



THE Hebrew Watchman

SERVING THE MEMPHIS JEWISH COMMUNITY SINCE 1925

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Young Israel's 2024 Annual Meeting



With his wife, Sarah, at his side, Julius Besser accepts YI's William Epstein Chesed Award from Steven Schwartzberg.

By Rabbi Akiva Males

Young Israel's 2024 Annual Meeting took place in the Shul's Moss Grand Foyer on Tuesday, June 4. This was an evening for the Shul's membership to gather for a delicious dinner, recognize our volunteers and honorees, and hear from the congregational leadership.

Thank you and a big Yasher Koach to everyone who volunteered their time and efforts to make this year's Annual Meeting a success: Sarah Bauer, Noam Davidovics, Elana Kahane, Shayna Kahane, Abbe Kaplan, Esther Katz, Yochaved Naftel, Ruthie and Ari Rashkin, Steven Schwartzberg and Eileen Segal.

YI thanks Rivka and Kevin Braverman for taking some great pictures at the event (a few of those are included).

Congratulations and much Hatzlacha to the new Board Members and Of-

ficers. Our thanks and gratitude to the outgoing Board Members and Officers for your years of dedicated service to our Shul: Michael Burnham, Ari Hagler and Ari Rashkin.

Mazel Tov to Julius Besser – recipient of the William Epstein Chesed Award! Your tireless work and devotion to our Shul and community is an inspiration for all.

A special thank you gift was presented to Magen Sauer in recognition of her dedicated work with YI's Shabbos / Yom Tov children's groups.

YI's outgoing President Steven Schwartzberg spoke about many of the congregation's accomplishments of the past year and what we can look forward to at YI moving forward. He also thanked all of our members who volun-



YI's incoming President Noam Davidovics presents a gift of appreciation to YI's outgoing President Steven Schwartzberg.

teer so much of their time, energies and resources in support of our Shul.

YI's incoming President Noam Davidovics presented a thoughtful gift to Steven for his dedicated service, and then shared a meaningful D'var Torah. This was followed by his thoughts on what our Shul means to him, his family and our broader community. (Noam also shared some exceptional smoked brisket and chicken with us that evening!)

Layala and I are thankful to our Shul's dedicated leadership and committed membership. Young Israel certainly has lots to be excited about, and much to look forward to in the years ahead!

Young Israel of Memphis' Rabbi Akiva Males can be reached at rabbi@yiom.org. **HW**



Attendees enjoying a delicious dinner including smoked brisket and chicken prepared by Noam Davidovics.

Birthright Israel Mega Event Brought Together Over 2,000 Young Jews from Around the World



Credit: Mark Nomdar Photography

Latrun, Israel (June 25, 2024) – More than 2,000 enthusiastic participants from all Birthright Israel programs currently in Israel for the summer gathered last week at Mini Israel Park for the Birthright Israel Mega Event. This highly empowering and inspiring event marks the highlight of the organization's summer trips to Israel.

This year's event took place in solidarity with the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) soldiers and the hostages still held in Gaza. It also highlighted the organization's efforts since Oct. 7 in fostering unity, bridging connections between Israel and Jewish communities worldwide, and strengthening the state of Israel.

Among the performing artist on stage were Yuval Sharabi, daughter of Yossi Sharabi, who tragically died in captivi-

ty in Gaza; Eden Golan with Hurricane, Hatikva 6 and Hagit Yaso.

Gidi Mark, CEO of Birthright Israel, started his speech by requesting a moment of silence to honor the memory of the 13 Israeli alumni who tragically lost their lives fighting to save lives or at the Nova music Festival.

"Nearly every young Jew who has visited Israel since Oct. 7 has come with Birthright Israel," he said. "This summer, almost 15,000 young Jews will visit Israel, and we should not overlook this opportunity. Birthright Israel aims for participants to connect with Jewish peers, take pride in Judaism, deepen their understanding of Israel and themselves, and forge lasting friendships. No matter what, we will never give up on our unity and support for one another." **HW**

My Teen Israel Experience



Dylan Spiegel in center with friend at left and advisor at right.

By Dylan Spiegel

My trip to Israel truly changed my life. I have a different perspective on not only my Jewish life but my school and social life. I am more grateful for every aspect of everything. I had heard it before, “Just waking up in the morning is a miracle,” but I do not think I believed that until my trip to Israel.

During one event while we were there, we all were supposed to ask a rabbi a question and see if we could stump him. Of course, none of us succeeded but that was one of the most meaningful moments of my trip. One thing I knew the rabbi instantly was right about was that part of a Jew’s soul is in Israel. He explained this is why some people become more emotional while in Israel, and it was true, I had higher highs and lower lows. Ever since returning, I have been much more in touch with my emotions.

There is something I have realized recently, If I come close to making a mistake but just dodge it, I will notice that and thank G-d for saving me. I realize that if it were not for G-d’s mercy, my life would be a lot worse. I thank G-d that I caught myself when I almost fell. I thank G-d when I remember to turn something in that I had forgotten about. I thank G-d every day, for saving me over and over again. I am determined to find more of these moments in my life, not only when I almost make a mistake, but stop myself, but also when things are going well. Like I said earlier, waking up each morning is a reason to thank G-d.

I have not only been thanking G-d more, but I have been more connected to him as well. We did an activity in our

Chavurah (a group of friends formed for religious reasons), where we were told to find three things throughout our trip that made us feel connected to G-d. The first time I felt truly connected to G-d was when Rabbi Noam was telling us a story about someone he knew who went to West Point.

Keep in mind I am shortening this story, but I still think it is very powerful. One of his classes covered wars throughout history, the world wars, civil wars, the Trojan wars, the Hundred Years’ War, and more. Not once did the professor mention a Jewish war, and the student became angrier and angrier until one day he had an outburst in class. The professor told the student to meet him in his office. Of course, the student was horrified. Whenever a student was called into his office it never went well. Flash forward to the student and professor in the office, and the professor asks the student why he disrespected him like that by yelling at him in his class. The student apologized profusely, but the professor still wanted to know why he did it. The student explained that he let his anger build up in him and he did not understand why the professor would not talk about the wars of his people, the Jewish nation.

The professor explained he does not talk about the wars of the Jewish people, because they are impossible to replicate. Every tactician agrees that the Jews should not have made it this far, there is no reason that they should have won all these wars other than that they have G-d on their side. This story was amazing to hear, it made me so proud to be a Jew, and nothing could take that away.

