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# Hebrew Watchman

**SERVING THE MEMPHIS JEWISH COMMUNITY SINCE 1925** 

HEBREWWATCHMAN.COM 18 KISLEV, 5785 DECEMBER 19, 2024 VOL. 103, NO. 12

## Lucy Pai, B'nai Tzedek Teen, Chosen for National Youth Ambassador Council



Lucy Pai presents Federation grant to Bluma Zuckerbrot-Finkelstein at May 2024 B'nai Tzedek Grant Reception.

Memphian Lucy Pai was selected to serve as a 2025 Youth Ambassador for Honeycomb, a nationwide Jewish teen philanthropy program. Lucy is a sophomore at St. Mary's Episcopal School in Memphis and has participated in the Jewish Foundation of Memphis B'nai Tzedek teen philanthropy program since eighth grade.

In addition to volunteering with B'nai Tzedek, Lucy is a Student Ambassador at St. Mary's, where she leads tours for prospective students. She is also a committed athlete and has been a proud member of her school's cross country and track teams since middle school.

Carolyn Schrier, B'nai Tzedek coordinator, nominated Lucy for Honeycomb's 2025 Youth Ambassador Council, saying, "Lucy has been an enthusiastic and dedicated member of B'nai Tzedek, and I know she will be a stellar Youth Ambassador who will represent Memphis well."

B'nai Tzedek is the premier teen philanthropy program in Memphis. Founded in 2002, the program has touched hundreds of participants and has granted thousands of dollars over its 22-year history.

Eligible teens are those who, at the

time of their bar/bat mitzvah, choose to donate a portion of their gift money to start their own charitable fund. Over the course of high school, the students learn about tzedakah and can make annual grants from their funds to qualified charities. In addition, teens also participate in a group grants process and receive proposals, evaluate the charities, and make grants to local Jewish organizations.

Sheri Gadberry, senior philanthropic officer and executive vice president with Jewish Community Partners, said of the nomination, "I am thrilled to see Lucy share her giving spirit and her knowledge of charitable giving with other teen philanthropists. She is an amazing young leader."

If you or someone you know is interested in being part of B'nai Tzedek, please contact Carolyn Schrier at cschrier@jcpmemphis.org or call the Foundation at 901-374-0400. **HW** 

# Federation Hosts Its Third Annual Reunion — A Night of Celebration and Fundraising for Jewish Young Adults







Federation's third annual Reunion was a great night full of fun, connection, and a little fundraising too – it was totally rad! Thanks to everyone who voted for their favorite Jewish community service – the winning bucket was Senior Hot Meals, a program that delivers hot and kosher meals for homebound or isolated seniors in our community. Thanks to the Young Adult Committee and Host Committee for making this event possible. HW

Captions clockwise from top left:

Reunion guests say "cheers" in celebration.

Guests vote for their favorite Jewish agency/program.

Young Adult Committee.

## Native Memphian Makes Menorah Out of Snowboards for Steamboat Springs Mountain Resort



Randy Salky with his large-scale menorhas.





Randy Salky has always loved making art out of found and recycled objects, and when he moved to Steamboat Springs, Colo., 20 years ago, he had an opportunity to dive into this passion as the designer of the Hanukkah menorah's for the local Jewish community, Har Mishpacha.

On December 28 at 3:30 p.m. (Mountain Time), the latest menorah created by Randy Salky, will be unveiled at the base of the Steamboat Resort. This year's celebration, affectionately named '8 Nights of Shred,' is Salky's fourth menorah creation displayed in Steamboat Springs.

Salky's first large-scale menorah was built and planned for display on the Routt County courthouse lawn in 2014. However, the county objected to a "religious" display at the time and Salky and

the Har Mishpacha congregation were left scrambling to find another suitable location to shine the Hanukkah lights. The joyous Steamboat holiday spirit was shown when three different local churches offered their assistance. Pastor Tim Selby of Heart of Steamboat invited Har Mishpacha to display the menorah on their property and from there a foundation was made for a true partnership between the two congregations. Heart of Steamboat has now become a place of worship for many spiritual traditions in Routt County.

Over three years ago, Randy Salky, had a vision of making a large Hanukkah candle display out of snowboard decks. He had plenty of experience making the large artistic menorahs made out of skis,

(See Salky Page 3)

## Hebrew Watchman

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## Memphis Candlelighting Time

Erev Shabbat, Fri. Dec. 20, 2024 / 19 Kislev, 5785.......4:33 p.m. Havdalah, Sat. Dec. 21, 2024 / 20 Kislev, 5785 ...... 5:33 p.m.

**Weekly Torah Portion: Vayeishev** 

## Birth Announcement

## Maya Elizabeth Harkavy

Zoë and Alex Harkavy welcomed baby girl, Maya Elizabeth Harkavy, on Monday, December 2, 2024, at 8:58 a.m. and 6.5 lbs! Grandparents are Stuart and Kathy Goldberg, Michelle Harkavy and Mark Pollack and Neil and Michelle Harkavy. 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 23 Year End Game of Team Trivial Pursuit

This time the Game will feature most of the questions about Music, Movies and T.V. from the 50s, 60s, and 70s. Come have fun and a nice lunch with friends previous and new.

#### Wednesday, December 25 No Lunch in the Senior Lunch Room

The MJCC facilities will be open on 12/25 from 8 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. for recreation and fitness.

#### Monday, December 30 Special Program, Jeffrey Day, Local Magician Extraordinaire

Jeffery will be putting on an incredible Magic Show for just the Senior Lunch Bunch! He put on his show in July this year and group has been begging to have him back again. Jeffrey demonstrates what audiences saw from as long as 150 years ago during The Golden Age of Magic (1837-1901). Most magicians have not seen or heard of the illusions that you will see in Jeffrey's one-man show, "The Mesmerist." The Light-Heavy Chest, the Rings, "Spiritulism" (mind reading), the famous 'Zombie' levitation, and much more will be performed in front of your very eyes. Prepare to be MESMERIZED.



Magician Jeffrey Day

#### Wednesday, January 1 No Lunch served in the Senior Lunch Room

The MJCC will be closed that day. Have a Happy and Healthy New Year!

There will be a senior lunch December 31 and January 2. Reservations are needed on Monday, January 30 for both!

