

JEWISH LOUISVILLE COMMUNITY



INSIDE:
CenterStage is back
Theatrical troupe names
shows for 2022-23 season
STORY ON PG. 10

FRIDAY Vol. 48, No. 5 | May 27, 2022 | 26 Iyyar 5782

Israel meets Louisville in first-time street fair here



An estimated 2,000 people attended Louisville's first Israeli Street Fair on Sunday, May 15, in the parking lot of the Trager Family Jewish Community Center. With faux lamps and signs bearing the names of actual Israeli streets dotting the pavement, bringing a taste of Israeli street life to the Derby City, this year's festival – the first of its kind – boasted food trucks, a shuk for artists and synagogue giftshops, a DJ and a stage for live entertainment. (Community photos by Robyn Kaufman, see story and gallery, page 12)

Rabbi Rapport, who witnessed Temple evolution for 34 years, reflects on career

By Lee Chottiner
Managing Editor

After 34 years at The Temple, Rabbi Joe Rooks Rapport is retiring in a fitting way: He is being its rabbi.

In addition to being the guest of honor at the congregation's May 21 celebration of his career, he also is slated to officiate at some weddings and b'nai mitzvah – some for families he has known for years.

"It's been a real blessing to be in the same congregation, to raise children, see them grow up and raise children of their own," Rapport said in an interview with *Community*. "That's been the real blessing of being here so long."

Many rabbis do not get that blessing, moving between three, four or even more pulpits during their rabbinates. But aside from four years as a part-time rabbi in St. Louis while earning his Ph.D. at Washington University, Rapport has never served another congregation.

"I call this my first real job," he



Rabbi Joe Rooks
Rapport

said.

And he spent most of it working side by side with his wife, Rabbi Emerita Gaylia R. Rooks, with whom Rapport trained for the rabbinate. They were even ordained together

in 1984 – a first for the Reform Movement and possibly for organized Judaism.

"We were able to work together as a team for the majority of our rabbinates, which is an unbelievable blessing," Rapport said.

Raised in Michigan, Rapport joined the Temple eight years after the merger of Adath Israel and Brith Sholom. Since then, he's seen even more change, not the least being in the past two years when The Temple, like every congregation, has grappled with how to keep Jewish life vibrant during a pandemic. "One of my un-

dergraduate degrees was in computer technology," Rapport said, "but I never imagined that would be so large a part of my rabbinate these past two years of COVID and needing to lead the congregation into an online kind of role."

Rabbi David Ariel-Joel said Rapport, his colleague of 20 years, has been integral during this period, "reinventing ... how to teach, lead services and lifecycle events, providing rabbinical services and creating vibrant and active Jewish life in a virtual world that was forced on us overnight. I could not do this without him as a partner, a colleague and a friend."

A classical Reform congregation when Rapport arrived (he prefers "Southern Reform" – spoken with a drawl), The Temple services were done largely in English with a choir.

That, too, has changed, he said. The choir is still a major component, but he said services have moved closer to the "mainline" of the movement.

The face of the congregation is also

See **RAPPORT** on page 19

Louisvillians join NCJW abortion rally in Washington

By Lee Chottiner
Managing Editor

With *Roe v. Wade* hanging by a thread, the National Council of Jewish Women ginned up support for the landmark Supreme Court abortion ruling by organizing a May 17 rally on the National Mall in Washington.

Some 1,500 people – mostly Jews, but people from all backgrounds – including Beth Salamon and Nancy Chazen of the Louisville Section, turned out, demonstrating support for a woman's right to choose an abortion.

"Energetic, great signs," said Salamon, the state policy advocacy chair in Kentucky, describing the atmosphere at the rally. "Mostly women, but there were men there, too, which was nice to see. It's time for men to realize that this impacts them as well. It's not just a women's issue."

The Jewish Rally for Abortion Justice, as the rally was called, had been envisioned as the closing ceremony

See **NCJW** on page 19

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THE DASHBOARD

Word of the Month

Are curses incentives for good behavior?



D'var Torah

Cantor
David Lipp

Why do bad things happen to good people? Rabbi Harold Kushner wrote a whole book (however slim) inspired, in part, by portions like the one we read this weekend. It concludes the book of Leviticus with a short promise of blessings for good behavior and a graphic series of curses for disobedience.

Reader, beware: cannibalism, diseases, debilitating paranoia, drought, plague, destruction and starvation. Not enough? Look towards the end of Deuteronomy for a far more extensive cornucopia of catastrophe that awaits the disobedient People of the Book.

As a disincentive for bad behavior, these warnings seem to have failed, according to later biblical writings. The destruction of the First Temple is punishment for cardinal sins, those that one should not commit even if one's life is on the line: murder, idolatry and a variety of sexual crimes. The Second Temple is destroyed because of baseless hatred amongst our people.

But, even in biblical times, with the inclusion of the Book of Job, the editors were already uncomfortable with the implied causation of catastrophe by conduct unbecoming a holy people. Rabbi Kushner bases his response to the opening question on his personal experience with a child suffering from progeria and his reading of that oft-studied biblical fable of misfortune.

Still, many rabbis hold that our people's myriad misfortunes over the millennia were the result of our sins, past and present. For individual misfortunes, they tell us to look at our deeds soberly, and, if we can't find reason there, it must be that our Torah study is not up to par with our capacity.

Even after the Holocaust, there were theologians who found fault with our people, some blaming either supporting the founding of the State of Israel or not working hard enough towards that

end. Both Zionists and anti-Zionists were theological justifications for God's inaction as Hitler's hordes descended upon us.

A 600-plus word d'var Torah will not resolve a theological conundrum that has confounded far more brilliant minds than mine. Let me just share my theological response to this portion with the aid of Rabbi Elliott Dorff, who responds to a similar reward- and-punishment text that traditional Jews recite twice a day as part of the tripartite prayer rubric of the Shema.

Rabbi Dorff notes a simple, but important, element often overlooked by those who try to find simplistic answers in ancient texts: tense. These texts are almost invariably in future tense. For instance, "If you walk according to my laws and commands, to keep them and perform them, then...."

So often we try to reverse-engineer God's intent. The text doesn't say, if bad things happen to you, it must be because I'm angry with you. God says you should act in such a way and that, if you misbehave, bad things will happen.

You may argue that this analysis is merely semantic, but I believe Rabbi Dorff is on point. The text we read in *Bechukotai*, and elsewhere, is a warning, an incentive for good behavior, not a diagnosis of our current communal or individual physical, mental and social health.

Further, never assume that anyone who is suffering from illness or bad luck "deserves" it because God clearly doesn't favor them. Trust me, alternate monotheistic majorities have used these arguments against us too many times in the past two millennia. It's a shame that we sometimes believed them.

The curses of this portion of *Bechukotai* are followed by a description of how to evaluate one's worth when designating a gift to the sanctuary. More than one commentator has noted that a searing series of calamities against us for bad behavior is followed by a concrete description of our basic worth as human beings.

It's a lesson we should learn for ourselves. And, extend to others.

(Cantor David Lipp is the hazzan of Adath Jeshurun.)

Snapshots



The Yale Spizzwinks, the oldest underclassmen a cappella group in America, and featuring Louisville's Jake Latts (baritone), sang for an appreciative crowd on Monday, May 16, in the Shapira Foundation Auditorium at the Trager Family JCC. It was the first live performance in that venue since its opening. (Community photos by Robyn Kaufman)



Candles

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

- June 3 @ 8:44 p.m.
- June 4 @ 9:49 p.m. Shavuot
- June 5 @ 9:50 p.m. Shavuot
- June 10 @ 8:48 p.m.
- June 17 @ 8:50 p.m.
- June 24 @ 8:52 p.m.

Contacts

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

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

Not getting your paper? Want to subscribe? Putting your subscription on

hold? Development Associate Kristy Benfield can handle all circulation questions. She can be reached at kbene-field@jewishlouisville.org or 502-238-2770.

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 **Wednesday, June 15** (though sooner is better).

The paper should be in your mailbox

by **Friday, June 24.**

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

Read Community Everywhere...

We have you covered, Louisville – online. *Community* stories are posted regularly at jewishlouisville.org/community/. That also is where you can find breaking news ahead of our print deadline.

Maybe you like the look of a real paper without the, er ... paper. Then check out *Digital Community* at jewishlouisville.org.

jewishlouisville.org/community/community-newspaper/print-version/.

If you read on the run, *Community's* social media is just the thing. Follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/JewishLouisville/](https://www.facebook.com/JewishLouisville/) or on Twitter, [Twitter.com/CommunityLou](https://twitter.com/CommunityLou), for the latest Jewish news from Kentucky and around the world.

Corrections/Clarifications

Have a correction? Send it to Ichottiner@jewishlouisville.org.

In the April 29 print issue of *Community*, a guest column titled "What I can tell you as the Jewish mother of a transgender child" incorrectly inferred that Arlene Kaufman had passed away.

Mrs. Kaufman, past preschool director of Temple Trager Early Childhood Education Center, is in fact living a wonderful life in Louisville with her husband, daughters and their families. *Community* regrets the error and apologizes to Mrs. Kaufman and to her family.

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NEWS

‘Brick by brick, person by person’ Donor wall for Trager Family JCC to reflect Western Wall

By Lee Chottiner
Managing Editor

During his career, Phil Rowland has designed at least 12 “honor walls” – walls of tiles inscribed with the names of donors to an organizations.

But the Cincinnati resident and graphic designer for GBBN Architects has never had a project quite like the honor wall at the new Trager Family JCC, which will be dedicated by late summer.

This wall – floor to ceiling, 12.5 feet wide by 24 feet tall – tells a story.

“It’s such a wonderful story that you can easily understand,” Rowland said. “Some of these walls – and I’ve done them myself – can have more of a generic feel to them.... They will look nice, but when you can add that second layer, third layer of meaning and storytelling, it really helps to have buy-in from everybody.”

That is exactly what he did in designing the JCC’s honor wall.

Taking his inspiration from the Western Wall in Jerusalem, essentially built in three layers over three eras, Rowland has created a design that reflects the Kotel, with larger, darker, triangular plaques at the bottom, much like the oldest section of the wall, built in 36 B.C.E. Smaller, lighter tiles comprise the next layer (8th century



An artistic rendering of the honor wall that will be installed soon at the Trager Family JCC. (image provided by Phil Rowland)

C.E.) with the smallest, lightest tiles at the top (13th century C.E.). Each layer is distinct from the others.

