services were held at Arlington Memorial Park on Wednesday, May 29, 2024, with Rabbi Shalom Lewis presiding. HW

## In the Apple TV+ Series 'The Big Cigar,' A Jewish Deli Shootout and a Tale of Allyship



### via Apple TV+ **By Lior Zaltzman**

This originally appeared on Kveller, reprinted with permission.

The new Apple TV+ series "The Big Cigar" tells the story of how a fake film production (of a film titled, you guessed it, "The Big Cigar") helped Black Panthers founder Huey P. Newton escape to Cuba, as the FBI was trying to frame him for a murder. The show doesn't really delve much into the Jewish identities of the show's two white protagonists -"Easy Rider" producer Bert Schneider (played by Alessandro Nivola) and his frequent collaborator Steve Blauner (played by P.J. Byrne) - but in many of the scenes where we see Blauner, a big Star of David necklace peeks out from his parted button-down shirt.

The truly delightful and diverting limited series paints both Schneider and Blauner as people who use their whiteness and privilege - as wealthy and connected producers - to help Newton continue his work and stay a free man. The only times their religion gets addressed is mostly through Jewish delis and accessories, and in tiny Yiddishisms along the way. There's also a brief mention of Jewish activist Abbie Hoffman (who Sacha Baron Cohen plays in Netflix's "The Trial").

The lack of Jewishness doesn't really detract from the show, which is ultimately an ode to Newton and the Black Panthers and a stark portrayal of the Black experience in America, which draws clear parallels to a fight that continues to this very day. Andre Holland plays a relatable and deeply human Newton who also serves as narrator. Viewers learn a lot about Newton: his childhood roots; what engendered his activism; the many stops in his life; the constant harassment and persecution he faced from the police.

Schneider was the scion of a Jewish movie-making legacy. His father was the head of Columbia Pictures, and early on, we see that he is drawn to activism partly due to his father's failure to stand up for the creators around him during the McCarthy Era. Seeing his father remain silent in the face of injustice enshrines in Bert the belief that he should never be a neutral bystander in the face of other's suffering. Newton at first dismisses Schneider, not wanting to get involved with Hollywood, but in the series, it's the fact that Schneider is willing to put his own body at risk and even land himself in jail that ultimately wins Newton over.

Neither Newton nor Schneider are shown as idealized heroes. They're portrayed as men who often neglect their loved ones and hurt, or at least knowingly endanger, them for their ideals. The show about "great men" with fairly big egos doesn't give quite enough breadth to its female characters, who mostly serve as accessories. The only female character who gets ample screen time is Tiffany Boone, who plays Newton's girlfriend, Gwen Fontaine, and yet even her character left me wanting more. Still, Jamie Ray Newman absolutely shines as Roz, the sexy, tortured and frustrated wife of Blauman, who doesn't get consulted as he uses their family home to keep Newton safe.

We don't really get to hear from Schneider's ex-wife, the mother of his two children whom he hopes to reconcile with but whose birthday party he quickly abandons to help out Newton. We do get to see a really beautiful and complex relationship between Schneider and his brother, Stanley, played by Noah Emmerich. Stanley may not understand Bert's activist drive, but he admires him, and their mutual love is palpable. The scenes between the two of them are some of Bert's most touching moments in the show.

And there is one particularly excellent and tense Jewish scene. The latest episode released this Friday called "Guns & Matzah" features a shootout at Canter's Deli, the iconic Jewish deli in Los Angeles - not really a TV moment I'd have expected but a really entrancing and dramatic action scene nonetheless. Even Newton is shocked when he hears of it.

"All delis are Jewish, I think," a still shellshocked and blood-smeared Blauner says. Schneider quickly corrects him by saying that the Italians and Greeks have them, too (to be fair, the Jewish deli is its own phenomenon).

All of this is not to say there is nothing enlightening in the series about the American Jewish experience. First of all, the Jewish experience and the Black experience of America isn't always separate, a truth that even some of Hollywood's biggest stars exemplify. It's also worth remembering that the Black Panther movement had a pivotal role in Israeli history, inspiring the name and the activism of the Israeli Black Panthers.

