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The Next Generation of Memphis Jewish Leaders Gears Up for the Future



Memphis Jewish Federation hosted a warm and inspiring reception honoring participants in its renewed Leadership Development Program.

Memphis Jewish Federation (MJF) hosted a warm and inspiring reception last week, honoring participants in its renewed Leadership Development Program, held at the home of Cindy and Mark Finestone. The evening brought together current and future leaders of the Memphis Jewish community, including past presidents of Memphis Jewish Federation, Jewish Foundation of Memphis and Jewish Community Partners, to celebrate the program's success and the bright future of Jewish communal leadership in Memphis.

Under the guidance of Leadership Development Program Director Jill

Shanker and the leadership of MJF Vice Chair of Leadership Development Jaclyn Marshall, the program was designed to cultivate and inspire the next generation of Jewish communal leaders.

Over the past several months, participants — Danielle Lazarov, Emily Lennon, Jaclyn Marshall, Lee Olswanger, Greg Phelps, Leor Reef, Shayna Roark, and Rachel Siegel — have taken part in nine intensive three-hour sessions led by community leaders and professional facilitators. Each session explored critical topics in leadership, from strategic thinking, philanthropy and collaboration to understanding the local, national

and international Jewish landscape.

The experience will culminate in a four-day immersive trip to Israel in February, providing participants with a deeper connection to Israel, Jewish life and leadership on a global scale.

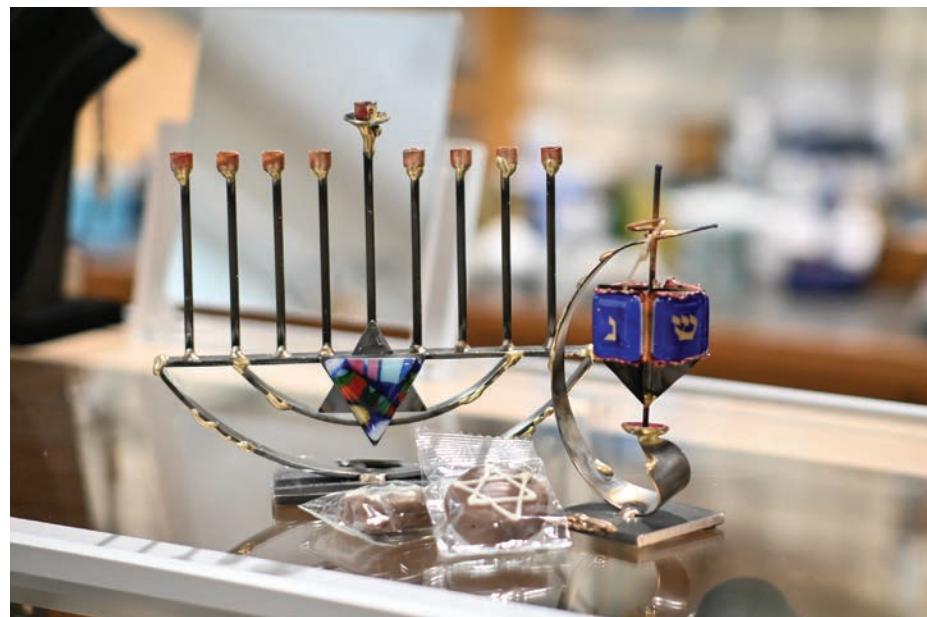
At the closing reception, each leadership development participant shared their personal Jewish Leadership Story — reflections written during the program that captured why they are involved in Jewish leadership, what inspires their commitment to community and what they hope to achieve as future leaders.

"We are so excited about the future

of Jewish Memphis," said Jill Shanker, who has guided the cohort through their journey. "This group's passion, insight and dedication demonstrate the strength and potential of Jewish leadership in Memphis for years to come."

The renewed Leadership Development Program reflects Memphis Jewish Federation's long-standing commitment to building a vibrant, sustainable Jewish community by investing in the people who will lead it. If you or someone you know is interested in participating in future leadership development programs, please email Carrie Richardson at crichardson@jcpmemphis.org **HW**

Celebrate the Season at Temple Israel's Annual Chanukah Marketplace



Temple Israel's annual Chanukah Marketplace is open Sunday, November 23, from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Temple Israel Judaica Shop, conveniently located in the Temple's Welcome Center, 1376 East Massey Road, Memphis, TN 38120. 901.937.2782

The gift shop is open year-round. Visit tisisterhood.org for hours.

Get ready to stock up on festive favorites and discover unique gifts at Temple Israel's annual Chanukah Marketplace,

happening Sunday, November 23, from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Temple Israel Judaica Shop, conveniently located in

the Temple's Welcome Center.

This beloved annual event transforms the Judaica Shop into a joyful holiday marketplace, filled with the sights, sounds, and tastes of Chanukah. Shoppers will find everything they need to make the Festival of Lights shine bright — from a wide range of beautifully crafted menorahs and colorful dreidels to themed decorations, candles and gift wrap. The shelves are brimming with fun seasonal gift items for every member of the family, including cozy socks, whimsical pet toys, festive clothing and delightful children's gifts.