THE Hebrew Watchman

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7/4/2024



Memphis Candlelighting Time

Erev Shabbat, Fri. July 5, 2024 / 29 Sivan, 5784..... 7:59 p.m.
Havdalah, Sat. July 6, 2024 / 30 Sivan, 5784..... 9:01 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion: Korach

One more thing I want to talk about is the Jewish soul, Neshama. Our soul is split into five different pieces. One-fifth of our soul is cut into thousands of pieces, and every time we do mitzvot, an angel will collect a little of our soul. One resides in us, one in our best friend, one in our spouse, and one in Israel. When we die the pieces of our soul are poured onto a table, and if we reach the required amount, we will face our punishment and then our reward, however, if we do not, we will be reincarnated to do those mitzvot, which we lacked. We are natu-

rally attracted to our souls, which is how we find our spouse, our best friend, and of course Israel.

Thank you to the Memphis Federation’s Lemsky Endowment Fund for helping me find the fifth piece of my soul. I am eternally grateful for the opportunity for making my Israel trip possible.

Dylan Speigel, son of Melinda and Michael Lejman, is a rising senior at White Station High School. Memphis Jewish Federation’s Lemsky Endowment Fund provided him with a Teen Israel Experience grant to offset the costs of his NCSY Jewish Student Union TJJ 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 available at jcpmemphis.org/lemsky-endowment-fund. HW

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Your Health Seniors And Aging. What’s The Best Way to Prevent Falls?

By Cindy Katz, Nurse Practitioner

Remember the famous line from the medical alert company commercial, “Help! I’ve fallen, and I can’t get up!” Some of us thought we were too young to worry about this, but we may now be at the age when we must start taking a potential fall more seriously. As we age, the risk of severe injury increases, which can affect our ability to remain independent.

Let’s look at some common conditions that should be treated as risk factors for falls and addressed.

Home Hazards:

Identify trip hazards and keep floors clear of clutter, loose rugs and electrical cords.

Install handrails and grab bars to help maintain balance and stability in critical areas such as near stairways, bathrooms and beds.

Ensure adequate lighting, especially in bathrooms and bedrooms.

When walkers or canes are used, be sure they are always within reach, especially at bedtime.

Health Conditions:

Several conditions can contribute to falls, such as urinary or bowel incontinence, dementia, and blood pressure issues, all of which can result in con-

fusion or dizziness. Be aware of these conditions and bring them to the attention of your health care provider.

Address vision changes, check for balance issues or difficulty walking, and new medication interactions by getting routine health care visits.

Practice Pearls:

Get up slowly and sit or lie down immediately if you feel weak.

Check into a medical alert system, especially for those seniors who live alone.

Use a walker or cane correctly, and don’t try to carry too much at one time.

Stay physically active and incorporate balance and strength training exercises into a daily routine.

If you fall, assess whether you are injured and can get up independently. If not, seek help immediately.

Preventing falls is crucial, and we should all strive to raise awareness and reduce their associated risks. A proper diet and fluid intake are also vital for good nutrition and hydration. Falls can be prevented if we take the time to evaluate and change any home or health hazards.

Take those necessary steps to reduce your risk of ending up like that person in the commercial crying for help. **HW**

Bridge and Mah Jongg Classes Starting at the MJCC in August

Beginning Mah Jongg Lessons with Melanie Mann

August 20 through September 24 Tuesdays at 6 – 8 p.m.

Because of the demand we have started a second class in August on Tuesday nights! Melanie has been teaching this class for quite a while at the MJCC as well as other places around town. We filled up her other class so please call in your reservations ASAP! Call the front desk at the MJCC at 901-761-0810 to register. The new class number is 10954. Bring your friends and learn a new game!

Beginning Bridge lessons will return on Thursday August 22

Taught by Debbie Jackson. Learn to play the world’s greatest game. This class will teach you all the basics you need to start playing bridge like a pro! The class will be on Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. The Course number is 10743.

The cost is the same for both courses: \$80 for nonmembers of the MJCC and only \$72 for members. Reservations can be made by calling the MJCC front desk at 901-761-0810. They can also be made by calling Steve Kaplan, Adult Services Coordinator at 901-259-9220 or email stevekaplan@jccmemphis.org. Reservations are limited so please make your reservations before they are sold out. **HW**

Pro-Hamas Mob Attacks Jews Outside LA Shul

By Miri Weissman

(Israel Hayom via JNS) – A Pro-Hamas mob last Sunday attacked pro-Israel Jews outside the Adas Torah synagogue in the Pico-Robertson area in western Los Angeles.

Los Angeles Police officer Tony Im said that the riot was initiated by pro-Palestinian protesters, who were met with opposition from demonstrators waving Israeli flags.

Videos shared on social media captured several instances of violence, with

some pro-Palestinian rioters wielding protest sign handles and sticks as weapons. Police in riot gear were deployed to the scene, where they witnessed heated verbal exchanges and physical altercations.

During the incident, authorities made a single arrest, charging the individual with a misdemeanor for allegedly possessing a “spiked flag,” which is considered a prohibited item at protests, the “Los Angeles Times” reported. Police did not provide further information about the person arrested.

Footage recorded by onlookers seemed to show law enforcement officers detaining at least two pro-Palestinian rioters from an SUV.

In an interview with KCAL News, Rabbi Hertzel Illulian, the founder of the JEM Community Center in Beverly Hills, said, “Such protests don’t belong in front of a synagogue. I don’t believe Jewish or Christian people would stage similar demonstrations outside a mosque.”

The Jewish Federation Los Angeles said, “We are aware of an anti-Israel protest outside a local synagogue in the Pico-Robertson area. Our Community Security Initiative (CSI) is monitoring the situation and working with our local law enforcement partners to make sure our community is safe.”

Sacha Roytman Dratwa, CEO of the Combat Antisemitism Movement, told JNS last Monday that the incident in Los Angeles “marked a further increase in the already unprecedented levels of antisemitism Jewish communities worldwide are coping with.

“This is an important reminder of the reason why we must come together and fight on a daily basis against all who perpetrate, support or justify acts of terrorism and violence against Jews,” he said.

Roytman Dratwa called on U.S. authorities to “protect their Jewish constituents and not leave them to face these antisemitic threats alone.”

In November, Paul Kessler, a 69-year-old Jewish man, died when a young pro-Palestinian protester threw a megaphone at him during dueling demonstrations in Westlake Village in Ventura County, in the greater Los Angeles area.

