the JEWISH VOICE

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Serving Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts

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FINANCE & PHILANTHROPY

Alliance awards grants to six innovators

BY FRAN OSTENDORF
fostendorf@jewishallianceri.org

What do a STEAM-based school program, a retreat for clergy and an education renewal project have in common?

These are just some of the proposals received by the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island after it announced in November that funds were being allocated to finance innovative ideas from the community for projects that serve the Jewish community of Greater Rhode Island.

The Alliance focused on funding "fresh and creative projects, programs and services aiming to benefit an otherwise underserved population and to illustrate short-term success for long-term sustainability," according to a letter issued to community partners.

Now, six community groups are being given seed money totaling about $63,500 to develop innovative, collaborative programming aimed at unmet needs in the community.

"This is a great first round," said Marc Gertsacov, vice chair of community development for the Alliance and a member of the Innovation Funding Committee. "We are pleased with the number of applicants for these grants." The committee

GRANTS | 20

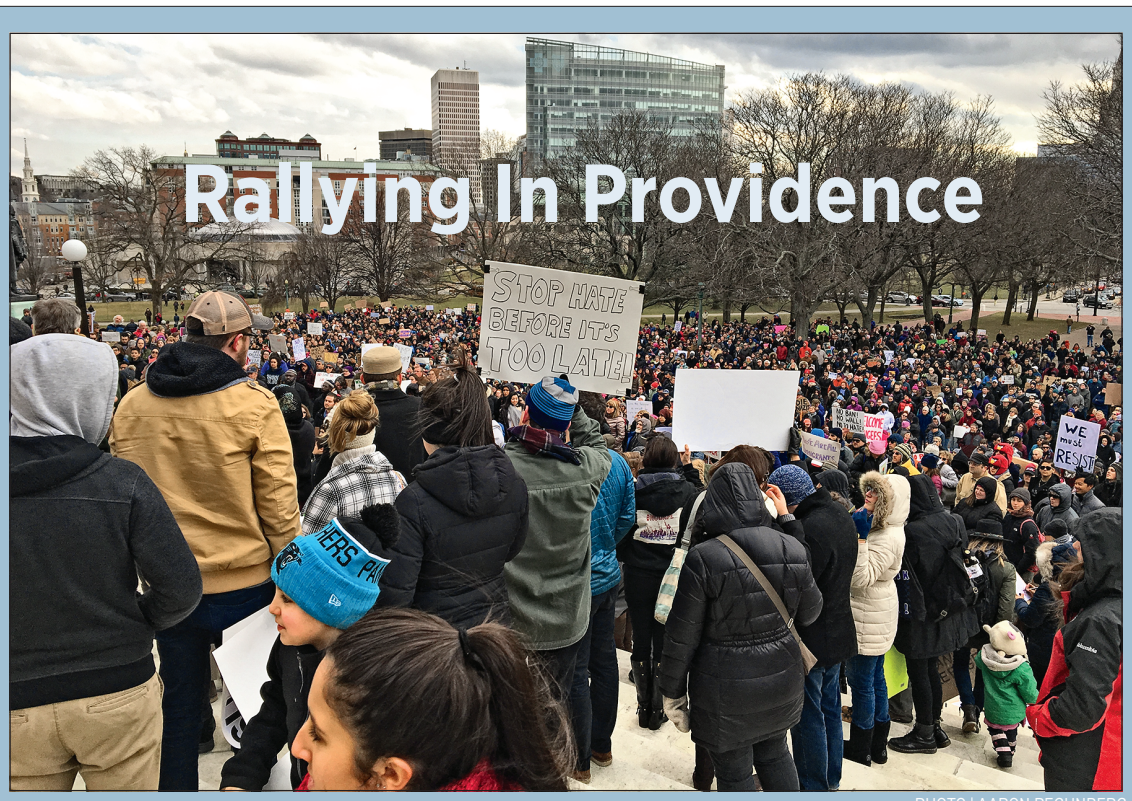


PHOTO | AARON REGUNBERG

Since the Jan. 20 edition of The Jewish Voice, many people have gathered to make their opinions heard in Providence, Washington, D.C., and around the United States. On Sunday, Jan. 29, crowds gathered outside the Rhode Island State House in support of allowing refugees to come into the U.S. More coverage of rallies on page 14 and 15.

Meet the Jews in President Trump's administration

BY JOSEFIN DOLSTEN

JTA – American Jews are watching the beginning of Donald Trump's presidency with both fear and hope.

Many have expressed worries about some of his supporters' ties to the so-called "alt-right" movement, whose followers traffic variously in white nationalism, anti-immigration sentiment, anti-Semitism and a disdain for "political correctness." Those fears intensified when Trump named as his chief strategist Stephen Bannon, the former chairman of Breitbart News, a site Bannon once referred to as a "platform" of the alt-right. Trump's strongly conservative Cabi-



Jared Kushner

net picks also back policies on health care, the environment, abortion and civil rights often

TRUMP'S | 27

Refugee ban puts Jewish asylum seekers in limbo for now

BY CNAAN LIPHSHIZ

JTA – A year after they submitted their application for asylum in the United States, Shahi and his mother expected to be let in.

As Iranian Jews who applied for asylum through a federally recognized agency for refugee status, their case was expected to be simple. Shahi (not his real name) is in his late 20s and already has two sisters waiting for him and their mother. As of now, mother and son are in a third transit country.

But the lives of Shahi's family were plunged into further uncertainty on Jan. 27 when President Donald Trump signed an executive order suspending the admission of all refugees into the United States for four months. The order also imposes a 90-day ban on entry visas to all citizens of seven predominantly Muslim countries, including Iran.

Too fearful to return to Iran, Shahi and his mother don't know whether they will be eligible to enter the United States in the foreseeable future. Trump is said to be mulling suspending indefinitely the intake of refugees from countries deemed "of concern." The family is also unsure how long the transit country will agree to continue

REFUGEE BAN | 9

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INSIDE

Business 22-22
Calendar 11-12
Community 2-5, 12, 23, 26
D'Var Torah 7
Finance & Philanthropy 16-20
Food 13
Nation 14-15, 26-27
Obituaries 25
Opinion 8-10
Seniors 24

THIS ISSUE'S QUOTABLE QUOTE

"Each time we listen to the cries of the oppressed, we become more aware of the suffering and needs around us."

'The Pianist of Willesden Lane' is an uplifting tale of the power of music

BY LEV POPLOW

"My name is Lisa Jura, and I'm 14 years old," Mona Golabek says, her voice taking on a girlish lilt and a slight accent. "It's Vienna, 1938, and it's a Friday afternoon. I'm preparing for the most important hour of my week – my piano lesson." But this week the lesson will not take place. And so begins "The Pianist of Willesden Lane," a true story of family, hope and survival told through the world's most beautiful music.

Golabek is an American concert pianist, author and radio host. She has appeared with many leading orchestras and made numerous recordings. Based on the true story of Golabek's mother, the film, "The Pianist of Willesden Lane," is the inspirational recounting of Lisa Jura Golabek's escape from Nazi-controlled Austria to England on the Kindertransport. A musical prodigy, Lisa Jura had a wonderful life in Vienna. When the Nazis began closing in on the city, life changed irreversibly.

Although he has three daughters, Lisa's father is only able to secure one berth on the Kindertransport. The family decides to send Lisa to London so that she can pursue her dream of a career as a concert pianist. Separated from her beloved family, Lisa bravely endures the trip and a disastrous posting outside London before finding her way to the Willesden Lane Orphanage. It is there that Lisa's story comes to life. Her music inspires the other children, and they, in turn, encourage her efforts to make good on her promise to her family to realize her musical potential.



Mona Golabek

"Never stop playing, and I will be with you every step of the way."

Golabek was taught piano largely by her mother, who had learned to play from her own mother (Mona's grandmother) Malka Jura. When asked in an interview whether she had had other piano teachers aside from her mother, Golabek answered, "I studied with several outstanding pianists, but my mother was my true teacher and inspiration." In April 2012, Golabek was featured in a one-woman show, "The Pianist of Willesden Lane," directed by Hershey Felder, which was filmed for all to learn from and enjoy.

Before she boarded the train in Vienna, Lisa's mother told her, "Never stop playing, and I will be with you every step of the way." Lisa took the words to heart. Spiritually speaking, her fingers never left the keys, because only through her music could she maintain a connection to the vanished happiness of her Vienna childhood. The resulting tale delivers a message of the power of music to uplift the human spirit and to grant the individual soul endurance, patience and peace.

Presented by the Bornstein Holocaust Education Center, "The Pianist of Willesden Lane" will be screened at 7:30 p.m. on Feb. 15 at Laurelmead, 355 Blackstone Blvd., Providence. There will be a discussion after the film led by Paula Olivieri, education coordinator, Bornstein Holocaust Education Center. This event is free and open to the public.

LEV POPLOW is a communications and development consultant. He can be reached at levpoplow@gmail.com

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‘Love is in the Air’ at Temple Sinai on Feb. 11

BY DEBORAH JOHNSON

My dear friend Shelley grew up in an Orthodox household where they would never even think of celebrating holidays like Halloween or Valentine’s Day.

While these two holidays are widely accepted as “secular” in American culture, they have a long history as Christian holidays. For Shelley, and many Jews like her, both holidays retain their Christian identity.

With regard to Halloween, at least, even the church would agree. It may have begun as a Celtic harvest festival (Samhein), but for many hundreds of years, until the early 20th century, Halloween was exclusively devoted to commemorating the faithful departed.

Not so for Valentine’s Day. Even Catholics agree: Valentine’s Day is not just for Christians anymore. While Saint Valentine’s Day remains an official feast day in the Anglican, Lutheran, and parts of the Eastern Orthodox churches, each of these celebrations is commemorated for different Saints Valentine and on different days. Because of the difficulty in determining exactly who Valentine was, the Roman Catholic Church has disavowed any official connection to the Valentine’s Day celebrated on Feb. 14.

Today, when most of us think of Valentine’s Day, we don’t think of saints, but of love. And there is hardly a more rich and memorable expression of love, in all its myriad forms, than in the classic love songs of the 1930s and ’40s – composed mostly by Jews.

Dissertations have been written about why so many of these song writers – Richard Rodgers, Oscar Hammerstein, Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern and Irving Gordon among them – were Jewish.

Topping this list is the greatest composer of them all, George Gershwin. It’s hard to believe that Gershwin died at age 38. In just a few short decades, he wrote much of the music that has since become known as modern American standards: works like “Porgy and Bess” (considered the best American opera of the 20th century), “Rhapsody in Blue” (the most popular of all American concert works), “An American in Paris” (a “rhapsodic ballet”) and the jazz piece “Three Preludes.”

But Gershwin is perhaps best known for some of the most beloved love songs of all time. Think of a love song from this period – “Embraceable You”? “The Man I Love”? “Someone to Watch Over Me”? – and I’ll bet it’s by Gershwin.

Gershwin had the typical upbringing of a Jewish child born to immigrant Russian parents at the beginning of the 20th century. When he arrived here, Gershwin’s father changed his name from Gershowitz to Gershwine, and as his son would later change his name from Jacob Gershwine to George Gershwin.

Moving from tenement to tenement, first in Brooklyn, New York, and then in Manhattan’s Lower East Side Jewish ghettos, the family was not particularly observant. However, Gershwin adapted Jewish musical motifs throughout his work. Sing the refrain from his “It Ain’t Necessarily So” and follow it up with the opening of the Torah blessing, “*Barchu et adonai hamevorach*” – it’s the same tune!

Gershwin met with a tragically misunderstood end. A few years before his death, he began to experience blinding headaches, mood swings, odd behaviors and auditory and olfactory hallucinations to the extent that his family signed him into Cedars of Lebanon Hospital with a diagnosis of hysteria. It was only when he later fell into a coma that doctors discovered a malignant brain tumor and called for immediate surgery. He died on the operating table.

All the while, Gershwin’s music had been bright, beautiful, breezy – and often powerfully poignant.

DEBORAH JOHNSON is the cantor at Temple Sinai, in Cranston.



Temple Sinai’s Cantor Deborah Johnson and pianist Raymond Buttero present “Love is in the Air: Gershwin and Friends”

WHEN: Saturday, Feb. 11 at 7 p.m.
WHERE: Temple Sinai, 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston.
COST: Tickets to the program, which includes desserts, are $10 in advance, $12 at the door.
CONTACT: Dottie in the temple office, 401-942-8350 to RSVP.

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A tasty treat for Cohen School students

BY DORI ADLER

On Jan. 15, Temple Torat Yisrael's Cohen School students, with the help of Tslil Reichman, the Israeli *shlicha* (emissary) at the Jewish Alliance of Greater R.I., explored, prepared and enjoyed traditional Israeli dishes.

It is a Jewish tradition to share food as part of celebrations and as a way to tell a story. This special Israel Day program also taught the students about different aspects of Israel and its history.

The program kicked off in the East Greenwich temple's kitchen, where Reichman shared her Israeli cooking expertise. Excited students from grades K-7 were assigned different dishes to prepare. Reichman, speaking in Hebrew and English, provided a hands-on learning experience about the food culture of Israel.

With Israeli music playing in the background, the students busily measured, stirred, mixed, cut and mashed the fresh ingredients. The sounds of their laughter filled the air along with cracking eggs and the chopping of vegetables.

The students worked together to create a feast that included Israeli Chocolate Cookie Truffles, hummus with tahini, which was served with fresh pita, chopped Israeli cucumber and tomato salad, and *shakshuka* (eggs poached in tomato pepper sauce), a popular Israeli breakfast food.



Fourth- and fifth-graders work together to prepare Israeli salad.

After feasting at the family-style meal, the students enjoyed Israeli music and dancing. Also, the upcoming *Kotel* wall-building project was introduced. This project gives the students an opportunity to write messages that will be placed in the *Kotel* by a Cohen student in March.

The K-1 students then worked on a map puzzle of Israel. Grades 2-3 received pen-pal letters from new friends in Beer Sheva, Israel. The students were excited to get a response to their letters, which were exchanged by Reichman before Hanukkah.

The Cohen School is looking forward to more learning experiences with Reichman, who has partnered with the school to help with programs on Israel.

DORI ADLER is the education director at Temple Torat Yisrael's Cohen Religious School, in East Greenwich. For information about the school, contact her at school@toratyisrael.org.

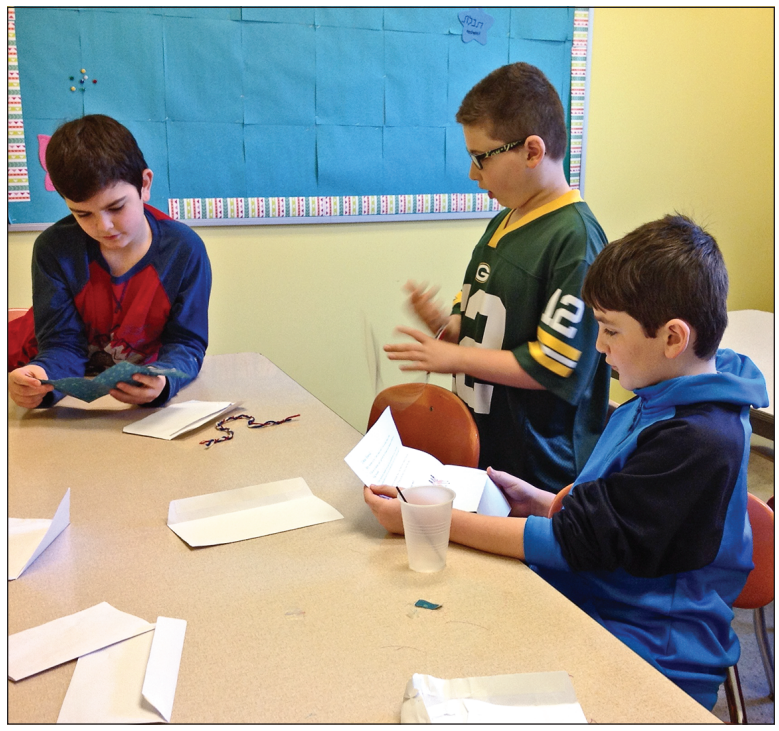


PHOTO | TORAT YISRAEL

Kindergarten and first-graders make chocolate cookie truffles.



Upper school students try out some Israeli dance moves.



Second- and third-graders open letters from Israeli pen pals.

the JEWISH VOICE

EDITOR
Fran Ostendorf

CONTRIBUTORS
Leah Charpentier BouRamia
Cynthia Benjamin
Seth Chitwood
Stephanie Ross
Sam Serby

EDITORIAL CONSULTANT
Judith Romney Wegner

DESIGN & LAYOUT
Leah Camara

ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT
Chris Westerkamp
cwesterkamp@jewishallianceri.org
401-421-4111, ext. 160

Karen Borger
ksborger@gmail.com
401-529-2538

VOICE ADVISORY GROUP
Melanie Coon, Douglas Emanuel, Stacy Emanuel, Rabbi Jeffrey Goldwasser, John Landry, Mindy Stone

COLUMNISTS
Michael Fink
Rabbi James Rosenberg
Daniel Stieglitz

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The Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island, Chair Mitzi Berkelhammer, President/CEO Jeffrey K. Savit,
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REMEMBER THE PAST

From the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association

Don't overlook Tu b'Shevat: It connects us to a dream

BY GERALDINE S. FOSTER

Tu b'Shevat, like Hanukkah, is a post-biblical holiday. Unlike the over-celebrated Hanukkah, *Tu b'Shevat* is, in my estimation, under-celebrated. It was not always so, at least in my youth.

Each night of Hanukkah we lit the candles, said the blessings and sang about the steaming hot latkes coming to our table. We heard stories of Maccabees and miracles, and we played dreidel. From a drawstring bag, each of us received 10 shiny pennies with which to start the game. It did not matter who won or lost, because the pennies were not ours to keep. At the end of the evening's play, they were returned to the little sack for use the next night.

After the eight nights, the dreidels and the pennies disappeared into the drawstring bag and were placed in the back of a drawer until Hanukkah came around again. The eight days were fun, with a connection to some ancient history.

Tu b'Shevat, on the other hand, was our connection to a land far away and to a dream, the dream of a Jewish homeland. It was also our connection to the *halutzim*, the pioneers who were paving the way for its fulfillment.



Bokser, or in Hebrew, haruv tree

We welcomed our Jewish Arbor Day and heard songs about blossoming almond trees. The story of *Honi ha-M'agel* and the carob tree had a special meaning for us, because we, by dropping coins in the Jewish National Fund Blue Box, were helping to reforest the barren land for future generations.

Adults in our extended family gathered in homes or at meetings where conversation and discussion were abetted by noshing on figs and dates, raisins and almonds, accompanied by Kosher wine – the tastes of fruits grown in *Eretz Yisra'el*. Of course, they were all products of California, but no matter. One could imagine.

There was always one fruit that truly came from the Holy Land. It was never known as carob but by its Yiddish name – *bokser*, or *haruv* in Hebrew, but usually *bokser*, as it had always been known in Ashkenazi homes. The word came from the German *bokshornbaum*, literally the ram's horn tree, a reference to the shape of its pod.