Adding a sweet touch to the celebration, during the Marketplace, the shop will feature a sale on Dinstuhl's Kosher Chanukah Candy, a favorite that makes a perfect treat or hostess gift. Whether you're shopping for family, friends or your own home, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

Beyond the holiday season, Temple Israel's Judaica Shop serves the community all year long. It offers a full range of Judaic items and personalized services



— including bridal and b'nai mitzvah registries, tallit fittings and even Mah Jongg card orders. The dedicated volunteer team is always ready to help you find the perfect item for any occasion, whether it's a milestone celebration or a meaningful addition to your home.

The Chanukah Marketplace is an excellent opportunity to shop local and support Sisterhood's efforts to support the Jewish community of Memphis, as all proceeds from sales go to help local Jewish organizations.

Stop by, browse the displays, and enjoy the warmth of community as you prepare for the Festival of Lights. **HW**

Lions of Judah Celebrate 40 Years

The 40th Anniversary celebration of Memphis Lions of Judah was an evening filled with pride, gratitude and inspiration.

Lions gathered at the Brooks Museum of Art to honor four decades of women's philanthropy, friendship and commitment to the Memphis Jewish community. Lion Co-Chair Debra Saharovitch opened the evening with a warm welcome before Dr. Zoe Kahr, executive director of the Brooks Museum, shared greetings from the host venue.

National Women's Philanthropy Board Member Betsy Saslawsky then introduced keynote speaker Alison Lebovitz, whose heartfelt message resonated

deeply.

"Our work is never done and forever we are always looking to who came before—to emulate, to match, to be better than if we can. And to look to the generation that comes after us and say 'Be better than me. Do better than me,'" she said, capturing the essence of the Lion legacy.

The program closed with remarks from Lion Co-Chair Margo Fogelman who shared her "Why Federation" story, and Jewish Community Partners President and CEO Laura Linder, reflecting on the power of collective giving and the enduring impact of women leading with purpose. **HW**

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11/20/2025



Memphis Candlelighting Time

Erev Shabbat, Fri. Nov. 21, 2025 / 1 Kislev, 5786.....4:32 p.m.
Havdalah, Sat. Nov. 22, 2025 / 2 Kislev, 5786 5:30 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion: Toldot

IDF Says Lebanon Border Wall to Stay on Israel's Side

The Israel Defense Forces confirmed to JNS last Wednesday that it is building a barrier at the Israel-Lebanon border and that the security wall is entirely on the Israel side, countering Arab media reports that the work is being carried out beyond the Blue Line.

"Contrary to Lebanese reports, the barrier in question is located within Israeli territory and does not cross into Lebanese territory," the IDF said.

The Hezbollah-affiliated Al Manar

network had earlier reported that the IDF was building a new fence opposite the village of Yaroun in Southern Lebanon, close to an IDF outpost.

Other Arab reports said that some sections extend beyond the U.N.-demarcated Blue Line and inside Lebanese territory, particularly in areas facing the towns of Maroun al-Ras, Ayta al-Shaab and near Avivim.

The Blue Line is considered the internationally recognized withdrawal line, not the official border. **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.

Monday, Nov. 24

Speaker: Rabbi Ian Lichter of Baron Hirsch Synagogue

Topic: Thanksgiving and The Jews

Rabbi Lichter's talks always lead to great discussions and a fun question and answer period. He brings up points that many of the participants find unusual and engaging. With the Thanksgiving holiday just a few days away, come learn about how it resonates with the Jewish People.

Wednesday, Nov. 26

Annual Thanksgiving Bingo Game

Holiday prizes are included. Come have fun and socialize right before the holiday. Have a Great & Happy Thanksgiving!

Monday, Dec. 1

Speaker: Tim Flesner

Topic: Fall Prevention Techniques

Falling is the leading cause of seniors going to the hospital, which sometimes leads to other serious problems. Mr. Flesner runs a home health company and is very familiar with dangers that falling poses to seniors. He has given many excellent talks to the seniors. Please come hear this excellent speaker.

Wednesday, Dec. 3

Field Trip to the Baron Hirsch Synagogue for their Last Monthly Senior Luncheon of the year!

The food there is always excellent provided by their terrific group of cooks. They always have great entertainment provided by Creative Aging. Join us for a nice lunch. If you need to use the MJCC Senior bus, please call the front desk at 901-761-0810. The cost for the bus is \$2, and lunch is paid at Baron Hirsch for \$5. All reservations should be called in to Baron Hirsch 901-683-7485.

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

Hamas Returns Remains of Hostage Held for 11 Years as Attention Deepens Around Postwar Planning



Jared Kushner meets with Israeli officials, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in Jerusalem, Nov. 10, 2025. (Courtesy GPO)

By Philissa Cramer

(JTA) – Hamas returned the remains of Hadar Goldin, an Israeli soldier it murdered and kidnapped in 2014, to Israel last Sunday, bringing the number of hostages whose remains it still holds in Gaza to four.

All four were killed when Hamas attacked southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023. The number has shrunk steadily in recent days as Hamas has repatriated the remains of half a dozen hostages, including Itay Chen, the final American-Israeli held in Gaza.

