

JEWISH LOUISVILLE COMMUNITY



INSIDE:

Girls field hockey team wins bronze at Maccabi Games in Buenos Aires

SEE PAGE 4

FRIDAY Vol. 50, No. 1 | January 26, 2024 | 16 Sh'vat 5784

When talking to children about war, questions often have no easy answers

By Andrew Adler
Community Editor

A few days after October 7, Ory Rosin, Laura Milo and their seven-year-old son, Galil, were bicycling in their northern Israel town of Akko when the sirens sounded. It was a long way back home, and Galil could barely keep up with his parents as the alarms grew ever more persistent.

"We had to grab him, and it made everything very bad," recalled Ory Rosin, contacted via Partnership2Gether. "It was very traumatic for him."

It turned out to be a false alarm – no Hezbollah rockets were headed their way – "and we told him, but that didn't make him much calmer," his father says. "And since then, he has been asking wherever we go and wherever we are, 'Where do we go in case of an alarm? What happens if I'm in the shower? What happens if I'm sleeping?'"

The experience raises a fundamental question: How should adults talk to children about war and other highly fraught subjects? It is a query with decidedly few clear answers, though resources like Jewish Family & Career Services can offer valuable perspectives.

"Usually when they start a conversation like that, the first question is, 'What have you heard,' because that gives you some information as to what they already know," advises Clint Nowicke, a Louisville clinical psychologist who specializes in counseling children. Far

better for a trusted adult to acknowledge difficult issues in a child than pretending they don't matter, Nowicke advises.

"Research shows that cocooning, which is when parents try to block out any and all instances of media, doesn't work," he says. "It actually makes the kid more anxious because suddenly it's become a forbidden topic. Whereas if you don't do the cocooning, and don't linger on it, that's the most effective way to address things like war with kids."

"So maybe you're flipping through the news, and they start talking about it. You don't immediately change the channel and say stuff like 'Don't look at that!' Just act like it's part of the day," Nowicke says. "And if they do have a question, they'll ask. That's where you can ask them, 'How do you know about what's going on?' Or 'What are your thoughts on it?' Basically, the younger they are, the less information they need and the less media they need to have access to."

If there is one saving grace along these lines regarding elementary school-age



Seven-year-old Galil Rosin – at left wearing a maroon shirt – is pictured here with some of his second-grade classmates at the Hareches ("The Mountain Range") school, located in Lavon, a community settlement in northern Israel, slightly more than 13 miles from the Lebanese border. (Photo courtesy of Ory Rosin)

children, it's that most of them don't yet have smartphones. Children under 10 still tend to rely on their parents, or perhaps another trusted adult figure, as the principal sources for objective information about difficult topics. A key imperative, Nowicke emphasizes, is to cast oneself as a reassuring presence -- especially with a subject as sensitive as the war in Gaza.

"For some kids, everything in the world is scary and they're going to react to anything and everything they hear about," Nowicke says. "Other kids are pretty good at compartmentalizing and recognizing that it's literally on the other

See **TRAUMA** on page 27

Annual Campaign's Super Sunday wants you to 'Answer the Call'

By Andrew Adler
Community Editor

There's lots of energy associated with the Jewish Federation of Louisville's Annual Campaign, and nowhere is this more apparent than on Super Sunday.

This year's telethon gets under way Sunday, Feb. 4 at 10 a.m., when a cadre of volunteers will gather at the Trager Family JCC to work the phones on behalf of the 2024 campaign.

"Super Sunday is the community's day," says Sara Klein Wagner, the Federation's president and CEO. "There's always buzz in the room. And there are people who appreciate that a volunteer reached out to them – that they're part of the Super Sunday collective."

It's a blend of pacesetting and practicality. "Our volunteers are incredible," Wagner says. "But we don't have enough of them to literally meet face-to-face with every single donor. So Super Sunday, for decades, has been a space where people are willing to give their time to help make sure that everyone's included in the campaign, where we try to have as many personal conversations as we can."

"I think a lot of people want to give – they just want to be asked," says Beth Salamon, chair of the Jewish Community Relations Council and an unabashedly enthusiastic Super Sunday volunteer.

This isn't a matter of cold calling – quite a few people on the other end of the phone

See **SUPER SUNDAY** on page 26

Cue the popcorn: the 26th Annual Louisville Jewish Film Festival is ready to roll

By Andrew Adler
Community Editor

Question: Where can you laugh, cry, discover, debate, sip some bourbon, hear actor Saul Rubinek speak trippingly in Yiddish, and – if you're lucky enough – snare a Golden Ticket to what may be Louisville's most acclaimed new restaurant?

Answer: the 26th Annual Louisville Jewish Film Festival.

This year's edition offers no fewer than 17 films and related special events – live

and virtual – spread over the course of 16 days. By any measure, it's a heady declaration of genre shapeshifting.

"What this festival is about is showcasing, educating, entertaining, enriching and building bridges" says Tricia Kling Siegwald, Senior Director of Festivals & Special Projects at the Trager Family JCC. "So our mission is to get this out into the community."

The festival opens Saturday, Feb. 3 at the Trager Family JCC with a reception and live showing of "Remembering Gene Wilder," director Ron Franks' affectionate

documentary about the star of such films as "The Producers," "Blazing Saddles," "Young Frankenstein," and "Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory."

"Everyone loves Gene Wilder," Siegwald says. In that spirit, "we're going to have a Willy Wonka theme with treats and light hors d'oeuvres. Everyone who walks in will get a little candy bar with a Golden Ticket, and someone will win a gift certificate" to MeeshMeesh, Israeli-born chef Noam Bilitzer's lauded NuLu restaurant.

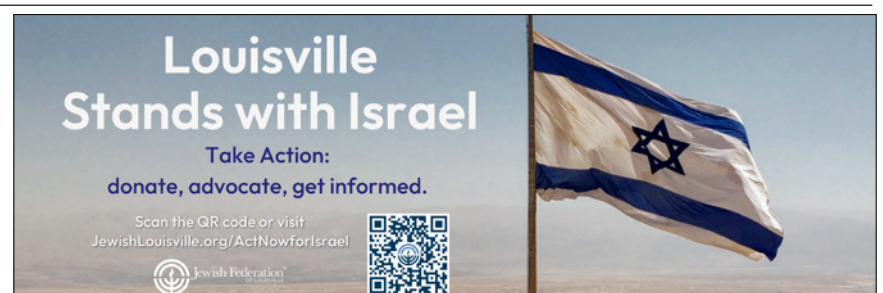
The evening will also include a



recorded cameo appearance by comedian Ariel Elias, who'll talk about what the festival describes as "the value of humor, especially in tough times."

This opening event is sponsored by

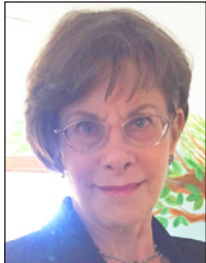
See **FILM FESTIVAL** on page 8



THE DASHBOARD

Word of the Month

Ruminations on finding holiness in the gloom of winter



D'var Torah

Rabbi Laura Metzger

Maybe the sun is shining while you are reading this. Maybe not. It's raining today as I write. All the past week, the sun has remained muted behind a scrim of gray. The days have been alternating between frigid and soggy. The energy is sapped out. Like the bears and squirrels, warmth and vigor are hibernating and will return, eventually.

It's easy to feel exhilaration after a hike to the top of a sunny trail, not so much after a slog in the dismal cold.

One can sink into it, turn on the television, burrow into that deep couch and try to wait it out. As Irish poet John O'Donoghue wrote:

"This is the time to be slow,
Lie low to the wall
Until the bitter weather passes."
One can resist the sleepy pull to hunker down, and stride out with purposeful pride. Long walks are good for perking up one's energy. After all, as the Danes say, there is no bad weather, only inappropriate clothing.

One can ditch the whole scene and, like hummingbirds, head south for the winter. Seek the sun and revel in it. If you can. While you can.

I've tried them all. Each has its satisfactions. I propose, though, another approach - finding the holiness.

When you go outside, look up. The trees have shed their veil of leaves, and now the bared branches let us see the sky. It might be gray today, but the sunlight is dimmed, not gone.

The earth as it is in winter seems cold. It is cold. It seems barren, but that it is not. Cold earth, snow covered or sheltered by dead leaves and brush, protects seeds that fell during the autumn or were buried and forgotten by burrowing animals. Those very seeds hold the germ of growth. After a chilling season, with spring rain, they will swell and sprout. Some will survive and

grow. Life is there, waiting, preparing. Holiness is there, if you see it, if you look for it, if you recognize it.

This winter month - January in common parlance, Sh'vat in Jewish time - holds another opening to holiness. If, while walking, you look closely at the branches, you'll see buds at the tips. Those fuzzy little pointed ovoids are waiting, ready for the days to lengthen, when they will push open and invite the sunlight in, and as the weather warms, they will blossom.

And if going outside is too burdensome, the Jewish calendar itself will let us know the trees are preparing for spring. Tu B'shvat - January 25 this year - comes just as the sap begins to rise in the trees. Scientifically accurate or not, that's what Rashi says and I choose to accept and celebrate it. Yes, that first hint of spring begins in the depths of cold, gray winter. Though we cannot see it, life stirs, prepares, rises.

I've said and taught that religious experience isn't in the poetry of the prayer or the beauty of the sunrise. It's in our interaction with them. The prayerbook isn't the prayer; it's a route to prayer. The sunrise is a miracle only when you gasp in awe at seeing it.

So to take us one step farther along in finding the holiness, we can reach outward, connect. Margaret Renkl wrote in her New York Times column this month:

"To make it through the gathering disquiet, I will need embodied connection. ...

I will need to seek comfort in the warmth of others this year. Whenever the cold creeps in, wherever the dark night pools, I will need to look for others. I will need not pixels but voices. Not distances but reaching hands."

And there we have it. The holiness, the healing of wholeness, is there if we look up toward the sky, gaze deep into what the earth holds, and reach out to other humans in shared need and warmth. Connection and the realization that we can connect, that's where holiness waits. In winter. And really all the time.

Rabbi Laura Metzger is a wise elder, micro-farmer, and pen-and-ink artist.

Snapshots



Children from infants to four-years-olds enjoying a Musikgarten session at the Trager Family JCC. Musikgarten exposes young children to folk, classical and popular music in a hands-on, nurturing format designed to stimulate their senses and pave the way for a life-long joy of all things musical. (Photos by PJ Library)

Candles

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

- Feb 2 @ 5:48 p.m.
- Feb 9 @ 5:56 p.m.
- Feb 16 @ 6:04 p.m.
- Feb 23 @ 6:11 p.m.

Contacts

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

Send it along to *Community* at **community@jewishlouisville.org**.

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all circulation questions. She can be reached at **gshoemaker@jewishlouisville.org** or 502-238-2770.

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

Deadlines

Got a news item for *Community*? Deadlines matter, especially for newspapers. Send in your news by **Monday, February 12** (though sooner is better).

The paper will be published on **Friday, February 23**.

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

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Corrections/Clarifications

Because of a transcribing error, last month's story about Temple Shalom intending to put its existing building on the market and move to the Trager Family JCC included a reference to a "Division Committee" that should have

read "visioning committee." Also, an earlier proposal, that was said to have split the congregation 50-50, was in fact defeated by a significant margin. Have a correction? Send it to **community@jewishlouisville.org**

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NEWS

Federation's Abigail Goldberg coaches girls field hockey team to a bronze medal at Pan American Maccabi Games in Buenos Aires

By Abigail Goldberg
Guest Columnist

Recently I had the wonderful opportunity to travel to Buenos Aires, Argentina with Maccabi USA for the XV Pan American Maccabi Games – which ran Dec. 27-Jan. 5 -- coaching the Under-16 Field Hockey team. The athletes on this team were from all over the U.S. but had two fundamental qualities in common: their Judaism and their love for field hockey.

I share those passions. I feel incredibly fortunate to have been surrounded by coaches, athletes and managers from all over the world with the same love of sports, traveling, and Jewish peoplehood. Rose Geller and Sadie Hyman, like me both from Louisville, were two of the 13 athletes that I had the pleasure to coach in Buenos Aires.

"What I imagined would be a fun way to meet new people and visit a new country over winter break turned into an experience of a lifetime," Rose says. "Staying in a hotel with 800 Jewish athletes from all over the United States and meeting new players from all over the world who share

our religion was amazing. It was like summer camp for athletes -- only better. The sportsmanship, friendships, and culture Maccabi USA exemplified was an experience that I will forever be grateful for."

Putting my feelings about this trip into words is difficult. Perhaps my most overwhelming feelings are gratitude and Jewish pride. The Maccabi experience was truly life changing.