Bokser was dark brown, dried out and hard as a rock. Taking a bite endangered your teeth and your taste buds. It was awful, but among all the fruits grown at that time in *Eretz Yisra'el*, it alone could survive the ocean voyage. For that reason it had a special place at the table.

Many years later, during a visit to my daughter and son-in-law in Israel, I noticed trees with unusual pods in the park near their apartment. Some were green, others brown. All were soft and pliable. What are they? I asked. *Bokser*, came the answer.

Oh, no – too soft, wrong shade of brown, wrong time of year. This may be carob or *haruv*, but not *bokser*. *Bokser's* reality had nothing to do with a botanical genus. Its connection to a dream gave it a unique place and meaning in our lives that these pods would never have.

On another occasion, a visit to Israel ended just after *Tu b'Shevat*. On the way to the airport, I glimpsed pink blossoms on trees growing near the highway. Almond trees! For the first time I was actually seeing the blossoming almond trees of our songs and our dreams.

The driver was unimpressed. He could not understand my excitement: Come again next year at this time and you will see them again. For him, the blossoming was just part of the annual life cycle of the trees. For me, it was miraculous.

A number of years ago, Warren and I bought a condo in Florida. As a sort of house warming, we invited friends for lunch. The date chosen, one of our friends pointed out, would fall on *Tu b'Shevat*.

The house-warming lunch became a *Tu b'Shevat* seder, with conversation and discussion abetted by postprandial noshing on figs and dates, almonds and raisins, tastes of Israel complemented by Israeli wine.

The *Tu b'Shevat* seder became a feature of our annual stay in Florida. Only one thing was missing from our celebration – *bokser*. Though I scoured the stores in the area, there was none to be found. No matter. *Bokser* still had a place, if not at the table, then in our memories.

For me, *Tu b'Shevat* is still a connection to that amazing land I have visited so many times. My thoughts on Feb. 11 will not dwell on the past – that is for old people – but on the environmental challenges we all face now and in the future. Taking care of our environment, replenishing it for coming generations – that, for me, is the message of *Tu b'Shevat*.

Chag sameach.

GERALDINE S. FOSTER is a past president of the R.I. Jewish Historical Association.

New England Rabbinical College annual dinner

The New England Rabbinical College, located on Blackstone Boulevard, will host its 32nd annual dinner on Sunday, Feb. 19 in the Brown Hillel Social Hall. The college is aimed at post-high school and post-graduate students pursuing Talmudic studies and is New England's premier institution dedicated to this endeavor. Students engage in the study of the Talmud and classical commentaries in their original text. At the same time, they pursue secular degrees at local colleges.

The college's annual dinner draws wide attendance from within the community as well as outside of the community. The gathering celebrates the accomplishments of a select group of honorees – individuals who have earned their respective awards because they exemplify the teaching of the *Mishnah* (*Pirkei Avos* 1:2) and represent "the three pillars upon which the world stands."

The New England Rabbinical College is privileged to honor Rabbi and Mrs. Yosef Lipson of Providence. Rabbi Lipson's profound impact on the college in his role as a teacher of Talmud and mentor for the past 30 years is keenly felt in the community. He is integral to the functioning of the college and has formed lasting bonds with current and former students. Rabbi Lipson, and his wife, Miriam, a teacher at Providence Hebrew Day School and New England Academy of Torah, love Torah and love the Jewish people. They combine these loves as they impart Torah wisdom in their open home that reaches out to Jewish people from everywhere.

Mr. and Mrs. Akiva Feinsod will be recognized as the Alumni Achievement awardees. Feinsod's successful career path, as a managing partner of Reception Hotels & Resorts/GreatStay Hospitality Partners, together with his wife, Roselyn's, path as a senior partner at Aon Hewitt, have always been governed by their recognition of the centrality of Torah study in the life of a committed Jew. They are well-known in their Jewish community of Monsey, New York, for their faithful involvement in, and support of, many communal needs. And it goes without saying that they devote themselves equally to their family, of whom they are so proud.

Rabbi and Mrs. Yaakov Beker will be presented with the Harbotzas Torah award. The Bekers are uniquely qualified to be recipients of this award, which recognizes distinction in the area of Jewish education. Rabbi Beker, whose career as an educator was inaugurated at the Providence Hebrew Day School, distinguishes himself with his devotion to his students and the excellent quality of his lessons. He is a well-recognized and beloved role model for his students at the Maimonides School in Boston. Together with his wife, Leah, who is a registered nurse, the Bekers are held in high esteem in the Boston Jewish community.

A commemorative journal expressing good wishes and appreciation to the honorees will be presented at the dinner.

For more information and to place a reservation, call Chana Twersky at 401-274-1361 or email cftwersky.nerc@gmail.com

– Submitted by New England Rabbinical College

Point Street Reading Series continues Feb. 21

Popular radio host and book enthusiast Robin Kall hosts the award-winning Point Street Reading Series on Tuesday, Feb. 21 at Point Street Dueling Pianos at Davol Square in Providence. Doors open at 7 p.m. with the event from 7:30-9:30 p.m.

The Feb. 21 event features distinguished authors: Kerry Egan ("On Living"), Laurie Albanese ("Stolen Beauty"), Anna Pitoniak ("The Futures"), Abby Fabiaschi ("I Liked My Life"), Rob Spillman ("All Tomorrow's Parties"), and Eric Bennett ("A Big Enough Lie"). Authors will read from their books for 15 minutes. Short breaks follow each author with time for conversation and refreshments. Brown University Bookstore will have books available for purchase and autographing. Tom's BaoBao and Panera Bread will offer treats!

"The series is a great opportunity to connect book lovers with some of their favorite authors," said Kall who hosts the weekly Reading with Robin podcast available on iTunes and also runs Rhode Island's first on-line book club. "Rhode Island has such an enthusiastic and engaged reading community. The Point Street Series will allow us to gather every month and share our love of the written word. We have a great lineup coming each month!"

The series meets every third Tuesday with a $5 cover charge payable at the door. For more information visit readingwithrobin.com or Point Street Reading Series on Facebook. Reservations are suggested and free parking is available at 3 Davol Square in Providence. Groups of two or more may request a table at robin@readingwithrobin.com.

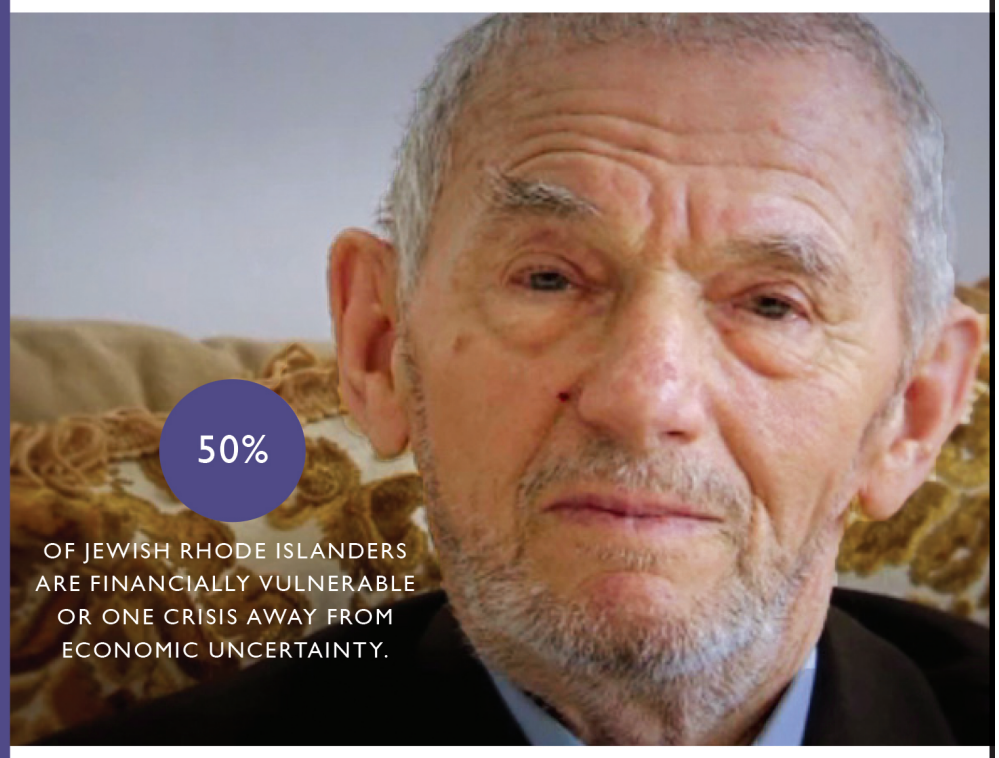
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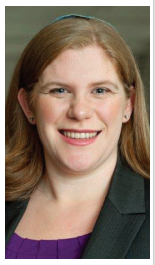
Through our own programs and services, and those of our partners both locally and globally, we do so much to strengthen Jewish life... ***But there's so much more to be done.***

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Jewish Alliance
OF GREATER RHODE ISLAND

Strengthening our hearts



RABBI RACHEL ZERIN

This week's *parashah*, *Bo*, lays at the heart of the story of the Exodus. Seven plagues have already befallen Egypt, yet, Pharaoh continues to enslave the Israelites. This week, Moses continues to approach Pharaoh, asking him to let the Israelites go and warning him that the plagues will continue until he does. But each time Moses approaches Pharaoh, we read: *vay'azzek A-donai et lev par'oh*, that God strengthens the heart of Pharaoh, and Pharaoh does not let the Israelites go. This pattern continues through the final three plagues: locusts, darkness and the death of the first born. It is only then, when the suffering of both Pharaoh and his people has become so great, that Pharaoh releases the Israelites and the plagues come to an end.

There is something that initially seems both disconcerting and incongruous about this pattern. How could the same God who hears our suffering and redeems us from oppression also be the One who strengthens Pharaoh's heart, causing him to bring suffering and death not only upon himself but on all his people? We think of God as the God of justice and righteousness, but how could it possibly be just or right to punish Pharaoh for enslaving the Israelites when it seems that it was not Pharaoh's choice to continue acting as oppressor, but God's?

If we read the story carefully, however, we realize that it is not so simple. Yes, after the plagues of boils, locusts and darkness, and again after a warning about the final plague, we read that God strengthens Pharaoh's heart, and Pharaoh does not set the Israelites free. But this is not always the case. In response to the first five plagues, we read simply *vayye'ezak lev par'oh*, that Pharaoh's heart was strengthened, or *vayyakhbed par'oh et libbo*, that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. Initially, God plays no role in Pharaoh's decision-making. As a midrash in Exodus Rabbah says, "When the Holy Blessed One saw that Pharaoh would not repent as a result of the first five plagues, from then onward the Holy Blessed One said, 'even if he wants to retract what he has done, I will strengthen his heart in order to spread my judgment over him.'" It is only after Pharaoh has five opportunities to have mercy and free the Israelites, only after Pharaoh chooses five times to harden his own heart against the oppression of others, that God steps in. And even then, God does not harden Pharaoh's heart, God merely strengthens Pharaoh's resolve.

> **"Each time we listen to the cries of the oppressed, we become more aware of the suffering and needs around us."**

While this might still seem problematic (couldn't God change Pharaoh's resolve, rather than making it stronger? Or at the very least have left Pharaoh alone?), there is something very real about this idea. Each time we walk past someone who is suffering, it becomes a little easier to do so again; each time we try to ignore the cries of others, we become less likely to notice their pain. When we harden our hearts, that resolve is strengthened.

However, the opposite is true as well. Each time we listen to the cries of the oppressed, we become more aware of the suffering and needs around us. Each time we give to someone in need, we cultivate an attitude of generosity. As the rabbis of the Talmud said, "a person who comes to defile themselves is given an opening to do so; while one who comes to purify themselves is helped." If God can strengthen Pharaoh's resolve to harden his heart to the cries of the oppressed, then God can also strengthen our resolve to soften and open our hearts to the needs of others.

Perhaps that is why the Torah tells us that God strengthened Pharaoh's heart: to remind us that God strengthens our own resolve as well. The first step is up to us (or perhaps the first five steps, as was the case with Pharaoh). If we choose to act selfishly, to be cruel and oppressive, then we will be more inclined to do so in the future.

However, if we choose compassion over hatred, generosity over selfishness, the right and the just over the easy and self-serving, then God will strengthen our resolve, opening our hearts and supporting us as we work to make the world a more holy place.

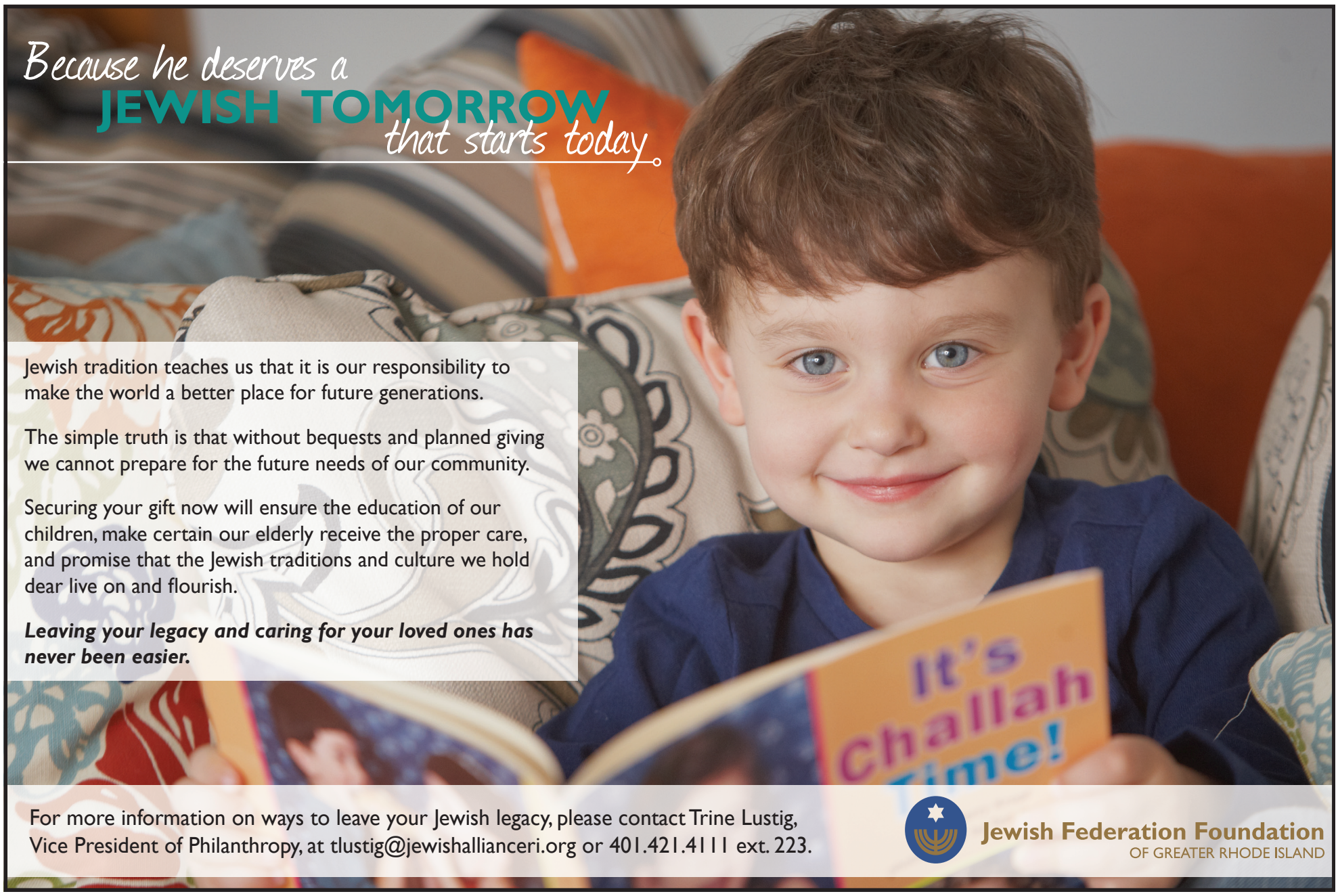
RACHEL ZERIN is the assistant rabbi at Temple Emanu-El in Providence.

Candle Lighting Times

Greater Rhode Island

February 3	**4:45**
February 10	**4:54**
February 17	**5:03**
February 24	**5:11**





Step back and focus on the bigger picture



EDITOR

FRAN OSTENDORF

Time to take a break from obsessively watching, listening and reading about the latest news. Step away from the computer. Shut down Facebook and Twitter for a few minutes. Realize that life continues to go on in the world around us.

What have you missed?

The Patriots are back in the Super Bowl! That's right. Love 'em or hate 'em, Tom Brady and the boys are in the Big Game again. And if they beat the Atlanta Falcons, there are all sorts of records to be broken. Even if you don't care about football, it's always fun to see what the advertisers have paid big bucks to creatively toss at the television audience. Sometimes, the ads are better than the game!

Need a different sports diversion? There is always the road to March Madness. Some people love college basketball. Both the University of Rhode Island Rams and the Providence College Friars men's teams are doing well this year. But in our house, it's all about our alma mater, the Northwestern Wildcats, who are having the best season in the school's history and are on the cusp of making it into the NCAA tournament for the first time EVER. (Poor NU is the only top conference school never to make "the Dance," even though they hosted the first NCAA championship.)

My husband is happily living a sports year for the ages. First, his beloved Chicago Cubs won, then the NU football team was victorious in the Pinstripe Bowl, and now there are the Pats and the NU basketball team successes. All his teams are winning big.

Of course, you've got the Celtics, Bruins and Providence Bruins, all in the middle of their seasons. The Celtics were holding their own at No. 3 in the Eastern Conference as of press time. The Bruins had won more games than they'd lost, and the P-Bruins were third in the Atlantic Division.

Tired of the cold winter and political controversies? It's not too early to focus on warm sunny days to come.

Baseball season is coming up quickly. Spring training starts the week of Feb. 13, when pitchers and catchers will report for their first workouts. Red Sox Truck Day is Feb. 6. That's the annual equipment sendoff from Fenway Park in Boston. Tickets for spring training games for all teams are already on sale. In fact, some games are sold out, including some of those sunny Arizona games for the World Champions.

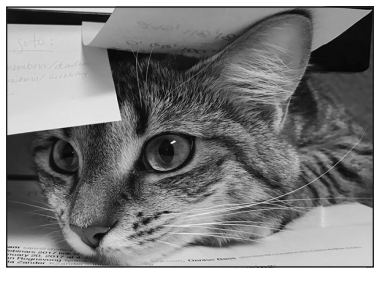
By the time the hockey and basketball seasons are over, I'm usually wondering why they last so long. The weather is warmer and baseball is well underway. But for now, it seems appropriate to have lots of indoor diversions for the long winter.

Not into sports teams? Get out and take a walk. Many of us at least aspire to stay in shape through the winter months. Stop in to J-Fitness at the Dwares Jewish Community Center, in Providence, and use the facilities. Check out the winter program guide. There's a lot going on in our community, and you can see the beautiful JCC renovations as they get closer to completion.

And how are you doing on your winter projects or resolutions? Remember those things you resolved to do a month ago? Only about 58 percent of people keep their New Year's resolutions past one month, according to a recent Statistic Brain Research Institute survey.

