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EDITION 34

Rosh Hashanah/Fall 2018



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As the High Holidays approach, we are moved to reflect on Judaism, both spiritually and in our relationships with G-d.

In this edition, you will find articles about anti-Semitism, the Israeli Nation-State law, Judaism around the world, and social justice. King Solomon said in the book of Ecclesiastes that there is a time for everything: "a time for war, and a time for peace." It seems inherent in the Jewish people to question and debate every issue, including decisions made in the State of Israel. But my question to American Jews who are openly criticizing the state of Israel is: Why now, when people around the world are targeting Jews, and when we have seen the rise of anti-Semitism everywhere and in every form?

Israel is under attack from the south and the north. Jewish children near the Gaza border are constantly running to shelters to escape from missiles. The desert that Israelis transformed into a fruitful land is being set on fire by terrorists. All this while we get stressed in line waiting for our soy latte. Now is the time to reaffirm our unity and support for Israel, the Jewish State and the land of our people. And in doing so, it is also important to acknowledge our only true Muslim friends in Israel, the ones who serve in the army and fight on our side, the Druze.

While it is understandable that recent measures such as the moving of the Embassy to Jerusalem, the continued building of settlements, and the Nation-State law are entirely frustrating to many, can't we work together to help find a solution?

We need to improve the connection between Jews in the Diaspora and Israel. It will not help to criticize without affirming the biblical bond between Jews and Israel.

With so many in the Diaspora marrying "Jews by Choice," it is also not the time for the Orthodox rabbinate in Israel to disavow those who were married by non-Orthodox rabbis. Diaspora Jews need to be included in this discussion, or the distance between Israel and the Jewish people will grow. Please joins us at [Facebook.com/shalommagazine](https://www.facebook.com/shalommagazine), and send us your comments. Shalom Magazine is also available at www.issuu.com/shalomMA. May you and your family be blessed with a happy and healthy New Year.

Shirley Farber - Publisher

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Beth Sholom of Framingham

Temple Beth Sholom of Framingham is pleased to invite you to our annual HaYom service on the second day of Rosh Hashana. This year's service will be held on Tuesday, September 11, from 10:30 a.m. until noon. All ages are welcome, and temple membership is not required.

The service will include participatory singing, instrumental accompaniment, contemporary prayers and readings, and an innovative Torah service. There will be no formal sermon or haftarah reading at this service. The service will be led by rabbinical student Jessica Lowenthal Weber, with participation from congregation members.

Advance ticket (\$18) purchase is required. For more information, or to purchase tickets, please contact templeadmin@beth-sholom.org or call 508-877-2540 x205.

Beantown Jewish Gardens

Sukkot on the Farm will be held on Sun. Sept. 30 from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Powisset Farm in Dover. Join us to help with the fall harvest, build a Sukkah, learn about honeybees, sing, dance, craft, press cider and celebrate Hoshana Rabbah, a biblical day of judgement for rainfall in the coming year. Suggested donation \$10 adult/\$7 child. Rain or Shine! More information at www.beantownjewishgardens.org.

Israeli Stage

Bereaved, a play by Joshua Sobol, is receiving its English language premiere at Boston's Israeli Stage on Sept. 24 at 7 p.m. at District Hall, 75 Northern Ave. in Boston's Seaport District. Tickets are \$25 for the play presentation, followed by dialogue and a reception. Tickets and information: www.IsraeliStage.com.

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Chabad of Wellesley-Weston

Wellesley-Weston Chabad invites all to join our High Holy Days services and meals with NO CHARGE OR TICKET NEEDED. Check out the info at www.wjewish.org.

Shirat Hayam of Marshfield

Temple Shirat Hayam of Marshfield is pleased to announce its high holiday schedule. Tickets/suggested donations for non-members are \$300 to attend all four services, and \$150 to attend one service. They can be purchased at http://shirathayam.net/payments_donations.html.

Erev Rosh Hashanah, Sept 9 - 7 p.m.

Rosh Hashanah, Sept 10 - 9:30 a.m.

Kol Nidre, Sept 18 - 6:30 p.m.

Yom Kippur, Sept 19 - 9:30 a.m., Break-Fast in Ellis Hall, 7 p.m.

Please visit <http://shirathayam.net/> or <https://www.facebook.com/ShiratHayamMarshfield/> to see other events.



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Photos: Galya Feerman



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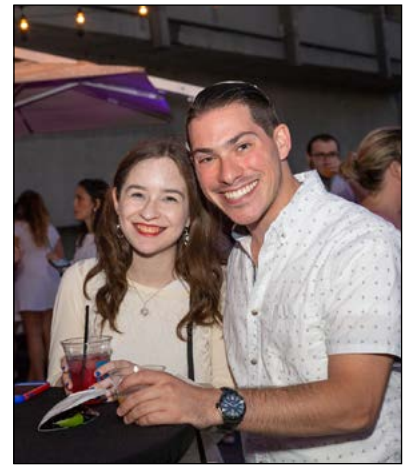
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YJP (Young Jewish Professionals) Boston's Tu B'Av White Party on August 2 gathered hundreds of young adults at the Revere Hotel in Boston.

Photos: Galya Feierman

White Party



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Rep. Capuano at J Street forum



Rep. Michael Capuano, Janette Hillis-Jaffe, and Nancy Buck, chair of J Street Boston and J Street national Board member

Congressman Michael Capuano addressed neutrality, Israel, and Congressional advocacy at J Street forum on June 18 at the Dante Alighieri Society in Cambridge. In a discussion with J Street’s New England Regional Director Janette Hillis-Jaffe, he stressed the importance of listening to different viewpoints and opinions.

Capuano acknowledged the significant ways in which J Street has shifted dynamics around Israel and the Middle East on Capitol Hill. When asked, he said that he would love to go to Israel, but would want to hear both sides.

“I think we have an obligation to do so. It’s got to be a two-way street, or you’ll never settle anything,” he said.

Capuano served as mayor of Somerville from 1990 to 1999 before winning the Democratic primary to succeed Joseph Kennedy II. He has since been reelected nine times.

Hillis-Jaffe, a Shabbat observant Sharon resident, holds a master’s degree in Public Health from the Harvard School of Public Health. Her international public policy work has included securing funding for anti-poverty and public health programs, as a development consultant in Israel.

“We appreciate Congressman Capuano making such an eloquent argument for active citizen engagement in both electoral campaigns and legislative advocacy,” said Hillis-Jaffe. “He demonstrated how J Street’s work has had a real impact on Capitol Hill dynamics around the Middle East, and we thank him for his support.”

JALSA

Larry Rasky, founder of Rasky Partners, received the JALSA distinguished leadership award for his commitment to civic engagement on June, 21, 2018. JALSA President Lawrence Bailis and JALSA Executive Director Cindy Rowe also pictured.



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Israel360 Graffiti Night in Somerville

Armed with paint brushes, stencils of historic Israeli and Zionist leaders, and a ton of great ideas, more than 100 young adults from around greater Boston this summer transformed a warehouse space in Somerville into a colorful, compelling Tel Aviv street scene. Israel360's "Graffiti Night," was led by Tel Aviv street artist and historian Murielle Cohen, who offered her thoughts on Israel's vibrant public art scene before helping the participants complete their creations. Music was provided by a Tel Aviv DJ (of course) along with Israeli drinks and snacks to fortify our many artists. To find out about future young adult programming, check in with www.israel360.org.



The University of Massachusetts was chosen as campus of the year by The David Project. Pictured with the award are UMass students Maxine Wiesenfeld and Santino Dandini.

L'Shana Tovah

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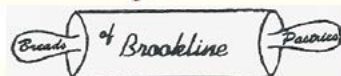
Lino Covarrubias, Karin Blum, Sarah Abramson, Kimberlee Schumacher, and Jeremy Burton. Photo: Craig Byer.

CJP's FACES Mission to Texas

A group of 29 Boston-based volunteers, organized by CJP, spent two days in San Antonio, Texas learning about the problems faced by families of immigrants and refugee seekers separated at the U.S. border and volunteering their time to help those facing an uncertain future after release from detention facilities. The mission was part of CJP's Fund to Aid Children and End Separation (FACES), an effort that has raised more than \$215,000 to support organizations, including the Interfaith Welcome Coalition, the Young Center, and Catholic Charities. While in San Antonio, the volunteers packed close to 1,000 children's backpacks with essential items, from food and water to hygiene products and even plush toys, as many children and their parents are often released from detention without any possessions. They then helped to distribute them at the San Antonio bus station. For more information on the campaign, please visit cjp.org/faces.

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Justice, justice shall you pursue

By Sandra Lilienthal, Ed.D.



With the holidays fast approaching (What??? Again???), we will once more be reading from the *Haftarah* of Isaiah on Yom Kippur. As we are fasting, and are proud of ourselves for doing so, our Bible brings us the famous words of the prophet (Isaiah 58:5-7):

“Is such the fast I desire, a day for men to starve their bodies? Is it bowing the head like a bulrush and lying in sackcloth and ashes? Do you call that a

fast, a day when Adonai is favorable? No, this is the fast I desire: To unlock the fetters of wickedness and untie the cords of the yoke to let the oppressed go free; to break off every yoke. It is to share your bread with the hungry, and to take the wretched poor into your home; when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to ignore your own kin.”

Just when we think we are doing one of the most important religious actions of the whole year, fasting on Yom Kippur, G-d’s words pound in our ears: if we think that fasting is enough to please Him, we have not understood the message; we have not grasped the big picture.

You see - among the 613 commandments spelled out in our Torah, many relate to taking care of those in need, whether the poor, the

orphan, or the widow. We are also commanded to treat the stranger with kindness, remembering that we were once strangers, enslaved in Egypt. If anyone can understand the lack of dignity of those under oppression, we - the Children of Israel - can. If anyone should have it clear that fighting for justice is important, we should.

As we read in Exodus 23:2, “You shall not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shall you bear witness in a cause to turn aside after a multitude to pervert justice.”

“Justice, justice shall you pursue” says the Torah in Deuteronomy 16:20. This is the core of a Jew’s moral life.

The Torah proposes a few instructions on how to establish a society based on justice. First and foremost, in order to achieve justice, a system of courts of law must be in place. Our judges should be carefully chosen, as we read in Deuteronomy 16:18-19: “You shall appoint magistrates and officials for your tribes, in all the settlements that the L-RD your G-d is giving you, and they shall govern the people with due justice. You shall not judge unfairly: you shall show no partiality; you shall not take bribes, for bribes blind the eyes of the discerning and upset the plea of the just.”

Justice is to be found not in courts, though. All relationships need to be governed by justice: workers and employers; shopkeepers and customers; teachers and students; doctors and patients; and so forth. Several rules in the Talmud regulate these relationships in an attempt to ensure fairness and justice. These laws are all based in passages in our Torah - laws that expect us to share our food and the product of our labor with the poor, as we read in Leviticus 19:9-10: “When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall not pick your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I the L-RD am your G-d.”

This is such an important concept that the Torah, which is generally sparse in its writing, repeats it a few chapters later, in Leviticus 23:22: “And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your

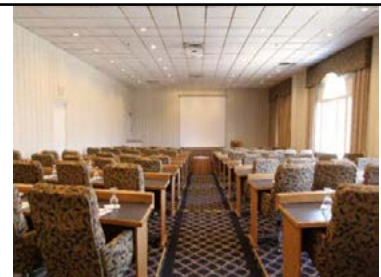
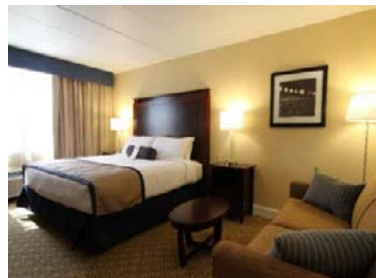
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Justice, justice shall you pursue

harvest; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I the L-RD am your G-d.”

There are also laws that expect us to pay our workers on time, as in Deuteronomy 24:14-15: “You shall not abuse a needy and destitute laborer, whether a fellow countryman or a stranger in one of the communities of your land. You must pay him his wages on the same day, before the sun sets, for he is needy and urgently depends on it; else he will cry to the L-RD against you and you will incur guilt.”