I participated in Maccabi as an athlete years ago, and now I can proudly say, as a coach. The field hockey experience in Argentina was competitive, but always very welcoming. We competed in five games against different Argentinian teams -- we played very well and came home with a hard-fought bronze medal. I love my athletes who shared this experience with me, while I met some amazing people from across the U.S. and the world. I am looking forward to seeing everyone again at the 22nd Maccabiah -- July 8-22, 2025 -- in Israel!

Abigail Goldberg is Teen Director at the Jewish Federation of Louisville.



Abigail Goldberg (rear row at far right) with the under-16 Girls Field Hockey Team who competed at the 2023 Pan American Maccabi Games in Buenos Aires, Argentina. (Photos provided by Abigail Goldberg)



Pictured (L-R): Members of Team USA pictured at the 2023 Pan American Maccabi Games in Buenos Aires, Argentina.; Lucia (left), an athlete from Argentina, and Rose Geller (right) traded uniforms with each other.; Abigail Goldberg (at center) coaching members of the under-16 Girls Field Hockey team during the 2023 Pan American Maccabi Games in Buenos Aires, Argentina. (Photos provided by Abigail Goldberg)

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GLOBE

When Elie Wiesel came to my summer camp, and what he taught me about speaking the unspeakable

By Rabbi Diane Elliot
JTA



Eli Wiesel

It was August 1966, the summer before my senior year of high school, and I was attending a Reform movement summer camp in Wisconsin when Elie Wiesel came for a visit.

Wiesel's "Night," a spare, searing memoir of the 11 months he spent in Auschwitz and Buchenwald, had been published in English just a few years before. Now Wiesel would come to a different kind of camp to meet with a bunch of American high-schoolers to get a taste of our experience and offer us a window into his.

The day of his arrival, I saw him from afar walking with the rabbis, a thin, dark-haired man, chest concave — enwrapped, it seemed to me, in a mist of sadness, not fully of this world. I had not yet read Night, but I knew that he had lived through something unimaginable, and I was both drawn to him and vaguely horrified, as if I were about to approach someone bearing a grave, open wound.

That afternoon we sat rapt, packed

into the airless Quonset hut that served as our social hall, listening to Wiesel describe what he endured and barely survived some 20 years earlier, when he was the same age as his audience. He spoke in a low voice, devoid of affect. I don't remember the particulars, but I can still feel the reverberations in my body. You could have heard a pin drop as we strained to understand his Romanian-Yiddish accented English.

I had been asked to write a poem expressing the essence of philosopher Martin Buber's concept of I and Thou, the idea that one may experience the divine by being wholly present with another. That night I read my poem during the evening service in our outdoor chapel, stars shimmering above the treetops. Wiesel sat quietly at one end of a wooden bench, folded into himself. As the service ended, he approached me, gripped my arm with a ferocious strength and said with quiet intensity, as if to emboss the words on my soul, "Dat vas veddy gud." Thrilled, I ran off by myself to lie beneath the stars and savor his praise.

I wonder what it must have been like for this European refugee, a survivor destined for greatness as a writer, speaker, teacher, activist and eloquent witness to the destruction of European Jewry, to encounter a group of well-fed, comfortable American teenagers, enjoying our

privileged suburban lives, just waking up to the racial injustices in our own country and to the war gathering steam in the jungles of southeast Asia, but mostly oblivious to the suffering in so much of the world, even to the traumas embedded in our own lineages.

For me, meeting him was an initiation, a window into a world of religious piety, human suffering and courageous resilience. I sensed in him a kindred poet-mystic, as perhaps he did in me. At his request I sent him my Buber poem and others. He sent back notes of encouragement, which I keep in a manila folder marked "Historical Materials," and which I read from time to time, a memento of my younger yearning self, reaching for a connection backward in time, outward to the world, and inward to my own soul. Perhaps Elie Wiesel would have been less surprised than I to find myself, some 40 years later, being ordained as a rabbi.

I have often reflected on the 10 years it took Wiesel to begin to write or speak about the horrors he experienced. Maybe like Moses, he had to spend time in the wilderness tending other flocks before the call to speak for the living and the dead flamed up in him like a burning bush, unquenchable. Perhaps his heart still needed to hold on to the boy he had been before the war, measuring the weight of his anger, shame and grief

before he could speak the unspeakable.

How much longer has it taken a shocked humanity to begin to process those devastating years of the Holocaust. Two decades of relative silence gave way to what has become, more than 75 years later, a flood of memoir, film, poetry, fiction, choreography, museums and monuments, mostly created and curated not by those who lived it, but by their children and grandchildren. It has taken lifetimes — generations of slow digestion and gradual openings of heart and mind.

How much time, how much holding does it take for a collective nightmare to be felt through and digested? The prophet Ezekiel, speaking to his own vanquished people in exile nearly 2,500 years ago, offers God's stunning promise of renewal: "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."

In this time of polycrisis, when images of horror and destruction flash across our computer screens hourly, I wonder how long it will take to revivify our hearts, how many generations to begin to feel, absorb and heal.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of JTA or its parent company, 70 Faces Media.



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

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FORUM



Bearing necessary witness to the horror of October 7



Mindful Ramblings

Andrew Adler

Last week I had the unenviable privilege of attending a closed showing of a 46-minute video compiled by the Israeli government, displaying scenes of atrocity and brutality that, in my contemporary experience, has no parallel. The subject was the Hamas attack of October 7. The cast included terrorists in various guises, wielding automatic weapons, knives, and other implements of destruction.

There has been abundant description about various elements of this video. Many Hamas terrorists wore body cams, gleefully recording their murderous rampage, punctuated by shouts of “Al-lahu Akbar!” and an especially perverse phone call home: “Mom, Dad, your son is a hero! I killed 10 Jews with my bare hands!”

The official presentations of this video compendium, which are not open to the public, are being coordinated in this country by the Israeli consulate, which in the Southeast Region is represented by Atlanta-based Consul General Anat Sultan-Dadon. There were two sessions on Jan. 17, both in Frankfort. The first took place at the state capitol, attended by approximately 60 state legislators and a number of guest observers. The

second, which I attended, was held at Kentucky State University for members of local media. Sultan-Dadon gave a contextual introduction, alongside a uniformed Israeli Defense Forces Lieutenant Colonel.

This official video was compiled out of hundreds, of hours taken from captured body cams, mobile phones, intercepted phone calls, etc. Some excerpts lasted only a few seconds; others a minute or more. Each segment was accompanied by a terse explanatory caption.

I’m not going to go into detail about what I saw. One, because there are sufficient descriptions available elsewhere; and two, because nothing can take the place of seeing and somehow, in some way, trying to make sense of what is beyond sense.

I used the word “gleeful” earlier, because I can’t think of an adjective that better describes the declarations of pride, joy and accomplishment these terrorists had in murdering civilians and soldiers, be they infants, elderly, the disabled, whomever. Many who escaped death were hustled and dragged, often severely injured, to be taken into Gaza and paraded as trophy hostages, alongside the corpses of fellow Israelis who did not survive that short drive from what they thought was heaven into what became their collective hell.

I was struck by the quietude of many of these horrific scenes. Most heartrending, for me anyway, was video taken by first responders who came upon the aftermath of the Nova music festival, at which Hamas gunmen slaughtered more than 300 Israeli civilians. “Signs of life, signs of life?” the emergency per-

sonnel shouted, hoping that somebody – anybody -- might answer. But there was no answer, only ravaged body after body, sprawled muted in the dirt.

A friend of mine asked me why this video is being circulated, and why would I subject myself to the abject misery of sitting through it. I thought back almost 80 years ago when Buchenwald was liberated at the end of World War II, and officials, from supreme Allied Commander Dwight Eisenhower on down, got a firsthand look at what the Holocaust had wrought.

Bearing witness to such atrocities, speaking for victims who no longer can speak for themselves, is necessary and proper. There will always be those who deny that these atrocities occurred, or that what happened was exaggerated and manipulated, or that it was best to relegate it to a corner of one’s memory and move on.

That of course is grossly insufficient, and indeed, insulting. As Sultan-Doron remarked at KSU after the video ended, it is not enough to mouth platitudes of “never again” and walk away, self-satisfied, that all will be well. Because we have seen, in Bosnia, Rwanda, and now at the hands of Hamas, that it can and will happen again. Somehow, we must find the means to go beyond those platitudes. Otherwise, all that we’ll be left with are the scarred and silent dead, lying motionless on the cold and unforgiving ground.

Andrew Adler is Managing Editor of Community. To contact Andrew, email him at aadler@jewishlouisville.org.

FORUM

Our collective imperative: 'Move forward!'

Sara's
ViewSara
Klein Wagner

Every week, Jewish congregations across the globe take a Torah scroll from the ark in an annual cycle of study and renewal. The readers may be rabbis or cantors in front of congregations, or they may be volunteer readers, or even first time *b'nai mitzvah* students accepting the responsibility of the Torah for the first time. Yet, even in this variety, we all study the stories of the portions at almost exactly the same time from year to year and place to place. While the stories and portions do not change, there is always something new to consider—some new lesson to garner—based on the moment we are living in.

The portion of *Beshalach* is the lens from which we can study and look at the world in this moment. *Beshalach* tells the "song of the sea," that moment at the edge of the sea when the people of Israel were confronted with a barrier that was preventing them from escaping slavery to move into freedom. The people stood at the edge of the waters, as

a terrifying army was approaching, and had to make a choice: return to slavery, be crushed by an army, or move towards freedom despite an overwhelming obstacle. And then, at the most critical of moments, the sea parted and the people were able to move forward.

A wonderful community member and leader, Carol Jones Levitch shared the critical nature of that moment at a recent meeting, sharing the thoughts of Rabbi Yohoshua B Gordon, who said:

"The people had spent 210 years in Egypt, with nearly 100 of those years marked by brutal oppression. Pharaoh, having forgotten Joseph and his contributions to Egypt's greatness, became obsessed with the 'Jewish Problem,' subjecting the people to cruel enslavement. Finally, G-d charged Moses with leading them out of Egypt. After Moses and Aaron spent nearly a year in negotiations with Pharaoh, including G-d bringing the 10 Plagues upon the Egyptians, the people miraculously left, embarking on their journey to Mount Sinai to receive the Torah. Regretting letting the people out, Pharaoh led his special forces to pursue them. Encamped around the Red Sea, the people found themselves trapped."

Rabbi Gordon explained that the teachings that the people were divided into four camps: those who wanted to fight, those that wanted to flee, those that wanted to return to slavery, and those that needed to pray. Each had

strong opinions as to what to do next but divided they remained.

But then, an interesting thing happened: Moses rejected all four options. "Don't be afraid!" he reassured the people. There is only one answer when confronted with these impossibilities: do not accept the apparent obstacles. Move Forward!

How relevant is this today? When Jewish people are facing one crisis after another, when it feels like we are at the edge of a sea and being pursued from all sides, what should we do? The answer remains: *Move forward!* We have collectively and individually faced a myriad of problems and challenges. Obstacles seem insurmountable, but the lesson to not give in comes forth in *Beshalach*. Change always comes when we get to work and keep going forward.

When Carol shared this lesson, we were in a group discussing Jewish education in our community. The possibilities seem as large as the sea, and we are working together to build up the future of Jewish education across so many platforms. Likewise, the desperation around houselessness and gun violence in our community seems overwhelming. But little by little, progress is beginning. Just like the journey through the desert or an ocean, the miracle is not that the sea parted, it is that the people were brave enough to take the first step. They moved forward.

As we move forward, we can become a

catalyst for change here in Jewish Louisville and across the broader community. We can listen, we can learn, and we can be present for one another. Over the next month there are so many ways to come together and get to work. We can volunteer, we can participate in learning opportunities through the Shalom Hartman Institute, we can sit together as Jews at the Louisville Jewish Film Festival, we can study the past through a display provided to us from the American Bar Association. We can challenge gun violence or poverty in a number of ways. We can move forward.

The Jews fleeing slavery took their first steps towards a future filled with hope and longing. The first step was perhaps the hardest, but the responsibility to continue moving forward is no less important. As we all work on the causes that will make our Louisville community safer and stronger and our Jewish community, we can keep our momentum. The year ahead will be filled with choices - attending Jewish experiences, educational, spiritual and cultural, volunteering for a cause you care about, extending friendship to a newcomer caring for the most vulnerable. Whatever you want to do, do not be afraid of taking that first step.

Sara Klein Wagner is President and CEO of the Jewish Federation of Louisville and the Trager Family JCC



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NEWS

FILM FESTIVAL

Continued from page 1

Wilma Probst Levy, who with her late husband Louis Levy has for many years been a stalwart festival supporter.

"Louis was very committed to Louisville and to Jewish life in Louisville, she said, speaking via Zoom from her current home in Washington, D.C. "So in 1998 he decided to create the Theater and Film Festival Fund —later he put more emphasis on the 'film.' That was his passion, and I shared that passion with him and still do."