The repatriations have come as Hamas has faced steep pressure, including from U.S. President Donald Trump, to uphold its end of the ceasefire deal that ended fighting in Gaza last month. As part of

the deal, Hamas agreed to return all living and deceased hostages immediately, but while 20 living hostages were freed at one time last month, the group has located and released deceased hostages more slowly, sometimes with snafus that have drawn allegations of ceasefire violations.

Now, with the central demand of the first phase nearly satisfied, attention is increasingly turning to what happens next in Gaza, which has effectively been partitioned between areas under Israeli control and areas under Hamas control.

Trump's plan calls for Israel to fully withdraw over time, but the United States has so far fallen short of convening an "International Stabilization Force" that would run Gaza and allow for its reconstruction. Israel has rejected Turkish participation and last Monday, the United Arab Emirates announced that it had ruled out joining for now.

Jared Kushner, Trump's Jewish son-in-law who has played a key role in negotiations toward ending the war, is back in Israel, where he met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu last Monday. No details of their meeting were immediately disclosed.

Trump, meanwhile, met with a different foreign leader in Washington last Monday – Syria's Ahmed al-Sharaa. Al-Sharaa, who seized power last year, has sought to project a moderate profile after rising to prominence as an Islamist leader and has permitted Jews and representatives of the Syrian Jewish diaspora to visit Syria, though the tiny number of local Jews remaining say they are not optimistic about a resurgence of their once-mighty community.

Trump has suggested that Syria could join the Abraham Accords, normalization deals with Israel that expanded the week prior to include Kazakhstan, but that possibility feels far off. HW

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Trump Formally Requests Pardon in Israeli Legal System for Benjamin Netanyahu



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu arrives in a courtroom at the District Court in Tel Aviv, in the trial against him, Oct. 15, 2025.

Credit: Reuven Kastro/Pool/Flash90

By Philissa Cramer

(JTA) – President Donald Trump has made official a suggestion that he first issued on the floor of Israel's parliament: that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu should be pardoned preemptively for his alleged crimes.

Trump made the case in a letter to Israeli President Isaac Herzog that Herzog's office released last Wednesday. In it, Trump calls Netanyahu a "formidable and decisive War Time Prime Minister" and characterizes his prosecution as "lawfare," a term that when used pejoratively refers to the misuse of legal systems to achieve ideological ends.

"Prime Minister Netanyahu has stood tall for Israel in the face of strong adversaries and long odds, and his attention cannot be unnecessarily diverted," Trump writes.

He adds, "While I absolutely respect the independence of the Israeli Justice System and its requirements, I believe that this case against Bibi, who has fought alongside me for a long time, including against the very top adversary of Israel, Iran, is a political unjustified prosecution."

The letter represents the kind of insertion into Israeli domestic politics that

would have drawn ire in the past but have become relatively commonplace during Trump's norm-busting second term. It follows Trump's successful push for Israel to strike a ceasefire deal with Hamas that freed the Israeli hostages and suspended the two-year war in Gaza, and comes as Trump is seeking to safeguard the peace. Trump says in the letter that Netanyahu's leadership is essential for allowing Israel to move forward.

"Now that we have achieved these unprecedented successes, and are keeping Hamas in check, it is time to let be [and] reunite Israel by pardoning him and ending this lawfare, once and for all," Trump concludes, ending with one of his signature signoffs. "Thank you for your attention to this matter."

Unlike in the United States, where Trump has pardoned a number of political allies, including last week, Israel does not typically grant preemptive pardons. Netanyahu has not been convicted of any crimes.

Netanyahu has three legal cases open against him, on charges of fraud, bribery and breach of trust. They relate to allegations that he accepted lavish gifts in exchange for political favors and that he used his position to secure positive media coverage. The trial in the cases began in 2020 and has proceeded in fits and starts, with hearings routinely canceled as Netanyahu attends to Israel's

affairs, including the multi-front war and a protest movement that Netanyahu and his allies allege has been stoked through foreign interference.

Yair Lapid, the leader of the opposition, dismissed both the prospect of a pardon and Trump's letter. On X, he said that Israeli law required those receiving pardons to admit guilt and show remorse – neither of which Netanyahu has yet done. In the Knesset, he said, "We are a sovereign state. There is a limit to intervention."

Herzog's office issued a statement praising Trump's efforts in the Middle East but emphasizing that requests for pardons must come through Israel's official process, which requires that people directly implicated in the case, or their immediate family members, must file a formal request.

"The president holds great respect for President Trump and has repeatedly expressed his appreciation for Trump's unwavering support of Israel and his tremendous contribution to the return of the hostages, the reshaping of the Middle East and Gaza, and the safeguarding of Israel's security," the president's office said in a statement. "Without detracting from the above, as the president has made clear on multiple occasions, anyone seeking a pardon must submit a formal request in accordance with the established procedures." HW

Marco Rubio Warns that Violence in the West Bank Could Threaten Gaza Truce



U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio speaks to journalists at the airport in Hamilton, Ontario, on Nov. 12, 2025. Credit: Mandel Ngan/POOL/AFP via Getty Images

By Philissa Cramer

(JTA) – U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said violence in the West Bank, which is surging, could undercut the fragile ceasefire in Gaza, which the United States is working to preserve.

