

JEWISH LOUISVILLE COMMUNITY



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STORY ON PG. 9

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‘Who wouldn’t want this job?’ Finke sees JFCS as way to care for neediest people

By Lee Chottiner
Community Editor

Growing up in Dayton, Ohio, David L. Finke would rush home at mid-day to make lunch for his grandfather, who lived with the family.

Today, grown, married and a trained psychologist and human services executive, Finke and his wife, Helene, have a son who was born with a rare chromosomal abnormality that inhibits verbal communication. He has never spoken.

These two experiences have left their marks on Finke, the new chief executive officer of the Jewish Family & Career Services. They affect how he sees his job and the mission of the agency he has been hired to run.

“There are two populations that communities want to support,” Finke said in an exclusive interview with *Community*. “They want to support kids and they want to support older adults. Those are populations that can’t take care of themselves.”

As CEO, he hopes to serve both groups,

and all the other populations that JFCS traditionally helps.

Only three days into his job at the time of the interview, Finke nevertheless gave a broad outline for what he wants to do as CEO: improve the quality of services, increase the “breadth and quantity” of services, maintain a “happy work force” (which he said will impact the quality of its work) and make the Jewish community proud.

Finke is specifically focused on vulnerable populations, which he has worked with since he entered private practice. That is why the former executive at Bellewood & Brooklawn – a local children’s service agency – hopes JFCS will venture more into services for kids under his leadership.

“If we’re going to repair the world, if we’re going to make a better Louisville community,” he said, “then part of that is serving children and families.”

He said services can be increased with-

See **FINKE** on page 18



David L. Finke, the new CEO of the Jewish Family & Career Services, hopes to improve and expand the agency’s services for children and older adults. (photo by Deborah Gary)

‘We were stunned’ Four Jewish Louisvillians recall 9/11

By Lee Chottiner
Community Editor

Everyone has a 9/11 story to tell. Jewish Louisvillians are no exception.

U.S. Coast Guard Chief Warrant Officer James Todd (Ret.) was the first military commander to respond to the attack on the World Trade Center in New York, directing evacuations by boat from Manhattan.

Aliza Weinstock, the daughter of Rabbi Robert and Deborah Slosberg, passed out sandwiches to first responders at Ground Zero.

Alan Engel, then president of the Jewish Federation of Louisville, assembled community leaders to discuss ways to keep the community safe.

And Sara Klein Wagner, then director of the Jewish Community Relations Council, represented Jewish Louisville at an interfaith service following the attacks.

Each experience offers a different perspective on the worst attack on American soil since Pearl Harbor.



The Tribute in Light memorial is in remembrance of the events of Sept. 11, 2001. (U.S. Air Force photo/Denise Gould)

Todd, who recounted his experiences at Temple Shalom’s Shabbat service on Sept. 10, was the commander of Coast Guard cutter USCGS Hawser, which had just returned from a 10-day patrol of the Hudson River and Erie Canal.

The morning of 9/11, he was having breakfast at a diner near his home port in Bayonne, New Jersey, when he heard

a plane had struck one tower.

At first, he thought it was an accident, but by the time he reached his base, the gate was already on lockdown. “That’s when I found out it was a terrorist attack.”

Since much of his seven-member crew was ashore, he found an electrician’s mate and engineer to steam with him to Manhattan, where he found he was the only military officer present.

“Everyone was looking to me to figure out what to do,” he recalled. “I had to make a determination. It was a terrorist attack; the towers were on fire. Were there chemical, biological and nuclear weapons involved as well? Quite frankly, I was looking at the shoreline to make sure Manhattanites were staying upright and not falling down.”

Todd directed evacuation efforts with scores of tugboats nearby, ordering vessels to make pickups or help in any way they could.

“We were fashioning makeshift air masks out of cloth paper towels, rubber

See **9/11** on page 19

CenterStage to perform ‘Joseph’ outside at Farmington

By Lisa Hornung
For Community

After a year without live performances, the Jewish Community Center’s CenterStage theater is about to take to the stage again.

However, because COVID continues to surge, the company’s first production of the year, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, will be performed outdoors at Farmington Historic Plantation, 3033 Bardstown Road.

For Erin Jump, Arts and Ideas program director, this rare change of venue away from the company’s JCC home, was all about safety.

“We went through a lot of ideas, including performing at the J, performing outdoors, doing a virtual experience,” Jump said. “It just kind of fell

See **CENTERSTAGE** on page 14

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THE DASHBOARD

Word of the Month

A plea to get vaccinated



D'var Torah

Rabbi
Chaim Litvin

Numerous synagogues have joined the vaccine supporters and urged their congregations to take full advantage of the vaccines being offered. Our rabbis and cantors lead by example.

This month, the vaccine is being offered at synagogues throughout the country from Sept. 7 through 29. I encourage everyone to take full advantage of this program.

Remember, there is nothing so precious as life: a life filled with love of family, love of community and love of G-d.

I understand that some people, although a very small percentage of people, have natural immunity to this pandemic. But for the 99.99 percent, which is basically all of us, the vaccine is a life-saving requirement and cannot be trivialized.

This illness is the greatest threat imaginable and as time goes by, it only gets worse. It inhibits our ability to sense things, to smell, to taste and even to breathe. Have you received your vaccination?

By now, you may have realized that I am not referring to a physical ailment, but a spiritual one. (Although I do encourage everyone to get the COVID vaccine.)

This ailment doesn't cause a heightened temperature, but a lowered one, and once it affects people, they become cold. Cold to our faith and cold to friends and community. The pandemic I am referring to is that of *apathy*.

There are only two ways to fight any such illness: First, from within, with your

natural spiritual antibodies. People who can do this are called *tzadikim* (righteous ones); they have natural spiritual immunity and always remain passionate and excited no matter what happens in their lives.

However, for the rest of us, the only other way to combat such an ailment is with a spiritual vaccine, an inspiring shot to the soul that helps your natural body fight off such a challenge and remain warm.

Synagogues have been offering this annual vaccine all month, from Rosh Hashanah, with the blowing of the shofar, to the fast on Yom Kippur.

These final annual shots will be offered during Yizkor memorial prayers on Sept. 28 and dancing with the Torah on Sept. 29. If you haven't had your annual vaccine yet, please take advantage of it, ASAP.

By now, we all know that one shot is not enough. So, there are booster shots being offered throughout the year: Chanukah, Purim and Passover.

I also strongly believe in wearing a mask. If someone wants to gossip about someone else or share some juicy tidbit that would detract from another person's honor or prestige (in Hebrew, the word for honor is *covod*), just point to your mask and say, "sorry, this is a gossip-free zone."

I am sure that when G-d sees us taking all these steps, with love to one another and following in the teachings and traditions of our faith, G-d will surely bless us with long life, good health, and much happiness in the upcoming year.

In fact, if we all do these things together, we may finally be able to travel again – on the ultimate trip with *Moshiach* (messiah) to visit Jerusalem together and see and worship G-d in the third and eternal Temple.

(Rabbi Chaim Litvin is chief executive officer of the Bourbon Rabbi.)

Snapshots



Temple Shalom planted its own cornfield this year and used the stalks for the roof of its sukkah. Mark and Cindy Phelps, who germinated the idea for a homegrown sukkah roof, harvested and bundled the corn this month in preparation for the festival. (Community photos by Lee Chottiner)



Candles

Here are the candle-lighting times for Shabbat in October:

- Oct 1 @ 7:07 p.m.
- Oct 8 @ 6:57 p.m.
- Oct 15 @ 6:46 p.m.
- Oct 22 @ 6:37 p.m.
- Oct 29 @ 6:28 p.m.

Contacts

Got a story idea? A letter? A gripe? A kudo?

Send it along to *Community* Editor Lee Chottiner at lechottiner@jewishlouisville.org. You can also call Lee at 502-238-2783.

Not getting your paper? Want to subscribe? Putting your subscrip-

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Got an item for the *Community* eblast? Send it to weeklyupdate@jewishlouisville.org.

Deadlines

Got a news item for *Community*? Deadlines matter, especially for newspapers. Send in your news by Friday, Oct. 20 (though sooner is better). The paper should be in your mailbox by

Friday, Oct. 29.

Submitting an item for *Community's* weekly eblast? Please submit it by Friday. The eblast is sent out every Monday afternoon.

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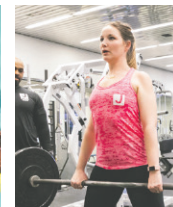
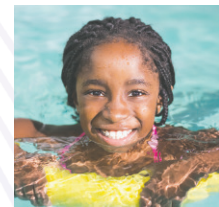
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To follow our progress or make a gift online: jewishlouisville.org/TragerJCC

NEWS

Looking ahead Rothschild eyes new programming to spur female activity in Jewish life here

By Lee Chottiner
Community Editor

While women in Jewish Louisville have occupied leadership roles for many years, Shannon Rothschild thinks plenty of untapped potential remains.