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** 

# Chinese Dinner and a Movie December 25 at Chabad Chanukah Evening

"In addition to the other Chanukah events that Chabad will be hosting this year, we will be having a Chinese Dinner and a Movie on December 25," said Rabbi Levi Klein, regional director of Chabad. "Many Jews have been eating a Chinese Dinner and going to a movie on December 25, so we decided to turn it into a Chanukah celebration this year."

The Chinese Dinner prepared by Chef Avi Katz will be at 5 p.m., on Wednesday, December 25, the first eve of Chanukah at the Chabad Center for Jewish Life on Kirby Parkway. There will be Chanukah activities and the Kindling of a Giant Menorah, which will take place at 5:30 pm.

There will be two movie options at 5:45 p.m., one for adults and one for children.

The adult movie, "Beneath the Hel-

met," is a coming-of-age documentary about five Israeli high school graduates drafted into military training for eight months who discover their core values and find their lives changed forever as they defend their country.

The movie stars Mekonen Abeba, Eden Adler, Coral Amarani, Oren Giladi, Eilon Kohan, Wayne Kopping, and is directed by Wayne Kopping.

Dinner is \$36 for adults and \$18 for kids 3 to 12 and the movies are included. Reservations are required by Sunday, December 22 by visiting www. JewishMemphis.com/dinner

For further information on any of the Chabad Chanukah events or if you have any questions related to Chanukah, please visit www.JewishMemphis.com or call Chabad at 901-754-0404. **HW** 

## Salky...

(Continued From Page 2)

acrylic columns and fence posts, but this vision kept on popping up for him. His vision required a well-planned collaboration with engineers, electricians, carpenters and designers. Every time he thought of making the snowboard design, the task seemed a little overwhelming and daunting, and he just sat on the idea

Two years ago, Har Mishpacha, took a giant step and hired a fulltime rabbi. Rabbi Kolby Morris-Dahary came on before the high holidays and made an effort to get to know all the members of the Steamboat Springs community. One relationship she built was with Rob Perlman of Steamboat Resort. The two of them came together to share their vision of the holiday spirit on the mountain base and when a menorah was suggested, Rabbi Kolby knew who to call.

Salky has created many menorahs over the years and happened to have a 'SKInorah' or 'HannuSKIah' at his house. He was happy to share this creative sculpture made of skis with the mountain but realized the last two years of displaying this menorah on the mountain that the scale of the menorah needed to be larger and more animated. Always thinking out of the box, he knew that this was the sign to create what he had been thinking about putting together for years, and now it was time to literally put the "boards" in motion to make this happen.

He had gathered about 50 snowboard decks donated by Christy Sports and a call was made out to the Steamboat Springs and Har Mishpacha community to help. Many people came to offer their expertise. Special thanks to Peter Soller, Curtis Gravatt, Robert Goldstein, Mike Hirshman, Kande Iken and Eli Margaret-Verrett. The "8 Nights of Shred" was sponsored by the generosity of Har Mishpacha, David Josfan, Jon Peddie, Joanne and Harvey Sender and BBYO Global Shabbat.

Last week the finishing touches were put on making the articulating snowboard menorah. The "8 Nights of Shred" Snowboard Menorah will be revealed on December 28 at the base of the Steamboat Mountain in Gondola Square and the Community Menorah Lighting at Heart of Steamboat will be held on December 29. All are invited.

Randy and his wife, Paula Pepper Salky, moved to Steamboat Springs, Colo., 20 years ago with their daughters, Miranda and Reina. Randy has been practicing law for over 30 years and enjoys being able to ski, bike, hike and camp while living his dream in the Rocky Mountains. He is the son of Hermine Salky and the late Bennie Salky.

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# Daniel R. Weiss, Ed.D. Selected for The Wexner Foundation Class 9 of Field Fellows

Fifteen Jewish professionals, ages 37-50, will receive leadership training, professional development, and Jewish learning over the course of three years.



Daniel R. Weiss, Ed.D., Bornblum Jewish Community School Head of School

The Wexner Foundation, in partnership with the Jim Joseph Foundation, is excited to announce Class 9 of the Wexner Field Fellowship. This class is the inaugural cohort under revised eligibility criteria, focusing on established professionals ages 37-50. The Wexner Davidson Fellowship, which recently held its first institute, is for emerging professionals ages 26-36. With the new Wexner Field Fellowship age range extending the age eligibility up to 50 years, there were more finalists who have had non-traditional career paths toward professional excellence including those with leadership positions in early childhood education and supplementary Jewish education. These candidates reflect the diverse Jewish practice, background, and experience in the Jewish professional field.

The newest Field Fellows will participate in a 3-year cohort-based learning initiative including semiannual institutes. The Wexner Foundation prepares talented professionals within the Jewish community for the challenges of these uncertain and volatile times. These professionals will participate in leadership seminars with world-class faculty and also benefit from one-on-one coaching, Jewish learning, and individualized professional development opportunities.

These 15 professionals were selected from a large, competitive pool of applicants. All Wexner Field Fellows are integrated into The Wexner Foundation's vast network of more than 3,000 professional and volunteer leaders in North America and Israel, including the 30 other outstanding professionals who are now active Field Fellows, and our 100 Field Fellow Alumni.

## Wexner Field Fellows, Class 9

- Lisa David: Executive Director, URJ Camp Harlam, URJ Camps, Jenkintown, Pa.
- Aliza Craimer Elias: Interim CEO, Institute for Curriculum Services, Berkeley, Calif.
- Shaun Goldstone: Senior Director, Global Resource Development, JDC, Huntington Beach, Calif.
- Mandy Kaiser-Blueth: Associate Vice President, National Women's Philanthropy, Jewish Federations of North America, Atlanta, Ga.
- Manashe Khaimov: CEO, SAMi Sephardic American Mizrahi Initative, Hollywood, Fla.
- Jason Leivenberg: Associate Vice President, Innovation, Hillel International, Los Angeles, Calif.