“When you’re looking at the Western Wall ... you can tell exactly where the work started and stopped for the next generation; you see between the size and color of the stones that are used; you can see this distinct leveling,” Rowland said.

“So, when we designed this donor wall, we mirrored that idea to where the first seven rows of these tiles have a different color and a different feeling, and the next four have a different color and a different feeling. But it’s subtle, just like the wall.”

Each of 417 tiles on the wall will

be different, using four different thicknesses in eight different shades of blue and two different colors for text.

“No two tiles will be the same,” Rowland said.

Since the triangular tiles come together to make multiple Stars of David, the wall meshes well with the ceiling, which is designed in the same fashion. The purpose of the wall comes through in the design: No one or two donors built this JCC. “Achievements like this aren’t done by one person; you’ve got this beautiful illustration right in front of you of how it takes a collective group effort to make these really beautiful things like this JCC – the new JCC –

happen.”

Stacy Gordon-Funk, senior vice president of philanthropy & chief development officer for the Jewish Federation of Louisville, said she was “thrilled” with the design.

“Our architects have been the perfect partners, helping us showcase our organizational values,” she said. “One of them is *tzedakah*, our commitment to make the world a better place.”

She thanked the honor wall committee: Madeline Abramson, Sarah O’Koon and Frank Weisberg.

“It’s a honor to recognize our donors,” she said.

A graphic designer for GBBN, the architectural firm that designed the JCC, for 10 years, Rowland has worked primarily on environmental graphic design strategies around wayfinding, signage and donor recognition.

He also founded a series of hand-drawn map installations on display throughout Cincinnati and northern Kentucky, including one in an 800-square foot space.

He called the Western Wall a “great analogy” for the work needed to build something like the JCC.

“It’s brick by brick, person by person, that builds these things, these buildings that we’re going into,” he said. “It took all of these donors, not just the big ones, to really make this thing happen.”

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NEWS

Steamship Quanza remembered

YH program puts spotlights on refugees saved during Holocaust, and today

By Lee Chottiner
Managing Editor

"We used to help refugees because they were Jewish. Now, we help them because we are Jewish."

**– Mark Hatfield,
CEO of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid
Society (HIAS)**

In other words, Jews know what it's like to flee an enemy, having done it many times.

So, nearly eight decades after the end of World War II, Jews have a moral obligation to help those fleeing war and oppression today.

Both points were made at this year's Yom Hashoah program on April 27 at Adath Jeshurun. The program paid tribute to 86 Belgian Jews aboard the Portuguese steamship Quanza who, in 1940, sought refuge in the United States despite the U.S. State Department's efforts to block their entry.

The program also lauded Jews today for aiding those refugees and asylum-seekers fleeing strife in their own homelands.

"We are not the only ones who have been touched by the randomness of trauma and death," said Rabbi Ben Freed, the opening speaker. "Our *zikaron* (memory) should serve as a reminder for us to recognize those who have similar marks, and to do everything we can to help them as they flee their own traumas."

The program screened excerpts from the documentary, *Nobody Wants Us*, the story of the Quanza. Through the intervention of American Jews, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and a relatively unknown State Department official, the Quanza passengers were saved.

Their salvation didn't begin in the states, though.

Filmmaker Laura Selzer-Duny, who created *Nobody Wants Us*, said the Jews aboard the ship fled Belgium after the Germans invaded on May 10, 1940. Many reached Bordeaux, France, where a Portuguese diplomat, Aristides De Sousa Mendes, defied his country's orders and issued visas to the Jews.

"This man was a true hero," Selzer-



Filmmaker Laura
Selzer-Duny

Duny told the audience, "standing up and conforming to what God was telling him to do, what his heart told him to do, and not what the government was telling him to do."

The ship left Lisbon on Aug. 9 with more than 300 passengers, arriving in New York 10 days later, where 196 passengers with valid visas went ashore. The remaining 121 aboard sailed to Vera Cruz, Mexico, where 35 more were let off. The rest – mostly Belgian Jews – were refused entry.

For a time, it seemed as though the Quanza would face the same fate as the S.S. St. Louis a year earlier, when 907 passengers were turned away from Havana and Florida, forcing the ship to return to Europe. The Quanza even docked at Norfolk, Virginia, specifically to take on coal for the return voyage.

While there, though, local attorneys Jacob and Sally Morewitz succeeded in holding the ship in port by suing the cruise line for breach of contract. Meanwhile, national Jewish figures, including Rabbi Stephen Wise of the World Jewish Congress and Cecilia Razovsky of the National Council of Jewish Women, lobbied for the passengers' release.

Their plight reached First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who persuaded her husband, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, to have the immigration status of the passengers reviewed.

A State Department official, Patrick Murphy Malin, was sent to Hampton Roads to investigate. After interviewing the passengers, Malin, defying the wishes of his superiors, finally allowed them to come ashore.

"They all disembarked literally at 11 o'clock at night," Selzer-Duny said. "The National Council of Jewish Women and their families came with their cars and they pulled up to the port in Norfolk, Virginia. ... It's just a great story."

Jeff Jamner, who organized this year's

program, noted the parallels between the Quanza passengers and the people fleeing Ukraine, Afghanistan and other war-torn lands today.

"This relates to our time," Jamner said. "We've seen refugees in our own time desperate to escape. We're seeing them every day on the news."

Speaking of those, refugees, Sara Klein Wagner, president and CEO of the Jewish Community of Louisville, said local Jews have been reaching out to refugees for some time, actively settling families from Syria, Afghanistan and Eritrea.

"There's a common denominator of activism of our Jewish community, whether it's individuals or whether it's organizations, that stepped up and said *hineini* – I'm here to help," Wagner said. "That's still happening today."

The program also highlighted three Holocaust survivors – all Louisville residents – who died this past year: Elias Klein, a renowned research scientist whose team invented the artificial kidney membranes used in dialysis treatment; Gila Glattstein, an Israeli pioneer who cofounded her kibbutz and became a surgical technician; and Fred Gross, a journalist who spoke about his experiences to audiences in eight states

and authored the memoir, *One Step Ahead of Hitler: a Jewish Child's Journey through France*.

"These are giants," said Rabbi Robert Slosberg, paying tribute to the three.

Rabbi Simcha Snaid, in a videotaped message, introduced this year's candlelight ceremony. Eleven candles were lit by survivors and relatives of survivors, with narration done by students from St. Francis of Assisi School.

Cantor David Lipp performed music in memory of members of the community who perished in the Holocaust. He also chanted El Malei Rachamim.

Rabbi Beth Jacowitz Chottiner led an adaptation of the Mourner's Kaddish, which pairs each line of the prayer with the name of a concentration or death camp, a ghetto, or the scene of a modern-day genocide.

In his closing remarks, Rabbi Joe Rooks Rapport reminded the gathering that the act of remembrance is "a challenge to our souls," requiring action to remember lives lost and, through the actions of others, lives saved."

He said it calls on the living not to stand silent in the face of evil.

"This program tonight is an act of remembrance," he said.

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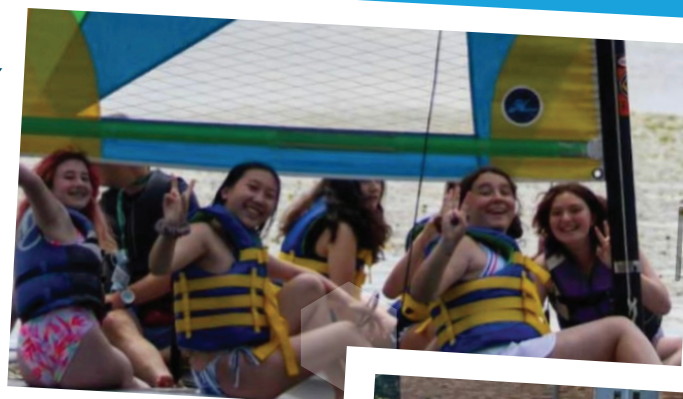
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Community is published monthly by the Jewish Community of Louisville, Inc., 3600 Dutchmans Lane, Louisville, KY 40205-3216.

USPS #020-068 at Louisville, KY.

The Jewish Community of Louisville is a nonprofit organization. \$26 of your pledge is for a subscription for **Community**.

For more information, call 502-459-0660, fax 502-238-2724, e-mail jcl@jewishlouisville.org or check out the website www.jewishlouisville.org.

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COMMUNITY DEADLINES

Deadlines for the next two issues of **Community** for copy and ads are: June 15 for publication on June 24 and July 20 for publication on July 29.

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 accepts letters to the editor for publication. All letters must be of interest to the Jewish community or in response to an item published in the paper. They must be no longer than 300 words in length and signed. Name, address and daytime phone number must be included for verification purposes only.

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



Don't forget the suffering in Africa



Human Resources

Lee Chottiner

Abebe Kahsay believes his people in Ethiopia's Tigray region and the Jews could soon share a deadly resemblance.

Unless things change quickly, both will have endured a time when six million of their people were killed – the Jews during the Holocaust, Tigray today.

Kahsay's home region in northern Ethiopia is gripped by a two-year-old civil war that has claimed thousands of lives. Without intervention, things could soon get much worse.

"There is a resemblance" with the Jewish experience, said the former army and air force commander in the Ethiopian National Defense Forces. "These people are in hunger, these people are in the process of dying because of lack of food, medicine and other services. Unless the international community reacts as soon as possible, it will be a catastrophe."

The 69-year-old asylum-seeker and his family, forced to flee Ethiopia, where his fellow Tigrian officers have been arrested, now live in Louisville, and the Jewish Family & Career Services has been assisting Kahsay in finding work.

That's how he came to my attention. Desiring to speak to the Jewish community about the unfolding catastrophe in

his country, the JFCS put him in touch with me.

Jewish World Watch, a Los Angeles-based nonprofit that monitors mass atrocities around the world, tweeted on May 12 that six million Tigrans (probably more now) were at risk of starvation, despite a cease-fire and promises that food and other aid would be sent by trucks to the region.

That aid has been blocked from getting through, tweeted Samantha Power, administrator of U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). "Progress has been made to increase the trickle of aid previously allowed through," she said, "but we need a flood to make up for lost time."

Specifically, Kahsay said at least 500 trucks a week are needed.

"It is genocide in every aspect in Tigray," he said.