It is true that the majority of American Jews are white, and that Jewish allyship has always had a place in the movement for Black liberation. The show talks a lot about the idea of privilege and activism, of putting conviction into action, putting your body at risk and on the line, using your whiteness to shield and help others. And in the tensions in Schneider's family, and even within Schneider himself, the show explores the price we pay for remaining silent, and of the very human inclination so many of us have of choosing our own comfort and safety at the expense of taking action.

"The Big Cigar" does a lot in its six episodes, and yet it also manages to be imminently watchable and enjoyable thanks to its '70s-inspired cinematography, the excellent nostalgic wardrobe and infectious music. And at the end of the day, when it comes to Jewish representation, it tells us a story of two Jewish men who do their best to make the world a little bit more just. HW



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## Sans 'Day After' Plan, Israel Faces 'Jihadis' Worse than Hamas, Blinken Says

(JNS) – The Jewish state lacks a plan for the day after the war in Gaza, so Israel faces either an "enduring insurgency on its hands" or a vacuum that "jihadis" who are worse than Hamas will fill, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said last Wednesday.

Speaking alongside Maia Sandu, the Moldovan president, at a press conference in the East European nation's capital city Chişinău, Blinken fielded several questions about the Jewish state.

The U.S. secretary called recent civilian deaths in Rafah "horrific" and said that Washington awaits what he hopes will be a "deliberate but also fast investigation" by Israel. He noted that the Jewish state has said that it used targeted munitions as it sought to kill Hamas terrorists.

"Even limited, focused, targeted attacks designed to deal with terrorists who've killed innocent civilians and are plotting to kill more – even those kind of operations can have terrible, horrific, unintended consequences," Blinken said.

He added that Israel "has to ask whether – and especially in the absence of a plan for the day after in Gaza – further incremental gains against Hamas, but gains that may not be durable in terms of Hamas's defeat in the absence of a plan – how that stacks up against some of the, again, unintended but horrific consequences of military action in "We need to get as quickly as possible a plan for the day after that does not leave Israel responsible for Gaza," the U.S. secretary of state said.

a place where the people you're going after are so closely embedded with civilians."

In addition to appearing to suggest that civilian casualties were Israel's and not Hamas's responsibility, Blinken said that the incident underscored that without a "day after" plan in Gaza, "there won't be a day after."

"We need to get as quickly as possible a plan for the day after that does not leave Israel responsible for Gaza, which it says it does not want to be," he said. "But if it is, it will simply have an enduring insurgency on its hands for as far as one can see into the future."

If Israel does not secure Gaza, "Hamas will be left in charge, which is unacceptable," Blinken predicted. "Or if not, we'll have chaos, lawlessness and a vacuum that eventually will be filled again by Hamas or maybe something, if it's possible to imagine, even worse – jihadis." **HW** 

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#### JUNE 6, 2024 | PAGE 11

## John Fetterman Disavows Harvard, his Alma Mater, while Receiving an Award from Yeshiva University



Sen. Jon Fetterman, center, with Yeshiva University leadership, ahead of the university's commencement ceremony in Queens, May 29, 2024. Credit: Luke Tress

### By Luke Tress

(New York Jewish Week) – Sen. John Fetterman, the Pennsylvania Democrat who has emerged as an unlikely champion for Israel since Oct. 7, disavowed his alma mater, Harvard University, while receiving an award at Yeshiva University's commencement ceremony.

Fetterman and Y.U. leaders used last Wednesday's event, held at Louis Armstrong Stadium in Queens, to portray the flagship Modern Orthodox university as a counterpoint to college campuses across the United States (including Harvard's) that have had pro-Palestinian encampments and whose graduation ceremonies have been marked by disruptive protests.

In his remarks on stage after receiving the Presidential Medallion, which Y.U. says is its most prestigious award for global leadership, Fetterman echoed that comparison. He said the last time he attended a graduation ceremony was his own at Harvard, 25 years ago.

At the mention of Harvard, the crowd hissed – and Fetterman responded.

"I have been profoundly disappointed," he said, mentioning "Harvard's inability to stand up for the Jewish community after Oct. 7."

He then removed a red stole from his shoulders, from Harvard's traditional graduation robes.

"I do not fundamentally believe that it's right for me to wear this today," he said to applause.