It's the beginning of February. Time to reevaluate. Let's get back on track with the business of living!

We haven't forgotten your pets!

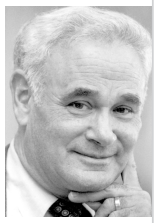


Don't worry. Our annual pet issue has moved. Look for it May 26. Deadline for photos is May 17. But you don't have to wait. We keep your photos in our files, so feel free to send them to us when you have them. Email editor@jewishallianceri.org.

OUR MISSION

The mission of The Jewish Voice is to communicate Jewish news, ideas and ideals by connecting and giving voice to the diverse views of the Jewish community in Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts, while adhering to Jewish values and the professional standards of journalism.

The story of Moses' second son



IT SEEMS TO ME

RABBI JIM ROSENBERG

The children of great men and women are often swallowed up in the greatness of their parents. It is the rare son or daughter who survives unscathed growing up in the shadow of a parent who is always in the spotlight. It is not surprising, then, that we know next to nothing about Moses' two sons.

Early in the book of Exodus, we learn of the birth of Moses' first child: "Moses agreed to stay with the man [Reuel/Jethro, priest of Midian], and he gave Moses his daughter Zipporah in marriage. She bore him a son; and he named him Gershom, saying, 'I have been a stranger [*ger*] in a strange land'." (Exodus 2:21-22.)

According to our biblical text, Moses, who becomes a shepherd, was living in Midian with his family for a long time before his transforming encounter with God at the burning bush.

Soon after meeting the One Who instructs him to return to Egypt in order to lead his Israelite brethren out of bondage in Egypt, "Moses took his wife and his sons, put them on a donkey, and went back to the land of Egypt." (Exodus 4:20.)

Notice that the text says "sons," not "son." So Gershom had a younger brother. We don't know when he was born; we don't even know his name. All we do know is that the second son of Moses and Zipporah, like his older brother, was born during the family's extended stay in Midian.

Event follows event, crisis follows crisis. The first nine plagues – blood, frogs, lice, swarms of flies, disease of livestock, boils, hail, locusts, thick darkness. Then the celebration of the first Passover while still in Egypt, followed by the 10th and final plague: the death of Egyptian firstborn males.

Then, the beginning of Exodus. Flight from the Egyptian army. The splitting of the Red Sea. The celebratory song of Moses and Miriam upon reaching the other side. The sweetening of bitter waters. Manna from heaven. Water from the rock. The defeat of Amalek.

All this, and not a single additional word about Gershom or his nameless brother. Finally, in Exodus 18:3, 14 chapters after we first learn about the existence of Moses' second son, we learn his name: "... and the name of the other [son], Eliezer; for he [Moses] said, 'The God of my father was my help...'." (Eli, my God; ezer, help.)

> **"It is the rare son or daughter who survives unscathed growing up in the shadow of a parent who is always in the spotlight."**

What else does our Bible tell us about Eliezer or his older brother, Gershom? While we learn nothing about Gershom himself, we do learn that his son, Jonathan (also identified as Shebuel), becomes an apostate priest, leading the tribe of Dan in the worship of an idol.

The book of Judges, Chapter 18, concludes with these astonishing verses, branding the grandson of Moses as an idolater: "Then the Danites set up an idol [from the home of Micah] for themselves. Jonathan, son of Gershom, son of Moses, and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites until the time that the land went into captivity. So they maintained as their own Micah's idol that he had made, as long as the house of God was at Shiloh." (Judges 30-31.)

While we learn nothing about Eliezer himself, it seems safe to say that his progeny did not become idolaters who led others into idolatry. We find this snippet in Chapter 23 of I Chronicles: "... but as for Moses, the man of God, his sons were to be reckoned among the tribe of Levi. The sons of Moses: Gershom and Eliezer. ... The sons of Eliezer: Rehabiah the chief; Eliezer had no other sons, but the sons of Rehabiah were very numerous." (I Chronicles 15, 17.)

So what else is there to say about this second son of Moses? We know that he died sometime during the 40 years the Israelites were wandering in the midbar, that forbidding desert wilderness of the Sinai Peninsula and the desolate stretch of land east of the Jordan River and the Dead Sea. We know this because, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb, all those born before the Exodus, spiritually deadened by the slave mentality, were doomed to die in the wilderness, never setting foot in the Promised Land.

On the other hand, we can assume that Eliezer's son and grandsons, members of the tribe of Levi, did serve as some sort of religious functionaries once the Israelites settled in Canaan.

We don't know if Eliezer ever managed to forgive Moses for being an absentee father, entrusting all parenting duties to Zipporah. Where in his father crowded world of crushing responsibilities was there room for him?

Perhaps, as Eliezer matured, he came to value Moses' total engagement in the historic mission of leading his people from bondage to freedom, from darkness to a great light. Maybe, even though wounded by his father's neglect, Eliezer came to take pride in Moses' enormous accomplishments.

I would like to think that Eliezer lived out his life in the desert satisfied with his lot. Yes, he was understandably disappointed with Moses as a father, but he quieted his discontent with the hope that through his tireless efforts, his father would ensure the future of the Jewish people *l'dor vador*, from generation to generation.

Moses' second son does have a name, Eliezer, but he does not have a story…except in the imaginations of those who wonder what happened to him, his unnamed wife, his one son and his many grandchildren. It could be that if we were able to trace our lineage back far enough, we would discover that Eliezer, son of Moses, is a root in our own family tree and, as such, a humble participant in an ancient chapter of our own stories.

JAMES B. ROSENBERG is rabbi emeritus at Temple Habonim in Barrington. Contact him at rabbiemeritus@templehabonim.org.

COLUMNS | LETTERS POLICY

The Jewish Voice publishes thoughtful and informative contributors' columns (op-eds of 500 – 800 words) and letters to the editor (300 words, maximum) on issues of interest to our Jewish community. At our discretion, we may edit pieces for publication or refuse publication. Letters and columns, whether from our regular contributors or from guest columnists, represent the views of the authors; they do not represent the views of The Jewish Voice or the Alliance.

Send letters and op-eds to: The Jewish Voice, 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence, RI 02906 or editor@jewishallianceri.org. Include name, city of residence and a contact phone number or email (not for publication).

CRC, Board of Rabbis issue statement on executive order restricting entry of refugees

The following statement was made public on Jan. 31:

"The Community Relations Council (CRC) of the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island and the Board of Rabbis of Greater Rhode Island steadfastly oppose the executive order issued on Friday, January 27 to restrict the entry of refugees seeking asylum from seven predominantly Muslim nations.

We are called, not only as people of faith, but from a long-standing democratic tradition to welcome all people to our country regardless of religion, color or nationality. As Americans we have a centuries-old tradition of welcoming all immigrants with open arms. As Jews, we know all too well the horrors of living in places where we are not wanted. And our Torah repeatedly commands us to accept and welcome people from strange lands, for we too were strangers.

We understand the complexities of the immigration issue. The refugee crisis is a global one. Millions of people have been forced from their homes with nowhere to go. America must do its part to provide sanctuary. This is not an option. It is an imperative.

We agree with the current post-9/11 policy which includes extensive background checks by Homeland Security as it relates to the vetting process of refugees entering our country. This notwithstanding, a reasonable and compassionate system or program that will not undermine one of our nation's most basic core principles must be implemented. One that provides a home and shelter for those seeking refuge, while also assuring the safety of its people.

We further denounce this announcement made on International Holocaust Remembrance Day, a day commemorating the liberation of Auschwitz. This is a particularly meaningful day for victims of the Holocaust, especially Jews. On this day we remember the ancestors we lost and the survivors whose lives were forever changed. We also remember the Jews seeking asylum who were turned away from the United States and other countries only to return to certain encampment and death.

Richard Glucksman
Community Relations Council, Chair
Rabbi Sarah Mack
President, Board of Rabbis of Greater Rhode Island
Marty Cooper
Community Relations, Director

AT PRESS TIME

At least 17 bomb threats to JCCs in third wave of harassment

No threats have been called in to the Jewish Alliance's Dwares JCC

JTA – At least 17 Jewish community centers across the United States were targeted with bomb threats Jan. 31 in the third wave of such mass disruption in January.

Paul Goldenberg, the director of Secure Community Networks – an affiliate of the Jewish Federations of North America, which advises Jewish groups and institutions on security – said the threats were called in late in the morning. Some of the messages were live, he confirmed.

"[I]n the past we know that the numbers can grow exponentially," he said, adding that perpetrators have been "leveraging technologies to make mass calls."

Goldenberg confirmed that threats had been called into JCCs in Albany, New York; Syracuse, New York; West Orange, New Jersey, Milwaukee, San Diego and Salt Lake City.

The JCC in New Haven, Connecticut, received a live call at 11:45 a.m. Jan. 31 threatening violence. The JCC is housed in several locations following a Dec. 5 fire, and evacuated about 100 people from those sites following the call. After law enforcement determined that the threat was not credible, the evacuees returned. The New Haven JCC was also targeted in a wave of bomb threats about two weeks ago.

"We recognize that we live under a new set of circumstances that we have to be responsive to, and take every possible precaution to keep our people safe," said New Haven JCC CEO Judy Diamondstein. "While we are disrupted, we refuse to be daunted by this."

Goldenberg said his organization was instructing the JCCs to be in touch with local police to determine if they should evacuate.

"In light of the newest bomb threats, we must remain a resilient community, and we need to ensure that we are back at our JCCs as soon as local police advise the all-clear," Goldenberg said.

THREATS |18

FROM PAGE 1 | REFUGEE BAN

to host them while the U.S. is stalling their application.

Shahi's relatives are among several Jewish families and several hundreds of non-Jewish ones handled by HIAS, the former Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, a 135-year-old Jewish agency that assists refugees and asylum seekers. The U.S.-based agency once focused on helping Jews flee persecution in Europe, but is now working mostly with non-Jews in 30 countries, and has been recognized for decades as an immigration facilitator by the Department of Justice.

"There are hundreds and hundreds of people with approval notices who now can't come to the States," the group's CEO, Mark Hetfield, told JTA on Jan. 29.

Of the approximately 85,000 refugees admitted into the United States last year, HIAS was responsible for resettling 3,884 – including 159 Jews, among them 89 from Iran and several others from Yemen.

Hetfield said that some of the families processed by HIAS already received a refugee visa but were turned away at airports while trying to enter.

"This inhumane act was done in the most inhumane way possible," he said, underlining the outrage that on Jan. 28 brought thousands of people to protest the executive order on refugees and Muslim countries at airports around the country. Many Jews participated in the rallies, and Jewish community groups have vocally opposed the executive order.

On Jan. 28, a federal judge in Brooklyn issued a stay of removal for the estimated 100 to 200 people detained at American airports under Trump's order – some of them children and legal permanent U.S. residents.

But that was only a partial victory for pro-refugee activists.

A non-Jewish family of asylum seekers from Syria who, despite having obtained visas on Jan. 20 to enter the United States as refugees following a Homeland Security Department vetting, were turned back in Ukraine to their camp in Jordan on Jan. 27. Citing Trump's order, airline officials did not let the family – a mother and daughters aged 5 and 8 – fly to the United States, Hetfield said.

The mother and her daughters are seeking to reunite with their father, who is already in Connecticut. They were let back into Jordan, "but in such cases, there is a risk that people who leave to become refugees in the United States will not be let back in, or worse," Hetfield added.

The Zionist Organization of America was one of the few Jewish groups to enthusiastically praise the executive order on refugees, hailing it for addressing "notable failings of the U.S. vetting process."

"Deteriorating conditions in certain countries due to war, strife, disaster, and civil unrest increase the likelihood that terrorists will use any means possible to enter the United States," Trump's executive order on refugees states.

While it acknowledges that security vetting for visa applicants was toughened following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the order says that the shutdown is necessary to carry out a review to make sure the current vetting tools can "determine that the individual seeking the benefit is who the individual claims to be and is not a security or public-safety threat."

But Hetfield says that the current vetting procedure is so stringent that "terrorists are not going to look to [the] refugee program as a way in. They are going to try a less intrusive method. We don't have any worries about it."

Hetfield could not provide figures for how often asylum seekers are denied visas for security reasons – partly because Homeland Security neither specifies its reason for turning down applications nor offers recourse for appealing it.

Whereas the United Nations estimates that there are about 1 million people who meet its definition of a refugee – not including Palestinians, who have a different refugee classification – only several hundred thousand of them have been offered resettlement.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada and some lawmakers there suggested that their country would be willing to take refugees affected by the White House crackdown, but have presented no concrete plans for how and when this would be done.

Rather than encourage other countries to take in refugees turned down by the United States, Hetfield fears that Trump's executive order is likelier to have the opposite effect: Other countries will be less willing to bring in refugees.

"If the United States, that has led by example, decides its vetting process isn't safe enough, well, that will have huge implications for other countries," Hetfield said.

The fact that the order came on International Holocaust Remembrance Day is "especially painful," he added, because "the international law pertaining to refugees today is a direct result of the Holocaust and the failure to act and protect Jews trying to leave Germany and Austria" and other places in war-torn Europe before and during World War II.

Another immigration professional from the United States, herself a refugee from the Middle East, said she believed that the language of the executive order signals that when it comes to the Muslim world, the Trump administration seeks to turn its refugee program primarily into an "escape route for non-Muslims." She asked not to be quoted by name because "things are too unclear right now to make an official statement."

She cited a passage of the executive order that speaks of "changes, to the extent permitted by law, to prioritize refugee claims made by individuals on the basis of religious-based persecution, provided that the religion of the individual is a minority religion in the individual's country of nationality."

But that's not a good thing for religious minorities in Iran and elsewhere, the professional said.

"Just as Iranian Jews have long been flagged as a fifth column because they are welcome to resettle in Israel," she said, "now the same will happen to all the other members of religious minorities" in the region.

Is Israel 'occupying' its own land?

BY MOSES MORDECAI TWERSKY

Jephthah sent emissaries to the king of the Children of Ammon, saying, 'What is there between you and me that you have come to me to make war in my land'? (Judges 11:12)

The king of the Children of Ammon said to Jephthah's emissaries, 'Because Israel took away my land when it ascended from Egypt, from Arnon to the Jabbok to the Jordan! So now return them in peace.' (Judges 11.13)

Of course, the land of Israel was not part of Ammon. Ammon was northeast of Moab. As God spoke in Deuteronomy 2:19, "and you shall approach opposite the children of Ammon; you shall not distress them and you shall not provoke them, for I shall not give any of the land of the children of Ammon to you as an inheritance, for to the children of Lot have I given it as an inheritance."

Zionism, begun by Theodore Herzl at the close of the 19th century, was successful in procuring the Balfour Declaration, on Nov. 2, 1917, supporting a Jewish national home in Palestine. After World War I, the League of Nations confirmed the Balfour Declaration, under international law, for a Jewish home as demarcated in the Palestine Mandate.

The mandatory authority was conferred on Britain in April 1920. As envisaged by Lord Arthur Balfour, British foreign secretary, and the League of Nations, the geographic area of the Jewish home was much broader than was subsequently authorized in the United Nations' Partition Plan of 1947. Nonetheless, the international legal commitment of the League of Nations was subsumed by the U.N. Charter as valid under international law.

This is the foundational legal basis of the State of Israel under international law. The Palestinians had no comparable status. They had rejected the U.N. Partition plan, along with their mentors, the Arab states.

The Six Day War of June 1967 brought the Palestinians under Israeli rule. U.N. Security Council Resolution 242, which emerged from that conflict, called for "secure and recognized boundaries" for Israel.

It was understood at the time that Israel would keep some territories. British Foreign Secretary George Brown explained, "The proposal said 'Israel will withdraw from territories that were occupied, not from "the territories," which means that Israel will not withdraw from all the territories."

Also, the holy city of Jerusalem was not part of Resolution 242. Arthur Goldberg, U.N. ambassador at the time of 242, wrote a letter to the New York Times on March 6, 1980, stating, "Resolution 242 in no way refers to Jerusalem, and this omission was deliberate."

However, Charles Yost, the U.N. ambassador during the Nixon administration, for the first time called East Jerusalem "occupied territory." And so began the long course of U.S. foreign policy that weighed strong support for the democratic state of Israel against support for the Arab lobby – particularly its heated focus on the deprived Palestinians.

Efraim Karsh, professor and head of the Middle East and Mediterranean Studies Program at Kings College, in London, explains in his book "Palestine Betrayed" that the *Nakba* was a result of violent self-destruction by the leaders of the Palestinians, such as the Mufti Hajj Amin Husseini, who went to Nazi Germany and was a sycophant of Hitler.

The Arab states, many of them sympathetic to Nazi Germany, advocated after World War II the total and violent destruction of Israel. This commitment to destroy Israel was never abandoned by the Palestinians; it continues today.

Yasser Arafat, about two months after rejecting an astounding offer of almost complete sovereignty over Jerusalem by Ehud Barak during the Camp David talks with President Bill Clinton in 2000, launched the murderous al-Aksa Intifada, which he had been planning for a long time.

President Barack Obama focused on Israeli settlements, including in East Jerusalem, as illegal under international law. This view is not necessarily shared by international law scholars. Mark Goldfeder, senior lecturer at Emory University Law School, has stated, "Israel has exclusive title and sovereignty ... from an international law perspective, this is not an occupation."

Northwestern University School of Law Prof. Eugene Kontorovich wrote, "The U.S. must clearly declare that whatever the political merits of Israeli settlements, they do not violate international law. The [U.N.] Security Council's condemnation of any Jewish presence in eastern Jerusalem and the West Bank is a unique rule invented for Israel."

Obama warned Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas not to internationalize the conflict with Israel by going to the U.N. General Assembly in 2012. Yet on Dec. 23, 2016, Obama did exactly that. He threw Israel into the maws of a hostile international community. This act, which arguably harmed American national security, certainly harmed Israel's security.

MOSES MORDECAI TWERSKY has a master's degree in American history from Providence College. He is a scion of the Chernobyl Belz Makarov Hasidic rabbinical dynasty.

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Christian Zionist support for Israel has deep historic, theological roots

BY TRICIA MILLER

Christian support for the Zionist cause – the return of the Jewish people to their ancient homeland of Israel and the resumption of Jewish sovereignty in that land – is built on a historic and theological foundation that is as old as Christianity itself.

This foundation includes a belief in the biblical history of Israel and the prophetic promises concerning the return of the Jewish people to their land; an understanding of the historic and spiritual connection between Jews and the land; and agreement with the right of Jews to self-determination in the reestablished State of Israel.

Christians who do not believe in the right of Jews to self-determination in their historic homeland, or who do not believe the modern Jewish state has any historic or theological connection to biblical Israel, often allege that Christian Zionism began with, and is based on, relatively recent End Time theology. However, this is simply not true.

The theological expectation of a restored nation of Israel and Jewish sovereignty over Jerusalem has a history that goes back to Jesus and first-century Christians.

In Mark 11:17 in the New Testament, Jesus quoted Isaiah's prophesy concerning a restored Jerusalem. In Acts 3:21, the apostle Peter speaks about the restoration of all things spoken of by the Hebrew prophets, using language that explicitly refers to the return of Jews to Israel. And in Revelation 21, it is clear that Jerusalem and the twelve tribes of Israel are at the center of End Time events that revolve around the reestablishment of Israel.