"Certainly there's some concern about events in the West Bank spilling over and creating an effect that could undermine what we're doing in Gaza," Rubio told reporters last Wednesday.

The comments offer a stark confirmation that U.S. officials are paying attention with alarm to conditions in the West Bank, where Israeli settlers have increased their pace of attacks on Palestinians in recent months.

Masked settlers attacked Palestinians in two villages last Wednesday, drawing an unusual rebuke from Israel's president.

"The harsh events that took place this evening in the Shomron by a handful of violent and dangerous individuals are shocking and serious," Israeli Pres-

ident Isaac Herzog said in a statement in Hebrew on X. "Such violence against civilians and against IDF soldiers crosses a red line, and I condemn it severely. All state authorities must act decisively to eradicate the phenomenon and to strengthen the IDF fighters and security forces who protect us day and night."

The incident comes amid near-daily attacks by settlers on Palestinian villages, which watchdogs say is contributing to unprecedented displacement of West Bank Palestinians. Last week, settlers targeted a group of American Jewish activists who came to the West Bank to protect Palestinians harvesting olives. One settler was reportedly dismissed from reserve duty in the Israeli army following the clash, in which he fired a gun. In a separate incident, two American Jewish women were deported and barred from Israel for 10 years over their participation in a solidarity mission. HW

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Acoustic Sunday Live! 7th Annual Benefit for Protect Our Aquifer, Set for Dec. 7

Two of Memphis' greatest natural resources – water and music – come together yet again this holiday season as Acoustic Sunday Live! presents The 7th Annual Memphis Concert to Protect Our Aquifer at **7 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 7**, at First Congregational Church, 1000 Cooper St.

Acoustic Sunday Live! has been produced by Bruce and Barbara Newman for three decades now and always for a cause. This concert will include award winning blues singer Shemekia Copeland, blues icon Bobby Rush performing in a special appearance with Kenny Wayne Shepherd, songwriter James McMurtry, Americana duo Alice Howe & Freebo, plus Memphis' own Eric Lewis & Jimmy Davis. Bobby Rush & Kenny Wayne Shepherd were, as of this writing, nominated in the blues category for the 2026 Grammy Awards.

The concert will feature two sets with each artist performing two songs per set, and then will end with a big finale sing along.

"I love this time of year as we are able to bring world class music together with an amazing cause like Protect Our Aquifer," Newman says. "Bring a friend and show them what this show is all about."

Formed out of necessity in 2017, Ward Archer founded Protect Our Aquifer thinking it would be a short-lived legal fight. It soon became apparent there is no entity working to protect the source of drinking water for Shelby County, Tennessee and much of the Mid-South. Protect Our Aquifer is a 501(c)(3) non-profit with a force of citizen advocates challenging threats to the Aquifer. Since its founding, Protect Our Aquifer has become a leading voice in the science-based protection of the Aquifer and the people

that depend on it. With the new AI facility in Memphis and the Blue Oval Ford plant in Stanton, Tenn., water issues are more important to the region than ever.

"We are excited to be the beneficiary again this year," said Archer. "This concert has become our largest fundraiser and will help cover the cost of some new and exciting initiatives."

Tickets start at \$50, are tax deductible and can be purchased at acousticsundaylive.com. Info at 901-237-2972. **HW**



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Financial Issues to Consider Before Marriage

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

Before you tie the knot, keep in mind that married couples face some financial considerations that single individuals simply don't. For example, married couples can file their taxes as married, either jointly or separately. But does simply checking a different box on your tax forms guarantee a better outcome? Not necessarily.

Prior to the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, married couples earning similar incomes could experience a "marriage penalty" by getting bumped into a higher tax bracket when filing married/joint versus filing single. However, recent legislation exactly doubled the single-filer tax brackets except for the top 37% rate. This reduced the potential marriage penalties for married/joint filers with similar incomes. In fact, if one spouse earns little or no income and the other is the primary wage earner, filing married/joint may result in paying less taxes. Your tax advisor can help determine the potential outcome for your situation.¹

Benefits for married couples

Here are a few benefits married couples can enjoy, assuming both spouses

are U.S. citizens:

- The ability to transfer an unlimited amount of assets to your spouse free from federal gift or estate taxes either during life or at death
- More tax-planning options upon inheriting your spouse's retirement accounts
- The right to open an IRA based on your spouse's earnings record if you are unemployed

Timing your marriage

If you're thinking about marriage, choosing a wedding date that accommodates family, friends, and employers – not to mention the venue and reception hall – can be a wedding planner's greatest challenge. To complicate matters even more, should you also consider the IRS when selecting a date?

Your tax-filing status is determined on December 31 of each year. For tax purposes, that means even if you wait until the last day of the year to walk down the aisle, the IRS will consider you married for that entire year. Having a conversation with your tax advisor prior to getting married can assist with understand-

ing any potential tax impacts on your future filings.

Income isn't the only factor that influences whether marriage could impact your tax situation. Understanding what deductions, tax credits, and other tax preferences may be impacted can also help you gauge the potential effects of marriage on your tax situation – and help you determine the best time to exchange vows.