G-d states clearly (in Deuteronomy 15:4) in the Torah that we should build a society where there is no needy person. “If, however, there is a needy person among you, one of your kinsmen in any of your settlements in the land that the L-RD your G-d is giving you, do not harden your heart and shut your hand against your needy kinsman. Rather, you must open your hand and lend him sufficient for whatever he needs,” we read in verses 7-8 of the same chapter.

And we find laws that mandate the freeing of slaves and the release of credits every seven years. In Deuteronomy 15:1-2, we read: “Every seventh year you shall practice remission of debts. This shall be the nature of the remission: every creditor shall remit the due that he claims from his fellow; he shall not dun his fellow or kinsman, for the remission proclaimed is of the L-RD.” And in verses 12-15: “If a fellow Hebrew, man or woman, is sold to you, he shall serve you six years, and in the seventh year you shall set him free. When you set him free, do not let him go empty-handed: Furnish him out of the flock, threshing floor, and vat, with which the L-RD your G-d has blessed you. Bear in mind that you were slaves in the land of Egypt and the L-RD your G-d redeemed you; therefore I enjoin this commandment upon you today.”

We are reminded that each of us is created in G-d’s image, and as such, is expected to act in G-dly ways, as we read in Deuteronomy 10:17-19: “For the L-RD your G-d is G-d supreme and Lord supreme, the great, the mighty, and the awesome G-d, who shows no favor and takes no bribe, but upholds the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and befriends the stranger, providing him with food and clothing.

- You too must befriend the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” We are to treat the stranger with kindness, we read in Leviticus 19:33-34: “When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not wrong him. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as one of your citizens; you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.”

After reading all of these sources, which are just a few I chose, it should not come as a surprise to anyone that Jews have typically been on the forefront of all social action movements, whether it be feminism, labor unions, or the American civil rights movements. Fighting for justice, doing what is needed to protect the vulnerable, is ingrained in our religious DNA - it is what Judaism expects from each and every one of us. As we read in Micah 6:8, “He has told you, O man, what is good, And what the L-RD requires of you: Only to do justice And to love goodness, And to walk modestly with your G-d.”

This Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, when we reflect on our accomplishments last year and commit to doing even better next year, let us be reminded once again that G-d is waiting for us to step up to the plate and make this world a better place for all. Shanah Tovah to all!


Sandra Lilienthal is an adult educator in South Florida. She is a 2015 recipient of the Covenant Award for Excellence in Jewish Education.

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Rabbi Marc Baker Makes CJP Debut at Choose to Connect

CJP CEO/President Rabbi Marc Baker made his first appearance as the first new head of the organization in more than 31 years as the keynote speaker at CJP's Choose to Connect event at Congregation Shirat Hayam in Swampscott. Marc, who grew up in Lynnfield on the North Shore, said the theme, "Choose to Connect," had great resonance. "It really captures everything that we are. when we choose to remember, we choose to connect. Choosing to connect in some way could be the mission statement of the Jewish people and could be the title of the book to my Jewish journey." More than 100 attended the event.



Judith T. Sydney, Shari Sagan McGuirk, Rabbi Marc Baker, Karen Solomon, Alex Shube. Photo courtesy of CJP.

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The Israeli living in the streets of Rio

By Shirley Nigri Farber

Jews in Brazil are used to seeing homeless people begging for money on the street, but they would never conceive of the possibility of the person being Jewish.

One day in April, 2016, my childhood friend Ilana Cohen received a call from her bank manager in Rio de Janeiro, who told her that an Israeli beggar living at the ATM was going to be arrested. Ilana went to the bank to meet Olga Babaev, who vehemently said that she did not want to go back to the Holy Land.

Olga was born in Azerbaijan in 1959. After a series of unfortunate events she moved to Moscow, and in 1991, she emigrated to Israel with her mother and one child.

Surprised to find an Israeli citizen sleeping on the streets and begging for food, Ilana began to post information on Olga on Facebook and asked for help from the Rio Jewish community. On the same day, Olga got a bed at the Hebraica Jewish Community Center, and later moved to the senior home, Lar Uniao Israelita.

As I was following Ilana on Facebook, I wondered how I could help from Boston. So I translated the news about Olga into English on my various Facebook pages, hoping that someone in Israel would see it. I also sent the news to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. At the same time, Rio's online Jewish News posted an article on Olga's situation.

Two days later, I received a message on Facebook from an Israeli man who said that he believed that Olga was his mother. At this point, she had not mentioned having any children. So I gave him Ilana's contact information.

Using Apple's FaceTime, the mother and son talked and viewed each other for the first time in over 20 years. Olga explained that her son was taken away from her at the age of 7, as after an accident, the Israeli government accused her of negligence. He was later adopted and changed his last name. Upon entering the Israeli Army, he learned about his biological mother and two brothers. And for many years, he had been looking for her, until he saw the news on Facebook.

How did she end up with no money in the streets of Rio?

Before losing custody of her son, the single mother said that she used to work at a hotel in a position that utilized her language skills. Despite speaking Russian, Hebrew, Farsi, Juhur (the language of Jews from the Caucasus) and English, she found herself with no job, and living on the streets of Israel.

One day, she decided to go to France, and from there, she traveled to South America. In April, 2016, Olga arrived in Rio de Janeiro, a place she had heard was known for being warm and welcoming. She stayed at a hostel for two weeks and when there was no money left, began to sleep on the streets.

Olga distinctly remembers the day City Hall workers took her to a shelter, as she felt it was the worst place she had ever slept. She chose to sleep at an ATM because it was climate-controlled and had good security.

Rio de Janeiro doesn't have an Israeli consulate anymore, so Ilana had to contact the consulate in Sao Paulo. Representatives from the Israeli government tried to convince Olga to return to Israel, but could not force her to do so.

Olga mentioned the name of an uncle in New York. When I called him, he could not believe his niece was living on the street, and recalled that she had stayed for a while in his home. He agreed to send money to help her in Brazil. As Olga reconnected with her uncle, he put her in contact with the two older sons she had in Azerbaijan, who are now living in Israel.

She said she was forced to marry at the age of 15, and later left the house due to domestic violence. She left her two sons with their father, as was mandated by the laws of the Muslim country. She moved to Moscow with her mother and became pregnant again.

While living at the senior home in Rio, she had a very emotional conversation with her older son, with whom she had not spoken since she left Azerbaijan. When she could not stay at the senior home any longer, a member of the Jewish community offered her a ticket to Israel, but she chose Peru.

Media attention in Peru

After living for over 20 days at Jorge Chávez International Airport in Lima, in June of 2016 she was featured on the news on a television station, where her situation was compared to that depicted in Steven Spielberg's film "The Terminal." She became a tourist attraction, and members of the small Peruvian Jewish community began to flood the airport with food and clothes. They arranged for medical treatment for her, and even then-Peruvian Jewish president Pedro Pablo Kuczynski Godard became involved.



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The Israeli living in the streets of Rio

Olga's story is a tale of Russian Aliyah (immigration to Israel), Jewish life in the former Soviet Union, mental health, homelessness, arranged marriage, divorce in Muslim countries, child custody, adoption, and how Jewish people around the world rise up to help others in need.

Eventually, the airport director, frustrated with the situation, offered Olga a ticket to anywhere she wanted to go. She could not obtain a visa to see her uncle in the U.S., so she asked for a ticket to return to Rio.

Rio airport and the 2016 Olympic Games

Olga stayed for a few days at the airport, which was under heavy security because of the upcoming Olympic Games. As the wandering never seemed to end, Ilana picked her up at the airport, and was able to arrange for Olga to stay at a community member's rental propriety just outside Rio. That lasted for nine months, until she was no longer welcome. At that point, Olga was sent to the Israeli Embassy in Brasilia, but somehow ended up in the extreme north of Brazil, in Manaus.

Throughout the ordeal she was in touch with two of her sons, who asked her to go back to Israel, a place she describes thusly: "In Israel, I lost everything I have." With no money and just a small suitcase, she kept moving as if she was trying to forget her traumatic past.

Olga had mentioned to Ilana that she had bad memories of the former Soviet Union as a communist country, and that she had dreamed of going to Venezuela. Ilana laughs as she remembers how she tried to tell her about the bad situation of socialism in Venezuela today. Meanwhile, from Manaus, Olga took a bus to Venezuela, about 30 kilometers north.



Olga at her wedding; Ilana first meeting with Olga at the bank sidewalk; Olga entering the airplane to Israel



After she found out for herself that Venezuela, under an economic crisis, was not a dream land, she went back to Manaus, and from there, back to Rio.

This June, after she lost her passport, she arrived in Rio and with the help of the Jewish Federation secured a room at the Jewish seniors home Lar de Jacarepagua, while the Israeli consulate arranged for her final trip, with only a "laissez passer" that would not permit her to go anywhere other than Israel.

And in August 2018, Olga arrived at Ben Gurion Airport, where her oldest son was waiting.

I am only one of many people from all over the world who have been involved with helping her, or who have just followed Olga's story through social media. We hope that in Israel, she will finally find peace and the right support network that she needs.

Ilana Cohen is the director of Casa Rai, an assisted living facility in Rio that houses 13 Jewish adults with mental disabilities.

Shirley Nigri Farber is an international journalist, editor of Shalom Magazine, and attended Max Nordau Jewish Day school in Rio de Janeiro with Ilana Cohen.

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N. E. Chair Irv Kempner, son of Holocaust survivors, says, “MOTL strengthens Jewish identity, builds teen ties with their heritage and Israel, teaches about prejudice and how to combat it.” Participant Micah Kanter says, “The trip strengthened my commitment to make sure #neveragain becomes a worldwide mantra.”

For Teen applications/information: Aaron L Kischel, Director, MOTL Teen Programming, Day Schools, Synagogues & Youth Movements / kischel7241@gmail.com / 781-799-4765.

ADULT TRIP

April 30 – May 12, 2019

Poland, Hungary & Israel

The Adult MOTL brings 10,000 adults from around the world to learn about the Jewish community that once flourished in Europe, the tragedy of the Holocaust, and the establishment and survival of the State of Israel.

The group marks Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day with a march from Auschwitz to Birkenau, concluding with Hatikvah. **The journey includes a side trip to Budapest to explore the demise of the Hungarian Jewish community after 1944.** From there, MOTL celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's 71st Independence Day, accompanied by educators and Holocaust scholars. *Your trip doesn't end once you get home. Participants continue to correspond and reflect on their experiences. These bonds last a lifetime!*

For general information/2019 registration and/or info on teen MOTL scholarship donations, contact Irv@MOTLnewengland.org / (617) 285-8620, or visit <https://motlnewengland.org/>.

For Major Gifts donations, contact Jim Slovin – Jim@MOTLnewengland.org. **To register,** email Mel Mann - melmann1154@gmail.com



Contact: Aaron L Kischel,
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781-799-4765

To Register for Adult March:

Mel Mann
melmann1154@gmail.com

Info: Irv Kempner, N.E. Chairman
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Prisoners of Hope

David Bernat, PhD

The Shofar's blast, heard on these Days of Awe, signals moments of renewal: personal, communal, and national. Of course, the essential contemporary moment of national renewal for our people was the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. That modern moment of renewal was ushered in by founding fathers and mothers such as Herzl, Jabotinsky, Rav Kook, Ben Gurion, Begin, and Golda.

However, it was, as the anthem proclaims, the culmination of *HaTikvah Bat Shnot Alpayim*, The Hope Born of 2000 years. As such, the Zionist pioneers of the 19th and 20th centuries were giving life to the words of the Biblical prophets.

But have we seen the prophetic dreams fulfilled, or are we, in the words of Zechariah (9:12) *asirei hatikvah*, "prisoners of the hope," whose ideals are far from being attained? I admit that, of late, I have been both buoyed and dismayed. As Isaiah predicted (54:3), Jerusalem has indeed burst out to the right and left, along with Tel Aviv, Haifa, Beer Sheva, Modiin, and Efrat. Moreover, the desert has bloomed and new skyscrapers gleam everywhere. Yet, did not Isaiah also affirm a vision of inclusion? "...enlarge the site of your tent...(54:2);" "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the peoples... The One who gathers the dispersed shall gather all the more (56:7-8)."