It merely takes the right kind of programming to tap it.

“My goal is to engage more women – whether it’s philanthropic work, doing an awesome online book club or an outdoor art project,” said Rothschild, the Federation’s new senior manager of women’s philanthropy and outreach. “I feel like there’s a lot of women who would like to be involved and are not involved.”

Rothschild, who just started her new job in August, plans to get women from all synagogues, or no affiliation at all, involved through what she calls a “hybrid” of projects, speakers and interaction with federations in other cities.

“There’s a huge opportunity to thread the women of the community together,” she said. “I think the women of this community want to be involved; they want to do something ... they want to be engaged. They just need to find the right niche.”

Some of her ideas for engagement could be new for Jewish Louisville, including her pet project: Dignity Grows, a nationwide effort to provide menstrual



Shannon Rothschild

and hygiene supplies to women who are unable to afford them, what has become known as “period poverty.”

Feminine hygiene products are not covered by SNAP, WIC or other

welfare programs, and are rarely available at food pantries, according to Dignity Grows, which was started by Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford and is supported by National Women’s Philanthropy of Jewish Federations of North America.

Rothschild met with Dignity Grows officials this month to discuss how to establish the program here.

A native of Indianapolis, Rothschild grew up immersed in the Jewish community. She went to an Orthodox elementary school, attended a Reform summer camp (GUCI), attended a Conservative/Reconstructionist synagogue and double-majored in sociology and Jewish studies at Tulane University.

After marrying her husband, Edward, Rothschild delved into Jewish life here, serving on the board of trustees at The Temple (she is currently its president-elect), heading up the Israel Camp grants at the JCC and traveling to the Jewish state in 2019 on a Momentum mission.

The Rothschilds have three kids: Reagan, Trey and Emory.

Rothschild has two master’s degrees, in health administration and business, from Indiana University, and has worked extensively in the health, insurance and private equity sectors.

But working in the Jewish sector, she said, feels like returning to her roots.

“I feel like I’ve come full circle,” Rothschild said.

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NEWS

Kentucky, Ohio federations assail Massie's Holocaust tweet, seek meeting with congressman

By Lee Chottiner
Community Editor

The three federations that border U.S. Rep. Thomas Massie's Kentucky congressional district have criticized his tweet comparing COVID-19 safety measures to the Holocaust.

"The only thing that's comparable to the Holocaust is the Holocaust," said Jackie Congedo, director of the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati.

Mindy Haas, executive director of the Lexington-based Jewish Federation of the Bluegrass, said she is trying to arrange a meeting with Massie. Also, Cincinnati, along with the Louisville JCRC, have written to Massie's office, inviting him to visit the Nancy and David Wolf Holocaust & Humanity Center at Cincinnati's Union Terminal.

A Republican representing the 4th Congressional District, Massie has come under fire for tweeting a message comparing COVID passports to an image of a hand with a number tattooed to its wrist.

"If you have to carry a card on you to gain access to a restaurant, venue or an event in your own country ... that's no longer a free country," read the text in



U.S. Rep. Thomas Massie

the image Massie tweeted, which was deleted shortly afterwards.

Matt Goldberg, director of the Louisville JCRC, called Massie's comparison "jarring" and said it dishonors the memory of the six million Jews who died at the hands of the Nazis.

Of that six million, Congedo noted, approximately 1.5 million were children.

Haas said there is no comparison between the COVID vaccines and the tat-

toos survivors were forced to wear.

"The vaccine is a choice to live," she said. "In the Holocaust, there was no choice."

The ADL has called upon Massie to apologize for the tweet, which has already prompted one of his interns to resign, labeling the congressman's actions anti-semitic.

It's not clear how many Jews live in Massie's district, which includes the Kentucky suburbs of Cincinnati and part of Jefferson County, but a recent community study by the Cincinnati federation indicates that 1,600 to 2,500 reside in the northern counties.

As of print deadline, none of the Federations have reported hearing back from Massie or his staff. But Congedo said she has received messages of support from northern Kentucky.

"I had a beautiful message from Thomas More University (a Catholic school in Crestview Hills). They were really sorry to hear what was shared and expressed their solidarity and support – completely unsolicited."

Congedo urged Federation supporters of all faiths "not to remain silent," noting that making Holocaust references for political purposes has been happening

across the political spectrum.

"This is not a feature of one political side or another," she said. "This is in keeping with the move to the extremes and the equating of what is not even comparable ... for shock value."



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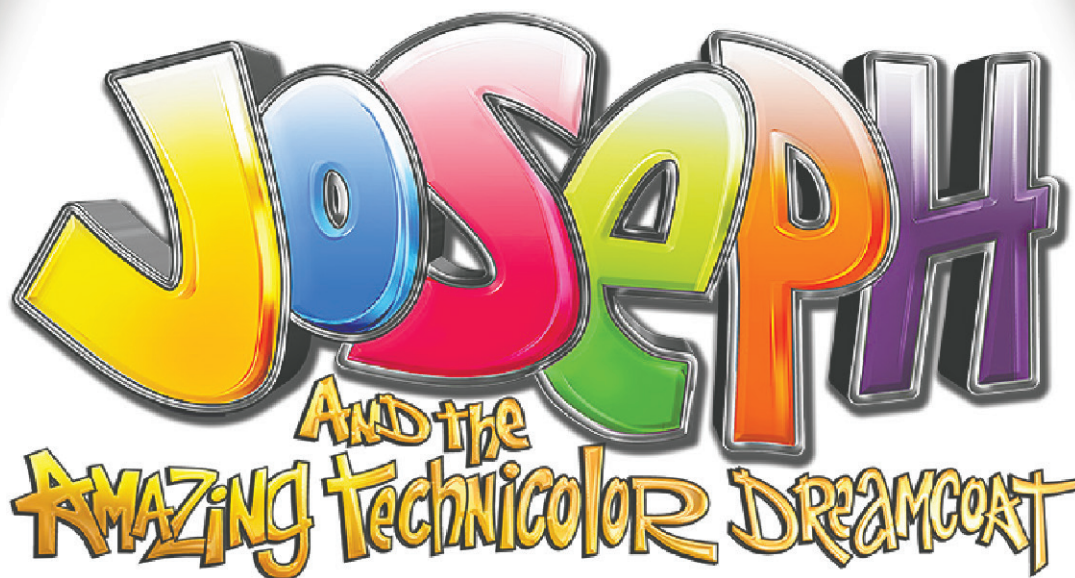
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Deadlines for the next two issues of **Community** for copy and ads are: October 20 for publication on October 29 and November 17 for publication on November 26.

Community publishes Newsmakers and Around Town items at no charge. Items must be submitted in writing. Please include your name and a daytime telephone number where you can be contacted in the event that questions arise. **Community** reserves the right to edit all submissions to conform to style and length requirements.

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Community reserves the right to refuse to publish any letter, to edit for brevity while preserving the meaning, and to limit the number of letters published in any edition.

Email your comments to: **Community**,

Letters to the editor, Lee Chottiner, at

lchottiner@jewishlouisville.org.

To submit items to Newsmakers, Around Town or Lifecycle, please email them to newspapercolumns@jewishlouisville.org.

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FORUM



Weaponizing Shoah not OK, not even for Jews



Human Resources

Lee Chottiner

Weaponizing the Holocaust has been going on for some time, but with nowhere near the intensity that we are seeing now.

Even Jews, people who should know better, are now getting in to the act, promising that this shocking practice of cheapening the memory of the Shoah victims will get worse before it gets better.

Politicians, organizations, regular Joes in the street, are plumbing disturbingly new depths, disparaging public figures, issues, legislation, government mandates – anything with which they personally disagree (or perhaps see as opportunities to advance their own agendas), by comparing them to Holocaust imagery.

The latest targets for the Holocaust weaponeers are COVID-related. Politicians are freely exploiting the anti-vax craze (no other way to describe it) by using Nazi crimes to demonize mask mandates and vaccine passports, both of which have been used in Israel – a point that these weaponeers conveniently fail to mention.

The attacks were recently felt in Kentucky, when U.S. Rep. Thomas Massie, a Republican from the Fourth

Congressional District, tweeted a photo of a hand with a serial number tattooed on its wrist. The accompanying text read, “If you have to carry a card on you to gain access to a restaurant, venue or an event in your own country ... that’s no longer a free country.” (See story, page 5)

Federations in Louisville, Lexington and Cincinnati, all of which surround Massie’s district, roundly condemned the tweet, which was quickly deleted, and the ADL called on the congressman to apologize.

That was bad enough, but it has been eclipsed by a more recent incident: In Ohio, a Republican candidate for the U.S. Senate, Josh Mandel, protested President Biden’s mask mandates by comparing them to Gestapo tactics.

“I call on my fellow Americans: Do not comply,” Mandel said in a video. “Do not comply with the tyranny, and when the Gestapo show up at your front door, you know what to do.”