Originally published by Israel Hayom. **HW**

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Strong Black Support for Campaign to Unmask Hamas Supporters in NY

By Mike Wagenheim

(JNS) – A coalition of faith and civil leaders is demanding that New York State reinstate its law banning wearing masks in public places after months of violent anti-Israel protesters wearing face coverings.

The campaign, called Unmask NY, has garnered the support of Eric Adams, the mayor of New York City.

“New York City will always defend your right to free speech and will continue to protect public health, but we are increasingly seeing masked protestors using anonymity to intimidate, threaten and break the law,” Adams said last Thursday. “This behavior is unacceptable, and we will not tolerate it.”

The mayor spoke outside of Columbia University’s campus, which was the site of a pro-Hamas encampment this spring where protestors, many of them masked, intimidated and harassed Jewish students and other members of the Columbia community.

Also attending the press conference were New York State Assembly members from three of the city’s five boroughs; National Urban League president Marc Morial; Jonathan Greenblatt, CEO and national director of Anti-Defamation League; Mount Nebo Baptist Church pastor Johnnie Green; representatives of the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York; and the UJA-Federation of New York also attended the press conference.

Several black leaders supported the measure – a notable development after some American Jewish leaders have remarked on what they called a lack of support for U.S. Jews from black Americans since Oct. 7.

“Black communities know all too well that individuals who hide their identities with intent to terrorize, intimidate or harass are a threat to all of our safety and have no place in New York,” said Hazel Dukes, a former NAACP president and current president of its New York State

conference.

“Reinstating New York’s masking laws will protect New Yorkers from some of the most terrifying periods in our history, when the Klan menaced Black Americans, faces covered, without accountability,” Dukes added. “We can’t let history repeat itself.”

Morial said that “in the dark days of Jim Crow, those who carried out racial intimidation and violence felt no need to hide behind masks because they knew there would be no repercussions.”

Green, who pastors a Black congregation in Harlem, said “many of us have roots in the South.”

He continued, saying “our community knows what it means to see individuals who hide themselves in order to harass and menace. It reminds us of the darkest, racist chapters of American history.”

Eric Dinowitz, a prominent Jewish member of the New York State Assembly, introduced a bill in the last session to reinstate an anti-masking law that was canceled during the pandemic.

“Once we saw more and more protestors openly target Jews, fully masked up, fully hidden, as the threats got more and more violent, and I heard from more and more Jews that the terror and the sense of targeting was real, I knew we had to get our mask laws back on the book,” the Jewish lawmaker said.

The final draft of the bill will account for health and religious concerns, Dinowitz said.

New York’s mask ban stood for 175 years before its cancellation in 2020, when the state required people to wear masks in public spaces during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Alvin Bragg, the Manhattan district attorney, cited masks obscuring the identities of protestors who occupied a Columbia building when he said that his office would not press charges against most of the alleged offenders. **HW**

‘Stunt, Total Joke’ for UN to List IDF as Child Abusers, Congressman Says

(JNS) – Washington’s greatest ally in the Middle East and its leadership try to protect life, while Hamas hides behind human shields “like a bunch of cowards,” Rep. Tim Burchett (R-Tenn.) stated last Thursday.

The congressman sponsored a bipartisan resolution, H.Res. 1323, criticizing António Guterres, the United Nations secretary-general, for including the Israel Defense Forces this month in the global body’s Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict “on a list of parties to conflict that have not put in place adequate measures to protect children.”

The resolution, in part, “condemns the United Nations’ longstanding bias against Israel across multiple United Nations bodies, including the United Nations Human Rights Council and United Nations Security Council.”

“This latest stunt by the United Nations is a total joke,” Burchett stated, of listing the IDF in the report. “We need to make it clear to the United Nations that the United States completely supports Israel’s efforts to wipe these terrorists off the map.”

Reps. Jared Moskowitz (D-Fla.), Mike Lawler (R-N.Y.) and Josh Gottheimer (D-N.J.) co-sponsored the resolution.

“This U.N. move is just the latest example of the ridiculous, antisemitic double standard that Israel has to deal with,” Moskowitz stated. “The United Nations will use kid gloves with Hamas after it murders over 1,000 innocent Israelis, but when Israel exercises its right to defend itself, the IDF gets put on the same list as the Taliban and Hezbollah.”

Tennessee congressman Tim Burchett introduced a bipartisan bill which rejects the global body’s decision.

“If it wanted to make itself useful, the U.N. would be urging Hamas every day to accept a ceasefire and return the hostages,” Moskowitz added.


Lawler stated that the United Nations was once again “revealing itself for the cesspool of antisemitism it really is.”

“Again and again, they slander Israel for defending itself while giving the real human rights abusers a free pass and a free platform to spew their hateful propaganda under the guise of international legitimacy,” the congressman said. “Contrary to the lies of the Hamas apologists, IDF soldiers are not ‘child rights abusers.’ They are brave men and women defending their homeland and fighting to rescue their citizens.”

“The real ‘child rights abusers’ are the murderers who went door to door on Oct. 7 murdering innocent men, women and children in Israel,” Lawler said. “The IDF goes out of its way to avoid innocent casualties, dropping leaflets to warn civilians. Hamas, on the other hand, cowardly uses civilians as human shields, firing rockets from schools and hospitals.”

“They are the real oppressors of the Palestinian people,” he added. “This war won’t end until they surrender and release every remaining hostage.” **HW**

INDEPENDENCE DAY



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Wedding Announcement



Michael and Kadisha Glaser

Michael and Kadisha Glaser celebrated their wedding on June 1, 2024.

Hashem was in charge of uniting them in marriage, and it took them more than 30 years to meet. They traveled many kilometers away to find each other, as this was the plan

that was already written by Hashem. They are on their way to fulfill a mitzvah of forever living together, after passing under the chuppah. Michael and Kadisha say they were born the day they met, because Hashem created them for one another. Ani Le dodi vedodi li. [HW](#)

Police Lift Keffiyeh-Wearing Toddler from Car after Handcuffing LA Couple

(JNS) – Last Sunday, as violence broke out when anti-Israel demonstrators attacked during protests at the Adas Torah synagogue in Los Angeles’s Pico-Robertson neighborhood, an adult couple driving a Range Rover near a gas station provoked a response from police.

According to video shared on social media, the woman stood out of the vehicle’s sunroof with a keffiyeh, held out both arms and displayed her middle fin-

gers at the crowd of pro-Israel activists.

Riot police approached with one yelling, “Put your hands up. Get out of the car now. Ma’am, step out of the car.”