Anxious for Jewish Louisville to know that something just as dire as the war in Ukraine is happening on the horn of Africa, Kahsay noted the long relationship between Jews and Ethiopia. Both are ancient civilizations, he said, and the Queen of Sheba, who visited King Solomon, according to legend, is an ancestress of the Ethiopian Jews, many who live in Israel today.

"I want the Jewish community to stand for human rights and to help these people get food, get medicine, get services," Kahsay said. "I want the Jewish community to be the voice for the voiceless."

The civil war in Ethiopia, which started in 2020, has been a brutal affair. Pitting government forces against Tigrian rebels, it's hard to say how many people

have already died. But an estimate from Belgium's Ghent University says the figure could be as high as 500,000, including 50,000 to 100,000 killed in the fighting, 150,000 to 200,000 dead from starvation and more than 100,000 from the lack of medical attention.

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director-general of the World Health Organization and an Ethiopian himself, has warned that Tigray is on the edge of a humanitarian disaster. "[There is] nowhere on earth where the health of millions of people is more under threat," he said, according to Bloomberg News.

In addition to starvation, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken has confirmed that "ethnic cleansing" had taken place in western Tigray. There are reports of mass graves and bodies being burned in advance of a possible investigation.

Kahsay wants to bring this information to the Jewish community. He still has family in the region, including a brother with type 1 diabetes; Kahsay doesn't know if he's alive or dead.

He understands the world's preoccupation with Ukraine, where eight million people have been displaced, cities flattened and Russian forces stand accused of war crimes.

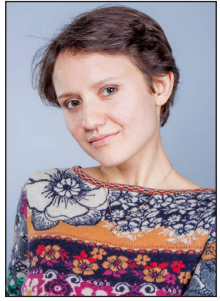
He only asks that we not forget his suffering people.

"There should also be some kind of attention to Africa," he said. "I'm not saying there is not attention, but there's not enough."

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

FORUM

Proud Russian Jew explains why she left following Ukraine invasion



Guest
Columnist

Tatiana
Glezer

BUDAPEST, Hungary (St. Louis Jewish Light via JTA) – It has been more than two months since I fled Russia with my two daughters, a cat and a dog. Like thousands of other Russians horrified by the senseless war in Ukraine, we left with few suitcases and no plan.

The decision to leave my country was excruciating. Our life in Moscow was full and happy. I had a job I loved as the Jewish community center's creative director. My daughters – Varya, 14, and Katya, 12 – loved their school and the many friends they had there. Our cozy flat, with two balconies in the center of the city, was a cherished home. Why would I give all that up? Why would I leave everything I had worked for – and leave my father?

I am still coming to grips with the answer. All I know for sure is that I simply couldn't stay in Moscow. The war against Ukraine, and the accompanying laws aimed at silencing all dissent, broke my relationship with Russia, perhaps forever. Day after day, I was hearing about friends being arrested for

attending peaceful demonstrations. One friend was asked to leave her job after her boss found out that she had gone to a protest. A sociology professor from the university I attended was badly beaten by police for speaking out against the war.

I feared I could be next, or worse, my oldest daughter, who insisted we take to the streets and revolt. I had already signed a letter condemning the war. I had put up anti-war flyers on buildings in my district. I had posted unflattering comments about Vladimir Putin on social media.

At the same time, media from outside of Russia was being censored. People around me feared talking openly on the phone. I was seriously afraid of being cut off from the rest of the world, stuck behind a newly erected iron curtain. I started to feel claustrophobic in the biggest country in the world. I couldn't sleep at night. In the day, it was literally hard to breathe.

All this to wage war against Ukraine, the place where my great-grandparents are buried and home to some of my dearest friends and colleagues. I spoke to the mother of one of those friends on Viber, a secure messaging app, as she hid in a bomb shelter. It was heartbreaking. I love Ukraine and I am ashamed that my country has caused so much pain and destruction.

I decided to leave Russia, despite the many obstacles in my way.

As a result of Western sanctions, I was unable to use my credit card

to buy airplane tickets, book a hotel or do much of anything that might help me escape Russia. International travel was mostly halted. Prices for flights that were taking off skyrocketed tenfold, with demand far exceeding supply.

I stayed online late into the night, desperately looking for tickets to take me anywhere, from Uzbekistan to Casablanca. My friends in Europe and the United States tried to help me, but their money couldn't pay for flights that were no longer allowed to fly.

I decided I might have better luck speaking face-to-face with an airline ticket agent rather than on the phone. After a fruitless search to find tickets, the agent asked to speak to me privately, away from her colleagues. She told me how scared she was because of the war, how hard it was to see so many people trying to flee Russia. She told me how unbearable it was to watch other Russians living everyday life like nothing had happened. Then, she started to cry, and we hugged, two strangers united by fear.

My failed attempts to leave by air increased my anxiety enormously. I bought train tickets to St. Petersburg. From there, I would take a bus to Finland, Estonia or Latvia.

I discovered very quickly that all the bus tickets had been sold out for days. I decided to go to St. Petersburg anyway, figuring I would somehow find a way out, even if we had to walk. Maybe that sounds

crazy, but I was in a state of panic. I was not willing to wait any longer on the chance that Russia might right itself. My kids' futures, as well as my own, were at stake.

With a rough plan in place, it was sad to think about leaving our pets. We have a lovely dog, a gift from my mom who died of cancer last summer, and a cat that my youngest daughter favors. Taking them was completely irrational, expensive and time-consuming, but I decided to do so anyway. It was especially difficult because my pets didn't have international travel documents. Local veterinarians, seizing on an opportunity to make quick money, were charging a fortune for these papers. Still, I had to do my best to obtain them as soon as possible once we arrived in St. Petersburg.

I remember the last hours in my flat in Moscow. I was so tired. I just wanted to lie down on my bed under the blanket. It was three hours before the train departed. I looked around at my things – my bookshelves, a table, a favorite painting on the wall. They looked as they always had, like everything was still OK, still normal.

See **GLEZER** on page 19

Letters to the Editor

Shaky ground for synagogues?

I am concerned that the future of Conservative Judaism is on shaky ground in Louisville.

It is obvious to anyone who has gone to shul in the last few years that we have aging Conservative congregations. In fact, according to numbers provided to me by Adath Jeshurun, 70 percent of its congregants are over 60. Loss from death outnumbers new members 2 to 1. I presume that demographics at Keneseth Israel are similar. At the end of 2021, AJ had 406 members, and KI had 260, they said. The old cultural differences will soon have died out. At least, for most of us.

Members from both congregations agree that merger is inevitable. What are we waiting for? If something is not done soon, one or both congregations may not exist. Is that fair to future generations of Conservative Jews?

If for no other reason, the financial numbers make the decision easy. Merge the two congregations into one building and build an income-producing facility on the grounds of the other building. The staff could be cut in half; the overhead would be cut in half, and only one rabbi and one cantor would be needed. This action would increase the life of one

solid congregation, and Conservative Judaism, for years.

The real problem now is that both congregations have hired new rabbis in the past 12 months. Maybe we could work around that, but how long do we keep spending twice the money that we need to and risk the demise of one or both? Let's think long term for the sake of Conservative Judaism. Let's have this conversation now.

Chuck O'Koon
Louisville

A joint response from AJ and KI

We appreciate Chuck's passion for Conservative Judaism, which we share as well. On paper, mergers look practical. In actuality, mergers are very complicated.

Adath Jeshurun and Keneseth Israel have discussed the possibility of merger numerous times over the past few decades. In every case, the outcome was a preference to maintain separate synagogue communities. Members of both synagogues have ties to their spiritual homes. This includes generational connections, familiar traditions, pride in their building, relationships with clergy, bonds with

fellow members and memories of many joyous occasions.

In 2019, the Louisville Council of Jewish Congregations, in conjunction with the Jewish Heritage Fund for Excellence, embarked on a sustainability study by the Rosov Consulting Firm. The issue of a possible merger was discussed. The consultant's response from the report stated:

"We understand that each congregation has a unique culture and history, and simply merging those of like denominations is not the only – or the best – solution for this sustainability challenge."

Chuck's letter states, "The real problem now is that both congregations have hired new rabbis in the past 12 months." We don't view the hiring of new clergy as a "problem." In fact, we view this as a wonderful opportunity to energize Conservative Judaism in Louisville.

With the arrival of Rabbi Ben Freed at KI and Rabbi Joshua Corber at AJ, we feel doubly blessed by this dynamic new infusion of youth, energy and ideas. We are very excited about the future of Conservative Judaism in Louisville.

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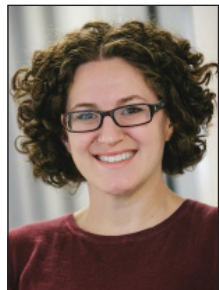
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FORUM

Jewish tradition 'permits' abortion; not enough if you believe in bodily autonomy



Guest
Columnist

Michal
Raucher

Recently, Israeli Health Minister Nitzan Horowitz responded to the draft U.S. Supreme Court opinion that would overturn *Roe v. Wade*: "A woman's rights over her own body are hers alone."

It might seem odd that the Israeli health minister was commenting on American abortion law, but his response, contained in a tweet, addresses a theme common to the abortion discussion in Israel and America that I research as an ethicist and scholar of reproduction among Jews.

In the 1970s, the Israeli Knesset debated the legalization of abortion. After several years of discussions, it ultimately passed a law that permitted abortion in certain circumstances: 1) If a woman is younger than 17 or older than 40; 2) when pregnancy results from rape, incest or extra-marital relations; 3) under the possibility that the baby will be born with a physical or mental deformity; and 4) when the continuation of the pregnancy could endanger a woman's life or mental health. This law allows for certain abortions to be performed until the 39th week of pregnancy.

When I teach Americans about abortion law in Israel, they often express shock that Israel seems much more progressive than America. That's because their frame of reference for religion and abortion is a particular

strain of American anti-abortion Christianity. My students – college-aged and adult, Jewish or not – are surprised to see a country so strongly influenced by religion that is not opposed to abortion.

Yet in one important way the Israeli and American attitudes toward abortion are similar. They both reflect the fundamental assumption that abortion is wrong, and one must have a "good enough" reason to do something that is otherwise wrong. This is called the justification approach to abortion. Certain abortions are justified, while others are not. The justification approach to abortion also assumes that women were meant to be mothers. As a result, not wanting to be pregnant for nine months, give birth or raise a child are not considered good enough reasons to get an abortion.