Not only did Mandel give a veiled green light to the use of violence (“you know what to do”), but his remarks sink even lower than Massie’s in two important ways:

First, when ADL CEO Jonathan Greenblatt called on him to apologize, as his organization did with Massie, Mandel called Greenblatt a “kapo,” a reference to Jews coerced into doing the dirty work for Nazis in the concentration camps. Never mind that the ADL has been at the forefront of defending the memory of Holocaust victims.

Second, Mandel is Jewish. He knows

that these comparisons cheapen the memory of the six million Jews who were murdered because of who they were, **not** because they were trying to stop a deadly public health threat in its tracks.

Since Mandel is Jewish, it is easy to see how extremists would see his remarks as some twisted seal of approval to use Holocaust references in any manner they like: to stifle vaccination drives, to indoctrinate police academy cadets, to thwart efforts to slow climate change...

Fill in the blank. Opposing anything by painting it as a Holocaust equivalent is so simple.

Only it’s wrong. As Jackie Congedo, director of the Jewish Community Relations Council in Cincinnati said in response to the Massie tweet, “The only thing comparable to the Holocaust is the Holocaust.”

So how to stop it? Unless they feel enough pain, those who make these comparisons, benefitting somehow from their shock value, probably won’t stop. And Jewish condemnation alone isn’t painful enough. Rebuke must come from all quarters.

Like many of you, I had family who died in the Holocaust. Like many of you, comparing anything else to the Holocaust is not OK with me. So, don’t be silent; voice your disdain to Jews and non-Jews alike; ask them to do the same.

We might just silence weaponeers’ guns.

(Lee Chottiner is the editor of the Jewish Louisville Community.)

FORUM

Judaism's sabbatical year offers model for fighting climate change, inequality

Guest Columnists

R.I. Sen. Meghan Kallman
and Rabbi Lex Rofeberg

We are in an era of multiple interlocking crises. Record-breaking heat waves, wildfires, water shortages, rising authoritarianism and a pandemic rampaging across the world all make clear that survival requires urgent, major changes to how we live.

Bold policy proposals already exist to address these problems at national and state levels, but we – a progressive politician and a progressive rabbi – suggest another possibility, gleaned from Jewish tradition: the ancient idea of *shmita*, the sabbatical year, which can guide our work when everything we do matters.

As millennials, we have come of age under the worst inequality since the Gilded Age, exacerbated and symbolized by a student and healthcare debt crisis. The disastrous effects of climate crisis, extinctions, displacement and environmental degradation are threatening to turn life on the planet into a nightmare.

These problems can be traced to a global obsession with unending growth.

Our only chance to avoid that is to drastically re-envision our society and its priorities.

While millennials, both of us are also Jewish. We have, in different ways and at different points in our lives, felt called to participate in Jewish communities of learning, prayer and gathering.

Neither one of us learned of *shmita* until adulthood. It is time for our Jewish spaces around the world to re-prioritize this sacred ritual, applying its wisdom in concrete ways to our own times.

Shmita, which is observed every seven years, began several days ago, on Rosh Hashanah. "Sabbatical" tends to refer to respite from work, typically in a university context. But the *shmita* year is different. It is a collective sabbatical, a radical recalibration of society, aligning it with principles of justice and equity for human beings and for the lands we inhabit. *Shmita* offers a framework for enshrining seemingly individual choices as social values.

The *shmita* year has two major components: First, it serves as a rest for land. Just as humans observe a sabbath every

seven days, the land that we inhabit gets a sabbath, too. In biblical times, it meant the land should lie fallow for a year; its gleanings left for the needy and for animals. Through *shmita*, our relationship to land can shift from one of control and domination to one of appreciation and interdependence. Clearly, such lessons apply to this moment as well.

Second, debts are forgiven during the *shmita* year, to address financial inequities that grow over time, and to provide everyone with the opportunity to thrive. Debt forgiveness every seven years disrupts wealth-hoarding and provides relief to those struggling to meet their basic needs. *Shmita* approaches justice expansively.

These ideas can, and should, be used in practice – not just in our ancient texts, and not just aspirationally. For instance, we could forgive debts and change systems that cause terrible indebtedness. Two-thirds of contemporary U.S. bankruptcies happen over medical issues and medical debt; we must make healthcare free and universal to solve this problem over the long term. Collectively, U.S. college students owe nearly \$1.6 trillion in student loan debt; President Biden

could and should forgive up to \$50,000 per borrower in federal student debt through executive action. Over the medium term, we must make public colleges and universities free, to avoid re-creating the same problem – something that our home state of Rhode Island is already doing. This year, its General Assembly permanently enacted RI Promise, the free tuition program at the Community College of Rhode Island.

Shmita can also guide us in avoiding the most catastrophic effects of climate change. *Shmita* proposes that for a year, humans don't treat land as a means to our ends; we must not think in terms of limitless expansion, but of sustainability and rest. Leaving the land fallow rejects the notion that our planet, and its resources, exist only to serve us.

Rhode Island's Act on Climate bill sets legally binding targets for emissions reductions; now we must act urgently to meet them. Measures like mandating net-zero emissions in energy generation, a critical move that passed only the Senate this session, are crucial first steps. We also need to rebuild our food systems and expand public transit and clean en-

See **SABBATICAL** on page 17

Letters to the Editor We're not always strangers

I have always found your editorials well written, but I do have some slight disagreement with the most recent opinion. ("I am an American, a Jew and a stranger," Aug. 27)

I, too, am a Jewish person who has been raised in the United States of America. My father, a first-generation American, raised us to not be overly aware of antisemitism.

He once told me that upon graduating from high school in 1926 he went looking for a job. The first two places he went had the following signs: "Jews and Irish need not apply" and "Jews and Catholics need not apply." I asked him if he registered a complaint with the ADL (Anti-Defamation League). He said "no" but that many of his friends did.

He then told me something I would never forget: "No one was going to keep me from being a success." In today's language, he stated, "no one is going to make me a victim." Eventually, he became a successful independent accountant and auditor.

Your noting the statement of the Christian exterminator reveals a lack of knowledge of the Christian mindset and biblical understanding. I do not believe he

was being anti-Semitic or considered you a "stranger in a strange land." He might have revealed some ignorance of Jewish people in America and nothing more.

When I was in the military, I was often the only Jewish person in an entire unit, but I was never made to feel I was a stranger.

The company I worked for (that moved me to Louisville) was owned by a Jewish family, but I was their only Jewish sales representative. Most of the people I worked with, and for, were Roman Catholics. They often revealed a lack of knowledge of the Jewish people, but they never made me feel like a stranger.

I do see your point and would like to see more Jewish people aware that antisemitism does still exist; particularly, among the American left.

Once again, thank you for your efforts. I just hope you can understand my position as well. I will remain vigilant for any form of hatred and stand ready to defend those who experience prejudice and hatred due to their ethnicity, color and religious preferences.

Aaron L. Bortz
Louisville

Touched, yet angered

Thank you for your Forum column in the Aug. 27 issue of *Community*. ("I am an American, a Jew and a stranger.")

My husband Joe and I were both touched and angered by it. Touched by your sharing the depth of a painful experience and angered by the arrogant religious stupidity/ignorance that takes place in the minds of the far-right of any reli-

gion, including our own Jewish religion.

The unfortunate lesson is that it has been ever thus. We pick up and we keep trying, but sometimes we get tired – especially as we age. Your sharing your story was a blessing for us.

Angeline Golden
Louisville

The Top Ten Things To Do If You Want To Sell Your House

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FORUM

My abortion was a blessing

Rabbi promises to fight for others' right to make their own sacred choices



Guest
Columnist

Rabbi Rachael
Pass

On the second night of Rosh Hashanah, in my second year of rabbinical school, while working in New York, at my first-ever High Holy Day pulpit, I accidentally conceived.

I had my first bout of morning sickness in our introductory Talmud course, and my first pregnancy craving during Hebrew Literature and Grammar (I still swear that pickles on pizza is a million-dollar idea).

I took my pregnancy test on Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan and whispered the blessing “*asher yatzar et ha'adam b'chochmah*” (who created human beings with wisdom), when it read positive.

That night, I attended a required class Shabbat program at Kehilat Romemu on the Upper West Side, where I discovered that morning sickness could indeed happen at night in a shul bathroom.

I prayed. I read every piece of Jewish literature on abortion that I could find. I read every opinion article on the internet

about “why I’m happy I had an abortion” or “how I came to regret my abortion.” I made a pros and cons list. I consulted the would-be father, and my rabbinic mentor, Rabbi Jen Gubitz. I cried on the phone with my mom. Ultimately, I made the choice using the instinctual wisdom inside myself, heeding nobody’s opinion but my own. And perhaps God’s.

We Jews are commanded, in lines that appear in this week’s Torah portion: “I have put before you today blessing and curse, life and death: *Uvacharta v'chayyim* – choose life.