The expectation of a future return of the Jewish people to the land and the restoration of the nation of Israel was fairly common in the early church as well. Tertullian, a third-century leader, provides one example. He said: "It will be fitting for the Christian to rejoice, and not to grieve, at the restoration of Israel, if it be true, as it is, that the whole of our hope is intimately united with the remaining expectation of Israel."

Medieval theologians also believed in a future return of the Jewish people to their historic land, as did a number of leaders of the 16th-century Protestant Reformation.

In the same time period as the Reformation, Zionism was developing in Britain. Beginning in the 17th century, English Puritan leaders promoted beliefs such as: Jews were "God's chosen nation"; Christians "must acknowledge ourselves debtors to the Jews"; and "the dispersed Jews would be restored into their own country, and would rebuild Jerusalem."

Puritan leaders who came to North America also believed that the nation of Israel would be restored, as evidenced by the writings of John Cotton and Increase Mather of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. In 1642, Cotton wrote that gentiles needed to prove their faithfulness by actively helping Jews return, and should be willing "to convey the Jews into their own country with chariots, horses and dromedaries." And in his comprehensive 1669 work on the restoration of Israel, titled "The Mystery of Israel's Salvation," Mather wrote, "the Israelites shall again possess … the Land promised unto their Father Abraham."

Jonathan Edwards, an influential British theologian of the early 18th century, wrote that Israel would again be a distinct nation, and Christians would have free access to Jerusalem because Jews would look on Christians as their brethren. It is significant that, since 1948, Edwards' words have indeed been fulfilled.

By the 19th century, the Evangelical movement within Christianity, both in England and the U.S., was quite strong, and Evangelicals to this day continue to be the most significant contingent of Christians who support the Zionist cause.

Twentieth-century proponents of Christian Zionism include Lord Arthur Balfour, the author of the 1917 Balfour Declaration; Col. John Patterson, the commander of the Jewish Legion during World War I; and Gen. Orde Wingate, the British officer who, in the 1930s, advocated for the establishment of a Jewish homeland on religious and moral grounds.

As this brief survey demonstrates, Christian expectation of a restored nation of Israel, including Jewish sovereignty over Jerusalem, is based on a theological foundation that goes back to Jesus himself. Christian Zionism, as adhered to by millions and millions of Christians, is simply the modern version of the historic belief that the Jewish people would return to their homeland, just as the Hebrew prophets promised.

TRICIA MILLER is senior research analyst with CAMERA, the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America. She spoke recently at a program at Congregation Beth Sholom, in Providence, sponsored by CAMERA with local assistance from StopIranNow-RI (stop.iran.now.ri@gmail.com)

Ongoing

Alliance Kosher Senior Café. Kosher lunch and program every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Temple Emanu-El, 99 Taft Ave., Providence. Noon lunch; 1 p.m. program. $3 lunch donation from individuals 60+ or under 60 with disabilities. Neal or Elaine, 401-338-3189.

West Bay Kosher Senior Café. Kosher lunch and program every weekday. Temple Sinai, 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. 11:15 a.m. program; noon lunch. $3 lunch donation from individuals 60+ or under 60 with disabilities. Steve, 401-743-0009.

Through March 2

Plein Air Artists. Temple Habonim Gallery, 165 New Meadow Road, Barrington. Features works by members of the summer 2016 Lifelong Learning Collaborative Plein Air class. Gallery is open Wednesday and Thursday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Friday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and by appointment. Information, call 401-245-6536 or email gallery@templehabonim.org.

Friday | February 3

Shabbat Chai. 6-8:30 p.m. Temple Emanu-El, 99 Taft Ave., Providence. Shabbat Chai combines musical instruments with both traditional and spirited Kabbalat Shabbat melodies. After the service, stay for Shabbat dinner. All ages welcome, with children's activities available throughout the evening. Free, although contributions are welcome before or after Shabbat. Information, Paul Stouber at pstouber@teprov.org or 401-331-1616.

Saturday | February 4

Minyan Breakfast and Torah Study. 9:30-10:30 a.m. Temple Sinai, 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Weekly breakfast and Torah study in the downstairs chapel. Warm breakfast followed by study of the weekly Torah portion. All members of the community are welcome to participate. Information, Dottie at Temple Sinai, 401-942-8350.

Taste of Shabbat. 9-11 a.m. Temple Torat Yisrael, 1251 Middle Road, East Greenwich. 9 a.m. Torah Discussion and 9:45 a.m. Shabbat Service followed by a light Kiddush. Information, Stephanie Reinsant at stephanie@toratyisrael.org or 401-885-6600.

Saturday Morning Junior Kiddush Club. 9:30-11:15 a.m. Congregation Beth Sholom, 275 Camp St., Providence. Shabbat morning activities include prayer, parashah, play time and a special Kiddush just for kids. Age groups: Tots, Pre-K-1st grade, 2nd grade and up. No fee. Information, office@bethsholom-ri.org, call 401-621-9393 or see Facebook page @ BethSholom-RI.

Musical Bingo Night. 6-9 p.m. Temple Sinai, 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Family-friendly event hosted by WRIK Entertainment. Listen to clips of songs from many decades and mark bingo cards according to directions. Six games will be played, and prizes will be awarded to the winners. The cost for the evening is $10 per person, maximum $30 per family. Includes dinner, drinks and dessert. Sign up, call temple office at 401-942-8350. Information, Ina Land at riland1@cox.net.

Game Night. 6:30 p.m. Temple Torat Yisrael, 1251 Middle Road, East Greenwich. Fun for the whole family. Bring games. Snacks and dessert provided. Kids come in PJs. $5 per family. RSVP to the Torat Yisrael office at 401-885-6600.

Sunday | February 5

OROT Classes Winter & Spring 2017. 8:45-9:30 a.m. Congregation Beth Sholom, 275 Camp St., Providence. Led by Rabbi Barry Dolinger. Continue the study of Rav Kook's revolutionary seminal work, a collection of challenging and moving essays that describe the religious significance of Zionism. Free. Information, rabbi@bethsholom-ri.org.

Sisterhood Book Review. 9:30 a.m. Temple Torat Yisrael, 1251 Middle Road, East Greenwich. We'll be reviewing "A Remarkable Kindness: A Novel" by Diana Bletter. Information, Stephanie Reinsant at stephanie@toratyisrael.org or 401-885-6600.

Sunday Serenity. 9:45-10:30 a.m. Congregation Beth Sholom, 275 Camp St., Providence. Meditation instruction for all levels. Engage in mindfulness practice to increase awareness, compassion and inner calm while reducing stress and anxiety. Information, rabbi@bethsholom-ri.org.

URI Hillel Super Bowl Brunch. Noon-1 p.m. URI Hillel, 6 Fraternity Circle, Kingston. Get into the football spirit at our Super Bowl brunch. Free for students. $15 for community members. Information, Yaniv Havusha at yaniv_havusha@uri.edu or 401-874-2740.

PJ Library Stories and More. 3-4 p.m. Barrington Books Retold, Garden City Center, 176 Hillside Road, Cranston. Purim storytime for children up to age 5. Free. Information, Ruth Horton at rhorton@jewishallianceri.org or 401-421-4111, ext. 117.

(401)j NFL Super Bowl Party. 6 p.m. Dwares JCC. Watch the Super Bowl with (401)j. BYOB (beer and wine only). Dairy/vegetarian food at no charge with Kosher options available. To coordinate a ride, email Dayna Bailen with your town. Information or to RSVP (by Jan. 29), Dayna Bailen at dbailen@jewishallianceri.org or 401-421-4111, ext. 108.

Project Shoresh Partners in Torah Night. 7:45-8:45 p.m. Center for Jewish Studies, Providence Hebrew Day School, 450 Elmgrove Ave., Providence. Join us for a free, lively, informal, partner-based study group, where you study your choice of texts together, English or Hebrew, ancient or modern, with on-site facilitators available to answer questions – and ask them, too. Let us know if you want to be a "study-buddy." There's a lively, positive energy in the room. Information, Noach Karp at rnoachkarp@gmail.com or 401-429-8244.

Monday | February 6

Conversion Class. 7:30-8:45 p.m. Congregation Beth Sholom, 275 Camp St., Providence. Rabbi Barry Dolinger continues a broad-based exploration of the biggest topics in Judaism, designed to give an overarching but detailed appreciation for traditional Judaism. This semester will focus on increased personal study for additional breadth of information while delving deeper through discussions during classes. We will continue our study of Shabbat. Free. Through May 22. No class: Feb. 20, April 10, April 17, May 8. Information, rabbi@bethsholom-ri.org.

Tuesday | February 7

Adult Education: Israel, Our Homeland. 10-11 a.m. Temple Sinai, 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. In this four-session course, students will learn about the religious and historical connection between modern Jews and the land of Israel. Difficult topics, like our relationship with Arabs living in Israel and the racial background of today's Jews, will be discussed. Information, Dottie at Temple Sinai, 401-942-8350.

Congregation Beth Sholom's Lunch & Learn. Noon-1 p.m. Offices of Rosenstein, Halper, & Maselli, 27 Dryden Lane, Unit #4, Providence. Engaging study, led by Rabbi Barry Dolinger, and great company for lunch. Study Mishpat Ivri – Jewish Civil Law – as it might be applied in the modern State of Israel in a special five-part series. Upcoming dates: Feb. 21, March 7 and 21. Cost: $15 per class, $72 for the semester. RSVP to Tammy Giusti at tgiusti@rhmllp.com. Information, rabbi@bethsholom-ri.org.

Yoga. 6-7 p.m. Temple Torat Yisrael, 1251 Middle Road, East Greenwich. Cost: $30 for 3 sessions paid in advance; $12 per session at the door. Beginner and intermediate levels. Open to all. Bring your own mat. Information, Stephanie Reinsant at stephanie@toratyisrael.org or 401-885-6600.

Tuesday Night Talmud (TNT). 7:30-8:30 p.m. Congregation Beth Sholom, 275 Camp St., Providence. Study the Fifth Chapter of Berachot with Rabbi Barry Dolinger. Upcoming dates: Feb. 14, Feb. 21, Feb. 28, March 7, March 14, March 21, March 28 and April 4 (semester siyum). Information, rabbi@bethsholom-ri.org.

Wednesday | February 8

Israel in Real Life: Four Hatikvah Questions. 7 p.m. Dwares JCC. Led by Robbie Gringas, creative director, Makom: Jewish Agency for Israel's Education Lab. A constructive approach to understanding conversations about Israel and to dealing with the latest hot topic. RSVP, Lynne Bell at lbell@jewishallianceri.org or 401-421-4111, ext. 156.

Mah Jongg. 7 p.m. Temple Torat Yisrael, 1251 Middle Road, East Greenwich. Open to members, non-members, men and women. Bring your friends and your 2016 Mah Jongg card. Free. The 2017 cards will be available for purchase at Torat Yisrael as soon as they are published in April. Information, contact Stephanie Reinsant at stephanie@toratyisrael.org or 401-885-6600.

Friday | February 10

Shabbat Shaboom. 6 p.m. Temple Sinai, 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Program for families with preschool and kindergarten children includes a half-hour of Jewish songs, stories, crafts and snacks to celebrate Shabbat. Information, Dottie at Temple Sinai, 401-942-8350.

Avi Schaefer Multicultural/Multifaith Shabbat Dinner. 5:30-7:30 p.m. URI Hillel, 6 Fraternity Circle, Kingston. A night of dialogue, ethnic food and entertainment. The evening is facilitated by students, with prompt/guiding questions provided at each table to spark conversation. Blessings from all faiths are incorporated into the evening. Free for students | $10 for community members. Reservations required. Co-sponsored by Hillel, the Chaplains Association and the Office of Community, Equity and Diversity as part of the Critical Community Conversations series as well as the 2017 Martin Luther King Jr. week. Information, Yaniv Havusha at yaniv_havusha@uri.edu.

Friday Night Live Chocolate Shabbat. 6-8:30 p.m. Temple Torat Yisrael, 1251 Middle Road, East Greenwich. Musical Shabbat service followed by dinner and dessert. In honor of Tu b'Shevat, enjoy chocolate, a divine fruit that grows on trees. Adults and children over 12 years $20 | 12 years and younger free | family max. $60. RSVP to the Torat Yisrael office at 401-885-6600.

Saturday | February 11

Taste of Shabbat. 9 a.m.-noon. Temple Torat Yisrael, 1251 Middle Road, East Greenwich. Celebrate the Trees of Life. Shabbat Service followed by a Tu b'Shevat celebration with a tasting of different kinds of wine and fruit. Information, Stephanie Reinsant at stephanie@toratyisrael.org or 401-885-6600.

Minyan Breakfast and Torah Study. 9:30-10:30 a.m. Temple Sinai, 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Weekly breakfast and Torah study in the downstairs chapel. Warm breakfast followed by study of the Torah portion. Everyone welcome. Information, Dottie at Temple Sinai, 401-942-8350.

Saturday Morning Junior Kiddush Club. 9:30-11:15 a.m. Congregation Beth Sholom, 275 Camp St., Providence. Shabbat morning activities include prayer, parashah, play time and a special Kiddush just for kids. Age groups: Tots, Pre-K-1st grade, 2nd grade and up. No fee. Information, office@bethsholom-ri.org, call 401-621-9393 or see Facebook page @ BethSholom-RI.

"Love is in the Air." 7-9 p.m. Temple Sinai, 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Gershwin and Friends presented by Deborah Johnson, cantor of Temple Sinai, and Raymond Buttero, accompanist. Beautiful music and delicious desserts. Tickets are $10 in advance, $12 at the door. Information or to RSVP, Dottie at Temple Sinai, 401-942-8350.

OROT Classes Winter & Spring 2017. 8:45-9:30 a.m. Congregation Beth Sholom, 275 Camp St., Providence. Led by Rabbi Barry Dolinger. Continue the study of Rav Kook's revolutionary seminal work, a collection of challenging and moving essays that describe the religious significance of Zionism. Free. Information, rabbi@bethsholom-ri.org.

Men's Club Breakfast and Speakers. 9-11 a.m. Temple Torat Yisrael, 1251 Middle Road, East Greenwich. Two Rhode Island Christians and two Rhode Island Jews who all support Israel, will speak. Breakfast at 9 a.m. (optional); Cost $10 | Speakers at 9:45 a.m. Open to all. Information, Stephanie Reinsant at stephanie@toratyisrael.org or 401-885-6600.

Sunday Serenity. 9:45-10:30 a.m. Congregation Beth Sholom, 275 Camp St., Providence. Meditation instruction for all levels. Engage in mindfulness practice to increase awareness, compassion and inner calm while reducing stress and anxiety. Information, rabbi@bethsholom-ri.org.

Feel the Warmth at Tamarisk. 1-4 p.m. The Phyllis Siperstein Tamarisk Assisted Living Residence, 3 Shalom Drive, Warwick. Open House. Executive Chef Deb Blazer will offer a hot soup cooking demonstration from 1-2 p.m. with samples. RSVP by Feb. 5 to Susan Adler at susana@tamariskri.org or 401-732-0037.

StandWithUs: The REAL History of the BDS Movement. 7-9 p.m. Congregation Beth Sholom, 275 Camp St., Providence. Cornell Law School Professor William A. Jacobson examines the history of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, and explains how BDS is the end product of continuous Arab anti-Jewish boycotts starting in the 1920s. The presentation will include analysis of how recent developments at the United Nations will affect BDS moving forward. Cost: $10. Information, Bracha Stuart at brachas@standwithus.com.

Project Shoresh Partners in Torah Night. 7:45-8:45 p.m. Center for Jewish Studies, Providence Hebrew Day School, 450 Elmgrove Ave., Providence. Join us for a free, lively, informal, partner-based study group, where you study your choice of texts together, English or Hebrew, ancient or modern, with on-site facilitators available to answer questions – and ask them, too. Let us know if you want to be a "study-buddy." There's a lively, positive energy in the room. Information, Noach Karp at rnoachkarp@gmail.com or 401-429-8244.

Monday | February 13

Conversion Class. 7:30-8:45 p.m. Congregation Beth Sholom, 275 Camp St., Providence. Rabbi Barry Dolinger continues a broad-based exploration of the biggest topics in Judaism, designed to give an overarching but detailed appreciation for traditional Judaism. This semester will focus on increased personal study for additional breadth of information while delving deeper through discussions during classes. We will continue our study of Shabbat. Free. Through May 22. No class: Feb. 20, April 10, April 17, May 8. Information, rabbi@bethsholom-ri.org.

Tuesday | February 14

Adult Education: Israel, Our Homeland. 10-11 a.m. Temple Sinai, 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. In this four-session course, students will learn about the religious and historical connection between modern Jews and the land of Israel. Difficult topics, like our relationship with Arabs living in Israel and the racial background of today's Jews, will be discussed. Information, Dottie at Temple Sinai, 401-942-8350.

Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Aaron Philmus of Temple Torat Yisrael. Noon-1:30 p.m. T's Restaurant, 5600 Post Road, East Greenwich. Join Rabbi Aaron Philmus at T's Restaurant. Participants order from the menu, and study Jewish sources addressing current issues. Everyone is welcome!

Yoga. 6-7 p.m. Temple Torat Yisrael, 1251 Middle Road, East Greenwich. Cost: $30 for 3 sessions paid in advance; $12 per session at the door.

FROM PAGE 11 | CALENDAR

Beginner and intermediate levels. Open to all. Bring your own mat. Information, Stephanie Reinsant at stephanie@toratyisrael.org or 401-885-6600.

Tuesday Night Talmud (TNT). 7:30-8:30 p.m. Congregation Beth Sholom, 275 Camp St., Providence. Study the Fifth Chapter of Berachot with Rabbi Barry Dolinger. Upcoming dates: Feb. 21, Feb. 28, March 7, March 14, March 21, March 28 and April 4 (semester siyum). Information, rabbi@bethsholom-ri.org.

Wednesday | February 15

Jewish Culture through Film: "Schwartz Dynasty." 6:30-9 p.m. Dwares JCC. This movie focuses on two women with loved ones to bury who join forces in a struggle against Jewish cemetery politics. See story page 26. RSVP, Lynne Bell at lbell@jewishallianceri.org or 401-421-4111, ext. 156.

Mah Jongg. 7 p.m. Temple Torat Yisrael, 1251 Middle Road, East Greenwich. Open to members, non-members, men and women. Bring your friends and your 2016 Mah Jongg card. Free. Information, contact Stephanie Reinsant at stephanie@toratyisrael.org or 401-885-6600.

Saturday | February 18

Minyan Breakfast and Torah Study. 9:30-10:30 a.m. Temple Sinai, 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Weekly breakfast and Torah study in the downstairs chapel. Warm breakfast followed by study of the Torah portion. Everyone welcome. Information, Dottie at Temple Sinai, 401-942-8350.

Saturday Morning Junior Kiddush Club. 9:30-11:15 a.m. Congregation Beth Sholom, 275 Camp St., Providence. Shabbat morning activities include prayer, parashah, play time and a special Kiddush just for kids. Age groups: Tots, Pre-K-1st grade, 2nd grade and up. No fee. Information, office@bethsholom-ri.org, call 401-621-9393 or see Facebook page @ BethSholom-RI.