- Judith Moses Dworkin: Senior Vice President, Campus Life & Advocacy, Hillel Ontario, Hamilton, Ontario
- Leah Palestrant: Executive Director, Springboard Fellowship, Hillel International, Jacksonville, Fla.
- Dini Peterson: Chief Program Officer, Mental Health & Safety Net Services, Jewish Family Service of Metro Detroit, Oak Park, Mich.
- Lily Rabinoff-Goldman: President/ CEO, JCC Greater Boston, Newton,
- Stacy Rigler: Executive Director, Association of Reform Jewish Educators, Bryn Mawr, Pa.
- Yonatan Rosner: Judaic Studies and Hebrew Principal, Jacob Pressman Academy of Temple Beth Am, Los Angeles, Calif.
- Orna Siegel: Executive Director, ElevatEd, Silver Spring, Md.
- Hannah Spinrad: Executive Director, North Carolina Hillel, Chapel Hill, N.C.
- Daniel Weiss: Head of School, Bornblum Jewish Community School, Memphis, Tenn.

The Wexner Foundation has more than 30 years of experience developing excellence in Jewish professionals and volunteer leaders in North America. The Wexner Field Fellowship was created in 2013 in partnership with the Jim Joseph Foundation to focus on developing promising Jewish professionals' leadership skills while enveloping them in a rich network of Jewish colleagues. Fellows are selected based on their past accomplishments, career trajectory, and the role they will play as one of the 15 fellows in the diverse cohort of Jewish professionals, a microcosm of the Jewish community.

Rabbi Elka Abrahamson, Wexner Foundation president, shared, "It is gratifying to welcome a new class of Field Fellows who enter the Fellowship with deep experience both in life and in work. Having observed the changing landscape within Jewish Professional Leadership we have, with the support of our partners at the Jim Joseph and William Davidson Foundations, expanded our professional development initiatives. The capacity to develop and support an emerging set of Jewish professionals is one The Wexner Foundation cherishes more than ever, and we are proud, at this historic time, to develop more professional leaders (30 new fellows annually) than ever before. We aspire to support their developments and actualize their visions for a strong and vibrant Jewish future."

"Talented leaders are vital to creating Jewish experiences and communities that add meaning throughout people's lives and provide support at particularly challenging moments," said Dawne Bear Novicoff, acting president and CEO of the Jim Joseph Foundation. "This newest cohort of Wexner Field Fellows, whose members have vast experience in our field, work in a wide range of settings and reflect a diversity of personal backgrounds. Now as a cohort, they'll learn together and build a lasting network for years to come. We're grateful to The Wexner Foundation for its continued commitment to strengthening leaders who positively influence people and Jewish communities around the country."

For more information, please visit wexnerfoundation.org. **HW** 

## Trials Expose Logistics, Planning Behind Amsterdam Pogrom



Police face off against anti-Israel protesters at Dam Square in Amsterdam on Nov. 10, 2024. Credit: Courtesy of Bart Schut.

#### By Canaan Lidor

(JNS) – More than a month after dozens of Arab men went on a so-called "Jew hunt" for Israeli soccer fans in Amsterdam, the trials of seven suspects revealed [last] week new information on the logistics of the event that shocked Jews and others worldwide.

The information, which was revealed last Wednesday at a court in Amsterdam, exposed the antisemitic agitation of the alleged perpetrators, and also how organizers worked for days to bus in culprits from across the Netherlands to ambush Israelis, whom the attackers often referred to simply as "Jews."

The new information contradicts the popular narrative in the Netherlands that the assaults of Nov. 7 were a spontaneous reaction to Israeli soccer fans' provocations.

Instead, it conforms with reports by Israeli authorities, including the National Center for Combating Antisemitism under Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism Minister Amichai Chikli, which found ties between the attacks and Hamas.

Some of the revelations in the indictments come from transcripts lifted from correspondence within WhatsApp groups that police had infiltrated and monitored yet failed to use the information to prevent the assaults.

A defendant identified as Rachid O., 26, from Utrecht allegedly shared locations throughout the night of Nov. 7 of "cancer Jews to beat up," as he wrote to the 900 members of the main WhatsApp group of that night's "Jew hunt," as participants called the series of assaults.

("Cancer Jew" is a common antisemitic term in Dutch.)

The group was initially titled "Free Palstine" [sic] but renamed "Neighborhood Home 2," in a possible attempt to camouflage it.

The assaults by members of the group and others were against Maccabi fans returning from a soccer match between their Maccabi Tel Aviv and the local Ajax team. More than 20 Maccabi fans were wounded in the assaults, which many Jews and others in the Netherlands called a pogrom.

Police were deployed in large numbers near the stadium but failed to protect the Israelis in the city center, where they walked into an ambush that had been planned days in advance by Arab men, including dozens of taxi drivers, the indictments showed.

## A regular Dutchman

A defendant identified as Umutcan A. from The Hague claimed that he participated in the assaults because he was "afraid" of the Maccabi fans, "The Algemeen Dagblad," aka AD, newspaper reported. "It was a stupid instinct. Basically I'm just a regular Dutchman, a citizen who just works and pays my

taxes," he told judges.

Prosecutors last Thursday presented evidence from WhatsApp chats of Umutcan planning to "attack Jews" and going on a "Jew hunt." One of his friends praised Umutcan on the chat. "He thumped a lot of Jews. He was the star of the evening again," that person wrote about Umutcan, whom prosecutors want jailed for eight months.

The heaviest sentence request by the prosecution, that of two years in prison, was against a man identified as Sefa Ö., 32. He was filmed kicking a man against a moving tram and punching another man while he was on the ground, the "AD" news site reported last Wednesday.

He is a barber, and his wife is heavily pregnant. He told the judge last Wednesday that he regrets his actions but did not elaborate on this point, "AD" reported.

Several defendants said they regretted their violent acts and that they had been provoked into perpetrating them because of the behavior of the Maccabi fans, namely when they pulled down a PLO flag from a balcony and when they sang about how the "IDF is f\*\*king Arabs."

Antisemitic rhetoric was rife in correspondence in the WhatsApp groups, "AD" reported.

On the day of the assaults, perpetrators may have arranged transportation for culprits from outside Amsterdam, the "Het Parool" daily reported.

"People from other cities want to come," one group member, Amir, wrote after 4 p.m. on Nov. 7, several hours before the assaults. "We have 20 cars here," another replied.

"Where are the buses from Utrecht?" another user asked. "They're on their way with 70-80 men aboard," another replied.

