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L'Chaim to Legacy: Raising a Glass to 30 Years of Securing the Memphis Jewish Future



It was a night of forward-looking celebration as the Jewish Foundation of Memphis marked three decades of unparalleled philanthropic leadership with a glittering 30th Anniversary event, "L'Chaim to Legacy," held on December 10 at Memphis Botanic Garden. The evening was a powerful tribute to the visionary donors, professional partners, and community leaders whose dedication have ensured the vitality and sustainability of Jewish life in Memphis.

Event Co-chairs Jason Salomon and Lawson Arney set an enthusiastic tone for the night. "This incredible gathering is a testament to the passion, vision, and generosity that have been the hallmarks of this Foundation for three decades," said Arney, reflecting on the community's collective commitment.

The heart of the evening was a deep reflection on the Foundation's monumental impact.

Foundation Chair Pace Cooper addressed the attendees, describing the organization's origin three decades prior: "What began as a casual conversation in 1995 launched a philanthropic movement for our city."

Cooper emphasized that the Foundation's strength lies in its ability to serve as an "indispensable partner in giving," providing stability through its foundational pillars: innovative community thinkers, agency partners, Donor Advised Fund holders, and Professional Advisors. He highlighted the staggering growth and collective generosity of the Memphis Jewish community, noting that the number of funds has grown to

550 and current assets under management top \$215 million.

However, Cooper said, "The most exciting number – the one that speaks directly to our impact – is the \$202 million in grants that we have collectively awarded to over 3,400 organizations over these 30 years." He proudly cited the Foundation's recognition by the Memphis Business Journal as the fourth largest grantmaking organization in the city.

The Foundation also honored a champion of philanthropy, presenting the Raymond Shainberg Professional Advisor Award to longtime legal counsel and valued advisor Michael Kaplan.

CEO and President Laura Linder turned the focus from the past toward the future, inviting the audience to

imagine their family giving trajectory using a Thanksgiving gathering as the center point. "Imagine starting a family tradition that engages every generation of your family in giving," she said.

Linder stressed the necessity of creative and flexible philanthropy to achieve this future, positioning the Foundation as the community's "tailor-made philanthropy partner." She noted that structured giving has been normalized for everyone, from children participating in the B'nai Tzedek program to individuals making complex estate plans. In a moving conclusion, Linder spoke of the relationship with donors, and thanked the staff for their dedication to the organization and the

(See Legacy Page 2)

Calling All Young Artists and Writers: Memphis Jewish Federation Announces 17th Annual Yom HaShoah Art and Essay Contest



The 2025 Yom HaShoah Art and Essay Contest winners.

Lorraine Wolf, Community Impact Manager, Memphis Jewish Federation

Do you know a creative middle or high school student in Tennessee? Be sure to tell them about the Memphis Jewish Federation's annual Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) student contest!

For the 17th consecutive year, Federation's annual contest is launching once again, inviting young artists and writers to explore powerful and vital themes focused on preserving memories from the Holocaust. This contest provides a meaningful opportunity for students to engage with the history of the Holocaust

and ensure that the stories of the victims and survivors are never forgotten. In previous years, students from across the state have participated, from both Jewish and secular schools.

Winners will be publicly celebrated at the Federation's community-wide Yom HaShoah Observance event, scheduled for Tuesday, April 14, 2026, which will take place this year at Baron Hirsch Synagogue.

Art Contest Guidelines and Details

The Art Contest challenges young students to connect with a personal Holocaust story and use their creative skills

(See Contest Page 3)

Legacy...

(Continued From Page 1)



community.

Beyond the formal remarks, attendees participated in hands-on activities to cement their legacy. Many stepped forward to sign the Book of Life, a permanent project for those who create a Jewish legacy through a planned gift to an endowment fund. By inscribing their personal and family messages, members of the Legacy Society honor the past while ensuring the Jewish community's future remains robust. Attendees also visited the Legacy Speaks traveling booth to record personal phone messages to the community, capturing their hopes and motivations for charitable giving for generations to come.

The Jewish Foundation of Memphis extends profound gratitude to all the individuals, families, and organizations that sponsored the "L'Chaim to Legacy" celebration:

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- Laurie and Elkan Scheidt
- Rob, David and Lauren Grossman, in memory of their parents Ron and Mimi Grossman

Thank you to our event co-chairs: Andrea and Ted Cohen, Margo and Mark Fogelman, Tova and Roy Gruber, Charles and Monique Jalenak.