Kids' Night Out: Glow in the Dark. 5-10 p.m. Dwares JCC. Children participate in a variety of themed activities including sports, crafts, swimming and more. A pizza dinner and snacks are served, and the evening ends with a movie. Price: $35 | Members: $25 | Siblings: $15. Information or to register, Shannon Kochanek at 401-421-4111, ext. 147.



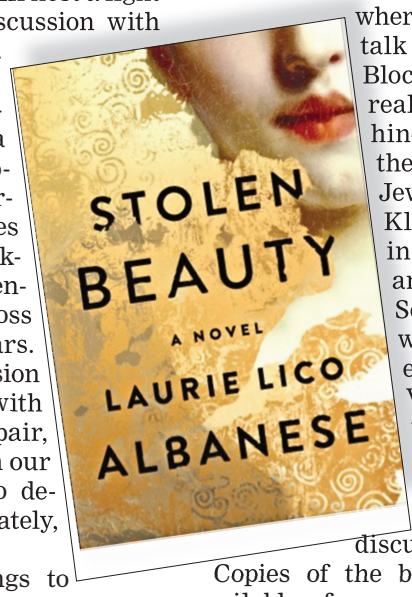


Author to discuss 'Stolen Beauty'

BY LARRY KATZ
lkatz@jewishallianceri.org

The "Woman in Gold" seen in the 2015 British-American film of that name comes alive again in the novel "Stolen Beauty," by Laurie Albanese.

Robin Kall, the "fairy book mother" behind Reading with Robin and the Point Street Reading Series, will host a light breakfast and discussion with the author on Feb. 22.



Impeccably researched and a "must-read," "Stolen Beauty" intertwines the tales of two remarkable Jewish-Viennese women across more than 100 years. It juxtaposes passion and discovery with hatred and despair, and sheds light on our ability to love, to destroy, and, ultimately, to endure.

The novel brings to life the intimate and triumphant stories of the women, who are bound by blood and by Gustav Klimt's iconic golden portrait, "Adele Bloch-Bauer I." This portrait represents the glory of *fin de siècle* Vienna, its destruction during World War II, and the courage and tenacity of its rightful owners.

"Stolen Beauty" is the first novel to bring Adele Bloch-Bauer to life in fiction. Bloch-Bauer was an important patron of the arts, a social influence in Jewish Vienna and an early independent woman.

In the novel, Bloch-Bauer, the model for what is perhaps the most iconic painting since the "Mona Lisa," narrates her own awakening (sexual, artistic, intellectual and political). Her niece, Maria Altmann, narrates her own tale of struggle and triumph.

Laurie Lico Albanese is the author of two novels and a memoir, and co-author of another novel. Her travel and general interest stories have appeared in the New York Times, the Chicago Tribune and elsewhere. She will talk about Adele Bloch-Bauer, the real woman behind the gold, the height of Jewish Vienna, Klimt's place in that world, and the anti-Semitism that was already evident in Vienna. She will also show art slides to illustrate her discussion.

Copies of the book will be available for purchase and there will be complimentary bagels and pastries at the event at Temple Beth-El, in Providence, on Wednesday, Feb. 22, at 9 a.m.

RSVP to the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island at 401-421-4111, ext. 100, or info@jewishallianceri.org.

The event is sponsored by the Jewish Alliance, Temple Beth-El and Reading with Robin.

Laurie Albanese will read from her book Feb. 21 at the Point Street Reading Series. See page 5.

LARRY KATZ is director of Jewish life and learning at the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island.

Kosher Meals on Wheels needs your help

Kosher Meals on Wheels allows area seniors to stay in their homes as long as possible, delivering Kosher meals to those who are homebound. This is a vital service to the homebound in the greater Rhode Island Jewish community.

Now, the program is looking for drivers in the Warwick and Cranston area as well as the Providence and Pawtucket area. All you need is a car and one hour a week or a month to spare. Gas reimbursement is available. Meals are delivered between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Kosher Meals on Wheels is a program of Jewish Family Service of Rhode Island in partnership with the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island and Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island.

If you are interested or for more information, contact Neal at 401-338-3189 or email neal@jfsri.org.



PHOTO | NEAL DROBNIS

Kosher Meals on Wheels volunteer Russell Kushner ready to start his deliveries.

This entrée will satisfy all the picky eaters at your table

BY SHANNON SARNA

(The Nosher via JTA) – My 4-year-old, previously meatball-loving child has recently decided, in fact, she does not like meatballs any longer. Or tomato sauce. My husband does not like spaghetti squash. And I am trying to cut back on my carbs just a smidge.

In short, dinner is becoming harder and harder to coordinate. So when I made sweet and sour meatballs for the first time recently and they were devoured, I knew we had a winner. That is, until my daughter decides she doesn't.

I served these meatballs with simple roasted spaghetti squash for myself, and some rice for my husband and daughter, so everyone was happy.

If you want to cut the sugar in this recipe, you can reduce it to 2 tablespoons brown sugar or replace with honey or stevia. If you want to remove a sweetener all together, try pureeing 1 whole peeled carrot in a food processor. While sauteing the onion, add the pureed carrot to add natural sweetness.

Special thanks to Kosher By Gloria for inspiring this post.



Sweet and Sour Meatballs with Spaghetti Squash

Ingredients

1 spaghetti squash

For the sauce:

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 medium onion
2 garlic cloves
1 (28-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
1/4 cup brown sugar OR 1 tablespoon stevia OR 2 carrots, peeled and pureed in food processor
Juice of 1/2 lemon
1 teaspoon fresh orange or lemon zest
1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
1 cup water or broth (vegetable or beef broth)

For the meatballs:

1 pound ground beef
1 egg
1/2 cup breadcrumbs
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/8 teaspoon ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Directions

To cook the spaghetti squash: Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Using a fork, prick the squash all over. Place on a baking sheet and cook 30-40 minutes until soft. Allow to cool slightly. Cut squash in half, scoop out the seeds, discard. Using a fork, remove the spaghetti squash flesh. This step can be prepared 1-2 days ahead.

To make the sauce:

Add 1 tablespoon olive oil to a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Cook onion 4-5 minutes until soft and translucent. Add garlic and cook another 2-3 minutes. Add crushed tomatoes, brown sugar (or sweetener or honey), lemon juice, citrus zest, vinegar, and salt and pepper to taste. Bring to a simmer and cook on low while preparing meatballs.

To make the meatballs:

Mix together breadcrumbs with cinnamon, ginger, salt and pepper. Add ground beef and mix gently. Add 1 beaten egg and mix until fully incorporated.

Using the palms of your hands, gently roll tablespoon-sized meatballs, taking care not to pack too tightly or "smush." If you want to be more precise, use a cookie scoop to measure.

Place all the meatballs in sauce and simmer on medium-low heat for 45-50 minutes, covered.

Serve warm with spaghetti squash, rice or noodles.

SHANNON SARNA is the editor of The Nosher. The Nosher food blog offers a dazzling array of new and classic Jewish recipes and food news, from Europe to Yemen, from challah to shakshuka and beyond. Check it out at TheNosher.com.

Easy dessert perfect when you need a fast sweet

BY SHANNON SARNA

(The Nosher via JTA) – Everyone enjoys a good recipe hack, and I think you will love this one: two ingredient rugelach! That's right: just a package of puff pastry, filling and that's it. You can make flaky, sweet, indulgent rugelach for your next Shabbat dinner, brunch or just because you need something with your afternoon cup of tea, within 30 minutes.

I like to use chocolate hazelnut spread, but you could use a cookie butter or jam – or try something savory like goat cheese and herbs. Top with a quick beaten egg and bake for 16-18 minutes, or until golden. Doesn't get a whole lot easier than that.



Two Ingredient Rugelach

Yield: 2 dozen

The following was inspired by a recipe from Real Simple.

Ingredients

2 sheets puff pastry, thawed overnight in fridge or on counter for an hour
Chocolate hazelnut spread or other filling
1 egg, lightly beaten

Directions

Thaw your puff pastry overnight, or for an hour out on the counter.

Take each sheet of puff pastry and spread with filling, leaving 1/4-inch border.

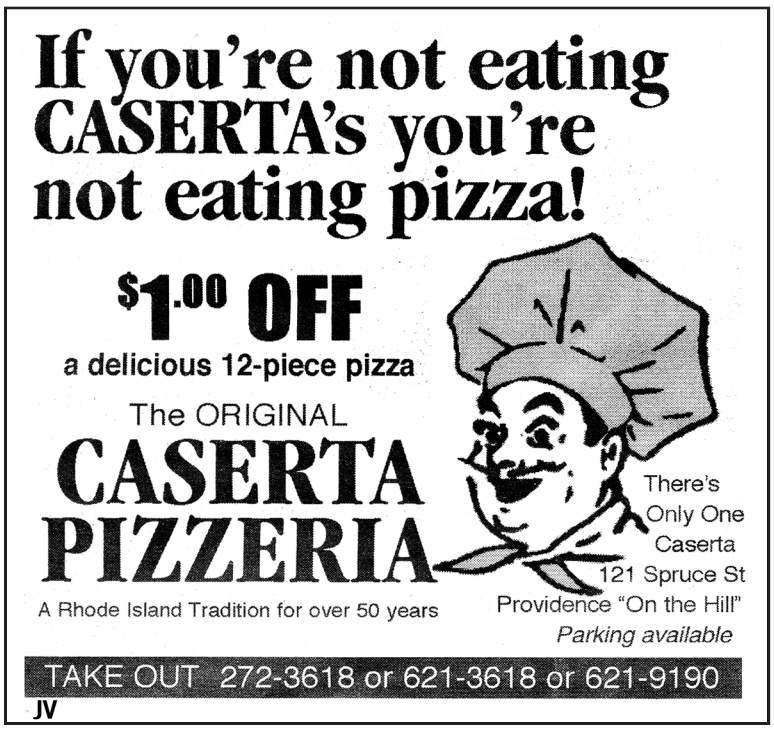
Cut puff pastry in half lengthwise. Then cut 6 squares. Cut each square into 2 triangles.

Working from the longer end, roll up each rugelach and place point side down on baking sheet lined with parchment or a Silpat. Place in freezer for 15-20 minutes, until firm.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Beat one egg in a small bow. After rugelach have firmed up, brush with egg wash. Top with cinnamon sugar if desired. Bake for 16-18 minutes.

SHANNON SARNA is the editor of The Nosher.





At dawn of the Trump era, two Jewish tribes descend on Washington

BY RON KAMPEAS

WASHINGTON (JTA) – "Cantor Kaufman!" Rabbi Jonah Pesner shouted across the intersection of 3rd and D in Washington's Northwest quadrant, packed sidewalk to sidewalk with women in pink pussycat hats and their male friends. "A song!"

Jason Kaufman, the cantor at Temple Beth El in Alexandria, Virginia, draped in a rainbow *tallit* and in the middle of telling a joke, cocked an eyebrow and pivoted gracefully from the guy hanging with his buddies at Saturday's [Jan. 21] Women's March on Washington to the religious leader ready to, well, lead.

Kaufman's rich tenor soared above the foggy chill and soon found company. The song was a natural for hundreds of Reform Jews waiting at the junction to join with hundreds more organized by the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) and other liberal Jewish groups.

"*Hinei ma tov umanaim*," they sang, quoting from Psalm 133. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity."

The Reform marchers, organized by the movement's Religious Action Center, which Pesner leads, ultimately never met up with the NCJW marchers – Washington's streets and the National Mall were crammed to the point of claustrophobia the day after the inauguration of Donald Trump as the nation's 45th president. The sternest shouted entreaties by group leaders could not keep the Jewish marchers from disappearing into the sea of humanity pocked by the pink hats that were the marchers' badge of honor.

Still, at around the same time, Nancy Kaufman, the NCJW CEO said, the marchers she was leading from the historic synagogue at Sixth and I broke into the same song.



PHOTO | SHARON FRIEDMAN

With the Capitol in the background, crowds from across the U.S. came together at the Women's March on Washington, D.C., Jan. 21. Chapters from every state, including Rhode Island attended.

It was not the first time that King David's words soared over the nation's capital. Psalm 133 also made an appearance on Friday [Jan. 20], in Trump's first speech delivered as president.

"When you open your heart to patriotism, there is no room for prejudice," Trump said. "The Bible tells us, 'How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity.' We must speak our minds openly, debate our disagreements honestly, but always pursue solidarity. When America is united, America is totally unstoppable."

Rather than unity, the twin uses of Psalm 133 signaled a nation deeply divided, and within it two Jewish tribes deeply at odds over its future. To the smaller tribe, solidly Republican and disproportionately Orthodox, the inauguration weekend was a time to celebrate Trump for bringing Israel closer to the U.S. bosom. For the other, larger one, which votes reliably Democratic and tends to support a progressive domestic agenda, it was a time to stand as one against what it sees as Trump's crusade to cleave Americans from one another.

Those glad of the Trump ascendancy say it will be a relief from a U.S.-Israel relationship still stinging from the toxicity between former President Barack Obama and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Their ranks include Sheldon and Miriam Adelson, the billionaire casino magnate and his wife, whose spending on pro-Israel causes is outmatched only by their spending to keep Democrats from power. On Friday, they were seen grinning on the inaugural dais – a rare, if not unprecedented place of honor for donors. Trump said later that their combined giving to his campaign and to the inauguration reached $125 million.

Perhaps a half football field across from them, six or so Jewish Trump supporters from Los Angeles huddled on the mall in layers a little too thick for the mild mid-Atlantic chill. They were close to tears as Rabbi Marvin Hier took the stage to deliver the benediction – one that cited another psalm, 137, "If I forget you O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its skill."

"That's my rabbi!" one yelled out.

After the speeches were over, the group enthused about why they had made the journey cross-country.

"We had a chill" as Hier spoke, said Chaya Illulian, 22. "God wants us to stand for the truth!"

"We're excited for the change," chimed in Chaya Israely, also 22.

"To see Rabbi Hier up there, it means we're equal," said Adam King, 33.

The evening before, clumps of middle-aged out-of-towners, red "Make America Great Again" hats covering their *kippot*, clustered around tables at the Char Bar kosher steakhouse. The most common topic of conversation: Would Trump's Orthodox Jewish daughter, Ivanka, and her husband, Jared Kushner, set to assume a role as a top adviser, make it out of their parade limos the next day in time for Shabbat? (They did: The limos pulled up to the White House at 4:35 p.m. Shabbat came in a few minutes after 5.)

Earlier Thursday [Jan. 19], a select group of Jewish Trump supporters attended the exclusive Republican Jewish Coalition reception, which featured Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, Rep. Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., the House majority leader, and Tom Rose, the conservative Jewish talk show radio maven who is close to Vice President Mike Pence.

On Friday night, they gathered on the lower floors of the Marriott Marquis at "The Inaugural Shabbat," sponsored by the Israel Forever Foundation. The hotel is connected to the Washington Convention Center where, as the Shabbat dinner got underway, Trump took his first dance with his wife, Melania, mouthing the words to Frank Sinatra's "My Way."

Or they were at the American Friends of Lubavitch headquarters near Dupont Circle, where Friday night services were packed with visitors. Rabbi Levi Shemtov's sons squeezed between worshippers with trays bulging with tiny plastic cups of sweet Kiddush wine.

The sense of a homecoming, of relaxed and happy banter, was natural, said Matt Brooks, director of the Republican Jewish Coalition.

"At the end of the day, I think there's a huge sense of relief," he said. "This last eight years we have seen a significant weakening of the U.S.-Israel alliance. Things are going to be very different from the Obama

MARCH | 26



PHOTO | SHARON FRIEDMAN

At times, the streets were so packed that nobody moved, according to reports.



PHOTO | MICHAEL GOODWIN

People lined the march route, holding signs and banners.

‘This is what democracy looks like’

BY SHARON FRIEDMAN

They came – the young, the old, entire families and collections of fast friends, those aided by canes and others in wheelchairs.

This undulating mass of humanity, including many on their first political march and many wearing the signature pink hats, was peaceful, kindly, united.

They held aloft a great variety of signs, ranging from the profane to the profound. They were all sending messages; some of them proclaimed that “Civil rights are human rights,” that “There is NO force equal to that of a determined woman,” that “They tried to bury us – they didn’t know we were seeds.”

A man close to me held up a sign that announced, “I’m here to show my sons it’s manly to stand up for women’s rights.” And a woman in a *hijab* shared this poignant message: “My head, my scarf, my body, my choice.”

My two friends and I were fortunate. We arrived in time to find a spot close to a jumbotron and a bank of speakers so that we could hear a soulful invocation “to honor our ancestors,” the “indigenous people rising.” Many marchers could not get close enough to the stage to see or hear the speakers and the music – but they were happy to just be there and be counted.

Charlie Brotman, the longtime inauguration parade announcer who was replaced this year, opened the rally and then declared that all of the women at the march were “Charlie’s Angels!” A long succession of speakers followed, each one inspiring those gathered, urging us forward.

Among the more than 50 speakers, entertainers and artists were the famous –Michael Moore, Gloria Steinem, Angela Davis, Madonna, Alicia Keyes – and the not-so-famous, as well as organizers from organizations large and small: Cecile Richards from Planned Parenthood; Amanda Nguyen of the civil-rights group Rise; Judith LeBlanc from the Native Organizers Alliance; and Rabbi Sharon Brous of the Jewish spiritual community IKAR.

Among the highlights for me was when one of the organizers looked out on the crowd and stated, “This is what democracy looks like,” sparking a spontaneous chant that echoed throughout the rally and march.

Actress America Ferrera declared that “we will not go from a nation of immigrants to a nation of ignorance.” Feminist and political icon Gloria Steinem spoke passionately about the power of coming together. She remarked that she had never seen such an “outpouring of democracy.”

“We are linked, not ranked,”



Sharon Friedman

she said, and: “A Twitter finger must not become a trigger finger.”

Steinem also reported on a note she received from a friend in Germany, which stated, “We in Berlin know that walls don’t work.”

“The Constitution does not begin with ‘I the President,’ it begins with ‘We the people’,” she said.

Steinem was followed by several other impassioned speakers. Evie Harmon of MomsRising said, “Unfair treatment of any one of us hurts all of us.”

One of the most poignant performances, by Ashley Judd, was “Nasty Women.” Activist Van Jones reminded us that “with every breakdown, there is a breakthrough” and added, “When it gets harder to love, let’s love harder.”

So what did I take away from this amazing, enthralling experience? Lots of things!

It was clear to me that the overcast skies and the occasional drizzle would not dampen the energy and determination that was everywhere evident in this march on Washington.

A trio of Asian-American



women, who had flown in from San Francisco, said they were going to a training at Emily’s List the next day. One of them was considering running for an elected office next year.

A mother and daughter from Virginia contemplated their next step.

Kamala Harris, a newly elected senator from California, urged us all to recommit, to use our power.

I listened carefully to Michael Moore’s plea for us to run for office, local or otherwise, and asked myself what more I could do. I already serve on a town board; I participate in the local and state political party of my choice; I speak to my local Board of Selectmen when there is an issue of importance to my family or me; I serve in my local synagogue; and I’m a board member for the Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative.