Both the driver, who wore a mask and yellow shirt, and the passenger were placed in handcuffs. Officers then approached the vehicle to retrieve a toddler, donned in a keffiyeh, the symbol of Palestinian nationalism popularized by the late PLO leader Yasser Arafat. [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 July 8 Mystery Program!

We will also have an Ice Cream Social featuring Trader Joes parve ice cream treats. Come join us for a summer treat! All are welcome. Reservations required by the Friday before.

Wednesday July 10 Double Program! Bingo & Ice Cream

The Mah Ani Group from the MJCC Camp will join the seniors for Bingo and ice cream! Come have fun and engage with these energetic young people. They just finished interacting with the senior lunch group in a rousing Trivial Pursuit Game that had everyone joining together in an interesting quest for the right answer. It was a lot of fun for all.

Monday July 15 Speaker: Tim Flesner Topic: How to Prevent Scams!

According to the Better Business Bureau, scams targeting seniors are on a historic rise. Come get some valuable tips on how you or a friend or loved one can prevent being a victim. The talk is free and open to the public.

Please join us Monday through Friday for a delicious kosher lunch from the kitchens at the Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab. 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](#)



Magician Jeffrey Day

Wednesday July 17 Special Program

Magician Jeffrey Day will give a private performance for the seniors! Mr. Day demonstrates what audiences saw from as long as 150 years ago during the Golden Age of Magic [1837-1901], while revealing a few tricks to the audience. Prepare to be “MESMERIZED!” Reservations are required as space is limited.

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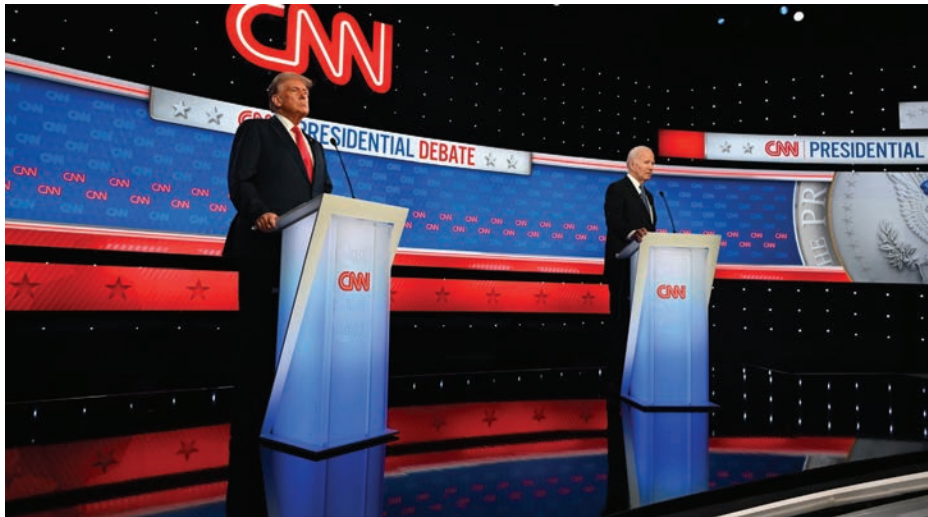
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Trump Calls Biden ‘a Very Bad Palestinian’ as Israel, Antisemitism Feature in a Disjointed Debate



President of the United States Joe Biden and Former President Donald Trump participate in the first Presidential Debate at CNN Studios in Atlanta, June 27, 2024. Credit: Kyle Mazza/Anadolu via Getty Images

By Ron Kampeas

(JTA) – Joe Biden and Donald Trump rambled and jabbed each other with insults in a debate that included exchanges about Israel’s war with Hamas and neo-Nazi violence.

The debate in Atlanta last Thursday night, moderated by CNN’s Dana Bash and Jake Tapper, was the first of two scheduled for this presidential election. The nominees faced each other in two debates in 2020. Biden bested Trump,

then the incumbent, in that election.

This debate left many Democrats debating whether Biden should remain the party’s candidate in November. Biden was hoarse, frequently corrected himself mid-sentence and on several occasions appeared to lose his train of thought. Trump, meanwhile, spoke robustly but in run-on sentences that included numerous falsehoods, about the 2020 election and the prosecutions and

lawsuits he has faced.

The result was a number of bizarre moments, including one related to Israel’s war with Hamas. “He’s become like a Palestinian,” Trump said of Biden during the section dealing with foreign policy. “But they don’t like him because he’s a very bad Palestinian. He’s a weak one.”

Biden said he had secured across the board agreement for his three-stage plan to end the war, including from Israel.

“Everyone from the United Nations Security Council, straight through the G7 to the Israelis and [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu have endorsed the plan that I put forward,” Biden said. “The only one who wants the war to continue is Hamas.”

Trump said Biden was wrong and that Israel did want the war to continue – and that it should. “As far as Israel and Hamas, Israel’s the one that wants to go – he said the only one who wants to keep going is Hamas,” Trump said. “Actually Israel is the one, and you should let them go and let them finish the job. He doesn’t want to do it.”

Trump, as he had in the past, also said he left office with Iran on its heels, and that it had rallied under Biden, allowing its surrogates, Hamas and Hezbollah, to launch the war against Israel.

Trump and Biden also clashed over the deadly 2017 neo-Nazi march in Charlottesville, Virginia, when Trump equivocated in condemning the marchers. The incident animated Biden’s decision to run for president and has been a theme of his public comments since.

“He said ‘I think there are fine people on both sides,’” Biden said. “What American president would ever say Nazis coming out of fields carrying torch-

es, singing antisemitic bile, while carrying swastikas are fine people?”

Trump repeatedly said Biden’s Charlottesville account was a lie that has been debunked. “He made up the Charlottesville story, and you’ll see it’s debunked all over the place,” he said.

At the time, Trump said on multiple occasions that there were bad and good people on both sides in Charlottesville, and specifically called out neo-Nazis. The marchers at Charlottesville were overwhelmingly neo-Nazis and white supremacists, and the counter-protesters were mostly peaceful.

Biden also referred to reports, from Trump’s late wife, Ivana, and from Trump’s White House chief of staff John Kelly, that Trump had said some things about Adolf Hitler were admirable.

Biden attempted to repeat one of the key moments in the 2020 debate, when Trump refused to renounce his white supremacist and extremist backers, instead calling on one far-right group to “stand back and stand by.”

Biden asked Trump to denounce the rioters who led the deadly insurrection at the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, spurred by Trump’s call to overturn the election.