L'Chaim to the next 30 years of partnership and success! **HW**

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12/18/2025

**Memphis Candlelighting Time**

Erev Shabbat, Fri. Dec. 19, 2025 / 29 Kislev, 5786.....4:33 p.m.
Havdalah, Sat. Dec. 20, 2025 / 30 Kislev, 5786 5:33 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion: Mikeitz

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12/18/2025

**DEADLINE FOR
STORIES AND
ADS
WEDNESDAY
AT 5PM
WEEK
PRIOR TO
PUBLICATION**

The MJCC Larisa and Ben Baer Senior Adult Club Happenings

The regular lunch program begins at 11:30 a.m., and speaker and entertainment programs begin at noon.

Monday, December 22

The seniors will enjoy another rousing session of **Team Trivial Pursuit**, one of the most popular programs offered to the Senior Lunch Group. The room is divided into two teams, each tasked with answering questions from the classic Trivial Pursuit game. If one team misses a question, the opposing team gets a chance to answer. There is always plenty of lively discussion, lots of laughter, and great fun as everyone tests their memory. Come enjoy a good lunch and stay for the friendly competition.

Wednesday, December 24

Steve Baer will speak to the group on the topic "Advantage Plans vs. Supplements? Plus, Changes in Medicare for 2026." With confusion surrounding the differences between Medicare supplements and Medicare Advantage plans, Mr. Baer—who has over 18 years of experience in the insurance industry—will offer clarity and insight into the options available.

Monday, December 29

A special presentation will be given by Tal Nezry, MJCC Community Shlicha, Center for Jewish Life & Learning. Miss Nezry just returned from a trip to Israel. Her talk, "Light in Dark Times," is sure to be meaningful and inspiring. Anyone who has heard Tal speak knows how special her presentations are, and her recent visit to Eretz Israel will add even more depth. Reservations are required for the daily lunch. Tal's talk will begin at 12 p.m., and reservations are requested (but not required) for the talk itself.

Wednesday, December 31

The month will conclude with our End-of-Year Bingo! Enjoy special games, prizes, and a festive atmosphere. Come for a delicious kosher lunch and stay for the fun.

There will be no senior lunches served on 12-25, 12-26, 1-1, and 1-2 due to holidays. Check MJCC website, www.jccmemphis.org, for dates when the MJCC is open and closed.

Please join us Monday through Friday for a delicious kosher lunch prepared by the kitchens of the Memphis Jewish Home. The cost is only \$2 for seniors. Reservations are required by 1 p.m. the day before. To make a reservation, please contact Steve Kaplan, Adult Services Coordinator, at 901-259-9220 or email stevekaplan@jccmemphis.org. Steve is available Monday through Thursday, 9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m. Reservations can also be made by calling the MJCC front desk at 901-761-0810. **HW**

Contest...

(Continued From Page 1)

to preserve the memory of an individual.

Students in grades 5-8 residing in Tennessee and surrounding states can enter the contest by submitting a painting, drawing, diorama, collage, or sculpture. Entries must explore the theme "**Art as Memory: Keeping Stories Alive.**" Students are encouraged to research a specific individual's Holocaust story and create a piece that preserves that person's memory. Entries are due on March 23, 2026.

Judging will be based on originality, creativity, passion, the message conveyed, connection to the themes, and usage of colors, symbols, and proportions. Generous cash prizes are provided by the Kaethe Mela Family Memorial Fund of the Jewish Foundation of Memphis, honoring Kaethe, her husband, Paul, and their 17-year-old daughter, Doris, who perished at Auschwitz. The winning artwork will be featured as the cover image for the program booklet at the 2026 community-wide Yom HaShoah event on April 14. All winners will receive public recognition at this significant commemoration.

Essay Contest Guidelines and Details

The Essay Contest invites high school students to reflect on the role of memory in both the Holocaust and their own lives. This year's theme is "**The Power of Memory: Holocaust Stories and the Stories You Carry.**"

Students must select a Holocaust victim, survivor, or witness whose story has been preserved through written testimony, oral history, artwork, music, film, or another artistic medium and describe the impact of the individual's story on their understanding of the Holocaust and the importance of remembering it. In their essays, they should also share a story from their own family and discuss what this story means to them and why preserving it matters.

High school students in Tennessee and surrounding states are encouraged to submit their 400-600 word essays by Monday, March 23, 2026. Prizes for the essay contest are also provided by the Kaethe Mela Family Memorial Fund of the Jewish Foundation of Memphis. The First Place essay will be published in the program booklet for the community-wide Yom HaShoah/Holocaust Observance event on Tuesday, April 14, 2026, and published in other print and digital platforms. All winners will be officially recognized at the commemoration.

Submission guidelines for both contests are available at jcpmemphis.org/holocauststartandessay.

This annual contest serves as a vital educational tool, ensuring that future generations understand the lessons of the Holocaust and commit to remembrance. We look forward to receiving the moving and powerful work of the talented students in our community. For questions, please contact Lorraine Wolf at lwolf@jcpmemphis.org. **HW**

Canadian Police Arrest Man Found with Guns and Confederate, Swastika Flags

John Charles Reid of Lloydminster, a city that straddles the border between Alberta and Saskatchewan, was charged with willful promotion of hatred after Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers seized guns and Confederate and swastika flags from his home.

