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Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab Staff Member Wins Statewide 2024 Caregiver of the Year



Jesse Samples, Mitchell Lansky, Sharon Young and Bobby Meadows celebrate Young's achievement.

By Baylee Less-Eiseman

Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab (MJHR) is proud to announce that Certified Nursing Assistant Sharon Young won the Tennessee Health Care Association (THCA)'s Statewide Caregiver of the Year Award for 2024.

On Friday, November 22, co-workers, supporters, and local leaders gathered to honor Sharon for her dedicated 35 years of service to the field and MJHR.

Held in a full auditorium at the Home, the ceremony began at 1 p.m. with opening remarks from Executive Director Bobby Meadows, who offered an emotional tribute about Sharon and her compassionate temperament.

"When I started at the Home more than 11 years ago, many people made me feel welcomed and comfortable, but one person truly went above and beyond. That was always Sharon," he said.

Meadows introduced Jesse Samples,

director of the THCA, who explained the origins of this prestigious award and gift and presented Sharon with her official plaque and a \$2,500 honorary check.

In 1999, members of THCA developed the Caregiver of the Year Award as a way to recognize and pay tribute to selfless individuals who have devoted their careers to improving the lives of those whose conditions require roundthe-clock attention in a state-licensed nursing facility. The Caregiver of the Year program includes the recognition of honorees in each of THCA's six districts: Memphis, Jackson, Nashville, Chattanooga, Knoxville and East Tennessee. From the pool of six district honorees, THCA's Public Relations Committee selected Young as the statewide Caregiver of the Year.

When asked about her work, Young



Co-workers congratulate Young at the celebration.

responds, "It's always been about the patients. I love my patients, and they love me. It's all about love."

Congressman Steve Cohen attended the celebration to pay tribute to Sharon and all of the caregivers across Shelby County. He offered passionate stories about his father residing at the former B'nai B'rith Home in Midtown Memphis and how a photo hangs in his D.C. office of his mother and her longtime caregiver.

"The caregivers that take care of our loved ones are the most valuable and important people in our lives," he said.

He also presented Sharon with an official Congressional proclamation in honor of this achievement.

The gathering closed with words from MJHR Director of Nursing Annie

"We are all just so fortunate to have Sharon working with us, the patients, the staff, all of us," she said.

Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab is a



Sharon Young and Congressman Steve Cohen.

not-for-profit nursing home, Jewish in character and environment, dedicated to providing the highest level of care possible with dignity, compassion, and professionalism. Only through the help of generous donors is the organization able to care for those in need. Find more information at www. memphisjewishhome.org/giving. HW

Israel and Lebanon Agree to Ceasefire in War with Hezbollah



First responders stand next to a crater where a rocket fired from Lebanon hit an area in northern Israel's Haifa district on October 31, 2024. Credit: Ahmad Gharabli/ **AFP**

By Ron Kampeas

(JTA) - Israel's security cabinet has approved a U.S.-brokered ceasefire proposal with Hezbollah, which would end more than a year of conflict with the terror group on Israel's border with

President Biden said in an address to the nation after the agreement that Lebanon's government had agreed to the agreement, and that the withdrawal of forces starting then would take up to 60

"I'm pleased to announce that their governments have accepted the United States proposal to end the devastating conflict between Israel and Hezbollah," he said from in front of the White House. He also thanked the French president, Emmanuel Macron, for helping to broker the deal.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu suggested that one reason his government agreed to the deal was his expectation that the incoming Donald Trump administration would be more accommodating to Israel. He also said future plans to counter Iran factored into the decision.

Last Tuesday evening, Netanyahu said in a televised address that he would recommend that his hardline rightwing cabinet accept the deal. The deal - which would be the longest ceasefire Israel has agreed to since Hamas invaded from Gaza on Oct. 7, 2023, launching the current conflict - signals a new phase in Israel's multi-front war.

"I am determined to give our courageous soldiers every resource to keep them safe and bring us victory," Netanyahu said. "Therefore, this evening I will bring a ceasefire outline for the cabinet's approval."

The deal as reported would reinstitute the 2006 ceasefire that ended that year's Israel-Hezbollah war, which required Hezbollah to retreat north of the Litani River, which is about 18 miles north of Israel's border. Hezbollah disregarded much of that agreement, continuing to build up arms south of the river and launching rockets at Israel. Hezbollah began pounding Israel with rockets following the Hamas invasion, prompting clashes that intensified into a full-on Israeli invasion of Lebanon at the end of September.

The deal currently would reportedly

(See Ceasefire Page 3)

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Excitement Builds as ChillZone **Kicks Off!**





Parents, mark your calendars because Saturday nights just got a lot more exciting for your kids! ChillZone, a dynamic new program for 3rd-8th graders, has already launched and is already making waves in the community.

ChillZone is an innovative international program where Jewish values meet modern fun. Memphis Jewish Experience (MJX) led by Rabbi Noach Karp, has partnered with ChillZone to bring this impactful program to Memphis.

Each week, kids come together for an evening packed with energy, learning and connection. Through engaging Jewish learning sessions and thrilling activities, Chill Zone inspires participants to deepen their connection to their heritage while having the time of their lives. Add in fantastic prizes, and it's no wonder kids can't stop talking about it!

The first few weeks have been a tremendous success.

"Our goal is to create a space where

kids feel the joy of being part of the Jewish community," says Rabbi Karp. "The smiles, laughter and curiosity we've seen so far have been incredible."

In the words of Brooke Sanderson and Atara Siegel, two of the teen "Head Chillers" that help run the program, "The kids have a blast. The energy and excitement in the room is tremendous. The hoverboard and drone raffles are certainly a highlight."

From team challenges to creative crafts, every Saturday night at Chill-Zone offers something new and exciting. It's more than just a program – it's an opportunity for kids to build friendships, develop meaningful values, and create unforgettable memories.

Don't let your child miss out on this amazing experience. Sign them up for ChillZone and let Saturday nights be a highlight of their week.

For more information or to register, please contact www.chillzone.org. HW

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Memphis Candlelighting Time

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Weekly Torah Portion: Vayeitzei

White House Denounces Murder of Chabad Rabbi in UAE 'in Strongest Terms

(JNS) - The White House National Security Council condemns the murder of Rabbi Zvi Kogan in the United Arab Emirates "in the strongest terms," Sean Savett, a spokesman for the council, stated last Sunday evening.

"Our prayers are with his family, the Chabad-Lubavitch community, the broader Jewish community and all who are mourning his loss," Savett said. "This was a horrific crime against all those who stand for peace, tolerance and coexistence. It was an assault as well on UAE and its rejection of violent extremism across the board."

Washington "is working in close coordination with Israeli and UAE authorities, and we have offered all appropriate forms of support," the council spokesman added. "We commend the rapid efforts of UAE authorities who now have suspects in custody. Those who carried out this crime, and anyone supporting them, must be held fully accountable." HW





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Ceasefire...

(Continued From Page 1) be policed in part by the Lebanese army. It was brokered by the United States,

It was brokered by the United States, France and other countries, and does not apply to the ongoing conflict in Gaza. Lebanese and international officials have also signaled optimism about the deal.

"We're in the final stages of securing a ceasefire agreement for Lebanon," U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said last Tuesday at a meeting of the G7 group of nations. "It will make a big difference in saving lives and livelihoods in Lebanon and Israel. It will make a big difference in creating the conditions that will allow people to return to their homes safely in northern Israel and in southern Lebanon."