So what more will I do? I will be in touch with my representatives and senators on both the state and federal level more frequently. I will send letters of support when I agree with them, and letters of concern to implore them to do the right thing when they are deciding on issues that affect my constitutional rights or my well-being.

And, above all, I am urging everyone to become and stay involved no matter your political preference. Our democracy is a fragile and fluid entity that thrives on civil discourse.

My biggest takeaway from the historic Women’s March on Washington is that it takes all of our voices to keep our democracy vibrant and responsive. Let’s do this together!

SHARON FRIEDMAN is a member of Congregation Agudas Achim in Attleboro.



PHOTOS | BRIAN SULLIVAN

Scenes from the Women’s March rally in Providence on Jan. 21.

7 unexpected Birthright trips, from yoga to Instagrammed food

BY GABE FRIEDMAN

(JTA) – Birthright trips – the 10-day Israel tours offered free to young Jews – are so much part of mainstream culture that they have been copied by other religions, parodied on television shows like "Broad City" and "Transparent," and debated by academics and activists.

But if your idea of Birthright is outdoor hikes, camel rides, visits to the Western Wall and flirty bus trips up and down the spine of Israel, think again. The third-party vendors that work with the Taglit-Birthright Israel foundation offer an array of unexpected options – including trips for yogis, journalists, medical students and more.

The latest niche offering, announced last week, is a trip for vegans run by Mayanot Israel and Jewish Veg, a nonprofit that promotes plant-based diets. Participants will visit Israeli farms, eat at vegan restaurants and meet with some of the country's leading vegan diet proponents.

"So many young Jews who are vegan or vegetarian have become distanced from Judaism because their needs have not been met by our communal institutions," Jeffrey Cohan, the executive director of Jewish Veg, told the Forward. "This is a phenomenal way of re-engaging them."

Here are seven other niche trips that put an unusual spin on the Birthright experience.

For journalists (Mayanot Israel)

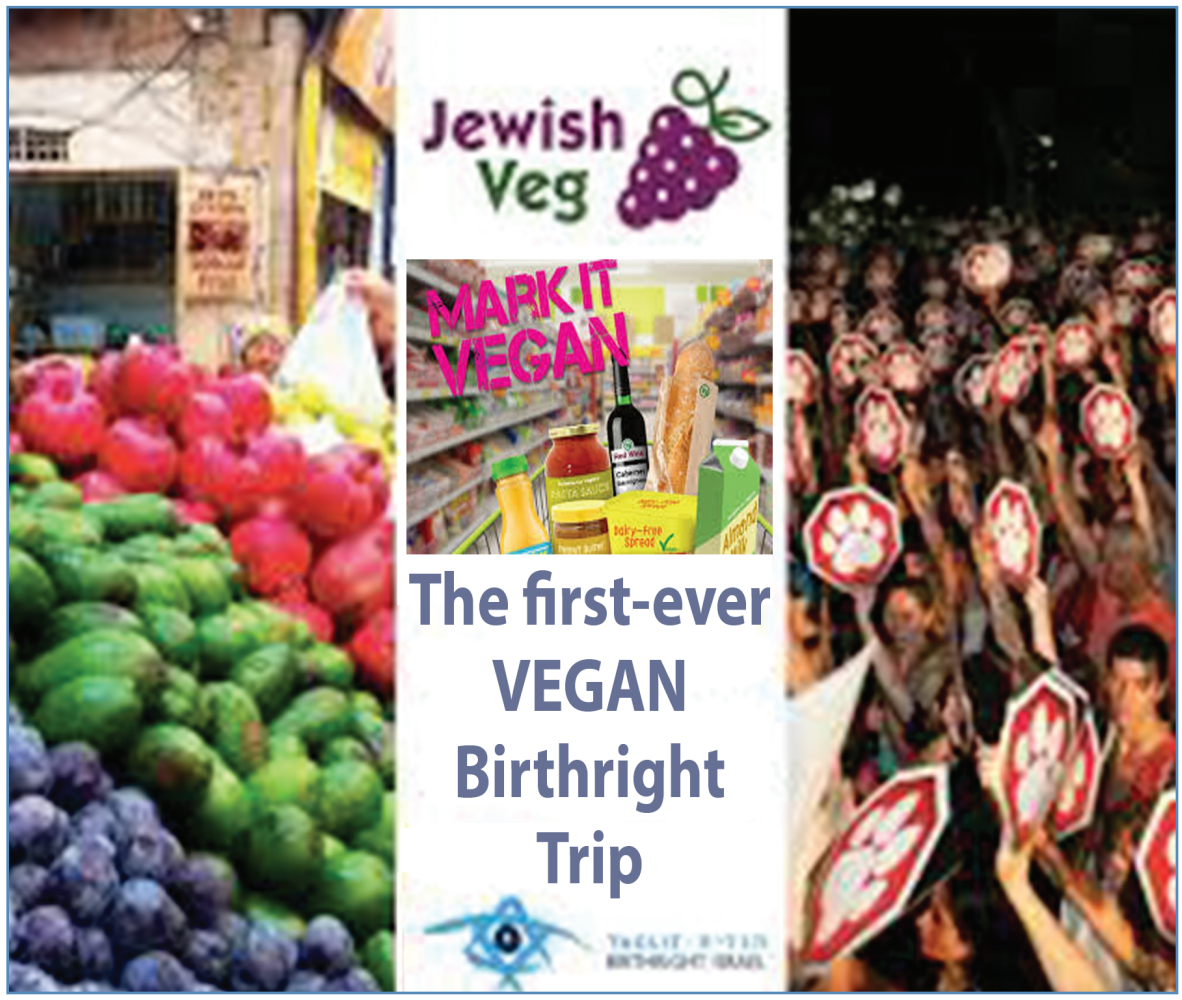
Long before Trump clashed with journalists at his latest news conference, the question of a free press was a hot topic in Israel. Participants on the "Newsroom to Newsroom" trip get a behind-the-scenes look at some of Israel's most prominent media organizations. On past trips, participants have met with Jerusalem Post writer Khaled Abu Toameh, author Yossi Klein Halevi and Times of Israel founder David Horovitz.

For yoga junkies (Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life)

Birthright is known for being an action-packed blur of activity. But for those looking to take a step back, take some deep breaths and strike a few relaxing poses, there is always the "Yoga and Mindfulness" trip. This past winter's trip included a combined Iyengar yoga and Torah lesson, a meditation session in the Amuka forest near the city of Safed, a yoga session at the Safed Citadel and a Shabbat service that included meditation.

For frat bros and sorority sisters (Tlalim-Israel Outdoors)

This trip is for all the Jewish Greeks out there – no, not Jews who trace their family history back to Athens, but Jews in a college fraternity or sorority. Expect all of the usual Birthright itinerary stops, but likely with more sharing of campus-party stories.



For Latin America aficionados (Tlalim-Israel Outdoors and IsraelExperts)

Looking to meet some new friends from south of the equator? "The USA-Argentina Joint Journey" includes Argentine and North American participants, and the Across the Universe trip is made up of 20 Brazilians and 20 North Americans (and eight Israelis). In addition to Hebrew, you might pick up some Spanish or Portuguese along the way.

For medical students (Tlalim-Israel Outdoors)

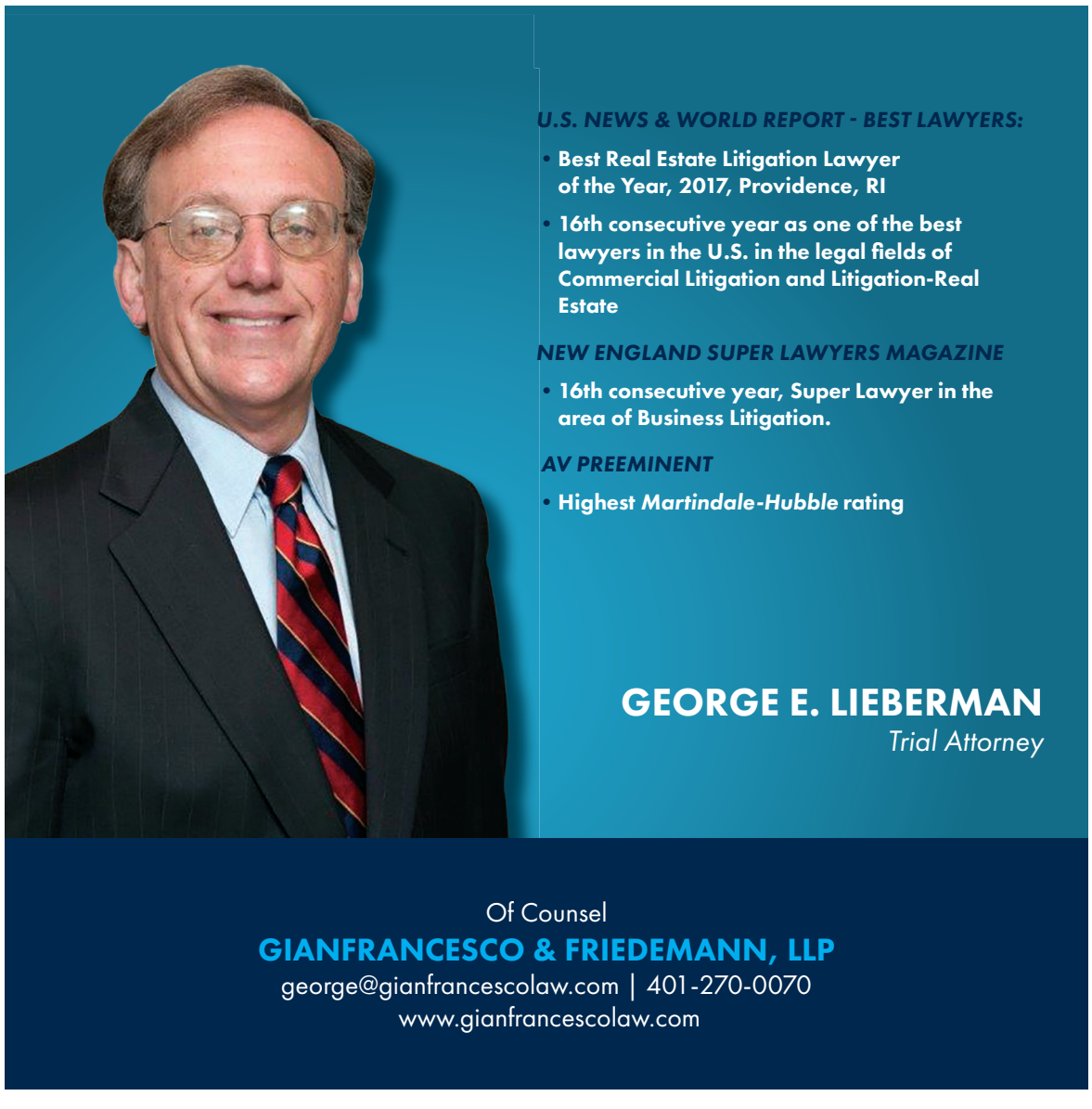
Yes, medical school is a grind. But fear not, science nerds – med students and practitioners who want to bond with their fellow overworked peers – there is a Birthright trip just for you. In addition to the usual Israel sightseeing fare, participants get to meet with doctors at the prestigious Hadassah hospital, visit medics and soldiers working in the Israeli army's Medical Corps and receive training through Magen David Adom, Israel's version of the Red Cross.

For Kabbalah dabblers (Israel Free Spirit)

This might be the only Birthright trip that brings you at least one degree of separation closer to Madonna or Gwyneth Paltrow. The "Soul Trek" promises to teach participants about the ancient Jewish practice of Kabbalah through "mystical hikes," "life-changing insights" and a meeting with a kabbalistic artist.

For food Instagrammers (Shorashim: Israel with Israelis)

As Instagram continues its takeover of the online world, a trip focused on food photography can now barely be considered "niche." The "A Taste of Israel Through the Lens" trip encourages its participants to take photos of Israeli and Middle Eastern food and share them on social media. Participants will experience more food markets, tours and tastings than those on typical Birthright journeys, and receive guidance on how to frame photos especially well for social media posts.





Philanthropy and *tzedakah* – aligning your heart and head

When I think of philanthropy, I think of people with wealth giving money to worthy causes that help humanity. That is partially true as my research has shown.



PATRICIA RASKIN

The definition of philanthropy, according to a Google search, is "the desire to promote the welfare of others, expressed especially by the generous donation of money to good causes."

Wikipedia goes deeper, "Philanthropy means etymologically, the love of humanity, in the sense of caring, nourishing, developing, and enhancing what it means to be human. In this meaning, it involves both the benefactor in their identifying and exercising their values, and the beneficiary in their receipt and benefit from the service or goods provided."

This aligns with *tzedakah*, the Jewish perspective of charity. How to give, how much to give is discussed in the article "Charity: *Tzedakah*" on Chabad.org.

"*Tzedakah* – often translated as charity – is a mainstay of Jewish life. The sages teach that the world was built upon kindness. However, *tzedakah* goes one step beyond. Literally translated as 'justice' or 'righteousness,' *tzedakah* tells us that sharing what we have with others isn't something special. It's the honest and just thing to do. *Tzedakah* is not limited to gifts of money. Sharing time, expertise or even a kind smile are all forms of charity that we can do."

I feel that when we give our time for worthy causes we are being philanthropic.

I have difficulty equating *tzedakah* with charity because of the connotation of the word charity. For me, some of my most rewarding work comes from non-monetary remuneration. Although money is our means of exchange, the heart and soul behind our giving is what makes the difference. For example, when I mentor a person or offer business leads, it gives me great satisfaction that I am helping a person succeed.

Tzedakah is a very important concept – one we should pay attention to every day.

PATRICIA RASKIN hosts "The Patricia Raskin Show" on Saturdays at 3 p.m. on WPRO, 630 AM/99.7 FM and on Mondays at 2 p.m. on voiceamerica.com. Raskin is a board member of Providence's Temple Emanu-El.

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Deadline looms for R.I. Foundation scholarships

Apply soon for college aid honoring the legacy of Roger Williams

PROVIDENCE – High school seniors have until Feb. 16 to apply for college scholarships of up to $80,000 from the Rhode Island Foundation. The scholarships are intended to promote the legacy of Roger Williams, generally considered to be the father of religious freedom in America.

"This annual scholarship program is intended to inspire students and their parents to think big about what's possible for their future and to value the role of education," said Jessica David, senior vice president of strategy and community investments. The Roger Williams Scholarship was conceived, and funded by, philanthropists Letitia and John Carter.

"Rhode Island founder Roger Williams was a remarkable man. He came from a very modest background, and access to education was absolutely key in shaping his character, beliefs, and actions throughout his life. Roger Williams set the standard for separation of church and state that the nation adopted, and his vision and determination built the 'lively experiment' that was and is Rhode Island. Many of his values are more relevant than ever," she said.



The Foundation will award up to three scholarships per year. The maximum scholarship will be $20,000 per year per student. The awards are renewable for up to three consecutive years following the first award, based on proof of the recipient's continued financial need and academic good standing.

To be eligible, students must be residents of Rhode Island, be seniors at any high school in Rhode Island and have been accepted by an accredited post-secondary institution by the time the scholarship is awarded.

Students must submit a completed application; a written, video or audio personal essay; proof of residency, such as a driver's license or letter from their school; an academic transcript; a letter of recommendation; a Student Aid Report and a financial need worksheet online at findingrogerwilliams.org. The personal essay should be no more than five written pages, or no more than five minutes in a video or audio format.

Applicants will be evaluated based on their financial need, understanding and embodiment of Roger Williams' legacy and academic and community service achievements.

The website also includes a free education hub offering activities and discussion starters on Roger Williams and his teachings for elementary, middle and high school educators to use in their classrooms. Also posted on the website is a comprehensive collection of verifiable information about Roger Williams, his life, legacy and character.

"We wanted to establish a sense of place and awareness for all Rhode Islanders by providing access to resources and opportunities inspired by our state's founder and his teachings," said David.

"This initiative is meant to encourage review and reflection. Roger Williams was a complex man, he was forward-thinking and yet very much a man of his time. We are committed to presenting a complete, verifiable and accurate portrayal of who he was and what he accomplished – without bias," she said.

The Rhode Island Foundation is the largest and most comprehensive funder of nonprofit organizations in Rhode Island. In 2015, the Foundation awarded more than $41.5 million in grants to organizations addressing the state's most pressing issues and needs of diverse communities. Through leadership, fundraising, and grant-making activities, often in partnership with individuals and organizations, the Foundation is helping Rhode Island reach its true potential. For more information, visit rifoundation.org.

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FROM PAGE 9

THREATS

He added: "Our Jewish community centers are focusing on security today more than ever before, and in spite of these continuous bomb threats I'm confident that our institutions are taking security seriously – and in many cases Jewish institutions are more secure than institutions frequented by the general public."

The Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island issue the following statement after a series of bomb threats nationwide Jan. 18:

"We, at the Jewish Alliance, are committed to the safety and well-being of our community. While many JCCs around the country have received non-credible threats, no such calls have been made to our campus.

"Be assured, we are working with the proper authorities and following all recommended procedures, ensuring the ongoing safety and security of our building.

"As always, we will maintain communication with law enforcement and our security team in order to vigilantly ensure the security, safety, and well-being of our members. You can be confident knowing that we have taken added measures to increase security, some of which you will notice, with many things happening behind the scenes.

On Jan. 18, some 30 Jewish institutions in at least 17 states received bomb threats. On Jan. 9, such threats were called into 16 JCCs across the Northwest and South, forcing the evacuation of hundreds.

With reports by The Jewish Voice staff.

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Safeguard your financial future: Start early, keep it simple

BY FRAN OSTENDORF
fostendorf@jewishallianceri.org

Whether you are a boomer, a millennial or part of Generation X, it's never too early – or too late – to think about organizing your finances and working toward your goals.

Don't have a clue about where to start? There are many avenues for advice, from books to the internet to trained financial advisers. But the key is to get started. There's no time like the present.

So how do you start if you're in your 20s or 30s?

We asked Robert Tyler, vice president and senior wealth management officer with Washington Trust Wealth Management, in Providence, for a few tips.

He offers these four keys to financial success: Keep it simple; start saving; budget; and attack your debt.

"We have a spectrum of clients who are often multigenerational. In talking with them, we talk about basic things like simple goals," he says.

Additionally, Tyler said, you have to educate yourself, at least about the basics, such as budgeting.

Tyler said budgeting is a crucial first step. "You have to understand where your money is being spent so that you can save," he said.

There are many ways to budget and keep track of what you spend, including online trackers. These are fine for some people, while others prefer a paper budget. The important thing is to know where your money is going.

If a lot of your money is going to pay down student debt, you are not alone. But paying it down is important to keep your credit as clean as possible, Tyler said. You want good credit for that future car or house purchase. And don't assume that there will be debt relief via legislation. "You've got to plan for what you have," he said.

While you are paying down that debt, don't forget about saving. Tyler recommends automating tasks like this so you don't forget and you have no excuses. Money goes right into savings for an emergency fund or into your retirement plan or 401(k). Automating goes a long way toward simplifying.