To qualify for an abortion that is legal and paid for by the state, Israeli women must sit in front of a committee and tell it why they are requesting an abortion. Although 98 percent of abortion requests are approved, the law reflects the belief that women cannot or should not make this decision on their own.

Consider the case of a pregnant 24-year-old married woman who is pregnant from consensual sex but does not want to be pregnant because of the potential harm to her career. Or a 35-year-old married *haredi* (ultra-Orthodox) woman who has eight children and who simply cannot care for one more. In Israel, both women must lie or otherwise mislead the committee to get their abortions.

Horowitz opposes these committees and has been advocating to get rid of them, at least through the first trimester. He says that women should not need to give any reason for their request, and that nobody should have to determine whether their request is valid.

While we don't have these committees in the U.S., we have heard a lot this month about the legislation that many states have developed, each providing different circumstances under which they would permit abortion. Some say that abortions will only be permitted if the woman's life is in danger. Others allow abortion after rape or incest. And, of course, one's ability to terminate a pregnancy is already limited by where one lives, how far along one is in pregnancy and the financial resources one has available.

Well-meaning Jewish groups often draw on rabbinic sources to claim that Judaism is supportive of abortion rights. Unfortunately, here, too, we see the justification approach. Last week, in a statement, the Orthodox Union explained that it cannot support an "absolute ban" on abortion because Jewish law requires abortion when "carrying the pregnancy to term poses real risk to the life of the mother." This popular argument is commonly also heard among more progressive Jewish groups.

But when you hear that "Jewish law permits and sometimes requires abortion," you must also listen to the assumption underlying this statement: Women do not have the bodily autonomy to make that decision on their own. Jewish law must permit it – and sometimes demands it, regardless of what a woman prefers. These statements, often used to express support for abortion rights, are ultimately stymied by the assumptions of rabbinic law, a system that does not support bodily autonomy or the ability to make decisions about one's own body.

The statement by the Orthodox Union goes even further. It also explicitly prohibits what the group and others call "abortion on demand," or abortion because someone doesn't want to be

pregnant.

By contrast, the Reform movement's Religious Action Center bases its position on reproductive rights on "the core belief that each person should have agency and autonomy over their own bodies." Other progressive Jewish groups, including the National Council of Jewish Women, have gone on record highlighting the value of bodily autonomy over reproduction, but too few. Some non-Orthodox rabbis even expressly forbid it.

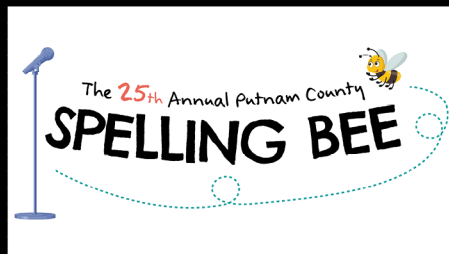
Unless you support a person's right to bodily autonomy, then you are supporting a system wherein someone else determines what you or anyone else can do with their bodies. It does not matter whether that person is a lawmaker, a judge, a contemporary rabbi or one from 2,000 years ago. It does not matter whether that person would permit most abortions or even require some.

There's a temptation right now to say that restrictions on abortion rights in the United States violate the religious freedom of Jews. That's true, to an extent. But a religious argument based on Jewish law and rabbinic texts only goes so far. Those of us who support reproductive health, rights and justice ought to be honest about the connection between that and our rabbinic tradition. I believe in the same bodily autonomy argument that Nitzan Horowitz makes. It may not be an argument rooted in Jewish law, but it is a Jewish argument – and it's time to make it.

Michal Raucher is associate professor of Jewish Studies at Rutgers University and author of "Conceiving Agency: Reproductive Authority Among Haredi Women" (Indiana University Press).



2022-23 Season



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FEDERATION

Buffalo and Uvalde beg question: How can a community be present for mourners?



Sara's View

Sara Klein
Wagner

As we again mourn the murder of members of the African American community following the recent horrific shooting in Buffalo that took the lives of 10 innocent people, the families of those victims and how their community and faith will comfort them in the months ahead has been on my mind.

And now, before the burials in Buffalo have all taken place, our grief cries out for the lost lives of 19 children and two adults who were mercilessly murdered this week at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas.

How do we make sense of such

senseless acts? How do victims' families and communities cope with the loss?

Earlier this year, I participated in my first Melton class on "Love, Loss & Wisdom," which was taught by Melton Director Deborah Slosberg.

Our studies included making sense of suffering, how mourning helps heal and the "Soul's Steps: What Happens Next?"

Designed to help learners better understand moments of anguish as individuals and a community, the six-week course was thoughtful and warm. It provided a secure environment to discuss, listen and understand each other.

We spent time talking about how we should be present for those in mourning, what to say and how to just listen.

It is not always easy to be present for those in need, to attend a funeral or a shiva. Some of us make minyans daily so others can say the Mourner's Kaddish for loved ones, but when

other people are mourning, how do we as a Jewish community ensure we are present and listening?

Losing a loved one is always difficult, and the

tragedies in Buffalo and Uvalde will impact entire communities along with the victims' families. The Buffalo Jewish Federation, our sister federation, has been present for its neighbors, providing support. They have been attending prayer vigils and supporting those coping with food insecurity. (The Tops supermarket was the only grocery store in the neighborhood).

As I contemplate these most recent tragedies and the need for individuals to maintain hope, advocate for gun legislation and find a warm, thoughtful environment to engage in Jewish study, it is good to remember that Jewish education is not just for our children. I am grateful and proud that our community is a leader in adult Jewish education. Melton is a perfect example of lifelong learning,

providing new tools to make sense of the world, of our lives and how to support others.

A quote that I read recently read on positive-judaism.org states, "The purpose of Jewish education today is to ensure that Jewish tradition empowers people to thrive in today's world." We are yet another generation studying texts with both old and modern commentary, taking away what is most meaningful to each of us. I am grateful to continue my own journey with Melton, studying with other adults. I encourage you to learn more at adatheshurun.com/melton. Give me a call or email Deborah Slosberg at dslosberg@adatheshurun.com.

May the memories of those lost in Buffalo and Uvalde be for a blessing.

(Sara Klein Wagner is the president and CEO of the Jewish Community of Louisville.)

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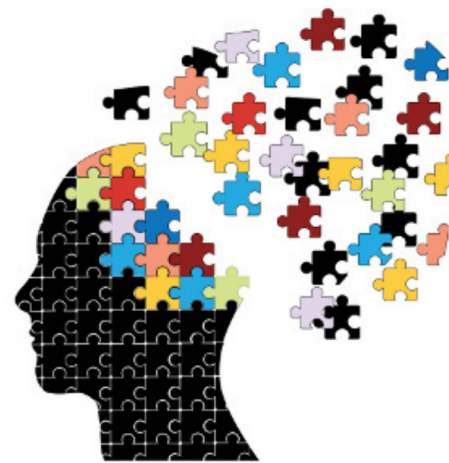
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CenterStage announces 2022-23 season lineup

Kentucky's oldest community theatre program returns to stage producing its first full season since the COVID-19 outbreak. For updated information on confirmed dates, ticket sales and auditions, visit CenterStage's website page (jcclouisville.org/centerstage) and sign up for email updates. All performances will be held in the Shapira Foundation Auditorium.



CenterStage at the Trager Family JCC

Showtime again! CenterStage Announces 2022-23 season lineup

By Sarah Provancher
For Community

CenterStage, Kentucky's oldest community theatrical program, will mark its return to the stage following a two-year hiatus during the COVID pandemic with a retrospective of the troupe's favorite scenes, performances and musical numbers from the past.

CenterStage: A Century of Entertainment is the title of the special production because "it's 100 years in the making," said Erin Jump, arts & ideas director.

The production will be the first of the 2022-23 season, which opens in August in its new home at the Trager Family Jewish Community Center.

"We felt that it was important to look back, as we now look forward, because our CenterStage tradition is so important," Jump said. "We are also celebrating the return of live theatre, which is so exciting to the entire theatre and arts community."

The second MainStage production is *Falsettos*, which had been scheduled

for Fall 2021 and includes the same cast who rehearsed last year. However, the production was postponed because it could not be performed before a live audience because of surging COVID cases. It will now open this October.

The third production, *13: The Musical*, is scheduled for February 2023. Jump said *13* was selected for its relevance to theatergoers of all ages and for its pertinent message for youth today.

Opened on Broadway in 2008, *13* famously featured pop-artist Ariana Grande who made her debut there. CenterStage's production will feature musical performances in an intimate environment with audiences getting to know the private, and not-so-private, lives of 13-year-olds, all experiencing and navigating middle school and the early teenage experience.

Closing the season will be *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, an audience-participation production "because the tone of it is comedic and warm, and it includes audience participation, which is always a neat element." The show was also a runner-

up as CenterStage people's choice award in 2019.

This season's productions all include music by Jewish composers. "Sharing and showcasing Jewish composers and writers is something that is extremely important to CenterStage's mission," Jump said.

Additional events and performances are being planned for this season including *The King's Revue* and *The Diary of Anne Frank*, which will both take place throughout the season.

The CenterStage Academy will also return; its shows will be announced later this summer.

"I'm not sure there are words to express how excited we are," CenterStage board chair Sarah Harlan said of the upcoming season. "We're grateful for everyone's patience and loyalty as we safely navigated through the COVID pandemic while crafting a season that will celebrate CenterStage's wondrous past and foretell the creative, entertaining seasons to come in our new performance space."

CenterStage: A Century of Entertainment August 2022

A look back and reprisal of many favorite CenterStage performances over the years.

Falsettos October 2022

A hilarious, heartbreaking contemporary musical about family, relationships, bar mitzvahs, baseball and AIDS. When Marvin leaves his wife, Trina, and his son, Jason, to be with his lover, Whizzer, tempers flare as problems escalate and everyone learns to grow up.

13: The Musical February 2023

After Evan moves with his mom from New York to Appleton, Indiana, he can't get the cool kids to come to his bar mitzvah. To survive the school year, not to mention, the rest of his life, he must navigate the world of cool kids and nerds, jocks and cheerleaders, first kisses and heartbreak, all the while learning what it means to be a friend.