And now, I fear that this vision is being undermined and its foundations eroded.

I refer to the way the government reneged on its promise of a space for egalitarian worship at the Kotel, and most disturbing, the arrest of Rabbi Dubi Hayoun at 5:30 on the morning of July 19 for performing weddings unsanctioned by the Chief Rabbinate. Dubi is a leader in Israel's Masorti (Conservative) movement, the Rabbi of Kehillat Moriah in Haifa, and a force for Torah, spirituality, Jewish pluralism, and constructive multi-faith engagement. Dubi has a close relationship to the Boston Jewish community, and the Synagogue Council, due to his involvement in CJP's Boston-Haifa partnerships.

Thus, his arrest hit many of us particularly hard. As the head of an agency whose mission is framed by a commitment to Arevut, connectedness and unity, I find myself increasingly discouraged by the marginalization of communities, institutions, and congregations that do not conform to the narrow norms of the government-sponsored religious establishment.

Still, at Synagogue Council, we are doubling down on our engagement with the Land and State of Israel. Toward that end, our upcoming Israel Experience and Unity Mission, a collaboration with Hebrew College's Adult Learning Department and Keshet Educational Journeys, departs on February 26, 2019.

During this two-week immersion, we will study the ancient origins of the Synagogue through text and archaeology, and, on the modern landscape, connect with our Haifa partners, including Rabbi Hayoun. We are especially excited about solidifying our relationship with innovative, forward-looking Jewish organizations, working for the cause of pluralism, such as Ve' Ahavta TLV Experience and Dror Israel. I invite all to join us on this inspiring journey. For information, please email me at dbernat@synagoguecouncil.org or visit our website, www.synagoguecouncil.org.

In the meanwhile, I wish you a Shana Tovah, a healthy and happy New Year, with the hope that the Shofar calls us to a year of optimism, where our ideals and aspirations come to fruition.

David Bernat, Ph.D., is the executive director of the Synagogue Council of Massachusetts.







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Understanding the Nation-State Law

By Steven Schimmel

Israel's recently enacted Nation-State legislation has caused controversy both in Israel and here in the United States. Immediately after its passage dozens of harshly critical articles popped up in media sources around the world.

Detractors claim the bill changes the equal status of Israeli citizens, related to ethnicity, race and religion. Much of the criticism has focused on the law's perceived failure to balance between the country's character as both a Jewish state and a democracy. Since the founding of the country in 1948, Israel has been guided by the principles written in its Declaration of Independence which refers to "complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex."

Critics of the recent legislation note that similar language is absent from the Nation-State law. While the law did not revoke any rights or privileges of any group, there are concerns from many both in Israel and abroad that its passage reflects the increasing aggressiveness of right-wing political parties in Israel.

Supporters of the bill have responded to critics, saying that the rights of all of the country's citizens are enshrined in other laws, and that affirming the country's Jewish character in no way diminishes the rights of any citizen.

Since becoming law on July 19 large demonstrations have taken place in Israel, including protests from Israel's Druze community, which numbers around 150,000 and is seen as a very loyal minority group. Druze leaders have been especially vocal in protest of the law's passage, claiming the law makes their community second-class citizens.

A turning point came on the night of August 4, when large demonstrations were held around the country, including a mass protest in Tel Aviv's Rabin Square. Coalition ministers immediately responded to these protests, expressing assurances that they would quickly address the concerns of the Druze community. The Prime Minister's



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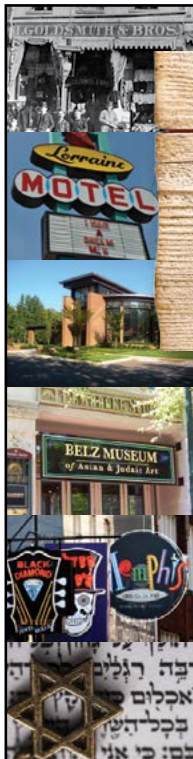
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Understanding the Nation-State Law

Office also stated that a plan was being drafted to ensure the status of the Druze population.

Not surprisingly, Knesset Members from the Arab Joint List party were arguably the most outspoken critics of the Nation-State bill. Arab lawmakers and Arab-Israeli community organizers have assailed the bill and been actively calling for its annulment.

Many individual Jewish communities in the United States have also criticized the bill, seeing it as damaging to Israel as a democracy. Unfortunately many of the reports on the bill, or at least those in English language media, made a lot of errors in their reporting. Dozens of articles wrongly referenced some of the earlier provisions that were far more controversial. Many of the most contentious aspects that were dropped from the final bill were still reported on as if they had been enacted into law. David Hazony wrote in the Forward on July 23, "Everything you've heard about the Nation-State Bill is Wrong," pointing out some of those errors.

While it is unclear what effect the bill will have on Israeli citizens, it is obvious that Israel's harshest critics have used the passing of this legislation as another opportunity to cast Israel in a bad light. In our society which seems to be increasingly critical of Israel, these reports are another obstacle to making the case for support, although those who truly hate Israel will concoct their own conspiracies with or without false information about this bill.

As a supporter of Israel, it is important for me to know what all of this really means - and that isn't easy. It is almost as if one would have to be an expert on Israeli politics and society to truly understand the implications of the bill. It's hard to separate the legitimate criticism of the bill from normal opposition speaking points, especially at a time when anything coming from Prime Minister Netanyahu's coalition is unpopular with the Israeli left and with many in our own communities, and at a time when Israel's detractors are more vocal than ever.

While many of the reports have been critical, other articles have

tried to explain this bill by assuring that it changes nothing in Israeli society or by giving examples of similar legislation from European countries. Reading and digesting all of this information really makes the whole situation even more confusing. Perhaps most tellingly is the fact that the Druze community, which is without question a community supportive of Israel, engaged in such vocal and widespread protests.

At the same time, the fact that lawmakers were so swift to address the Druze concerns really says something positive about Israel. It should tell us that despite what anyone might say about Israeli politics or this bill, Israel continues to cherish, protect and support its non-Jewish minorities. These are some of the tenets and principles that make us love Israel - the fact that it is Jewish and democratic.

That there is a minority non-Jewish community that lives as Israelis is something Zionists should care about and support. Of course, Israel being the Jewish state and the homeland of our people is essential, and the flag, anthem and status of Hebrew should reflect that, but Israeli lawmakers should be certain to show that Israel embraces the minorities that it embrace it.

Steven Schimmel is Executive Director of the Jewish Federation of Central Massachusetts. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of the Jewish Federation or its members.



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Anti-Semitic acts involving Israel 'Far More Likely' to create hostile climate for Jewish Students

Tammi Rossman-Benjamin

In AMCHA Initiative's annual report on anti-Semitic activity on U.S. campuses, we found that Israel-related anti-Semitism was considerably more likely to contribute to a hostile environment for Jewish students than incidents involving classic anti-Semitism. And a closer analysis revealed that Israel-related incidents are alarmingly shifting from boycotting Israel to boycotting actual students and student groups.

Recognizing that anti-Semitic incidents given equal weight in an audit may not have an equal impact on Jewish students, AMCHA's latest study sought to look beyond the tallies. We created a new index for distinguishing between incidents whose perpetrators deliberately intended to inflict harm on Jewish students, and those that expressed bigoted opinions about Jews or Israel, but did not show evidence of intent to harm. Using this new index, we closely examined incidents of anti-Jewish (classic) and anti-Zionist (Israel-related) harassment, vandalism and assault on U.S. campuses that occurred in 2017. We also examined whether each incident was carried out by more than one individual and if perpetrators were affiliated with groups, given that "mobbing," or bullying by multiple persons or a group, is known to enhance the emotional stress of its victims.

The analysis revealed the following:

Israel-related incidents were significantly more likely to contribute to a hostile campus and have multiple perpetrators

- Classic anti-Semitic incidents outnumbered Israel-related incidents three to one, but less than 25% of classic incidents demonstrated intent to harm, whereas 94% of Israel-related incidents did.

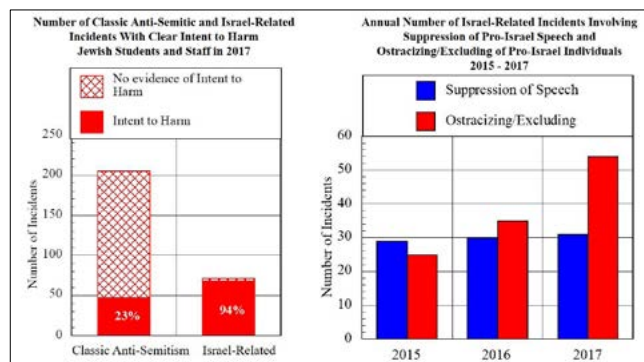
- Israel-related incidents with intent to harm were 6.5 times more likely to have multiple perpetrators and 7 times more likely to be affiliated with groups than classic incidents.

Genocidal expression was the most common feature of classic anti-Semitic incidents, though most incidents did not show intent to harm Jewish students

- Incidents of genocidal expression of Jews, such as a swastika, rose dramatically from 2015 to 2017 with a possible decrease occurring in 2018.

- 75% of the incidents involving classic anti-Semitism in 2017 involved genocidal expression, though less than one-fifth showed evidence of intent to harm Jewish students or staff.

Suppressing speech and ostracizing and excluding Jewish and pro-Israel students from campus life were the most common form of Israel-related anti-Semitic incidents



- 44% of Israel-related incidents involved behavior intended to silence expression.

- 76% involved behavior that directly and personally targeted students or groups for denigration or discrimination, including open calls to boycott interaction with, exclude, or expel actual on-campus students or student groups.

Unfortunately, university administrators have been far less likely to adequately address Israel-related incidents than acts of classic anti-Semitism, despite the fact that Israel-related incidents are greater contributors to a hostile campus for Jewish students. In large part, this inequity is a result of the fact that classic anti-Semitism may violate state or federal anti-discrimination law, and most schools' policies prohibit the harassment of students based on characteristics, including religion or ethnicity.

However, university administrators rarely recognize anti-Zionist harassment as discrimination, because they see it as motivated by political considerations rather than ethnic or religious ones.

The reality, however, is that harassment is harassment. The effect of pervasive exclusionary and harassing behavior on students is the same, regardless of the motivation of the perpetrator or the identity of the victim. Therefore, it must be addressed, and addressed equitably.

There are immediate steps that university administrators can and should take, including issuing an "equity statement" assuring all students that they will be equally protected from harassment and intolerant behavior; amending university policies to prohibit peer-on-peer harassment that suppresses freedom of speech and assembly and interferes with any student's access to educational opportunities; and instituting educational programs to encourage the expression of a wide range of views in a civil, productive and respectful manner.

Rossman-Benjamin is the director of AMCHA Initiative, a non-profit organization that combats anti-Semitism on U.S. college campuses. Its daily Anti-Semitism Tracker documents incidents of anti-Semitism and is accessible to the public at www.amchainitiative.org.

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A Three-Legged Approach to the Awesome Days Ahead

By Rus Devorah Wallen, LCSW, ACSW

As we approach the upcoming Jewish holidays, many of us become anxious and stressed. Some of us are concerned about guest lists for the holiday meals and some about Yom Tov menus. Others become overwhelmed about grocery shopping, purchasing Judaica items, clothes or shoes and more.

Ironically, we may get so overwrought with mundane matters that we forget the whole point of our spiritual preparation for these days of Awe and Judgment before Hashem. Ironically, if we think deeper into this matter, the internal and spiritual preparation should be of greater import and impact! If anything “should” stress us out, it should be this!

As it says in our Rosh Hashanah prayers, on these days, we are judged - “written and sealed” - regarding “Who will live, and who will die? Who by fire, and who by the sword?” (from the Rosh Hashanah liturgy). Pondering these issues of “life and death” is enough to put someone of great fortitude into a tizzy. Maybe that is why we often throw ourselves into the mundane preparations, in an unconscious avoidance of the truth - the *emet*.