Reid, 38, was also charged with unauthorized possession of and storage of firearms.

Police said that a warrant was executed on Dec. 2 as part of a probe of a man who threatened violence against "identifiable groups of people."

A Mounted Police spokesman told JNS that he couldn't expand on details of the threats, because "the matter is still under investigation," but that "a lot of threats were also made online."

Reid is due in court on Jan. 12. **HW**

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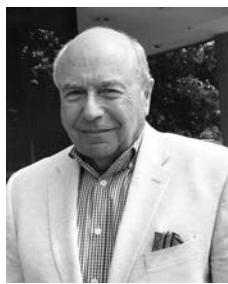
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Celebrating 90 years of the Memphis Jewish Federation

A look back on our history in photos

For 90 years, Memphis Jewish Federation has united our community to support and celebrate Israel, observe meaningful Jewish milestones, engage with elected officials on issues that matter to Jewish life, and participate together in national and international gatherings of Jewish significance.



Holocaust survivors along with their children and grandchildren attending the 2012 Yom HaShoah program.

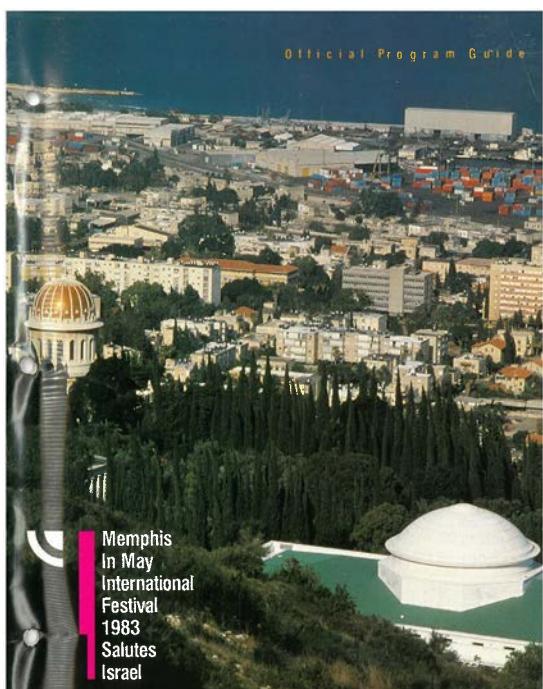


1997 KNESSET BREAKFAST
With LEA RABIN

Seth Kaufman, Hal Newburger, Leah Rabin, Joel Katz, Yair Walzer, and Gary Siepser at Knesset Breakfast in 1997.



Ben Goodman, President from 1941-1942 and 1953-1954 speaking at the 25th Anniversary Dinner on January 19, 1961.



Official Program of Memphis in May International Festival 1983 Salutes Israel



Mayor Jim Strickland with Shoham – Memphis Steering Committee at the Taste of Israel in 2019.



Bobbie Gordon, Peggy Jalenak, Mickey Wurzburg, Nancy Levinson, Marlene Gerson, and Arlene Schwartz attending the International Lions of Judah Convention in Israel in 1996.

Invitation to the Silver Anniversary Dinner Meeting of the Memphis Jewish Welfare Fund on January 19, 1961 at the Hotel Claridge.

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Miss Israel, Gila Golan, featured speaker for the 1962 Memphis Jewish Welfare Fund Campaign.

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Mr. And Mrs. Ronald Belz Selected Special Chairpersons For Festival
Pat Chafetz, president of the Memphis Jewish Community Relations Council, announced this week the appointment of Anice and Ronald Belz as chairpersons of the Memphis in May steering committee for the Memphis in May to coordinate Jewish community involvement in the festival, which will honor Israel this year.

"I am pleased to have Anice and Ron Belz, two outstanding young Memphis representatives of the Jewish community, in this significant role," stated Mrs. Chafetz. "They, along with a steering committee made up of capable and effective individuals from our community, are sure to insure the continuing Memphis in May's success and seeing that there is participation from all sectors of the Memphis Jewish community."

Mr. and Mrs. Belz have prepared for the chairmanship of this major committee through their participation in a recent Memphis Jewish Federation Mission to Israel along with Memphis in May officials.

Both are past participants in the Memphis Jewish Federation's Young Leadership Development program.

Members of the Memphis in May steering committee working closely with Mr. and Mrs. Belz are Phyllis Berz, Dr. Michael Fisch, Richard E. Wolf and Mrs. Chafetz.

Memphis Jewish Federation staff associate working with the committee is Arlyn Buring, director of the Women's Division. Uri Schae-

Ron and Anice Belz selected as Special Chairpersons for Memphis in May International Festival, Hebrew Watchman, January 20, 1083.