Domestic partnerships and civil unions

Although a handful of states recognize domestic partnerships and civil unions, the IRS does not. So, while these designations may offer some of the same rights and responsibilities available to married couples, it's only at a state level and on a state-by-state basis.

¹The changes to the tax-rate brackets passed with the Tax Cuts and Job Act are scheduled to sunset at the end of 2025 if no legislation is enacted.

Wells Fargo & Company and its affiliates do not provide legal or tax advice. This communication cannot be relied upon to avoid tax penalties. Please consult your

tax and legal advisors to determine how this information may apply to your own situation. Whether any planned tax result is realized by you depends on the specific facts of your own situation at the time your tax return is filed.

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BBC Execs Resign Amid Scandal Over Trump Interview Edit and Gaza War Coverage



Deborah Turness, who resigned the day before as BBC News CEO, faces the media as she arrives at the offices of the BBC in London, Nov. 10, 2025. Credit: Henry Nicholls/AFP via Getty Images

By Shira Li Bartov

(JTA) – The head of BBC and its top news executive have quit amid allegations that the network misled viewers in coverage of President Donald Trump and the Gaza war.

The BBC's director general Tim Davie and CEO of News Deborah Turness resigned last Sunday after a leaked report by Michael Prescott, a former standards adviser to the broadcaster, who accused it of anti-Trump and anti-Israel bias. The memo was published in the right-leaning British newspaper The Telegraph last week.

Prescott accused the BBC of selectively splicing footage of Trump's speech to supporters on Jan. 6, 2021, in an episode of its documentary show "Panorama." He said the show patched together sections of the remarks to suggest that Trump said, "We're going to

walk down to the Capitol, and I'll be there with you, and we fight. We fight like hell."

These words came from two parts of the speech spoken almost an hour apart, omitting a part in which Trump said he wanted supporters "to peacefully and patriotically make your voices heard." After Trump's speech on Jan. 6, in which he said the 2020 presidential election was stolen from him, his supporters violently stormed the United States Capitol.

Prescott's memo accused BBC Arabic of choosing to "minimize Israeli suffering" to "paint Israel as the aggressor" in Gaza. The BBC previously faced backlash over failing to identify the narrator of a Gaza documentary as the son of a Hamas government official, along with using a contributor who said on social

media that Jews should be burned "as Hitler did." The network was also criticized for livestreaming a Glastonbury performance of the punk group Bob Vylan that included chants of "Death to the IDF."

The BBC has been scrutinized from all political sides over its coverage of Israel and Gaza. Presenter David Yelland called the resignations of Davie and Turness a "coup" by members of the BBC Board who had "systematically undermined" Davie's team.

Some insiders have raised concerns about Prescott's friendship with Robbie Gibb, a member of the BBC board who played a key role in Prescott's appointment as BBC adviser, according to The Guardian. Gibb was the director of communications for former Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May between 2017 and 2019.

Both Trump and the Israeli government applauded the resignations in social media statements.

Israel's foreign ministry said Davie's resignation "underscores the deep-seated bias that has long characterised the BBC's coverage of Israel" but said the problem was not limited to the broadcaster.

"Far too many news outlets are promoting politics disguised as facts, amplifying Hamas's fake campaigns," it tweeted. "The time has come for real accountability to restore integrity, fair and factual journalism."

The chair of the BBC Board, Samir Shah, was expected to apologize for the editing of Trump's speech last Monday, in a move meant to blunt potential damage to the U.K.-U.S. relationship. HW

Groundbreaking Analysis of Hitler's DNA Shows No Jewish Ancestry - But Finds a Genetic Disorder

By Philissa Cramer

(JTA) – Adolf Hitler had a sexual disorder that made it more likely for him to have a micro-penis, according to the first-ever analysis of his DNA. He also did not have the Jewish ancestors that some have claimed he had.

The analysis is being revealed in detail in "Hitler's DNA: Blueprint of a Dictator," a new documentary, which premiered last Saturday night in the United Kingdom. The documentary looks at the researchers who decided to tackle the genetic makeup of one of history's greatest villains, as well as what they learned – and cannot learn – from his DNA.

They found that he had Kallmann syndrome, a genetic disorder characterized by incomplete puberty, according to an exclusive report published last Wednesday in the Times of London. They also found that he had genes making him more likely to have autism, schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, though they cautioned that the DNA alone is not suf-

ficient to deliver a diagnosis.

Among those quoted in the documentary is the prominent British Jewish psychologist Simon Baron-Cohen (father of actor Sacha). "Behavior is never 100% genetic," he said in the Times report. "Associating Hitler's extreme cruelty with people with these diagnoses risks stigmatizing them, especially when the vast majority of people with these diagnoses are neither violent nor cruel, and many are the opposite."

The analysis, conducted by a team led by a prominent British geneticist, is more definitive on the subject of Hitler's possible Jewish ancestry. Rumors about such a background were prevalent during Hitler's rise: In one notable example, in 1933, a newspaper aligned with Austria's anti-Nazi chancellor challenged German authorities to disprove his Jewish ties.