Blinken has been working intensively, and so far without success, to reach a ceasefire deal in Gaza. He said that the deal in Lebanon will demonstrate that Hamas "can't count on other fronts opening up in the war," which could dampen its will to fight on.

Biden in his remarks said the Lebanese army would assume control of areas Israel has cleared of Hezbollah. "Over the next 60 days, the Lebanese army and state security forces will deploy and take control of their own territory," he said. "Once again, Hezbollah terrorist infrastructure and southern Lebanon will not be allowed to be rebuilt. And over the next 60 days, Israel will gradually withdraw its remaining forces and civilians."

Hezbollah's position was not known, but Lebanon's government likely would not have given the deal the nod without the assent of the terrorist group or its backers in Iran.

One new wrinkle is that the United States would play a role assessing violations, Biden said, but this would not involve the stationing of U.S. troops in

Lebanon.

In his own address, Netanyahu began by listing what he said were Israeli successes in what he described as a seven-front war, in which Israel is fighting in Gaza, Lebanon and the West Bank as well as directly with Iran and its proxies. Among the achievements he claimed were the decimation of Hezbollah's forces and the elimination of much of its leadership. He vowed that the tens of thousands of Israelis evacuated from the Lebanon border would be able to return to their homes.

Then he listed the three reasons for agreeing to the ceasefire in Lebanon.

"The first reason is to focus on the Iranian threat, and I will not expand on that," he said. Then he implied that Trump's return to office could change the outlook for Israel's military.

"The second reason is to give our forces a breather and replenish stocks," Netanyahu said. "And I say it openly, it is no secret that there have been big delays in weapons and munitions deliveries. These delays will be resolved soon. We will receive supplies of advanced weaponry that will keep our soldiers safe and give us more strike force to complete our mission."

Netanyahu in June said the U.S. government was slow-rolling weapons deliveries. Biden administration officials have adamantly denied any delay, beyond one on 2,000-pound bombs President Joe Biden did not want to deliver for the war in Gaza, because he said they were inappropriate for use in areas where civilians were concentrated.

"There was no policy to delay weapons to Israel for either Lebanon or Gaza operations, save the one shipment of 2,000 pound bombs," a senior administration official told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. "The U.S. government was methodical in ensuring that the provision of U.S. weapons were not used in violation of our law or our policies. That takes time."

Biden in his remarks squarely blamed Hezbollah for the conflict and noted the assistance his administration has provided to Israel.

"Let's be clear, Israel did not launch this war," he said. "The Lebanese people did not seek that war either. Nor did the United States. Over the past year, including the days immediately following October the seventh, I directed the U.S. military to flow assets and capabilities into the region, including aircraft carriers, fighter squadrons, a sophisticated air defense battery to defend Israel and deter a common enemy."

The Biden administration has sent reinforcements to the area whenever Iran has threatened retaliation in what has been an escalating series of attacks and counterattacks. The latest round came on Oct. 26, when Israel, heeding Biden, limited retaliatory strikes to military targets and avoided hitting oil extraction and nuclear sites. Trump, campaigning at the time for the presidency, said Biden should have greenlighted attacks on nuclear sites, although he did not say he would assist Israel in carrying out such attacks.

Netanyahu's third reason, similar to what Blinken said, was to isolate Hamas. "With Hezbollah out of the picture, Hamas is left on its own," he said. "We will increase our pressure on Hamas and that will help us in our sacred mission of releasing our hostages."

Netanyahu did not say what the ceasefire would compromise, except to claim that it would not stop Israel from reentering Lebanon should Hezbollah violate its terms – and that would include not just the movement of forces across the Litani River, but simply the act of rearming. **HW**

Memphis Police Probing 'all Leads' in Killing of Israeli Man, 'No Indication' of Hate Crime

By JNS Staff

(JNS) – The Memphis Police Department in Tennessee is investigating a homicide on the 2300 block of Hernando Road, in which Aviv Broek, 21, was killed, the department told JNS.

"There has been no arrests in this case. This is an active investigation and there is no indication at this time of a hate crime," the department's public information office told JNS.

The department added that it "is pursuing all leads."

Israeli media had reported that local police was investigating the killing of Broek – which reports had spelled as Brock – as a suspected terror attack.

Broek, who reportedly is from Rehovot, was robbed and killed while on a call as a locksmith over last weekend or last Thursday, according to various press reports.

"Ynet" quoted a friend of Broek's, who said that "on [last] Thursday evening, around 10:30 p.m., Aviv received a call to change a lock" and "when he got out of the car in an isolated alley, he was robbed and shot four times in the stomach. According to the police, he did not resist or struggle, yet they shot and killed him."

The friend told "Ynet" that another friend, who worked with Broek, "reached him two hours after the shooting. They found him lying on the floor and immediately called the police."

"They used a location app on their phones, and that's how they found him," the source told the Israeli publication. "As soon as the app stopped working, we started to suspect something was up."

The friend told "Ynet" that the killer took Broek's "work equipment worth thousands of dollars, cash and even his passport."

The publication also quoted Broek's older brother, Rotem, who told the publication that his brother had reported that "there is no antisemitism" in Memphis.

"We don't know if that is the background to the case, but in my opinion it is," the brother told "Ynet." "He was a giving person, always ready to help others. When they called him, they claimed it was an urgent situation – that someone's mother was stuck in a car – and offered to pay him double. They lured him into a trap, bringing him to an abandoned house.

"He was a man of peace, someone who loved life and new experiences. He was brave and never afraid of anything. This tragedy shocked us," the brother added. "We thought it was safer there than in Israel. Aviv always told us he took care of himself and avoided dangerous places." **HW**

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The MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club Happenings

Lunch is Monday—Friday at 11:30 a.m. All programs start at 12:15 p.m. Monthly Luncheon is at noon.

Monday, December 9 Tour of Young Israel

The tour will be led by Rabbi Akiva Males. Young Israel moved into its new building in August of 2021. The Young Israel of Memphis is a Traditional Orthodox shul with a vision focused on spiritual growth, a commitment to learning, a dedication to davening and a desire for a warm and supportive community, based on Torah values. Rabbi Akiva Males grew up in Cleveland, Ohio, and received his Jewish education at the Hebrew Academy of Cleveland, the Wisconsin Institute for Torah Study (W.I.T.S.), and Yeshiva Chofetz Chaim (Rabbinical Seminary of America) based in Queens, N.Y. where he received his Semicha. Rabbi Akiva and Layla Males relocated to Memphis in the summer of 2016, and they are thrilled to be part of the Young Israel of Memphis family. Reservations are needed for the tour and the preceding lunch. Please join us.

Wednesday, December 11

Tour of Town Village Audubon Park

With the day-to-day freedom to come and go and the convenience of any number of activities to choose from, independent living at Town Village Audubon Park is a perfect fit for an active, healthy lifestyle. Enjoy restaurant-quality dining and weekly social gatherings, and feel empowered to explore personal interests. The tour will be led by Daniel Lund, sales and marketing director. Reservations are needed as the MJCC Bus has limited seating. Refreshments will be served.