Senator Bob Corker speaking to MJF leaders at the JCC in April of 2018.



Pace Cooper and Chef Erling Jensen

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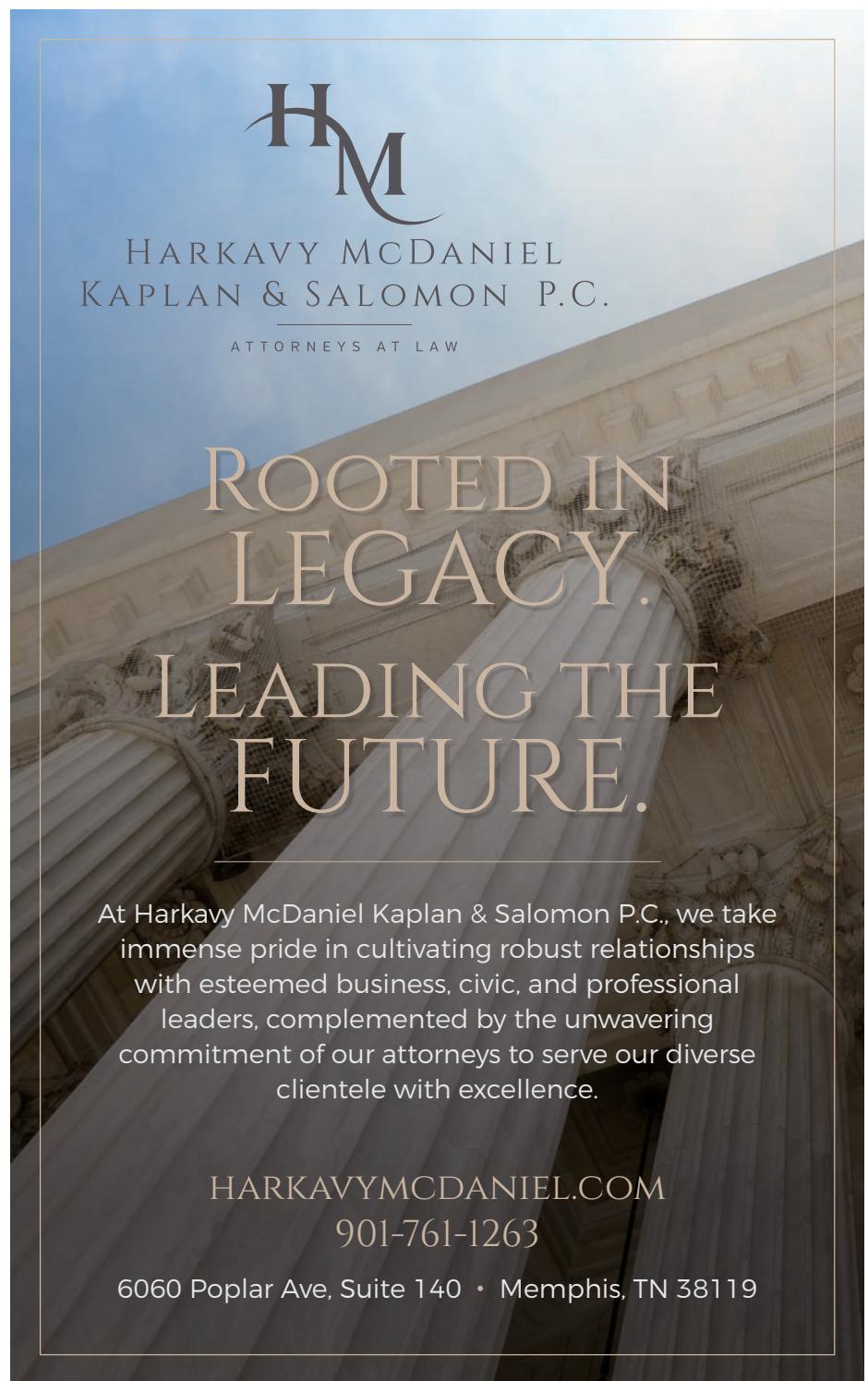




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Witnesses, Including Antisemitism Activist, Describe 'Absolute Bloodbath' In Bondi Beach Hanukkah Attack



Arsen Ostrovsky, an Australian-Israeli activist, was injured in the Bondi Beach Hanukkah attack on Dec. 14, 2025, in Sydney. (Screenshot)

By Philissa Cramer

(JTA) – Arsen Ostrovsky moved back to Australia from Israel two weeks ago to helm the Sydney office of AJAC, the Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council.

On Sunday, he was one of scores of people shot during an attack on a Hanukkah celebration at Sydney's Bondi Beach. At least 11 people were killed, as

well as one of the attackers.