“I said, ‘Will you denounce the Proud Boys?’ He said, ‘No, I’ll tell them to stand by,’” Biden recalled. “Will you denounce these guys? Will you denounce the people we’re talking about now? Will you denounce the people who attacked the Capitol?” Unlike in 2020, Trump ignored the challenge.

Trump also repeated a claim that his election alone would spur Russian President Vladimir Putin to release Evan Gershkovich, the Jewish Wall Street Journal reporter held prisoner for more than a year. **HW**

‘You’re a True Leader,’ Herzog Tells Fetterman During First Visit to Israel

(JNS) – Sen. John Fetterman (D-Pa.) met with Israeli President Isaac Herzog last Tuesday during his first visit to the Jewish state.

The senator told Herzog that supporting Israel, “through everything your nation has been through after Oct. 7,” has

“I don’t really believe I should be thanked for just doing my job,” the Pennsylvania senator told the Israeli president.

“been a very easy and clear choice,” according to Herzog’s office.

“I’ve always wanted to be a very consistent voice throughout all this,” Fetterman said.

Herzog welcomed the senator and thanked him for “his continued support for Israel and solidarity with the Israeli people.”

“Those who stand with us showing moral clarity, we shall never forget them,” the Israeli president said. “We want to thank you. You’re a true leader.”

According to Herzog’s office, Fetterman showed the Israeli president a bracelet he was wearing that family members of victims murdered at the Nova festival by Hamas terrorists on Oct. 7 gave to him.

“He told the president that he would not remove the bracelet until all the hostages had been returned home to their families,” the president’s office said.

Fetterman told Herzog that he was honored by the president’s words, “but I don’t really believe I should be thanked for just doing my job,” per Herzog’s office. **HW**



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Closed-Door Espionage Trial of American Jewish Journalist Evan Gershkovich Begins in Russia

By Jackie Hajdenberg

(JTA) – The closed-door trial of American Jewish reporter Evan Gershkovich began in Russia last Wednesday, 15 months after his arrest there on espionage charges widely regarded as spurious.

The trial is being held in Yekaterinburg, the city where Gershkovich, now 32, was arrested while on assignment as a reporter for “The Wall Street Journal” in March 2023. He was held in Moscow before being moved prior to the trial, and appeared in court with his head shaven, as is customary in Russia.

Jewish activists and organizations have mobilized to support Gershkovich since his arrest. On Passover in 2023, seder tables around the world included an empty seat for the journalist to symbolize his imprisonment, and Jewish Federations spearheaded a letter-writing campaign over Rosh Hashanah that year.

Gershkovich, his employer and the United States all deny that he is a spy, and U.S. authorities have been trying to secure his release. He is the first American reporter since the Cold War to be arrested on espionage charges in Russia.

“Evan has never been employed by the United States government,” said John Kirby, the White House national security spokesman, according to “The Wall Street Journal.” “Evan is not a spy. Journalism is not a crime, and Evan should never have been tried in the first place.”

Russian investigators announced earlier this month that they had collected evidence that Gershkovich was in Yekaterinburg on behalf of the CIA to gather information on Russian arms manufacturer Uralvagonzavod, which produces tanks and other weapons used in Russia’s war in Ukraine. They have shared no evidence supporting their claims, and the trial is not open to the public.

“His case is not about evidence, procedural norms, or the rule of law,” the U.S. Embassy in Russia said in a statement published last Wednesday. “It is about the Kremlin using American citizens to achieve its political objectives.

Gershkovich faces up to 20 years in prison if convicted. He is scheduled to appear in court again on Aug. 13. [HW](#)



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What Stubborn Inflation Could Mean for the U.S. Economy

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

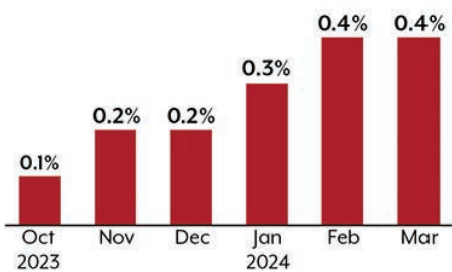
On April 10, 2024, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics released the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for March, and the increase in CPI – the most commonly cited measure of inflation – was higher than expected. The rate for all items (headline inflation) was 3.5% over the previous year, while the “core CPI” rate, which strips out volatile food and energy prices, was even higher at 3.8%. The month-over-month change was also higher than anticipated at 0.4%.¹

The stock market dropped sharply on this news and continued to slide over the following days, while economists engaged in public handwringing over why their projections had been wrong and what the higher numbers might mean for the future path of interest rates. In fact, most projections were off by just 0.1% – Core CPI was expected to increase by 3.7% instead of 3.8% – which hardly seems earth-shattering to the casual observer. But this small difference suggested that inflation was proving more resistant to the Federal Reserve’s high interest-rate regimen.²

It’s important to keep in mind that the most dangerous battle against inflation seems to have been won. CPI inflation peaked at 9.1% in June 2022, and there were fears of runaway inflation similar to the 1980s. That did not happen, and inflation declined fairly steadily through the end of 2023. The issue now is that there has been upward movement during the first three months of 2024.³ This is best seen by looking at the monthly rates, which capture the current situation better than the 12-month rates. March 2024 was the third month in a row of increases that point to higher inflation (see chart).

Trending Upward
A monthly increase in the Consumer Price Index of 0.1% to 0.2% would equate to an annual inflation rate of roughly 2%, which the Federal Reserve considers appropriate for a healthy economy.

One-month change in CPI



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024 (Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers)

High for longer
While price increases hit consumers directly in the pocketbook, the stock market reacted primarily to what stubborn inflation might mean for the benchmark federal funds rate and U.S. businesses. From March 2022 to July 2023, the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) raised the funds rate from near-zero to the current range of 5.25%–5.5%, in order to slow the economy and hold back inflation. At the end of 2023, with

inflation apparently moving firmly toward the Fed’s target of 2%, the FOMC projected three quarter-percentage point decreases in 2024, and some observers expected the first decrease might be this spring. Now it’s clear that the Fed will have to wait to reduce rates.⁴⁻⁵

Higher interest rates make it more expensive for businesses and consumers to borrow. For businesses, this can hold back expansion and cut into profits when revenue is used to service debt. This is especially difficult for smaller companies, which often depend on debt to grow and sustain operations. Tech companies and banks are also sensitive to high rates.⁶

In theory, high interest rates should hold back consumer spending and help bring prices down by suppressing demand. So far, however, consumer spending has remained strong. In March 2024, personal consumption expenditures – the standard measure of consumer spending – rose at an unusually strong monthly rate of 0.8% in current dollars or 0.5% when adjusted for inflation.⁷ The job market has also stayed strong, with unemployment below 4% for 26 consecutive months and wages rising steadily.⁸ The fear of keeping interest rates high for too long is that it could slow the economy too much, but that is clearly not the case, making it difficult for the Fed to justify rate cuts.