Monday, December 16

Speaker: Rabbi Ian Lichter, Head Rabbi of Baron Hirsch Congregation

Rabbi Ian Lichter joined Baron Hirsch Congregation in August 2022. Previously he served as the Assistant Rabbi at the Great Neck Synagogue in Long Island, N.Y., for 12 years. He received his rabbinic ordination from the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University and earned his master's degree in education and administration from Azrieli Graduate School. Rabbi Lichter strives to provide for a diverse and vibrant community by fully immersing himself in the spiritual and physical well-being of the congregation. He provides both inspiring and practical drashot, shiurim, and Divrei Torah to the shul as well as a caring and compassionate ear for its congregants.

Wednesday, December 18 Big Monthly Luncheon

Get excited about The MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club Monthly Luncheon featuring vocalist Stephen Len White. Stephen is a native Memphian and classically trained vocalist who will sing anything from the American Songbook for you to enjoy. He has performed with the New York Grand Opera. He is equally trained on the musical stage and has appeared in dramas and musicals, including appearances in "The Sound of Music" and "As You Like It," at Playhouse on the Square, and with the Tennessee Shakespeare Company. His selections for the senior luncheon will be the kind of music that everyone will enjoy. He and his wife, Deborah, on piano, will have you singing along with them in no time. The cost for the Monthly Luncheon is only \$5. The MJCC Bus is available for those that live near the MJCC for only \$2 roundtrip. Call Steve Kaplan with any questions.

Please join us Monday through Friday for a delicious kosher lunch from the kitchens at 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. Steve works Monday thru Thursday 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. HW

'IDF Withdrawal from Lebanon Hinges on Implementation of Truce'

(JNS) – Israel Defense Forces troops have remained in their positions in Southern Lebanon since the truce with Iranian-backed Hezbollah went into effect last Wednesday morning, an Israeli security source told the Associated Press, reiterating that the IDF will only gradually withdraw.

"We need to see the mechanism is working," said the unnamed security official. "It's a gradual agreement. It's a gradual withdrawal."

The official would not say when soldiers would begin the withdrawal but said the redeployment would be completed during the 60-day period laid out in last Tuesday's ceasefire deal with the Lebanese government.

He said the pace of the withdrawal and the possible return of Lebanese non-combatants to villages near the Israeli border would depend on whether the agreement is implemented and enforced by all sides.

Hezbollah has launched some 16,000 rockets, missiles and drones at Israel since joining the war in support of Hamas on Oct. 8, 2023, a day after the Gaza-based terrorist organization's massacre in southern Israel.

Nearly 70,000 residents of Israel's north have been internally displaced due to the attacks from Lebanon. During "Operation Northern Arrows," 45 civilians and 79 troops were killed, according to data from the Alma Research and Education Center, which monitors the northern fronts.

The ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon took effect at 4 a.m. local time last Wednesday, ending nearly 14 months of hostilities. The IDF will respond "forcefully" to all violations of the deal by Hezbollah, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed last Tuesday night.

As part of the deal, Israel promised to gradually withdraw from Southern Lebanon, where the IDF has been operating since early October, reaching as far as the Litani River last Tuesday for the first time since 2000.

As the IDF withdraws, Lebanese forces are to enter these areas and ensure that Hezbollah retreats north of the Litani, located some 18 miles north of the border with Israel. The U.S. and France are to oversee compliance by receiving regular updates from diplomats and military officials. **HW**

Your Health When Should You Go to the Emergency Room?

By Cindy Katz, DNP

General Health | Preventing Sickness

Emergency rooms (ERs) are open 24/7/365 and staffed by skilled professionals, including Emergency Medicine Physicians, Nurse Practitioners (NPs), and Physician Assistants (PAs), who provide high-quality care regardless of the ability to pay. Upon arrival, patients undergo a **medical screening examination** to determine the necessary course of treatment.

Depending on the urgency and the facility's capacity, diagnostic tests such as blood work, X-rays, or CT scans may be performed before or after admission. For **life-threatening concerns**, expect rapid care. However, for non-urgent issues, it might be better to consider other options.

Knowing what constitutes a medical emergency is critical. Here's a guide to help you decide when to visit the ER:

Signs You Need Emergency Care

Heart Attack Symptoms

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Chest or upper abdominal pressure lasting more than 5 minutes

These signs may indicate a cardiovascular emergency. Seek immediate medical attention.

Hypertensive Crisis

- Blood pressure readings of 180/120 or higher accompanied by:
 - o Chest pain
 - o Shortness of breath
 - o Vision changes
 - o Numbness, weakness, or slurred speech

Without additional symptoms, consult your primary care provider (PCP) to adjust your medication.

Stroke Warning Signs

- Vision changes, difficulty speaking or confusion
- Sudden numbness in the face, arm, or leg (especially one-sided)
- Difficulty waking

Use the **F.A.S.T. test** to assess:

- F (Face): Does one side droop when smiling?
- A (Arms): Can both arms be raised evenly?
- S (**Speech**): Is speech slurred or difficult?
- T (**Time**): Call 911 immediately if any signs are present.

Severe Abdominal Pain

Abdominal pain could indicate serious conditions like:

- Appendicitis: Pain in the lower right abdomen with fever, nausea, or vomiting
- Gallbladder Issues: Pain in the upper right abdomen with nausea or vomiting, and or diarrhea especially after eating
- Kidney Stones / Infections: Flank pain

For women, abdominal pain may signal:

- Ectopic pregnancy or pelvic inflammatory disease
- Ovarian cyst complications
- If pregnant and experiencing vaginal bleeding, seek emergency care immediately.

Choking (Non-Responsive Individual)

Follow the **A.B.C. assessment**:

- A (Airway): Is it open?
- **B** (**Breathing**): Are they breathing?
- C (Circulation): Do they have a pulse?

If "no" to any, call 911 immediately.

Traumatic Injuries

Trauma from falls, car accidents, or burns may lead to severe injuries.

In serious, yet rare occasions following a head injury, watch for these red flags:

- Unequal pupil size
- Persistent headache or worsening symptoms
- Loss of consciousness, confusion, or seizures

High Fever

A fever in adults of equal or greater to $103^{\circ}F$ with symptoms such as abdominal pain nausea or vomiting, severe headache, stiff neck, rash, or difficulty breathing requires urgent evaluation.

Overdose or Poisoning

If you suspect an overdose, call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222. They'll guide you on what to do next.

Mental Health Emergencies

If you're experiencing suicidal or homicidal thoughts, go to the ER immediately. You can also contact the **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline** to speak with a trained counselor.

Final Tips for ER Visits

- Plan Ahead: Bring an updated medication list and know your medical history.
- Stay Proactive: Keep immunizations and screenings up to date.

Recognizing true emergencies can save lives and reduce ER overcrowding. Stay informed, act swiftly, and take care of your health! **HW**

BBYO Delta Region Gathers for Shabbat at Fall Convention





Over 80 teens from all around Delta Region gathered the weekend of November 8-10 at a camp outside of Nashville.

Teens spent the weekend engaging in a special camp Shabbat service, onegs, Shabbat options on Saturday morning learning about the recent Jewish holidays and a havdalah around the campfire.

There was Israel programming and the best of all, Maccabiah! The teens loved breaking into colors and competing the weekend away with fun games, sports and more.