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee May 2023

A riotous comedy performance with audience participation. An eclectic group of sixth-graders enter a competition, each eager to win for different reasons. With only one speller leaving as the winner, and the losers receiving a juice box, the show is altogether "perspicacious," "jocular," and "effervescent."

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PICTURE THIS: ISRAELI STREET FAIR

Thousands pack the Israeli Street Fair at the JCC

By Lisa Hornung
For Community

A hot, beautiful, sunny day greeted about 2,000 guests at the Israeli Street Fair on Sunday, May 15, at the Traeger Family JCC.

“We’ve been hearing raves all day long,” said Tricia Kling Siegwald, who coordinated the event. “Everyone has been thrilled.”

While the JCC has had Israeli festivals in the past, this one stood out as the largest and most diverse.

“What we tried to do here when we created this event is something for everyone,” Siegwald said. “You look around, you see all these different ages.”

Faux streetlamps with signs bearing names of actual Israeli avenues freckled the parking lot, directing foot traffic to

highlights of the fair, like Meesh Meesh Falafel by Chef Noam Bilitzer. A long line stood at his booth until it was sold out. Bilitzer is formerly the executive chef at Red Hog Butcher and grew up on a farm in Israel.

Rabbi Simcha Snaid of Congregation Anshei Sfard worked with Bilitzer Thursday and Friday in the JCC’s kitchen to make sure the food served from the booth was kosher.

“Next year, we’ll be ready, so we don’t have lines for our falafel,” Siegwald said.

While not all food served at the fair was kosher, it was all vegetarian, including the food trucks at the event, like Spinelli’s Pizza, where one of the bakers entertained the crowd, skillfully tossing and catching twirling saucers of pizza dough.

DJ Aaron Thompson played modern Israeli music, adding to the street life

atmosphere.

At 3 p.m., Cantors David Lipp and Sharon Hordes, and vocalist Jennifer Diamond took the stage to sing Jewish and Israeli songs.

The Star of David Kids’ Zone was popular among families of young children. There were inflatables – an obstacle course and a bouncy house – and a large craft tent that included spice painting, coloring of a hamsa and edible maps of Israel kids made with food.

Sharon Salvatore said she came to the event to honor her “Israeli sisters,” with whom she went on a Momentum trip to Israel in 2019. She said she and her three children enjoyed the fair.

“It’s nice bringing everybody together. This might be the most amount of Jewish people we’ve seen together since we’ve been in Louisville,” Salvatore said. “It’s nice to

have a sense of community because where we live, we’re just about the only Jewish people.”

Zachary Salvatore, 8, said his favorite part was the Challenge Tent in the Kibbutz Hangout, which was set up like an escape room, except that contestants had to answer questions to finish. Zachary said he learned when Israel first became a state.

His sisters, Bella and Olivia, both 11, said they most enjoyed the food and hanging out with people.

Snaid was pleased by the number of people who came.

“This is such a great turnout, he said. “It’s great to see so many people come out to celebrate and to see all the different types of people that are here. To see all the different programming and people coming together, it’s really just a wonderful job.”



From top left: character artist Denny Whalen at work; Jessi Ray Henna creating beautiful henna tattoos on Israeli Street Fair attendees; Meesh Meesh Falafel; Noah Hill holds a custom screen print made by the Steam Exchange; Rachel Goldberg creates in the craft tent; Michael Cohen with Elijah Pedowitz showing off his arm painting; Harper Klein playing in the dead sea mud sensory station; Rabbi Freed at the KI Gift Shop booth; Hannah Doleman and her niece Jo; Tom Frentz, Becky Admony and Karen Benabou at the Israeli Street Fair Shuk booth selling Israeli spices and snacks. (Photos by Robyn Kaufman)



PICTURE THIS: ISRAELI STREET FAIR

From top left: Children show off their face paint by Bohemian Monkey; Three generations of Abramson men, Jerry, Sydney and Grayson; Jennifer Diamond, Sharon Hordes and David Lipp perform together; Girls enjoying some shade and hammocks in the Geo Dome at the Kibbutz Hangout; Aaron and Elijah Pedowitz enjoying the food trucks along Ben Gurion Avenue; Bonnie Toborowsky, Marsha Roth and Sue Levitch at the AJ Gift Shop booth. (Photos by Robyn Kaufman)



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ARTS

'Let There Be Light' a refreshing take on Genesis, but reread the original first

By Ranen Omer-Sherman
For Community

Liana Finck's latest book, *Let There Be Light: The Real Story of Her Creation* is an invigoratingly reimagined Book of Genesis, turning the first book of the Torah into something hilarious, tragic, poetic, mysterious and always rapturously imaginative.

Such is its lasting power that, after reading it, some may find it difficult to ever read the original in quite the same way again.

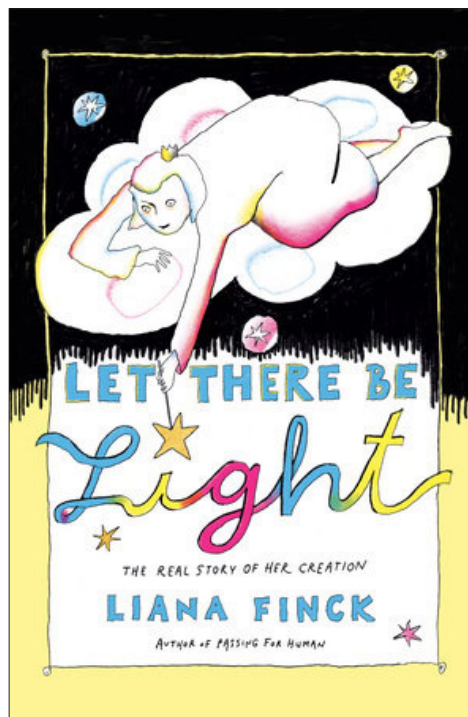
A popular *New Yorker* cartoonist whose previous books include the highly praised graphic memoir *Passing for Human*, Finck is one of our bravest and most idiosyncratic contemporary comics artists. Yet even devotees of her earlier work may find themselves startled by the level of enchantment she achieves here. *Let There Be Light* is perhaps most profoundly an extended inquiry into the nature of creative process, artistic responsibility, and the sheer strangeness of existence. Though biblical literacy is by no means a requisite, readers may wish to reacquaint them-

selves with Genesis to fully appreciate this deeply affecting journey.

Hovering above creation on a cloud, Finck's full-bodied Goddess is much like her human creations: lonely, loving, self-doubting, and, at times, vengeful. Throughout, Finck has a great deal of subversive fun with gender, often in delightful, unexpected ways. It is hard to think of an artist who so brilliantly captures Eve's thunderstruck epiphanic state after eating from the Tree of Knowledge, certainly not with such startling imagery and language.

In another unsettling example of gender mischief, the notorious "begats" sequence, progeny comically erupt from men's bodies, arresting images that cast an excruciatingly satirical judgment on the presumptions of biblical patriarchy.

Finck's stories about the struggle to be guests and hosts on a strange planet are rendered in her spare pen-and-ink style, a deceptively simple approach that captures a sophisticated blend of emotional and spiritual states: vulnerability, otherness, regret, and fierce love. With deep



dives into the human psyche, Finck's artistry feels both raw, intimate and universal. Finck is never merely self-indulgent, so that even when *Let There Be Light* morphs into surrealism, as

with the story of Joseph in Egypt, that shift only deepens the narrative's profoundly poignant impact. A tour de force of feminist midrashic creativity, *Let There Be Light* is brimming with the kind of breathtakingly deep philosophical, psychological, and even mystical insights that rewards repeat readings.

(Ranen Omer-Sherman is the JHFE Chair of Jewish Studies at the University of Louisville.)

Book Review

Let There Be Light: The Real Story of Her Creation by Liana Finck, Random House, 2022, 352 pages.

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NEWS/NEWSMAKERS

Local naturalist, writer publishes first children's novel



The Dragon in My Back Yard, the debut children's novel by Alan Goldstein of Louisville, has just been published.

This 208-page fantasy story is about 11-year-old Josh Draconette, a child of a wealthy family, ignored

for the sake of business. Grounded by the love of nature, he explores his family's vast estate with his friends. When his father starts building a warehouse next to his favorite place, his tear drops on an ancient jade dragon sculpture (a birthday gift from his parents) awaken the stone. Together, they plot and scheme to foil Josh's dad's plans.

Goldstein has been the interpretive naturalist at the Falls of the Ohio State Park in Clarksville, Indiana, since 1993. He developed the paleontology education programs reaching over 100,000 students. Since 1981, he has written more than 150 articles in astronomy, geology, park planning, education, and more. Two won articles national peer awards.

He is a co-author of 10 new fossil crinoid species. Completed but unpublished is, *Earth Heart* a five-book fantasy series that took four years to write. He is the co-founder of the Louisville Writer's Meet Up, established in 2015.

Shimberg named Kol Israel advisor

Rabbi Jessica Shimberg has become a spiritual advisor on the Kol Israel Congregation of Kentucky advisory board.

A 1987 Brandeis University graduate, Shimberg later graduated from the Ohio State University College of Law in 1991, having served as an attorney, mediator, and facilitator of conflict transformation. Studied for the rabbinate at the ALEPH Ordination Program of Jewish Renewal.

The children of the Little Minyan Kehilah

She helped form the Little Minyan in 2006, a central Ohio congregation now known as Kehilat Sukkat Shalom.

Shimberg is a spiritual guide and facilitator. She is a teacher, justice advocate and self-described "community builder."

She has worked for many years, through T'ruah: the Rabbinic Call for Human Rights, and in alliance with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, to address human rights abuses faced by agricultural workers and help grow the food justice movement.

Mazel Tov to...

The Temple's 2021 confirmation class: Ariel Alexis Hatzell, child of Jodi and Tim Hatzell; Violeta Higuera, child of Natalia Mahecha; David Kaplan, child of Faina and Vadim Kaplan; Benjamin Norton, child of Kim and Scott Norton; Elijah Peppers, child of Erin and Justin Peppers; Nicole Scaiewicz, child of Valeria and Riccardo Scaiewicz; Jed Schwartz, child of Rachael and Brian Schwartz; Benjamin Teitel, child of Deborah and Todd Teitel.



“Making music, in a joyful and purposeful way, provides a self-recognition in children that help them to enjoy the act of learning.”

