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Journey Through the Decades: The Legacy of the Hebrew Watchman

Through Sept. 13, 2025
Shainberg Art Gallery
Memphis Jewish Community Center
6560 Poplar Avenue • Memphis, TN 38138



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Journey Through the Decades: The Legacy of The Hebrew Watchman



Journey Through the Decades: The Legacy of The Hebrew Watchman is on display in the Shainberg Art Gallery of the Memphis Jewish Community Center through the morning of September 14.

"This is amazing." "Thank you so much." "How did you do this?"

Visitors to **Journey Through the Decades: The Legacy of The Hebrew Watchman**, celebrating 100 years, were blown away by the extensive collection covering 10 decades of local, national and international Jewish news.

"The exhibit is amazing, telling the history of the Memphis Jewish community through the hundred years of The Hebrew Watchman," said Joe Roberts. "The display is beautiful and so well done. I know my mom (Shirley Roberts) and Uncle Herman and Aunt Bobbie were so proud, and my grandfather, Papa Leo, (obm) would be thrilled to know that the paper is still making a difference in the Memphis Jewish community 100 years after its beginning. With Susan at the helm, we're on our way for another 100 years!"

The exhibit, which opened on, Sept. 1 in the Shainberg Art Gallery at the Memphis Jewish Community Center, is on dis-

play through the morning of Sept. 14.

As visitors enter the gallery, they are introduced to three generations of the Goldberger family, beginning with Leo Goldberger who began the paper in 1925 and those who kept the family business alive until selling it in 2021. Along the next wall are 10 panels, depicting clippings from each decade from 1920 through 2010s. The final panel highlights the 2020s when Susan Nieman bought the paper. Guests are encouraged to take photos in front of the banner displaying every header printed. And a photo prop helps get everyone in on the fun.

"Browsing through 100 years of archives has been a year-long process," said Susan Nieman, publisher and editor of The Hebrew Watchman. "I want to thank Matt Timberlake, who spent hours interviewing the Goldberger family and many hours at the storage facility sifting through thousands of pages and taking numerous photos. And I want to especially thank my daughter, Rebecca Schudel,



Susan Nieman browses through the gallery with Herman and Bobbie Goldberger before it is open to the public. Credit: PixByEli

whose creative brain brought this dynamic exhibit to fruition. Thanks also to my husband, Larry, my brother, Donnie Heitner, and daughter Toni Nieman.

"We have talked about this milestone event for more than two years and had no idea at the time how it was going to come together," Susan continued. "Rebecca's design has turned out to be more than we could have ever imagined. The exhibit was only planned for two weeks and now we wish it was longer. We will be looking for other venues to perhaps make this a traveling exhibit so that more people can see the dedication of the Goldberger family over the past 100 years."

This exhibit was made possible by generous sponsors who have shown their support for many years. Thank you for your faith in The Hebrew Watchman, the Niemans and the Goldbergers.

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If you have any ideas for places to exhibit or contacts that you would like to share, please send us their information at susan@jewishscenemagazine or info@HebrewWatchman.com. HW

New Leadership at Memphis Jewish Federation is a Familiar Face



Abbey Cowens and her family.

Abbey Cowens' recent arrival at the Memphis Jewish Federation is a true homecoming.

After five years away from the organi-

zation, the Federation welcomed Cowens back to its full-time staff earlier this spring, this time as an organizational leader

Cowens's first official role with the Memphis Jewish Federation began in 2016 as a database manager, a position she held for three years before becoming the manager of Campaign Operations. She credits former staffer Stacy Wagerman with introducing her to the Federation through its Grants Committee, a group she quickly grew to love. Prior to that, after earning a sociology degree from the University of Cincinnati, she worked as an editor for a local Jewish newspaper. She then transitioned into sales for trade show displays and later spent seven years as a project manager for Sonoco Corrflex, where she honed her skills in client service and strategic execution - skills she brought with her to the Federation.

In 2020, Cowens left the Federation to take on a new challenge as the executive director of the Memphis Opportunity Scholarship Trust (M.O.S.T.). During her five-year tenure, she led the organization to remarkable growth, increasing

its reserves by \$4 million and modernizing its operations. While this was a proud professional accomplishment, Cowens always knew she would eventually return to Jewish philanthropy.

For Cowens, the events of October 7, 2023, were a catalyst for her to return to the Jewish world. "The D.C. fly-in was particularly pivotal for me," she said. "It clarified that while I loved my work at M.O.S.T., my place was back in the Jewish world. I felt an urgency to re-engage with this work and help strengthen Jewish life here in Memphis."

This pivotal moment led her back to the Federation, where she now works as the executive vice president of Advancement.

In her current role, Cowens focuses on fresh and creative ways to sustain Jewish Memphis, working alongside a talented team and dedicated lay leaders. Her goals for the Annual Campaign are

(See Federation Page 3)

He Prays; He Plays: New Rabbi Brings Music and Soul to Beth Sholom



Beth Sholom Synagogue congregants welcomed Rabbi Samuel Rosenbaum as their spiritual leader in July.

Call him a soulful guide to Jewish living. Rabbi Samuel Rosenbaum is bringing his congregants a little closer to Judaism through a blend of music and

The new rabbi of Beth Sholom Synagogue, entering his second month on the job, Rabbi Rosenbaum has been busy: holding the first musical Kabbalat Shabbat; leading a Tisha B'Av class linking Eicha with music by Leonard Cohen and Bruce Springsteen; organizing a musical Shabbat experience in a park for young families.

He says music is a prerequisite to community building, a way to bring people together who may never have crossed paths. He grew up in the music world, learning to sing and play a wide range of instruments: guitar, piano, harmonica, bass, mandolin, drums.

Before rabbinical school ever crossed his mind, he was a full-time musician, creating Jewish music and touring across the country to play it. He performed at more than 50 synagogues and a slew of music festivals, sharing a stage with big Jewish names, including Matisyahu, David Broza and Peter

"Music has been a part of our lives since biblical times. It's the language of the soul," Rabbi Rosenbaum said. "Where the spoken word often struggles, music fills the gaps. It stirs feelings deep inside, all the more so when we pray."

Rabbi Rosenbaum recently moved from Los Angeles, where he served as assistant dean of the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies, the very same institution he was ordained from in 2023.

His primary role was to recruit the next generation of rabbis. To his credit, 30 more students are studying at Ziegler - forming some of the largest classes the school has seen in 10 years.

While in California, he also held a part-time pulpit at Temple Ner Shalom, a Conservative synagogue overlooking the mountains of San Luis Obispo. about three hours north of Los Angeles.

"A shul, a Jewish community, is strongest when every person is valued, every voice is heard and every question is welcomed," Rabbi Rosenbaum said. "Growing up in that kind of environment got me into Jewish life."

Rabbi Rosenbaum was somewhat of a poster child of the Conservative Jewish movement. His parents, both of whom are Jewish educators, sent him to Jewish day school. He spent 15 summers at Camp Ramah Darom, first as a camper and later as a counselor, and participated

After high school, he enrolled at the University of Florida to study geography – quite a far call away from the rabbinate. There, he became active in Hillel and a part of AEPi. Upon graduation, he moved to Atlanta to become the music educator at The Temple, a historic Reform Synagogue.

Rabbi Rosenbaum founded a Moishe House in Atlanta, leading over 200 programs out of his own home. He also started The Well, a once-a-month, musical Kabbalat Shabbat service for young

In between all of the programming and song sessions, he carved out time to produce two of his own albums: "Lift" and "We Are the Ones."