A fun dessert truck showed up during chofesh time that was a hit. Teens also shared in traditional BBYO moments like a business meeting about Delta Region, BBG AZA and siblinghood separates and closing with a friendship circle. Everyone had a blast and can't wait to gather again for Spring Convention in Memphis. **HW**

Patriots' Assistant Coach to Lace Up Shoes with Design to Fight JewHate

(JNS) – Evan Rothstein, a member of the New England Patriots' coaching staff, will wear shoes customized to promote the Foundation to Combat Antisemitism as part of the NFL's My Cause My Cleats initiative.

"I'm Jewish. It's of a high level of importance to me," said Rothstein, assistant quarterbacks coach and director of game management.

"I think in today's day and age, with everything going on, it's important to support such a positive message about bringing people together to stand against hate," he added.

The foundation, headquartered within the Gillette Stadium's front offices, was established in 2019 by Patriots' chairman and CEO Robert Kraft.

"When I first got here, I became more aware of the foundation," Rothstein said. "But certainly October 7th last year brought a bigger spotlight to what he's trying to accomplish there."

The shoes, which the assistant coach will wear on Dec. 1 during the team's game against the Indianapolis Colts, sport a white, black and blue color scheme. A Star of David is featured on the front of one shoe with the word chai in Hebrew on the other. The Foundation to Combat Antisemitism's blue square symbol and the phrase "Stand Up to All Hate" appear on the side.

"I think the overall unifying message is that if we remain silent, hate wins," Rothstein said. "If one minority group is on the receiving end, eventually that will spread to all different groups." HW





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Mayim Bialik Shares Her Hot Takes about Bagels with Jewish Comedian Iliza Shlesinger

Her opinion about everything bagels was pretty controversial



Mayim Bialik via Gilbert Flores/Variety via Getty Images

By Lior Zaltzman

This originally appeared on Kveller, reprinted with permission.

This week, comedian and Jewish mom Iliza Shlesinger had actress Mayim Bialik on the first YouTube episode of her podcast, "Ask Iliza Anything," and rightfully introduced her as everyone's "favorite Jewish person" to share a hot take in a segment Shlesinger calls "Fight Me."

The take was, of course, about bagels. "There are only certain flavors of bagel that should be allowed in the universe," the "Blossom" and "Big Bang Theory" star and former "Jeopardy!" host argued, meaning that if an ingredient "makes a better something else, it's not allowed to be a bagel flavor."

Confused? Bialik, who has a doctorate in neuroscience, after all, went on

to expand on her methodology for determining which bagels are unworthy: "Blueberry makes a better muffin, chocolate chip makes a better cookie, cinnamon makes a better cinnamon roll."

The only bagels the "As They Made Us" director said are allowed to exist are "water bagels," referring to the term used for bagels boiled in water, because there is no such thing as a plain bagel, she surmised. Along with them, she is OK with "egg, sesame, garlic, salt" and, she hesitated, "maybe poppyseed." Is that because it makes a better hamantaschen?

An everything bagel? That's just an anglicized bagel in Bialik's eyes. Shlesinger responded with an "ouch" on that one. I know a lot of people might take offense at talking down the seasoning, which is now perhaps the most iconic of bagel seasonings – so iconic that people whose lives don't permit them to eat bagels will sprinkle it on other foods to make them feel somewhat bagel-adjacent.

Everything bagel feelings aside, the most important part of her take, Bialik reminded the crowd, is that those other flavors should not exist. "They're not bagels," she said. "They shouldn't be called bagels. I find it offensive, so fight me."

After the video of Mayim played, Shlesinger joked with her audience: "If people didn't know she was Jewish before..." Well, they should have known, but they certainly know now. She disagreed about the everything bagel hate: "I feel like everything is everything," she asserted, and the crowd all seemed to agree.

Yet she generally agreed with Bialik. "I think about how offensive it is as a Jew, when people are like, I'll take a jalapeño cheddar," she joked. "I'm like, you mean queso?!"

What do you think? Is Mayim right? I personally am a huge cinnamon-raisin bagel fan (I love a good savory and sweet mix, though I do agree they're ultimately better as a mix in something like a kugel.) I do believe that blueberry bagels are an abomination and was horrified to discover back in 2022 that they're the most ordered bagels on GrubHub (for shame!!) and refuse to acknowledge the existence of chocolate chip bagels.

Mostly, though, I think all American Jews need to have strong opinions about bagels. Hopefully, we can all agree on that one. **HW**

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Netflix's 'Mary' Ignites Storm Over Casting of Israelis

By Ron Reitan

(Israel Hayom via JNS) – A forthcoming Netflix drama has become the center of controversy following the release of its trailer, with social media users calling for boycotts over its cast of Israeli actors while displaying fundamental misunderstandings about history.

The release of the trailer for "Mary," featuring Israeli performers Noa Cohen, Ori Pfeffer and Ido Tako, has sparked intense online criticism. The controversy centers particularly on Cohen's portrayal of the Virgin Mary, despite historical records establishing Mary's Jewish identity.

The reaction to the casting has revealed deeper undercurrents of antisemitism. The production has drawn unprecedented hostile responses across social media platforms, extending beyond film into broader cultural discussions.

Critics of the film have made historically inaccurate claims about the religious identity of New Testament figures, with some asserting that Mary and Jesus were Palestinians. Historians note that Palestinian is not a religious identity, and the figures depicted were Jews.

Some responses have escalated to threats of violence, with one user suggesting that casting an Israeli as Mary warranted death threats. Other comments called for boycotts and included explicit antisemitic language. One user wrote, "Half the cast is Israeli, including Cohen who plays Mary. Looks like s*** anyway, but needless to say avoid this like the plague."

The film chronicles Mary's journey as an unwed mother facing societal rejection. Academy Award winner Anthony Hopkins portrays King Herod of Judea, who leads a deadly pursuit of Mary and her child, forcing them into hiding alongside Joseph. **HW**









Nine Israelis Arrested, Accused of Assaulting Suspected Hamas Men



Israeli soldiers during a counterterror raid in Balata, outside Nablus in central Samaria, Nov. 19, 2023. Credit: Nasser Ishtayeh/ Flash90.

(JNS) – Nine Israelis – soldiers, police officers and a civilian – have been detained on charges of beating a Palestinian who was suspected of having sympathy for Hamas.

The civilian suspect in the case was named by the "Israel Hayom" daily last Tuesday as Sa'ar Ofir, previously suspected of murdering a member of Hamas's elite Nukhba Force that led the Oct. 7, 2023, invasion of southern Israel.

According to the charges, made public last Tuesday after a months-long undercover investigation into the August incident, the civilian – working together with four Israel Defense Forces troops, three police volunteers and a suspended police officer – moved to arrest a Palestinian suspect in the Wadi Ouja (aka Wadi Auja) area, in the Binyamin region of southern Samaria.

According to Ofir, they carried out the arrest after they saw Hamas terrorist propaganda on the lock screen of the Arab suspect's phone.

The Israeli suspects allegedly put the Arab in their vehicle, drove him to an isolated area and punched him. The nine men also stand accused of abandoning the bleeding Palestinian.

Unnamed Israeli security officials told "Ynet" that there is no confirmation of the Palestinian's alleged ties to Hamas or other terrorist organizations.

The civilian suspects were brought to the Rishon LeZion Magistrate's Court last Tuesday to extend their detention. Meanwhile, the IDF troops appeared in military court for a hearing on the extension of their arrest.