— Dr. Lorna Heyge, Founder of Musikgarten

Summer Session

June 12 - July 24

(no class July 3)

Classes will be held on Sundays at the Trager Family JCC

10:00 - 10:45 a.m.

for children 2-3 years of age

11:00 - 11:45 a.m.

The playground will be available for participants after class.

JCC Member: \$30 per child* | Public: \$35 per child*

*Class fee subsidized by PJ Library of Louisville, a \$90 value. Registration fee includes home materials for each child.

Register at thej.campbrainregistration.com

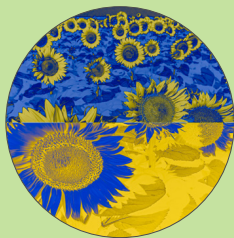
For more information, contact Katelyn Graves, kgraves@jewishlouisville.org



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**Sunday, June 26 at 1 p.m. ET
Zoom**

World Cup
Wishes



Book Club - World Cup Wishes
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P2G@jewishlouisville.org

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AROUND TOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, all events are free and open to the community.)

Adath Jeshurun

Adath Jeshurun and Keneseth Israel will celebrate Shavuot together with a guest speaker, Rabbi Jessica K. Shimberg. The in-person Tikkun Ley'l; Shavuot Festival of Learning will take place on Saturday, June 4, at AJ. Mincha will begin at 5:45 p.m., followed by a dairy meal at 6:15 p.m. Rabbi Shimberg's presentation, "Shavuot in a Shmita Year: In What Ways Can We Better Utilize the Biblical Gifts of Shmita and Shabbat?" will start at 7:15 p.m.; teaching by local rabbis and cantors, 8 p.m. RSVP by May 27 at adathjeshurun.com/reservations.

The first day of Shavuot is Sunday, June 5. Services will start at 10 a.m. at AJ. Rabbi Jessica K. Shimberg's topic will be "See you at Sinai: Who Was Present at the Foot of the Mountain, and How Does that Relate to the Complexion of Our Modern Jewish Communities?" Second-day services and Yizkor will start at 10 a.m., Monday, June 6, at Adath Jeshurun beginning at 10 a.m. Both services will also be live-streamed on YouTube. Masks and proof of vaccination with booster are required for in-person attendance.

AJ minyan services take place in person and on Zoom. Morning minyan is held Mondays through Fridays at 7:15 a.m., and Sundays at 8:45 a.m. Evening minyan takes place Sundays through Fridays at 5:45 p.m. There are no Saturday evening services. Kabbalat Shabbat services begins at 5:45 p.m.; Shabbat morning services, 10 a.m. both in-person and on YouTube. Shabbat services will no longer be shown on Zoom as of June 3. Masks and proof of vaccination with booster are required for all in-person services.

Anshei Sfard

Shavuot will be celebrated at 2904 Bardstown Road with open learning at 12:30 a.m., Sunday; Sachrit at 9 a.m. followed by a dairy kiddush with cheesecake and ice cream; Mincha at 8:30 p.m. followed by Maariv. On Monday, June 6, Sachrit will begin at 9 a.m. with Yizkor approximately at 11 a.m. Mincha will be at 8:30 p.m., followed by Maariv. Yom Tov ends at 10:03 p.m.

Rabbi Simcha Snaid offers weekly classes: Talmud Trek II, 9:30 a.m., Sunday; and Spice of Life, 7:30 p.m., Wednesday. Call 502-451-3122 for details.

Chabad of Kentucky

Chabad will worship at the Jewish Family & Career Services, 2621 Klempner Way, during June and July. Participants will meet in the JFCS boardroom. Services are held Saturday and holiday mornings at 10 a.m. Call 502-235-5770 for reservations. Chabad had been meeting in the old Anshei Sfard building following the April 22 fire that destroyed its center.

"What Makes Jewish Law JEWISH?" a six-part class on Jewish civil law, will be held at the Trager Family JCC. The class will examine when there is a legal requirement to morally reprehensible acts, laws of damages based on a faith in humanity and making restitution based on restoring full compensation to an offended individual. Classes will

meet Wednesday nights in the community room beginning May 25. The fee is \$80, including textbook. Email Rabbi@chabadky.com or call 502-459-1770.

The Louisville Tefillin Club meets Sunday mornings in June at the Jewish Learning Center, 1110 Dupont Circle at 830 a.m. Participants put on tefillin and hold Bible portion discussions over coffee and refreshments.

Chavurat Shalom

Lunch is held Thursdays at noon in The Temple's Heideman Auditorium; the program follows at 1 p.m. In-person participants must be fully vaccinated and wear a mask while inside, except while eating or drinking. RSVP by 5 p.m., Tuesday, to attend in person; contact Sarah at 502-212-2038 or sarahharlan86@gmail.com. All programs remain viewable via ChavuratShalomZoom.

June 2 – Guitarist/singer/songwriter Tyrone Cotton will perform (lunch: hamburgers with all the fixings, baked beans, coleslaw, fresh fruit and apple cobbler).

June 9 – AARP volunteer Deborah Turner will speak (lunch: fried fish, French fries and hush puppies, braised cabbage, mixed green salad, fresh fruit and bread pudding with a caramel sauce).

June 16 – shofar blower and pianist David Shapero will perform (lunch: eggplant parmesan, angel hair pasta with broccoli, Caesar salad, fresh fruit and tiramisu).

June 23 – the Alzheimer's Association will present, "The 10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia;" JCL seniors also will take part (lunch: build-your-own chicken fajitas, taco salad bowls, rice pilaf, fresh fruit and chocolate cake).

June 30 – accordion player Mike O'Bryan will perform (lunch: beef stroganoff, egg noodles, mixed vegetables, mixed green salad, fresh fruit and assorted desserts).

Filson Historical Society

Violins of Hope in Louisville, a new documentary film about the 2019 Violins of Hope exhibition and concert, will have its public premiere at noon and again at 6 p.m., Thursday, June 2. Go to filsonhistorical.org/events/upcoming-events/ for details and tickets.

Keneseth Israel

Daily minyan services are offered in person and on Zoom at tinyurl.com/kiczoom. Shabbat and holiday services are offered in person and on YouTube-Live at tinyurl.com/KICyoutubelive. Go to kenesethisrael.com for times and COVID policies.

Jews and Brews with Rabbi Ben Freed, a weekly Torah portion class, is held Wednesdays at 11 a.m. on Zoom and in person at the Trager Family JCC. Rabbi Freed will also do Jews and Brews: After Hours once a month starting at 7 p.m., June 9, at a brewery to be determined.

Intermediate level Hebrew class meets at 5 p.m., Sunday in person and on Zoom. A learners minyan, which has an abbreviated service, follows at 6 p.m.

Kabbalat Shabbat in the Park will be held Friday, June 10, tentatively at Ho-

gans pavilion (check Facebook or the website for updates). Bring your own dairy picnic. KI will provide desert.

Torah Yoga with Cantor Hordes will return at 6:30 p.m., Thursday, June 16. Some yoga mats are available, but bring your own if you have one.

Big Questions: Jewish Answers, a four-part, monthly class taught by Rabbi Freed, covering contemporary issues of systemic racism, abortion, gun control and immigration, begins at 7 p.m., Monday, June 20.

The My KI Family Gala will be held at 6 p.m., Sunday, June 12. Cocktails, a silent auction, dinner and the program are included. Every Ticket is an automatic entry into the \$1K raffle. Go to kenesethisrael.com/gala for details.

Kentucky Institute for Torah Education

The Chavaya 3.0 will be Sunday, May 29. Starting with a hike to Tioga falls at 12 p.m. a chill, BBQ and bonfire at The Golf House will follow. Transportation will be provided. Go to ChavayaRetreat.Eventbrite.com to register or email Rabbi Zack Blaustein at rabbizb@kentuckytorah.org with any questions.

The Light of Torah class will now be in person at the new Trager Family JCC in the Barbara Brick reading room on Mondays from 7:30 to 8 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. There is also a zoom option. Contact Rabbi Blaustein at rabbizb@kentuckytorah.org to RSVP or for the zoom link.

KITE will conduct its third Dads Trip to Israel from Oct 24 to 30. The trip is highly subsidized by KITE and Momentum. Visit MomentumUnlimited.org/apply-form-man to apply or email Rabbi Blaustein at rabbizb@kentuckytorah.org.

Kol Israel Congregation of Kentucky

Inner Peace for Challenging Times, a communitywide Jewish meditation with Interfaith Paths to Peace, will be held at 9 p.m., Monday, June 13. Reb Brian Yoseph will lead.

Kabbalat Shabbat and Oneg, done through the lens of the seven weeks of Sefirat laOmer (the counting of the Omer) will be held at 7:15 p.m., Friday, June 3, at a private home in the Highlands. The service will be led by Rabbi Jessica Shimberg, flamenco guitarist Paul Carney and clarinetist Dr. Mark Perelmutter. Space is limited. Register at KolIsraelKy@gmail.com or 502-341-1595.

The next Bloomington Shabbat Renewal, live and Zoom will take place at 10:15 a.m., Saturday, June 11. Reb Leon and Jackie Olenick will lead. Register at KolIsraelKy@gmail.com or 502-341-1595.

Temple Shalom

Shabbat services are held in person on Fridays at 6:30 p.m. and on Saturdays at 10:30 a.m. No-Shush Shabbat, Temple Shalom's popular family-friendly service, returns on Friday evening, June 10, with music by Benji Berlow.

Women of Temple Shalom (WOTS) are sponsoring a Holland bulb sale in part-

nership with Temple Israel in Memphis. Bulbs can be ordered now and will be delivered to Temple Shalom in time for fall planting. Buyers will be notified upon their arrival. To select and order, visit tisisterhoodbulbs.com, or email Sandy Flaksman at sflaks37@att.net or Carol Eckler-Ungar at cceckler@bellsouth.net for a brochure. Online credit card orders only.

The Book Club will meet at 2 p.m., Thursday, June 2, at Des Pres Park (weather permitting). Book picks are *A Play for the End of the World*, by Jai Chakrabarti, and *Surprised by God: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Religion* by Danya Ruttenberg.

Fun at the Zoo will be held Thursday, June 2. Attendees will bring their own picnics to Joe Creason Park at 5 p.m., meeting at the Gazebo, then see Wild Lights at the Zoo, one of the largest lantern festivals in the nation. Tickets are \$13.75 per person for Zoo Members (child and/or adult); children 2 and under are free. For Zoo non-members, tickets are \$16.25 per person (child and/or adult); children 2 and under are free. Parking is \$6 per car at the Zoo or walk over from the park for free. Advance ticket purchases are required. RSVP to Slava Nelson at (502) 830-4968 or engagement@templeshalomky.org.