That commandment has been co-opted as a rallying cry for those who support restrictions on abortion, such as the Texas ban on abortions after six weeks that went into effect last week when the U.S. Supreme Court declined to block it. But for me and so many others, this verse is a clear rebuttal to that law, the most significant infringement on abortion rights in America since the Roe v. Wade decision protected a women’s right to choose 48 years ago.

I chose life when I left Literary Artistry of the Bible early on a Thursday afternoon to walk the few short blocks from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion’s New York campus to the Margaret Sanger Planned Parenthood on Bleecker Street. I took the first pill in a quiet office, sitting across from a doc-

tor who looked just like me. The next morning, my Medieval Jewish History class took a field trip to the Met Cloisters. Our professor was late because she had to prepare her brisket for Shabbat dinner. I felt so sick I could hardly stand. That night, I livestreamed Shabbat services while holding the four Misoprostol pills in the four corners of my mouth, waiting for them to disintegrate. I bled all night.

A week after the bleeding stopped, I went to the mikveh, the Jewish ritual bath, with ImmerseNYC, a liberal mikveh project founded by Rabbi Sara Luria. I did an adapted version of a post-abortion ritual written by Rabbi Tamar Duvdevani. I listened to Debbie Friedman’s *Sow In Tears, Reap In Joy* on repeat the entire way there and the entire way home. I looked at my naked body in the giant mirror in the preparation room and saw every change that short pregnancy had wrought. I felt weak and I felt strong. I sang to myself, because I was still scared, as I dipped under the water and came back up: “*Elohai n'shamah shenatata bi t'hora hi.*” (My God the soul you have given me is pure.)

The next morning, our class took a field trip to that same mikveh. I asked five of my classmates, now colleagues, to come early. They were pretty much my only friends in New York at the time and some of the only people that I had told about my abortion. We stood on the corner of 74th and West End Avenue on a windy morning with a challah that I had baked and a little bit of honey and finished the ritual together. We dipped the challah in the honey, a symbol of sweeter times ahead. I cried. We stood in a circle, and they wrapped their arms around me. “*Hazorim b'dimah b'rinah yiktzoru,*” I repeated, “those who sow in tears will reap in joy.”

You may have noticed that my abortion story is very Jewish. Everything from the timing of the accidental conception to the decision and procedure itself was brimming with my Jewish practice, learning and living. It is impossible to extricate my Judaism from my abortion.

And yet you might also assume that my abortion would not have been Jewishly “okay,” permissible under *halacha*, or Jewish law, because I simply did not want to be pregnant – because mine is the kind of abortion that anti-choicers most disdain. The standard Jewish line on abortion is that Judaism traditionally permits abortion when the pregnancy endangers the life of the mother. This derives from Mishnah Ohalot 7:6, which states that “[for] a woman who is having a hard labor – *makshah leiled* – they cut up the fetus in her womb and remove it limb by limb – *mipnei shechayeiha kodmin l'chayyav* – because her life comes before its life.” *Chayeiha kodmin l'chayyav* – her life comes before that of the fetus.

What does it mean that the life of the pregnant person comes before that of the fetus? Over the centuries, various rabbinic authorities have offered their answers. It means that her physical needs and pain levels are prioritized over the birthing of the child (Rabbis Josef

Trani and Jacob Emden). It means that her mental health is prioritized over the birthing of the child (Rabbi Mordecai Winkler). It means that her dignity and her honor are prioritized over the birthing of the child (Rabbi Ben-Zion Ouziel). It means that the primary considerations in the Jewish question of abortion are the needs of the person giving birth, their life, their health and their dignity.

The Texas abortion ban, SB8, denies human dignity. This ban not only removes the option of safe choice for individuals seeking abortion care in Texas, but it also empowers and incentivizes individual citizens to report and pursue legal action against those who aid people seeking abortion, from doctors to family members to cab drivers.

As a result, it criminalizes care – something that violates Jewish law. As Jews, we are commanded over and over again to care for those on the “margins” of society – the poor, the widowed and orphaned, the queer, the people of color, people with disabilities, the systemically oppressed. These are the people who are already and will continue to be most devastated by this abortion ban and by the abortion bans that anti-abortion activists hope will follow all over the country. The lack of care for those in our society who need it most is a prophetic call to us as Jews.

Americans who want to fight back against SB8 can do many things. We can donate to organizations such as the Lilith Fund and the Buckle Bunnies Fund, which provide financial assistance to those in Texas seeking abortion, or to Jane’s Due Process, which provides teens with abortion care and birth control, or Fund Texas Choice which provides out-of-state transportation and accommodations. We can share websites like **abortionfinder.org** or **needabortion.org**, which direct people to safe clinics. We can call our legislators and lobby for the federal Women’s Health Protection Act, which would protect women and people of all genders against state-level legislation such as SB8.

As Jews, another strategy is available to us. If anyone ever again tries to argue that abortion restrictions are justified under the prerogative of religious freedom, we can explain that our religious freedom demands that we have access to abortion care when it is needed and wanted.

There is nothing more sacred than the right to live one’s life as one chooses – and to choose life, and to choose blessing. In having an abortion, I chose my life. Now I will do what I can to ensure that others – including the countless women, nonbinary individuals and trans men affected by SB8 in Texas – can retain the sacred choice to make their own choices and their own blessings.

(Rabbi Rachael Pass, a Louisville native, is the associate rabbi and director of spiritual counseling at the T'Shuvah Center, a Jewish home and recovery community for individuals with addiction of all kinds. She was ordained from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 2021.)



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FEDERATION

Families give to Capital Campaign to ensure JCC for future generations

Three legacy families, among others, have stepped up to be a part of the Capital Campaign for a new Trager Family Jewish Community Center.

Each of these three has become a part of the campaign for different reasons, but all were excited about being a part of the JCC's future and the memories that will be created in its new home, which is on track to open in Spring 2022.

A Place of Learning and Enrichment

Dr. Karen Abrams and her husband, Dr. Jeff Glazer, both spent their high school years at the JCC. Both credit it for helping them develop important life skills.

"BBYO was incredibly impactful in my life and helped me learn, develop and put into practice leadership skills," Karen said. "The JCC has always been a place of learning and enrichment."

Karen also recalled her family's involvement. Her husband was a camp counselor in high school and her kids took cooking classes from Miss Paula and learned to swim at the center.

"The JCC is just home for us," she said.

Karen hopes that the new Trager Family JCC will entice more Jewish families to join, enabling their families to grow up with the same enriching experiences as she – albeit in a modern facility that serves the physical and technical needs of the community today.

"This facility is going to be a 21st century building, Karen said. "I know it will inspire so many

History and Heritage

Max Shapira remembers how his family would regularly drive 31E back and forth from Bardstown, where the family was raised, to Louisville so that they could attend Sunday school, family dinners and other Jewish activities in the 1950's.

"We eventually moved to Louisville and it was there that I met my wife, Ellen, through her sister and events at The Temple," said Max Shapira.

Meanwhile, Ellen grew up with the Louisville JCC as a central part of her life.

"We just hung out there," Ellen said.

There wasn't a mall at the time, she explained, so she and her friends hung out at the JCC – and they loved it.

According to Ellen, they got involved in girls' and boys' clubs that, to this day, she credits for preparing her up for leadership success in life.

Ultimately, it's the heritage and history that made it easy for the Shapira family to say yes when asked to be a part of the Capital Campaign.

"The JCC is an extraordinary institution, having started in 1890 and continuing and thriving today," Max said. "It's a place that we can be so proud of as a Jewish community and share with all of Louisville."

The Center of Life

David and Bruce Roth remember swimming, participating in clubs, playing sports and just gathering together as a family at the JCC.

"The center has always been our



Future generations will enjoy making new memories at the Trager Family JCC.

home," David said. Together, now with their brothers and sisters, their own spouses, grown children and grandchildren, they think of the JCC as "the center of life."

"Our three children have such strong memories of their time growing up at the J," Bruce said. "They are all married now, with their own families, and living in other cities, but wanted to contribute to ensure that a new generation has the same opportunity they had."

When the Roth family committed to donating to the Trager Family JCC, it was primarily to honor their parents, Louis and Lee Roth, who instilled in them the importance of sharing and living the family's values.

Secondly, though, and extremely important, was knowing that they would be helping to continue the JCC tradition for future generations.

"It's like planting a tree now," Marcia Roth said. "Others will enjoy the shade later."

She said the family wanted to be a part of this campaign to ensure that everyone in Louisville, Jew and non-Jew, would have a place where they are welcome – together.

"Our entire family believes in active learning," Marsha said, "and the fact that kids will be able to learn with adults and families can learn together under one roof is just amazing."

For the Roth, Abrams and Shapira families, the JCC has been, and continues to be, a central part of life for multiple generations throughout its 130-year history. The Trager Family JCC will continue this legacy of being a place that the community can call home.