Eleven of the 17 films will be virtual – available for Louisville-area viewers to watch on their digital device of choice.

"I'm very happy with the variety of films we have this year," says festival committee co-chair Keiley Caster, "including documentaries, comedy, and drama. All our films are thought-provoking and have passed several steps to be in the festival. First, a film has to be selected by our preview committee. Then the whole committee selects the films that make the festival's lineup."

One of the most intriguing of the virtual offerings is "SHTTL," French director Ady Walter's 2022 feature film about a Ukrainian shtetl – a small, predominantly Jewish town – on the verge of being invaded by Russia in 1942. (The title's missing "e" alludes to Georges Perec's 1969 novel "La Disparition" ("The Void"), written entirely without that letter.)

The best-known actor in "SHTTL" is Saul Rubinek -- known for such roles as pulp-fiction writer W.W. Beauchamp in

Clint Eastwood's 1992 epic Western film "Unforgiven," and the nebbish divorce lawyer Donny Douglas on the TV series "Frasier."



Saul Rubinek

In "SHTTL" he plays the town's Rebbe, a small but important role he shot over the course of two days during the summer of 2021, on an elaborate set comprising 25 separate buildings about an hour from the capital city of Kyiv. The set – now littered with mines sewn by the Russian army during its subsequent invasion of Ukraine – included a full-size synagogue that was consecrated by a Ukrainian rabbi seven months before war broke out in 2022.

The film's dialogue is entirely in Yiddish and Ukrainian. As the only child of parents who immigrated to Canada (after surviving the Holocaust thanks to a Polish farmer who hid them for two years), Rubinek had mastered Yiddish before he learned to speak English. "SHTTL" re-connected him to a not-so-distant past in which one way of life gave way to another.

"This was a very small community," he says of the film's setting, "a hamlet, a little town, village. There were hundreds, if not thousands of them throughout Eastern Europe. In these villages lived side-by-side with non-Jewish ones, whether they were Polish, Ukrainian, Romanian – whatever country they were in. They existed for hundreds of years, with occasional violence. But mostly they figured out a way to get along with their neighbors."

"The rabbi of this particular village is a leader, the spiritual leader of the community," Rubinek explains. "He's an elder, and he's got his own troubles – it's not 'Fiddler on the Roof.' It's a more realistic depiction of the kind of controversies that existed within shtetl life. There are very religious or Orthodox; there are atheists; there are feminists; there are communists; there are Zionists. Even in a community with as few as 100 people there are a lot of different factions, with arguments and intellectual as well as spiritual clashes. The rabbi has to find a way to keep the community together. Unfortunately, the only way you could have unified the community for survival would have been to arm them. But that was not in the nature of this culture."

On Feb. 7 at 7 p.m., Rubinek will participate virtually in a discussion about the film and his diverse career with Adath Jeshurun Cantor David Lipp.

Such special events are a hallmark of the festival. A particularly distinctive example arrives Feb. 10 from 7:30-9:30 p.m., when "Shorts & Shots" comes to the Louisville Slugger Museum and Factory, 800 W. Main St. Described as "a short film and bourbon experience," the event (\$36 per person) will offer tastings led by Phil Kollin, Executive Bourbon Steward with the Stave & Thief Society. Admission also includes a Slugger Museum and Factory souvenir plus a guest pass for a subsequent museum visit.

Feb. 8 at 7 p.m., the festival will present a live showing of "Bella!" – a documentary film about the fiery, groundbreaking New York congresswoman Bella Abzug – at the Baxter Ave Theater. Afterward there will be a discussion featuring Kentucky State Senator and physician Karen Berg, and Kentucky ACLU Executive Director Amber Duke.

Another live showing/discussion at the Baxter comes Feb. 15 at 7 p.m., when the

festival presents "Checkpoint Women | Memories" – about "a group of Israeli women who established Checkpoint Watch to guard the human rights of those passing through the checkpoints between Israel and the West Bank."

There will be a post-showing discussion with Ranen Omer-Sherman – head of the Jewish Studies program at the University of Louisville – and Matt Golden, director of the Jewish Community Relations Council.

Feb. 17 at 7:30 p.m. – back at the Trager Family JCC – there will be a live showing of "My Neighbor Adolf," weaving a tale about a "grumpy" Holocaust survivor living in Colombia who discovers that a "mysterious old German man" – who he's convinced is Adolf Hitler -- has moved in next door. After the showing, director Leon Prudovsky will join in a discussion via Zoom with Asaf Angermann, Assistant Professor Term of Philosophy and Jewish Thought at U of L.

It's a eclectic assortment of films and subjects – which, again, is the point.

"We have a diverse community and want to be able to show films that will speak to all kinds of people," says Janet Hodes, co-chair of the festival committee, acknowledging that "not every film (is) going to speak to the same people. Some people prefer comedies; some people prefer documentaries. Some people want to be pushed in (their) film experience. Some people want to really learn something that will reflect on the Jewish experience. And, there are a lot of non-Jews in our audience."

In other words, this is a festival that punches considerably higher than its relatively small-market weight.

"It's not unusual for the films our committee chooses to be on the cutting edge of what's happening around the nation," Hodes says. "So here we are in little Louisville at the forefront."

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2024

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Passes and Tickets

OPENING NIGHT GOLDEN TICKET, \$22

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\$177 value

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*Shorts & Shots event not included

IN-PERSON/LIVE FILM PASS, \$69

\$94 value

Includes all full-length in-person films, special programs, and opening night special event.

Films Included: *Remembering Gene Wilder*, *June Zero*, *Bella!*, *Checkpoint Women: Memories*, *My Neighbor Adolf*, *Seven Blessings*

*Shorts & Shots event not included

VIRTUAL FILM PASS, \$59

\$83 value

Includes 4 full-length and 7 virtual short films and a virtual special program for SHTTL.

Full-length Films Included: *SHTTL*, *March 1968*, *Closed Circuit*, *Matchmaking*
Short Films Included: *Anne Frank Gift Shop*, *Demon Box*, *Fledge*, *The Boy*, *Periphery*, *Heritage Day*, *I Missed You At Synagogue*

INDIVIDUAL TICKETS

Short films: \$5

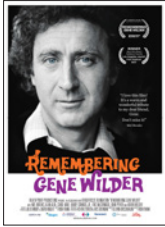
Full-length films: \$12

FILM FESTIVAL

This year's film festival at a glance

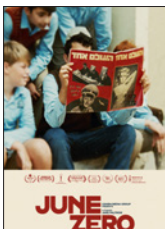
Here are the synopses for the films and special programming for the 2024 Louisville Jewish Film Festival

The following films are in-person.



Remembering Gene Wilder – *United States, 92 minutes.* Ron Frank's affectionate biographical documentary displays the full measure of Gene Wilder's gifts as a comedic actor of great depth, a writer, a director, and a mensch. Told in part through Wilder's own voice, from his audiobook recording of his memoir, the film offers generous helpings of clips from across Wilder's career – *The Producers*, *Willy Wonka*, *Blazing Saddles*, *Young Frankenstein*, and more – and poignant home movies from his marriage to Gilda Radner.

Saturday, Feb. 3: The film will be accompanied by an opening night Willy Wonka themed reception at 7 p.m. with scrumdiddlyumptious Wonka style treats and light hors d'oeuvres. Your Golden Ticket to the event includes a chance to win a gift card to Meesh Meesh, owned and operated by award-winning Chef Noam Bilitzer. The evening will feature a special recorded cameo appearance by comedian, Ariel Elias. Ms. Elias will talk about the value of humor, especially in tough times.



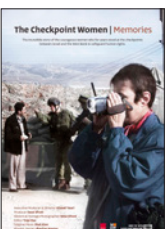
June Zero – *United States/Israel, 166 minutes.* Jake Paltrow's historical drama captures a profound event in Israeli history. The aftermath of the Adolf Eichmann trial is examined through the experiences of three characters: a 13-year-old Libyan immigrant who works in the factory where Eichmann's corpse is incinerated, a Moroccan guard assigned to protect the jailed Eichmann from vigilante justice, and a Polish survivor of Auschwitz who is the chief interrogator at the trial.

Sunday, Feb. 4: The film will be shown at Baxter Avenue Theaters at 2 p.m.



Bella! – *United States, 102 minutes.* In 1970, Bella Abzug challenged the Washington establishment boys' club and, with her trademark hat and Bronx swagger, entered Congress swinging, battling for credit cards for women, LGBTQ rights, and other issues of diversity, despite pressures from the left and the right, the Nixon administration, the CIA, the FBI, even the *New York Times*. Her struggles and successes are documented via never-before seen home movies, audio diaries, and newly discovered news footage.

Thursday, Feb. 8: The film will be shown at Baxter Avenue Theaters at 7 p.m. Immediately following the film, Kentucky State Senator Karen Berg and ACLU of Kentucky Executive Director Amber Duke will join us for a discussion about what it's like to be a woman today, fighting for civil rights, women's equality, LGBTQ+ rights and the road that Bella Abzug paved to get us where we are today. Moderated by Solange Minstein, Community Outreach Chair of the Louisville Jewish Film Festival



Checkpoint Women – *Israel, 60 minutes.* A group of Israeli women established Checkpoint Watch to guard the human rights of those passing through the checkpoints between Israel and the West Bank, documenting on film their interactions with the soldiers and their advocacy for the people who need to make the crossing.

Thursday, Feb. 15: The film will be shown at Baxter Avenue Theaters at 7 p.m. Immediately following the film, Dr. Ranen Omer-Sherman, JHFE Endowed Chair in Judaic Studies at the University of Louisville and Matt Golden, Director of Jewish Community Relations Council, will lead our audience through a thoughtful discussion surrounding the film.



My Neighbor Adolf – *Israel/Poland, 96 minutes.* In 1960, Polsky, a lonely and grumpy Holocaust survivor, lives in the remote South American countryside. Just after Adolf Eichmann is captured in Argentina, a mysterious old German man moves in next door, and Polsky becomes convinced that his new neighbor is actually Adolf Hitler. In order to gather evidence against him, Polsky must befriend the man.

Saturday, Feb. 17: The film will be shown at the Trager Family JCC at 7:30 p.m. Immediately following the film, Director Leon Prudovsky will join us on video for a special Q&A session. Mr. Prudovsky is an Israeli screenwriter and director. He graduated from The Steve Tisch School of Film and Television (Tel Aviv University) with his short film *Dark Night*, which was voted finalist at the Student Academy Awards and received Special Mention at the Venice Film Festival. His feature film debut *Five Hours* from Paris won several international prizes, including the Best Film awards at the Haifa Film Festival and Napoli Film Festival. *My Neighbor Adolf* is Leon's second feature film. Moderated by Dr. Asaf Angermann, Assistant Professor Term of Philosophy and Jewish Thought at University of Louisville



Seven Blessings – *Israel, 108 minutes.* Marie was two years old when she was given to her barren aunt, a common custom of Moroccan Jews at the time. Forty years later, Marie returns from France to marry, and is walked down the aisle by both of her mothers. During the Seven Blessings tradition, a week of festive meals in honor of the bride, old wounds and secrets surface and the celebration turns into a bittersweet explosion of food, family drama, and belated forgiveness.

Sunday, Feb. 18: The film will be shown at The Speed Cinema at 5 p.m.

The following films are virtual.



Anne Frank Gift Shop – *United States, 15 minutes.* When a high-end design firm presents its plan to reimagine the gift shop at The Anne Frank Haus, the company's overt appeals to Generation Z spark a darkly comic debate about collective trauma, the Holocaust, and tote bags.



The Boy – *Israel, 25 minutes.* A father and his emotionally fragile son are forced to deal with yet another round of rockets aimed at their kibbutz bordering the Gaza strip. The son reaches a boiling point, and the father is forced to absorb the heat.

Special note about the director of this film: On October 7th, Hamas terrorists burst into the film director's bedroom in Kibbutz Kfar Aza. He fought the terrorists, allowing his wife and their one-month-old daughter to escape, but he was murdered.



Closed Circuit – *Israel, 53 minutes.* On June 8, 2016, two well-clad terrorists opened fire at a popular café in Tel Aviv, and murdered four people. Actual footage taken from security cameras is interspersed with testimonies from survivors, both Jewish and Palestinian. Produced by Nancy Spielberg, this gritty film deconstructs the events and examines the trauma shared by the victims.



Demon Box – *Canada, 14 minutes.* After getting rejected by several film festivals, Sean Wainstein goes over everything that is wrong about his short Holocaust film. This film-within-a-film explores how young Jews today are still affected by generational trauma. (Suicidal content.)