For so long, his life revolved around Jewish community. And yet, becoming a rabbi never entered his mind, not until a mentor asked him a question: "Have you ever thought about going to rabbinical school?" After much introspection, Rabbi Rosenbaum decided yes, he wanted to be a rabbi. And perhaps he wanted to be one all along.

"We're lucky to have him," said Keri Unowsky, president of Beth Sholom. "Rabbi Rosenbaum is bringing energy to Jewish life, and our next generation of Jews is seeing that and learning

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Memphis Candlelighting Time

Erev Shabbat, Fri. Sept. 5, 2025 / 12 Elul, 57857:02 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion: Ki Teitzei

from it."

Rabbi Rosenbaum started teaching Jewish high schoolers as part of a new weekly class on the history of antisemitism, Zionism and the Arab-Israeli conflict. One of those students is Emma Berger, 16.

"Rabbi Sammy is giving us a space to share our perspectives and experiences," Berger said. "He's creating a learning environment that feels both personal and meaningful."

As he continues teaching students, and building community in many other ways, Rabbi Rosenbaum is looking forward to a year of Jewish warmth, energy and of course, music.

"I see that our congregation is poised to come together inside and outside of shul," Rabbi Rosenbaum said. "They care about one another. This is truly a kehilah kedoshah, a holy community." HW



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

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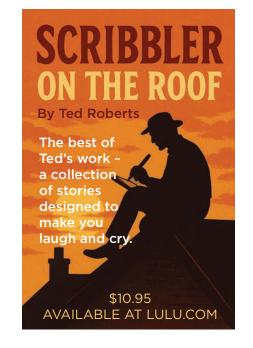


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Federation...

(Continued From Page 1)

clear: to ensure the needs of the Memphis Jewish community are met and that the community continues to thrive as the warm, welcoming and vibrant place it has always been.

The Memphis Jewish community is more than just a workplace for Cowens; it is home. When her family moved to Memphis in 2014, her youngest son was just two years old. This community has profoundly shaped both of her boys' Jewish lives, from attending Jewish day camps and youth groups to celebrating their bar mitzvahs.

"The truth is, they are far more involved Jewishly than I was at their age," she said. "And that is thanks to the strength and uniqueness of this Memphis Jewish community. It has given them – and our family – an identity and belonging that we deeply value."

Cowens is a native of a Cincinnati suburb but she, her husband, Jeff, and their two sons have called Memphis home for over a decade, and her parents even moved to Memphis in 2017 to be

closer to their grandchildren. In her free time, she enjoys reading, taking walks and cheering on her favorite college and WNBA basketball teams, joining in with her family's obsession with the Cincinnati Bengals, and playing card games like Euchre with her family.

"We're all thrilled to have Abbey back, particularly leading all our Fundraising and Engagement efforts," said Laura Linder, CEO and president of Jewish Community Partners, the umbrella organization that runs Memphis Jewish Federation. "She's an incredible asset to our entire team, and as September kicks off this year's Annual Campaign activities, we've already seen how valuable her passion and creativity are to its success."

Join Abbey and your other Federation leadership on Super Sunday, the Memphis Jewish Federation's largest single-day fundraising event for our Annual Campaign, at 10 a.m., September 14 at the Memphis Jewish Community Center. **HW**

Rep. Omar, Claiming Calling Her Millionaire is 'Categorially False,' Worth at Least \$6 Million

(JNS) – Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) has said that it is "categorially false" and "ridiculous" to say that she is a millionaire. And yet, the anti-Israel congresswoman is reportedly worth between \$6 million and \$30 million, The Washington Free Beacon reported, citing her financial disclosure forms.

Omar and her husband, Tim Mynett, reported between \$6 million and \$30 million at the end of 2024.

Most of the couple's fortune stems from Mynett's stakes in two companies, which were worth about \$51,000 at the end of 2023, per the Free Beacon. The publication reported that represented at least a 3,500% increase.

The Free Beacon reported last Thursday that one of Mynett's companies owes more than \$200,000 in unpaid income taxes. **HW**

The MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club Happenings

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

Monday, September 15: Field Trip to TCBY for Ice Cream/ Yogurt Social

The Group will ride the bus from the MJCC, and some individuals will meet us at the TCBY on Brookfield Circle. We will leave the MJCC at a little after noon and go straight to TCBY. We haven't done it in quite a while and everyone is really looking forward to it. This is sponsored by the generosity of an anonymous donor! All seniors in the community are welcome to join us for lunch and take the bus with us for a fun dessert outing. Please call the front desk at 901.761.0810 to make your reservations.

Wednesday, September 17: September MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club Monthly Luncheon

The next MJCC Larissa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club Monthly Luncheon will feature one of our favorite entertainers, The Julia Cruz Magness Duo. Julia Cruz Magness originally hails from Austin, Texas, where she performed with The Original Bells of Joy gospel group in Austin for over a decade. Julia moved to Memphis in 2016 and now sings at The Peabody Hotel as a duo most Fridays from 4-7 p.m. You can see her regularly with a band at The Gold Strike Casino, Hard Rock Cafe, and on the Riverboat dinner cruises. She is also a soprano in The Tennessee Mass Choir. In 2012 her band, Miss Julia and The Cruzers, won the Austin Blues So-



Julia Cruz Magness will perform at the MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club Monthly Luncheon on Spetember 17

ciety's Blues Challenge and represented Austin, Texas, in Memphis at the International Blues Challenge. She also represented Memphis in 2019 as a duo with Chad Pope. Come have a delicious lunch and hear a great performance from this multi-talented duo! There is only a \$5 cover, which includes the entertainment and the kosher lunch served by the terrific MJCC Staff. This lunch is sponsored by Opus East Memphis and the entertainment is provided by Creative Aging. The lunch and program are from 12 to 1 p.m. Bingo follows. All community seniors are welcome. Please call the front desk to make your reservations by Tuesday, September 16 at 12 p.m. Hope to see you there.

Monday, September 22: Erev Rosh Hashanah! Special Bingo

Come have some fun before Yom Tov, and maybe win some prizes. Great way to get together with friends and start the New Year off on a fun note.

Wednesday, September 24: No Senior Lunch

The second day of Rosh Hashanah Yom Tov. Have a Happy Healthy New Year! Shanah Tovah Umetukah! Enjoy the Holiday!

Sunday, September 28: Special Sunday Funday

The Senior Lunch Bunch will go to Germantown Community Theatre to see the musical comedy "Nunsense." This hilarious musical spoof follows five nuns trying to raise money to bury their dearly departed sisters after a cooking mishap. Come laugh along with the Sisters of Hoboken. We will leave the MJCC at 1:30 p.m. and go directly to the theatre. Pick up and return transportation is available to people who live in the area. The cost of the tickets including transportation is only \$22. Please call the front desk at the MJCC to make your reservations. There are only a limited number of tickets available. If you wish to meet the group there, please call Steve Kaplan at 901-259-9220 to make your reservation. He is also available to answer 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 through Thursday 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. HW



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Executive Director of Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab Elected as President of THCA



Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab **Executive Director Bobby** Meadows, III

By Baylee Less-Eiseman

This past week in Nashville, Tennessee, the Tennessee Health Care Association (THCA) hosted their 2025 Trade Show and Convention. Senior care professionals, legislators and vendors gathered to discuss trends, challenges and successes of the industry. During the convention, Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab (MJHR) Executive Director Bobby Meadows, III, was elected as the incoming president of their Board of Directors. This is the first time a Memphian has held the position in almost 20

Meadows shared, "It is truly an honor to serve our state and senior care community in this way. Senior care is not for everyone, but when you realize it's for you, it sticks. I'm extremely proud of my work and team at Memphis Jew-

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ish Home & Rehab. If it weren't for the support of the Home and our residents, I wouldn't feel ready for this role."