When Israelis were identified in the city center, at around midnight, members wrote on the WhatsApp group: "ASSEMBLE AT CENTRAL STATION" and "WE HAVE TO MAKE THOSE CANCER JEWS FEEL WHAT THEY DID TO OUR BROTHERS," a reference to Israel's attacks on Hamas in Gaza, "Het Parool" reported.

On Nov. 18, Amsterdam Mayor Femke Halsema retracted her initial use of the word "pogrom" to describe the attacks.

"I have to say that in the days that followed, I have seen how the word 'pogrom' became very political, propaganda in fact. The Israeli government speaks of 'a Palestinian pogrom on the streets of Amsterdam', Dutch politicians use the word 'pogrom' mainly to discriminate against Moroccan residents, Muslims. That is not what I meant and that is not what I wanted," said Halsema, a former leader of the farleft GreenLeft party. **HW** 

## Biden, Blinken Praise Contributions of Kennedy Center's David Rubenstein



(JNS) – David Rubenstein, board chairman of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, received praise from President Joe Biden and Secretary of State Antony Blinken during recent celebrations for this year's recipients of the 47th Kennedy Center Honors.

Biden called Rubenstein "one of the most generous people" during his remarks at the White House reception for the honorees on Dec. 8.

Biden said that when he prepared to live in the president's residence in the White House, his brother said, "Look, you want to be able to see from your desk—you want to be able to see Rubenstein.' I said, 'I beg your pardon?' He said, 'The Washington Memorial.' This guy rebuilt the sucker."

"You're the best, David," Biden added. "You are."

Rubenstein announced on Nov. 21 that he will stay on as board chairman through September 2026 after previously announcing his intent to retire from the Kennedy Center board after 14 years in the leadership position.

During the medallion ceremony at the State Department on Dec. 7, Blinken told Rubenstein, "Your contributions to American philanthropy, to the arts, are simply unparalleled. Your tenure as the board chair of the Kennedy Center—genuinely historic."

The Secretary of State reflected on the location of the special tribute ceremony, which took place in the Benjamin Franklin State Dining Room in the Harry S. Truman Federal Building.

"I'm reminded of the story of when Thomas Jefferson was appointed to follow Franklin as the United States ambassador to France," Blinken said. "When Jefferson presented his credentials, the French foreign minister said, 'You replace Monsieur Franklin,' to which Jefferson replied, 'I succeed him. No man can replace him.""

Blinken addressed Rubenstein, saying, "David—I'm glad the Kennedy Center has persuaded you to stay while they work to find the Jefferson to your Franklin."

Those selected for the lifetime artistic achievement awards include director and filmmaker Francis Ford Coppola, blues rock singer-songwriter and guitarist Bonnie Raitt, the American rock band The Grateful Dead, jazz trumpeter, pianist, and composer Arturo Sandoval and The Apollo, which will receive a special Honors as an iconic American institution. HW

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David M. Rubenstein, board chairman of The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, delivers remarks during the Global Music Diplomacy Initiative Launch at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 27, 2023. Credit: U.S. Department of State/Freddie Everett via Wikimedia Commons



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## Beth Sholom Gala: A Night to Remember



Beth Sholom President Keri Unowsky (I) and Rabbi Sarit Horwitz pose onstage after their remarks.

About 250 members and friends of Beth Sholom Synagogue gathered Saturday night, December 7, to socialize, dance, feast, and celebrate being together at the shul's Third Annual Gala.

The evening ushered in what will be a year-long commemoration of the synagogue's 70th Anniversary. A retrospective slide show, produced by Marcy Milman, pictured the shul's leadership, members, and events through the years. Guests also were treated to a moving tribute to Beth Sholom's growth since it was founded in 1955 in a video produced by Jonathan Epstein of Running Pony.



Gala Co-Chairs Samantha Alperin (I) and Rebecca Landau during the cocktail hour.

Beth Sholom also wants to recognize the tremendous support it received from the evening's corporate sponsors: Harkavy Shainberg Kaplan PLC, Stifel Investment Services, Reynolds, Bone & Griesbeck PLC, Running Pony, Robert Irwin Jewelers, Marcy Milman Productions, The Hebrew Watchman/Jewish Scene, OrthoSouth, MOGA, Lisa Harris of Crye-Leike Real Estate Services, Makowsky Ringel Greenberg LLC, Tanenbaum Dermatology Center, DocPottery901, and Ghost River Brewery.

A huge thank-you goes to the many individual sponsors, who generously supported the event. **HW** 



Dancing Queens Susan Gross, Deanna McAlexander, Amy Hertz, and Gail Brody on the dance floor. Music was provided by Memphis Soul Remedy.



Dot and Stanley Bilsky chat with Elaine Miner and David Attias during the cocktail hour.



Shawn Wood with Jay Cohen, MD



## Adam Sandler Teases Possible July Release for 'Happy Gilmore 2'

(JNS) – Actor Adam Sandler teased a possible release date and celebrity appearances for the upcoming Netflix sequel to his 1996 golf comedy "Happy Gilmore" during a recent appearance on the "Dan Patrick Show."

"I don't know 100%, but I think around July," Sandler said on Dec. 6. "Not July 4, but we're trying to get it done in time for July. You never know what's going to happen. We're just finishing today."

Sandler also revealed appearances by rapper Eminem and retired golfer Jack Nicklaus in the sequel.

He added that Eminem "said a million things we can use and a million things that we're glad we have him on tape."

"I know Eminem for a long time, and he's a great guy," he said. "He came in and was funny as hell. I think we just hung out a day with Eminem, and he just shot and shot, and it was insane."

Original film cast members Julie Bowen, Christopher McDonald and Ben Stiller will also return.

"We've got a lot of good stuff, and we just want to make sure that it all comes together and keeps it going from start to finish, and that's the goal," Sandler said. "We're definitely nervous, but we feel some sort of confidence." HW

## Berl Olswanger, 'Mr. Music of Memphis,' Honored Posthumously with Beale Street Brass Note



Anna Olswanger receives the Brass Note on behalf of her father, Berl Olswanger.