Fledge – *Israel/France, 15 minutes.* A folkloric fantasy based on Slavic mythology combined with a realistic coming-of-age story. Elina, an immigrant teenage girl has inherited from her grandmother a strange genetic quirk: she starts to grow feathers. Now she must choose her one identity.



Heritage Day – *United States, 20 minutes.* Eight-year-old Evie becomes obsessed with pretending to be a Holocaust victim after dressing up as her estranged grandmother, a Holocaust survivor, for Heritage Day at her school. Inspired by a true event, this dark comedy explores the strife between mother and child.



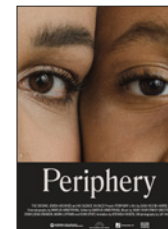
I Missed You at Synagogue – *Israel, 12 minutes.* When Carmel, a religious boy, finds his best friend Ido at his house, heartbroken from a recent break-up, Carmel realizes he has feelings for Ido that he doesn't dare admit.



March 1968 – *Poland, 115 minutes.* Apolitical students Hania and Janek fall in love in the midst of social turmoil and discrimination against Jews in 1960s Warsaw. When Hania's parents lose their jobs and are forced to emigrate, the couple participate in a protest rally where they discover the high cost of freedom.



Matchmaking – *Israel, 96 minutes.* Moti Bernstein is the perfect match for every bride – good looks, a good family, a good mind. In search of a wife, he meets the best girls in the Orthodox world, but he falls for the one girl he can never have. Against everything he knows and every value he holds dear, Moti is forced into the most unexpected and unusual of stratagems in his attempt to prove that love can conquer all.



The Periphery – *Canada, 27 minutes.* This short film about the intersection of Jewish identity and ethnic, racial, sexual and cultural diversity within the Jewish community comprises interviews with people from a wide range of Jewish experience.



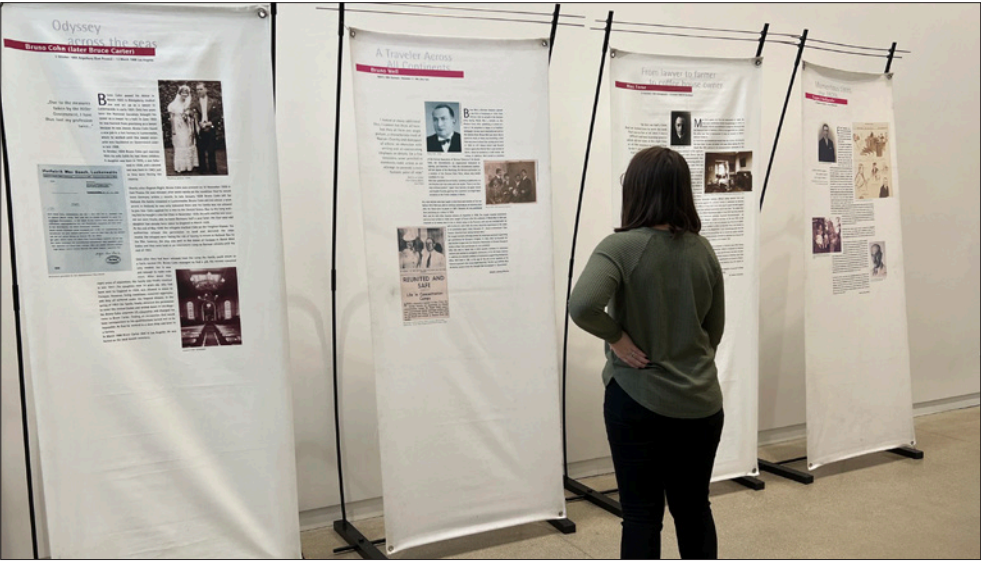
SHTTL – *France, 109 minutes.* In one unflinching shot, this story reveals a day in the life of a Yiddish Ukrainian village on the Polish border 24 hours before the Nazi invasion. A filmmaker returns from Kyiv to his rural village to marry the love of his life, instead of the Rabbi's daughter he is expected to wed. The producers have fully reconstructed a traditional Shtetl outside of Kyiv, which they plan to turn into a museum.

Wednesday, Feb. 7: Join us virtually at 7 p.m. as actor Saul Rubinek, who plays the Rabbi in SHTTL, will appear with Cantor David Lipp to discuss the film and his career. Rubinek was born in a displaced-persons camp in Allied-occupied Germany in 1948. The Rubinek family emigrated to Canada the following year. Rubinek has had a successful career as an actor in well-known films and television shows including *Frasier* and *Warehouse 13* as well as most recently in the Amazon series, *Hunters*. Your ticket for SHTTL includes this virtual special event. A Zoom link will be sent to you prior to the event.

PICTURE THIS: ABA EXHIBIT



A series of narrative panels comprising **Lawyers Without Rights: Jewish Lawyers in the Third Reich**, a traveling exhibit on loan from the American Bar Association now on view at the Trager Family JCC through Feb. 6.





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PICTURE THIS: SENIORS NEW YEAR'S PARTY



The annual Senior Social Club membership party was held in early January at the Trager Family JCC. Seniors enjoyed music, a specially-prepared meal and time together to celebrate the New Year. For information on the Senior Social Club, email Dara Cohen at dcohen@jewishlouisville.org.

Pictured (L-R): Top Row: Gale Karen, Evelyn Watkins, Gail Moody, Mohini Warick, Becky Conkling; Marvin Yussman, Vicky Hobson, Linda Yates, Jean Marlowe, Jimmy Crawford, Tony Kerr, and Mickey Nibur; Tami Penner, Sharon Goldblatt. Middle Row: Lewis and Ilean Rowe, Chuck and Kathy Jones, Lucinda Durham, Donna Benton, DJ Duker; Dolores Levy, Marian Harrell, Vicki Rego, Donna Hart, Dude Cahall; Jerry and Shari Solzman, Jill and Eddie Ginsburg. Bottom Row: Everyone in attendance was entertained by the group Sweet Harmony. (Photos by Kathryn Harrington)



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Volunteering Transforms Lives, Communities

The start of every new year finds many of us reflecting on the past and contemplating ways to make the upcoming year more meaningful and fulfilling. Whether it's going to the gym, a change in eating habits to be healthier, New Year's resolutions often revolve around personal growth and happiness. Many find a powerful way to achieve these goals is to seek out opportunities to give back to the community by volunteering.

Volunteering can be a transformative experience. It goes beyond self-improvement; it allows individuals to connect with their neighbors and foster a sense of community, belonging, and purpose. JFCS has a wonderful core group of volunteers, some of whom have been connected to the agency for many years. I would like to invite you to join them.

Whether it's helping inside our food pantry, hosting Shabbat services at a local assisted living facility, or providing companionship and thoughtful conversation to someone who lives alone through our Telephone Reassurance program, there are myriad ways you can join us and make an impact this year.



Dr. David Finke
JFCS CEO

Beyond individual achievement, volunteering can create meaningful bonding experiences for the entire family. Many studies have shown that getting young people involved in volunteering not only nurtures important life skills like leadership and teamwork but also provides a meaningful way for them to grow personally. Not only do they get satisfaction from making a positive impact in their community.

When setting New Year's resolutions, I hope you consider volunteering at JFCS. Whether it's committing a few hours each week or dedicating a single day to service, every hour you spend helping someone else makes a difference, not just for JFCS clients but also for you.

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Current Volunteer Opportunities at JFCS

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Pledge 13 Program

Mitzvah-aged students completed their Pledge 13 projects, beginning their lifelong commitment to service connected to shared Jewish Values.

JFCS Sonny & Janet Meyer Food Pantry

Volunteers needed to help stock and organize the pantry, shop with clients, make deliveries and pickups from Dare to Care.

Telephone Reassurance Program

Volunteers needed to call and check on isolated seniors and brighten their day with a friendly voice.

Doris L. & Theodore B. Meyers

JFCS Shabbos Friends Program

Volunteers provide Sabbath services monthly to Jewish seniors living in local assisted-living facilities and nursing homes.

Do You Have A Truck

Seeking a volunteer with a truck to help with weekly Dare to Care pickups for the JFCS food pantry.

As you contemplate your New Year's resolutions, I hope you consider the profound impact volunteering at JFCS can have on your life and the lives of others. You not only contribute to positive change in our community, but

the positive effects volunteering can have on your life in the coming year could be life-changing. For more information on volunteering contact Courtney Evans at cevans@jfscloouisville.org or call (502) 452-6341.

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Nicole & Dr. David Goldstein	in memory of Bobbye	Sara Yamin
Scott & Kristal Goodman	Robinson and Irving	
Frankye Gordon	Klempner	

Powered in part by the Jewish Federation of Louisville

PICTURE THIS: HESCHEL'S PASSOVER EVE



Pictured (L-R): Roots 101 Founder Lamont Collins and Kentucky State Representative Daniel Grossberg at the Roots 101 African American Museum, Jan. 15, 2024; Cantor Sharon Hordes and Dr. Michele Elisburg; Actor Eric Berger performing in the one-man play Heschel's Passover Eve Jan. 15, 2024 at Roots 101 African American Museum; Audience members gathered at the Louisville's Roots 101 African-American Museum for a performance of the one-man show "Heschel's Passover Eve" on Jan. 15, 2024. (Photos by Cantor David Lipp)



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Young Adult Trip to Budapest!

P2G is planning an amazing Young Adult Summit in Budapest in September 2024.

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Interested in a solidarity and service mission trip to Israel?

Contact Amy Fouts at p2g@jewishlouisville.org for more information about upcoming mission trips to Israel.

For more information about Partnership2Gether, contact Amy Fouts, p2g@jewishlouisville.org

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Second Session is February 20: History of Zionism

Zionism is both a continuation of Jewish History and a revolution against it. This session will look at the emergence of Zionism as a Jewish response to modernity.

More sessions to follow on a monthly basis through May 2024.

Register & Learn More

JewishLouisville.org/understanding-israel



A Family's Journey to Montessori Torah Academy

In January 2022, my husband and I made the decision to move our then 5 year old son from public school to Montessori Torah Academy. This was not an easy decision and required many hard conversations, a realignment of priorities, and the tough realization that our son would no longer be attending the same school I worked as a Literacy Coach.

Fast forward to January 2024, and there is no doubt that we made the best decision, regardless of how hard it was to make at the time. Baruch Hashem, it worked out even better than we could have even imagined. In this month's MTA Moments, I'd like to share our journey and encourage other families to explore the incredible opportunities that a Torah-focused Montessori school offers for our future generations.

Let's take a step back to the fall and winter of 2021. During this period, Rabbi Zack Blaustein and his family were hosting a child-centric Shabbat experience at their home on Saturday mornings. Each week, Rabbi Blaustein would creatively dress up as Torah figures like Avraham, Joseph, Moshe, and even Pharaoh, to bring the weekly Parsha to life.

My son was completely captivated by these stories, absorbing every detail. Rabbi Zack would often ask the children (his audience) questions and hands would immediately shoot up as they were all eager to answer. My son would turn to me and say, "How do they know all of this?" and I would respond, "Well, they go to a Jewish school, so they learn a lot of this at school during their school day".

This is what created the spark, and the many follow-up requests to 'Go to a Jewish School'.

During this time, I also began to reflect on what the public schools looked like behind the scenes and started to question if this aligned with what I really wanted for my son (and my daughter as well, but that's a story for another time). I saw firsthand, that too many kids in large schools lose their innate joy of learning. Class sizes are often large, and teachers are often (ok... always!) overwhelmed, making it difficult for children to get what they need, both emotionally and educationally.

Motivated by my son's repeated requests to 'Go to a Jewish School', I eventually reached out to Montessori Torah Academy to gather more information and arrange a school visit. As an educator, I had high expectations for the secular academics, but I was equally curious about the unique aspects of the Montessori method and how it differed from public school education. I was also very interested in the Judaic studies curriculum and how it was integrated throughout the day. I sat in a classroom for an extended period of time to take in the full experience. To say I was blown away would be an understatement!

I literally had to hold back tears on many occasions throughout the day, because I realized that the dream I had in my head for how I wanted my kids to experience school was happening before my eyes! As a teacher and coach for many years, I had never seen or experienced a classroom atmosphere such as the one I saw at MTA on that day. The students were joyful, self-motivated, hard-working, supportive and helpful to each other, kind, interested, creative and focused.

There was a quiet buzz throughout the room, as kids carefully and thoughtfully used the Montessori materials to practice new skills.

There were individual and small group lessons going on with the teacher that were specifically designed for the needs of each student. The differentiation was incredible and the high expectations were apparent! After observing, there was no doubt what our next move would be, regardless of the logistical obstacles we had to overcome.