After attending Marshall University and starting his career as a Certified Nurse Aide (CNA), Meadows earned a business degree in healthcare management from the University of Alabama before achieving a chain of successes managing several sizable nursing home facilities. He has served as executive director of MJHR for 13 years, and under his direction, the organization has added two new services lines and undergone a \$7 million addition to build their stateof-the-art rehab gym. In 2022 and 2023, the Home was ranked as the #1 nursing home in Tennessee by Newsweek, and in 2024, the Ronna K. Newburger Adult Day Center was opened on MJHR's campus under Meadows's purview.

Founded in 1947, the Tennessee Health Care Association is dedicated to helping maintain the high standards of licensed long-term care facilities in the Volunteer State. Members of THCA and its organization for assisted living facilities, the Tennessee Center for Assisted Living, include more than 400 facilities with a combined total of more than 35,000 patients. Meadows has served on the board of directors for the past several years, assisting with advocacy at the state level for nursing home and senior care support.

Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab is a 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. For more information, please go to: www. memphisjewishhome.org/giving. HW

OBITUARY

Jack Henry Marks

Jack Henry Marks passed away August 31, 2025. He was born to Grace Posert and Joseph James Marks on October 15, 1931, in Memphis, Tenn. He graduated from Duke University and began his career with IBM, where he retired from in 1987.

He married Faye Goldberg in 1959 and celebrated almost 66 years of marriage. He was preceded in death by his son, David J. Marks, and is survived by his wife, Faye G. Marks, and daughter Laura Beth Marks. Funeral services were held Wednesday, September 3, 2025, at Temple Israel Cemetery. HW

You're Invited to Celebrate the High Holy Days at Memphis Jewish Home



Dozens gather for Yom Kippur at Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab in 2024.



Rabbi Kelman, director of Spiritual Care at MJHR, helps a resident shake the lulav and

By Baylee Less-Eiseman

The annual tradition of High Holy Day Services at Memphis Jewish Home will continue this year, and we want you to join us! Services will be led by Maurice Buring and his family, who have helped lead services for many years. The Home is very grateful for their volunteered time to assist with this effort. We want to make special note that we will miss our cherished chazzan, Lester Lit z"l, this upcoming year who led Rosh Hashanah services for many years in the Belz Synagogue.

Opening their doors to the community for Judaism's holiest days is a tradition the residents at the Home have truly grown fond of and one that the volunteers have also always loved.

"It's one of the highest mitzvahs, to help form a minyan for our seniors, to help them observe our rituals for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur," says Maurice Buring, long-time board member of the Home.

The residents are always engaged with the services as well, reading passages and singing their favorite tunes. This year, the Home's doors will be open once again to community members for High Holy Days services. They hope you will join them!

Rosh Hashanah services will be held on Tuesday, Sept. 23 and Wednesday, Sept. 24 at 9 a.m. with lunch to follow. Yom Kippur services will be held Wednesday, Oct. 1 at 6 p.m. and Thursday, Oct. 2 at 9 a.m. and continue all day long. A lavish Break the Fast will be served at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 2 and is also open to the entire community.

If you have any questions regarding services, please contact Maurice Buring at 901-230-6343. If you would like to attend services at the Home, please RSVP to Baylee Less-Eiseman, director of development, at bless@ memphisjewishhome.org.

Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab is a 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

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PHOTOS A New Mah Jongg League Starting at the MJCC A new opportunity for camaraderie,

competition and cognitive fun is starting as Mah Jongg at the J invites seasoned players and curious newcomers to join its growing community. This local Mah Jongg league offers a fun way to socialize, while playing the classic tile-based game.

The league runs October 5 through November 2 and will be led by certified instructor, Vicki Cook Campbell, who has also been teaching beginner Mah Jongg classes at the J. Players in groups of 4 will compete weekly and follow National Mah Jongg League rules. Awards will be presented to winners at the end of the 4-week series, based on

Mah Jongg is a game of skill and strategy, seeing a major comeback across all generations. Mah Jongg at the J offers the ideal setting for all players, regardless of age or how long they have been playing the game.

"I have had so many people expressing an interest in a Mah Jongg league," said MJCC Adult Services Coordinator Steve Kaplan. "We are very excited about starting the league and hope for it to possibly lead to a tournament for the players."

For more information, please see the MJCC website or call Steve Kaplan at 901-259-9220. HW

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'Modern Warfare Extends into Space'



The Ofek 19 military reconnaissance satellite lifts off from central Israel aboard a Shavit rocket on Sept. 2, 2025, marking a milestone in Israel's defense and space capabilities. Credit: DDR&D Multimedia, Israel Ministry of Defense.

By Yaakov Lappin

(JNS) – Israel successfully launched the Ofek 19 Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) advanced observation satellite into space on the night of Sept. 2, a move designed to enhance the nation's intelligence-gathering capabilities against enemies throughout the Middle East.

The launch, conducted by the Ministry of Defense and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), comes as the Israeli defense establishment moves to expand its foothold in space, a domain whose critical importance was proven during the "Rising Lion" war with Iran in June this year.

The role of satellites and particularly radar satellites in that conflict was critical. During the 12-day operation, Israel's space assets captured over 12,000 satellite images across Iranian territory, with hundreds of thousands of square kilome-

ters (miles) surveilled, and provided the Israel Defense Forces with hundreds of targets without exposing personnel to danger in the intelligence gathering process. This enabled rapid target engagement, according to defense sources.

A Western observer told JNS, "The advantage of the radar is that it is good both day and night, in clouds, in all weather, and it sees things that are not seen in optics [camera payloads]."

He noted that IAI's CEO had revealed that the resolution of Israel's SAR satellites is better than half a meter (about 20 inches).

The observer provided historical and technical context for the launch, noting that Israel's first Ofek satellite was launched in September 1988, 37 years ago. Israel launches its satellites westwards to avoid flying over and dropping

rocket stages on populated areas. While this requires more energy than an eastward launch, it is a safety necessity.

The source noted that the Shavit launcher is built by IAI's Missiles and Space Group, while IAI's Elta Group built the advanced SAR payload. The rocket launch engines are manufactured by Israeli defense companies Rafael and Tomer.

While Ofek 19 represents the cutting edge of current technology, this launch also marks the end of an era.

"This is the last launch of the Shavit launcher. The next generation of launchers is in development," the observer revealed. "There is a larger launcher that Israel intends for the next generation of satellites, which will be almost twice as heavy as the current ones."

This move towards larger, more capable satellites is part of a two-pronged, hybrid approach to maintaining space superiority. "There is a pincer movement," the observer explained. "One arm moves up to heavier satellites that will be launched in the coming years. The other arm moves down."

He noted that other Israeli defense companies, like Elbit and Rafael, are developing small satellites that are launched commercially, often as piggyback payloads on commercial rockets.

"If you have many small satellites, you can improve your revisit rate [the rate that an area in enemy territory can be observed] and achieve a situation of coverage every few hours, or even every quarter of an hour, depending on the number of satellites," he said.

While these smaller satellites may not have the same high resolution as the large Ofek platforms, they provide the persistent coverage needed for near-real-time intelligence. "The solution is a hybridization of the two channels," the observer concluded.

Ofek 19 was launched at 10:30 p.m. from a test site in central Israel aboard

a three-stage launcher called Shavit. According to the Defense Ministry, the satellite successfully entered its orbit, began transmitting data, and is currently undergoing a series of tests by engineers from the ministry's Directorate of Defense Research and Development (DDR&D) and IAI's Space Division. Once fully commissioned, it will be handed over to Unit 9900, the IDF's visual and geospatial intelligence unit.