Ostrovsky, who grew up in Sydney after leaving the Soviet Union as a child, was injured in the head and treated at the scene.

"It was actually chaos. We didn't know what was happening, where the gunfire was coming from. I saw blood gushing from me. I saw people hit, saw

people fall to the ground," he told a local news station, his head bandaged with blood visible on his face and clothing. "My only concern was, where are my kids? Where are my kids? Where's my wife, where's my family?"

He said he had been briefly separated from his family before finding them safe.

"I saw children falling to the floor, I saw elderly, I saw invalids," he said. "It was an absolute bloodbath, blood gushing everywhere."

The attack struck at a centerpiece of Jewish community in Sydney, home to an estimated 40,000 Jews, nearly half of Australia's total Jewish population. At least 1,000 people had turned up for the beachside celebration on the first night of Hanukkah.

"There were people dead everywhere, young, old, rabbi — they're all dead," Vlad, a Jewish chaplain with the State Emergency Service, told a local TV station. "And then two people died while we're trying to save them, because the ambulance didn't arrive on time."

He said the people who died were an elderly woman who had been shot in the leg and an "older gentleman" who was

shot in the head.

"It's not just people, it's people that I know, people from our community, people that we know well, people that we see often," said Vlad, who had covered his 8-year-old son with his body during the attack. "My rabbi is dead."

The rabbi who was killed, Eli Schlinger, moved to Bondi Beach as an emissary of the Chabad movement 18 years ago. He was the father of five children, including a son born two months ago.

"He wasn't some distant figure. He was the guy staying up late planning the logistics for a Menorah lighting that most people will take for granted. The one stressing about the weather. The one making sure there were enough latkes and the kids weren't bored," wrote Eliezer Tewel, another Chabad emissary, on social media.

"He was just doing his job. Showing up. Being the constant, reliable presence for his community," Tewel added. "And that's where the gut punch lands: He was killed while doing the most basic, kindest, most normal part of our lives. It wasn't a battlefield. It was a Chanukah party." **HW**

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Key Questions to Answer to Help Plan to Pay for Retirement

Provided by Mike Stein, Managing Director - Investments, Wells Fargo Advisors

Questions for Mike? You can reach him at 901.761.8151 or Michael.Stein@WellsFargoAdvisors.com • fa.wellsfargoadvisors.com/michael-stein

Your retirement could last 20 years or more. Now could be the time to ask yourself, "What do I want to do when I retire?"

It's an important question to ask sooner rather than later, as the answer could impact your retirement savings plans, so that you can align the retirement you want with the retirement you can afford. The first two steps in that process are: (1) decide what you want to do, and then (2) determine the potential costs.

The answers to these questions could help you take the first step toward creating the retirement lifestyle you hope to achieve.

What will I be doing during my retirement days?

- Do I plan to continue working past age 65 or after I reach my full retirement age? Full time or part time?
- Are there hobbies I want to pursue that will either cost money or make money?
- Is there volunteer work that may also have costs associated?
- Do I plan to travel?
- Are there things I enjoy doing that have related costs?
- What are the activities that make up my ideal retirement day?

Where will I be living in my retirement years?

- Will I stay in my current home or downsize to a smaller home or a rental property?
- Will I move to a retirement community or assisted living facility?
- Will I sell my home and replace it with an RV or other alternative living option?

What situations might occur that could impact my retirement expenditures?

- What health care coverage do I need for my specific health conditions?
- Do I have an emergency fund for unexpected situations such as a health care crisis or loss of property due to a natural disaster?
- What if I stop working sooner than expected?
- What happens if I experience a significant loss of income?

What are the barriers that are keeping me from investing?

- I have nothing extra to invest.
- I have education loans or other debt.
- I don't know how to start an investment plan.
- I have time to start saving later.

Next steps:

Prepare rather than panic. Review the questions above and create an outline from your answers. That outline will give you the framework to calculate the income you may need to support your retirement lifestyle.

Make the decision to adjust your spending patterns today. Choose something that you really don't need and redirect that amount to a savings or investment account. Take advantage of the growth potential over time. Pay yourself first instead of spending money on something that will not support your future retirement needs. Creating that nest egg now could lessen your stress about money.

Start or add to an emergency fund. Even if the amount seems very small, it is important to take the first step. As that amount grows and the saving behavior becomes a habit, you will likely gain confidence and momentum in your investment activities.

Meet with your financial advisor to review your answers and turn your outline into a plan that will help you work toward your goals. Your advisor has planning tools and other resources

to help you identify your retirement income needs.

Revisit your plan on a regular basis. Over time, your goals may change because of new opportunities or unexpected events. Periodic reviews can help you assess your progress and fine-tune your strategy.

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Long Island Man Gets Out of Jail Time on a Technicality



Shops on the main street in Montauk, N.Y. Credit: Beyond My Ken via Wikimedia Commons.