#### By Matt Timberlake

Before a capacity crowd in Trezevant Manor's Performing Arts Center, an iconic member of Memphis' Jewish community was memorialized with a well-deserved honor, decades in the making. Berl Olswanger, of blessed memory, was known in the media as 'Mr. Music of Memphis' during his heyday decades ago, and has now joined Booker T. & the M.G.s, Aretha Franklin, George Klein, and dozens of other local legends in receiving a Brass Note on the Beale Street Walk of Fame.

His daughter, Anna Olswanger, was presented with the award, which will soon be installed in the sidewalk of the iconic street, known world-wide as Birthplace of the Blues.

"My father would be honored to know that the city he loved chose to honor him this way," said Anna, addressing friends, family, colleagues, collaborators, residents, and fans. "We've focused on the past tonight, which is fitting because his contributions came years ago. But I'd also like to focus on the future of his legacy. I hope his Brass Note will lead a new generation to discover his music."

Growing up in the 1920s and 30s, Berl was immersed in a musical movement undergoing creation. W.C. Handy and his peers were literally creating 'the Blues' as we know them today, their early compositions becoming the nuts and bolts used by future artists to expand the art form, from soul and R&B to country and rock n roll. Music was in the city's tap water, and Berl drank thirstily. His sense of melody, rhythm, and showmanship matured together, and he was performing professionally by the age of 12.

An early stint on Memphis radio opened doors, and he was soon touring with George Olsen's Orchestra, criss-crossing the country while accompa-



Overton High School's brass quintet played Berl's music to the all-ages crowd.

nying big names like Bing Crosby and Jack Benny. But as a member of the Greatest Generation, Berl found himself serving in the Navy in the South Pacific just as he was gaining national recognition as an artist.

A torpedoman, Berl nonetheless found opportunities to perform. His virtuosic playing and ear for a good tune were noticed by the admiral who commanded the South Pacific, and Olswanger was put in charge of all music and entertainment in the Pacific Theater. This role created more opportunities for Olswanger, and after the war he considered big offers in New York. But Berl followed a different path to Memphis music immortality.

"He had a television show in the 50s, and growing up, I knew he was talented and respected as a performer. I remember going to the Peabody in the 60s where he and his orchestra played. It seemed natural that he was there," said Anna. "But I always associated him with his music store."

The store and the studio, where countless thousands of Mid-Southern musicians bought and learned to play their instruments, are Olswanger's legacy, and an important reason his name now adorns a Brass Note. Like other music shops, one could buy pianos, guitar strings, and sheet music at Berl Olswanger Music, but Berl's store also offered something unique – a school built around his innovative quick-learning method, dubbed 'The Berl Olswanger Way.'

"He was a renowned composer and band leader, but what Berl gave Memphis has a much bigger footprint than the music he made," said Dean Dayo, chairman of the Beale Street Walk of Fame and president emeritus of the Memphis Music Foundation. "So many great Memphis musicians wouldn't have known how to read sheet music or know how to play a note if it wasn't for Berl. He planted seeds that grew elsewhere, thousands of them across the Mid-South, and many already in our Walk of Fame."

For Anna, his legacy is of a more personal sort.

"I have many great memories of my dad, but his home practice is the most meaningful to me," she said. "He would practice an hour and a half every day. That was one of my greatest losses when he died, the sound of him practicing. It was like listening to the harmony of the universe. When I heard him practice, I felt everything was as it should be in the world. I'm so grateful that his musical legacy is being honored with this Brass Note."

Learn more about Berl Olswanger at www.bigroundrecords.com/catalog/br8967/ and listen to his music on your favorite streaming platform. **HW** 

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## Do You Have Enough Life Insurance?

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

Your life insurance needs change as your life changes. When you are young, you may not have a need for life insurance. However, as you take on more responsibility and your family grows, your life insurance needs increase but then decrease after your children are

You should periodically review your life insurance coverage to ensure that it adequately reflects your life situation. Here are several methods to consider in determining your life insurance needs.

#### **Income rule**

The most basic rule of thumb is the income rule, which states that your insurance need would be equal to six or eight times your gross annual income. For example, a person earning a gross annual income of \$60,000 should have between \$360,000 (6 x \$60,000) and \$480,000 (8 x \$60,000) in life insurance coverage.

#### **Income plus expenses**

This rule considers your insurance need to be equal to five times your gross annual income plus the total of any mortgage, personal debt, final expenses, and special funding needs (e.g., college). For example, assume that your gross annual income is \$60,000 and your total expenses are \$160,000. Your insurance need would be equal to  $460,000 (60,000 \times 5 + 160,000).$ 

#### **Income replacement calculation**

The income replacement calculation is based on the theory that the family income earners should buy enough life insurance to replace the loss of income due to an untimely death. Under this approach, the amount of life insurance you should consider purchasing is based on the value of the income that you can expect to earn during your lifetime, taking into account such factors as inflation and anticipated salary increases, as well as the interest that the lump-sum life insurance proceeds will generate.

## Family needs

With the family needs approach, you would purchase enough life insurance to allow your family to meet its various expenses in the event of your death. Under the family needs approach, you divide your family's needs into three main categories:

- · Immediate needs at death (cash needed for funeral and other expenses)
- Ongoing needs (income needed to maintain your family's lifestyle)
- Special funding needs (college funding, bequests to charity and children, etc.)

Once you determine the total amount of your family's needs, you should consider purchasing enough life insurance to cover that amount, taking into consideration the interest that the life insurance proceeds could earn over time.

#### **Choosing the Most Appropriate Policy**

Here are some factors to consider when choosing a life insurance policy.

- 1. How much coverage do you need?
- 2. How long will you need the cov-
- 3. How much coverage can you afford?
- 4. What policy riders or features might you need?
- 5. What is the financial strength and rating of the insurance company you're considering?

## Estate preservation and liquidity

This approach attempts to calculate the amount of life insurance needed upon your death to settle your estate. This method takes into consideration the amount of life insurance required to maintain the current value of your estate for your family, while potentially providing the cash needed to cover death expenses and taxes. Using this method, you should consider purchasing enough life insurance to cover potential estate taxes, along with funeral, accounting, and legal expenses associated with the administration of your estate. The life insurance may allow you to preserve the value of your estate at the level prior to your death and to help prevent an unwanted sale of assets to pay estate taxes and related expenses.