How can we practically prepare ourselves spiritually, mentally, and physically for these days of awe?

In my previous articles for *Shalom Magazine*, we discussed the work I do with clients and students to alleviate anxiety and other challenges. Various cognitive-behavioral techniques, as well as meditation and relaxation exercises, can be beneficial, life-changing skills for personal well-being and happiness. However, in treating anxiety disorders, or even just worrisome thinking, I believe we need a third approach. Just as a stool can only stand when there are at least three legs, we need to work in three directions - body, mind, and soul:

1) The first element is to calm the physical body down. When the Stress Response (“Fight, Flight, Freeze or Fawn-mode”) occurs, one’s sympathetic nervous system is activated. The heart rate and blood pressure rise, and cortisol and norepinephrine course through the system. In my *Giftpak* to the readership (see link below), I share some basic techniques we can all employ as we get ready for the awesome days ahead (and any days in this 21st century).

The first technique to relax the body only requires two or three minutes nightly of a slow, deep, intentional breathing technique called *The Breathing Contest*.™ Additionally, I recommend that everyone try to breathe as much through the nose as possible (vs. mouth breathing or “over breathing”). For some people, this is very difficult. As in any new effort, the beginning’s sincere and consistent efforts will bear significant fruit. Since there are dozens of benefits to doing nostril breathing, this may need to be addressed in more detail in another



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A Three-Legged Approach to the Awesome Days Ahead

article. Suffice it to say, that these few benefits are worth the effort:

- It filters the oxygen as it enters the nose via the small cilia hairs inside the nostrils.
- it cools (or warms) the air to allow it to acclimate to the body's own temperature.
- it diminishes over-breathing (which is associated with dozens of problems), since the air is going through a much smaller aperture than the mouth.
- it increases nitric oxide (NO) in the system, which is good for immunity and many other benefits.

2) The second element is to calm down the mind. Although all of us have stress in our lives (financial, interpersonal, work or growth-related, etc.), different people react differently under pressure. It is known and proven that the magnitude of the stress we experience is more dependent on our attitudes and reactions to what occurs than the actual issue at hand. Some of us take things in stride, and some of us get "hooked" on or paralyzed by basic life challenges. Some "Let go and let G-d" and others become immobilized and stuck, hijacked by unhelpful thoughts, ideas, projections, and perceptions. In this element, we learn how to reframe things, looking from a different, more positive perspective. In his famous book "The Will to Meaning," Viktor Frankl said, "To detach oneself from even the worst conditions is a uniquely human capability."

Additionally, the use of meditation techniques to settle the mind is extremely useful. This creates a "slowing down" of thoughts so one can respond to situations more sensibly, versus reacting in a "knee-jerk" fashion. As Dr. Frankl again so aptly put it, "Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom."

Through meditation and relaxation techniques, we can create a longer "space" so that we have the power to choose our response. This is what I call the ability to respond, or "ResponsAbility." It is the

"responsible" thing to carefully choose our response. *The Beginner's Meditation on the Breath™* is only six minutes long, and when done daily, brings amazing benefits within a very brief time.

3) The third, and possibly the most important leg of the stool is to calm the soul. In my estimation, a person living in these complex times cannot completely feel truly peaceful and tranquil without belief in Hashem. Upsetting events and circumstances can leave a person at a loss if she or he does not believe there is meaning or a Divinely orchestrated plan in the works. The third leg is *Bitachon* - Trust and Assuredness. When one knows that *Hashem* (G-d) has a reason for every circumstance, and we trust that He knows what is best for us, we can be calm and tranquil, resting assured. I suggest that my clients read either "Chovos HaLevavos, Sha'ar HaBitachon - Duties of the Heart: The Gate of Trust," or "In Good Hands: 100 Letters and Talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe on Trust in G-d."

In short, since each of us is one holistic being, we cannot have an incomplete approach. We must enhance ourselves in body, mind, and spirit to best respond to our loved ones and especially *Hashem*, especially with the holy days approaching. May we all have a blessed year of GeFeN - *Gezunt, Parnosso, and Nachas* - Health, Livelihood, and Pride - from all of our loved ones. Enjoy my gifts to you, and may they help you get through these Days of Awe and all your future Awesome Days!

GIFTPAK J - A Three-Legged Approach

<http://bit.ly/2OrMgM8>

Rus Devorah (Darcy) Wallen, ACSW, LCSW is a psychotherapist, educator, motivational entertainer, and composer living in Amherst, New York. In addition to her private therapy practice, she offers training to groups and individuals. For free downloads of mindfulness exercises contact her at RD@Toratherapeutics.com, and listen to her sound healing audios and music at www.reverbnation.com/rdwallen or visit her website at www.Toratherapeutics.com.



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Letter from a Jew in Paris

By David Cohen

People often ask me what it's like to be a Jew in France these days. My answer is usually the same - it's very easy. With over 250 kosher restaurants in Paris alone and the 2nd highest diaspora community after the U.S., Jews, as the recent film "ils sont partout" ("The Jews" in English) portrays, are everywhere.

From every corner of the capital to both its richer and poorer suburbs, you will find a synagogue, and kosher food in the local supermarkets. Finding an Ashkenazi minyan would be a lot harder though, as the majority of the Jewish population today is descended from the Maghreb, with Moroccan, Algerian and Tunisian Arabic-speaking Jews replacing the German and Yiddish speaking Alsatian Jews of pre-war France.

The horrific terrorist attacks of the last few years against the community in Toulouse and later at the kosher supermarket in Paris (a part of the Charlie Hebdo attacks) are not forgotten, but have become part of the wider general threat against the modern French way of life. The army patrols major tourist sites now as well as some synagogues and Jewish schools, because after the Bataclan attacks, where 130 people were murdered simply for going about their normal life, French society woke up to the threat of Islamic terrorism toward all of society, and not merely "the Jews."

Does that mean anti-Semitism has disappeared? Far from it. Attacks from the far left and the far right, especially those linked to Israel, continue. However, the government of Emmanuel Macron is firm in supporting the Jewish community, insisting that they are an "inseparable part of France."

An example from last year highlights the situation, where at a commemoration of the Vel' d'Hiv roundup (the first round up of Jews by French police on behalf of the Nazis in July 1942), Macron solemnly declared, in front of survivors, their families and Israel prime minister Netanyahu, that "the Vichy did not come from nothing, and did not return to nothing."

This was the first-ever acknowledgement by a French President that anti-Semitism was also a French problem before the war, and that the collaborationist government did not disappear. Rather, many civil servants and policemen went unpunished after the war for their involvement in the deportations and genocide.

"France organized this," he stated. For Jews of course, this was merely stating the obvious - but it caused an uproar, and the President was attacked from both the right and left.

Why, you might reasonably ask? Marine Le Pen and her far-right National Front attack the President for apologizing again for the Holocaust. "Vichy was not France; the true French government was in exile in London, and in any case, they are weakening France with admissions of guilt," they say.

The far left, meanwhile, attacked the President for clearly equating anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism, when he called the view that Israel is some kind of racist state a "reinvention of anti-Semitism" that must be fought.

While the majority voted for Macron in the last election, millions did not and chose the far right or far left candidate - a disturbing thought for Jews everywhere. This political argument, though, actually reflects a much older schism in French politics, which while it affects us deeply, is not always about us.

I am talking of course about the Dreyfus affair, the "Trial of the Century," according to the New York Times, where a Jewish corporal was

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Letter from a Jew in Paris

falsely accused of treason and the whole country tore itself apart for a decade. Citizens were either for or against him. Emile Zola's famous "J'accuse" open letter to the President at the time, accused Dreyfus of betraying the principles of the state: liberty, equality and brotherhood.

The Dreyfus affair was not really about the man himself or the army, or the mostly useless information that a traitor was giving to Germany. It was a societal battle between the secular, mostly Paris-based intellectuals and the royalist, Catholic provinces. The sight of pogroms and attacks on Jews in the streets of France in 1899, within the modern, liberal so-called light of democracy and freedom, was shocking. In fact, to some extent, it inspired a young Theodore Herzl to write his thesis on the future for the Jews, in their own sovereign state in their ancient homeland.

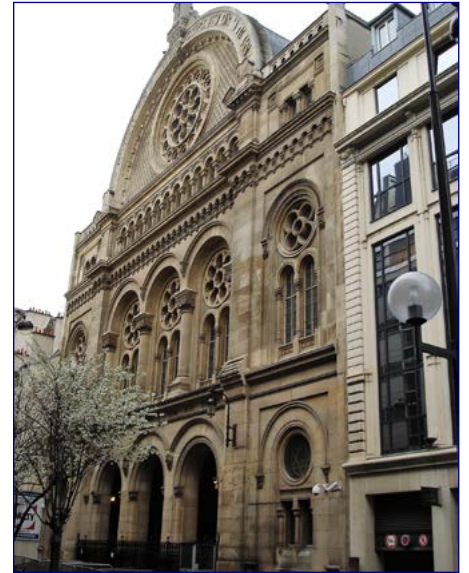
The "Dreyfusards" may have won that battle, but the Vichy collaborationist regime was the payback. Even today, the echoes are felt in the politics of the far right, who perceive a Jewish influence everywhere, and venerate a strong, militant past that is white and Catholic, unsullied by immigrants or Jews.

Thankfully, however they remain a mostly maligned view, and the preoccupations of the young French Jews of today are of an altogether different nature. Earlier this year, a protest took place outside the grand central Synagogue de la Victoire, the great symbol of Jewish integration and acceptance in France in the late 19th century and the seat of the grand Rabbi of France. It was not, however, anti-Semites or even anti-Israeli protesters with their banners and noisy chants outside. Instead, it was young members of the community themselves, demanding a change to the old guard and an apology from a community leader who had disparaged both gays and members of France's small but growing liberal community.

Despite everything, however, at this summer's famed "Paris Beach" festival along the River Seine, a group called JewSalsa is pumping out Israeli dance classics and salsa music as tourist and locals, Jews and non-Jews move their bodies to the beat in the sweltering heat. They are one of many official groups providing entertainment, and there are no security guards or bag checks. This is hopefully the future of Jewish life in France, the same as we would hope for in any of our communities - safe and secure, confident and proud, open and egalitarian.

David Cohen is a British, Australian and Israeli Jew who has been living and working in the City of Lights for the last four years. As a tour guide, he offers tours of Jewish Paris and can be contacted at secretparistours@gmail.com.

Pictures: the author at a synagogue in Yangon, Burma where his grandmother was born; Synagogue de la Victoire from wikipedia.



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80th Anniversary of the 1938 Evian Conference

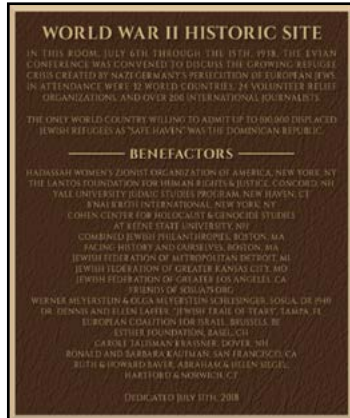
On July 10 and 11, the 80th Anniversary of the 1938 Evian Conference was convened at the Hotel Royal in Evian, France. Graciously hosted by the Hotel Royal & Evian Resort on a breathtaking venue on Lake Geneva, this historic event was conceived of and directed by JLTV's East Coast Director of Business Development Elihu Baver.

Proclaimed "Evian II" by Shimon Samuels, the 30-year Director of International Relations for the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Paris, the "International Educational Symposium on Human Rights and Global Anti-Semitism"

took place in the same room where the 1938 ill-fated Conference was convened by then-US President Franklin Roosevelt. There, only one country out of 32 in attendance, the Dominican Republic, offered "safe haven" for European Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi persecution.

Participating as keynote speakers were International Jewish leaders from some of the world's leading Jewish and human rights organizations, in addition to World War II and French historians, academicians, authors, filmmakers and French government officials.