The Tikkun Olam group will participate in the New Directions Housing Corporation (NDHC) Repair Affair on Saturday, June 25. Repair Affair provides free home repair for qualified homeowners over the age of 60 or with a verified disability who own and live in their home. For more information, contact chailands@templeshalomky.org.

The Temple

The Women of Reform Judaism/Sisterhood Gift Shop is open by appointment. Visit its Facebook page at facebook.com/wrjtemplegiftshop. Contact Sheila Lynch, 502-896-9736, Marlene Ornstein, 502-329-2276, or Karen Waldman, 502-425-4360 for appointments.

Adult education continues at The Temple. Monday night's classes are Advanced Hebrew at 6 p.m. with Rabbi Joe Rooks Rapport. Temple Scholars with Rabbi Rapport meets Wednesdays at 10:45 a.m. studying "Jewish Art and Artists." Saturday Torah Study with Rabbi David Ariel-Joel starts at 9 a.m. on Zoom and in person. For the full schedule, go to thetemplelouky.org/adult-education.

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

Rabbi Rapport will lead a celebration of the confirmation class of 2022/5782 during the Erev Shavuot Service at 7 p.m., Saturday, June 4. The Ten Commandments will be read. Rabbi Ariel-Joel will lead Tikkun Leil Shavuot at 8 p.m., the topic being "How did we receive the Torah (teaching) from God?" The program will be live-streamed on Zoom or YouTube. Shavuot morning services will be held at 10:30 a.m., Sunday on YouTube and in person.

Rabbi Ariel-Joel will lead his monthly hiking group at 8:45 a.m., Sunday, June 21, at Charlestown State Park. Rabbi. The event is for all ages, although stroll-

AROUND TOWN/LIFECYCLE

ers are not recommended. During the summer months the hiking group will meet in the morning and during the winter, in the afternoon. The Temple will provide water bottles. Sign up at thetemplelouky.org/hiking-with-rabbi-david.

The Temple Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday, June 16. RSVP at thetemplelouky.org/Annual-Meeting.

Father's Day Shabbat will be held at 7 p.m., Friday, June 17.

The Temple will celebrate LGBTQ Pride Month with Pride Shabbat on Saturday, June 18. LGBTQ members and families will lead services and a video about being an LGBTQ member at The Temple will be screened. Pride Shabbat will begin with a Torah study dedicated to LGBTQ issues at 9 a.m., followed by services to 10:30 a.m. and a lunch catered by Chef Z. RSVP at thetemplelouky.org/pride. The desserts will include WRJ/Sisterhood rainbow cake.

The Temple Brotherhood will go trap shooting for Father's Day at 10 a.m., Sunday, June 19. The group will leave The Temple at 9 a.m. or meet at Indian Creek, 5950 Gun Club Road NE, Georgetown, Indiana). Bring your own shotgun or share with others. Trophies, earplugs, and water will be provided. A safety course will be given.

Births



Hunter Donn Klecner

Gal and Michelle Klecner of Louisville announce the birth of their son, Hunter Donn, born on May 7, 2022. A brit milah was held Monday, May 16, at Temple Shalom.

B'nai Mitzvah

Araya Devoire Trowell, daughter of Kerrie Suzan and Ray Trowell, sister of Kenya Chambers, will be called for the Torah as a bat mitzvah at 10:30 a.m., Saturday, June 11. Araya is the granddaughter of Larry and Barbara Suzan and Carmen Trowell and Johnny Bald

and the great-granddaughter of the late Yetta Suzan and Maxcine Bald.

A seventh grader at Kammerer Middle School, Araya is a competitive gymnast at Kentucky Gymnastics Academy and is the regional floor and vault champion. She loves all things K-pop, dancing and playing with her dog, Pearl. She is collecting items for the Humane Society as her Pledge 13 project.

Weddings

Kate Stein (Davidson) and Corey Stein were married on May 29 at The Temple.

Obituaries



Alan S. Cooper

Alan S. Cooper, 79, formerly of Louisville, died Wednesday, May 11, 2022, in Potomac, Maryland.

The oldest child of Rudey and Rosalie Cooper, Alan was active in high school in Resnick AZA, where he was president. He was also vice president of the KIO Region and District 2. Alan was loved, admired and respected by all his Resnick Brothers, with all of them remaining close throughout the years.

He attended Vanderbilt University, where he became president of ZBT fraternity and created many lifelong friendships. He also graduated from Vanderbilt Law School.

Alan was a "lawyer's lawyer" and a pre-eminent specialist in trademark and unfair competition law. In 1994, he was the special advisor on trademarks to the U.S. Delegation to the Nairobi Conference on the Revision of the Paris Convention, which dealt with international trademark matters.

A frequent lecturer at trademark law seminars, Alan also became an adjunct professor at Georgetown Law School, but practicing law was his passion.

Interested in his family's genealogy, Alan did extensive research on Serey, the shtetl in Lithuania where his maternal grandmother was born. He also interviewed survivors of the Nazi massacre there and contributed information to the Litvak community around the world.

Alan is survived by his two daughters, Lauren K. Cooper (Kevin) of Washing-

ton, D.C. and Jennifer C. Alford (Jon) of Vienna, Virginia; his five grandchildren, Sophie, Rory, Madelyn, Jacob and Maisy; his three brothers, Dr. Barry Cooper (Lynn) of Dallas, David Cooper (Helene) of Louisville and Dr. Mark Cooper (Brenda) of Solon, Ohio.

Alan was married to the late Linda Morguelan Cooper, formerly of Louisville, and previously to the late Maxine Jacobs Cooper (mother of Lauren and Jennifer).

The funeral was held on May 19 at The Judean Gardens in Olney, Maryland. Contributions may be made to the Charles Weisberg BBYO Fund, c/o The Jewish Federation of Louisville, 3600 Dutchmans Lane, Louisville, 40205, or the charity of one's choice.



Linda Cooper

Linda Cooper died Wednesday, May 11, 2022, in Potomac, Maryland. She was 78. Linda was the wife of the recently deceased Alan S. Cooper.

The former Linda Morguelan grew up in Louisville and graduated from Indiana University. She taught elementary school and also became a paralegal. Before re-marrying and moving to Potomac, she raised her family in Yardley, Pennsylvania.

Aside from her love of reading, Linda enjoyed cooking, traveling and experiencing arts and culture. She was a member of several book clubs and enjoyed entertaining at their home. She especially loved spending a few weeks each summer in the Berkshires, where she and Alan would see plays, attend concerts and visit the local art museums.

Linda was a devoted mother, wife, and grandmother and will be missed by her sons, Stuart Klein (Jamie) of Philadelphia, and Randy Klein of Jersey City, New Jersey; her granddaughters, Margot and Ashley; her brother, Dr. Barry Morguelan of Los Angeles; and her sister, Robin Simon (Fred) of Louisville.

In her memory, expressions of sympathy may be made to the donor's favorite organization.

Barbara Helene Franklin

Barbara Helene "Bobbie" Franklin – teacher, volunteer and world traveler – passed away Saturday, April 23, 2022.

Continued on page 18

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LIFECYCLE

Continued from page 17



Chanukah gift.

The Franklin family left Buffalo, moving around the Midwest, until landing in Louisville when Bobbie was 14. She graduated from Seneca High School in 1964, where she was introduced to real basketball.

After graduating from the University of Louisville, she traveled around Europe with friends. Upon returning to Louisville, she began teaching special education in the Jefferson County Public Schools.

She took a job as a nanny for a family in Denmark and became lifelong friends with them. Again giving in to the wanderlust, she traveled to the Middle East, Australia, China, Japan and the Mediterranean.

She was in Greece during a revolution and was evacuated by the State Department to Alexandria, Egypt.

After returning to Louisville, she joined the Peace Corps. She became fluent in Spanish and was assigned to Nicaragua. For the second time in her life, she was evacuated, this time by the Peace Corps after the country's president, Anastasio Somoza, was overthrown.

Bobbie finished her service with the Peace Corps in Guatemala and invited her niece, Jennifer Adams, to visit her there. The two had a wonderful time.

One of Bobbie's most memorable trips was to Russia, where she spent Christmas Eve on a train from Moscow to St. Petersburg during a heavy snowstorm.

Bobbie eventually transferred her talents to the USO and was assigned to the Marine Corps. During her tenure, she lived in Okinawa, where her father was stationed during World War II, Korea and finally at

Manilla, working at the Subic Bay Naval Station.

While in the USO, she organized entertainment for children and young adults and organized celebrity and shopping tours for kids.

She received many awards and grants during her lifetime, including recognition from the Kentucky Arts Council Individual Artists Project, Kentucky Foundation for Women, Louisville Board of Alderman Grant, NEA Project Grant, PTA Cultural Arts Grant, Kansas City Playwriting Award, and Military-Civilian Awards.

She was a member of the Dramatist Guild, Theater Arts Committed, JCC CenterStage and Performing Arts League of Louisville.

Bobbie worked with various theater groups in Louisville, including Actor's Theater. She also worked with JCPS creating writing enrichment programs and multiple non-profits and public elementary schools.

She would visit her Danish family after she retired from teaching, and she traveled to Israel after a bombing there to help rebuild.

Fiercely independent, even after the diagnosis of vascular dementia, Bobbie continued to volunteer with the National Council of Jewish Women and Adath Jeshurun, the synagogue which meant so much to her.

Her neighbors and friends helped so much during these trying times. When it became time, Bobbie entered Nazareth Home, where she received excellent care from a superb and empathetic staff.

Left to cherish her memory are her sister, Amelia "Mikki" Adams; her cousin, Joann Grossman (Stuart Morden); her niece, Jennifer Adams; her great-nephew, Noah Mancuso; her great-nieces, Asher Mancuso and Emily Morden, Jo's daughter.

Barbara's family thanks her friends who helped her through her final illness. With their care and love, her last days were meaningful. Rabbi Robert Slosberg and Cantor David Lipp eased her passing.