The Israel Police said in a statement, "After the files of the investigation are submitted [to the court], we will consider the police officer's case for disciplinary measures. As for the volunteers, upon learning of the incident, they were removed from their volunteer work in the police."

Israeli Authorities are expected to close the Oct. 7 murder investigation against Ofir and two co-defendants soon due to a lack of evidence and the unique circumstances of that day, "Kan News" reported last month.

Ofir met up with Roy Yifrah and Yisrael Biton after they traveled to the northwestern Negev to fight Hamas terrorists on the morning of Oct. 7, 2023. Prosecutors have claimed the three men subsequently detained a Nukhba Force terrorist, questioned him and executed him.

The body of the armed Palestinian terrorist was allegedly discovered in Israel's Sha'ar HaNegev region, near the border with northeastern Gaza.

Defense lawyers have said the suspects deny all charges, stressing that their clients risked their lives to save civilians and are being prosecuted for killing a terrorist operative who took part in the Hamas massacre.

Some 6,000 terrorists from Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Fatah, and unaffiliated Palestinian "civilians," infiltrated the Jewish state during the Hamas-led Oct. 7 massacre. Israel's security forces killed approximately a thousand of the terrorists and captured many others. **HW**

Our Jewish community wants to know what our local organizations & synagogues have been doing! send photos and stories to info@HebrewWatchman.com



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The Fed Finally Cut Interest Rates. What Could It Mean for Your Finances?

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 September 18, 2024, the Federal Reserve's Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) lowered the benchmark federal funds rate one-half percentage point to a range of 4.75% to 5.0%. It was the first rate cut since the Fed raised the funds rate aggressively from March 2022 to July 2023 to help control inflation.¹

The long-awaited policy shift suggests that a soft landing – the rare feat of bringing down inflation without causing a recession – is in sight. It also marks a critical juncture for the economy, with significant implications for consumers, businesses, and investors.

Why now?

The Federal Reserve operates under a dual mandate to foster maximum employment and stable prices for the benefit of the American public. For a couple of years rising prices have been considered the more serious threat, but the inflation rate has moved much closer to the Fed's 2.0% target.

Officials now see these two risks as "roughly in balance." In his post-meeting press conference, Fed Chair Jerome Powell said, "The labor market has cooled from its formerly overheated state, inflation has eased substantially from a peak of 7% to an estimated 2.2%, as of August."

In recent months, job gains have slowed considerably, and unemployment climbed from 3.8% in March to 4.2% in August. Powell maintained that employment data remains at solid levels, but recent changes suggest the

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downside risks have increased.3-4

Relief for borrowers

Lowering the federal funds rate helps to reduce borrowing costs across the board, creating breathing room in the budgets of many households and businesses.

The prime rate, which commercial banks charge their best customers, typically moves with the federal funds rate. Though actual rates can vary widely, small-business loans, adjustable-rate mortgages, home equity lines of credit, auto loans, credit cards, and other forms of consumer credit are often linked to the prime rate, so the rates on these types of loans should adjust lower relatively soon after a Fed rate cut.

Borrowers with home equity lines of credit, adjustable-rate mortgages, credit card balances, or other outstanding loans with variable interest rates should see their monthly payments fall as well, in many cases within a couple of billing cycles

Mortgage rates are influenced by a mix of complex factors that includes Fed policies, longer-term inflation expectations, and government bond market dynamics. The rates for 30-year fixed mortgages, which tend to track the yield on the 10-year Treasury note, fell steeply in August after government reports confirmed that inflation and the job market were cooling.⁵

The average rate on a 30-year fixedrate mortgage was 6.09% on September 19, the lowest in 19 months. This is down from a recent peak of 7.22% in early May. Aspiring home buyers have gained significant purchasing power since last spring and mortgage rates may continue to fall gradually, but it's also possible that much of the anticipated decline in interest rates has already been priced in.⁶

Too much cash on hand?

Savers have enjoyed being rewarded for holding cash in high-yield savings accounts and short-term certificates of deposits (CDs). Although it may not happen overnight, they should be prepared for the yields on these accounts to follow the Fed funds rate downward.

Investors who have more cash savings than they expect to need in the next couple of years might consider locking into today's relatively high yields by shifting money into CDs or bonds with fixed interest rates and longer terms. For example, someone could purchase bonds that mature when the money is likely to be needed for retirement expenses or to pay for a child's college education.

Moving more money into stocks, which have historically generated higher average returns over time, is a riskier option that may be appropriate for investors who intend to hang on to them for the long haul, but only if they can endure frequent price swings.

Rate cuts in a strong economy

Past rate-cutting cycles have aimed to boost growth when the economy was in trouble, which doesn't appear to be the case this time around. Powell stated clearly, "The U.S. economy is in a good place. And our decision today is designed to keep it there."

In the second quarter of 2024, U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) expanded at a healthy 3.0% annual rate, and recent forecasts based on the Atlanta Fed's GDPNow model indicate that the economy grew at a similar pace in the third quarter.⁸⁻⁹

The September rate cut — which officials hope will keep job market conditions from worsening — is presumably a starting point. The Fed plans to keep cutting interest rates until they reach a neutral stance that should no longer impact the economy for better or worse. According to current FOMC projections, the fed funds rate could drop an additional 0.50% by the end of 2024, and another 1.0% over 2025.¹⁰

It can take time for borrowing rates to respond to changes in the fed funds rate and noticeably impact the decisions of consumers and businesses. This "lag" "The U.S. economy is in a good place. And our decision today is designed to keep it there." — Fed Chair Jerome Powell

in the effects of monetary policy is one reason that some people fear the economy is not out of the woods.

Whatever happens next, the Committee intends to make policy decisions "meeting by meeting based on the incoming data, the evolving outlook, and balance of risks."¹¹

The FDIC insures CDs and bank savings accounts, which generally provide a fixed rate of return, up to \$250,000 per depositor, per insured institution. The return and principal value of an investment in bonds or stocks fluctuate with changes in market conditions and, when sold, these securities may be worth more or less than their original cost. Investments seeking to achieve higher yields also involve a higher degree of risk. Forecasts are based on current conditions, subject to change, and may not come to pass.

- 1, 9–10) The Federal Reserve, 2024
- 2, 4, 7, 11) The Wall Street Journal, September 18, 2024
 - 3) U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024
- 5) The New York Times, August 8, 2024
 - 6) Freddie Mac, 2024
- 8) U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2024

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IDF Apologizes After Lebanese Army Post Hit Amid Fighting Against Hezbollah

(JNS) – The Israel Defense Forces issued an apology last Sunday after one Lebanese soldier was killed and 18 were wounded, some of them seriously, in an Israeli airstrike on a Lebanese Armed Forces position in Southern Lebanon.

"The incident took place in an area where fighting is ongoing against the Hezbollah terror organization," the Israeli military confirmed in a statement in response to a query by local media.

"The IDF regrets the incident and clarifies that it is fighting in a targeted manner against the Hezbollah terror organization, and not against the Lebanese Army," the statement continued, noting that the incident remains under investigation.

The LAF post in the Southern Lebanese village of Al-Amiriya on the Al-Qalila-Tyre road was severely damaged by the strike, the LAF claimed in a statement.

Hezbollah has attacked Israel nearly daily in support of Hamas since Oct. 8, 2023, firing thousands of rockets, missiles and drones.