Indoor family pool area being dug with heavy digging equipment

Capital Campaign surpasses 500 donors

The Jewish Community Center and Jewish Federation of Louisville are thrilled to announce that more than 500 individuals, families and foundations have generously contributed to the Capital Campaign for a new JCC. We could never have reached this point without our dedicated donors. Because of their generosity, over \$42.5 million has been raised and we are still going. These efforts are a testament to a community that sees the vision for a JCC that will be here for generations to come.

To become a part of the JCC's continuing story, contact Stacy Gordon-Funk at sgordon-funk@jewishlouisville.org.



Trager Family
Jewish
Community
Center



Drywall going up in the main lobby facing the new auditorium/multipurpose space



Hallway space in the Early Learning Center with lots of natural light and windows



Natural play area in the Early Learning Center underway – with natural play elements to come

Photos provided by Jewish Community Center

PICTURE THIS: APPLE PICKING



Families from Shalom Baby and PJ Library picked apples for the High Holy Days on Sunday, Sept. 12, at Hidden Hollow Orchards. The families brought their own picnic blankets, snacks and apple juice. Some even did their own crafts. Approximately 24 people turned out for the event. (photos provided by Carly Mason)



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JFCS Announces New CEO, David L. Finke, Ph.D.



Finke brings more than twenty-six years of experience as a clinical psychologist and administrative manager in the social service sector, specializing in trauma-informed care practices. As the CEO of JFCS, Finke will provide strategic leadership guiding the agency in furthering the tradition of holistic and strengths-based care provided through the JFCS core services of career services, counseling services, family strengthening, Jewish life, older adult services and micro-enterprise development through JFCS Navigate.

Meet our new Board of Directors members, Carly Geer Mason and Judge Derwin Webb!



Carly Geer Mason is a Louisville native whose public relations career has included clients from the hospitality, consumer goods brands, and technology sectors. Carly is passionate about social justice activities and engaging with young adults in the community.

Judge Derwin L. Webb is the first African American male Family Court Judge in the history of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. A former standout basketball player and UofL Brandeis Law School graduate, he has lived in Louisville for more than twenty-five years.

**Read more about our new CEO
and Board members on our blog at
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ARTS

'Indecent' coming to Louisville**JHFE grant makes possible play about making of famous Yiddish drama**

By Lee Chottiner
Community Editor

Thanks to a Jewish heritage grant, an historic treasure of Jewish theater will be staged in Louisville next year.

The Jewish Heritage Fund for Excellence has awarded a \$60,000 grant to Bunbury-ShPIeL, a cooperative of two theatrical companies, to stage *Indecent* next February at the Henry Clay Theatre, downtown.

The grant will cover much, though not all, of the production costs for the play. It also will cover costs of next year's Teatron Festival of Jewish Theatre, administrative expenses, audience engagement and development of other productions.

"JHFE is proud to continue to support the Bunbury-ShPIeL Theatre Project and their efforts to leverage theater arts to connect and spark conversation between the Jewish and greater Louisville communities around race, religion, and social justice," JHFE Program Officer Jaime Jorrisch said in a statement.

A play by Tony Award-winning playwright Paula Vogel, *Indecent* recounts the making of the famous, and controversial, play *God of Vengeance*, by

Want to go?

Indecent is slated to open on Feb. 10, with shows scheduled from Feb. 10 to 13, 17 to 20 and 24 to 27. For more information, contact Chack at DCHACK@depaul.edu.

Sholem Asch, in 1923. That play explores the love affair between a prostitute (Manke) and the daughter of a brothel owner (Rifkele). Several subplots are woven through the production, which portrays actual characters, including Asch himself.

"The play is about the play, what's happening to the cast and the relationships that change the cast," said David Y. Chack, artistic director of the ShPIeL Performing Identity, who applied for the grant. "It's basically about a play within a play."

The play also showcases the "beauty of Yiddish culture and theater," he added.

Though *God of Vengeance* enjoyed success in Europe and in the Yiddish theater in New York, the cast was arrested for obscenity when it debuted on Broadway, the staging of a loving lesbian relationship being considered

scandalous at the time.

Critics also charged that the play fostered antisemitism for its treatment of prostitution.

Indecent addresses all these issues, and more, as it takes the audience behind the curtain of Asch's historic production.

For now, Chack said Bunbury-ShPIeL are planning for a live, in-person production, though only about 100 seats will be available per show to maintain social distancing. Rehearsals will start in December.

Every actor will play multiple roles, except for Lemml, the stage manager, who acts as the narrator.

For that role, Chack is bringing in an actor from Los Angeles, Casey Adler, who has previously performed with Bunbury-ShPIeL. Adler has appeared in several films and a daytime TV drama, *General Hospital*.

The rest of the cast is mostly set, though Chack said he cannot announce them yet.

Indecent has musical elements, featuring klezmer performances. Panel discussions about the play and a Jewish food and music night also are planned.

Chack sees *Indecent* as another step

in establishing a strong Jewish theater presence in the Derby City.

"I'm very interested in building a connection and involving and engaging the Jewish community here and at large – and the LGBTQ community and even communities of color," he said. "I'm going to be doing some casting that will be interesting in that direction."

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Robert and Lisa Klein, Louisville's P2G chairpeople & Amy Fouts, the Federation/P2G Community Liaison invite you to participate in upcoming events.

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Next month's programs include:

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GLOBAL DAY OF JEWISH LEARNING
November 7, 12:00 p.m.

BOOKCLUB
November 21, 1:00 pm ET
20:00 Israel 19:00 Budapest

INTERNATIONAL BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION
November 21, 1:00 p.m.
The Slave, by Isaac Bashevis Singer

We are also collecting personal P2G stories, experiences and pictures!
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NEWS & NEWSMAKERS

Mazel tov to...

Jennifer Harlan on the publication of her second book, *Call and Response: The Story of Black Lives Matter*,

co-authored with Veronica Chambers of *The New York Times*.

Bob Sachs, whose short story, *Old Times*, won the 2021 Tiferet Writing Contest in the fiction category.

Traveling shofar



To mark the second straight High Holy Day season when most worshippers could not be in the synagogue to hear the shofar themselves, Rabbi Ben Freed of Keneseth Israel brought the shofar to them, blowing the horn at various venues around Louisville. He is seen here sounding the shofar at Big Rock in Cherokee Park, but he also appeared at the Glenview Condos in the East End, Central Park in Old Louisville and at the University of Louisville. (photo provided by Keneseth Israel)

CENTERSTAGE

Continued from page 1

into place that an outdoor experience was best for everybody involved."

Joseph will only play three nights – Oct. 4, 5 and 6 at 7 p.m. – instead of the usual eight. And seating will be limited to 100 – less than half the usual capacity in the Linker Auditorium.

Tickets for *Joseph* went on sale Sept. 15, with a spike in purchases.

"Not only are we thrilled to be back, but it looks like, just evidenced by ticket sales, that people are excited, too," Jump said.

Kathy Nichols, executive director of Farmington, said this isn't the first theater production hosted at the plantation. Last year, Assumption High School performed *The Spoon River Project* there. Other theater companies have been in touch about using the venue, though they haven't followed up.

The outdoor space at Farmington, where the show will be presented, has a covered pavilion. Seating for the audience will be spread out, assuring that patrons won't be sitting shoulder-to-shoulder.

There also will be a bar and concessions stand appropriate for children

and adults. Additional ushers will help people find their way. Specifics about parking and seating will be sent to ticket buyers prior to the performance.

As in the past, this CenterStage production will be a fully-staged production. All the scenery, costumes and other production elements will be shuttled from the JCC to Farm-

ington, making the show like one staged at the Dutchmans Lane campus.

"Our audience is used to a grand scale," Jump said. "Our storytelling is so involved when it comes to set pieces, costumes, lights, sound – everything. While all of that does surround CenterStage, it is the quality of the performing as well."

The outdoors and surrounding fall colors will bring an added dimension to the musical by Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Weber, Jump added.

"When we announced [to the cast] that we're going to Farmington, everyone just cheered," she said. "As much as people are excited to see a show, our actors are so excited to perform for others. And I think it just speaks to everyone's desire to connect with everybody else.... We're excited to do it."

Want to go?

Tickets are \$25 and are on sale now at the J front desk or online at JewishLouisville.org.



Thank you.

You are the reason we have a thriving JCC, active summer camps, engaging programming, flourishing Jewish Family & Career Services, enthusiastic BBYO teenagers, interactive Hillel students, crucial assistance with community security/safety and trusted relationships with our Partnership cities in Israel – some of the many valuable causes supported by the Federation's annual campaign.



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AROUND TOWN

Adath Jeshurun

Here is the schedule for the remainder of the *chagim*: Shmini Atzeret, 10 a.m. and 5:45 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 28; Simchat Torah, 10 a.m. and 5:45 p.m., Wednesday, Sept. 29. All services continue to be live-streamed, and the links to join these services may be found in AJ's weekly emailed newsletter. Subscribe at adathjeshurun.com.