What’s driving inflation?
The Consumer Price Index measures price changes in a fixed market basket of goods and services, and some inputs are weighted more heavily than others. The cost of shelter is the largest single category, accounting for about 36% of the index and almost 38% of the March increase in CPI.⁹ The good news is that measurements of shelter costs – primarily actual rent and estimated rent that homeowners might receive if they rented their homes – tend to lag current price changes, and other measures suggest that rents are leveling or going down.¹⁰

Two lesser components contributed well above their weight. Gas prices, which are always volatile, made up only 3.3% of the index but accounted for 15% of the overall increase in CPI. Motor vehicle insurance prices made up just 2.5% of the index but accounted for more than 18% of the increase. Together, shelter, gasoline, and motor vehicle insurance drove 70% of March CPI inflation. On the positive side, food prices made up 13.5% of the index and rose by only 0.1%, effectively reducing inflation.¹¹

While the Fed pays close attention to the CPI, its preferred inflation measure is the personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index, which places less emphasis on shelter costs, includes a broader range of inputs, and accounts for changes in consumer behavior. Due to these factors, PCE inflation tends to run lower than CPI. The annual increase in March was 2.7% for all items and 2.8% for core PCE, excluding food and energy. The monthly increase was 0.3% for both measures.¹²

Although these figures are closer to the Fed’s 2% target, they are not low enough in the face of strong employment and consumer spending to suggest the Fed will reduce interest rates anytime soon. It’s also unlikely that the Fed will raise rates. For now, the central bank seems poised to give current interest rates more time to push inflation down to a healthy level, ideally without significant slowing of economic activity.¹³

All investing involves risk, including the possible loss of principal, and there is no guarantee that any investment strategy will be successful. Projections are based on current conditions, subject to change, and may not come to pass.

1, 3, 8–9, 11) U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024
2) The New York Times, April 10, 2024
4) Federal Reserve, 2023
5) Forbes, December 5, 2023
6) The Wall Street Journal, April 15, 2024
7, 12) U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2024
10) NPR, April 18, 2024
13) Bloomberg, April 19, 2024

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OBITUARIES

Glenn David Kiersky

Glenn David Kiersky, a beloved husband, a devoted father, an adored grandfather, a great poker player, and outdoorsman extraordinaire, died June 23 following a short illness at Baptist Hospital, where he was surrounded by his family. He was 75.

Glenn was born in Memphis the second of three sons, but he didn't let the middle-child syndrome get in his way. He always let his brothers know when he was right, which was always. As a teenager, Glenn spent his summers at Camp Nebagamon for Boys in Wisconsin, an experience that gave him a lifetime of fond memories. He graduated from East High School in 1967, and in 1971 graduated from Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois, where he met Yvonne, the love of his life and his wife of 53 years.

Glenn and Yvonne settled in Memphis, and with his father he managed his family's business, the South Memphis Stockyards until its closure in the late 1980s. He went full throttle into his second career as a financial consultant with Merrill Lynch and Smith Barney. Glenn was an avid outdoorsman who loved duck hunting and fishing and was a founding member of Blackfish Farms Hunt Club in Arkansas.

Glenn considered himself just a regular guy, but his life was truly extraordinary. He was a top-rated tournament poker player and a lifelong member of Ridgeway Country Club where he was a past president. He loved Tiger basketball, enjoyed his dogs, appreciated fine art, relished a good steak, loved to wear mud-soaked boots, laughed at bad jokes, prided himself in the endless number of stories he could tell, enjoyed his farm, loved to fish with his granddaughter, Amelia, trap shoot with his granddaughter, Shea, watch his grandson, Evan, play baseball, listen to his granddaughter, Elise, play the flute. Most of all, he loved to hunt with his son.

Yet Glenn's passion in life was his family. He leaves his wife, Yvonne, his son, Elliot (Tricia) Kiersky of Memphis; his daughter, Simone Coyle (Will) of Vienna, Va.; and his brother, John (Jan) Kiersky of Memphis. He was the doting grandfather of Shea and Amelia Kiersky, and Evan and Elise Coyle. Glenn was an adored uncle, brother-in-law, and friend to many, particularly his golfing foursome of 50 years whom he considered his family of choice. Glenn was preceded in death by his parents, Doris and J. Hubert Kiersky, his brother, James H. Kiersky, and his nephew Will Kiersky. Glenn also leaves behind numerous friends who will remember his larger-than-life personality and his kind and generous heart.

A service for Glenn, who was a lifelong member of Temple Israel, was held Tuesday, June 25 in the Levy-Cooper Chapel at Temple Israel Cemetery in Memphis.

The family asks that you honor Glenn's life with a donation to Camperships for Nebagamon, www.encharities.org, or to the charity of the donor's choice. **HW**



Linda Kriger Usdan

Linda Kriger Usdan, beloved wife, adoring mother and grandmother, and admired big sister, died on June 18 following a short illness. She was 78. Born in Memphis, Linda was the first of four daughters of the late Aimee and Abe Kriger. She was a fourth generation Memphian and the great-granddaughter of Jacob Goldsmith, founder of Goldsmith's Department Stores that now is part of the expansive Macy's chain.

Linda graduated from Central High School. She received her undergraduate degree from Newcomb College, then the coordinate women's college of Tulane University, and earned her master's degree in speech and language pathology from Tulane. She returned home to Memphis where she worked for several years with preschoolers as a speech pathologist. Linda married the love of her life, Dr. David Usdan, a Memphis ophthalmologist. During their 51-year marriage, Linda worked tirelessly for 45 of those years as her husband's office manager supporting his delivery of excellent medical service and care.

Although her birth order as the first among four siblings came by fate, the loving attention she gave her younger sisters throughout life came purposefully from her heart. Her devotion to her only daughter was without measure, and her two granddaughters were the light of her life. She successfully encouraged her daughter to follow in her father's footsteps as a doctor, and she never missed a chance to spend precious time with her granddaughters. Yet Linda still found time to enjoy other pleasures in life like traveling, cake decorating, calligraphy, making bows, cooking and creating floral arrangements for her friends.