We could not be more pleased with the education that our son is receiving at Montessori Torah Academy. He carries so much joy with him to and from school. He is eager to go to school everyday, and the content he is learning is far beyond what I have seen in other schools. The Montessori classroom provides a beautiful atmosphere for learning and the Montessori materials and philosophy provide a clearly scaffolded, concrete learning experience.

I sincerely invite all families in our community to come and experience what Montessori Torah Academy has to offer! It is truly the complete package.

Amy Danino
MTA mom and Upper Elementary General Studies Teacher

*My son would
turn to me and say,
"How do
they know
all of this?"*

Snapshots



Montessori Torah Academy
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NEWS

Daniele Hurwitz joins Federation staff as Senior Director for Women's Philanthropy and Young Adult Engagement

By Andrew Adler
Community Editor



Daniele Hurwitz

Daniele Hurwitz has been named Senior Director for Women's Philanthropy and Young Adult Engagement at the Jewish Federation of Louisville.

Born in Richmond, Virginia and already steeped in Jewish service, she embraced Judaism via multiple trips to Israel, and several summers teaching kids to swim at Camp Ramah Darom in Clayton, Georgia.

Between graduating from high school and starting college at Indiana University in Bloomington (where she was a Jewish Studies major), Hurwitz spent a gap year attending Jerusalem's Hebrew University.

After college, Daniele worked for multiple nonprofit organizations making her way to the west coast. After completing her Masters in Public Administration at the University of San Francisco, Daniele

spent the last 6 ½ years working in corporate philanthropy and donor experience at City of Hope, a nonprofit cancer and diabetes research hospital based in Los Angeles.

"I like to figure out what drives people and find ways to connect them back to the mission" she says. "It's all about building relationships. In corporate philanthropy, there is a magic in turning a corporate sponsorship into individual giving because a connection was made."

Rewarding as her LA job was, "I was ready for a new challenge," Hurwitz says. "I was toying with the idea of getting back into the Jewish world. I knew it would have to be something that had a strong Israel connection, but which also had to be the right fit."

Eventually she was put in touch with Sara Klein Wagner, President and CEO of the Jewish Federation of Louisville. A family friend was familiar with Wagner's initiatives and thought she and Daniele might hit it off.

"There was no job description," Hurwitz recalls, but the conversation flowed naturally. "It was just like talking to a family friend I'd known my entire life. And as we continued to talk about the

opportunity here, I couldn't say no."

"Daniele is going to be a strong addition to our team," Wagner says. "Her portfolio is going to focus on two areas. One is women's philanthropy. Ideally, we'd love to create what I'll call a leadership board -- to go out and listen to the diverse group of women in our community so we better understand how to engage people. Because we know that when women's philanthropy at the Federation is engaged and excited, it raises the level of enthusiasm of the entire community."

As a prime example, Wagner cited an evening event this past November at Work the Metal in Butchertown that featured Jewish entrepreneur and jeweler Dana Gordon.

"Women of all different ages came together for a night out to hear a young Jewish entrepreneur," Wagner says. "People are craving that kind of connection. And I think Daniele -- who's passionate about Jewish life -- is excited about empowering women and young adults to forge those connections and build lasting relationships."

Hurwitz will draw from the recent Brandeis University-led Study of Jewish

Louisville, which offers a rich array of jumping-off points.

"Daniele is going to take what we've learned from both the Brandeis study and from the think tanks and focus groups that we're convening around the theme of Jewish Louisville 502.0," Wagner says, and "she's already meeting community members and engaging in a lot of listening. We're putting together a calendar of events, programs and experiences for young adults, recognizing that no one size fits all. An important part of Daniele's role is understanding who's out there and eager to engage -- and perhaps even more importantly, identifying community members who may be a bit hesitant and why."

"People want to have those opportunities," Hurwitz emphasizes, adding that her new Federation position will allow her to "further develop my own set of skills, and help develop this community -- which already is thriving -- get to the next level. I want to see what works and what doesn't work -- and if it doesn't, how do we make it work? We have the data, but data can get you only so far. So now we need to put it into action."

Jewish Lou

502.0

Jewish parents – We want to hear from you.

Our recent Brandeis University-led Community study of Jewish Louisville underscored the characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors reflected by the wide spectrum of Jewish-identifying individuals in the Louisville region. The results are illuminating – charting a path toward creating the most inclusive, vibrant, and welcoming Jewish Louisville possible.

We are gathering a group of Jewish parents who are raising Jewish children ages 12 and under for a think tank on Sunday, Feb. 4 at 3 p.m. to share ideas and help shape where we are going.



Interested in participating?

Scan the QR code or go to JewishLouisville.org/502.0 and let us know a little about yourself.

Questions? Contact Alison Roemer, aroemer@JewishLouisville.org

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NEWS

Competition to curb gun violence names two winners

By Andrew Adler
Community Editor

On a July morning a little more than six months ago, a group of people gathered at the corner of 43rd and West Market Streets to remember where 19-year-old Christian Gwynn had been murdered by a drive-by shooter in December of 2019.

But there was more than remembrance at stake on that July day. Representatives of the Crescent Hill Community Council announced there would be a competition to identify innovative ideas for curbing gun violence in Jefferson County. Some 230 entries were submitted over the next several months, and during a Jan. 23 press conference at Metro Hall, organizers announced a pair of winners: multimedia artist Lisa Austin, and retired JCPS psychologist Michael Reed. Each of them will receive \$3,500.

Austin says she'll use her share of the prize money to fund the creation of a banner bearing the names of people who have been murdered or died as result of gun violence.

"Along with their names there will be stories about who they were, or how this affected the community or the person who suggested the name," Austin said, telling of a cousin who was gunned down in 1951, a killing that "affected my family for generations. 'Hopefully (her banner) will be traveling around the city,' so viewers 'can see that these are

real people, not stereotypes. They're not from a certain end of town, but from everywhere. They're all of us."

Reed's proposals emphasize how "peace begins with each one of us. We all have a role in creating a more peaceful society. And we can start with just the way we interact with each other. We live in a divisive time, an angry time, and we have to get beyond that."

More specifically, "we need to talk about the ramifications of gun violence on people," he said. "When people get into a volatile situation and are angry, they get into a rage, and they quit thinking. But if we start talking, that might be the impetus for (someone) to stop and say, 'no, this is going to have a tremendous impact on my kids, my family, my mom and dad, and the victim's family. And that trauma is going to last forever.'"

Trauma still gnaws at Christian Gwynn's mother, Krista Gwynn. Her daughter was shot and wounded in June of 2021 -- less than 18 months after her son was murdered.

"We're putting on a face about what's going on with our children in this mayhem," she said. "Just yesterday or two days ago, a guy was gunned down at Fourth Street Live in broad daylight. These kids are thinking that there are no repercussions -- now we are taking a stand and letting them know that it has to stop."

"Gun violence is something that, as a society, we've already seen take far too

many lives," Louisville Mayor Craig Greenberg said in prepared remarks. "It's shattered too many families and terrified too many communities. I'm a survivor of gun violence myself," Greenberg added, alluding to an assassination attempt while he was campaigning in February 2022. "I lost a very good friend to gun violence at the Old National Bank shooting last year. No one is immune from gun violence. It's everyone's problem."

Greenberg recalled a recent family vacation to Japan, "a country of about 125 million people. That entire country generally loses fewer than 10 people per year to gun violence. Yet here in our beloved city of Louisville, we lost 150 people to homicides -- mostly gun violence -- last year. That's simply unacceptable."

Michael Bogan, director of the city's Office of Group Violence Intervention, shared thoughts about gun violence's emotional toll on families.

"I've had a chance to speak to grieving mothers, grieving parents," he said. "I've heard the stories, and I will be honest with you: I've been moved to tears sitting across from those grieving mothers. In my family I had a dear cousin who was murdered via gun violence. So I'm familiar with the screams of grieving mothers when they hear the news. I'm familiar with the long blank stares into space when they're trying to make sense of what has happened."

Asked if he believes the two winning



Pictured (L-R): Michael Reed, Krista Gwynn, Lisa Austin and Jane Emke (Photo by Andrew Adler)

entries will bear substantive results, Rabbi Ben Freed of Keneseth Israel paraphrased a celebrated Mishnah statement attributed to the Torah sage Rabbi Tarfon.

"It's not up to us to complete the task -- we know going into it that this is not going to finish the job," Freed said. "We're not going to come here and do this, and then, 'There's going to be no more gun violence.' But 'you are not free to then withdraw yourself.' Is this going to be the thing that makes the difference? I don't know. But we have to try, because if we're not trying, then we're not doing anything."

It may come down to resisting the impulse to settle arguments by pulling a gun. Or as competition co-chair Jane Emke put it: "We need to really start telling people, 'Put down your piece, and think peace.'"

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AROUND TOWN

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

Adath Jeshurun

Adath Jeshurun invites the community to our Shabbat-Luck Dinner on Friday, Feb. 16, after evening services. Join us for Kabbalat Services at 5:45 p.m., then we'll all share a vegetarian potluck meal. For full dietary guidelines and a reservation link, visit www.adathjeshurun.com/shabbat-luck.

Talmud and... TikToks? Miriam Anzovin, creator of the popular #DafReactions series, will visit Congregation Adath Jeshurun on Saturday, February 24, 2024. She will give three talks in which she shares her practice of daily study of the Babylonian Talmud in the Daf Yomi cycle from the viewpoint of a formerly Orthodox, now secular, Millennial feminist. Go behind the scenes with Miriam as she shares her process for creating authentic, heartfelt, hilarious commentary which puts ancient discourse in direct communication with modern internet culture, pop culture, and current events. This event is cosponsored by the Louisville Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning, The Charles & Jean K. Erskine Fund of Congregation Adath Jeshurun and the Jewish Heritage Fund Endowment. Reservations are open now at www.adathjeshurun.com.

The 2024 Music Festival, endowed by the Adolf & Sara van der Walde and Israel Rosenblum Charitable Fund, will be held on Sunday, March 3, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at Adath Jeshurun. Our featured performer this year is Cantor Danny Mendelson. For those who were at the Cantors' Convention in Louisville in 2019 he sang with his dad Cantor Jack Mendelson. He is an amazing talent and I hope you'll come hear Mendelson Mayhem & Friends! Reservations are open now at www.adathjeshurun.com/musicfestival.

Anshei Sfarad

Classes are held weekly by Rabbi Simcha Snaid: A Night Kollel Ahron V'Leah – open learning from 8 p.m.-9:30 p.m. Monday – Thursday for anyone to come & learn; Spice of Life, Wednesday 7 p.m.; Discussion on the timeless lessons from Mishlei – the Book of Proverbs, Sunday mornings 7:45 – 8:30 a.m.; Talmud Trek II, Sunday 9:30 a.m. Women's learning Sunday evenings 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Chabad of Kentucky

Chabad of Kentucky is pleased to announce that all services are now being held at the Camp J building at 3700 Dutchmans Lane (formerly Congregation Anshei Sfarad). We extend our thanks to Jewish Family & Career Services for allowing us to use their building to hold services during the summer. We also extend our thanks to Jewish Community of Louisville for allowing us to use the Camp J building and we invite the community to share in all our services, classes and programs.

Chabad Offers "Advice for Life" Classes

A new class entitled Advice for Life shares the Lubavitcher Rebbe's teachings and advice in six critical areas of life: Health, Money and Career, Family and Home, Spirituality and Relationship with G-d, Challenge and Adversity, and Emotional Well-Being. The series will be taught by Rabbi Avrohom Litvin, for six Wednesday nights beginning Jan. 31, and will be held at the Trager Family JCC.

The Rebbe dedicated much time to meeting and corresponding with world leaders,

politicians, spiritual heads, community leaders in many areas of life including education, medicine, law, science, and the arts. At the same time, the Rebbe found endless hours for ordinary individuals from every walk of life. Bulging sacks of mail arrived daily at his doorstep, and his published correspondence is voluminous. Private audiences (yechidut) lasted entire nights several times a week. Later, the Rebbe distributed "Dollars"—dollar bills for charity—weekly, along with personal blessings and guidance to each of the thousands who filed by for a brief but powerful exchange. Now, many of those lessons will be available to our community.

Chavurat Shalom

February will be filled with beautiful music and inspirational discussions. Lunch will start at noon in The Temple's Heideman Auditorium and our program will start at 1:00 pm. All programs will also be available via Zoom for those who need to join us remotely.

Thursday, February 1 - Beth Olliges returns with a wonderful winter sing along. Lunch will include chicken and rice soup, deli platter, mixed green salad, fresh fruit, cookies, and brownies.

Thursday, February 8 - Our favorite accordion player, Mike O'Bryan, will bring his delightful music and sense of humor. Lunch will include beef pot pie, mashed potatoes, Caesar salad, fresh fruit, and caramel spoon cake.