Since the Israel-Hamas war began nearly eight months ago, Fetterman has been one of the most outspoken supporters of Israel at the U.S. Capitol, wallpapering his office with the pictures of hostages held by Hamas and wearing dog tags to show his support for their release. The approach has earned him opponents on the left and, uncharacteristically, friends on the right.

"I'm just a senator with a big mouth that happens to be committed to Israel," he said in his remarks at the ceremony, which drew enthusiastic applause. In addition to voicing support for Israel's war effort, Fetterman said, "I actually grieve for all the innocent Palestinian women and children that Hamas is responsible for taking."

Rabbi Ari Berman, Y.U.'s president, said the decision to invite Fetterman was "unanimous" for the university.

"Standing for Israel is a source of great strength for our community, and it's our privilege to honor him," Berman told the "New York Jewish Week." "Everyone was very excited about it."

Before appearing on stage, Fetterman – clad in shorts and black sneakers under his commencement robe – told the "New York Jewish Week" that he was surprised by the invitation to speak at the ceremony, especially after finding out that last year's commencement speaker was the inventor of Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system.

"I was blown away. I was like, 'I don't belong in that kind of category," Fetterman said.

The ceremony was filled with references to Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on Israel and the ensuing war in Gaza. Popular Orthodox singer Mordechai Shapiro sang a blessing for Israeli soldiers, and a video presentation honored fallen troops, including children of Y.U. alumni. Police were stationed outside, and security checked entrants at the gate, but there was no sign of anti-Israel protests.

The ceremony had its celebratory mo-

ments. After speeches by Berman and Fetterman, Shapiro sang a song with the refrain "Am yisrael chai," Hebrew for "the people of Israel live." Graduates danced in front of the podium next to Fetterman, who clapped his hands with the music as the students waved Israeli flags overhead.

Speakers, including Berman, highlighted students' efforts to support Israel, including by fundraising, organizing prayer groups, and tutoring Israeli children online.

"After Oct. 7, every prayer, every class, every day at Yeshiva University has changed and been charged with the mission of supporting Israel and the Jewish people," Berman said in his commencement address.

Fetterman said that the commencement was a cause for celebration, despite Hamas' attack and the war.

"I really believe there's two things that are true today – that you can't ignore what happened, but there's a lot of joy and a lot of reasons to celebrate today," he told the "New York Jewish Week."

Berman also portrayed the university's approach as a counterpoint to anti-Israel activism on other campuses, decrying other colleges for "capitulating to misbegotten demands" from protesters who have called to boycott Israel. Y.U. has sought to capitalize on anti-Israel activism on other campuses, including by extending its transfer application deadline to students looking to leave other campuses.

"We are taking the opposite stance," Berman said to applause. "At Y.U. we don't divest, we invest. We invest in Israel, we always invest in Israel." **HW** 

## Scribe Writes Largest Mezuzah for Private Home In Israel



Rabbi Meir Peretz with the mezuzah scroll. Credit: Courtesy.

(JNS) – A rabbi in the southern Israe-

but I don't think anyone has made a mezuzot of this size for a private home," added the Ashdod scribe, revealing that his client paid 1,500 shekels (\$400) for the project.

Since Hamas's Oct. 7 massacre in southern Israel and the ensuing war against the terrorist organization in the Gaza Strip and a simultaneous violent conflict with the Hezbollah terrorist organization in the north, there has been an increase in the demand for mezuzot and tefillin, stressed Peretz.

In Jewish tradition, a mezuzah ("doorpost" in Hebrew) is a piece of parchment inscribed with verses from the Torah held in a case that is attached to the right doorframe of the entrance to the home and in all of the rooms of the residence.

Tefillin (phylacteries) are two small black leather boxes containing passag-

## *"Writing the mezuzah took at least 6-7 hours," said Rabbi Meir Peretz.*

es from the Torah and are traditionally worn by Jewish men during morning prayers – one on the head and one on the arm. **HW** 



li city of Ashdod recently transcribed what could be one of the largest mezuzah scrolls ever written in the Jewish state for a private individual, Hebrew media reported last Tuesday.

Rabbi Meir Peretz, a certified scribe affiliated with the Mishmeret Stam Institute, was commissioned to write a mezuzah measuring 22 inches – some six times the size of a regular mezuzah scroll, "Israel Hayom" said.