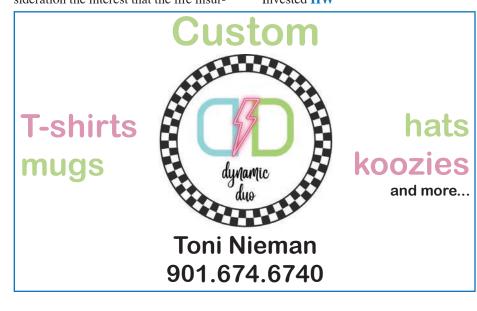
As with most financial decisions, there are expenses associated with the purchase of life insurance. Policies commonly have mortality and expense charges. In addition, if a policy is surrendered prematurely, there may be surrender charges and income tax implications. The cost and availability of life insurance depend on factors such as age, health, and the type and amount of insurance purchased.

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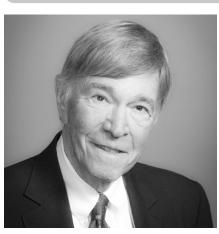
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#### **OBITUARIES**



Ronald Maury Harkavy

Ronald Maury Harkavy was born on November 19, 1934, and passed away peacefully on December 6, 2024, shortly following his 90th birthday celebration. Other than attending Vanderbilt University undergrad and law school, he spent his entire life in Memphis, Tennessee. He was an outstanding husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, uncle, cousin, brother-in-law, friend, civic and community leader, and attorney. As he responded, anytime he was asked how he was feeling, he was "perfect."

First and foremost, in his priorities were his family and his community. Everything he did in his life set examples of how to live. Throughout his career he was actively involved in various professional and community organizations, including serving on the Board of Directors of the Memphis Bar Association and the Hearing Committee for the Tennessee State Disciplinary Board and in a

variety of positions including president of Anshei Sphard Beth El Emeth Synagogue, the Memphis Jewish Community Center, the Memphis Jewish Federation, and the Jewish Foundation of Memphis (of which he was also a founder). He held directorship positions with other organizations such as the Midtown Mental Health Center, Memphis Urban League, Memphis Heart Association, Jewish Family Service and Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab.

He was so proud to be an attorney with a very distinguished legal career spanning over 60 years. He specialized in business and financing transactions, real estate and land use planning and zoning matters and was the go-to attorney for any Memphis development zoning needs. His extensive contributions to both the legal profession, world Jewry and the Memphis community highlight his commitment to service and excellence.

Ronald was an enviable family man. He is survived by his wife of more than 66 years, Iris Harkavy, children Neil Harkavy (Michele), Debbie Lazarov (Stuart), Alan Harkavy (Diane), Lee Harkavy (Laura), and cousin Gordan Olswing (Donna), and he was PaPa to 19 grand-children and 15 great-grandchildren.

The funeral was held on Sunday, December 8 at Anshei Sphard Cemetery. The family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Memphis Jewish Federation or a charity of your choice. **HW** 



Suzanne Irene Friedman

It is with great sorrow that we announce the passing of Suzanne Irene Friedman on December 9, 2024, in Memphis, Tenn. Suzanne was born in 1935 in New York, N.Y., the first child of Julius and Blanche Nathanson. A few years later, the family welcomed Suzanne's sister, Audrey. The two sisters were raised in Jamaica, Queens. Suzanne graduated from Queens College with a degree in teaching and began her teaching career in the New York public school system. In July 1960, she met the love of her life, Charles Friedman, and they were married three months later. The newlyweds started their life together in Memphis. Suzanne and Charles were blessed with three loving children, Sandy, Michelle and Sam.

Her teaching career continued in Memphis at the Memphis Hebrew Academy for 25 years. From there she moved to Kansas Street Elementary School for seven years and eventually moved to Richland Elementary School where she finished her career. Her professional passion was teaching children to read, and she was well loved by her students. Her favorite children's authors were Dr. Seuss and Patricia Polacco. She is remembered for dressing up as the Cat in the Hat to read to her students. She enjoyed reading and instilled this love in her children, as well.

Outside of her career, Suzanne loved making memories with her friends and family. She spent many hours with her friends in the swimming pool at the Memphis Jewish Community Center. She loved large family gatherings and making big family dinners. She also loved traveling with her husband, Charles, and her sister and brother-in-law, Audrey and Barney. After her husband passed, she continued to enjoy traveling with friends to places near and far. Suzanne was a long-time member of Beth Sholom Synagogue and loved attending classes and social events at the synagogue.

Suzanne lived a full and vibrant life and touched the lives of many people along the way. She will be deeply missed by all who knew her.

Suzanne is preceded in death by her beloved husband, Charles Friedman. She leaves behind her three children, Sandy Friedman, Michelle Friedman and Sam Friedman. She also leaves behind her sister, Audrey Schiffman, along with various beloved nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers the family requests that donations be made to Beth Sholom Synagogue or a charity of the donor's choice. **HW** 

## House Hearing Discusses Radical Indoctrination of Young Students

(JNS) – The House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education held a hearing Dec. 4 to discuss the increasing trend of teachers focused on indoctrinating their students with radical ideas.

The hearing, titled "Back to Basics: America's Founding, Civics, and

Self-Government in K-12 Curricula," was led by Rep. Aaron Bean (R-Fla.), chairman of the subcommittee.

"Instead of focusing on the basics of history and the founding of America, teachers and administrators have taken it upon themselves to indoctrinate the youngest students with terms like 'slavocracy,' radical ideology about sexuality and discriminatory lessons about Israelis as 'colonial settlers,'" Bean said.

In his opening remarks, he added that educators leaning on Critical Race Theory are "substituting the traditional narrative of this great but flawed nation with a political story built on racial resentment and collective guilt."

Critical Race Theory's "framework is distorted and applied to sow division and foster animosity against the Jewish people," Bean said. "We have numerous examples that fails to give the full context of Jewish history or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict." **HW** 

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## A Former Neo-Nazi Becomes a Member of the Tribe In the season of miracles, TM Garret lights the way out of darkness.



TM Garret Credit: John Sklba By Ronda Robinson

As a neo-Nazi growing up in Germany, TM Garret adorned his body with white supremacist tattoos and T-shirts. Since his Conservative conversion to Judaism last Hanukkah, he now wears a big Star of David.