Thursday, February 15 - David Shapero will play a variety of music on the piano. Lunch will include cheese tortellini with smoked salmon, broccoli with roasted red peppers, mixed green salad, fresh fruit, and banana pudding.

Thursday, February 22 - Misha Feigin will entertain us with his beautiful piano and guitar music. Lunch will include roasted turkey, mashed potatoes, green beans, kale salad, fresh fruit, and apple cobbler.

Thursday, February 29 - Our friend Bob Mueller will inspire us with a presentation about Positive Living. Lunch will include chicken and dumplings, mixed vegetables, mixed green salad, fresh fruit, and carrot cake.

If you're not "a regular," please RSVP by 5 p.m. Tuesday if you'll be attending that week in person by calling or emailing Sarah at 502-423-1818 or sarahharlan86@gmail.com.

Chavurat Shalom is a unique opportunity for Jewish senior adults to meet socially and share ideas. Chavurat Shalom is funded through the generosity of the Jewish Heritage Fund, The Temple, The Temple WRJ/Sisterhood, The Temple Brotherhood, NCJW, and many other generous donors.

Filson Historical Society

Join the Filson Historical Society for these upcoming events! For more information, registration, and membership visit www.FilsonHistorical.org.

Jewish Family & Career Services

The 2024 JFCS MOSAIC Awards ceremony will be May 14 at the Mellwood Arts Center. This is the 19th year honoring refugee, immigrant and first-generation Americans in Louisville who have changed the community by being a Leader, Changemaker, or Humanitarian. Honorees will be announced in January, along with our new award this year, the JFCS MOSAIC Corporate Changemaker, given to a Louisville

business who exemplifies what it means to support refugees, immigrants, and first-generation Americans in a direct, impactful way. Contact Courtney Evans at cevans@jfcsloouisville.org if your company would like to help sponsor the 2024 JFCS MOSAIC Awards.

Through community support, JFCS has been able to meet a 120% increase in requests for mental health services over the past two years; a 23% increase in services provided to older adults; a 56% increase in helping our friends and neighbors realize their dream of running their own business and much more! In the season of giving, every act of kindness counts! As the social service arm of the Jewish Community, your support of JFCS is vital in helping us touch lives all across Louisville. Let's continue making a collective impact together. Give the gift of change by contacting Courtney Evans at cevans@jfcsloouisville.org.

Struggling with Addiction or Substance Abuse?

JFCS offers individual, couples, and family counseling services to help assist in understanding and working through addiction as well as providing support for loved ones and family members. Caring, compassionate and experienced mental health counselors are available to work with those with current, non-crisis level addiction issues, those in recovery, and/or loved one or family members that have someone currently in active addiction or recovery. If you or someone you know is struggling with non-crisis addiction and substance misuse issues, please contact us at (502) 452-6341 or email: services@jfcsloouisville.org.

Following months of collaboration, introspection, and careful consideration by staff, stakeholders and our Board of Directors, JFCS is excited to announce its Three-Year Strategic Plan. We believe this plan sets a clear course for JFCS to evolve and adapt to the ever-changing community landscape and continue Expanding Possibilities For All in Greater Louisville for many years to come. We welcome you to see the plan at: www.jfcsloouisville.org/strategic-plan.

The conflict in Israel and Gaza, with its profound impact on countless lives, has left many individuals in our own community grappling with grief, loss, and emotional distress. JFCS is offering a FREE mental health counseling session to anyone in the community who may be struggling regardless of faith or cultural background. Our therapists are trained to address various aspects of grief, from loss of loved ones and friends to the trauma of witnessing violence and destruction, even if only seeing these things on social media or the news. Contact JFCS at www.jfcsloouisville.org or by calling (502) 452-6341.

Jewish Federation of Louisville

Join us for a special program Thursday, Feb. 1 from 5:30-7 p.m., offered in conjunction with the exhibit Lawyers Without Rights: Jewish Lawyers in the Third Reich at the Trager Family JCC.

Hear the remarkable story of John Rosenberg -- a Holocaust survivor, Department of Justice lawyer, and civil rights advocate -- who founded the Appalachian Research and Defense Fund in Kentucky. Mr. Rosenberg will share his story and lead a discussion about this exhibit, which is on loan from the American Bar Association and on view at the Trager Family JCC through Feb. 6.

This FREE event includes light hors d'oeuvres and beverages with time to gather as a community. To register, go online at

jewishlouisville.org/event/john-rosenberg.

Help us create Jewish Louisville 502.0 Our recent Brandeis University-led Community Study of Jewish Louisville underscored the characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors reflected by the wide spectrum of Jewish-identifying individuals in the Louisville region. The results are illuminating – charting a path toward creating the most inclusive, vibrant, and welcoming Jewish Louisville possible. We are gathering a group of Jewish parents who are raising Jewish children ages 12 and under for a think tank on Sunday, Feb. 4 at 3 p.m. to share ideas and help shape where we are going. Interested in participating? Please complete the survey at www.jewishlouisville.org/502.0. Interested but don't fit the current demographic? We still want to hear from you. Complete the survey to let us know a little about yourself. As other cohorts are defined and the groups are scheduled, we will reach out to invite appropriate community members to participate.

Annual Campaign's Super Sunday wants you to 'Answer the Call'

There's lots of energy associated with the Jewish Federation of Louisville's Annual Campaign, and nowhere is this more apparent than on Super Sunday. This year's telethon gets under way Sunday, Feb. 4 at 10 a.m., when a cadre of volunteers will gather at the Trager Family JCC to work the phones on behalf of the 2024 campaign. If you'd like to participate or want more information, contact the Federation's Lee Anne Alsup at 502-238-2707, or via email at lalsup@jewishlouisville.org. For information on how to give to the Annual Campaign, go online at jewishlouisville.org/donate.

Keneseth Israel

Keneseth Israel Congregation offers Daily Minyan services at 6 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. Sundays, and 7:30 a.m. Monday and Thursday. Minyan services are offered in person and on Zoom at tinyurl.com/kiczoom. Join us for Shabbat services Fridays at 6 p.m. and Saturdays at 9:30 a.m. Shabbat services and Holiday services are offered in person and on YouTubeLive at tinyurl.com/KICyoutubelive. Please visit kenesethisrael.com for information.

Join Rabbi Freed for Jews & Brews every Wednesday at 11 a.m. at the Trager Family JCC. And enjoy a beer on him at another installment of Jews & Brews: After Hours, Feb. 8 at 7:30 p.m. at Gallant Fox Brewing Company, 2132 Frankfort Ave.

You're invited every Saturday morning at 10:30 a.m. for Shabbat Shalom Club -- a space for kids K through 5 to experience Shabbat. From Torah to games - there is something for every child.

Join Cantor Hordes as she takes you on a journey through the sun salutations, and meditations of Torah February 1st at 6:30 p.m. Some yoga mats are available, but please bring your own if you have one.

Kids and families of all kinds, come join us for our Refugee Shabbat on Feb. 2. Starting at 6 p.m., there will be a musical Kabbalat Shabbat service followed by a delicious meal. This event is free but please RSVP to tinyurl.com/KICShabbat or call 502-459-2780.

Join us on Sunday, Feb. 4 at 6:30 p.m. for a Back from Israel celebration dinner. Enjoy an Israeli-themed dinner of chicken schnitzel, couscous, Israeli salads, dessert, and more. During dinner, hear a first-

AROUND TOWN

hand testimonial from KI member Miriam Bird about her experience visiting Israel in recent weeks. Then, enjoy Israeli music played by Miriam and Cantor Hordes. RSVP to tinyurl.com/KICIsrael. Suggested dinner donation to the Melzer KI Future Fund: \$10/person

Have a toddler in your life? Come join us for our Tot Shabbat, Feb. 10 and 24 at 11 a.m. to enjoy a toddler-friendly shortened service and a sweet treat, followed by coming into the main sanctuary with their rendition of a closing Shabbat service song.

Keneseth Israel and the National Council of Jewish Women, Louisville Section will host Repro Shabbat Saturday, Feb. 10, featuring an enhanced Kiddush.

Kol Israel Community of Kentucky

A Shabbat of Love and Light Friday will take place Friday, Feb. 9 at 5:30 p.m., led jointly by Rabbi Naschon Siritsky on Zoom and special local guests. The in-person component will be held at a private home in the Highlands, followed by a vegetarian oneg dinner. Free, but space is very limited. To RSVP, email coordinator Adrian Barrios at KolIsraelKy@gmail.com or call 502-277-0555.

Louisville Melton School

How often do we stop and acknowledge the time-honored highs and the lows of our lives as Jews? Highs and Lows: Communal Days of Joy and Sorrow, a brand new 6-week course, will be offered in two formats: Tuesday evenings 6:30-8 p.m. via Zoom taught by Cantor David Lipp, and Thursdays, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in-person at Adath Jeshurun, taught by Rabbi Laura Metzger. The cost is \$179, which includes textbooks. Register and find out more here. Scholarships are available; email sisham@adathjeshurun.com to apply.

Louisville Vaad HaKashruth

The following venues are supervised and certified by the Vaad: Trager Family Jewish Community Center (Nancy Abrams Kitchen) and Krispy Kreme, 3000 Bardstown Road.

Moishe Pod: Louisville

The Moishes Pod: Louisville is a part of the international non-profit organization Moishes House, which aims to bring together young adult Jewish communities from around the world. Moishes Pod: Louisville is open to all young adult Jews regardless of observance level. It will be hosting three free events a month to bring the young adult Jewish community together in a welcoming environment. For more information or to pass along suggestions for an event Moishes Pod might host, email moishepod.louisville@gmail.com.

Moishes Pod: Louisville invites you to participate in our care packing service event. Feb. 6 at 7 p.m. join us to create reproductive care bags for those in need of that support in our community, while learning about reproductive care from a Jewish perspective. RSVP at tinyurl.com/MPLearning.

Get your game on at the Pod with our first game night of 2024. Join us Feb. 15 at 7 p.m. for refreshments and fun with a plethora of board, card, and video games to choose from. RSVP at tinyurl.com/mp-socials.

Come dressed in your masquerade best and get ready to celebrate Purim katan (little purim) at this festive Shabbat dinner Feb. 23 at 7 p.m. RSVP at tinyurl.com/MP-Shabbat.

National Council of Jewish Women, Louisville Section

Your Repro Rights committee is hard at work planning the next Reproductive Rights training session to be held on February 4, starting at 9:30 am, in the Community Room at the Trager Family JCC. Attendees will learn about the Jewish perspective on women's rights and reproductive freedom and gain the skills needed to be able to effectively share that critical information in our community. For more information and/or to sign up for the training, email Sarah Harlan at executivedirector@ncjwlou.org.

Sonia and Dr. Ronald Levine Jewish Voice for Choice Award

Created in 2023, the Sonia and Dr. Ronald Levine Jewish Voice for Choice Award is presented annually by the National Council of Jewish Women, Louisville Section to an outstanding person, group, or organization who has demonstrated courage of action and/or made a significant contribution in the efforts of reproductive rights and healthcare justice in the commonwealth of Kentucky – guided by the Jewish values of tikkun olam, repairing the world, and kavod ha'briyot, respect for human dignity.

These actions may include:

- Direct care
- Advocacy
- Speaking up when others cannot
- Recruiting others to help
- Contributing ideas to grow the movement
- Showing perseverance in the midst of resistance

The award is named in honor of Sonia and Dr. Ronald Levine, long-standing members of NCJW, Louisville Section for their life-long efforts to support women's reproductive healthcare. Sonia has been an active member of NCJW for many years, where she has chaired the Legislative Committee and Women's Issues Committee of NCJW and was appointed by the National Organization of NCJW as the Kentucky State Public Affairs Chair for over six years. Sonia and Ronald were both founding committee members of the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights.

Dr. Levine served as an Obstetrician and Gynecologist for over thirty years in many different patient care, teaching, and leadership roles. Of note, he served as a Medical Director of the Louisville affiliate and then as Chair of the Medical Committee of the Southeast Region of the U.S. and as a member of the National Medical Committee of Planned Parenthood.

To submit a nomination, please contact the NCJW office at 502-458-5566.

NCJW, Louisville Section College Scholarships

Did you know that NCJW, Louisville Section has a scholarship fund administered through the Community Foundation of Louisville? We're honored to help offset college expenses by awarding scholarships to Jewish students pursuing undergraduate degrees. For more information, see the details below or contact Sarah Harlan at executivedirector@ncjwlou.org.

Description: The National Council of Jewish Women Scholarship Fund was established to provide scholarship assistance in the form of grants to help defray college or university expenses of students who are of Jewish faith.

Eligibility: Jewish faith; Resident of Kentucky; Student must have completed at least one semester of college or university; Cumulative college GPA of at least 2.5. Demonstrate financial need.