The cross-border attacks from Southern Lebanon have killed 76 people in the Jewish state, including 31 IDF soldiers and six foreign nationals, and have wounded 729 more, 66 of them seriously. **HW**

Anti-Israel Vandals Deface Dutch Christian Group's Offices

By Canaan Lidor

(JNS) – Anti-Israel activists in the Netherlands last Monday vandalized the headquarters of a Christian Zionist organization that is organizing a mass rally in Amsterdam against antisemitism.

Several activists poured red paint on windows and the facade of the Christians for Israel headquarters in Nijkerk near Amsterdam last Monday morning, shortly after staff and volunteers showed up for work. The activists spray-painted graffiti accusing Israel of committing "genocide" in Gaza and Christians for Israel of supporting it.

About 15 people besieged the building for three hours, Alexander Blom, a spokesperson for Christians for Israel, told JNS. Police showed up and arrested several people whom Christians for Israel were able to identify, Blom added.

"As you often see with such actions, people act out of ignorance," Frank van Oordt, the director of Christian for Israel, said in a statement. "This campaign is another example of that. If the activists knew what we stand for, they would not have carried out this action. We feel safe in our building where we now have our beautiful summer exhibition. The building is guarded and absolutely safe for visitors."

Last Sunday, Christians for Israel announced that it was organizing a rally in Amsterdam on Nov. 28 against antisemitism, together with the Center for Information and Documentation Israel (CIDI) and other Dutch-Jewish groups.

The demonstration will go through as planned, Blom said. "We are not intimidated, and we're not feeling particularly sorry for ourselves. Dutch Jews have been dealing with such intimidation for years."

The Nijkerk building is the world headquarters of Christians for Israel, an international organization established in Nijkerk 45 years ago by the late pro-Is-

rael activist Karel van Oordt and run by his family today. The building is a mix of a community center, a vehicle for advocacy, and a department store for made-in-Israel goods.

The first act of vandalism against Christians for Israel in its history happened in July. Two far-left activists spray-painted messages about Gaza on the building.

Last Monday's attack was orchestrated by three far-left groups, including Extinction Rebellion Netherlands, which was also behind the July attack.

The rally against antisemitism being organized by Christians for Israel is scheduled to take place on the eve of the 77th anniversary of the U.N. General Assembly Partition Plan vote that validated the establishment of the State of Israel in 1947. The venue is Dam Square, the site of a large monument for victims of World War II, including the 75% of Dutch Jews murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators.

On Nov. 7, at least 100 Arab men assaulted dozens of Israelis on Dam Square as they were returning from a match between Maccabi Tel Aviv and the local Ajax team. The country's largest-scale antisemitic event since the Holocaust, it has reminded many local Jews and others of the lead-up to the genocide.

"We will come together at Dam Square in Amsterdam to show our solidarity with the Jewish community. Under the motto: 'We stand with our Jews,' we want to stand up together against antisemitism and Jew-hatred," Christians for Israel wrote about the planned protest.

Christians for Israel has organized several demonstrations against antisemitism since Oct. 7, 2023, sometimes providing most of the participants. **HW**

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The Authentic Dirtbag Charm of Jewish Musician Blondshell



Credit: Joseph Okpako/Wirelmage via Getty Images By Karly Jacklin

This originally appeared on Alma, reprinted with permission.

Trigger warning: mentions of sexual assault

"I can't stop having visions of following him," musician Sabrina Teitelbaum, stage name Blondshell, fearlessly confesses in her feminist, revenge-fueled track "Salad." It's a brave thing to admit on such a public scale – that you're unable to stop fantasizing about hurting someone. But it's the exact kind of raw honesty a listener can learn to expect from Jewish musician Blondshell.

Teitelbaum debuted Blondshell in June 2022 with the single "Olympus," a weighted rock song dedicated to the turbulent relationship between addiction and love – themes indicative of the singer's discography to come. It's a far cry from the indie pop sound she first emerged with under the moniker BAUM. However, as her 2019 "Hey Alma" interview reveals, she's always been unafraid of sincerity. Of her Jewish identity, she told Arielle Kaplan that she "really cares about the traditions," even if she isn't sure if she believes in God.

There's a certain gritty magnetism Teitelbaum infuses into each Blondshell song; her lyrics are painful and devastating, but they're coated in such a thick exterior of self-loathing levity that it makes you wonder just how blurred the distinction between crying and laughing can get. It's what we do as Jews – we pluck the comedy out of tragedy, and we subsist on it to manage the pain. Teitelbaum explained this sentiment in her 2023 "Rolling Stone" interview with a reference to a popular tweet: "Did you

have a happy childhood or are you funny?" And although Teitelbaum's Jewishness is rarely the explicit focal point of her songwriting – except in one-off lyrics like "You'll make a killer of a Jewish girl" – because of her commitment to total authenticity, an undercurrent of Jewish humor exists within all of it.

Take for example, "Sepsis," a song about continually hooking up with a shitty guy. "I'm going back to him," she jokes. "I know my therapist's pissed." It's the kind of lyricism that makes you wonder if Blondshell has ever read your diary, or worse, your mind. You'd text that lyric to your friend the morning after you ran into your not-partner (not-not-partner) at a bar. You'd say that kind of thing to your sister on a 3 a.m. phone call after she's begged you for weeks to stay away from your ex. Teitelbaum's writing is fiercely vulnerable, and it's so masterfully crafted.

She knows exactly the kind of charming dirtbag she is, and she's not scared of joking about her wounds as she heals them. That's Teitelbaum's greatest strength as a songwriter: her devotion to personal truth, to leaving the rough and ugly edges unrefined even after the piece has been through the editing process.

Nowhere is her craft as clearly demonstrated as in her debut album's last two songs. In the penultimate track, "Tarmac," Teitelbaum admits to a cyclical, almost obsessive pattern of becoming attached to everything: people, physical sensations, mere feelings. "Tarmac" is an ode to desperation, to loneliness, to the futile effort of sacrificing everything in pursuit of even the briefest moments

of human connection. "I can't stay away from my new friends," she sings an emotional wobble in her voice. "I feel like I'm losing myself."

Then, she puts her fears plainly: "I'm alone, I'm alone." It's a feeling relatable to any young woman. But for Jewish women, it stings in a very specific way. We're othered in society at-large and fetishized by non-Jews in the dating scene. When we're young and expressing our desires, we're fighting off the hypersexualized la belle juive – "the beautiful Jew" – and once we've aged or have decided to speak our minds, we're at risk of becoming it's the "Jewish mother." (As if that would be so terrible.) There seems to be nowhere we can exist without the threat of being confined to a neatly packaged stereotype ready for consumption: Any misstep in the eyes of the non-Jewish majority gets a new label thrown our way, forming a new archetype for us to morph into.

The experience of being objectified in a way that preys on, reduces us to or mocks our cultural identities has left many of us yearning for a community that sees the intersections of our personhood. And for those of us in places without a large or diverse Jewish population, that desire, all-consuming as it is, is often left unfulfilled.

If "Tarmac" is an ode to desperate sacrifice for community, "Dangerous" is an ode to the brutal fallout of said sacrifice. "They're my friends," the song opens. "And I'm scared of them." It's a description of the sobering moment when you look around and realize that you can't truly know anyone else's intentions, regardless of how much time you spend together. It's one that speaks directly to me.