With the Symposium theme of "Remembering the Past and Plotting a Course for the Future," part of the program included the dedication of a Commemorative Plaque, which will be affixed to the wall within the hotel where the 1938 Conference, known as "Hitler's Green Light to Genocide," was originally convened. This Plaque will remind future generations of the far-reaching significance and consequences of what happened during the original Evian Conference.



The Commemorative Plaque



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National Jewish Retreat 2018

The National Jewish Retreat 2018 took place in August at the Rhode Island Convention Center in Providence, Rhode Island. The National Jewish Retreat is a division of the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute, the adult educational arm of Chabad Lubavitch.

Rabbi Menachem Gurkow (right in the photo) of Shaloh House Chabad of the South Area was among the 1000 attendees.



Jewish Food Conference



The 7th Boston Jewish Food Conference took place on June 10 at Temple Israel in Boston. Rabbi Aaron Philmus, Temple Torat Yisrael, Leora Mallach, Director Beantown Jewish Gardens, and meteorologist David Epstein

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Denying the Shoah: A Violation of Memory

By Prof. John J. Michalczuk and Prof. Susan A. Michalczuk

The August 2017 "Unite the Right" white supremacist demonstration in Charlottesville, Virginia remains a disconcerting reminder that in spite of having survived the Shoah, the Jewish community is still under attack.

As Neo-Nazi and KKK extremists shouted "Jews will not replace us," and "The Jewish media is going down," others chanted the Nazi slogan "blood and soil," an allusion to their so-called pure Aryan heritage. In an evening rally of hate, a contemporary re-enactment of the night-time rally from Leni Riefenstahl's propaganda film "Triumph of the Will," the supremacists carried torches, fanning the flames of violence and intimidation with a call on their website to burn down Congregation Beth Israel, the only synagogue in Charlottesville.

Such scenes of anti-Semitism, coupled with racist attacks on African-Americans, recall the moral tragedy of the Shoah acknowledged across the globe.

Against the background of the hatred of these far-right demonstrators who target the Jewish community, other extremist voices violate the memory of the Shoah through their persistent and insidious denial of the Third Reich's attempt to eliminate the Jewish race from the face of the earth. The civil rights organization The Southern Law Poverty Center, which tracks issues such as this, refers to the Institute for Historical Review, founded in 1978, as a pseudo-academic organization dedicated to "promoting Holocaust denial and defending Nazism."

Holocaust deniers in the journal Historical Review maintain that the Holocaust is pure fiction, a hoax perpetuated by a Zionist conspiracy. Even today, there are deniers who negate the documented horrors of the concentration camps, the site of ghastly gas chambers and crematoria, while recasting Auschwitz as a type of "Disneyland."

When Professor Deborah Lipstadt challenged the deniers of the Shoah in her groundbreaking 1993 book "Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory," and labeled British author David Irving as a Holocaust denier, Irving sued the historian in British court. The 2000 case, *Irving v. Penguin Books and Deborah Lipstadt*, brought into sharper focus the distortion of history in Holocaust denial for both the British and American press. Although at that time, Irving claimed Lipstadt's book had deprived him of his livelihood and had made him a target of hatred throughout the world, Professor Lipstadt won the libel case.

Almost two decades after the actual trial, the 2017 film *Denial* with Rachel Weisz as Deborah Lipstadt introduced the topic to an even larger public. Irving continues his claim of engaging many like-minded believers from the younger generation who follow him on social media. As a voice of Holocaust denial, Irving refutes the



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Denying the Shoah: A Violation of Memory

documentation from the Auschwitz crematoria, insisting that the events and records lack evidence and accusing the eyewitnesses of lying. Lipstadt's initial academic study of 1993 has contributed to exposing Irving's aberrations.

Given the incontrovertible evidence that the Holocaust really took place: the array of documents from the Third Reich itself, the testimony of Jewish survivors, and the memorial sites at Dachau and Auschwitz, it is hard to fathom how anyone could challenge the unspeakable atrocities of the Holocaust. Nevertheless, even countries with strict laws against Holocaust denial, such as Germany and Austria, struggle to balance freedom of speech and historic authenticity.

Memory links the past with the present to offer a future of hope with the human bond remaining strong and intact, able to remember, to mourn, and to live.

A year ago, the "Unite the Right" Charlottesville rally evoked harsh memories of Nazi Germany as the media graphically broadcast the demonstration. Witnessing Jews and African-Americans as targets of aggression and oppression, many across the globe wondered what had become of the solemn pledge, "Never Again." Denying the reality of the Holocaust shatters memory.

John J. Michalczyk, director of the Film Studies at Boston College, has taught literature and film since 1974. His publications, lectures and documentaries principally deal with WWII, the Holocaust, genocide and conflict resolution. Susan A. Michalczyk, a professor at Boston College, teaches comparative literature, art, and film, with an emphasis upon the autobiographical narrative/memory experience. In her film work with her husband, Michalczyk's focus is on issues of social justice and human rights.

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Beth El's commitment to social justice includes work on immigrant and refugee support, LGBTQ rights, voter rights, environmental issues, interfaith relations, and healthcare. Twelve years ago, we established the MetroWest Free Medical Program, the first medical clinic housed in a synagogue. On Tuesday evenings, Beth El's sanctuary is transformed for licensed physicians, nurses, and social workers to provide free medical services to individuals who lack health insurance. A year ago, we declared ourselves a sanctuary in support of immigrants. We recently canvassed with Freedom for All in support of transgender rights. Beth El members have traveled to North Carolina for voter registration drives. Members volunteer on Build Days in support of Habitat for Humanity to build homes for families in need. The Beth El Tzedek Scholarship Fund provides financial support to students at Framingham State University.

Our commitment to social justice is matched by our commitment to educating our children and lifelong learning. Our Be-InspirED education program teaches students from pre-K to 12th grade. Those

becoming bar and bat mitzvah and their parents study together for a semester and take a retreat with the rabbi and cantor. Siyyum (12th grade) graduates present essays about their Jewish identity. Our Adult education program brings luminaries and Jewish thought leaders to Beth El for provocative and informative discussions on everything from Jewish portrayal in film to Muslim-Jewish relations.

As a Ruderman Foundation Congregational Partner, we have received recognition and financial assistance for improvements to our building, events and educational programs, with the goal of increasing access for people with disabilities.

For 17 years, Rabbi David Thomas and our cantor Lorel Zar-Kessler led services and partnered with lay leaders and congregation. When Rabbi Thomas announced his retirement, we began a search for a new rabbi. Many months later, our congregation voted unanimously to make Josh Breindel our new rabbi. Rabbi Breindel previously served for nine years as the spiritual leader of Temple Anshe Amunim in Pittsfield, where he reinvigorated the religious school, developed an annual summer lecture series, initiated interfaith services, and built ties between the temple and the broader faith and civic communities

We are excited to have Rabbi Breindel as our new spiritual leader.

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According to the National Institutes of Health, one in five adults in the United States experiences mental illness each year, but only 41 percent of those adults receive treatment. Why isn't it 100 percent?

Because stigma still exists.

Mental illness is often perceived as less "real" than physical illness, or as a sign of weakness or a character defect. Many people hold negative attitudes toward people with mental illness, and, for many, mental illness is a source of shame. That, in turn, leads people to hide their condition, making it less likely that they will seek treatment.

Brookline resident Kitty Dukakis has made it her mission in recent decades to break down this stigma, and recently she has helped to launch a new initiative in her hometown to raise awareness and understanding of mental health.

The new initiative, called the Spirituality and Mental Health Discussion Group, is based on the latest research from McLean Hospital on programs that address spiritual and religious issues, beliefs, and practices in treatment. Such programs have been found to be helpful by reducing depression, anxiety, stress, and even migraine headaches. They also demonstrate positive psychological results such as happiness, gratitude, and hope.

The goal of the new initiative is to engage participants in a powerful conversation about the connections between spirituality/religion and mental health. All religions and levels of faith are welcomed.

Running the program is Hadassah Margolis, a clinical social worker at McLean Hospital and the Lead Therapist at its Department of Spirituality and Mental Health, where she helped develop the hospital's first-ever Spirituality and Treatment groups. She is a newly-elected Brookline Town Meeting Member, having defeated a longtime incumbent, and she is the founder of Inspo:Expo, a grassroots initiative

that will host its second annual Brookline Social Action Fair on MLK Day 2019.

Hadassah and Kitty met at the recent CJP Ruderman event in May, "Celebrating Inclusion: Opening Doors to Jewish Community," which focused on mental health inclusion in synagogues. The two decided to launch this pilot effort in July at their synagogue, Kehillath Israel in Brookline.

The initial 5-session series sold out, and a second series was also well-attended. Using a cognitive behavioral framework, participants explore how spirituality/religion and mental health impact each other, both in positive and stressful ways. Participants have commented:

The handouts stimulated great discussions, and the topics each week provided a structure for conversation.

Hadassah was a superb facilitator,

encouraging participants to communicate openly.

- evening session participant.

It's really great to hear different points of view on religion and spirituality from people of diverse backgrounds

- daytime session participant

A fall series will be held at Temple Emeth (194 Grove St., Chestnut Hill). This 18+ discussion will meet for five Mondays, 7-8 p.m., from Oct. 15-Nov. 12. All religions and levels of faith welcome. Space is limited to 10 participants. Tuition is \$100, with a reduced fee option.

If your synagogue or institution is interested in hosting a group, or to register for the series at Temple Emeth or get more information, please email Hadassah at margolis.hadassah@gmail.com.

Picture: courtesy of BrooklineHub.com



Kitty Dukakis and Hadassah Margolis



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Yom Kippur and Vegetarianism

By Richard H. Schwartz, Ph.D.

There are many connections that can be made between the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur and vegetarianism:

1. On Yom Kippur, Jews pray to the “Living G-d,” the “King Who delights in life,” that they should be remembered for life and inscribed in the “Book of Life” for the new year. Yet, typical animal-based diets have been linked to heart disease, stroke, several types of cancer, and other chronic degenerative diseases that shorten the lives of 1.4 million Americans annually.
2. On Yom Kippur, Jews pray to a “compassionate G-d,” who compassionately remembers His creatures for life. Yet, there is little compassion related to modern intensive livestock agriculture (factory farming), which involves the cruel treatment and slaughter of over 9 billion farm animals in 1997 alone in the United States.
3. On Yom Kippur, Jews pray to G-d, “Who makes peace,” to be inscribed into the “Book of Life, Blessing, and Peace.” Yet, animal-centered diets, by requiring vast amounts of land, water, energy, and other resources, help to perpetuate the widespread hunger and poverty that often lead to instability, violence, and war.
4. On Yom Kippur, Jews are told through the words of Isaiah in the morning prophetic reading that the true purpose of fasting on that day is to sensitize them to the needs of the hungry and the oppressed, so that they will work to end oppression and “share thy bread with the hungry. (Isaiah 58:6,7).” Yet, 70 percent of the grain produced in the United States is used to fatten up farm animals, while 15 to 20 million of the world's people die annually from lack of adequate food.
5. One of the most important messages of Yom Kippur and the preceding days is the importance of *teshuvah*, of turning away from sinful ways, from apathy, from a lack of compassion and sensitivity, and returning to Jewish values, ideals, and mitzvot. Vegetarianism is also a way of making a significant turn away from a diet that has many harmful effects to one that is consistent with Jewish mandates to take care of our health, treat animals kindly, protect the environment, conserve natural resources, help the hungry, and seek and pursue peace.
6. The Yom Kippur liturgy has a prayer that includes the statement that “we are G-d's flock, and G-d is our shepherd.” Since Judaism teaches that people are to imitate G-d in His acts of compassion and caring, shouldn't we be treating G-d's defenseless creatures in the ways that we want G-d to treat us?
7. On Yom Kippur, Jews ask for forgiveness for the sin of “casting off responsibility.” Vegetarianism is a way to assume responsibility for our health, for animals, for the environment, and for the world's hungry people.



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Yom Kippur and Vegetarianism

8. Yom Kippur is a time for reflection and soul searching, a time to consider changes in one's way of life, a time to make decisions for improvement. Hence, it is an excellent time to switch to a diet that has so many personal and societal benefits.