Ofek 19 is the latest in a long line of advanced Israeli observation satellites and it specifically enhances Israel's all-weather, day-and-night intelligence-gathering capabilities through its radar technology.

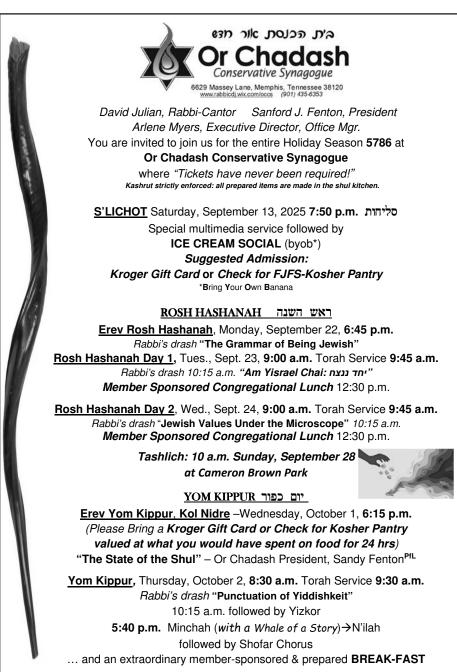
According to the official Israel Aerospace Industries statement, the Ofek 19's SAR payload, produced by IAI's ELTA Group, is what allows it to provide crucial intelligence regardless of visibility conditions, a capability deemed by IAI CEO, Boaz Levy, as "essential now more than ever."

Defense Minister Israel Katz stated, "Israel, once again, demonstrates its supremacy as one of the world's leading technological and defense powers. Launching the Ofek 19 satellite into space represents another building block in Israel's power projection on the global stage, reflecting the advanced capabilities of the Ministry, the IDF and IAI."

Defense Minister Director General Maj. Gen. (res.) Amir Baram directly linked the launch to the lessons of the recent war.

"The Swords of Iron War, particularly Operation Rising Lion, demonstrated that modern warfare extends into space. Expanding and strengthening our foothold in space is a central objective in the Ministry's strategy," he said. "In the coming decade, we will invest billions in deploying a satellite constellation that will allow us to maintain persistent, simultaneous surveillance of any point throughout the Middle East." **HW**





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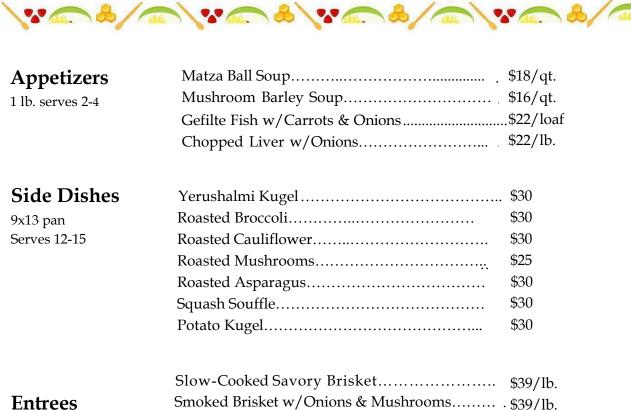
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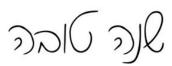
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Trump on Israel: 'They're Not Winning the World of Public Relations'



President Donald Trump speaks in the Oval Office Aug. 22, 2025, in Washington, DC. Credit: Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images

By Grace Gilson

(JTA) – President Donald Trump said that backing for Israel in Congress had declined during the country's military campaign in Gaza, telling The Daily Caller that Washington's pro-Israel lobby no longer has the hold on Capitol Hill it once did.

"Israel had the strongest lobby in Congress of anything or body, or of any company or corporation or state that I've ever seen. Israel was the strongest. Today, it doesn't have that strong a lobby," Trump said. "It's amazing."

He attributed the decline to a public perception problem driven by the war in Gaza, emphasizing as he has before that he would like to see Israel bring the war to a close.

"They're going to have to get that war over with. But it is hurting Israel. There's no question about it," Trump told Daily Caller White House correspondent Reagan Reese in an appearance last Monday. "They may be winning the war, but they're not winning the world of public relations, you know, and it is hurting them."

Trump's comments come as a record number of Senate Democrats have supported legislation to block U.S. arms sales to Israel, and dozens of Democrats in the House have signed onto a similar bill. Support for Israel among Republicans remains high but is also on the decline, polls show.

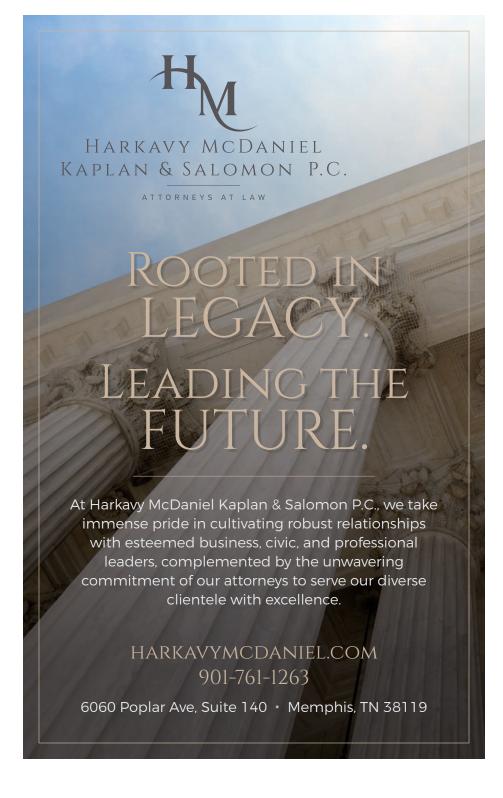
Trump also said that there was a time in American politics when speaking badly of Israel was widely frowned upon, but he believes that times have changed as progressive voices have gained greater influence.

"There was a time where you couldn't speak bad, if you wanted to be a politician, you couldn't speak badly. But today, you have, you know, AOC plus three, and you have all these lunatics, and they've really, they've changed it," he said, referring to Democratic Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

Recent reports of a hunger crisis, the killings of journalists and plans to widen operations in Gaza have also drawn increasing criticism of Israel from law-makers and the public alike. Among Democratic voters, support for Israel's actions in Gaza has fallen to just 8% while approval among Republicans remains at 71%, according to a recent Gallup poll. **HW**

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Five Important Estate Planning Documents to Consider

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

There is a common misconception that we can safely put off estate planning until our health starts failing or someone close to us dies. In reality, everyone already has an estate plan — the only question is whether it is your own or your state's plan for you. A good estate plan identifies whom you want to:

- Inherit your assets, such as bank, retirement, and investment accounts
 - Take care of your minor children
- Make legal and/or health care decisions for you if you become ill and incapacitated

Developing an estate plan is about taking control. You are controlling how assets are managed and distributed along with who will handle these tasks when you are unable to do so.

Bottom line: If you don't decide, state law has already decided for you.

Five important documents

Your situation's complexity will determine which documents your plan requires; however, these five are often included in an estate plan:

A will provides instructions for distributing your assets to your beneficiaries when you die. In it, you name a personal representative (executor) to pay final expenses and taxes and distribute your remaining assets. Many wills are drafted to "pour over" into a trust, which can keep your estate from having to be administered through the courts

a long and expensive process called "probate."

By transferring assets to a **revocable living trust** you can provide for continued management of your assets during your lifetime and after your death — possibly for generations to come.

A power of attorney lets you give a trusted individual management power over your assets if you can't manage them yourself. Powers of attorney can be "general" (which become ineffective upon your incapacity), "durable" (which stay in effect, even during incapacity, until they are revoked), immediately effective, or "springing" (effective only upon a certain event like your incapacity). Each kind is effective only while you're alive.