Linda is survived by her husband, Dr. David Usdan, her daughter, Dr. Lisa Usdan (Dr. David Portnoy) of Memphis, her two granddaughters, Abby and Paige Portnoy of Memphis, and her three sisters who cherished her: Dr. Diane Wilen (Barry) of Hollywood, Fla.; Laurie Blum (Marvin) of Ft. Worth, Texas; and Peggy Adler (William) of Memphis, as well as many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends who will remember Linda as a wise and kind person and a force of good for those she loved and those who loved her.

Linda's funeral was held Thursday, June 20, at Temple Israel Cemetery.

The family asks that you honor Linda's life with a donation to Temple Israel in Memphis, MIFA, or to ArtsMemphis. **HW**

U.S.- Hamas Formally Rejected Hostage Deal



Matthew Miller, the U.S. State Department spokesman, moderates a press conference at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, China, on June 19, 2023, as U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken looks on. Credit: Chuck Kennedy/U.S. State Department.

(JNS) – An official in Washington last Tuesday for the first time confirmed that Hamas's response to the hostage deal outlined by U.S. President Joe Biden on May 31 amounted to a rejection.

"They came back several weeks ago and rejected the proposal that was on the table," said U.S. State Department spokesman Matthew Miller.

Hamas "gave us a written response that rejected the proposal that had been put forward by Israel, that President Biden had outlined, that the United Nations Security Council and countries all around the world had endorsed," he told reporters, according to a State Department readout.

Miller added that the administration wouldn't release the text of the terror group's response due to the sensitive nature of the talks but confirmed it had received "a written rejection and counter-proposal."

While Miller was the first U.S. official to describe Hamas's June 11 reply as a rejection of the proposed framework, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken had previously said it included changes that were "not workable."

"A deal was on the table that was virtually identical to the proposal that Hamas made on May 6 – a deal that the entire world is behind, a deal Israel has accepted. Hamas could have answered with a single word: 'Yes,'" the secretary stated at a June 12 press conference in Doha.

Ismail Haniyeh, the Qatar-based head of Hamas's "political" bureau, last Tuesday stressed the terror organization's refusal to sign any deal unless Jerusalem commits to ending the war in Gaza and withdrawing all troops, conditions that Israel has repeatedly dismissed.

Any ceasefire proposal that does not guarantee an end to the IDF offensive in the enclave is "not an agreement," said Haniyeh.

"If the criminal enemy thinks targeting my family will change our position or that of the resistance, they are delusional," Haniyeh added, in reference to a Gaza airstrike in which one of his sis-

ters was killed.

The IDF confirmed last Tuesday that jets had struck two buildings in the northern Strip that were being used by Hamas terrorists, including several who invaded the Jewish state on Oct. 7 and took hostages.

Arab sources reported that a sister of Haniyeh was among those killed in the strikes.

More than 250 people were abducted to Gaza during Hamas's Oct. 7 invasion of the northwestern Negev. Thousands more were killed and wounded by the terrorist group, with numerous atrocities documented.

One-hundred and twenty hostages remain in the Strip, of whom 116 were abducted on Oct. 7 (the other four were captured earlier). The figure includes both living and deceased men, women and children.

At least dozens of the remaining hostages are believed to be alive, a senior Israeli official involved in the negotiations told AFP last week.

The official noted that the Jewish state cannot commit to ending the war as a precondition for a deal because Hamas could "breach their commitment...and drag out the negotiations for 10 years" or more.

During a meeting with Blinken at the State Department last Monday, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant emphasized the need for all parties to put more pressure on Hamas to release the captives.

Prior to his meeting with U.S. officials, including CIA director William Burns, Gallant stated in Hebrew that "it is Israel's primary commitment to return the hostages, with no exception, to their families and homes."

Israeli negotiators reportedly traveled to Qatar last week in an attempt to narrow the gaps between the agreed-upon hostage deal and Hamas's demands. According to the Elaph outlet, which cited an official familiar with the talks, the meeting focused on "controversial issues," including the number of hostages that would be released during the first phase. **HW**

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The Trailer for the Jason Schwartzman and Carol Kane Bat Mitzvah Movie Is Here



Credit: Sean Price Williams
By Evelyn Frick
This originally appeared on HeyAlma. Reprinted with permission.

We finally have a trailer for “Between the Temples,” the super Jewy oddball comedy starring Jewish actors Jason Schwartzman and Carol Kane!

Per Kveller, “Kane plays Carla, a retired music teacher who has a new lease on life. She meets an old student, Ben

Gottlieb, who is reeling from a devastating loss, taking shelter living with his two mothers and working as a cantor in the local synagogue, while both his faith and his spirit feel broken. He takes on the job of preparing Carla for her bat mitzvah, and the two form a tender romance.”

Though the film already sounds per-

fect in writing, the trailer teases a tangible tenderness and hilarity of Schwartzman and Kane’s performances. In one part of the trailer, Ben lays down in front of an 18-wheeler in an attempt to take his own life. “Keep going! Come on,” Ben darkly but uproariously yells at the truck driver when he stops, leaving the cantor unharmed.

In another part, Ben and Carla reconnect at a bar. “I work down at Temple Sinai. I’m a cantor,” he tells Carla.

“So interesting, because I’m an Aquarius,” Carla enthusiastically replies, only to learn that Ben said “cantor,” not “Cancer.”

The trailer also gives viewers a first look at the performances of the talented – and mostly Jewish – ensemble cast. Legendary “Saturday Night Live” writer Robert Smigel plays Rabbi Bruce, Caroline Aaron and Dolly de Leon play Ben’s moms, Madeline Weinstein plays Rabbi Bruce’s daughter Gabby, and it seems will even get a bit of Pauline Chalamet in a minor role.

“It’s so courageous, women who reinvent themselves, especially when you come from a different time when that wasn’t allowed,” Carol Kane told

Vulture at the Sundance Film Festival, where the movie first premiered. As my colleague Lior Zaltzman at Kveller first noted, Kane was just coming of age herself when bat mitzvahs began to become popular in certain Jewish congregations in the U.S. Though she never had her own bat mitzvah, the legendary “Hester Street” actress did actually learn the Torah portion she chanted in the movie.

“One of my huge takeaways was honestly just this idea of contributing that what you don’t know,” Schwartzman added to the same conversation. Schwartzman grew up in an interfaith Jewish-Catholic household and learned more about Judaism than he ever had to play Cantor Ben.