9. According to the Jewish tradition, our fate is sealed on Yom Kippur for the coming year, but repentance, charity, and prayer can avert a negative decree. However, people have determined the fate of animals before they are born, and there is virtually no possibility of a change in the cruel treatment and early slaughter that awaits them.

10. Yom Kippur is the day of atonement, a day of being, in effect, at-one with G-d. One way to be more at-one with G-d is by adopting a plant-based diet, and thereby not harming animals, since "G-d's tender mercies are over all of His creatures." (Psalm 145:9)

11. Yom Kippur teaches that, while it is often difficult, old habits can be broken. Thus, the days surrounding Yom Kippur provide a good period to break habits related to the consumption of animal products.

12. The afternoon service for Yom Kippur includes the reading from the book of Jonah which tells how Jonah was sent to warn the people of Nineveh that they must do teshuvah - change their sinful ways in order to avoid destruction. Today, the whole world is like Nineveh, in need of redemption, and in danger as never before from a variety of environmental threats. Today, in a sense vegetarians are playing the role of Jonah, pointing out that a shift away from an intensive animal agriculture that has significant negative effects on the environment, and a shift toward vegetarian diets have become global imperatives, necessary to shift humanity from its current perilous path.

13. The book of Jonah relates how Jonah was sent to the non-Jewish city of Nineveh to urge them to change their sinful ways. This teaches that G-d is concerned about the fate of all of the world's people. Vegetarianism is a way to show such concern and hence to imitate G-d's attributes of caring and compassion, since this diet requires far less

land, grain, water, fuel, and other resources, and hence can contribute to a reduction of the widespread hunger that afflicts so much of humanity.

14. The book of Jonah also shows G-d's concern for animals. It ends with G-d's statement, "Should I not then spare the great city of Nineveh with more than one hundred and twenty thousand human beings...and much cattle?"

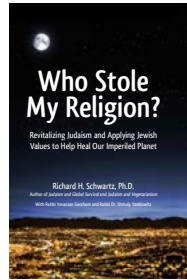
15. On Yom Kippur, one of the many sins that we ask forgiveness for is "the sin we committed before Thee in eating and drinking." This can be interpreted in terms of the harm that animal-based diets do with regard to human health, animals, the environment, and hungry people.

16. On Yom Kippur, Jews are forbidden to wear leather shoes. One reason is that it is not considered proper to plead for compassion when one has not shown compassion to the creatures of G-d, whose concern extends to all of His creatures.

17. Rabbi Israel Salanter, one of the most distinguished Orthodox Rabbis of the 19th century, failed to appear one Yom Kippur eve in time for the sacred Kol Nidre prayer. His congregation became concerned, for it was inconceivable that their saintly rabbi would be absent or late on this very holy day. They sent a search party to look for him. After much time, their rabbi was found in a Christian neighbor's barn. On his way to the synagogue, Rabbi Salanter had come upon one of the neighbor's calves, lost and tangled in the brush. Seeing the animal in distress, he freed him and led him home. His act of compassion represented the rabbi's prayers on that Yom Kippur evening.

In summary, a shift to vegetarianism is an important way to do *teshuvah*, to turn away from a diet that is harmful in many ways, to one that is in accord with the many significant teachings and values that Yom Kippur represents.

Richard H. Schwartz, Ph.D. is the president emeritus of Jewish Vegetarians of North America (www.JewishVeg.org) and the author of Judaism and Vegetarianism, Judaism and Global Survival, and Who Stole My Religion?



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Rosh Hashanah Questions



By Tamar Lilienthal

Rosh Hashanah might not have four traditional questions like Passover does, but there is still plenty to ask about the seemingly strange customs of the holiday. Even people who have been celebrating it for decades often do not know where certain practices come from! In an effort to give your holiday an extra touch of meaning, here are four "questions" about Rosh Hashanah customs. But don't be thrown off if

a question has multiple answers - as the old saying goes, "Two Jews, three opinions!"

1) Why do we dip an apple in honey?

As it is perhaps the most well-known tradition of Rosh Hashanah, many people have heard that we dip an apple in honey to symbolize the sweet year that we want to be blessed with. And while honey is definitely sweet, why is the apple our fruit of choice? Why not something even sweeter, like a peach or a banana?

One answer given is that in Song of Songs, King Solomon compares the Jewish people to an apple. The verse states, "As an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved amongst the sons (nations)." Thus, by eating an apple at our Rosh Hashanah table, we are reminding G-d of how special we are to Him, and we hope that in return He will gift us a blessed year.

Another reason given for the use of an apple is that according to the Midrash, the Garden of Eden smells like an apple orchard. Not only that, but in the biblical story when Jacob comes to ask for blessings from his father, Isaac, the commentators tell us that he smelled like the Garden of Eden, and more specifically, that Isaac could identify an apple orchard scent. And according to some opinions, this entire story occurred on Rosh Hashanah.

2) Why do we eat pomegranates?

Shana Tovah

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Rosh Hashanah Questions

Are there really 613 seeds in a pomegranate, as we are taught in preschool? Probably not. But the reason we eat pomegranates on Rosh Hashanah is found in the blessing we say before eating them - "She'yirbu zchuyoteinu ka'rimon," that our merits be many, like the seeds of a pomegranate. Not only are we asking G-d to find our merits (and not our faults), but the many seeds of the pomegranate symbolize the many mitzvot that we hope to fulfill.

3) Why a fish head? (And why do some people use sheep/ram heads?)

The most common answer to this question is that we eat a fish head to symbolize our hope that in the coming year, we will be strong leaders and not weak followers. (Some also add that the head symbolizes moving forward, and not trailing behind within the previous year.) However, why specifically a fish?

One opinion suggests that fish are very fertile and multiply quickly, and thus, by eating the head of the fish, we are asking G-d for increased fertility in this coming year. Another opinion adds that fish reproduce discreetly, and that therefore, we eat a fish head to symbolize that we wish to emulate the fish's trait of modesty. A third opinion states that fish do not have eyelids, and therefore it seems as though they never sleep. This symbolizes G-d's constant vigilance over us, and our responsibility to always act according to His ways.

Some Jews (mostly in Sephardic communities) use a sheep's or ram's head instead of that of a fish. The reason given for this is that it commemorates the ram that was brought in place of Isaac at the end of the story of the *Akeidah*. By reminding G-d of the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his own son, we hope that He will judge the Jewish people favorably and give us a good year.

4) Why do we eat a new fruit/wear new clothes on the second night of the holiday?

This tradition stems from a Talmudic discussion on how long Rosh Hashanah is.

"But why an argument," you may ask. "Isn't it clearly two days?"

While one opinion holds that indeed, Rosh Hashanah is two days long, there is another opinion that states that Rosh Hashanah is actually one elongated day. If that were the case, then there would be no reason to say the blessing of *Shehecheyanu* on the second night, since it wouldn't be the start of a new day of festivities - simply the continuation of the previous one.

To fix this "problem," we wear new clothes and/or eat a new fruit on the second night of Rosh Hashanah, since both of those things give us reasons to say *Shehecheyanu*. Thus, if Rosh Hashanah is two days long, then our blessing covers the second day of the holiday. If Rosh Hashanah is one long day, then our blessing is directed at something else. This way, we cover all opinions!

There is so much more meaning to Rosh Hashanah than can be encapsulated in just four questions. No matter what you are curious about, take some time this year to learn something new about the holiday. Here's to a year of more learning and growth!

Shanah Tovah!

Tamar is currently a high school senior at Rohr Bais Chaya Academy in Tamarac, Florida. She is an avid reader and writer, and hopes to study in Israel for a year after high school.

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Inside an IfNotNow hive in Boston

By Susie Davidson

IfNotNow has been in the news lately for disrupting a late June Birthright group. Five female members stood up near the end and voiced their views on ending the Gaza boycott, and the Israeli presence there. They then abruptly left to join Breaking The Silence, former IDF soldiers who share their concerns and conduct global speaking tours.

Their actions have been both roundly condemned and emphatically supported by the international Jewish community. For those of us in the middle, who look at the conflict as a whole and try to understand each side's point of view, we may find it inappropriate that these young women were on a free trip to the Holy Land that they then chose to disrupt. And yet, we understand their grievances and realize this may be the only way they can voice them.

Nonetheless, especially with a recent Pew survey revealing that the majority of American Jews are also sympathetic to such criticism of current Israeli policies, this is a group that cannot be ignored. Varied news sources have called IfNotNow's Generations Y and Z members the possible new face of young leftist Jews.

What exactly are they like? Certainly serious and determined, but as I learned, neither are they steadfast and somber.

At an IfNotNow gathering earlier this summer in the Back Bay, several dozen young Jewish activists (a "hive"; the national movement is unofficially referred to as a "swarm") often broke out in applause, cheers, and laughter.

Slides were shown of Eritrians and other groups creatively protesting in Israel. But there was no overt criticism heard in the room, no bashing. "That's not what we are about," said a kephah-wearing attendee (one of several yarmulkes in the room, amid a fair amount of nose jewelry).

They sang Hebrew songs, including Hebrew chant instructor Rabbi Shefa Gold's Ozi v'Zimrat Ya Vayahi li lishuah ("My Strength [balanced] with the Song of G-d will be my salvation" [Psalm 118:14, Exodus 15:2]).

Phoebe Rosen of Arlington, who has a background at Workmen's Circle, quoted author and professor Toni Cade Bambara (1939-1995): "The job of the artist is to make revolution irresistible."

IfNotNow, formed in the aftermath of Operation Protective Edge in 2014, is a nonviolent group rooted in Judaism, their website states "We celebrate Jewish cultural diversity as a source of resilience," it reads. "We connect our movement to Jewish traditions, languages, rituals and practices, knowing that there are as many ways of being Jewish as there are Jews."

Other points appeal to the conscience of the American Jewish community to help grant freedom, dignity, civil, political and economic rights to Palestinians. IfNotNow does not take a unified stance on BDS, Zionism or the issue of statehood.

"If I am not for myself, who will be for me? And if not now, then when?" it asks, quoting Hillel The Elder's famous 1st Century BCE words.

IfNotNow local actions have included an April 3 chain-in at the Israeli Consulate to encourage a public response opposing the use of live ammunition against demonstrators in the Gaza Strip. Eight members were arrested by Boston police as they blocked the entrance.

"We carry the imprint of ancestors who struggled for thousands of years to preserve our tradition,...and refused to dwell in despair," the site's "Our Story" section explains.

"We too are scarred by our people's trauma. Our families are their families, and our grandparents their parents.... But ... our freedom cannot be achieved absent the freedom of our neighbors," it reads.

"We will be the generation to transform our community's support for the occupation into a call for freedom and dignity for all," one attendee said at the gathering.

"We're trying to make a more humane situation for Palestinians and Israelis," said another attendee.

This was a group of dedicated, well-informed, and serious-minded young people who just might represent our future.

Recent flareups of anti-Semitism were brought up, as was the escalation in Gaza. On April 7, in the haze of thick, dark smoke of burning tires, Yaser Murtaja, a 30-year-old journalist with a wife and child who was wearing a press jacket, was shot and killed at the Gaza-Israel border.

"Often, Palestinian non-violent resistance is met with violence from Israeli soldiers," said Sara Sandmel. One Hive member helped set up an alternative seder outside last year's AIPAC conference.

"Because we have long been targeted by anti-Semitism, we are fearful of our own safety, and haven't taken the safety of other peoples as seriously as we should. Our goal is for the American Jewish community to turn its support for the occupation enforcement into a call for freedom and dignity for all - Israelis, Palestinians, and Jews," said another.

"We are building a flourishing, joyous, liberated Jewish community that stands for freedom and dignity for all. If not now, when?" the site states.

Susie Davidson contributes to various news outlets and authored a 2005 book and documentary film, "I Refused to Die," about local Holocaust survivors and liberating soldiers.