A health care power of attorney lets you choose someone to make medical decisions for you if you are unable to communicate your wishes or don't have legal capacity to make treatment decisions for yourself.

A **living will** expresses your intentions regarding the use of life-sustaining measures if you are terminally ill. It doesn't give anyone the authority to speak for you.¹

If you have an estate plan, remember to review and update it

Remember, establishing a plan is only the beginning. It's important to review your plan regularly to ensure it continues to meet your needs. Significant life events, such as relocation to a different state, marriage, divorce, or the birth of a child, are likely to call for changes to your plan. You need to consider whether your estate planning documents, asset titling, and beneficiary designations have been coordinated to allow your assets to be distributed according to your wishes. A regular review of whom you have named as agent, executor, guardian for minor children, and trustee is important to ensure those named are still willing and able to serve when needed.

Turn to a team of professionals

Taking the first steps to create an estate plan can seem intimidating, but it doesn't have to be. The key is to rely on a team of trusted professionals, including a financial advisor, estate planning attorney, and accountant. They know the questions to ask and can help you avoid potential pitfalls.

If you don't currently have relationships with these individuals, a financial advisor is a good place to start. He or she can discuss his or her role in the planning process and can refer you to an estate planning attorney who can work with you to draw up the necessary documents

1. In states that have adopted the Uniform Health Care Decisions Act, like California, health care powers of attorney and living wills are often combined

into a single document called an "advance health care directive."

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Many Unaffiliated with Specific Faith Still Have Religious Beliefs, Practices



Christian worshippers take part in the Holy Fire ceremony at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem's Old City during the Easter holiday on April 19, 2025. Credit: Erik Marmor/Flash90.

By JNS Staff

(JNS) – Many people worldwide who say that they aren't affiliated with any particular religion nonetheless have religious and spiritual views, including belief in an afterlife, according to new data from the Pew Research Center.

Half or more of the unaffiliated – what Pew calls the "nones" – surveyed in Peru (65%), Colombia (58%), Chile (57%), Brazil and Mexico (56%), Singapore (54%) and South Africa (50%) reported believing definitely or probably in life after death.

Among Americans, 42% of those unaffiliated with a religion believe an afterlife is at least probable, compared to 81% of Americans who are associated with a particular faith.

In all of the 22 countries – out of 36 surveyed – for which Pew collected ample data on the "nones," those who are affiliated with a faith were likelier to believe in an afterlife.

Overall, a median of 28% of the unaffiliated in the 22 surveyed countries reported believing in G-d, with as many as 92% of Brazilians doing so, followed by Colombians (86%), Peruvians (83%), South Africans (77%) and Mexicans (76%). Some 45% of unaffiliated Americans reported believing in G-d.

According to Pew, a "growing number" of the religiously unaffiliated report being atheists, agnostics or "nothing in particular" when asked about their faith.

The "nones" also reported some religious practices. Some 84% of Brazilian "nones" reported praying ever, followed by Colombians (83%), South Africans (77%), Peruvians (71%) and Americans (55%). Just 12% of Dutch "nones" reported praying. Overall, a median of 26% of "nones" in the 22 countries had prayed, and 13% say that they light incense or candles for religious or spiritual reasons.

Pew found that many of the "nones" in the 22 countries report having no particular faith, rather than being atheist or agnostic. In Japan, 51% of the 55% who are "nones" had no particular faith. Stateside, 19% of American "nones" had no particular faith, while 5% are atheist and 6% agnostic. (Pew told JNS that it lacked sufficient data about Israeli "nones" to include in the study.)

Greece and Italy were exceptions, with 8% of Greeks being atheists, 2% agnostics and 4% no particular faith; and 11% of Italians being atheists, 7% agnostic and 5% no particular faith.

Age played a factor as well, with those 18 to 39 likelier than older adults to say that they are "nones," and men likelier than women to report being "nones."

American "nones" were about middle of the pack among the 22 countries when it came to the degree to which they said religion was important to them. Some 53% of U.S. "nones" said religion was "not at all" important to them, 28% said "not too" important, and 15% said

"somewhat

Australian "nones" were likeliest (80%) to say religion wasn't at all important to them, followed by Swed-

ish (76%), Hungarian (74%), French (72%), Canadian (69%), and Spanish, Greek and British (68%) "nones."

In the United States, 70% of "nones"

say that religious texts influence American laws, and 20% think that ought to be the case – the largest gap of any of the 22 countries. **HW**





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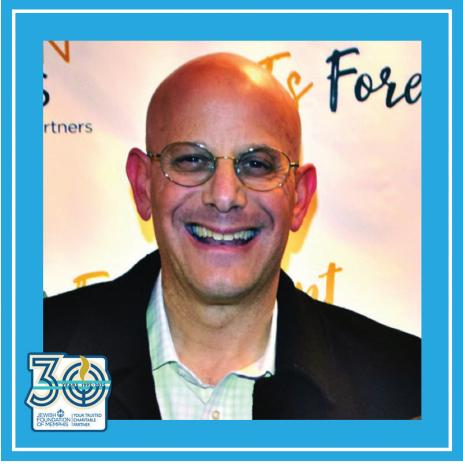
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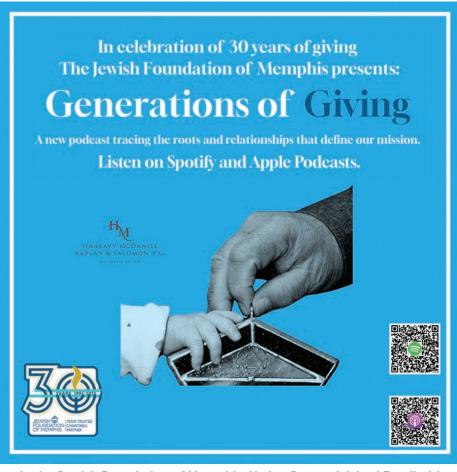


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Jimmy Ringel, current chair of Memphis Jewish Federation, is also an active participant in the Jewish Foundation of Memphis. He is a Donor-Advised Fundholder, and as a Generations of Giving family member, instilled a love of philanthropy in both of his sons, each of whom participated in the teen giving program B'nai Tzedek. Listen to an interview with Jimmy on the Foundation's new podcast, "Generations of Giving," available on Spotify and Apple Podcasts.

30 Years, 30 Moments A Look Back at the Legacy of the Jewish Foundation of Memphis in Photos

In honor of the 30-year anniversary of the Jewish Foundation of Memphis, we are showcasing the Foundation's history and impact through a content series across multiple platforms, including a photo series highlighting key moments in the Foundation's history.



November 27, 2012: The Jewish Foundation of Memphis was celebrated as the Outstanding Foundation of the Year by the Association of Fundraising Professionals, Memphis Chapter. Pictured with Laura is Foundation Past President Kay Usdan Saslawsky, z"l.

Hamas Releases Video of Hostages Guy Gilboa-Dalal, Alon Ohel in Gaza City Amid Israeli Military Offensive



Protesters gather for a demonstration organized by the families of Israelis held hostage by Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip, calling for their release and for a ceasefire in the war in Gaza, in central Jerusalem on September 3, 2025. Credit: Menahem Kahana / AFP

By Grace Gilson

(JTA) - Hamas released a video of two hostages, Guy Gilboa-Dalal and Alon Ohel, being driven in Gaza City last Friday as the Israeli military readies a major offensive there.

In the video, Gilboa-Dalal, 24, who was taken hostage at the Nova music festival, is seen in a car driving through several locations throughout Gaza City, saying that at least eight other hostages are located in the area.