(JNS) – A man from Montauk on Long Island, N.Y., who admitted to spray-painting swastikas and antisemitic messages such as "Jews die" and "Jews burn" across the village from Oct.

to Dec. 2023, was sentenced on Nov. 14 to five days in jail. The New York Post, however, is reporting that he served no time at all.

Michael Nicholoulias, 75, pleaded guilty to two felony hate crimes.

On the day he was arrested and held in custody, he apparently received "good

behavior" credit. And because the sentencing occurred on a Friday, a county jail-time rule effectively erased the remaining days.

Nicholoulias, caught by police while spray-painting a swastika on a bench, told the court he intentionally targeted Jewish-owned properties. **HW**

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Netanyahu Vows to Visit NYC Despite Mamdani's Arrest Threat



Andrew Ross Sorkin interviews Prime Minister of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu remotely onstage during The New York Times DealBook Summit 2025 at Jazz at Lincoln Center in Manhattan on Dec. 3, 2025. Credit: David Dee Delgado/Getty Images for The New York Times.

By Joshua Marks

(JNS) – Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said [earlier this month] that he will “of course” visit New York, despite threats by mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani to have him arrested under an International Criminal Court warrant.

“I’ll come to New York,” the premier asserted in an interview via video link from Jerusalem with journalist Andrew Ross Sorkin at The New York Times DealBook Summit. “Yes, of course I will,” Netanyahu added.

Asked by Sorkin, a New York Times financial columnist and the founder of DealBook, if Israel’s longest-serving prime minister would want to talk to the 34-year-old democratic socialist, Netanyahu said, to laughter from the audience gathered at Jazz at Lincoln Center in Manhattan, that he would be open to the meeting if Mamdani “changes his

mind and says that we have the right to exist, that’ll be a good opening for a conversation.”

Mamdani said on the campaign trail and after the election that he would seek to enforce a 2024 International Criminal Court arrest warrant against Netanyahu if he set foot in the city. The Muslim, left-wing politician, who has built his brand around harsh criticism of Israeli policies and opposition to Zionism, refuses to recognize Israel as a Jewish state.

Legal experts say it is unclear whether a New York mayor has authority to enforce ICC warrants, and an arrest is seen as unlikely. Israel and the United States are not members of the ICC.

During the nearly 30-minute conversation on a wide range of topics, Netanyahu denounced the ICC arrest warrant against him over alleged war crimes in Gaza and

noted that ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan has temporarily stepped aside amid sexual misconduct allegations.

The 76-year-old leader argued that the Israeli Defense Forces has done more than any army to protect civilians, while accusing Hamas of using Palestinians as human shields to generate propaganda against Israel. Netanyahu linked criticism of Israel to a long history of antisemitism, saying old libels against Jews have been redirected at the Jewish state and that Israel is now fighting both a military and an information war.

The premier portrayed his domestic corruption case as baseless, saying the main bribery count had already been dropped and that remaining allegations involve gifts such as cigars and champagne. He expressed hope that Israeli President Isaac Herzog would grant him a pardon following his formal request.

President Donald Trump also wrote to Herzog asking him to pardon Netanyahu.

Sorkin noted that Netanyahu had appeared in court on the day of the interview, to which the prime minister responded that he is “supposed to spend three times a week, eight hours a week in that trial.”

Netanyahu called the trial “nonsense” and a “joke.” He prefaced those criticisms with a pivot to policy priorities, saying, “You know, I’ve got a few other things to do, and I think history beckons. We have opportunities for peace. We have enormous opportunities in AI and quantum and other things. I’ve already revolutionized the Israeli economy once into a free-market economy and it’s become a juggernaut, and now we have the ability to seize the future, which will not only help us but help the entire Middle East – the world, really.” HW

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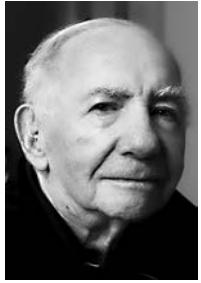


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Chanukah 2012



*Editor's note:
This story is being
reprinted in memory
of Ted Roberts in
appreciation of his
longtime service
as a newspaper
columnist.*

By Ted Roberts

(10/15-12) I've gotta start saving up for Chanukah. The older you get the heavier the fiscal load. Let me explain for some of my math deficient readers. A) You're three years old – your financial resources equal those of Stockton, California – bubkes, zip, garish. Nobody expects a present. B) You're eight years old. Gotta give Mom and Pop something – total expenditure five bucks. C) You're 80 years old – swarms of grandkids, great-grandkids, uncles, aunts, cousins, nieces, and nephews. If you were Bernake, you'd press the red button to print hundred-dollar bills or sell stacks of treasures. But since you're not a treasury big wig, you got

to raid your bank account. That's what Chanukah has come to for me. I think some rare Christian anti-semit in the 20s started the whole business. If we're gonna be broke due to Christmas giving, they may as well declare bankruptcy, too!