A funeral was held Wednesday, April 27,

at Herman Meyer and Son, Inc. Burial followed at Adath Jeshurun Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, Barbara's family would appreciate donations to the Sonny & Janet Meyer Food Pantry; the Humane Society, where Barbara's pets were adopted; the National Council of Jewish Women Nearly New Shop and Adath Jeshurun.

**Lynn Gold**

Lynn Gold, 88, of Odenton, Maryland, passed away on Saturday, April 9, 2022.

Born in Louisville on April 21, 1933, to Charles and Millie (Weiner) Gold,

Lynn is survived by his wife, Rita (Madavietsky) Gold; three daughters, Cindy Gold (John Keimig), Renee Vitilio (Jude) and Marian Hrab (Walter); and a son, Jeff Gold (Laurel).

Lynn is also survived by seven grandchildren: Emily Simms, Valon, Vinny, and Sophie Vitilio (Austin Deppe), Hunter, Morgan, and Margaux Hrab; and a great-grandchild, Kade Deppe.

A funeral service for Lynn was held on April 12 at Columbia Jewish Congregation in Columbia, Maryland. His final resting place is in United Hebrew Cemetery, Arbutus, Maryland.

**Sofiya Borisovna Vilder**

Sofiya Borisovna Vilder, 87, passed away peacefully in her home on Sunday, April 24, 2022.

Born in Minsk, Belarus, on Sept. 1, 1934, she was a beloved wife, mother,

grandmother and great-grandmother. She came to the United States in 1991 as a refugee and fell in love with country, learning English and always maintained

her strong Jewish identity. She made sure to pass traditional values through generations.

A dedicated librarian, Sofiya loved literature, travel, and people.

She was devoted to her family and friends and will be remembered for her kind smile, incredible memory for poetry, making everyone feel loved and her desire to feed all who entered her home.

She is survived by her husband, Zinovi; her daughters, Inessa and Yelena; her granddaughters, Lana, Liza and Danielle; and her great-grandchildren, Lielle, Talia, Caleb and Avi.

A graveside service was held on April 26 at The Temple Cemetery. Arrangements were by Herman Meyer & Son, Inc.

Memorial gifts in memory of Sofiya may be made to RJCF Children of Sderot, 200 Wells Ave, Newton MA 02459. <https://rjcf.com/BostonSderot2022>.

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NEWS

RAPPORT

Continued from page 1

different.

“When I first came, it was much more l’dor v’dor (generation to generation),” Rapport said. “Generationally, a lot of members of the Temple were the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of our founders.”

He recalled the 150th anniversary celebration when the president of the sisterhood, Ann Friedman, from the bima, asked all members who were descendants of founders to please rise.

“More than 100 people stood up,” he said.

“Today, we’re a more diverse congregation, I think..., people coming from other streams of Judaism, people coming from outside of Louisville. And ethnically, we’re more diverse.”

Coming to The Temple after his Ph.D. studies, Rapport taught at the local seminaries and universities as

well as the children, adults and seniors of his new congregation, delving into social justice, tikkun olam and the history of Jewish Louisville.

In other words, he had his dream job.

“The term rabbi really does mean teacher to me, and my teaching from preschool to adult and senior education and in the community has been the thing that has occupied most of my rabbinate.”

One of the great joys of his career was his work with The Temple archives, a job that he plans to continue in retirement.

“I use the archives a great deal,” he said, “to be able to give tours to groups, to use it for research in my classes and to engage congregants and be part of a historical congregation such as ours.”

He’s witnessed much of that history, watching multiple generations grow up at The Temple.

“Children I’ve named, for whom

I’ve also done bar and bat mitzvah or done weddings. Several of the young people who have grown up in our congregation have become rabbis.”

One of those homegrown rabbis was Yael Rapport, daughter of Rabbi Rapport and Rooks, and currently an associate rabbi at Beit Simchat Torah in New York. She said both her parents inspired her career.

“My father’s love and passion for Jewish history and Jewish stories have deeply shaped the rabbi I have become,” Yael Rapport said. “Whether in a classroom or around a campfire, his joy in teaching and sharing these stories is nothing short of magical. Everyone deserves a teacher like my father.”

Rapport and Rooks plan to stay in Louisville now that both are retired, but they will be hitting the road to visit friends and family. Rapport said he may continue performing occasional lifecycle events – especially when requested. He may even find

time to fish, something he enjoyed while growing up in Michigan.

“I’ve been looking forward to his retirement with great anticipation,” Rabbi Gaylia Rooks said. “I know some people say they married for better or for worse but not for lunch, but we love being together.”

In retiring, Rapport urged his congregation to continue to remain “radically inclusive,” not only of communities that haven’t historically felt welcomed in synagogues – LGBTQ, ethnic groups, interfaith families – but of new generations of Jews who don’t make the synagogue part of their lives.

“‘Welcoming’ used to mean our doors are wide open; that was the term that was used,” he said, “but that assumes people are going to walk through that door.... Overtime, we have learned that we have to be reaching out past just having open doors.”

NCJW

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for NCJW’s annual Washington Institute conference. Only a few hundred people were expected to attend.

However, plans changed earlier this month when *Politico* leaked a draft of a Supreme Court decision that would overturn *Roe v. Wade*. Instead of a few hundred, NCJW blanketed the Mall with demonstrators in one of the largest outdoor Jewish events in Washington since the 1984 rally for Soviet Jewry.

Among the speakers were U.S. Reps. Jerry Nadler, Andy Levin, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Judy Chu and Pramila Jayapal; Sen. Richard Blumenthal; Rabbis Hara Person, chief executive of the Central Confer-

ence of American Rabbis; and Dov Linzer, Rosh Hayeshiva of Yeshivat Chovevei Torah.

Participants came from across the country – and even Israel – who used the rally as an outlet to express their outrage and to find intersectional solidarity in their Jewish community.

“Every denomination was represented, from Orthodox to Reform,” Salamon said, “reaffirming that Judaism believes in the sanctity of life, but also believes that a woman’s life is paramount to that of the fetus, and care of the woman is respected.”

The rally comes as many states, including Kentucky, are passing laws that strictly limit access to abortions or effectively ban them.

The Kentucky General Assembly, this past session, passed a law over

Gov. Andy Beshear’s veto that bans abortions after 15 weeks and imposes new requirements for women to obtain abortion pills. Abortion clinics say they cannot operate under the new restrictions.

U.S. District Judge Rebecca Grady Jennings has blocked the law, but it could still take effect, depending on how the Supreme Court rules on a Mississippi law that also bans the procedure after 15 weeks. Many court observers believe the 6-3 conservative majority will use that case to strike down *Roe*, leaving the abortion question in the hands of the states.

The NCJW is preparing for that scenario, establishing in partnership with the National Abortion Federation (NAF), a fund to help women

living in states hostile to abortions access services elsewhere.

The Jewish Fund for Abortion Access, which was set up in May 17 – the same day as the rally. The NAF will use the money to support a hotline to provide information on accessing abortions, assign case managers to women and fund travel over state lines for those who need it.

For now, though, Chazen, director of the Louisville Section, said women must stay engaged and informed.

“We don’t stay quiet,” she said. “We use our voices. We know who we are voting for, keeping our voices heard and keeping the voices part of the continuing discussion.”

(The Jewish Telegraphic Agency contributed to this story)

GLEZER

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I didn’t want to move.

We made it to St. Petersburg, staying just one night with a friend. I spent all my time perusing multiple Telegram channels (a broadcast messaging service), researching the best way to cross the border. We had a tourist visa, which wouldn’t get us very far. Because of COVID, there were special requirements to enter Finland or Estonia. The only avenues for entry were for work, to see relatives or to seek medical treatment. We met none of these requirements.

Luckily, I found a solution. I paid for a full night in a spa-hotel with a medical treatment package in Estonia. I also found someone to give us papers for our pets – at quadruple the typical cost. A taxi drove us to the border. We then crossed a bridge into Estonia by foot.

It was March 8, International Women’s Day, when we left Russia. It was cold and sunny. The sun was shining directly in front of us on

our way to the border. I recalled the famous Pet Shop Boys’ song “Go West” as we journeyed.

The Russian border was no problem. The bridge between the two countries was beautiful. It was already dark and the medieval castle on the bank of Narva, a small Estonian town, looked like a fairytale fortress. The problem emerged on the Estonian side. It turned out it was not enough to have PCR-tests for my kids; border control requested full vaccinations for them. Somehow, I had missed this point among all the other requirements for entry.

The guards on duty were uncertain about what to do with us. We simply had to wait for what seemed like an eternity. Finally, an Estonian policeman stamped our passports. I was overjoyed and relieved. Like magic, the boulder that had been on my heart disappeared. We entered beautiful, peaceful Estonia, got a taxi to our hotel and, finally, slept. I didn’t wake up until the next afternoon.

We needed to get to Tallinn, Estonia’s capital, to catch a plane to Budapest where my close friend from

childhood now lives. We could stay with her until I figured out our next steps. Friends in Kharkiv, Ukraine, despite being under shelling, found us accommodations in Tallinn. With the help of a local Chabad-Lubavitch community, we stayed in a hotel room on the banks of the Gulf of Finland for a few days. The first person we met there was a sweet little girl from Kiev who wanted to play with our dog. She was a refugee, displaced by Russian bombs. The encounter should have been carefree, but we couldn’t help worrying that she or her parents might respond to us angrily once they learned we are Russian.

We are among many Russians here volunteering to help Ukrainian refugees. I am doing what I can but also need to resolve my own situation. My tourist visa expires in June. I need to find a job or academic relocation (I also am a doctoral student). I am also mindful that leaving Russia has been hard on my girls. They need support. Recently, I found my youngest daughter crying on her bed. She told me she misses home and her friends. It broke my heart and made

me question whether I have made the right decision leaving Russia.

Varya is already part of the vocal opposition. She has participated in the demonstrations supporting Ukrainians in Budapest. She and my friend’s kids have made anti-war posters, and Varya has been interviewed in English by the Associated Press journalists.

Both of my girls can continue to study online at their Russian school. While not ideal, this works for now.

A new friend in Hungary recently asked me if I have regrets. It took me only a second to reply that I do not. I know I could not survive in Russia any longer. If I stayed silent about the war, I would betray myself and die inside. If I spoke out, I could lose my job and likely face more severe consequences. Whatever new life I find for myself and my daughters, it has to be better than that.

(Tatiana Glezer is the former creative director at the Ralph I. Goldman Nikitskaya Jewish Community Center in Moscow.)



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