An advertisement for Listen Up! Music Store. The background is a vibrant blue with a circular pattern. In the center, there is a vinyl record with a black center. To the right, a hand is shown holding a guitar. The text "Music is our passion." is written in white at the top. Below it, "Listen Up!" is written in a large, yellow, cursive font. To the right of "Listen Up!" is a blue oval logo with the words "MUSIC STORE" in white. At the bottom, there is a white banner with the text "PROUD TO SUPPORT THE CENTER FOR ARTS IN NATICK".

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Keeping the Faith in Our Democracy

By Rachael Dubinsky

In the Jewish faith, the High Holidays are an important time for reflection. While we celebrate a New Year, we are also afforded the opportunity to think about ways we can work together to make the world a better place. And as I take stock of my life, as a young Jewish woman, I can't help but think about how our Jewish values are at stake in this year's midterm elections, and what we can do to take back our democracy.

2018 is an important year, chiefly because voters across our country will have the chance to bring their Jewish values into the voting booth with them during the upcoming midterm elections on Nov. 6. And that is why I'm so proud that my employer, the Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action, has decided to form a 501(c)(4), JALSA Impact, to harness the power of the Jewish community of Massachusetts and apply it to electoral organizing.

For decades, JALSA members have worked to change laws relating to immigration, health care, criminal justice, the environment, and so much more. Particularly since the Presidential election in 2016, however, we have seen that it is no longer enough that the progressive Jewish community work to change public policy. We have reached a point where we must also change the policy makers in Washington.

JALSA Impact is a new vehicle for Jews to help restore some form of checks and balances in America. If we can harness the power of our community to flip the House of Representatives on Nov. 6, we will be able to move our country in a direction that more closely reflects our progressive Jewish values.

Rabbi Yitzhak famously taught that "A ruler is not to be appointed unless the community is first consulted." (Babylonian Talmud Berachot 55a) Political participation is deeply embedded in our faith, and many Jews enthusiastically participate in the American electoral process by voting in large numbers. Because we take this civic obligation so seriously, during the civil rights movement and at many other times throughout our nation's history, we have felt compelled to speak out to ensure that all citizens are afforded the opportunity to vote and have their votes counted.

Today, it's not just that we have a President who feels he has a license to disrespect people based on their religious beliefs, sexual orientation, income level or immigration status. It's that our society's character is in question. Will we work together to elect leaders who reflect our shared humanity?

This is a matter that rises above simple partisanship, it's a matter of standing up for our core Jewish values, chief among them, "welcoming the stranger" and "treating others with dignity and respect." As Jews, it is our faith in kindness and compassion that gives us our sense of urgency to stand up for others.

By actively engaging in the political process, JALSA Impact volunteers will be reaching out to people in key states and talking to them about why it is so important to vote on Nov. 6. We will be working with our local and national partners to bring together volunteers to support candidates who are running in critical House races throughout the country. We will be phone and text banking, running postcard drives, and canvassing, all of which are activities that are directly aimed at turning out the vote on Election Day.

This isn't just another run of the mill "Get Out the Vote" effort. The 2018 election is the start of a movement that can protect immigrant families. It is an opportunity to come together and fight to repair our broken criminal justice system and bring resources to those who have been left out and left behind. It is a chance to stand up for the LGBTQ community, a woman's right to choose, a child's chance at a good education and so many other important causes.

And perhaps most importantly, the results of the 2018 midterm election will be a statement of who we are as a nation. It is critical that we do everything in our power to show that kindness and compassion are still foundational principles in our democracy.

So please engage with JALSA Impact: sign up to come to a phone bank or canvassing event, bring a friend, make a donation. We need all hands on deck in order to stand up for justice. For more information, visit www.jalsaimpact.org.

Rachael Dubinsky is the Director of Political Engagement at JALSA Impact, a newly formed 501(c)(4) organization, which will be harnessing the power of the progressive Jewish community to make electoral change.

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Y'ladim BaTeva, headed up by Rabbi Katy Allen of Ma'yan Tikvah - A Wellspring of Hope, is a new ten-month program for elementary school children and open to all families seeking a Jewish education for their kids. Developed around a significant outdoor component, there will be weekend outdoor classes, weekday online classes, and family Shabbat programs. Children and their families will:

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- An optional, traditional Hebrew decoding and prayer learning track is also available.

Space is Limited. Contact Rabbi Katy Allen at rabi@mayantikvah.org or visit <https://www.mayantikvah.org/children/> for more information.

Congregation B'nai Torah of Sudbury

Congregation B'nai Torah of Sudbury, an inclusive Reform community that embraces Jews by birth, Jews by choice, interfaith couples and families and the LGBTQ community, announces the continuation of its successful "Try Us Out" program for families seeking to join a connected Jewish community.

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New England Youth Congress



Rashi students with Mya Cook, third from right, and Deanna Cook, third from left



Rashi peer leaders

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL)'s *A World of Difference Institute* held its 24th Annual New England Youth Congress in April at the Boston Sheraton Hotel. The Youth Congress unites more than 1500

middle school and high school students, teachers and community leaders from over 70 schools across New England.

This year, educator and activist Brittany Packnett spoke, as did Mystic Valley Charter School's Mya and Deanna Cook. The Cook sisters spoke out against their school's discriminatory hair policy.



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Canton Chai Center



The Jewish Women's Circle is the highlight of the month for many women on the South Shore. Each month, the group meets to participate in workshops, explore Jewish themes, and have a good time. Women of diverse affiliations and backgrounds join together for friendship and fun. This July, they met to celebrate Rebbetzin Rivka Horowitz's birthday and learned all about the importance of celebrating your Jewish birthday at every age. You can join the Jewish Women's Circle in Canton and experience the fun for yourself. Contact Rivka at Jewishcanton@gmail.com or 781-929-1455.

*Trip to tour Chasidic Brooklyn & Pilgrimage to the Lubavitch Rebbe's gravesite to pray.
Sunday, Oct. 21, 8 a.m.-8 p.m. \$50/Person. To RSVP or for more info, please visit Jewishcanton@gmail.com.*

*Jewish Jazz Night - Sunday, Nov. 4 at 5 p.m.
Desserts and Drinks at the Chai Jewish Center,
576 Washington St., Canton. Tickets are \$18/Person. To RSVP or for more info, please visit Jewishcanton@gmail.com.*



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The Silly World of Chelm

The Mayor's Shoes

The little village of Chelm decided it was time to elect a mayor. By general agreement they chose Yankel. Now Yankel wondered, "How will strangers know that I am the mayor?"

A town meeting was called to address the issue. Everyone agreed with him that there had to be a way for strangers to know that Yankel was the mayor.

They presented the question to the Old Sage of Chelm. "That is an excellent observation," the Old Sage declared. "If we got him a special uniform, strangers would think we are a military community. So we cannot."

"And," exclaimed Mottel, "if we got him a fine satin kaftan, strangers would confuse him with our wise Old Sage of Chelm!"

"Why not get him a special pair of shoes that would be made of leather, but painted with shimmering gold paint?" suggested Moshe.

"Indeed," they all agreed. "A pair of golden shoes would be perfect. Then when a stranger came to town he would know instantly that he is the mayor."

And so the golden shoes were made. "But wait!" shouted Yankel, "If I wear golden shoes, they will become covered in mud the minute I walk in our streets. In Minsk they would be ideal because the streets are paved. But, here in Chelm, they would be covered with mud in seconds!"

"That is simple," exclaimed the Old Sage. "You will wear a pair of boots over the golden shoes."

"Indeed, an idea!" the Chelmites shouted, marveling over the great wisdom of the Old Sage.

"But if my boots cover my golden shoes, how will the strangers know I am the mayor?" pleaded Yankel.

"He is right" exclaimed the Old Sage of Chelm. "I would suggest that you wear a pair of boots, and cut large holes in the boots so that any stranger could see you are wearing golden shoes."

"Amazing!" shouted the Chelmites, marveling over the Old Sage's wisdom.

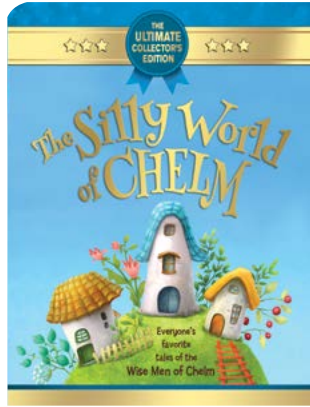
"But that is no good either," shouted Yankel. "If I cut holes in the boots, they will quickly be filled with mud from the streets we have in Chelm. In seconds no one would know I was the mayor."

"That is simple," exclaimed the Old Sage of Chelm. "If the holes in the boots will fill with mud, all we have to do is tie some straw over the holes to prevent the mud from entering."

"Brilliant!" everyone shouted.

And so if you are ever in the village of Chelm, and see a man walking around with a pair of golden shoes, under a pair of boots that have holes in them filled with straw, you should know immediately he is the mayor of Chelm.

Excerpted from the book "The Silly World of Chelm." Available at www.WorldOfChelm.com and at Amazon.com.



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Tefillin on the Vineyard

By Rabbi Dr. Yosef P. Glassman



Over the past year, my friend and upcoming rabbinical student Chaim Alperowitz took on a holy mission - re-igniting the mitzvah of tefillin on Martha's Vineyard. You may ask why tefillin, perhaps, or why specifically Martha's Vineyard. But the reality is, that if you are a man in Massachusetts over bar mitzvah age, the connection should become relevant.

My quest started when I was working as the director of hospital medicine at Martha's Vineyard Hospital from 2014-2017. My good friend and long-time islander Avi Lev showed me a pair of tefillin that he found abandoned and dusty in a storehouse in Vineyard Haven. No one was clear on who owned these abandoned tefillin, yet speculation had it that they belonged to a member of one of the earlier known Jewish settlers of Martha's Vineyard in the 20th century CE.

Perhaps they belonged to the earliest documented Jews on the island such as Sam Cronig, who came from Lithuania via New Bedford, and ultimately found work on a Martha's Vineyard farm. Using money saved from his farm work, the iconic Cronig later brought his three

brothers, a sister and, eventually, his future wife Libby from Minsk to Martha's Vineyard, later opening up a meat and grocery market on Main Street in Tisbury or Vineyard Haven.

Or did they belong to Yudel Brickman, a fellow Lithuanian Jewish cobbler? Perhaps they belonged to Israel Isaakson, the local Jewish tailor and dry cleaner.

These early Vineyard Jewish families were documented to have preserved Jewish traditions and practices, conducting Shabbat prayer in the Cronig's living room, lighting Shabbos candles weekly, and importing kosher meat from New Bedford and Boston.



Tefillin found at the island

However, the tefillin in our hands still remained a black box, or black boxes, both literally and figuratively. Was the re-emergence of these tefillin to be the sign (*siman*) of a Jewish renewal of Torah mitzvot on the island?

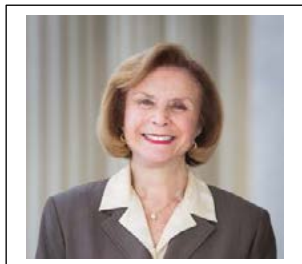
To be sure, Tefillin is one of the most important mitzvot of the Torah, derived from Dvarim 6:8: "And you shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be for ornaments between your eyes." Tefillin are made up of two small leather boxes attached to leather straps. The first undivided box is placed on the non-dominant arm, next to the emotion-based heart, and the second box, subdivided into four sections, is placed onto the rational head. Inside these black painted boxes are handwritten verses from the Torah pronouncing the unity of the Infinite Creator, assurances from the Infinite Creator in following the Torah down the last detail, and reminders of the daily obligation of Jewish people to recall the Exodus from Egypt - and an

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Tefillin on the Vineyard



Chaim Alperowitz helps a tourist put on tefillin



Avi Lev



A visitor puts on tefillin



Howard Paisner

instruction to inform one's children of all of the above.

By placing tefillin, the bar mitzvah (lit., the son of the [Divine] connection) dedicates himself to the service of the Infinite by literally tying his arm, head and heart, and thus his entire being. This tying ritual also indicates, at a personal level, the rule of intellect over emotion, where, normally, there is a battle and a split. Usually, the emotions control the mind, and the mind will often justify those emotions. But Judaism says the opposite - Jews should not let the heart gain control of the mind.