Right as I was coming into adulthood, I woke up in a friend's bed with little idea of how I got there. As I pieced together the night before, my emotions oscillated violently: I felt a cannibalizing sense of shame one moment and total vacancy the next. I thought taking control of the situation would stifle the sting of losing my autonomy, so I did the only thing my brain's survival mechanism would let me: I went back, and I clung to the relationship in hopes it would rewrite the reality of the situation.

My failure to process the trauma went terribly. Everything I knew to be true about my life had changed before I could even comprehend that I'd even been suffering. Eventually, my emotional back-and-forth ceased, and all I was

left with was the miserable realization that I was targeted not just for my body, but for reasons as intimate and sacred as my religion. Sentiments laced with antisemitic fetishization about what I'd endured drifted through my social circles. They worsened the initial violation and flattened my relationship to my Jewish womanhood: I was referred to as not a person to be known, but as an experience to be had. I felt collected, like a specimen displayed on a pinning block.

I'd experienced something terrible; however, that's not what wrecked my life. My behavior after the fact and my refusal to cope is what did it. I created a swamp of chaos through the act of clawing my way back to feeling human. It destroyed every ounce of stability I'd previously created, and the only time I'd seen that experience reflected back at me was upon hearing "Dangerous" for the first time.

"I'm trying new things out," Teitel-baum says. "Is it obvious?" It's a lyric not quite fully acknowledging a misstep – but loaded with the implication that something has gone awry. When we're in positions of complete disarray, the type of emotional state that only prolonged loneliness can produce, we find ourselves clinging to the wrong kind of affection that can only end in feelings of even worse isolation.

This comes to a head in the bridge of the song where Teitelbaum breaks down a pattern of self-destructive behavior. She outlines making out with someone after a party and – despite initiating the kiss – hating the experience. She turns to alcohol and expresses mistrust in her own choices, recognizing that they might be part of an addictive cycle: "I don't know moderation."

Once again, that is such a bold admission, and it's an intensely needed one. Teitelbaum doesn't just navigate the gray areas of sex and love in her work – she creates a space for those of us with similar stories to share them with that same disregard for the appearance of perfection. I'm no longer ashamed by an event I couldn't control, and I've begun to forgive myself for the messy way I coped with it. I have Blondshell to thank for kickstarting that process.

Whether it's through brutal honesty, humor or the very Jewish intersection of the two, Teitelbaum represents authentic Jewish womanhood. But more than that, she authentically connects with Jewish women, imperfect and healing as we are. **HW**

Hamas Hails Hezbollah Ceasefire, Calls for Truce in Gaza



Palestinian terrorists from the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of Hamas, in Rafah, the southern Gaza Strip, on April 27, 2020. Credit: Abed Rahim Khatib/Flash90.

(JNS) – Hamas welcomed the ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon that went into effect early last Wednesday, with the Gaza-based terrorist group saying that it, too, wants a pause to hostilities.

Qatar and Turkey that Hamas is ready for a ceasefire agreement and a serious deal to exchange prisoners," a Hamas official told the AFP news agency.

The Hamas official accused Jerusalem of obstructing an agreement.

The terrorist group welcomed the agreement despite its Iranian-backed ally reneging on its pledge to continue fighting Israel as long as hostilities persist in Gaza.

"Any announcement of a ceasefire is welcome. Hezbollah has stood by our people and made significant sacrifices," Osama Hamdan, a top Hamas political official in Lebanon, told the Hezbollah-affiliated, Beirut-based Al Mayadeen TV news channel last Tuesday, hours before the Israeli Security Cabinet voted to approve the ceasefire deal.

Channel 12 quoted a Hamas source as saying, "We will not stop the fire even when Hezbollah does so."

While Hamas rocket fire has signifi-

cantly decreased since the early days of the war nearly 14 months ago as the IDF has severely degraded the terrorist group's capabilities, it still carries out small, sporadic launches.

Hezbollah has launched some 16,000 rockets, missiles and drones at Israel since joining the war in support of Hamas on Oct. 8, 2023, a day after the Gaza-based terror organization's massacre in the northwestern Negev.

Nearly 70,000 residents of northern Israel have been internally displaced due to the cross-border attacks from Lebanon. During "Operation Northern Arrows," 45 Israeli civilians and 79 IDF soldiers were killed, according to the most recent data from the Alma Research and Education Center, which monitors the northern fronts.

Some 1,200 people were killed in the Hamas-led assault on southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, with 101 hostages remaining in Gaza, both alive and deceased, including 97 kidnapped in the attack. **HW**

Laura Linder Speaks to Law Enforcement Professionals During Meeting for Memphis Metro Chiefs of Police



At the recent meeting for Memphis Metro Chiefs of Police, hosted by Secure Community Network, Laura Linder, President and CEO of Jewish Community Partners, briefed local law enforcement professionals about the rise in antisemitism. She also expressed appreciation for their partnership in keeping the Jewish community safe.

Far-Right Politician Who Praised Nazi Collaborators Shocks with Top Finish in Romanian Presidential Election

By Philissa Cramer

(JTA) – A politician who praised notorious Romanian antisemites and Nazi collaborators has won the first round of his country's presidential election.

Calin Georgescu ran independently after leaving Romania's far-right party, Alliance for the Union of Romanians, following his comments and amid accusations that he was pro-Putin. He will now face a liberal reformer, Elena Lasconi, in next week's runoff; it will be the first election since the end of communism in which Romania's centrist party is not an option.

Georgescu's outsized showing – he took home 22% of the vote, far more than the 10% polls had suggested he would win – comes amid a wave of electoral successes for right-wing populists across Europe and beyond. In Germany, a far-right political party won a state election for the first time since the Holocaust this fall; weeks later, a far-right party founded by former Nazis won Austria's national election.

Geert Wilders, an anti-immigrant right-wing politicians, came in first in the Netherlands' national election last December, not long after a politician once photographed wearing a Nazi armband won Italy's election. And the far right in France posted stronger-than-expected results in the country's surprise elections this summer.

Unlike those parties and politicians, which traded on anti-immigrant and Eurosceptic sentiment, Georgescu – a 62-year-old former soil scientist – did not outline a thorough policy platform during the campaign. He gained attention for his social media posts, particularly on TikTok, the video app accused by lawmakers in the United States and Europe of promoting antisemitism and allowing foreign actors to covertly influence elections.

Georgescu previously went viral with

his praise for two fascists who led Romania in the 1930s and '40s.

Speaking on a primetime news show in February 2022, Georgescu, a sustainability expert formerly affiliated with the United Nations, explained why he had cited Corneliu Zelea Codreanu as a national "hero," saying Codreanu "fought for the morality of the human being."

The comment immediately drew widespread condemnation, including from Jewish groups, because Codreanu led the fiercely antisemitic Legionnaire Movement, which espoused an extreme version of ethnic and religious nationalism that involved political murders and acts of terrorism, until his execution in 1938.

Two years later, the group entered the government of Romania's pro-Nazi dictator Ion Antonescu, where it stayed until the following January, when it mounted a pogrom in the capital of Bucharest in which more than 120 Jews were killed and several synagogues and Jewish businesses were destroyed. The pogrom was intended as an uprising against Antonescu's government, which the Legionnaire Movement believed was insufficiently aggressive in pursuing a campaign against Romanian Jews.