"This is a giant mezuzah, ordered by a customer with a big villa in the north. I had to make a special quill because the letters are large, and a feathered quill of appropriate size was needed," Peretz told the paper.

"Writing the mezuzah took at least 6-7 hours," he said. "Two stages were needed over two days to allow the ink to dry after the first stage was finished, compared to about an hour's work on a normal mezuzah."

"I heard that there are larger mezuzot,

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## After Oct. 7, Just 19% of Israeli Jews Believe a Palestinian State Can Peacefully Coexist with Israel



A view of aid trucks carrying relief supplies from Türkiye have arrived in Gaza City as the Israeli attacks continue in Gaza City, May 8, 2024. Credit: Mahmoud Issa/Anadolu via Getty Images

### **By Ron Kampeas**

(JTA) – The share of Israeli Jews who believe an Israeli and a Palestinian state can peacefully coexist has plummeted since Oct. 7, according to a new survey.

The figure of 19%, reported in a study published last Thursday by the Pew Research Center, was the lowest since Pew started surveying Israelis in 2013. It is down from 32% in a survey released just weeks before the war broke out.

In 2013, according to Pew, nearly half of Israeli Jews – and a majority of Israelis overall – supported a two-state solution. In 2005, another polling firm found that most Israeli Jews supported the establishment of a Palestinian state.

This year, a quarter of Israeli adults

overall – including nearly half of Israeli Arabs – believe a Palestinian state and Israel can peacefully exist side-by-side. That takeaway is one of a number from last Thursday's Pew survey that show Israelis hunkering down for more conflict as the Israel-Hamas war is about to enter its eighth month. The survey of roughly 1,000 Israeli adults was taken in March and April – before Israel's invasion of the Gaza city of Rafah and other recent developments – and has a margin of error of 4%.

The survey also shows wide gaps between Jewish and Arab respondents. Among Arab Israelis, for example, 74% say "Israel's military response against Hamas in Gaza has gone too far." Only four percent of Jewish Israelis agree.

And while 76% of Jewish Israelis say Israel will achieve its goals in the war, only half as many Arab Israelis, 38%, say the same.

But Israeli Arabs and Jews share some of the same concerns about the war: 61% of both groups are worried about the war spreading to other fronts – a concern that has been top-of-mind for many in the region and beyond after constant exchanges of fire between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon, the first direct attacks between Iran and Israel and violence on other fronts.

And at a time when Tzachi Hanegbi, Israel's national security adviser, said he anticipated the war will last until the end of this year, the poll found that significant majorities of both groups (77% of Arabs, 66% of Jews) are worried about the war "lasting a long time."

The poll also measured one of the most vexing and divisive questions of the war: Who should control Gaza when the battles are over. The lack of a detailed plan for a postwar scenario has led to rifts within Israel's government as well as between Israel and the United States.

The poll found that 40% percent of Israelis, including half of the Jewish respondents, believe that Israel should continue to control the territory in a postwar scenario, while 18% believe it should be run by a version of the Palestinian Authority – which governs Palestinian population centers in the West

Bank but which Netanyahu has shut out. Meanwhile, 14% say people who live in Gaza should decide who governs them. Nine percent of Arab Israelis, and 2% of Jewish Israelis, say Hamas should continue to rule the enclave.

In addition to being taken before the launch of the Rafah operation, the poll was conducted before other landmark developments of recent weeks – including a prosecutor for the International Criminal Court announcing he was seeking Netanyahu's arrest and President Joe Biden saying that he would suspend delivery of some large bombs to Israel in a bid to influence the scope of Israel's Rafah invasion.

But even before those events, the poll showed disapproval of Biden's handling of the war rising in Israel. Biden was broadly popular among Israelis for his embrace of the country following Oct. 7, but by the time the poll was taken, 60% percent of Israeli Jews – and 86% of Israeli Arabs – said they did not approve of how he was handling the war.

Also unpopular was Netanyahu who, the poll found, had a lower favorability rating than at any point in the 11 years Pew has asked the question, at 41%. The two other leaders in his war cabinet, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and former Defense Minister Benny Gantz, fared better, with Gantz at 51% and Gallant at 61%. A more recent poll shows that Netanyahu's popularity, which nosedived after Oct. 7, is recovering among the Israeli public. **HW** 



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