How to Apply: The General Scholarship Application, which includes the National Council of Jewish Women Scholarship, opened December 1, 2023, and close February 29, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. EST. The application will be available via the Community Foundation of Louisville's website.

Renewable: Yes
General Scholarship Application Community Foundation of Louisville

One way you can support NCJW's important advocacy work is by visiting our Nearly New Shop in the Mid City Mall, 1250 Bardstown Road. We have everything from gently used designer outfits to great gifts for kids to housewares and furniture and everything in between. We're open Monday through Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm. All proceeds help to serve women, children, and families in the Louisville community.

Temple Shalom

The community is welcome at Temple Shalom's Shabbat services: Fridays at 6:30 p.m. and Saturdays at 10:30 a.m., led by Rabbi Beth Jacobowitz Chottiner. Members of the congregation lead the music. Saturday morning often includes a discussion of the Torah portion.

Tu B'Shevat Seder, Sunday, Jan. 28, 12:45 p.m. Join for a celebration of Tu B'Shevat, celebrating the earth and the birthday for the tress. The Seder will include music, readings, and tasting the traditional Tu B'Shevat foods. More information to follow.

The Temple

Sign up for adult education at The Temple! Text Study with Rabbi David and Beginning Hebrew with Mark Goldstein are on Monday nights; Temple Scholars on Wednesday mornings with Rabbi David and this month special guest, Professor Asaf Angermann; and Saturday Torah Study with Rabbi David starts at 9 a.m. on Zoom and in person will be every Saturday. For a full schedule and descriptions, please go to thetemplelouky.org/adult-education for more information.

Intro to Judaism is starting a new semester at The Temple on Monday, Feb. 26 at 7 p.m. led by Rabbi David who will be teaching about Jewish Beliefs and Practices. This class is a wonderful way for people who are considering becoming Jewish, interdating, and intermarried couples to learn together about Judaism. For more information, please go to thetemplelouky.org/monday-classes or email Rabbi David.

The Temple invites congregants to attend Shabbat services on Friday nights and Saturday mornings. More information at thetemplelouky.org.

We have expanded our Pickleball times at The Temple! Join us for this FREE and exciting way to stay active. Registration opens every Friday for slots the next week. Mondays from 5 - 7 p.m., Tuesdays from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. and Tuesdays from 5 - 7 p.m. At least two of the four players need to be members of The Temple. Be sure to sign the waiver and bring your own ball and paddles. Register online at thetemplelouky.org/pickleball.

The Temple's Shabbat Bop is a special program designed specifically for families with

young children. We invite you and your loved ones to join us for an evening filled with joy, connection, and Shabbat ruach (spirit) on Friday, Feb. 2 and March 1 at 5:45 p.m. Join us for a special Shabbat Bop with Rabbi David and Buhbee Ellen Shaikun leading us for a short, kid-friendly service in the Sanctuary. Then we will enjoy a family dinner in the Heideman Auditorium. More information and RSVP at thetemplelouky.org/Shabbat-Bop.

Join The Temple for our special Scout Shabbat on Friday, Feb. 2 at 7 p.m. in honor of our wonderful Troop 30 and Troop 30GT.

Join The Temple Brotherhood on Thursday, Feb. 15 for an Evening of Elegance with Scott Davis from Seng Jewelers. Explore the legacy of Seng Jewelers, in business since 1889, with Scott, the third-generation jeweler. Discover their unique approach—cutting their own diamonds and valuing craftsmanship over commerce. Learn about their passion for preserving history by buying old gold and estate jewelry. Enjoy fine dining and captivating stories at The Temple. Cost included with Brotherhood Dues of \$36, \$50, or \$100; non-members cost is \$18 per person. Contact Michael Friedman at mfriedman@sustainablemgt.com for RSVP. The meeting is at 6:30 p.m., the dinner is at 7 p.m., and the presentation is at 7:30 p.m.

Everyone is welcome for a thought-provoking Interfaith Shabbat on Friday, Feb. 16 at 7 p.m., as we delve into the wisdom of the Torah portion Terumah with Rev. Dr. Heather Anne Thiessen (M.Div., ThM Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Ph.D. Humanities University of Louisville). In this sermon, we will explore the profound question, What is a sanctuary, really? Join us in this exploration of challenges and possibilities, as we reflect on the broader significance of sanctuaries and the shared aspirations that unite us in the interfaith project.

The Louisville Orchestra will be performing Mahler's 6th Symphony on April 27. Gustav Mahler was not only a talented composer for the Vienna Philharmonic, but his life was filled with drama, death, antisemitism, marriage difficulties, and torment. To prepare for this concert, the Brotherhood will hold several educational classes following Shabbat Services on Feb. 23 and March 29. Additionally, immediately after the concert, the Brotherhood and Temple members

Continued on page 20

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AROUND TOWN

Continued from page 19

are invited to a private audience with concertmaster Gabe Lefkowitz. Although this event will be open to everyone, Brotherhood members will receive a discounted ticket price. If you have never experienced a Louisville Orchestra performance, now is the time, and this is the one. For more information, go to thetemplelouky.org/mahler.

Please join the Mitzvah Makers on Sunday, Feb. 25 at 11:30 a.m. as we make sandwiches for the Louisville homeless community. RSVP at thetemplelouky.org/sandwich-making. Before the event, please bring donations to The Temple to help us with this tikun olam project including: bottles of water, individual bags of chips, loaves of bread, and sandwich bags. Additionally, if you have some small hotel/sample size toiletries (shampoo, bars of soap, lotion, mouthwash, toothbrushes, and toothpaste), we will be making bags to hand out.

WRJ will be hosting our annual Interfaith Coffee on Monday, Feb. 26 at 10 a.m., when Rabbi David will discuss Jewish Holidays 101, including the beautiful music that enhances our celebrations. This is our opportunity every year to welcome people from area churches, mosques, and other faith communities to learn about Judaism and to share in a delightful and sumptuous breakfast. We look forward to welcoming our community friends at this annual event and hope you'll join us. RSVP at thetemplelouky.org/interfaith-coffee.

Join us for a Family Shabbat on Friday, March 1 with dinner at 6 p.m. for dinner and Erev Shabbat Services at 7 p.m. led by our Grade 4 students. Dinner is \$10 per person and free for children 12 and under. \$5 when you RSVP before Tuesday, Feb. 27. Please make your reservation by calling 502-423-1818 or registering online at thetemplelouky.org/family-shabbat-dinner.

Trager Family JCC

The Louisville Jewish Film Festival announces its 26th season Feb. 3-18. The festival is showcasing 17 top-rated, thought-provoking films including seven short films. In addition, the festival will present six special-event programs. Our 26th season will open at the Trager Family JCC Saturday, Feb. 3 with the film Remembering Gene Wilder, an affectionate biographical documentary that displays the full measure of Gene Wilder's gifts as

a comedic actor of great depth, a writer, a director, and a mensch.

The film will be accompanied by a Willy Wonka-themed reception at 7 p.m. with light hors d'oeuvres and Wonka-style treats. Your Golden Ticket to the event includes a chance to win a gift card to MeeshMeesh, owned and operated by award-winning Chef Noam Bilitzer. The evening will also feature a special recorded cameo appearance by comedian Ariel Elias, who'll talk about the value of humor, especially in tough times. For tickets and more information, visit jewishlouisville.org/filmfestival.

CenterStage's season continues with The Prom, opening Feb. 22 at the Trager Family JCC's Shapira Foundation Auditorium. It's the story of "four fading Broadway stars who are in desperate need of a new stage. So when they hear that trouble is brewing around a small-town Indiana prom—and the press is involved—they know that it's time to put a spotlight on the issue...and themselves. The town's parents want to keep the dance on the straight and narrow—but when one student just wants to bring her girlfriend to prom, the entire town has a date with destiny. Now, Broadway's brassiest are coming to join the fight and they are ready to kick-ball-change the world." Performances are Feb. 22, 24, 25 & 29; and March 2 & 3. For tickets and more information, go online at jcclouisville.org/centerstage.

You Bring the Audience, We Bring the Show. CenterStage Acting Out is a professional touring theatre troupe that travels to schools, community centers, and senior facilities to present educational and relevant musical theatre to audiences of any age. No buses, no chaperones, no permission slips: We bring the show directly to you. For more information, visit or contact Jesse Barfield at jbarfield@jewishlouisville.org.

All Trager Family JCC members are invited to join one of its many fitness classes, sign-up for personal training, join a basketball, futsal or pickleball game, or the new running club. Visit jewishlouisville.org/the-j/health-wellness more information or email Member Services Director, Amy Stephen, at astephen@jewishlouisville.org. For those interested in memberships, visit jcclouisville.org/youbelong or email membership@jewishlouisville.org.



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LIFECYCLE

B'nai Mitzvah



Leo Brooks Cha

Leo Brooks Cha, son of Dr. Yong Cha and Dr. Michelle Brooks, and brother of Eli, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, February 3, at 10:30 am at The Temple. Leo is

the grandson of Elliot and Sheri Brooks of West Palm Beach, Florida, and Bum (Bill) and Keum (Sue) Cha of Seattle, Washington.

Leo is in the seventh grade at Louisville Collegiate School, where he is a straight A student. Leo plays on the basketball team and the golf team. He plays Kentucky PGA and Bluegrass junior golf tournaments during the summer. Leo volunteered at the JFCS Food Pantry. Leo enjoys spending time with his friends, family, and our dog. He loves to travel, try new foods, and learn about different cultures. He especially loves Korean food and recently spent two weeks traveling around South Korea with his family.



Aaron Dougherty & Zachary Dougherty

Aaron Dougherty and Zachary Dougherty, sons of Aaron and Kelsey Dougherty, and brothers to Rivkah and Meir Dougherty, will be called to the Torah as B'nei Mitzvah on Saturday, February 24, at The Temple. Aaron and Zachary are the grandsons of Curt and Susan Dougherty of Independence, Missouri, and Susan Rubeck of Overland Park, Kansas.

Aaron is in the ninth grade at Salem High School in Salem, Indiana. His favorite subjects in school are biology and chemistry. Zachary is in the eighth grade at Salem Middle School in Salem, Indiana. His favorite subjects in school are science and math. Aaron and Zachary organized a food drive to provide essential items for families in need within their community. Aaron enjoys reading, weight lifting, and basketball. Zachary enjoys art, running, and being outdoors.

Obituaries



Stephen M. Feldman

Stephen M. Feldman of Apollo Beach, Florida, passed away on December 22, 2023, at age 81. Born to Meyer and Annette Feldman in Philadelphia on November 1, 1942, he attended Temple University and its School of Dentistry, graduating with a D.D.S. in 1967. He then joined the U.S. Air Force as a captain, assigned to Norton AFB in San Bernardino, CA, and became its preventive dental officer.

While there he met Sargent Anna Robbinette-Workman Feldman, who he married in March of 1969. Upon his release from the Air Force, he joined the New Jersey Army National Guard in 1969 and then in 1976 transferred to the US Army Reserves.

He trained in periodontics at Loyola University of Chicago and became certified 1971 in periodontics, joining the faculty of New Jersey Dental School that year, teaching periodontics and coordinating preventive dentistry, which became his professional passion. He received a M.S. Ed. from the University of Southern California in 1974. In 1976 he joined the faculty at the University of Louisville (Kentucky), where he continued as a tenured associate professor to teach periodontics and preventive dentistry and also was Director of Continuing Dental Education and Community Services. He received numerous awards at the university and in local and national dental societies.

Dr. Feldman volunteered to do dental exams and give preventive dentistry talks in the community and he frequently appeared as a guest in the visual, audio and print media on preventive dentistry topics. He also published numerous scientific articles in professional journals and gave professional presentations at national dental meetings, retiring from Louisville in 2002 and moved to California, New Mexico, and then Florida. He contributed numerous letters to the editor to newspapers, a favorite hobby of his. He was also an avid photographer and has thousands of pictures catalogued in his numerous albums. Dr. Feldman was a true friend to those with whom he came in contact. May his memory be a blessing.

In the past 19 years he lived in Florida where he was a member of Congregation Beth Shalom of Brandon. Unfortunately, the community surrounding the Temple suffers from both housing and food insecurity, as it is in many communities. Given that it is one of the very important tenets from G_d, he felt it was incumbent on him to volunteer in the monthly food bank which is part of the Outreach Programs at his synagogue.

He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Anna, his daughter, Samantha Feldman Ashby, and his two grandchildren, Rowan and Amara, who live in New Mexico. Stephen's obituary can be viewed on Hillsboro Memorial Funeral Home's website: hillsboromemorial.com. Should you choose to donate in memory of Stephen, please consider the following: Congregation Beth Shalom of Brandon: bethshalom-brandon.org. Feeding Tampa Bay: feedingtampabay.org and Metropolitan Ministries: metromin.org.