Georgescu also referred to Antonescu, under whose rule at least 280,000 Jews were killed and who was executed in 1946 for war crimes, as a "martyr."

His opponent Lasconi, a former journalist, ran on an anti-corruption platform but also holds some socially conservative views on topics including marriage. Lasconi's daughter, Oana, is an anti-Zionist activist who posted a photo on Instagram hugging and kissing her mother while wearing a keffiyeh, a traditional Palestinian headscarf, in the run-up to the first-round elections. If she wins she would become the first female president in the country's history. HW

Congressman Kustoff Receives Friend of Farm Bureau Award



TN Farm Bureau President Eric Mayberry, Congressman Kustoff, Congressman John Rose (TN-06), and TN Farm Bureau State Board Member John Chester from Weakley County

Congressman David Kustoff (R-TN) was presented with the Friend of Farm Bureau Award from the Tennessee Farm Bureau for his steadfast support for the agriculture industry in Tennessee.

"I am honored to receive the Friend of Farm Bureau Award from the Tennessee Farm Bureau," said Congressman Kustoff. "The Eighth Congressional District is the largest agriculture district in Tennessee. Our farmers are the backbone of our economy. As the voice of farmers in West Tennessee, I will always support legislation that puts the needs of our producers first." HW

INTUNITY Homes Announces Executive Director



Earle Schwarz

INTUNITY Homes, a nonprofit dedicated to providing low-income housing for the disabled, recently named Earle Schwarz as the organization's full-time executive director.

A founding board member of INTU-NITY, Schwarz is an attorney by trade. He has practiced with the law firms of Waring Cox, PLC and Glankler Brown, PLLC in addition to serving as outside counsel for such local companies as Interstate Blood Bank, Access Control Integration, Inc., and The Sekisui Group. For the past 17 years, Schwarz has run his own law practice. For 10 years, he served as an adjunct professor at the University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law. Schwarz earned his undergraduate degree in religious studies from Brown University and went on to attend law school at the University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law and Vanderbilt University Law School, where, in 1980, he earned his juris doctor.

He resigned from the board and became the part-time executive director of INTUNITY in 2018 before recently being named as the nonprofit's full-time executive director.

"One of the cornerstones of INTUNI-TY is that a better home leads to a better life," says Schwarz. "Our vision is to enhance the quality of life for people with intellectual, physical and/or developmental disabilities by providing exceptional housing in comfortable neighborhoods at below-market rental rates. I am gratified that the Board has entrusted me to shepherd INTUNITY's growth as we fulfill our mission to develop, own and maintain single-family homes that are designed to accommodate the special needs of physically and/or intellectually challenged individuals; are energy efficient and technology rich."

In 2023, INTUNITY's board of directors adopted a new strategic plan calling for the nonprofit to shift from purchasing existing homes to designing and building new homes with the goal of increasing INTUNITY's tenant population to at least 100 persons. As a result, INTUNITY engaged the architectural firm of LRK to design a home that is fully accommodated, energy efficient, durable and technology rich, allowing for optimal efficiency, minimal maintenance needs and a greater sense of independence for residents.

INTUNITY currently owns 23 homes in Shelby County, 14 homes in Madison County and serves a tenant population of approximately 70 individuals. INTUNITY works closely with state-certified providers of residential services whose clients become INTUNITY's tenants. These providers staff the homes and are responsible for the health, safety, welfare and development of their clients living in an INTUNITY home.

For more information on INTUNI-TY Homes, call 901-272-0607 or visit www.INTUNITYhomes.org. **HW** PAGE 12 | DECEMBER 5, 2024 THE HEBREW WATCHMAN | hebrewwatchman.com

UAE Ids 3 Uzbek Suspects in Murder of Chabad Rabbi Zvi Kogan



The three Uzbek nationals arrested as suspects in the murder of Chabad Rabbi Zvi Kogan. Source: UAE Interior Ministry/X.

(JNS) – The Emirati Ministry of Interior confirmed last Monday that the three suspects arrested for the murder of Chabad-Lubavitch emissary Rabbi Zvi Kogan are Uzbek nationals.

Security authorities identified the suspects as Olimpi Toirovich, 28, Makhmudjon Abdurakhim, also 28, and Azizbek Kamlovich, 33. The ministry circulated pictures of the three men in custody.

Additionally, the ministry announced the initiation of legal proceedings against the suspects, with reports indicating that they could face the death penalty.

The ministry announced the arrests last Sunday night after authorities in the Gulf state pledged swift justice for the

rabbi's murder. The United Arab Emirates normalized relations with Israel in 2021 as part of the Trump administration-brokered Abraham Accords.

"The ministry praised the vigilance and quick action of the security apparatus, ensuring the identification, pursuit and apprehension of the suspects in a short period. It also commended their efficiency in addressing attempts to undermine the safety and stability of the UAE community," last Monday's statement read in part.

Kogan was allegedly abducted and murdered by the three suspects, acting on orders from Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. The suspects are believed to have tracked the rabbi, monitored his daily activities, and ultimately kidnapped and killed him. Following the abduction, Kogan's car was discovered with evidence of violence and blood.

Kogan was last seen alive in Dubai on Nov. 21. His body was found three days later in Al Ain, near the border with Oman, by UAE intelligence and security services, the Israeli Prime Minister's Office and Foreign Ministry said in a joint announcement last Sunday morning.

"The murder of Zvi Kogan, of blessed memory, is an abhorrent act of antisemitic terrorism. The State of Israel will use all means and will deal with the criminals responsible for his death," the joint statement said.

Kogan's wife, Rivky, is the niece of Rabbi Gavriel Noach Holtzberg, a Chabad emissary, and his wife, Rivka, who were murdered by an Islamist group in India in the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks.

The White House National Security Council condemned Kogan's murder last Sunday evening.

"Our prayers are with his family, the Chabad-Lubavitch community, the broader Jewish community and all who are mourning his loss," said Sean Savett, a spokesman for the council. "This was a horrific crime against all those who stand for peace, tolerance and coexistence. It was an assault as well on UAE and its rejection of violent extremism across the board."

Washington "is working in close coordination with Israeli and UAE authorities, and we have offered all appropriate forms of support," the council spokesman added. "We commend the rapid efforts of UAE authorities who now have suspects in custody. Those who carried out this crime, and anyone supporting them, must be held fully accountable."

Kogan as an emissary for the Abu Dhabi Chabad branch and ran a kosher supermarket in Dubai, where he lived.

Chabad is one of the largest religious Jewish organizations in the world, with branches in scores of countries.

Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky, chairman of Chabad, stated last Sunday that "the worldwide Chabad community and the international Jewish community at large are shocked, grieving and outraged.

"Rabbi Zvi Kogan, a young Chabad emissary, was kidnapped and murdered in cold blood last week while serving the Jewish community in the UAE," Krinsky said. "Chabad-Lubavitch emissaries serve in countries around the globe in a spirit of generosity and kindness. Wherever they are stationed to grow and sustain Jewish life, they benefit the larger community as well with their love and light for all humanity.

"It is incumbent upon the authorities of every country where Chabad representatives serve in good faith, to ensure that terror finds no haven within its borders. The targeting of Rabbi Kogan was an attempt to destroy the sacred Jewish values that he represented: light, goodness and kindness," he said. "No country, no community, no society can afford the loss of these sustaining values." HW



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