What I dislike about this expensive spurt of generosity is that it takes the spotlight off our huge superbowl win over those Syrians, who haven't changed from that day to this; except aided by Persians they've expanded their blood lust from just Jews to anybody hanging around the street corners, including Syrians. As some Greek philosopher who was probably deluged with obligations for Chanukah gifts said, "The more things change, the more they stay the same."

But it was a famous victory and the first since the Canaanite victors of the previous millennia. Of course, as usual there were more than swords and shields involved. Two powerful philosophies, Grecian and Jewish clashed. And the Greeks, for all their civilized reputation, were as pagan as a mud-sculptured

idol. But oddly enough, our war with the Syrian Greek armies was not a black and white divide between us and them. Many Jews more cultural than spiritual sympathized with our enemy – hard to understand their religious regression to Stone Age gods – multiple gods who fought and lusted like humans. A truce of the old lure of idolatry, which we succumbed to throughout our first two millennia in the land of milk and honey and idols. Amazing that it was so hard to extinguish while in the background the Creator constantly thunders about His unique and solitary role as creator. And how often does he promulgate: "I am a jealous God?"

Anyhow, this is a long way from my four dozen youngsters who line up for gifts will in front of my bank, my Visa card, my car loan, my Uncle Harry who hasn't worked – through good times and bad – since 2006.

It's hard to be Jewish. It would have been nice if our rebellion against Rome, a century or two later, had been successful. There, too, was a split within the Jewish community. Juno and Jupiter un-

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By Ted Roberts

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believably attracted some of our fickle ancestors. And the Roman victors rubbed the Temple. Did He not tell us He was a jealous G-d?

The syndicated humor of Ted, the Scribbler on the roof, has appeared in newspapers around the U.S., on National Public Radio, and numerous websites. HW

JD Vance Rejects Claim that Antisemitism is Growing Inside the GOP, Breaking His Silence on the Topic

By Asaf Elia-Shalev

December 4, 2025 (JTA) – Vice President JD Vance said Thursday that he does not believe antisemitism is surging inside the Republican Party, pushing back on prominent conservatives who have raised alarms about hostility toward Jews among young right-wing activists.

"I do think it's important to call this stuff out when I see it. I also, when I talk to young conservatives, I don't see some simmering antisemitism that's exploding," Vance told NBC News in an interview marking his first year in office.

Vance said antisemitism is wrong, stating that "judging anybody based on their skin color or immutable characteristics, I think, is fundamentally anti-American and anti-Christian." (Vance himself is a convert to Catholicism who

recently said he hopes his Hindu wife chooses to become a Christian in the future.)

Vance added, "In any bunch of apples, you have bad people. But my attitude on this is we should be firm in saying antisemitism and racism is wrong. ... I think it's kind of slanderous to say that the Republican Party, the conservative movement, is extremely antisemitic."

These remarks amount to Vance's most direct response to Sen. Ted Cruz and other prominent figures on the right who have in recent weeks have warned of rising antisemitism among conservatives especially after Tucker Carlson, a Vance ally, hosted Holocaust denier Nick Fuentes on his podcast.

Vance's comments land amid a larger,

unresolved debate inside Republican circles over how seriously to treat the rise of explicitly antisemitic figures such as Fuentes, whose online "groyper" movement has attracted a following among young GOP staffers and activists. Jewish conservatives and other right-leaning commentators have expressed alarm at Fuentes' influence, estimating that significant numbers of junior Republican staffers consume his content. Fuentes has described "organized Jewry" as a threat to American unity.

Vance's silence on antisemitism was a prominent topic of conversation at a recent confab for Jewish conservatives, where speakers questioned his close association with Carlson.

President Donald Trump recent-

ly defended Carlson after the podcast host interviewed Fuentes, saying, "You can't tell him who to interview." Carlson campaigned for Trump in 2024 and remains influential within the administration. Trump himself met with Fuentes and Ye, the rapper formerly known as Kanye West, at Mar-a-Lago in 2022, later claiming he did not know who Fuentes was.

Vance has taken a similarly restrained approach. He defended Carlson's son, Buckley, from accusations of antisemitism without addressing Carlson's interview with Fuentes. In October, he was criticized for responding to a college student's question about Jews and Israel without acknowledging its antisemitic framing. HW

ISRAEL INSIGHTS: Politicians and Generals

By Howard Weisband

Controversies continue to swirl about the Netanyahu Government. As I write on December 10, the Government and the Knesset are considering a watered-down Haredi draft bill and a politically controlled probe into the October 7 failures.