"Some people find this the easiest way to save," he said.

Tyler also says that if your employer matches contributions, make sure to take advantage of that "free money."

Getting a bonus or a raise? Tyler recommends putting half in your savings.

Giving back is another issue that comes up in when discussing financial goals with people of all ages.

"Younger people have just as many concerns as older people on this subject," said Tyler.

For younger people without a lot of extra money, Tyler suggests that donations of time and services are just as necessary as cash.

"Many organizations that need help take donations 'in kind'," he said. That means you donate your services, which have a certain value.

"This is a great way to partner and builds a lasting and good relationship" with the organization, he said.

If you start working with an organization when you are younger and you realize the good work going on there, you are more likely to donate money when you are older and have more income to give, he said.

Underlying all the advice, tips and information is one basic bit of advice: Do what you are comfortable with!

FRAN OSTENDORF is the editor of The Jewish Voice.

Apply now for the Slom Scholarship Fund

The Aaron and Rita Slom Scholarship Fund For Freedom And Diversity provides up to two college scholarships for high school seniors. Students must submit an interpretive work focusing on the George Washington letter to the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, Rhode Island, in context with the present time.

Application materials are available at tourosynagogue.org/Touro Synagogue Foundation (http://www.tourosynagogue.org/history-learning/tsf-intro-menu/slom-scholarship). Only complete applications are considered.

Questions regarding the scholarship program can be directed to: ritaslom@aol.com or the Touro Synagogue Foundation office at 401-847-4794, ext. 207.

Applications and interpretive works must be received by April 24, 2017.

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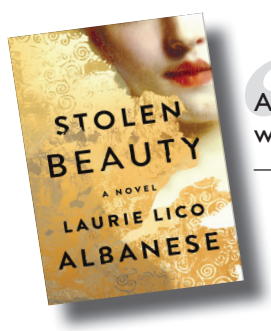
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RHODE ISLAND

FROM PAGE 1

GRANTS

received 19 proposals from 15 agencies and synagogues.

This is a one-time program, but the hope is that it can be renewed if more funding can be obtained.

Grants went to programs that stress collaboration across the entire Jewish community. The programs also have to start in the first two quarters of this year.

"This initiative grows out of a broader thought process," Gertsacov said. "How do we grow and fund other programs that we don't usually fund to engage more of the community?

"Communities today are so much more spread out than they were years ago."

In his Shabbat message on Jan. 27, Jeffrey Savit, president and CEO of the Alliance, said, "I was inspired by the many applicants and the scope of ideas proposed. They elucidated trends, emerging needs and a strong desire for collaboration."

Grant recipients

Chabad of West Bay: The Grow Program.
Innovative complementary STEAM-based school curriculum, integrating Jewish heritage with hands-on learning and focusing on global impact.

Congregation Beth Sholom: Mean What You Pray: Theater Techniques for Inspired Prayer.
Professionally-trained acting instructors and coaches teach inspirational approaches – including meditation, yoga and dance – to deepen and understand prayer.

Jewish Family Service/Thrive: Retreat for Clergy.
The project will empower clergy with a space to connect with other local religious and interfaith leaders and provide the skills and tools to balance the psychological demands in their ever-evolving roles. The connections should enable ongoing dialogue on the challenges of a world with multiple claims to religious truths.

Temple Emanu-El: Delve Deeper Jewish Adult Learning Program.
Educators will teach dynamic, in-depth, Jewish university-level courses for adult learners. Participant directed.

Temple Sinai: Education Renewal Project.
Establishes a technology-enhanced Hebrew curriculum classroom for multi-generational impact that will serve as a community model.

Temple Torat Yisrael: Youth and Teen Program.
Volunteer parent network engages tweens and teens with religious content intertwined with social engagement, leadership skills and community involvement.

FRAN OSTENDORF is the editor of The Jewish Voice.



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For more information, or to RSVP, contact Jana Brenman at jbrenman@jewishallianceri.org or 401.421.4111 ext. 181.

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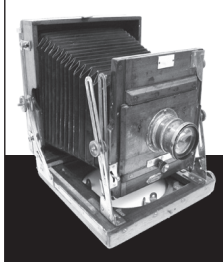
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Starbucks will hire 10,000 refugees

JTA – Howard Schultz, the Jewish billionaire CEO of Starbucks, said his company plans to hire 10,000 refugees over five years in a letter to employees addressing President Donald Trump's executive order temporarily banning refugees from entering the United States.

"We have all been witness to the confusion, surprise and opposition to the Executive Order that President Trump issued on Friday [Jan. 27], effectively banning people from several predominantly Muslim countries from entering the United States, including refugees fleeing wars," Schultz wrote in a message sent Sunday [Jan. 29] titled "Living Our Values in Uncertain Times."

"I can assure you that our Partner Resources team has been in direct contact with the partners who are impacted by this immigration ban, and we are doing everything possible to support and help them to navigate through this confusing period."



Howard Schultz

Schultz wrote that the "conscience of our country, and the promise of the American Dream" are being called into question. He added: "I am hearing the alarm you all are sounding that the civility and human rights we have all taken for granted for so long are under attack."

Schultz said the efforts to hire refugees will begin in the U.S. and focus on refugees who served with U.S. troops as interpreters and support personnel in foreign countries. He said refugees over the five years will come from 75 countries.

Other areas in which Schultz said he will help employees includes support of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or Dreamers program, including paying the biennial fee that his employees must pay to stay in the program; continuing to assist and buy from coffee farmers in Mexico, and to continue to offer access to health care through Starbucks.

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Goats for Jewish Uganda: A sustainable Bar Mitzvah project

BY HILARY LEVEY FRIEDMAN

Jacob Souza knew he wanted his Bar Mitzvah project to involve animals. His rabbi, Aaron Philmus, keeps goats, and he suggested a project involving this animal, which is sacred to Jews around the world. And so the Goats for Jewish Uganda project was born.

The Abayudaya are the Jewish people of Uganda. They are subsistence farmers who have been fighting drought. For them, a goat means many things, both practical, such as for food, and symbolic, for religious observance.

Thanks to fundraising on GoFundMe, promotion on social media, and a gift of some of his Bar Mitzvah money, Jacob was able to donate $700, which has translated into 10 female goats for 10 Jewish families in Uganda.

This project has given Jacob, along with other students at Torat Yisrael, in East Greenbush, insight into the good that *tzedakah* can do, as well as deepened their understanding of Jewish life. As Jacob wrote on his GoFundMe page: "'The Lord is My Shepherd' are the opening words of King David's most famous psalm. Abraham and Sarah, Moses, and King David were all shepherds of goats and sheep. Today Jews still bring awareness of God into our lives by blowing the shofar (ram's horn) on Rosh Hashanah, wearing woolen *tallit* (prayer shawls made of their hair), scribing the Torah on their skin (parchment), performing kosher slaughter, and keeping their milk and meat separated."



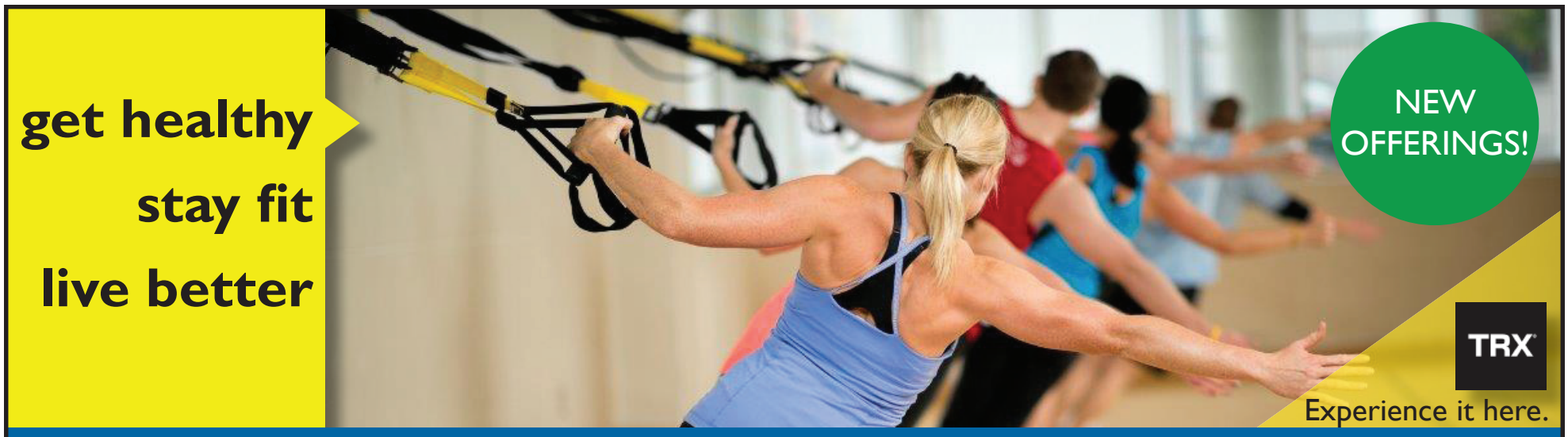


Images from Jacob Souza's GoFundMe page.

Rabbi Philmus uses his own goats at Torat Yisrael for educational and food purposes, explaining that they teach children leadership skills. He invites anyone interested in learning more about Jewish Uganda and goats to contact him at rabbi@toratyisrael.org.



HILARY LEVEY FRIEDMAN is a board member at Temple Torat Yisrael.



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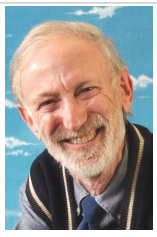
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Unforgettable memories of formative summers by the shore

On days of national or personal memory, I make a pilgrimage to my boyhood summer home on Teed Avenue in Barrington's Hampden Meadows.



SKETCHBOOK

MIKE FINK



The house in Hampden Meadows.

I drive my familiar route along the Wampanoag Trail, back in time to my very first visit to this dead-end street overlooking Hundred Acre Cove. It was 1944, the dramatic, decisive, dreadful season of World War II, and I can recall my mental and physical condition.

By the summer break in '45, the victory in Europe was over. My brother and I had been sent to Maine during the summers of '42 and '43, but by '44 we stayed along our local shoreline: No more submarines prowled our bays. I tried to create my own Victory Garden in the backyard, and my harvest was ... poison ivy!

Our house had a steep hill leading down to the eelgrass and beach, where I caught minnows in a glass milk bottle with a few crumbs of bread in that bubble that held the cream. I once used them as bait to pull up eels and "devil-fish." Mostly I kept the "mummies" in a large jar for a single day and then let them go and grow.

And then, as I was beginning my preteen years, I tried to get a tan (to impress the girls in the fancier houses of Barrington) and only succeeded in suffering the kind of sunburn that makes your skin peel. Yuck.

We drove the short distance through East Providence eastward to our miniature corn belt for seven summers.

I relive those long July and August doldrums days now, under the winter-gray skies, through my CDs of songs of World War II and the postwar era.

The radio reported the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and I worried that almost any accidental brush with the nucleus of any molecule might bring the world to an end! The Age of Anxiety at the tiptoe teen ages of 10 to 15.

Now, this house that my father and mother had purchased came fully furnished, with an old-fashioned wood-burning stove, a pump-in sink and dark Victorian oak furniture. (My brother claims he found a "Gentiles Only Need Apply" sign in an under-staircase closet. Sometimes he claims it read "No Jews or Dogs.")

My family was in the home-furnishings business, in East Providence, so we managed to get a " BarcaLounger" – a new-fangled reclining chair – upholstered in red plastic. Beside it in the parlor stood a "Morris chair," a 19th-century version of the same design concept, a throne that tilts.

I ensconced myself in the "modern" contraption and suffered throughout that final August of the war, in soul and in body.

My creative mom painted the furniture white and decorated the chests of drawers with giant roses. She took the croquet game stored in a large closet and fashioned towel racks or playful and whimsical toys and garden statues from the scattered and dismantled items.

My brother made me grilled cheese sandwiches using a device you had to plug in – and sparks flew! The wiring was worn and split. I got a similar small shock every time I tried to use the basement shower, which sported my mom's mural of a mermaid to distract me from the fraying wires and pipes of the homestead. My dad was willing to work as a handyman but, alas, he was an amateur.

For many years after these 1940's hammock retreats, I would make my sentimental journey to that fateful transition from the patriotic years to the doubts and dilemmas of the postwar era. Until one day, the house, like a mirage or a daydream, the very place itself, simply vanished – into the void!

It seems somebody had bought the place, but not the waterfront land upon which it stood. The house was rolled around the corner to a new location. And the murals and the tables and chairs had also disappeared, and nothing was left except what remains in the images and words you read here.

I drove by and recognized the front wall, mostly by the dated plaque marking the year of its construction: 1927. It took me several searches. I must have looked suspicious cruising the streets with a camera, unsure which structure was the dwelling that held my ghosts and phantoms.

As a 7-year-old, I had welcomed the declaration of war in 1941: now that the Duration had been declared and "Defense" stamps were straightforwardly "War" stamps, there was a clear line for me between good and evil, between freedom and slavery. Patriotism and its symbolic flag were everywhere. I was not only safe here, but could even actively contribute, by wearing hand-me-downs and cutting out the funnies and sending them to my uncles and cousins fighting far away over the Atlantic and Pacific, beyond, over there, not here, on the battlefields of Europe and among the islands in the Pacific.

The local branch libraries lent me 20 books, and I perused them all, big words and fancy thoughts and all. A number had themes relevant to the war, before, during and after. There were also books from earlier eras that had come with the house.

My brother and I rode our rusty old bikes everywhere. Tires and gas were rationed and the roads posed no danger to cyclists.

Once the veterans came back and sought jobs, it was possible to get help to terrace the hill behind our summer retreat. Friends and family could drive down on a Sunday afternoon, some on motorcycles, and play penny-ante poker and keep us company. We sailed and we rowed and we grew up and away. Part of me is still there and then, with the discomforts and fears as well as the hopes, the guilt for growing up as well as the pride of gaining the powers of adulthood.

I have kept a few souvenirs, like the Morris chair (but not that BarcaLounger contraption) and some dishes and kitchen tools that came with the house in that summer of 1944.

By 1951, we had moved on, and off and away. Except in this story. In my memory bank. On memorial occasions.

I hope I can get my brother to sketch the house as it was. I believe his career as an architect was inspired by that house: he has never wanted to tear down a structure but rather to restore and rededicate buildings, in the spirit of those summertimes and those childhood experiences from Depression to Duration. And the books that whiled away the war-time hours, they must have contributed to my career as an English teacher, whiling away the seasons in our Ocean State.

MIKE FINK (mfink33@aol.com) teaches at the Rhode Island School of Design.

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Paula Libby Feldman, 90

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – Paula Libby Feldman died Jan. 24 at Wingate on Blackstone Boulevard. She was predeceased by her husband of 67 years, Melvin. Born in Providence, the daughter of the late Harold and Sarah (Levey) Libby, she was a lifelong resident of Providence. After graduating from Pembroke College in 1946, she received a master's degree in social work from Simmons College School of Social Work in 1966 and was a social worker for the state of R.I. from 1968-1997.

She is survived by her twin daughters, Karen Feldman, of Providence, and Linda Feldman (Evan), of Washington, D.C, her sisters Elinor Bennett and Pat Libby of Boston, Massachusetts; twin granddaughters Jessica (Dave) and Laura (Eric) and her great-granddaughter Emily.

Roberta D. Goldstein, 76

COVENTRY, R.I. – Roberta D. Goldstein died Jan. 23 at R.I. Hospital. Born in Boston, Massachusetts, a daughter of the late Samson and Sara (Cramer) Goldstein, she was a resident of Rhode Island, previously living in Massachusetts. She was "Roberta the Tax Lady," running her own tax preparation services for over 25 years. Roberta was a member of the Providence Housing Board.

She was the mother of Cheryl Edgerly and her husband, Chuck, of Amherst, Massachusetts; Alan Mullarkey and his partner, Debbie Pike, of Whitman, Massachusetts; Pama Brown and her husband, Dan, of Cranston; and Liane Ottley-Torres of Cranston. She was the sister of Daniel Goldstein and his wife, Ruthie, of Florida; and the late Paul Goldstein, Janice Goober and Marty Goldstein. She was the grandmother of Elizabeth, Jason and Teresa Nathan, Ryan, Spencer, Cody, Julia, Tori, Tony and Andrew. She was the great-grandmother of Brianna, Tyler, Maya, Jenessee, Lucas and Lucy.

Contributions in her memory may be made to EB Research at ebresearch.org/donate, a cause that was very important to Roberta due to her grandson's rare medical condition, or to Meals on Wheels, c/o Jewish Alliance of Greater RI, 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence, RI 02906.

Rachel 'Ellen' Kaplan, 68

WARWICK, R.I. – Rachel "Ellen" Kaplan, of Sparrow Point, died Jan. 30 at Philip Hulitar Inpatient Center. Born in Providence, a daughter of the late Joseph and Blanche (French) Greenless, she was a resident of Warwick. Ellen was a member of Temple Sinai and its sisterhood, serving as a past president as well as teaching Sunday and Hebrew Schools.

She was the mother of Michelle Fallon and her husband, Michael, of Exeter and Erin Miskimins and her husband, Kevin, of Cape Coral, Florida. She was the sister of Joseph "Jay" Greenless and his wife, MJ; James Greenless and his wife, Laurie; and Alice Rogers and her late husband, Richard. She was the grandmother of Kelsey and Kendall.

Contributions in her memory may be made to Temple Sinai, 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston, RI 02920.

Stanley Roberts, 70

WARWICK, R.I. – Stanley A. Roberts died Jan. 17. He was the husband of Deborah (Kahn) Roberts for 45 years. Born in Providence, a son of the late Harold and Frimette (Silverman) Roberts, he had lived in Warwick for 41 years, previously living in Providence.

He was owner of S. Roberts Specialty Company for 30 years. He was a graduate of Pawtucket West High School, Class of 1965, and a member of its reunion committee. He was a member of Touro Fraternal Association. Stan volunteered as a mentor at SCORE and for Meals on Wheels. He was an active member of Temple Sinai.

He was the father of Rachael Kaplan and her husband, Ben, of Cranston; and David Roberts and his wife, Molly Bremen, of Urbandale, Iowa. He was the brother of Francey Nathan of Warwick; Linda Forman of Lenox, Massachusetts; and the late Michael Roberts. He was the loving Poppy to Madelyn and Henry. He was the son-in-law of Leona Spilka of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. He was the adored owner of his dog, Abbey.

Contributions in his memory may be made to the National Kidney Foundation, 85 Astor Ave., Norwood, MA 02062, or the Michael S. Roberts Fund, c/o Temple Beth-El, 70 Orchard Ave., Providence, RI 02906.