When one physically performs this act of restraint, it impresses this message on the tefillin wearer throughout the day.

Jewish men over the age of 13 have been wearing tefillin for over 3000 years, and they are the same style and shape as they have always been, unchanged, made in the same fashion that the *Talmud* (oral Law) has instructed from the Infinite Creator through Moses, our teacher.


The early Jews of Martha's Vineyard who carried their tefillin with them across the ocean's expanse knew that, and the rebirth of this ancient mitzvah on the island is encouraging.

Robert Fokos, a Hungarian Jewish survivor of the Holocaust who lives in Chilmark, can attest to the power of placing tefillin. After a prolonged hospitalization in 2014, facing near death from heart failure, he placed tefillin for the first time in his hospital bed, while wearing oxygen. Harried by war, Fokos never had a bar mitzvah, but rather than reading from the Torah at one's bar mitzvah, which was not possible, he placed tefillin on his arm and head, which is truly the essence of the bar mitzvah.

Others on the Vineyard have followed Mr. Fokos' recent path, including Howard Paisner, a respiratory therapist at Martha's Vineyard Hospital, and other Vineyard visitors like Stuart Rosenthal and Boris Dozortev. And Chaim Alperowitz, his friends Gabriel, Nathaniel, Eliayu and I have also been honored and excited to re-energize tefillin on the Vineyard.

Rabbi Dr. Yosef P. Glassman, MD, IDF Reserve Lieutenant, certified mohel, and Harvard trained geriatrician, is the CEO of Hadarta.org, which integrates Torah concepts to integrative medicine.

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FROM CONGRESSMAN RICHARD E. NEAL
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LimmudBoston 2018

The 9th annual LimmudBoston conference will fill Temple Reyim in Newton all day on Sunday, Dec. 2, offering learning opportunities, demonstrations and performances on everything from text study, Israel, social justice and parenting, to storytelling and music. Program Team volunteers are already reviewing sessions for this year's event. Session proposals are due by Sept. 28.

Limmud is Hebrew for "Teachings." LimmudBoston is one of 90 Limmuds in 42 countries.

Shirah Hecht of Needham, who is this year's program chair, recently represented LimmudBoston at the first gathering in Israel of 150 international Limmud leaders. Shirah's trip was made possible with help from LimmudBoston and Combined Jewish Philanthropies.

Shirah returned from Israel energized to infuse LimmudBoston with sessions reflecting Limmud International values and principles. Her working group at the Israel gathering touched on the essential Limmud goals of connecting Jews throughout the world, increasing learning and visioning a dynamic Jewish future.

"This trip opened my eyes again to our land and country across the oceans, and also allowed me to bring much back to Boston through Limmud and a new perspective," said Hecht.

Over three days, she participated in a working group devoted to "Limmud Values," which is what makes a Limmud conference so

special -- because every participant can find ownership through the volunteer model.

"In brief," Hecht explained, "the Limmud values emphasize learning and expanding Jewish horizons; connecting, participating and (volunteer/participant) empowerment; diversity and community/mutual responsibility; respect and arguments for the sake of heaven; and [respect for] religious observance."

Hecht became convinced that LimmudBoston - and Limmuds everywhere - offer, as she put it, a unique "framework for Jewish people of all stripes to come together to learn, without any denominational affiliations, across the world of Jewish communities."

Shirah Hecht and her LimmudBoston Program Team are currently seeking session proposals for Sunday, Dec. 2. Meanwhile, volunteers are also needed to help with all of the aspects of LimmudBoston, from signage to site management, PR and marketing, children's programming - and of course, session proposal evaluation.

LimmudBoston's founder and president Steffi Aronson Karp, added, "LimmudBoston is like 'youth group' for all ages." It is an opportunity for everyone who is interested in Jewish participation to recharge their Jewish batteries, delve into something new, or discover fresh aspects of Jewish life.

Volunteers who wish to help create the conference, or volunteers for the conference day should go to www.LimmudBoston.org to find opportunities. LimmudBoston offers many answers to the question, "What do you want to do for your Jewish community?" The LimmudBoston conference is the place to bridge New England's many community groups.

As at the international Limmud Connect event, New England attracts Jews from many countries, including those native to the U.S and Israel, Latino Jews, Russian Jews, Jews from Israel, and American or immigrant Jews of color. LimmudBoston provides a space for everyone to tell their stories to each other and learn more about what will enrich each other's experience.

Purchase tickets for this celebration of everything Jewish at www.LimmudBoston.org.



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Undisguised Acceptance: Why I'm Voting Yes on 3



By Tucker Lieberman

Our tradition has great stories of disguise, especially in Genesis. Soon, we celebrate Simchat Torah, and the cycle of Torah readings begins again. Jacob disguised himself as his twin brother to steal his birthright from their father. Leah disguised herself as her younger sister to marry Jacob, asserting her birthright to marry first. Tamar, a widow, disguised herself to become pregnant by her father-in-law because he denied her right to marry back into the family. Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery and didn't recognize him years later when he was governor of Egypt. These disguises were reactions to unfairness, exposing questions about family obligations.

Now let's talk about what's not a disguise: transgender identity.

When we meet someone, there's much we don't know about them. Their name. Whether they ever had a different name. Where they're from. Their ethnicity and citizenship. Whether they're single, partnered, married, widowed, divorced. Whether they date men, women, or both. Whether they transitioned from one gender to another. What their documents say. What they look like with their clothes off.

Some we find out quickly. Some we never find out. Some we hear without understanding. But just because part of someone's identity remains unknown or confusing to us doesn't mean they're disguised.

Massachusetts law holds that any sex-segregated area - such as a bathroom in a restaurant or mall, or a locker room at a gym - must treat everyone "consistent with the person's gender identity." That means if you see someone in the restroom and their gender is confusing to you, be assured that they're the expert on their own gender and they have a legal right to be that way. You don't need to ask personal questions or report them. Transgender people, and the law that protects them, do not cause problems in bathrooms.

Unfortunately, an anti-transgender group called Keep MA Safe wants to repeal this law. They claim that criminals might disguise themselves as transgender and specifically, claim that a male predator might enter a women's bathroom and there would be "no way to distinguish" criminal intent from transgender identity.

This "concern" is disingenuous to the point of being (ironically) itself a deception. We know what crime looks like, and we report it. We are pretty sure that male criminals do not announce their presence, falsely claim to be transgender, invoke a law that permits them in the women's bathroom, and go in there to hurt someone. That is not even a plausible scenario. Briefly pretending to be transgender won't help a man who's been arrested for a crime.

When the group Keep MA Safe tells us that criminals "will undoubtedly abuse" the rights given to transgender people, we are being deceived. They point to an imaginary link between queerness and criminality because it serves a broader anti-LGBT agenda. That's transphobia, badly disguised.

Some people believe they can see through my gender presentation and assess, with X-ray vision, my "biological reality." They can't. But I see through their fearmongering.

This November, all Massachusetts voters need to understand Question 3. A "Yes" vote keeps existing protections. The "Yes" vote is endorsed by a huge coalition of LGBT groups, businesses, faith leaders, and nonprofit and advocacy organizations including the Jewish Community Relations Council. A "No" vote would repeal the law, making it legal to discriminate against transgender people again.

Remember that to exclude people from public spaces is to challenge their participation in public life. Being harassed out of bathrooms for not looking feminine or masculine enough makes it difficult to grab a coffee, walk across the city, or hold a job. If discrimination becomes legal in Massachusetts, transgender people will be more skeptical about living, working, or traveling here. Society gains nothing from marginalizing those who are already misunderstood.

Simchat Torah brings us back to the beginning to ask the same questions again. In a way, so does the referendum on November 6. This is the law that holds us together as a diverse community. We have to show up and say we still want it, all over again.

*Tucker Lieberman's work is in the Lambda Award-winning anthology **Balancing on the Mechitzah**. He is also writing a book on eunuch villains in fiction. Please visit www.tuckerlieberman.com*




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PepsiCo to buy SodaStream for \$3.2 billion

By Abigail Klein Leichman

<https://www.israel21c.org>

Beverage and snack giant PepsiCo has agreed to buy Israeli company SodaStream in a deal worth \$3.2 billion. SodaStream makes home beverage carbonation systems sold in 46 countries.

Pepsi's incoming CEO, Ramon Laguarta, said the acquisition reflects the company's campaign to find new ways to reach consumers "beyond the bottle" as well as its growing emphasis on sparkling water.

"SodaStream is highly complementary and incremental to our business, adding to our growing water portfolio, while catalyzing our ability to offer personalized in-home beverage solutions around the world," said Laguarta.



SodaStream just experienced its most successful quarterly period in the company's history, according to a statement from Daniel Birnbaum, CEO of SodaStream since 2007.

"Most notably, sales of sparkling water maker units increased 22% to over 1 million in the second quarter and sales of gas refill units grew 17% to an all-time record 9.7 million," Birnbaum said.

Most SodaStream customers today are using their countertop machines to prepare liter bottles of plain sparkling water, making the Israeli company the largest sparkling water brand in the world by volume.

US-based PepsiCo, which has a distribution network in 200 countries, is the largest food and beverage business in the United States, Russia, India and the Middle East.

Photo by Christopher Gardiner/Shutterstock.com



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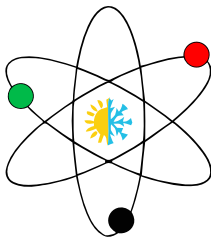
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Apple Honey Cake

3 chopped large granny smith apples (sprinkle with lemon juice)

Mix together:

- 1 cup of brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon of cinnamon
- 1/2 cup of honey
- 1 cup of whole wheat flour
- 4 eggs
- 3/4 cup of oil
- 2 tablespoons of vanilla

extract

- 1 teaspoon of baking powder
- 1 teaspoon of baking soda

For decoration:

half a cup of chopped walnuts mixed with 2 tablespoons of brown sugar

Directions:

Strain the apples.

Put half of the mixed batter in a round 8" cake (sprayed with oil) or a cupcake pan.

Put half of the apples on top and add the other half of the batter on top. Top with walnuts and brown sugar.

Bake for 45 minutes at 360°

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The Woman of Valor Award

Join ADL New England for the 12th annual *Women of Valor* Luncheon honoring Geraldine Acuña Sunshine on Friday, November 2, from 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the Mandarin Oriental, Boston. *The Woman of Valor Award* recognizes remarkable women leaders who have made an extraordinary impact on their communities, and exemplify the distinguishing values of integrity, leadership, and commitment. RSVP by Monday, October 23 at: www.adl.org/wov2018

Events at Temple Emanuel, Newton

Workshop Series for The Sandwich Generation
Navigating the Nitty Gritty to Help Our Aging Parents
Thursday evenings from 7:30- 9 p.m.
Oct. 18, Nov. 15, Dec. 13

Topics we will cover: The Emotions of Role Reversal; Navigating Family Conflict; Cognitive Issues: What to Expect, When to Be Concerned; Psychological Challenges in Older Adults; Tips for of Hands-On Caregiving. RSVP to Tracy Schneider at 617-959-4928. Sponsored by Hebrew SeniorLife.

October 21 Conversation Talk - first in a series

Please join us for an exciting afternoon on Sunday, October 21, at 1 p.m. in Reisman Hall at Temple Emanuel, 385 Ward St., Newton, featuring a hush, hush conversation on Sex and Sexuality for Seniors over 65, 75, and 85. Understanding our bodies as we age helps us to understand our sexuality. By understanding physical and emotional issues that may arise in our sexuality, we can better navigate problems.

Welcome Suki Hanfling, LICSW, AASECT Diplomate, Certified Sex Therapist, and founder and director of The Institute for Sexuality & Intimacy, who will guide the discussion. Not to be missed! Pre-registration required. For registration, call Tracy Schneider at 617-959-4928. Dessert following.

Happy Rosh Hashanah State Representative KEVIN G. HONAN Allston - Brighton



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