Sunday Night Live will return on Oct. 24 at 7 p.m. Dr. Edward Halperin will speak on the topic, "We do not want him, because he is a JEW!" Halperin will discuss a 1934 incident in Montreal when medical school interns went on strike to prevent a Jewish physician from joining the staff. A link to join this program is provided in AJ's weekly emailed newsletter. Subscribe at adathjeshurun.com.

Due to the pandemic, all in-person minyan, Shabbat, and holiday worship services continue to be held virtually. Links to join these services are provided in AJ's weekly emailed newsletter. Subscribe at adathjeshurun.com.

Anshei Sfarad

Rabbi Simcha Snaid is teaching three classes: Spice of Life, Wednesdays at 7 p.m.; Make a Prophet, Thursdays at noon; and Talmud Trek II, Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Contact Snaid at RabbiSnaid@ansheisfarad.com.

In-person services are being held. Those who have not been fully vaccinated should wear a mask and practice social distancing.

Chabad of Kentucky

A four-session course, "Outsmarting Antisemitism," exploring antisemitism today and how to respond, begins at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 27, at the Jewish Learning Center, 110 Dupont Circle. The cost is \$80. Continuing education credits are available for medical and legal professionals. Email Rabbi@chabadky.com or register at myjli.com/learn/louisville.

An in-person Yizkor service will be held at 11:30 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 28. Indoor and outdoor seating is available. Also, in-person observances of Simchat Torah will be held at 9 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 28 and Wednesday, Sept. 29. To reserve seating, email to rabbi@chabadky.com.

Chavurat Shalom

Lunch is held Thursdays at noon in the Levy Great Hall of the Klein Center; unless otherwise noted, programs starting at 1 p.m. via **ChavuratShalomZoom** for those joining remotely. In-person participants must be fully vaccinated and wear a mask while, except while eating or drinking.

Oct. 7: Attorney Aaron Lee Shaw will

speak about estate planning and elder law. Lunch will include cheese quesadillas, Mexican-style rice, black bean and corn salad, fresh fruit and Mexican-style chocolate mousse.

Oct. 14: Rabbi Joe Rooks Rapport will present "American Presidents and American Jews, Part IV." Lunch will include salmon cakes, mashed potatoes, green peas and carrots, cole slaw, fresh fruit, and chocolate trifle.

Oct. 21: AARP volunteer Deborah Turner will speak about aging gracefully. Lunch will include pasta and meatballs, Caesar salad, fresh fruit, and cookies and brownies.

Oct. 28: Jason Parroco, Hosparus Health manager of community outreach, will speak and play his ukulele. Lunch will include barbecue chicken, roasted potatoes, green beans, mixed green salad, fresh fruit, and caramel spoon cake.

Keneseth Israel

Shabbat and holiday services are being held outdoors in a tent, weather permitting. Otherwise, they will be on Zoom only. Weekday minyans and classes will continue to be on Zoom as well. Visit kenesethisrael.com for details about service times and updates on the COVID policy.

The Hebrew class, which addresses

reading and translating Hebrew texts with a focus on liturgy, is held Sundays at 5 p.m., followed by a learner's minyan at 6 p.m.

Kabbalah Month by Month with Cantor Sharon Hordes, a class on the teachings and meditations of Kabbalah based on the Hebrew calendar, is held the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

Text Me Back with Rabbi Freed: Encountering Judaism from Torah to Today, an introduction to the foundations and concepts of Judaism through its texts, will be held Mondays from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. beginning Oct. 11. Topics include Shabbat, holidays, God, kashrut and modern Israeli pop music.

Mid what? Midrash! A class exploring Torah between the lines, including its hidden stories, with artist-in-residence Ariane Barrie-Stern, will be held Tuesdays from 6:30-7:30 p.m. beginning Oct. 19.

Jews and Brews, a weekly Torah study class with Rabbi Freed, is held Wednesdays from 11 a.m. to noon.

Torah Yoga will be held at 6:30 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 21.

Temple Shalom

The Shabbat Experience with Rabbi

Continued on page 16

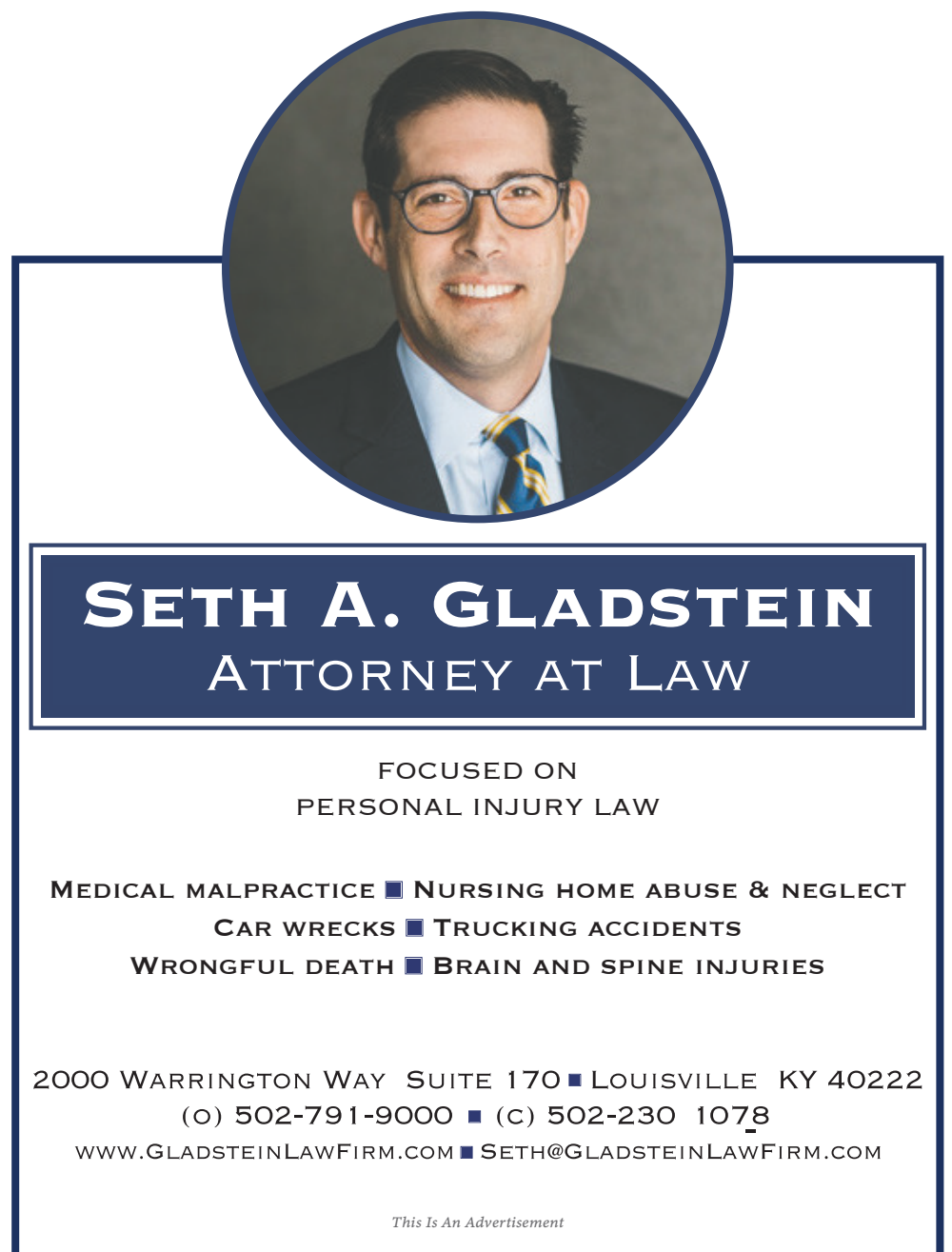


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AROUND TOWN

Continued from page 15

Beth Jacowitz Chottiner and a song leader is held Fridays at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom until further notice. Email information@templeshalomky.org for the link.

Cathy Kuhn, executive director of the Metropolitan Housing Coalition, will be the guest at the next Chailands Chavurah, 6:30 p.m., Monday, Oct. 25. Her topic will be "Toward Housing Justice in Louisville." The program will be held virtually. Email chailands@templeshalomky.org for more details.

The next Book Club meeting will be held at 2 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 7, the location TBD. The club is reading *All Who Go Do Not Return: A Memoir*, by Shulem Deen; and *Davita's Harp*, by Chaim Potok. For details, contact Carol Savkovich at savkofam@bellsouth.net.

The Temple

The Temple Trager ECEC has an opening for an afternoon preschool assistant (part time) and an infant/toddler teacher (full time). Applicants should be comfortable and experienced with children ages six weeks to Kindergarten and with interacting in a caring, positive manner while communicating and

responding professionally to children, parents and co-workers. Tasks include assisting in implementing daily plans and activities and tending to children's basic needs, which include feeding and changing clothes and diapers. Hours are 2:30/3-5:30 p.m., Mondays-Fridays. High school and college students at least 16 years of age are encouraged to apply. Send resumes to andrea@thetemplelouky.org or call 502-423-1444 with questions.