"We have received a sign of life from our Guy after six months since the previous video in which he was seen with Evyatar David watching their friends being released," the Gilboa-Dalal family said in a statement, referencing a February video in which Hamas brought him

to view other hostages being released. "Guy, Alon and other hostages were transferred to Gaza, and we are deeply concerned for their lives. They must be brought home."

Israel has said it does not know exactly where the hostages are being held and believes Hamas could try to move them out of the city amid a civilian evacuation - or bring more hostages into the city to blunt the offensive, which Israeli leaders say will "level" the city if Hamas does not surrender.

Toward the end of the propaganda clip, Ohel, 22, who was also kidnapped from the Nova festival, appears alongside Gilboa-Dalal who repeatedly says, "I can't believe I'm seeing you." The video marks the first footage of Ohel since his kidnapping. His family has had to rely on testimonies from released hostages for evidence of his

There are now 48 remaining hostages held in Gaza, of which 20 are presumed to be alive. The video of Ohel and Gilboa-Dalal was released amid protests across Israel for a hostage deal on the 700th day of their captivity as the IDF prepares for its takeover of Gaza City. The army said last Friday

that it already controlled half of the city, where nearly half of Gaza's 2 million residents have been living, and that it would begin targeting high-rise buildings from which it said Hamas was basing its operations.

Video showed a large high-rise towering over a tent city collapsing after a strike last Friday, following what Israel said had been an evacuation order at a building used as a Hamas base.

Israel's offensive in the city has been condemned by the families of the hostages, the Israeli military and much of the international community for endangering the lives of the hostages who are currently held captive there.

The Hostages and Missing Families Forum issued a statement last Friday, responding to assessments from officers from the IDF's Hostages and Missing Persons Unit last Thursday to the hostage families that the operation would risk harming their loved ones.

"We are deeply worried. This operation poses an immediate, direct threat to our loved ones, who have been languishing in Hamas tunnels for 700 days," the forum said. "We are sorry to say, we have not heard of any way of protecting them." HW

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For the Women on Hadassah's 2025 List of Zionists to Watch, Oct. 7 was a Call to Action



Journalist, model and social-media influencer Emily Austin shares pro-Israel content with her millions of Instagram followers. Courtesy of Hadassah

By Suzanne Kurtz Sloan

(JTA) – When Emily Austin was 16, a Holocaust education trip to Poland changed her life. The child of secular Israeli immigrants to New York, Austin grew up in Brooklyn and decided early on that being a Jew was important to her identity. But after the Poland trip, Jewish pride and combating antisemitism took center stage in her life.

"It was a turning point," said Austin, now 23 and a sports journalist, model and social media influencer with over 3 million followers on Instagram. "It was so traumatizing, and I made a promise to myself to not let it happen again."

After Oct. 7, 2023, Austin, already a passionate public advocate for Israel, went to southern Israel to see firsthand the devastation wrought by Hamas and to meet with victims and survivors. Austin documented her experiences in videos and pictures that she shared with her millions of followers.

Despite generating backlash for her pro-Israel activism – including lost sponsorships and antisemitic threats and vitriol – she said recently, "It makes me double down and only fuels my commitment to keep fighting for Israel."

Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, named Austin to its 2025 list of "18 American Zionist Women You Should Know."

The annual list, now in its third year, comprises a diverse group of activists, nonprofit leaders, politicians, entertainers, business innovators, educators and writers. Each is deeply involved in advocating for Zionism and speaking

up for Israel in the United States and around the world.

"Some of the women you may know – but all of them you should know," said Diana Diner, the list's curator and Hadassah's Israel and Zionism educator. "These women are doing the critical work of educating and of advocating for Israel."

Diner, who herself made last year's list, added, "They may not look or sound alike, but they are united in showing the world what it means to be a Zionist in 2025."

This year's list includes:

Anila Ali, a Muslim women's-rights activist born in Pakistan and the co-founder of the American Muslim & Multifaith Women's Empowerment Council.

Bellamy Bellucci, a South African-born dancer, model and Israel advocate known for her unique identity as a Black transgender Jewish woman who uses social media to promote inclusivity.

Patricia Heaton, an Emmy Award-winning actress ("Everybody Loves Raymond") and devout Catholic who brings Christians together to support Jews and Israel through the October 7th Coalition, the group she co-founded after the 2023 Hamas attack.

Caroline D'Amore, a TV personality who is the Italian-American founder and CEO of Pizza Girl. Despite not being Jewish herself, she has visited Israel several times since Oct. 7 and advocates to fight antisemitism and foster dialogue.

Mazi Pilip, an Ethiopian-born former

Israel Defense Forces paratrooper who made battling antisemitism a focus of her winning political campaign for a seat in the Nassau County, New York, legislature.

"What most people don't understand is to be a Muslim is to be a Zionist," said Ali, 57. "When I pray five times a day, several times in that prayer we ask God to bless us like the Jews and the Christians, like he blessed Abraham."

At a 2024 event co-hosted with Hadassah at which Sheryl Sandberg's film "Screams Before Silence," a documentary about the sexual violence Hamas committed on Oct. 7, was screened, Ali spoke to an interfaith audience about the weaponization of sexual violence against Israeli women and girls.

"Truth is more powerful than anything," she said. "I am honored and proud to be a Zionist."

Another woman on this year's list, Yocheved Kim Ruttenberg, grew up as a religious Jew but without Zionism, and over time became distanced from Jewish observance, too.

Then her brother joined the IDF. When the Oct. 7 attack happened, she dropped everything, quickly raised \$17,000 for essential supplies for soldiers, and days later arrived in Israel with 23 duffel bags filled with such items as headlamps, socks and underwear.

"I just thought, 'I have to go to Israel,'" said Ruttenberg, 24. "Even my mom said, 'If you don't go, you'll regret it for the rest of your life.""

Her two-week trip lasted 18 months, and she eventually made aliyah, immigrating to Israel.

Recognizing the need to help all the other volunteers who were (and still are) arriving in Israel during wartime, eager to do their bit, Ruttenberg founded the Sword of Iron Israel Volunteer Corp., an online hub that has helped mobilize 40,000 people worldwide since Oct. 7.

"I pinch myself every day that I'm so lucky to be doing this work to strengthen the State of Israel," she said. "I hope it inspires people to take action."

Allison Korman was a longtime senior executive at the DC Abortion Fund when the Oct. 7 attack changed her professional life. Suddenly, she found herself isolated when colleagues posted one-sided anti-Israel messages on her organization's social media accounts. Being the only Jewish and pro-Israel

voice at the DC Abortion Fund quickly became untenable for Korman, and within weeks she resigned.

But she wasn't ready to leave the work of women's public health. In June 2024, Korman launched the Red Tent Fund, an inclusive space rooted in Jewish values that serves people of all backgrounds who need access to reproductive care.

"It is Jewish values at work: We try to make the whole world better," said Korman, 46. "If Jewish people get pulled too far away from this issue, the only people who'll suffer are abortion seekers."

Among the other remarkable women on this year's list are Galia Amram, a lawyer and Jewish nonprofit leader; Suzanne Patt Benvenisti, a Hadassah executive who launched the organization's Yellow Nail campaign in support of Israel's hostages in Gaza; Stephanie Bonder, a sixth-generation Zionist, Jewish educator and communal leader; Hilary Hawn, a California-based community advocate, educator and writer; Michal Ilai, the senior Israel educator at Austin's Jewish federation, Shalom Austin; Shoshana Keats Jaskoll, an American-Israeli writer and activist who co-founded Chochmat Nashim (The Wisdom of Women), which fights religious extremism and women's marginalization; Esther Panitch, a lawyer and member of the Georgia House of Representatives, who co-sponsored a bill proposing the legislature adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of antisemitism; Deborah Villanueva, a mental health professional, educator and Zionist activist; Samantha Vinokor-Meinrath, an award-winning Jewish author and the senior educator at The Jewish Education Project; and Elena Yacov, the executive director of the Milstein Family Foundation and a force in Jewish philanthropy.