"The enormity of his change is not just the conversion but his self-extraction from a violent subculture to which he was a devout and devoted adherent," marvels Rabbi Cantor David Julian of Or Chadash in Memphis.

"And then to flip completely over to a nonviolent and totally antithetic culture to which he had had these inborn hatreds... to choose Judaism as the pathway that resonated the strongest with him."

The rabbi taught and guided Garret through the conversion process and was inspired by his sincerity and enthusiasm.

In a recent interview, Garret reflected on his unlikely metamorphosis. "I wanted to make sure it wasn't just a phase," he says. "I made a very conscious decision."

## Ku Klux Klan Leader

Garret began his descent into the dark side at age 13. He would tell Holocaust jokes as a way to fit in with his German peers. He had always felt like "the weird kid" in school due to many factors, including his parents' alcoholism and divorce. Bullies picked on him until he proclaimed himself a Nazi at age 15. A budding career as a neo-Nazi singer/songwriter at age 19 garnered more attention and applause.

By age 23, he had arrived—as a full-fledged white supremacist and a Ku Klux Klan leader in Europe. The labels came with personal tension. He feared going to prison for his activities. Then

he started questioning long-held beliefs. **Light Conquers Darkness** 

His metamorphosis had begun. Light was starting to penetrate the cracks in his armor in the early 2000s.

Garret and his then-wife had a Turkish Muslim landlord whose kindness surprised them. The shaky racist foundations were crumbling. Garret became open to learning about people he had hated, beginning with Muslims.

By 2006 he was shifting from neo-Nazi chants to American country music. Born Achim Schmid, he moved to America in 2012 and was told the only people able to pronounce his first name would be Germans, Jews and Arabs. So his stage name, TM Garret, stuck.

Living in Memphis, he started getting to know African-Americans and Jews for the first time. The second phase of his evolution from hatemonger to peacemaker had begun.

"I still had to overcome many prejudices. Even though I didn't feel like a hateful person anymore, the pictures of how I saw many minorities were stuck in my head," he said.

"There were many people that I once had declared to be my enemy, and while I had the opportunity to explore some of them, I had no relationship with the Jewish community until 2018. I knew some Jews, but I never had a meaningful conversation with them about being Jewish or my past."

During a trip to Los Angeles that year, a friend suggested he visit the Museum of Tolerance, the educational arm of the Simon Wiesenthal Center. "It was my first time reflecting on my past. I saw how important it was to make amends," Garret says.

#### Side Curls and Gefilte Fish

Little did Garret know where his personal journey would take him. He asked the Wiesenthal Center for help to create a program for college students as a form of amends for his past behavior. One of the first campuses he visited was Appalachian State University in North Carolina.

In the wake of the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting and antisemitic graffiti defiling their campus, Alpha Epsilon Pi, Hillel and others put on a program called Two Days Against Hate. The organizers asked him to speak about his experiences with hate groups and give insight into how to counter hate.

The AEPi fraternity brothers invited him to dinner. "I didn't know what to expect. I never had dinner with Jews before, he said. "Would they all wear payot (side curls) and eat gefilte fish? Again, my ugly past had a predisposed way of creeping into my idea of how this would go and what they would think of me.

"To my surprise, none of them wore payot and no gefilte fish was served. I began to realize that the Jewish community was just as diverse as any other."

Garret was further amazed when one of the AEPi brothers asked, "TM, how can we continue your mission?" The irony was not lost on him. A young Jewish leader was asking a former neo-Nazi for advice and guidance.

These days Garret uses his incredible story as a platform for interfaith dialogue and human rights work. Before the Covid pandemic, he organized the Memphis Peace Conference. Recalls Rabbi Julian: "After the event, which featured swamis, Native Americans and everyone in between, we spoke. One thing led to another, and I suggested he come to visit us at synagogue."

## Hello, Yom Kippur

"His first appearance was on Yom Kippur in 2019," says Rabbi Julian. "He was naturally a person of interest that day; people spoke to him at length."

Garret later learned that the rabbi had vetted him with the Wiesenthal Center to make sure he was on the level.

When curious congregants inquired about his faith, Garret would respond, "I think I'm a compassionate deist with a tendency toward Judaism." That tendency blossomed during services and Shabbat dinners.

He felt he had come home.

The Jewish rituals and sense of community spoke to his soul. Garret embraced the ethics that aligned with his own newly found ones. The 49-yearold grandfather learned that the "chosen people" bear a responsibility to be a light to the world. As he puts it, "We have to be good people in this life, for this life. This is not a test for the afterworld."

Garret's connection to Judaism marinated for four years as he kept learning, questioning and growing. He finally took the plunge and converted in December 2023. The timing was no coincidence.

"He was into dedication," says Rabbi Julian, "and Hanukkah is the season of rededication. He's been greatly accepted into our community and is one of the most regular attendees at our services."

Garret's next chapter involves publishing his book, "Rewired," and public speaking at synagogues, mosques, churches, schools and law enforcement departments across the United States to help people understand the roots of hate and how to respond to it.

He'll also be cheering on his wife, Carmen, as she follows her own slow and deliberate path to a Jewish conversion. (Carmen is the daughter of retired Memphis meteorologist Dave Brown.)

## Confronting Antisemitism Today

Garret has "walked the walk" of hate and emerged as a peacemaker. "Antisemitism has always been there. It's just more pronounced now. It's come up to the surface, people feel more comfortable expressing it," he says.

He offers the following ideas for navigating these troubled times:

- Understand that people have fears often based on ignorance. You have to create awareness when you hear or see signs of antisemitism.
- Pick your battles. Don't go to a university protest. Talk to people in a different environment.
- Adopt one person at a time. Be a listener. Learn the art of civil discourse. It might be really hurtful to hear what they say. But if you're not interested in them, how can they be interested in you? Win their trust.
- Show compassion and respect. They will be completely thrown off, thinking, "You're not the Jew I expected. You're different."
- Humanize them so they can humanize you.
- Show empathy but not sympathy. For example: "I know you're not antisemitic, but you're doing something antisemitic and probably not aware of it." **HW**

## Trump Named 'Time' Magazine Person of the Year



Credit: "Time" magazine.

By JNS Staff

(JNS) – U.S. President-elect Donald J. Trump was named "Time" magazine's Person of the Year last Thursday, in recognition of his stunning political comeback and a campaign in which he overcame a felony conviction and assassination attempts to return to the helm of American leadership.