The Women of Reform Judaism/Sisterhood Gift Shop is open by appointment. Visit its Facebook page at [facebook.com/wrjgiftshop](https://www.facebook.com/wrjgiftshop). Also, an online shop is coming. Contact Sheila Lynch, 502-896-9736, Marlene Ornstein, 502-329-2276, or Karen Waldman, 502-425-4360 for appointments.

Adult education has started for the Fall semester: Temple Scholars on Wednesdays from 9:30 a.m. to noon; Text study, Basic Judaism and Hebrew on Monday evenings.

Saturday Torah Study starts at 9 a.m. on Zoom and in person. Go to thetemplelouky.org/adult-education for details.

Indoor Shabbat services are held on Friday nights and Saturday mornings. Go to thetemplelouky.org for details.

Rabbi Joe Rooks Rapport and members of the 2022 confirmation class will hold a special Torah Dedication Shabbat service at 7 p.m. Friday, Oct. 1.

The opening meeting for The Temple Sisterhood/ WRJ will be held via Zoom at 4 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 3. Rabbi Rapport will speak on, "American Jewish Women Jurists." RSVP at thetemplelouky.org/wrjopening.

The Rabbi's Shabbat Dinner with a traditional Shabbat meal will be held at 6 p.m., Friday, Oct. 15 at 6 p.m. followed by services at 7 p.m. Dinner: \$10 per person (\$5 for RSVPs before Oct. 11) and free for children 12 and under. RSVP by calling 502-423-1818 or online at thetemplelouky.org/rabbi-shabbat.

Rabbi Rapport's next Movie Night will be held at 6:30 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 17. Pizza will be served followed by the Movie at 7 p.m. Go to thetemplelouky.org/movie-night for details.

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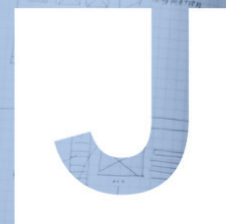
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LIFECYCLE

Births

Katie and Brad Gross announce the arrival of their son, Ezra Lawrence Gross.

B'nai Mitzvah



Joanna Figa, daughter of Julia Brown and Jeffrey Figa, sister of Jacob and Jenna, will be called to the Torah as a bat mitzvah at 7 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 2, at The Temple. Jo-

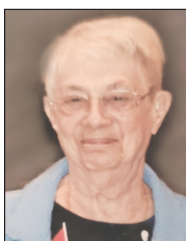
anna is the granddaughter of Lorna and Leon Figa and Kathleen and William Brown. A seventh grader at Kentucky Country Day School, Joanna is a member of the cross-country and track teams. She also enjoys gymnastics, playing volleyball, watching movies, listening to music, reading, jigsaw puzzles and spending time with her family and friends. She volunteers with the Kentucky Humane Society and with the Louisville Daylily Society.

Emory Jillian Rothschild will become a bat mitzvah at 10:30 a.m., Saturday, Oct. 16, at The Temple. Em-



ory is the daughter of Shannon and Edward Rothschild II, sister to Reagan and Trey, and a granddaughter of the late Frances and Edward Rothschild of Louisville and Heather and Ronald Melrose of Austin, Texas. An eighth grader at Walden School, Emory enjoys reading, creating multi-media art, Girl Scouts, music, playing the saxophone, spending time with her friends, family, two guinea pigs and two dogs. For her mitzvah project, Emory made 18 blankets for the homeless. As part of Remember Us: The Holocaust B'nei Mitzvah Project; Emory's bat mitzvah will honor the memory of Mirjam Rothschild z"l (no known relationship) who died in the Holocaust.

Obituaries



Lotte Widerschein

Lotte Widerschein, 88, of Louisville, died Wednesday, Aug. 25, 2021.

Born on March 15, 1933, in Konstanz, Germany, the only child of Gertrude and

Kurt Wolf, Lotte fled pre-war Germany with her family, joining other relatives in Waterloo, Iowa, where she grew up.

She enjoyed playing violin with the JCC Orchestra and its successor. She was a member of Keneseth Israel Congregation, the Senior Club at the JCC, and was a life member of Hadassah. She also was an avid bridge player and was slowly learning to play mahjongg.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Morton "Marty," and her son, Ross.

Lotte is survived by her son, Michael Widerschein and his wife, Aline Meeker; her grandsons, Samuel and Jacob Widerschein; and her cousins, the Nadler family, including Mark Nadler.

The family wishes to thank Kelly Smith, NP, Melanie Drury, NP, Dr. Lazar and the entire staff of compassionate caregivers at the Episcopal Church Home for their love and care.

Funeral services were held Friday, Aug. 27, at Herman Meyer & Son, Inc. Burial followed at Keneseth Israel Cemetery. Memorial donations are appreciated to Keneseth Israel Congregation, 2531 Taylorsville Road, Louisville, KY 40205.

SABBATICAL

Continued from page 7

ergy production. Neighborhoods are building community gardens while offering training for the formerly incarcerated, rethinking financial systems and experimenting with basic income. Communities and legislatures are mobilizing around these issues, but we need more and faster action at every level.

The choices we make now will determine the survival of millions within the next few decades. We must seek out every strategy available to us as we tackle the challenges that threaten the inhabitants of our country, other countries and our planet. That includes strategies anchored in ancient Jewish wisdom, like the *shmita* year.

(Sen. Meghan Kallman represents District 15 in the Rhode Island Senate. Rabbi Lex Rofeberg is the senior Jewish educator for Judaism Unbound.)

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NEWS

FINKE

Continued from page 1

out affecting existing services.

Sitting in his office, wearing a business suit with a Save the Children necktie, patterned with a colorful brood of young people, Finke said the work of JFCS is about “trauma-informed services.”

Trauma is a misunderstood term, he said. It doesn’t just mean victims of accidents and shootings seeking treatment at a hospital ER.

Trauma means much more: refugees rebuilding their lives in a new country, people who have lost their jobs and must reinvent themselves, grown children caring for aging parents, even people dealing with social justice issues or coping with stress brought on by a steady stream of negative TV news.

“Trauma impacts who you are and how you operate,” Finke said. “It’s important to be able to acknowledge that and work through that so you are no longer a victim of trauma.”

Those dealing with trauma are not just the JFCS clients either; they include the service providers.

“A trauma-informed care system does a good job of taking care of its employees; and the employees then, in turn, take care of their clientele,” he said.

Coping with trauma is something Finke and wife Helene, also a psychologist, know about first-hand. As the parents of a special-needs son – their youngest, Max – they have had to wrestle with government bureaucracy to get him the care he needs.

Max, 19, has Phelan-McDermid Syndrome (PMS), a rare genetic condition caused by a deletion or other structural change of the terminal end of chromosome 22. As PMS children grow, they typically have some degree of developmental and intellectual impairment. Most do not acquire functional language, and about 75 percent have been diagnosed with autism.

Though physically healthy, Max understands only 15-20 words, including names, and can pronounce only certain guttural consonants.

That means Max must communicate by other means, using an electronic tablet or physical gestures. Recently, the family had a frozen pizza for dinner, Finke said. “He walked over to the kitchen counter and touched the pizza box [indicating] that’s what he wanted to eat.”

While Max qualifies for a Medicaid waiver, which provides him the services he needs, his parents must reapply every year – a process fraught with pitfalls.

For instance, one year the state lost Max’s file, delaying renewal, but not interrupting services.

Another time, Finke showed up at the Medicaid office to apply for the program wearing a business suit. Because of his appearance, he was told this was a needs-based program, and he would not be approved.

Both experiences shed light on people who need government assistance. Finke said he has always been fortunate to hold jobs where he could take time to look after his family. JFCS clients are not

always so lucky.

“A lot of times, those who are hourly employees don’t have an understanding boss,” he said. “I recognize how fortunate I am, but I also recognize that I’m not that different, and I think that is true of all of us. We’re really not that different from the folks that we serve here.”

Finke said JFCS’s mission as a Jewish agency that serves all of Louisville is reflected in the words of Hillel: “If I am not for myself, who will be; if I am not for others, what am I?”

While he is committed to keeping JFCS connected to the Jewish community, “I think, being part of the Jewish community, we need to be there for the rest of the Louisville community.”

Venturing just once into politics during the interview, Finke lamented the rise of racist and anti-Semitic rhetoric in the country, warning that it could affect how JFCS does its job.

“Unless we think about how to have dialogues about the difficult conversations, and unless we as Jews are participating in those dialogues ... we’re not creating a better world,” he said, “and in my mind, that’s part of our job.”

Finke graduated from Washington University in St. Louis and Michigan State University, where he earned his Ph.D. in clinical psychology. He has been in private practice since 1995.

He and Helene are members of The Temple. Besides Max, they have two other sons: Cole and Jacob.