"We take to heart our responsibility to empower those who are standing up for Israel," said Carol Ann Schwartz, Hadassah's national president. "Hadassah has fostered and promoted Zionist ideals for more than 100 years, and the vision of our founder Henrietta Szold lives on through us."

This article was sponsored by and produced in partnership with Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America. This article was produced by JTA's native content team. **HW**

Trump Admin Weighs Ban on Iranian Diplomats from Costco, Sam's Club in NYC



Entrance to a Costco Wholesale warehouse in North Plainfield, N.J. Credit: Curlyrnd via Wikimedia Commons.

By Mike Wagenheim

(JNS) – The Trump administration is considering imposing travel restrictions

on the Iranian delegation at the upcoming United Nations General Assembly in New York City, including bans on

shopping at membership-based wholesalers popular with economically-isolated governments.

The Associated Press reported on an internal U.S. State Department memo, which details potential restrictions on delegations from Iran, Brazil, Sudan and Zimbabwe.

The report comes after the department announced last week that it was denying visas for officials from the Palestinian Authority and Palestine Liberation Organization, including Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas, who was scheduled to speak at the U.N. General Assembly's high-level debate week, which begins on Sept. 23.

The AP reports that discussions on Iranian restrictions are ongoing.

The United States, as the U.N. host country, typically must agree to provide visas to visiting diplomats but has made exceptions based on national security.

More often, it has instead granted visas but restricted travel to the U.N. district, which is a defined area including the U.N. headquarters and the surrounding neighborhood. This provision has often been applied to visiting Iranian officials.

The internal memo indicates the Trump administration is considering banning the Iranians from shopping at stores such as Costco and Sam's Club without obtaining permission from the State Department.

Iranian diplomats are known to shop at such wholesalers to purchase items in bulk and at discount rates that aren't available back home due to sanctions and other economic restrictions.

The memo reportedly stated that the department was weighing broader wholesale club membership restrictions on foreign diplomats posted in the United States. **HW**

Putting G-d on the Class List: How Jewish Educators are Getting their Students to Think About G-d

By Debra Rubin

(JTA) – It's not easy getting teens to think about G-d. Even if they go to Jewish day school.

When one Jewish educational organization asked day school students in middle school and high school several years ago to respond to the question, "What percentage of your time in Judaic studies do you spend talking explicitly about G-d?" some 80% of survey respondents put the figure at less than 10%.

"We don't have time," explained one 10th grader from a Modern Orthodox high school. "We're too busy studying Talmud."

"That's an oy vey," said Sharon Freundel, managing director of the Jewish Education Innovation Challenge (JEIC), which conducted the survey in 2017. Her organization has been working for several years in small and mid-sized communities to help Jewish educators bring G-d into the classroom in a systemized and organized way.

This spring the organization – which was founded in 2012 by the Maryland-based Mayberg Foundation to improve Jewish day school education through innovation, experimentation and collaboration – held an Innovators' Retreat in Seattle.

"The aim is to help kids develop their own relationship with G-d, or whatever they deem G-d to be," Freundel said.

"Kids and adults alike today are thirsting for a spiritual connection to something larger than themselves," Freundel said. "Whether you call this nature, or global community, or universe, or – as we do – G-d, we want to help schools and teachers facilitate this relationship formation for each of their students."

The idea is that connecting to G-d will assist children in their Jewish identity formation and help ensure they're more committed lifelong Jews,

according to JEIC.

Over the past few years, some 200 schools have received some form of support from JEIC, in part to facilitate G-d-centered learning – from Reform schools to nondenominational ones to Orthodox yeshivas.

G-d-centered learning can take myriad forms: pairing off students for discussions, using technology to get kids to think, asking students to meditate or sit in nature, having students listen to music or create art. What's important, educators say, is to create a lesson plan whose goal is to get students to think about and talk about what G-d means – or doesn't mean – to them.

In New York, JEIC worked with the Manhattan Day School to create a program that uses a digital prayerbook app to help students make Jewish prayer more personal. In the program, called Tefillah ReImagined and created with support from JEIC, students are encouraged to highlight passages, write questions in the margins, or even add pictures or doodles. Then, in weekly meetings with a prayer adviser, the students discuss what they added to their prayerbooks and how to make routine prayer more meaningful.

Chaya Elishevitz, head of school for the Chabad MMSC Day School & Seattle Jewish Montessori, said G-d-centered learning at her schools begins among the youngest students.

Preschoolers are taught "how lucky we are that we have G-d in our lives, that He's there for us, protecting us," and as students get older they learn that "a relationship with G-d is not simple," Elishevitz said. "There's a lot of room for questions."

At B'nai Shalom in Greensboro, North Carolina, Rabbi Rebecca Ben-Gideon and Eliana Light piloted and developed a program with the help of the Jewish Education Innovation Challenge in which middle schoolers focus on names – both their own and the many names used for G-d.

First, students complete worksheets about themselves, including their given names, whom they're named for, nicknames, character traits they're known by, traits they'd like to have and "special names that people call you," said Ben-Gideon, now an educational coach.

The point is that "your name's not the same as who you are; it captures part of who you are," Ben-Gideon said. "The same is true about G-d. G-d has many names, but G-d's names are not the same as G-d."

She notes that the Kaddish prayer uses the word "l'eyla" – "beyondness" – for G-d: "Just like love, which we can feel but find hard to put into words, our understanding of G-d goes beyond what we can put into words," she said.

Rabbi Yehuda Chanales, director of the Lifnai Vlifnim, a Jewish organization that supports schools in developing spiritual growth, worked with the Jewish Education Innovation Challenge on ways to encourage youngsters to develop a relationship with G-d through active listening. He recommends pairing off students and having one tell about an experience or a story while the other simply listens.

"Someone is listening to you. You're learning how to talk and feel heard without someone saying anything," he said. "Then, take it up a level and say: Now, let's talk to G-d."

OpenDor Media's Unpacked for Educators series, which provides teachers with tools to make Jewish spiritual learning accessible and substantive, created 10 videos with JEIC's support focused on various Jewish aspects of spirituality, including G-d, the afterlife, prayer, and why Judaism has so many

rules. Alex Harris, senior educator for the program, suggests asking students to try "hitbodedut" – the practice of solitary personal meditation and prayer pioneered by the late 18th century sage Rebbe Nachman of Breslov.

"Go outside, ask them to go into a quiet place, sit, walk around, think and talk to G-d," Harris said. "Having a conversation with G-d is the idea, not to have anything scripted."

Children should talk about what they're seeking, what they're thinking about in their lives, what their worries are, he said.

"Everyone, including young students, has a capacity to have these really deep, important conversations – whether it's about prayer, whether it's about free will, whether it's about G-d, about Shabbat, but oftentimes they don't have the language to do so," Harris said.

The aim of the exercise is to give them the tools for what he called "a lifelong process."

When over 90 Jewish educators, leaders and funders from around the country came to the Jewish Education Innovation Challenge's recent retreat in Seattle, which was co-sponsored by the Seattle-based Samis Foundation, they focused in large part on discussing how to implement G-d-centered learning in their schools. A 2026 retreat is scheduled for Atlanta.