And the rumors have endured: In 2022, Russia's foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, repeated the claim that Hit-

ler had Jewish ancestry. Lavrov was attempting to justify Russia's stated reason for invading Ukraine – to "de-nazify" the country – an effort that was complicated by the fact that Ukraine's president is Jewish. (He also said: "Jewish wise people said already a long time ago that the biggest antisemites are Jewish themselves.")

But while previous analyses of the DNA of Hitler's relatives suggested that he may have had some genetic links to groups that he sought to destroy – including Jews – the new analysis, on Hitler's own DNA, shows only Austrian German ancestry.

The analysis is based on a swatch of fabric stained with blood that a U.S. soldier cut from the couch upon which Hitler shot himself. The researchers were able to confirm without a doubt that the blood came from Hitler by comparing the DNA found in it to DNA previously confirmed to have come from one of his relatives. HW

Houston, Jackson City Websites Direct Readers to Page on 'Why Are Jews So Successful in Business?'

The websites of the cities of Houston, Texas, and Jackson, Miss., return three pages each that redirect to a website titled "Why are Jews so successful in business?"

The page to which the cities' official websites redirect, and which lacks a government URL suffix, appears to be written by artificial intelligence.

"Mastering new skills should be both efficient and enjoyable, and that is exactly what Why Are Jews So Successful

In Business was designed for," the page states.

"Each reader begins from a different starting point, so Why Are Jews So Successful In Business accommodates all experience levels," it adds.

JNS sought comment from both cities about why the websites direct readers to the page.

Mary Benton, chief of communications and senior adviser to Houston Mayor John Whitmire, told JNS last

Thursday that the city's information technology team "has spent the past few days investigating this matter."

"From what we can gather, doing a regular Google search, not the one specific to the city of Houston home page, it's brightideas.houstontx.gov, which auto-redirects to a page independent of the city of Houston website," she said.

"Steps have been taken to prevent the BrightIdeas page from auto-redirecting to the city of Houston website," she

OBITUARY



Susan Kosten

Susan Kosten, age 77, of Germantown, Tenn., passed away November 5, 2025, after a short illness.

Susan is survived by her husband of 51 years, Alan, her three sons, Bobby (Ginny) of Olive Branch, Miss., Larry (Kyle) of Decatur, Ga., and Andrew (Diana) of Brookings, S.D., her grandchildren, Alayna (Johnny), Ace, her great-grandsons, Isaiah and Abel, and her beloved pug, Rupert. She was preceded in death by her parents, James and Virginia Wood, and her sister, Nancy Wood.

A Memphis native, Susan was a 1965 graduate of Messick High School. While working at Memphis Title Company she met Alan, a local real estate attorney, and was married in 1974. She devoted the rest of her life to her family, raising her three boys.

In the 1980s Susan was an early adopter of aerobics, teaching classes locally in Memphis. She was an avid book reader and lover of classic movies. She also loved art and was an amateur artist herself, filling pages of notebooks and canvases with her own sketches. She loved her animals, particularly her dogs, Tuxedo (a black and white cocker spaniel) and her pugs, Hubie (named after legendary Memphis Grizzlies coach Hubie Brown) and Rupert.

Susan loved the ocean and loved spending time at her beach condo in Highland Beach, Fla., and later in life would spend several weeks in Malibu, Calif., in the summer to escape the heat of Memphis and South Florida.

Susan was also a warrior. She fought back several life-threatening illnesses in the last two decades of her life and always defeated them with courage and grace. She absolutely never gave up when it would have been easy to do so.

A Celebration of Life will be held on November 18, 2025, at 11 a.m. in the chapel of Temple Israel, 1376 E Massey Rd, Memphis, Tenn., 38120. HW

**WEEKLY DEADLINE
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told JNS.

Per the World Jewish Congress, assumptions have been made throughout history "about Jews and money, including that Jews are greedy global capitalists, wealthy communists, socialists and of course, that Jews unduly influence the world with their money."

"These stereotypes have permeated cultures globally and are rooted in antisemitism," the WJC said. HW

Roswell, New Mexico, is Rife with UFOs, Scorpions and Conspiracy Theories — But Few Jews



A granite monument in front of the Chaves County Courthouse in Roswell, New Mexico, displays the Ten Commandments and a Star of David. Credit: Larry Luxner

By Larry Luxner

(JTA) — ROSWELL, New Mexico — If it weren't for an Ashkenazi Jew named Stanton T. Friedman, the world might have long ago forgotten what's come to be known simply as the "Roswell incident."

Instead, countless books, documentaries and made-for-TV dramas have explored the 1947 discovery of mysterious materials found on a New Mexico ranch that Friedman argued were the relics of extraterrestrials. A wave of successors, including a prominent Israeli-American physicist, continue to press the case for alien contact. And this dusty desert town has been transformed according to an unusual paradox: It's shaped by conspiracy theories yet is home to virtually no Jews.

Roswell's only synagogue, Congregation B'nai Israel, closed up and moved to Albuquerque five years ago.

"They didn't have a rabbi and they only met twice a month, on Fridays," said Leslie Lawner, who made the move with her husband in 2020, reducing Roswell's tiny Jewish population by two. "There was really nothing we could do for them."