Raylah Weinstein, 82



CRANSTON, R.I. – Raylah "GG" Weinstein, formerly of Fall River, Massachusetts, and Narragansett, died on Jan. 21, with her family at her bedside, after a brief illness. She was the wife of Lewis "GZ" Weinstein for 64 years.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, and raised in Fall River, she was the daughter of the late Benjamin and Sarah (Seigle) Reitzas. She was the sister of the late Carol Wiesel (Reitzas) and her late husband Harold. She was a graduate of Durfee High School, Class of 1952. Raylah is survived by her children, Nancy Mills and her husband, David, of Cranston; Steve Weinstein and his wife, Denise, of Cranston; and Bruce Weinstein and his wife, Lynn, of Cranston. She was the grandmother of Jamie McKenzie and her husband, Kenneth; Allison McEntee and her husband, Todd; Daniel Mills and his wife, Sasha; Jonathan Weinstein, Brian Weinstein and Jeffrey Weinstein. She was the great-grandmother of Colin McKenzie, Ethan McKenzie, Lillian McEntee and Amelia McEntee. She enjoyed her time with her family and friends and traveling with her husband.

Contributions in her memory may be made to Miriam Hospital, 164 Summit Ave., Providence, RI 02906.

Harold Winsten, 96

PROVIDENCE, RI – Harold H. Winsten died on Jan. 9. He was the husband of Ada Winsten and the late Anita Winsten. Born in Central Falls, he was the son of the late Abraham and Leah (Cokin) Weinstein. A lifelong resident of Rhode Island, he was the father of Saul (Patricia) Winsten, Nancy (Robert) Weisman, and Royce Winsten; stepfather of Martha (Howard) Marson and Paul Tanenbaum and brother of the late Joseph and Saul Winsten. He was the zayde/papa/grandpa of 10 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. His family was the light of his life.

A graduate of the University of R.I. and Boston University Law School, he practiced law for 55 years. Besides his passion for his wife, he had a love for the law and sailing. He was a sculptor and was active outdoors. His favorite place to relax was on Martha's Vineyard.

He was on several committees in the Bar Association, was a district chair of the Boy Scouts of America in Blackstone Valley, a commander of the R.I. Jewish War Veterans, a chair of the youth committee at Pawtucket YMCA, and did pro-bono work, especially with children.



During WWII, he was sent by the army to Yale University for a year. He became fluent in Japanese and went to Japan to interrogate Japanese war prisoners.

Donations may be made to the Jewish War Veterans of Rhode Island or the Jewish Alliance of Rhode Island.

ASK THE DIRECTOR

BY MICHAEL D. SMITH F.D./R.E.
Shalom Memorial Chapel

Question: What defines an immediate family member for a funeral?

A.G., Warwick

Dear A.G.,

An immediate family member, in relation to the person who passed away, is a parent, a child, a brother or sister or a spouse. For grandchildren, in-laws, cousins, nieces, and nephews – while certainly no one would question the love and mourning of these people, they are considered further out than an immediate family member.

QUESTIONS ARE WELCOMED AND ENCOURAGED. Please send questions to: ShalomChapel@aol.com or by mail to Ask the Director, c/o Shalom Memorial Chapel, 1100 New London Ave., Cranston, R.I. 02920.

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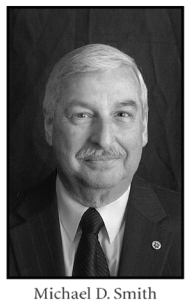
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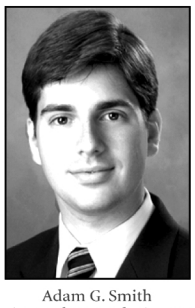
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Hundreds gather for a rally to celebrate School Choice Week in Rhode Island

Hundreds of students, parents, teachers, and community leaders gathered at the Rhode Island State House Jan. 26 for a rally to celebrate School Choice Week in Rhode Island and show support for increased educational opportunity.

Students and teachers from many schools enjoyed an afternoon of student performances, including dance, choir, and musical groups. Members of the Providence Hebrew Day School music program performed.

The event was organized by Rhode Island Families for School Choice, which includes Catholic, Protestant, Islamic, Jewish, independent, and charter schools, as well as homeschoolers.

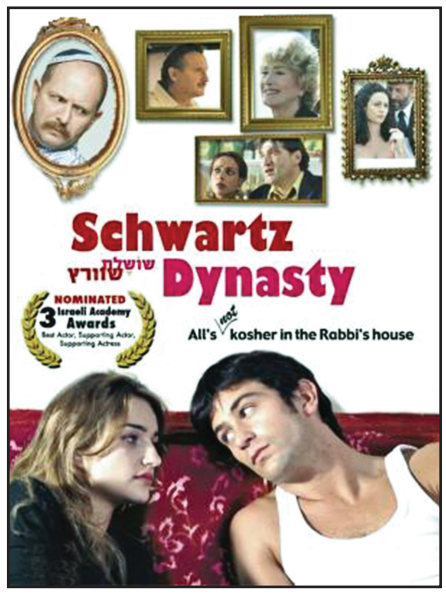


The PHDS performers.

Classic and complex film features leading Israeli actors

BY TSLIL REICHMAN
treichman@jewishallianceri.org

"The Schwartz Dynasty," a classic film featuring some of Israel's leading actors, will be screened at the Dwares Jewish Community Center in Providence on Feb. 15, at 6:30 p.m. The movie focuses on two women, with loved ones to bury, who join forces in a struggle against Jewish cemetery politics. The story revolves around Miryam, who goes against tradition by demanding to be buried next to her disgraced husband. Ana, a Russian immigrant, feels she must honor her deceased father's wishes by proving that he was Jewish. In achieving these goals, these women examine their individual history and background, revealing the layers of complexity to one's Jewish identity.



Their struggle is set in a small Israeli town seething with conflict, pitting its residents against each other and threatening to divide it: religious versus secular, immigrants versus the local population and dead against the living. This is also a love story involving two of the protagonists, the new immigrant and a 24-year-old Orthodox Jew, descendant of a distinguished dynasty of Rabbis.

The movie includes some of the leading actors in Israeli culture such as Tal Friedman, Ania Bukstien (who recently appeared in "Game of Thrones"), Yehuda Levi and Dov Navon. At Israel's Oscars, the movie was nominated for best actor and best supporting actor.

For information, contact Tslil Reichman at treichman@jewishallianceri.org or 401-421-4111, ext. 121.

FROM PAGE 14

MARCH

administration. We're looking forward to a different tone and a relationship."

And Trump's quotation of Psalm 133? A natural, Brooks said.

"His presidency is going to be about the people, it's going to be about holding government accountable, rebuilding infrastructure, restrengthening alliances, taking care of the middle class," he said. "Judaism is predicated on making sure we take care of all people, and we look out for people who are less fortunate."

If Trump was indeed intent on caring for the less fortunate, the message didn't reach the thousands of Jews who joined an estimated half-million protesters in Washington the next day – not to mention the millions of marchers in other American cities and around the world.

Josh Weinberg, the president of ARZA, the Association of Reform Zionists of America, had read Trump's speech but did not notice the president's Psalm 133 citation.

"OK, it's a nice line," said Weinberg, who gently guided one daughter in a stroller through the crowd, carried another on his back and had a third clutching his hand. "But forgive my cynicism."

Jewish marchers who had picked through Trump's speech said they discovered intimations of exclusion: a rejection of prejudice that was conditioned on opening "your heart to patriotism," a dystopian vision of "American carnage," of inner cities in flame and children lost to broken schools.

Most striking for these marchers was Trump's rallying cry. "From this moment on, it's going to be America first, America first," Trump said, an echo of the isolationist and anti-Semitic movement Americans rejected as they entered World War II.

"I've been disappointed before," said Leslie Shapiro, a retired paralegal from Gaithersburg, Maryland, recalling past elections. "I've never been afraid."

Rabbi Shira Stutman suggested that Trump had hijacked Psalm 133.

"Unity without watching out for one another is not us," she told a packed Friday evening service for marchers at Sixth and I. "Some of us grew up in this country feeling safe, and the safety is slipping from between our fingers."

The safety, according to Jewish marchers, was predicated on extending protections to all those who are vulnerable: The women, first of all, who marched because of Trump's long history of misogynist statements, his recorded boast in 2006 of sexual assault (one he now insists was empty), and his pledge to roll back abortion rights as president. But also protections for the minorities he named as a threat during the campaign, Mexicans and Muslims.



The women's rally in Providence. PHOTO | BRIAN SULLIVAN

"Resistance is awakened at the intersection of love and holy outrage," Rabbi Sharon Brous, the leader of Los Angeles' IKAR congregation, told the hundreds of thousands of protesters.

"Our children will one day ask us, 'Where were you when our country was thrust into a lion's den of demagoguery and division?' And we will say, 'I stood with love, I stood with hope, I stood with sisters and brothers of all religions and all races and all genders and sexualities,'" she said.

"I ask you now to take the hand of someone to your right, take the hand of someone to your left, raise your hands high," Brous urged, as hundreds of thousands heeded her. On the stage, one of the march's organizers, Linda Sarsour, a Palestinian-American Muslim, strode forward and grasped the rabbi's hand and raised it.

It was the unity the marchers sought. Carole Benson, 77, of northern New Jersey's Bergen County, woke up at 4 a.m., relying on two alarms and her husband to get her out of bed and on a bus with a broken toilet, idling for hours in traffic before getting off at RFK Stadium and then walking the 2 1/2 miles to Sixth and I to join other NCJW members.

At 5 p.m., Benson was barely winded.

"It was fun," she said. "We knew we were not alone."

Rabbi Jill Jacobs prescribed a similar odyssey for all Jewish Americans, citing Moses shucking off privilege as an Egyptian prince to join the Jews in bondage.

"We have certain access, and we have managed to assimilate, but we're vulnerable," said Jacobs, who heads T'ruah, a rabbinic human rights group. "We need to leave our place of privilege and join the liberation movement."

FROM PAGE 1

TRUMP'S ADMINISTRATION

diametrically opposed to the views of most Jewish voters.

Yet others have praised Trump's stance on Israel and his nomination of David Friedman, a bankruptcy lawyer, who supports West Bank settlement construction and has expressed doubts about the two-state solution, as U.S. ambassador to Israel. Trump won 24 percent of the Jewish vote, with especially strong support in the Orthodox community.

Here is a look at the president's Jewish advisers who will be helping to shape U.S. policy for the next four years.

Jared Kushner

Trump's Orthodox son-in-law is serving as a senior adviser to the president. Kushner, the 36-year-old scion of a prominent real estate family from New Jersey, will not receive a salary and will focus on the Middle East and Israel as well as partnerships with the private sector and free trade, according to The New York Times. A day before his appointment was announced, Kushner said he would step down from his role as CEO of his family firm, Kushner Properties.

Kushner, who married Trump's daughter, Ivanka, in 2009, played a crucial role in the president's campaign, especially on Israel. He worked on Trump's speech to the AIPAC annual policy conference that earned the real estate mogul a standing ovation, and helped plan a trip to Israel for his father-in-law last year. (Trump canceled the trip after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu slammed his call to ban Muslim immigration to the United States.)

Kushner may have become a household name during the campaign, but he's no stranger to the limelight. In 2006, at 25, he bought the New York Observer newspaper. Two years later he became CEO of Kushner Properties, four years after his father was sent to jail for tax evasion, illegal campaign donations and witness tampering. In 2015, Fortune named Kushner to its 40 Under 40 list, an "annual ranking of the most influential young people in business."

David Friedman

Friedman, a bankruptcy expert and longtime Trump attorney, was tapped as the U.S. ambassador to Israel. A statement by Trump's transition team in December said Friedman, who speaks Hebrew, would serve from Jerusalem, but White House press secretary Sean Spicer said last week that Trump had yet to decide on moving the embassy from Tel Aviv.

Friedman, who is in his late 50s, is the son of a Conservative rabbi with a family history of ties to Republican presidential candidates – his family hosted Ronald Reagan for a Shabbat lunch in 1984, the year he won re-election. He lives in Woodmere, New York, in the largely Jewish area known as the Five Towns, and owns a home in Jerusalem's Talbiya neighborhood, according to Haaretz.

Friedman has expressed support for, and funded construction in, Israeli settlements, and has expressed doubt about the future of the two-state solution, traditionally a pillar of bipartisan U.S. policy in the region.

Some of his controversial statements – including slamming backers of the liberal Israel advocacy group J Street as "far worse than kapos" and charging President Barack Obama with "blatant anti-Semitism" – have sparked outrage from liberal groups.

Jason Greenblatt

Greenblatt, the longtime chief legal officer for the Trump Organization, is working as special representative for international negotiations focusing on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, U.S.-Cuba relations and American trade agreements with other countries. An Orthodox Jew and Yeshiva University graduate, Greenblatt studied at a West Bank yeshiva in the mid-1980s and did armed guard duty there.

A father of six from Teaneck, New Jersey, Greenblatt said he speaks with people involved in the Israeli government but has not spoken to any Palestinians since his yeshiva studies. He has cited the American Israel Public Affairs Committee as one of his main sources for staying informed about the Jewish state, and helped draft Trump's speech at the lobbying group's annual conference in March.

Greenblatt, who has said he supports the two-state solution, has implied that Trump will take a *laissez-faire* approach to peace building.

"He is not going to impose any solution on Israel," Greenblatt told Israel's Army Radio in November. He also said that Trump "does not view Jewish settlements as an obstacle to peace."

Steven Mnuchin

Trump picked Mnuchin, a former Goldman Sachs executive who worked as Trump's national finance chairman during the campaign, to serve as Treasury secretary.

Trump and Mnuchin have been friends for 15 years, and prior to being in charge of Trump's campaign finances, Mnuchin, 54, served as an adviser. Part of what The New York Times describes as one of Manhattan's "most influential families," Mnuchin and his father – the prominent art dealer Robert Mnuchin – both became wealthy working at Goldman Sachs. The younger Mnuchin also co-founded the entertainment company RatPac-Dune Entertainment, which has worked on such Hollywood hits as "Avatar" and "Black Swan."

Some saw Trump teaming up with Mnuchin as unusual, considering that the real-estate mogul had consistently bashed Goldman Sachs during his campaign – but it doesn't seem to have hindered a good working relationship.

Stephen Miller

Trump named Miller, who has played a crucial role in his campaign by writing speeches and warming up crowds at rallies, as senior adviser for policy.

Miller, who has described himself as "a practicing Jew," joined the Trump campaign in early 2016, quickly rising through the ranks to become "one of the most important people in the campaign," as Trump's campaign manager told The Wall Street Journal.

Previously, the 31-year-old worked for seven years as an aide to Trump's choice for attorney general, Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., helping the lawmaker draft materials to kill a bipartisan Senate immigration reform bill.

Though Miller grew up in a liberal Jewish home in Southern California, he was drawn to conservative causes early. As a high school student, he wrote a letter to the editor of a local paper in which he slammed his school for providing free condoms to students and for making announcements both in English and Spanish, among other things.

Carl Icahn

Icahn, a businessman and investor, is serving as a special adviser on regulatory reform issues. He is working as a private citizen rather than a federal employee or special government employee.

An early supporter of Trump's candidacy, Icahn, 80, is the founder of Icahn Enterprises, a diversified conglomerate based in New York City, formerly known as American Real Estate Partners. He has also held substantial or controlling positions in numerous American companies over the years, including RJR Nabisco, Texaco, Philips Petroleum, Western Union, Gulf & Western, Viacom, Revlon, Time Warner, Motorola, Chesapeake Energy, Dell, Netflix, Apple and eBay.

Icahn is a major giver to Mount Sinai hospital in New York City, among other philanthropic endeavors. In 2012, he donated $200 million to the renamed Icahn School of Medicine there.

In addition, Icahn established seven Icahn Charter Schools in the Bronx borough of New York.

Gary Cohn

Cohn, the outgoing president and chief operating officer at Goldman Sachs, heads the White House National Economic Council. At Goldman Sachs, where he had worked since 1990, Cohn answered to CEO Lloyd Blankfein and was considered a strong candidate to lead the bank.

The 56-year-old father of three has a reputation for abrasiveness, but also for getting things done, according to a Wall Street Journal profile last year. In a 2014 New York Times oped, Goldman Sachs executive Greg Smith wrote on the day he resigned that Blankfein and Cohn were responsible for a "decline in the firm's moral fiber" that placed its interests above those of its clients.

Cohn, a Cleveland native, in 2009 funded the Cohn Jewish Student Center at Kent State University named for his parents.

Success wasn't always obvious for Cohn, whose struggle with dyslexia made school difficult for him. But the Goldman Sachs banker, who was featured in a book on underdogs by writer Malcolm Gladwell, told the author that his learning disability also taught him how to deal with failure and that "I wouldn't be where I am today without my dyslexia."

Boris Epshteyn

Epshteyn, a Republican political strategist who appeared as a Trump surrogate on TV, is working as a special assistant to the president. Epshteyn, who is in his mid-30s, also is serving as assistant communications director for surrogate operations.

A New York-based investment banker and finance attorney, Epshteyn was a communications aide for Sen. John McCain's presidential campaign in 2008, focusing his efforts on the Arizona senator's running mate, then-Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin.

He defended Trump on major TV networks over 100 times, according to The New York Times. TV hosts have described Epshteyn, who moved to the United States from his native Moscow in 1993, as "very combative" and "abrasive."

David Shulkin

Dr. David Shulkin, the undersecretary for health at the Department of Veterans Affairs, will lead the department as secretary under Trump if confirmed by the Senate. He would be the first holdover appointment from the Obama administration, in which he served since 2015.

Shulkin, 57, is an internist who has had several chief executive roles, including as president of hospitals, notably Beth Israel Medical Center in New York City. He also has held numerous physician leadership roles, including as chief medical officer for the University of Pennsylvania Health System, and academic positions, including as chairman of medicine and vice dean at the Drexel University School of Medicine.

As an entrepreneur, Shulkin founded and served as the chairman and CEO of DoctorQuality, one of the first consumer-oriented sources of information for quality and safety in health care.

Reed Cordish

Trump chose Cordish, who is a friend of his son-in-law Jared Kushner, to serve as assistant to the president for intragovernmental and technology initiatives. He will be responsible for initiatives requiring multiagency collaboration and also focus on technological innovation and modernization.

Cordish is a partner at his family's real estate and entertainment firm, the Baltimore-based Cordish Companies.

Cordish's father, David, the chairman and CEO of The Cordish Companies and an AIPAC board member, is a friend of Trump. The two met during the mediation process of a lawsuit in which Trump sued The Cordish Companies.

And Cordish, who is in his early 40s, has another connection to the Trump family – he was introduced to his now-wife, Margaret, by none other than Ivanka Trump, who attended the couple's wedding in 2010 with husband Jared Kushner. Cordish and his wife were listed as co-hosts for a Manhattan fundraiser for Trump's presidential campaign in October, Jewish Insider reported.

Avrahm Berkowitz

Berkowitz, 27, is serving as special assistant to Trump and assistant to Jared Kushner. Berkowitz and Kushner met on the basketball court of an Arizona hotel during a Passover program, Jewish Insider reported. The two stayed in touch and Berkowitz went on to work with Kushner in several capacities.

After graduating from Queens College, Berkowitz worked for Kushner Companies and later went on to write for Kushner's paper, the New York Observer. In 2016 Berkowitz, who was then finishing up his last semester at Harvard Law School, directed a Facebook Live talk show for the Trump campaign. Later he worked on the presidential campaign as assistant director of data analytics.

Berkowitz's first cousin is Howard Friedman, who served as AIPAC president in 2006-2010, according to Jewish Insider.

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