"It's going to look different in every single school," Freundel said. "If G-d is infinite, as we believe, then G-d-centered learning can have an infinite number of manifestations."

This article was sponsored by and produced in partnership with the Jewish Education Innovation Challenge, a bold initiative to radically improve the quality of Jewish education in day schools across North America. This article was produced by JTA's native content team. **HW**

U.S.-Backed Gaza Aid Group Says It Found Boy, Whom Former Contractor Said Israeli Troops Killed, Alive



Abdul Rahim ("Abood") Muhammad Hamden. Credit: Gaza Humanitarian Foundation.

By Mike Wagenheim

(JNS) – A Gazan boy, whom Tony Aguilar, a former contractor with UG Solutions, said that Israeli troops killed, is alive and well, according to the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, which is funded by the U.S. government.

Aguilar claimed that Israeli soldiers killed a boy, whom he identified as "Amir," in a "wall of bullets" on May 28 at a foundation distribution site. The Daily Wire reported last Thursday that the boy, whose name is Abdul Rahim Muhammad Hamden, and who goes by Abood, is alive and well.

The publication published video footage of the boy, who is "in a safe, undisclosed location after a false tale about his death was spread by an American contractor," it reported.

"After interviews with family mem-

bers and weeks of detective work, the boy, who actually goes by the name Abood, was found living with his birth mother after he abruptly left his stepmother's home in July," per the Daily Wire. "The child's identity was confirmed through biometrics, and he remained in possession of the shirt he wore in Aguilar's viral video."

"When this lie was brazenly, cravenly shared from the press to the halls of Congress, our team set out to find this little boy – whatever it took," stated Rev. Johnnie Moore, executive director of the foundation. "Not to show the truth or to prove our point, but to save the kid's life. These lies endangered his life."

"Too many people, including in the press and civil society, were quick to spread unverified claims without asking the most basic questions," Moore stated. "The public and policy makers should ask themselves what else they have heard and believed about the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation that is also a lie."

The foundation stated that the boy was found "after weeks of high-risk efforts by GHF's humanitarian team and American veterans, who worked closely with local community members to confirm the boy's identity and ensure his safety."

Aguilar was "terminated for misconduct" and "fabricated a story alleging that a young boy named 'Amir' had been shot and killed by the IDF on May 28 after seeking aid at a GHF site," the foundation stated. "Aguilar repeated these claims in multiple media appearances, describing in vivid and false detail the boy's supposed last moments."

"Aguilar circulated photographs of the boy across global media, knowingly misrepresenting their interaction and changing the story with each telling," it said.

Aguilar was ejected from a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing last Wednesday after shouting from the gallery that the United States was complicit in genocide.

"Imagine the kind of person who would endanger a child's life for 15 minutes of fame. That's what Tony Aguilar did," the foundation stated. "The outlets, influencers and individuals that gave him a platform, even after GHF and several journalists interested in the truth provided clear, contradicting facts, share in that responsibility."

Mike Huckabee, U.S. ambassador to Israel, stated that, "I hope the media outlets who ran the story from the discredited fired employee will issue a retraction and apology." **HW**

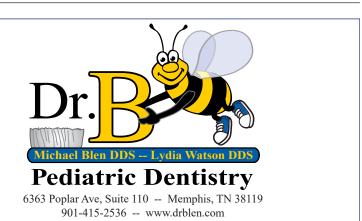
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Bornblum Teachers Take Summer Learning Journeys



Bornblum Teachers Sapir Pinto and Miriam Beeber at TI Tech Conference in Philadelphia, learning how to use resin products to encourage student creativity and Jewish passions in design thinking.

This summer, Bornblum Jewish Community School's faculty dedicated themselves to professional growth through an impressive range of workshops, institutes and conferences across the country – and even abroad. According to Bornblum Director of Curriculum and Instruction Jill Cross, "Our faculty share a strong commitment to using

summer learning to bring new ideas, fresh strategies and deeper expertise into their classrooms."

"Summer is an important time for our faculty to recharge their batteries," said Head of School Daniel R. Weiss. "For Bornblum teachers, summer is more than time at the beach or curled up with a good book. Bornblum teachers are committed to their craft, and they use their own time over the summer to invest in becoming experts in areas that interest them professionally.

In conjunction with a major design thinking expansion for the 2025-2026 school year, funded by a matching grant from the Legacy Learning Labs and the Herbert Shainberg Foundation, Bornblum design thinking faculty, Amir Sharabi, Miriam Beeber, Sapir Pinto and Jill Cross, traveled to Philadelphia to take part in TI Tech, a program focused on integrating technology into Jewish education.

According to Cross, "By combining hands-on tech exploration with strategic planning time, TI Tech helped our team to envision how to take our design thinking program to the next level, including deeper curricular integration with general and Jewish Studies. It reminded us that innovation thrives when educators are given space to dream, collaborate and design meaningful, cross-disciplinary learning experiences together!"

Bornblum teachers also explored American history through nationally recognized programs. Jill Cross and Kayla Buchanan attended Founding Forward seminars on Lafayette's Revolutions and Immigration, visiting historic sites including Liberty Hill and Ellis Island. Meanwhile, Amy Goldkin participated in the Civil Rights Educator Workshop (CREW) at Kennesaw State, strengthening their ability to connect history with civic engagement in the classroom.

Professional learning extended into Jewish Studies as well. Maya Sharabi and Rabbi Akiva Weisinger, both Bornblum faculty, joined Cohort XII of the Legacy Heritage Teacher Institute with The Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Melton Center for Jewish Education in Israel, enriching her knowledge of Jewish education on a global scale.

Teaching American History came to campus, where 15 Bornblum teachers plus faculty from other local schools participated in a Socratic session about FDR, WWII and the Holocaust. Jewish Studies Principal Michal Almalem attended the 2025 Belfer National Conference for Holocaust Education hosted virtually by the Washington National Holocaust Museum.

Another major focus of professional development this summer was in literacy and classroom practices. Teacher Christa Jolly participated in Elevate Your Classroom in Nashville with kindergarten teacher Claudia Lakey, while middle school math teacher Michelle Johnson traveled to Dallas for Get Your Teach On.

Lakey will continue her learning this fall with advanced Orton-Gillingham training in reading instruction. "Orton-Gillingham training elevates the learning of every student by equipping teachers with proven, multi-sensory strategies that benefit all learners. It lays a strong foundation in phonics, decoding and language comprehension, critical building blocks for lifelong literacy and academic success. What makes this especially impactful at Bornblum is that every K-3 teacher is trained in this approach, ensuring consistency and quality in literacy instruction across all classrooms.

The arts were also represented: Donia Wade joined the Summer Music Educators Workshop at Carnegie Hall in New York City, expanding her repertoire of creative approaches to music education.

According to Dr. Weiss, "As students return this fall, they will benefit directly from the dedication of their teachers, who are bringing back not only new knowledge but also renewed energy, creativity and passion. At Bornblum, learning never stops – especially for our superbly dedicated educators!" HW

Ohio Jewish Caucus Condemns Nazi Rally, Calls for 'Unity'

(JNS) – The Ohio Jewish Caucus, made up of Jewish Democratic state representatives and senators, issued a statement last Wednesday in response to a Nazi demonstration in Hudson, the hometown of caucus member Casey Weinstein.

"Sometimes the strongest defense against fear, hate and antisemitism is simply standing together as a community in peace and unity to drown out abhorrent rhetoric," the state officials

"We thank the people of Hudson and Jewish Ohioans for standing up against these antisemitic demonstrators," they added. "Hate speech and political violence must never be tolerated. Peace, love, empathy and strength of unity must always overcome." HW



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