"For marshaling a comeback of historic proportions, for driving a once-in-a-generation political realignment, for reshaping the American presidency and altering America's role in the world, Donald Trump is TIME's 2024 Person of the Year," the magazine wrote.

The magazine, which has bestowed the annual award for the last 97 years (called Man of the Year or Woman of the Year until 1999), awarded Trump the title in 2016 after his first presidential victory, in keeping with a quarter-century tradition of honoring new presidents.

The news magazine noted that while in some years the selection was difficult, this year it was unquestionably not.

"Since he began running for President in 2015, perhaps no single individual has played a larger role in changing the course of politics and history than Trump," "Time" said. "On the cusp of his second presidency, all of us—from his most fanatical supporters to his most fervent critics—are living in the Age of Trump. Trump is once again at the center of the world, and in as strong a position as he has ever been."

The annual Person of the Year award is given to a newsmaker who has "done

"All of us—from his most fanatical supporters to his most fervent critics—are living in the Age of Trump," the magazine wrote.

the most to influence the events of the year," which in the past has included people ranging from Winston Churchill and Queen Elizabeth II to Vladimir Putin and Joseph Stalin. **HW** 

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## 13 Honorees Celebrated for Community Impact During 11th Annual **SPARK Awards**



Josh Lipman, Executive Director Joanna Lipman, Founder and Board Member Joyce Johns, Founder and Board Member Paula Jacobson, Board Member Tracee Ridley-Pryor

Thirteen organizations and individuals were honored on Mon., December 16 from 8 to 9 p.m., during The SPARK Awards 2024 special televised broadcast on WKNO/Channel 10. The 11th annual televised awards show celebrates the efforts of individuals, nonprofits, corporations, and schools, in 13 different categories, who are igniting change and making a positive impact in the Greater Memphis community. The show was hosted by Tracy Bethea (of 95.7 Hallelujah FM) and Rob Grayson (of WKNO-FM). The SPARK Awards is produced in partnership by WKNO-TV and cityCURRENT.

Back in August, the public was invited to freely cast nominations in each of the 13 categories, as an opportunity to recognize and help publicly thank the organizations and individuals leading by example and making a difference in the Mid-South. The categories cover individuals of different ages (youth, college student and adult), nonprofits and corporations of various sizes, then education with a school, teacher, and education leader award. There is also a Legacy Award to honor someone's efforts and impact over the course of many years or a lifetime. Nominations were provided to The Midtown Memphis Rotary Club, whose Rotarians served as the independent judges for the awards show. No preference or weighting was given to multiple nominations for the same individual or organization.

The criteria for judging were based on taking a leadership role in initiatives or efforts that better the Greater Memphis community, volunteerism, and impact.

Each of the honorees were featured during the televised awards show where viewers had the chance to learn more about each of the honorees during short 3-minute interviews that highlight their community efforts and celebrate their

After the broadcast, the special will be available for viewing online at wkno. org, pbs.org, and cityCURRENT.com.

Here are The SPARK Awards 2024 honorees in each category:

#### Corporate

- 50 Employees or Fewer Woodyard Realty Corp.
- 51-150 Employees Mr. Handyman of Memphis
  - Over 150 Employees FedEx Nonprofit
- Budget under \$1 million Girls on the Run Memphis
- Budget \$1-5 Million Overton Park
- Conservancy

• Budget Greater than \$5 Million -Memphis Goodwill, Inc.

#### **Education**

- Leadership Meah Y. King
- Educator Dr. Susan Elswick
- School Music Box

## Individual

- Adult Susan Ewing
- Collegiate Anthony Miles
- Youth Eliza Flores

#### Legacy

Karen Harrell

"We greatly appreciate the community service, the dedication and leadership of each of our SPARK Awards 2024 honorees," notes Jeremy C. Park, CEO of cityCURRENT, host of The SPARK, and producer of The SPARK Awards. "It's inspiring to see students leading the way to help fellow students and local nonprofits, people helping families in need and working hard to decrease child hunger and homelessness, business executives and owners creating scholarship and mentorship opportunities and serving as community catalysts, educators going the extra mile to train the next generation of leaders while creating a more caring community, and nonprofits creating strong support networks for our city and citizens who need our help. Watching and learning their stories helps us see the good taking place not only in the Mid-South. but in our nation and world, as well. It's chance for us to thank these hometown heroes, to learn from them, and inspire more people to become a SPARK, to

make a difference. We also thank the viewers and community for supporting our positive programming and affording us the privilege to now reach the 11th anniversary with The SPARK Awards."

"One of the things public television does best," said Charles McLarty, WKNO president and CEO, "is to put a spotlight on positive achievement. This is exactly what both our monthly television series, The SPARK, and our annual televised awards show, The SPARK Awards, do. The SPARK Awards is all about honoring those who truly make the Mid-South a great place to live, work, and play."

The SPARK Awards 2024 will be rebroadcast on WKNO-TV Channel 10.1: Tuesday, December 17 at 1 a.m. The program is also scheduled on WK-NO-TV Channel 10.2 on Tuesday, December 17 at 8 p.m. The show also will air statewide on the Tennessee Channel programming block of public television stations across the state later in December (check local listings for air times).

Tennessee Public Television stations cover the cities of Memphis, Jackson, Martin, Nashville, Cookeville, Knoxville, Sneedville and Chattanooga.

The SPARK Awards is an extension of the WKNO-TV series, The SPARK, a monthly 30-minute show, hosted by Jeremy C. Park, about business and community leaders who are fueling change and giving back to the Mid-South. "The SPARK Awards grew from the success of our monthly show, The SPARK, which is now in its 12th year on WKNO," notes Park. "With both shows our goal is simple: to spotlight the GOOD taking place in our city and how we can become a SPARK to make an even greater difference and to help more people."

The SPARK airs the third Friday of each month at 7:30 p.m. on WKNO/ Channel 10. For more information: www.wkno.org HW







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## Our Warmest Wishes for a Joyous Chanukah.

From the owner, management, and entire team of the DoubleTree by Hilton Memphis, may you and your family be blessed with good health, peace, and all the best things in life. We look forward to hosting your next Simcha.





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