The Lawners left behind a town that is largely defined by what happened in the summer of 1947, when local rancher W.W. "Mac" Brazen found rubber strips, tin foil, thick paper and other debris on his property and shared the material with Sheriff George Wilcox of Roswell. The sheriff brought the unusual artifacts to the attention of the Roswell Army Air Field, which on July 9 of that year announced that it had recovered the remains of a "flying disc."

The outrageous RAAF claim was quickly denounced as erroneous by local military officials who said the debris was actually the wreckage of a crashed weather balloon and related equipment.

That would have been the end of it, if not for Friedman, a nuclear physicist and highly regarded "ufologist" who revisited the incident in the 1970s, devoting the rest of his life to proving the existence of flying saucers. In 1987, Friedman — who died six years ago — told The New York Times that federal officials had engaged in a "cosmic Watergate" to cover up the truth.

Now, this remote city of 47,000, located east of the White Sands Missile Range and about a three-hour drive southeast of Albuquerque, is known for one thing and one thing only: flying saucers.

Here in Roswell, those saucers are ubiquitous — beginning with one atop the "Welcome to Roswell" sign east of town along U.S. 380. There's also a UFO-shaped McDonald's, along with a bug-eyed little green alien relaxing under an umbrella in front of the nearby Western Inn.

Another extraterrestrial creature reclines on a bed in the display window of White Mattress, not to mention yet another, even more tacky, E.T. proudly holding up the Dunkin' Donuts marquee along Main Street. Not surprisingly,

Martians are a common theme in Halloween displays here.

In 1997, the Air Force — attempting to dispel rumors that had persisted for decades — released a 231-page report concluding that alien bodies recovered at the Roswell crash site weren't aliens at all, but dummies used in parachute tests. It also said that the "spacecraft" that had fallen to Earth on Brazen's ranch was really an Air Force balloon used in a top-secret program code-named Project Mogul to monitor the atmosphere for evidence of Soviet nuclear tests.

Asked at the time if the new report would finally put the matter to rest, retired Air Force Col. Richard Weaver told NBC's Today show: "No, I doubt it. This has become a religion to many people. It's almost a cult. Certainly, an unbelievable financial opportunity for many folks. So I think this is going to endure."

Now, the town has taken on added prominence with the Pentagon's recent establishment of an All-Domain Anomaly Resolution Office. President Donald Trump is a known skeptic of UFOs. But in a 2020 campaign video, he said, "Roswell's a very interesting place with a lot of people that would like to know what's going on."

In a town forged around the religion of aliens, Jewish life is virtually nonexistent. There aren't enough Jews here to make a minyan — let alone support a synagogue — and the few who did live here have mostly died off or moved away.

Lawner and her husband, Bob, rarely attended services at Congregation B'nai Israel, located a block from their house at 8th and Washington, during their 27 years in Roswell. But Lawner did help develop a curriculum on Holocaust studies for Sidney Gutierrez Middle School, which she helped found and where she taught for 17 years.

It was an area of inquiry that overlapped with one outlandish but persistent theory about the Roswell incident. Annie Jacobsen claims in her 2012 book, "Area 51: An Uncensored History of America's Top Secret Military Base," that just before the Roswell crash, Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin recruited Nazi war criminal Josef Mengele — the infamous Auschwitz "angel of death" — to create "grotesque, child-size aviators" to pilot a plane in order to trigger widespread panic throughout the United States.

The obsession with aliens has divided Jewish voices. An Orthodox Jewish rabbinical authority, Rabbi Pini Dunner of Beverly Hills, California, has called the Roswell incident "nonsense."

"Most people don't believe any of this, nor, for that matter, do we entertain the claims of those who maintain that the Apollo moon landings were all an elaborate hoax, or that Denver International Airport stands above an underground city that serves as a headquarters for the masonically inspired New World Order," Dunner wrote in an online post. "It's not that any of these



The welcome to Roswell sign includes UFO decor. Credit: Larry Luxner

conspiracy stories can be categorically disproved, but we feel they do not need to be. The question is: why would any intelligent person believe such nonsense to be true?"

But some Jews are attached to the idea that aliens are out there — including one of the most prominent scientists making the case today. The Israeli-American physicist Avi Loeb, who runs a lab at Harvard University, argues that some objects and phenomena in space cannot be explained except as evidence of extraterrestrial technology.

Loeb has emphasized the appeal of aliens and space exploration on Jewish grounds. "It is reasonable to imagine the absence of antisemitism in interstellar space," he wrote earlier this year, noting that anything traveling from the other side of the Milky Way would have had to set out before there were Jews.

This month, Loeb released new data that he said suggested that an object in space that will come within 269 million kilometers of Earth later this year may have extraterrestrial origins. The resulting frenzy has embroiled U.S. transportation officials and even Kim Kardashian.

Loeb's argument is rooted in theoretical physics. But here in Roswell, aliens are experienced in concrete terms. Factual or not, this past July, Roswell marked 78 years since the mysterious 1947 event, with an annual Roswell UFO Festival that lures thousands of tourists from all 50 states and beyond.

Every year, sidewalk vendors do a brisk business selling funnel cakes, alien salt-and-pepper shakers and other trinkets, while tourists happily pay \$5 each to visit the downtown International UFO Museum and Research Center.