Both are under attack throughout the media, within public demonstrations, understandably from opposition politicians, and even from former directors of Israel's intelligence and security agencies, the Mossad most notably.

Add to those factors is the Prime Minister's public, very formal request of the President of Israel, Isaac Herzog, to fully pardon him and end his ongoing, time consuming trial. The stinging criticisms in this matter abound, led by Netanyahu's lack of admission of guilt or even wrongdoing in any way, and his refusal to step out of political life in exchange for the pardon. In fact, just the opposite, Bibi has announced his attention to run again in the upcoming elections.

We are now within a year of October 2026, which is the timing for the next mandated national elections. However, it is possible that within the upcoming months, perhaps in the spring, the Prime Minister and/or the Knesset could call for early elections should they feel that the timing could work to their advantage.

In any case, one feels that those elections are already in the air. Just this week, at a conference in Tel Aviv, the Jerusalem Post reported that former Prime Minister and upcoming candidate Nafali Bennett (he has already registered a new yet to be named party) said that his first three acts if he regains office will be to cancel the government's Haredi IDF exemption bill, cancel its "politicized" probe into October 7, and limit the term of the country's leader to eight years.

Bennett's intent would be to pass a more stringent Haredi draft bill, and establish a state inquiry into the October 7 failures. The latter would mirror that which occurred following the Yom Kippur War, including, for instance, retired Supreme Court judges on the panel rather than current ministers of Government.

Amidst these searing national issues there arose a public dispute between the Defense Minister Israel Katz and the IDF Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir. The Minister let it be known publicly that he disagreed and was challenging key appointments that the IDF Chief wanted to make, officers that would be serving under his direct command. In addition, Zamir also wanted to return to the prior IDF probe into its own October 7 examination, in order to strengthen military

recommendations and perhaps release further officers still in uniform. Here too the Defense Minister objected.

Given the current, ongoing war situation and the diplomatic measures surrounding it, plus the internal issues on the Government's agenda, the last thing needed was a public spat between a key Minister and the IDF Chief of Staff. As of December 10, it is being reported that compromises have been found, but mature, experienced individuals in these two critical leadership positions should have found a way from the beginning to resolve their disagreements outside the eyes of both the media and the public.

Yes, the military is subject to civilian oversight, meaning that the IDF must work within the policies and oversight of the Defense Ministry and ultimately the Government. However, the political echelon must be doubly wise as to how it handles and directs that relationship. In my humble opinion, the fault lies in this case with the Defense Minister who should not have allowed a new "political front" to have opened at this critical time.

As the dispute became public, Herb Keinon wrote on November 28 an excellent analysis in the Jerusalem Post, titled "In Israel's clash of politicians and generals, IDF holds the upper hand over

government."

Keinon first relates to bitter feuds between politicians, then writes: "What is less common – and far more problematic – is an embittered and very public rupture between Israel's political leadership and its top military brass. Yet that is exactly what erupted this week, with Defense Minister Israel Katz and IDF Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Eyal Zamir locked in a bruising confrontation that spilled into the open, dominated headlines, and led to public questions about whether the defense establishment – which is still managing four "hot" fronts (Gaza, Judea and Samaria, Lebanon, and Syria) – is losing its focus."

These unfortunate realities are figuratively and literally painful. Political and military leadership must trust one another and work together in a modus operandi for the good of the nation.

Howard Weisband served as Assistant Executive Director (1975-77) and Executive Director (1977-84) of the Memphis Jewish Federation. Following Aliyah with his family in 1986, he served as Secretary General of the Jewish Agency for Israel through 1997, and then in other senior professional positions in Israel. Now retired, he and Kayla live in Jerusalem. He can be reached at hweisband@gmail.com HW



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Mark Halperin is Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at local commercial real estate firm Boyle Investment. He has served as President of Memphis Jewish Home & Rehab and Temple Israel, as well as board member of the Jewish Foundation of Memphis, Memphis University School and the Union for Reform Judaism. In addition to his own philanthropy alongside wife Diane, Mark is particularly proud of spearheading The Temple Israel Cemetery Sustainability Fund with a group of six families who collectively donated \$2 million to create an endowment to ensure the financial stability of the Temple Israel Cemetery. Listen to an interview with Mark 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



February 2022: Lion Behind the Pin – First Forever Lion Fund was created by a mother for her daughter. When Mimi Grossman, z"l, worked with the Jewish Foundation of Memphis to draft her legacy plan, she knew she wanted her children to feel the joy of tzedakah as she had. One of the strategies she implemented to do this was to establish two Lion of Judah endowment gifts with Memphis Jewish Federation. One would ensure her gift would last forever, and the other would ensure her daughter, Lauren, could benefit from the joy that being a Lion of Judah had brought to her. As one of the founders of the Memphis-made "Lion Behind the Pin," Mimi understood the importance of legacy – both through words and through actions.

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