As for Madeline Weinstein, she told Vulture that “Between the Temples” makes her think of the Yiddish word “doikayt.”

“It’s a really beautiful concept of fully living and making community wherever you are that kind of comes out of diaspora. But I was just thinking about that concept in relation to this movie,” Madeline explained.

“Between the Temples” is coming to theaters on August 23, 2024. **HW**

The Trailer Is Here for Kieran Culkin and Jesse Eisenberg’s Holocaust Trip Movie



Photo courtesy of Searchlight Pictures
By Evelyn Frick

This originally appeared on HeyAlma. Reprinted with permission.

Is the Jewish-family-goes-on-a-Holocaust-trip movie genre becoming a thing? All signs point to yes. “Treasure,” a film about a daughter (Lena Dunham) returning to her Holocaust survivor father’s (Stephen Fry’s) homeland, just opened in theaters last week. And now we have the first official teaser trailer for “A Real Pain,” the upcoming Kieran Culkin and Jesse Eisenberg Holocaust trip movie.

According to Hey Alma contributor Reuben Baron, who saw “A Real Pain” when it premiered at Sundance 2024, the question at the center of the film is one of Jewish happiness. Namely, how can Jews be happy? The movie follows Jewish cousins David (Jesse Eisenberg) and Benji (Kieran Culkin) as they tour Poland to see the former home of their late Holocaust survivor grandmother.

“Upon first impressions, Benji seems to know how to enjoy himself more than David does; he’s funny, forms connections with people instantly, and tries to

get his neurotic cousin to relax and lighten up,” Baron wrote at the time. “And yet Benji’s moods can easily swing in the opposite direction – if David’s perpetual discomfort stays bubbling under at a functional level, Benji’s sadness threatens to become too much to bear.”

The trailer release comes just a few weeks after the news that Jesse Eisenberg is applying to reclaim his family’s Polish citizenship. He was inspired to do so after filming “A Real Pain” on-location in Poland, in the cities and towns where his ancestors came from. “While I was working here, I met some people who worked in positions related to the government. I said to them: ‘I would love to create better relationships between Jews and Polish people,’” Eisenberg told Polish publication “Głos Wielkopolski.”

“Poland made me feel a real connection to something historically bigger than myself,” he added.

“A Real Pain” will open in the U.S. on Oct. 18, 2024. **HW**

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Kinky Friedman, Singer and Novelist Who Fronted The Texas Jewboys, Dies at 79



Kinky Friedman styled himself after popular American satirists Will Rogers and Mark Twain. (JTA files)

By Andrew Silow-Carroll

(JTA) – Kinky Friedman, the cigar-chomping, mustachioed Texan country singer and mystery novelist whose body of work often seemed like the un-kosher marriage of the Borscht Belt and the Bible Belt, died June 27 from complications of Parkinson’s disease. He was 79.

As frontman for the flamboyant 1970s country group Kinky Friedman and the Texas Jewboys, he was notorious for satirical songs such as “They Don’t Make Jews Like Jesus Anymore,” a raucous sendup of racism, and “Get Your Biscuits in the Oven and Your Buns in Bed,” which poked fun at feminism.

He could also turn serious, with songs dealing with social issues such as abortion and commercialism. His 1973 song “Ride ’em Jewboy” is a haunting elegy on the Holocaust, recorded by Willie Nelson and sung in concert by Bob Dylan. The lyrics transform cowboy clichés into a rumination on Hitler’s

victims:
*Now the smoke from camps a-rising
See the helpless creatures on their way
Hey, old pal, ain’t it surprising
How far you can go before you stay?*

The Jewboys broke up in the mid-1970s and Friedman spent much of the next decade in a haze of drugs. In the mid-1980s he cleaned up and began writing a series of successful, raunchy, comic mystery novels whose main character is himself. He wrote more than 20 books, all on a manual typewriter.

One reviewer, the actress and author Fannie Flagg, described his writing as “Raymond Chandler on drugs, if Chandler had possessed a tremendous sense of humor.”

In 2006 he ran for governor of Texas, looking to unseat incumbent Republican Rick Perry in a bid that went from joking to serious. His campaign material included a 13-inch talking action figure and bumper stickers that read, “My governor is a Jewish cowboy.” His official campaign slogan was, “Why the hell not?” He considered himself tough on immigration, pro-choice, anti-capital punishment and a proponent of alternative fuels.

In time, his campaign gathered force as a serious quest to shake up Texas politics, break down traditional party machines and reach out to a dramatically disaffected electorate.

“In the last election for governor, only 29% of eligible voters went to the polls,” Friedman, known as “the Kinkster,” told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that year. “Seventy-one percent didn’t vote – they didn’t like the choice between paper and plastic.”

In the end, Friedman placed fourth in the six-person race, receiving 12.6% of the vote.

Born Richard Samet Friedman in Chicago in 1944, he moved with his parents to Texas as a baby and earned his nickname in college from his curly hair. His parents were educators who ran a summer camp for mainly Jewish children at Echo Hill Ranch, the 400-acre spread where Friedman would come to live in a small but rambling lodge.

“We had services every Friday night, and Kinky would play the guitar,” Ellen St. Clair, who spent four summers at Echo Hill, told JTA in 2006.

The property is also home to the Utopia Animal Rescue Ranch, a home and adoption center for abused and abandoned dogs that Friedman helped found.

He attended the University of Texas at Austin, where he majored in psychology. Friedman proudly recalled that during their time as members of the Jewish Tau Delta Phi fraternity he and a friend, Nathan “Chinga” Chavin, tried to admit African-American students, an

effort that was ultimately thwarted.

After graduating in 1966, he served in the Peace Corps in Borneo. After returning from the Peace Corps, he formed Kinky Friedman and the Texas Jewboys, at a time when hybrid “country rock” bands – including The Band, the Eagles and Buffalo Springfield – were rising up the charts. The Jewboys drew a cult following – and occasional protests, as when the National Organization for Women awarded Friedman its “Male Chauvinist Pig Award” in 1973.

In early 1976, he joined Dylan on the second leg of the Rolling Thunder Revue tour. Friedman claimed to have been the first “full-blooded” Jew to take the stage at the Grand Ole Opry.

Friedman would cite Mark Twain and the humorist Will Rogers as his heroes, and the inevitable comparisons were not far off.

“These days,” he once said, “there are many people around the world who listen to the songs that made me infamous and read the books that made me respectable.” **HW**

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