"These exhibits are designed not to convince anyone to believe one way or another about their subjects," says a sign at the museum's entrance. "Visitors are encouraged to ask questions."

Local merchants don't seem to care much what really transpired that night in 1947. They're just grateful for all the desperately needed cash this festival generates.

"Roswell didn't have a tourist industry and one of my friends was telling me about this UFO stuff. So we started the UFO Festival," said Tim Jennings, the town's mayor. "I don't know what happened, but something definitely happened. It's not unreasonable. We live out in the middle of the desert, and without a lot of bright lights, at night you can see a lot."

Added Todd Wildermuth, Roswell's public information officer: "I don't have an opinion about it. I haven't really given it any deep thought."

To say Roswell is remote is a vast understatement. Some 140 miles from the nearest interstate highway, the town is also unbearably hot and dry. One quickly learns not to go anywhere without a water bottle; it's even better to stay inside where there's air-conditioning.

Roswell is certainly not the kind of place to visit if you don't like reptiles and other poisonous creatures. At the local Home Depot, two of the biggest-selling items, along with plywood and barbecue grills, are Harris Scorpion Killer and Snake-A-Way pellets.

These days, only a handful of Jews remain in Roswell. A Google search for "Roswell" and "Jewish" reveals three synagogues in Roswell, Georgia — a suburb of Atlanta — one of which is a Messianic church.

"There was never a large community here," said Cymantha Liakos, a Philadelphia native who wasn't raised as a Jew but recently took a DNA test and discovered she has Jewish ancestry. Liakos, a former geologist, settled in Roswell with her husband, William, a doctor.

Her 23-year-old son, John, a graduate of the nearby New Mexico Military Institute, visited Israel in 2022 as the first Roswell native (and quite possibly the last) ever to participate in Birthright, the program that takes young Jews to Israel on free trips.

Today, the corner structure that had housed B'nai Israel since its establishment in the 1940s is a medical clinic.

"The building was deteriorating and there was no one within the group who knew how to keep it up," said Judy Stubbs, B'nai Israel's former treasurer. "Since there was so few of us left, we decided it was in our best interests to sell it."

The community's Torah, meanwhile, has found a new home at Congregation Nahalat Shalom in Albuquerque, New Mexico's largest city and home to many of the state's estimated 25,000 Jews. In 2018, Roswell's dwindling Jewish community agreed to "indefinitely loan" Nahalat Shalom the sacred scroll, which had been rescued from a small town in Czechoslovakia by the Karnowsky family during World War II.

In 2018, Nahalat Shalom's spiritual leader, Rabbi Min Kantrowitz, led a special Simchat Torah dedication service in the presence of Kathryn Karnowsky and her Jewish friends from Roswell.

So what do the handful of Jews remaining in Roswell think about the 1947 "incident" that made their town famous?

"My husband is from a ranching family with longtime roots in this area, and all of their ranch neighbors strongly believe it is not a hoax," said Liakos. "There was an incident, and a government cover-up. Both of us are scientists, and we're not shrugging it off as ridiculous."

Stubbs, a longtime resident of Roswell and former city council member, agrees with her friend.

"People ask me that all the time," said Stubbs, who remains active in politics. "With all the continued hype, I believe something must have happened. A lot of people come here to find out, but no one has the answer. Unless the federal government chooses to open the records, it's a question that will never be answered." HW



Celebrating 30 Years of the Jewish Foundation of Memphis

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.

Five of the Foundation's past chairs wore two hats during their chairmanship – one of professional advisor and the other as community leader. Each, in his own way, brought financial and technical expertise to the role and have continued to actively engage their clients in the important work of Tzedakah. Pictured (right) are past chairs and professional advisors Anthony Morrison, Sandy Blockman and Charles Jalenak. The two other advisors/past chairs not pictured: Ronald Harkavy, I"z and Jason Salomon.



Fetterman Hospitalized After Fall Near His Pennsylvania Home



Sen. John Fetterman (D-Pa.) at the Jewish Democratic Council of America's 2024 Leadership Summit, May 20, 2024. Credit: Jewish Democratic Council of America.

(JNS) – Sen. John Fetterman (D-Pa.) fell near his home in Braddock, Pa., during an “early morning walk” and was hospitalized in Pittsburgh “out of an abundance of caution,” according to a spokesman for the pro-Israel Democrat.

“Upon evaluation, it was established he had a ventricular fibrillation flare-up that led to Sen. Fetterman feeling light-headed, falling to the ground and hitting his face with minor injuries,” the spokesman said.

“If you thought my face looked bad before, wait until you see it now,” the senator stated.

The spokesman said that the 56-year-old was “doing well and receiving routine observation at the hospital” and “opted to stay, so doctors can fine-tune

his medication regimen.”

Fetterman suffered a stroke in 2022 during his senatorial campaign. He has had difficulty hearing and speaking since the stroke, although his ability to do both has improved considerably since then.

The senator’s fall came two days after his memoir, “Unfettered,” was released.

The book includes “unvarnished details of his life-threatening stroke and struggles with depression, the truth about what really happens in Washington and his vision for navigating our divided country’s future,” per the publisher.

Democratic Majority for Israel wished Fetterman a speedy and full recovery. HW



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