He also co-chairs the Bounce Coalition, a multi-agency community col-

laborative that implements trauma-informed practices in schools, courts, health care systems and other public and profit/nonprofit agencies.

So, his new job fits with his other experiences.

“I’ve always been about working with part of the population that is underserved,” he said. “And as a society we have not done what we can do to help take care of them.”

Asked why he wanted the job, Fink wondered aloud, “Who wouldn’t want this job?”

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NEWS

9/11

Continued from page 1

bands and staples," he said. "We were laddling out water to people."

As bad as the situation was, it got worse.

"We stood and watched as people made their decision to jump to their deaths or burn in the fire," Todd said, his voice choking. "I never felt so helpless in my entire life."

Then his third-class machinery technician collapsed into the fetal position. His wife was supposed to have been in the towers that morning, applying for a job.

"Unfortunately, we needed all hands on deck and I had to motivate the engineer, get him off the deck and onto his feet," Todd said. "It wasn't my proudest moment in leadership."

(Todd learned later that the technician's wife had missed the interview and was not in the towers during the attack.)

Eventually, Todd's cutter was relieved, but not done. In the coming days, he said, his crew responded to scores of bomb threats.

As the towers fell, Todd's cutter became covered in small-particle debris, six inches deep in some places.

But the worst part was the "taste" of that day.

"I just remember most breathing in that taste," he said. "Three to four times a week [afterwards], I'd wake up in a puddle of my own sweat, and the first

thing I'm aware of is the bitter taste of burnt plastic, hot metal, cigarette smoke and chemicals."

Weinstock had a different view of the events. The 18-year-old freshman at Barnard College was taking a break from a Hebrew class when someone said a plane had hit a tower.

Recounting the experience during Adath Jeshurun's Sept. 11 Shabbat service, Weinstock said Barnard was eight miles north of Ground Zero. Nevertheless, the instructor dismissed the class. Weinstock and other students rushed to the Jewish Theological Seminary dormitories to catch TV reports. There, they saw the second plane hit.

Soon, a bomb threat was phoned in to the dormitories and everyone was sent to the basement to wait for the all-clear.

The next day, Weinstock and her friends, anxious to help, made a basket of sandwiches and took the subway downtown to pass them out to first responders. They did that for a couple days.

Months later, though, Weinstock was diagnosed with asthma. She never had that condition before and still wonders if it was Ground Zero-related.

After 9/11, Weinstock said, New Yorkers braced for another attack – possibly anthrax, or an attack on the subway. "Any time the train jerked, or stopped, everyone just held their breath."

She also has been subjected to airport security checks, likely because her

name didn't sound "American."

However, what she remembers clearest is the way the attacks have colored everything she knows about New York, a city where she had lived for just one week before the towers fell.

"I really don't have many memories of New York before the attacks," she said. "I really don't know a version of New York without this."

For Engel, the most memorable part of that day was how Jewish Louisville responded to it.

He was meeting with Karen Abrams and Robin Miller at his office at 9 a.m., Sept. 11, when Steve Shapiro came in and told them to turn on the TV.

"We turned it on, and we saw the second plane hit the tower," Engel said. Abrams left for Eliahu Academy, where her kids went to school, while the others sat there watching.

"We were stunned," Engel said. "We were really speechless."

Not far from the campus, Wagner was at a meeting at the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. During a break, she noticed a crowd gathering around a TV at the receptionist's desk. That's when she learned of the attack.

"I remember thinking about my kids," she said, "but as JCRC director, I was also thinking, 'Is there a connection to Israel with this?'"

Engel soon called a meeting of community leaders to decide how to respond.

"We discussed some plans, what we

would do," he recalled. "Obviously, we needed to be in touch with the police, which we were, and we talked about getting in touch with the congregations and really just taking the lead, so the congregations and agencies knew we were on top of it, and we did that."

Those initial meetings – and a later incident in which an unidentified caller threatened to murder Jews – led to the hiring of a security firm.

"I think it (9/11) was a wakeup call," Engel said. "We needed to be a little more vigilant. We couldn't take things for granted."

For Wagner, the takeaway was the way the community came together. "The first thing we did as communal leaders was get ourselves in a room together – that was our first instinct – and figure out who could do what and be there for each other," she said.

The Jewish community gathered for a service that evening at The Temple. The next day, at Broadway Baptist Church, Wagner shared the pulpit with Christian and Muslim leaders for an interfaith program.

She also remembers going home that day, wondering how she would tell her then-8-year-old, Talia, what had happened, but Talia had already heard at school.

"I remember looking at her when she went to bed that night, thinking that her world would never be the same."

No one's world would.



KID'S NIGHT OUT

Have a night out (or in, we won't tell) and let the kids have a night out! At JCC Kid's Night Out, children will have time to eat a packed dinner, play games in the gym, and watch a movie. A movie snack will be provided, but kids are welcome to bring extra snacks.

For dates and registration visit jewishlouisville.org/youth



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When schools are closed, bring your child to play at the J! Schools Out Days are 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. All days include sports, arts and crafts, games, and more. Wear comfortable clothes, a mask, and bring a lunch, morning snack (an afternoon snack will be provided).

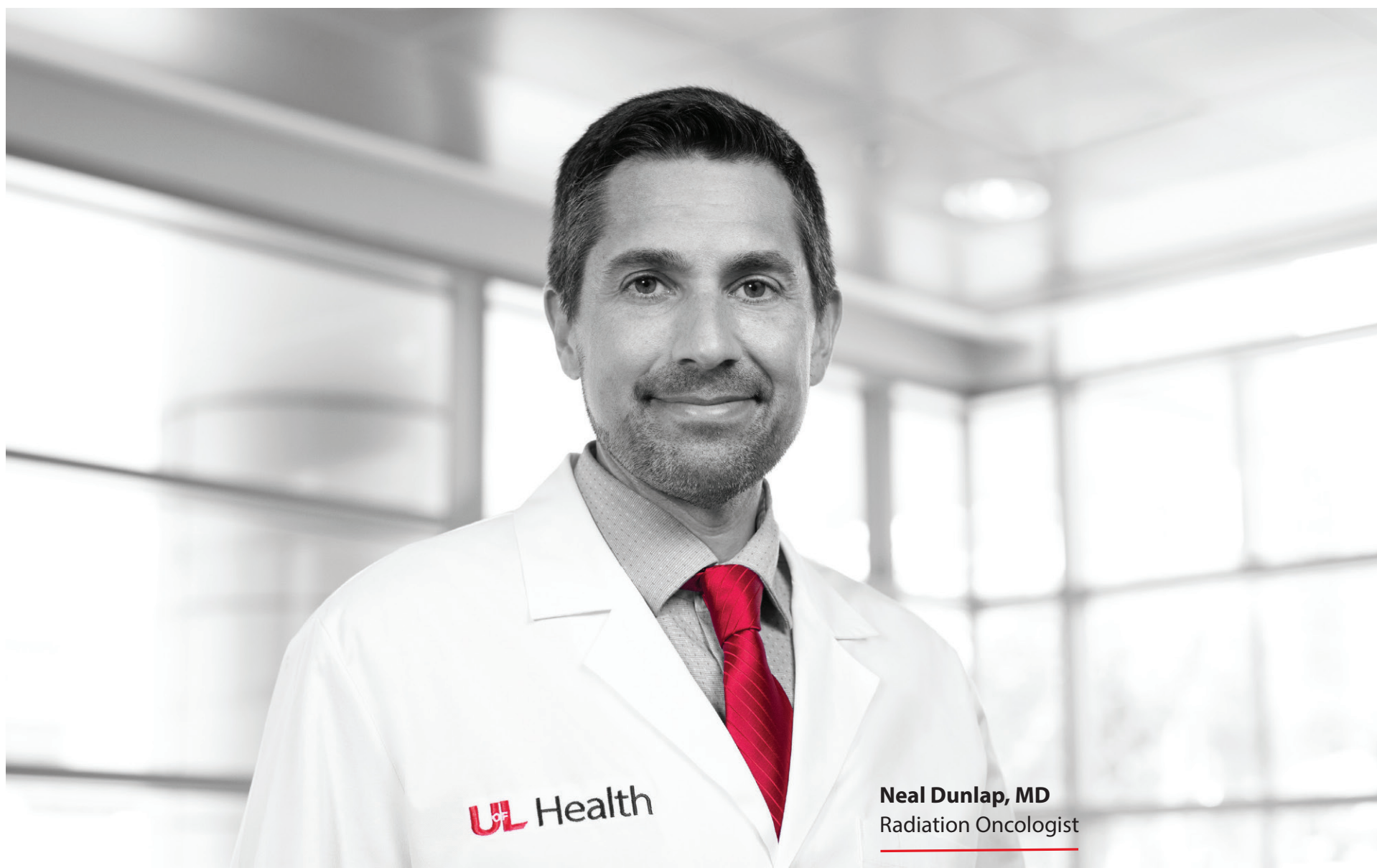
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