He met Diane, his beloved wife of 61 years, at a Kentucky Derby party in Queens, NY, hosted by his sister, Ruth



Dr. Allan Lee "Duke" Myers

Dr. Allan Lee "Duke" Myers of Louisville, Kentucky and Longwood, Florida was born on July 26, 1935 in Louisville and died on December 31, 2023.

Allan was a graduate of Male High School. He attended Butler University and graduated from the University of Louisville and its School of Dentistry.

He met Diane, his beloved wife of 61 years, at a Kentucky Derby party in Queens, NY, hosted by his sister, Ruth

Anne, and five months later they married. He served in the US Army Dental Corps at Fort Dix, NJ then returned to Louisville to operate his private dental practice for the next 43 years. After closing his practice, he worked as a contract dentist at Fort Knox.

Allan was a member of Sigma Alpha Mu fraternity; Alpha Omega Dental Society; the American Dental Association; the Anti-Defamation League; B'Nai B'rith; the Louisville Jewish Community Center; the Standard Club; Keneseth Israel Congregation, where he served as president; and Congregation of Reform Judaism in Orlando, where he was president of the Senior Club.

Allan was an avid collector of many things, most famously casino chips and antique poker chips, co-authoring multiple books on the subject. He was a charter and lifetime member of the Casino Collectibles Association (CC>CC) and was inducted into its Hall of Fame.

He spent years proudly compiling an in-depth family tree historical document that spans many volumes, which he leaves for future generations to embrace.

Allan is survived by his loving wife Diane, his daughters, Robin Anderson (Stewart) and Shari Massey (Kevin), sister-in-law Abby Schiff, niece Shelley Barnes (Harry), nephews Michael Rothstein (Doreen) and Jack Rothstein (Debbie Bjes), great nieces, great nephews, cousins, and many friends. Allan was pre-deceased by his parents, Eva and David Myers, and his sisters, Elinor Rothstein and Ruth Anne Myers.

Funeral services were held Jan. 5, 2024 at Herman Meyer & Son, with burial in Keneseth Israel Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to Keneseth Israel Congregation of Louisville, Congregation of Reform Judaism in Orlando, or the charity of the donor's choice.



Carole Moss Rifkin

Carole Moss Rifkin died on January 16, 2024, at the age of 87 in Louisville, Kentucky. She met her future husband, Sheldon "Shelly" Rifkin, in Syracuse, New York, and they began a loving 64-year relationship that took them on many adventures across the United States and worldwide. Eventually, they settled in Louisville, where they spent the rest of their lives together.

Throughout her life, Carole was devoted to her family, which included her four children, Steven Rifkin (Siska), Risa Yussman, Donna DelSardo (Tony), and Jodi Hatzell (Tim), as well as her 11 grandchildren, Danielle (Micah), Brenna, Dylan (Megan), Hanna (Stephen), Sami (Todd), Geoffrey, Jordan, Andrew, Bailey, Dori and Ari; and four great-grandchildren, Micah Jr., Arya, Lilly, and Layla. Her family was her focus and her true angels.

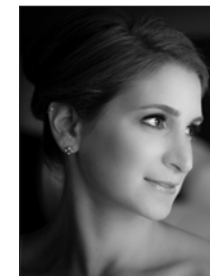
Carole was also deeply committed to The Temple, where she worked at the front desk and with the rabbis. She sang in the choir and loved celebrating all the holidays with her family and friends. She had a passion for collecting angel figurines, symbolizing her belief in people's goodness. Carole will be deeply missed by all who knew her, but her memory will live on through her loving family and the many lives she touched throughout her life.

After a funeral service on January 19, Carole was buried in The Temple Cemetery. Memorial donations may be sent to The Temple-Shir Chadash, the choir that Carole so enjoyed.

out her life.

After a funeral service on January 19, Carole was buried in The Temple Cemetery.

Memorial donations may be sent to The Temple-Shir Chadash, the choir that Carole so enjoyed.



Melinda Segal (Mellman)

Beloved wife of Elliot Segal. Loving mother of Jordan and Alex Segal. Cherished daughter of Maxine and Andrew Mellman. Dear sister of Frank (Sari) Mellman.

Fond daughter-in-law of Clifford (Joan) Segal and the late Laurie Segal and sister-in-law Andrea (Lawrence) Goldstein.

Melinda grew up in Louisville KY, where she attended Collegiate School and graduated from the advanced program at Ballard HS. During high school she was rated among the top five women épée fencers in the United States and volunteered at the Louisville Zoo caring for large mammals. She attended Barnard College of Columbia University in New York City, earning a BA in Architecture, and was elected a Class Marshal. Melinda also continued to fence and received All-Ivy-League recognition.

After graduation, Melinda was Sales Manager for Tiffany & Co's Fifth Avenue flagship store, managing over 100 sales professionals with responsibility for an average of \$1 million in sales per day. She transferred to New Product Development in the Watch Division while also serving on the Board of the High Line Park development in New York.

Melinda moved to Chicago to be closer to family, served on the Board of the Art Institute of Chicago and was active in various religious organizations. At the time of her death, she was the Director (and founder) of the Wall Covering Division of Holly Hunt, a Herman Miller subsidiary.

Services were held Dec. 27 at Chicago Jewish Funerals, 8851 Skokie Blvd., with interment at Westlawn. Memorial contributions may be made to Cancer Wellness Center, 215 Revere Drive, Northbrook, IL 60062, www.cancerwellness.org, or to your favorite charity.

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GLOBE

Antisemitic incidents have 'skyrocketed' in the United States post-Oct. 7, ADL reports

By Ben Sales
JTA

Antisemitism in the United States has "skyrocketed" in the three months since Hamas' Oct. 7 invasion of Israel, according to data tallied by the Anti-Defamation League.

There were 3,283 antisemitic incidents in the United States between Oct. 7 and Jan. 7, according to the ADL's report — including 60 physical assaults. It also counted 553 incidents of vandalism and 1,353 incidents of harassment.

The total number of incidents during the past three months is more than four times the number that occurred during the same period last year. The figure is higher than the total the group has recorded over the course of any full calendar year aside from 2022. By comparison, the ADL counted 2,717 antisemitic incidents during the entirety of 2021. In the whole of 2014, the year of Israel's last ground invasion of Gaza, the ADL recorded just 912 antisemitic incidents.

The main driver of antisemitism over the past three months, according to the group, is the Israel-Hamas war that began with the Oct. 7 invasion: The ADL said two-thirds of the incidents "included verbal, written, or contextual references to Israel or Zionism." Forty percent of the incidents tallied in Wednesday's re-

port — a total of 1,317 — were pro-Palestinian rallies that included "expressions of support for terrorism against the state of Israel and/or anti-Zionism."

ADL CEO Jonathan Greenblatt has repeatedly stressed, both before and after Oct. 7, that the group views anti-Zionism as tantamount to antisemitism. Surveys have shown that majorities of American Jews feel attached to Israel and say that opposition to its right to exist is antisemitic. Greenblatt said in a statement Wednesday that "In this difficult moment, antisemitism is spreading and mutating in alarming ways."

The ADL's equation of anti-Zionism and antisemitism, however, has put the organization at odds with groups like Jewish Voice for Peace and IfNotNow, which are anti- or non-Zionist and which have focused their criticism on Israel since Oct. 7. Greenblatt has referred to those organizations as "hate groups." The ADL's stances have also reportedly led to dissent and resignations, as Jewish Currents reported that four staffers quit the group in protest of the group's policies following Oct. 7.

Hundreds more of the incidents involved fake bomb threats mailed or called into synagogues or other Jewish institutions — a practice known as "swatting" that had occurred prior to Oct. 7, aiming to prompt a law enforcement response,

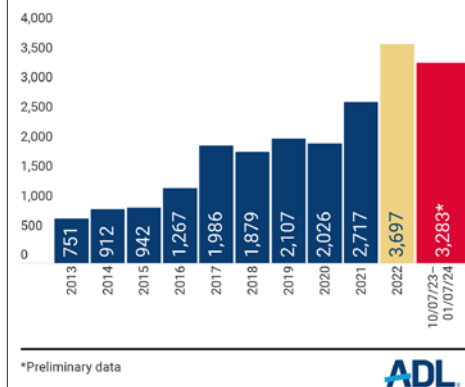
and has continued at a large scale since. During one December weekend, hundreds of synagogues across the country received false bomb threats.

Wednesday's report also said that since Oct. 7, there have been 505 antisemitic incidents at college campuses — an arena that has been a major focus of antisemitism watchdogs as well as elected officials during the Israel-Gaza war. Another 246 incidents occurred at K-12 schools, the report said. A string of universities and school districts have been subject to federal civil rights investigations over their handling of antisemitism post-Oct. 7.

The 60 assaults — 20 per month — are more than double the monthly average of around 11 the ADL recorded in 2022. In the most severe incident since Oct. 7, a Jewish man died after being struck on the head at dueling pro-Israel and pro-Palestinian rallies in southern California. At Columbia University, an Israeli student was allegedly assaulted during a dispute over hanging posters with pictures of hostages held by Hamas. A man has also been arrested for an alleged hate crime assault of an Israeli in Times Square.

The ADL could not say what portion of the assaults, nor how many of the campus incidents, took place during demonstrations related to the war.

Antisemitic Incidents | U.S.
Ten Year Review | 2013–January 2024



The ADL's surveys compile data from law enforcement, media reports and incidents reported directly to the organization.

The report did not break incidents down by location or date, though a previous ADL report, released last month, suggests that the pace of antisemitism has remained steady since Oct. 7. In December, the ADL reported that it had tallied 2,031 antisemitic incidents including 40 assaults over the first two months of the war. Taken together with this report, that means there have been a little over 1,000 incidents, and 20 assaults, per month.

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GLOBE

Amid war, this Israeli educator is finding new ways to promote Jewish-Arab coexistence

By Larry Luxner
JTA

It only took a few minutes from the time the rocket fire from Gaza began on the morning of Oct. 7 for Karen Tal to field her first of many phone calls and messages with terrible news.

The CEO of Amal, a secular educational network whose mission is to serve Israelis of all religions, Tal heard first from the principal of an Amal school in Ofakim, a Jewish city near Gaza. The principal said she could see Hamas terrorists shooting people in the street from her apartment balcony.

"We saw the pictures on TV, but we were getting real information from the field," recalled Tal, whose best friend's mother and her Filipino caregiver were among those killed at Kibbutz Kfar Aza.

In the ensuing days, Tal would learn that at least 42 alumni of Amal schools were killed on Oct. 7, and several others had been taken hostage to Gaza.

As this grim picture became clearer, Tal's first order of priorities was to figure out what she could do to support students and faculty, and to ensure that the war did not tear apart the delicate spirit of coexistence at the core of Amal's work. About 40% of Amal's 81 high schools and colleges are located in Arab or Druze communities. In all, over 30,000 students and 2,500 teachers are part of Amal schools.

"We're family, and we all share the same pain. It doesn't matter if you're Arab or Jewish," said Tal, 59, who immigrated to Israel from Morocco as a young child and grew up in Jerusalem. "Right now, this question of coexistence is so relevant to each one of us."

Tal's background and experience puts her in a unique position to deal with the monumental challenge of helping Israeli children of all ethnic backgrounds heal from this national trauma.

More than a decade ago, Tal gained international renown for transforming the Bialik-Rogozin School in impoverished south Tel Aviv into one of Israel's most successful educational models. The school had roughly 800 students from 48 countries, including violence-plagued African nations such as Eritrea, Nigeria and Sudan, as well as Israeli Jews and Arabs.

Students were performing abysmally, and the Tel Aviv municipality wanted to close the school. But after Tal took over as principal in 2005, she combined the elementary and high schools into one entity, transformed the school into a model of coexistence, and reversed its academic decline.

In 2011, Tal won Israel's National Education Prize for her achievements, HBO made a film about the school called Strangers No More, which won an Oscar for best short documentary, and Tal received The Charles Bronfman Prize. The

\$100,000 prize was established in 2004 by the children of Canadian philanthropist Charles Bronfman — Ellen Bronfman Hauptman and Stephen Bronfman together with their spouses Andrew Hauptman and Claudia Blondin Bronfman — and is given to a Jewish humanitarian under age 50 whose work is grounded in Jewish values but benefits humanity universally.

"After winning the Charles Bronfman Prize I decided it was time to search for a new challenge," Tal said.

She used the prize money to create a nonprofit called Tovanot B'Hinuch (Educational Insights) and spent the next decade implementing her educational model — which employs long school days, volunteer private tutors and extracurricular courses — in at least 40 other schools in Israel.

"One of the main things I emphasized was coexistence between Jews and Arabs," Tal said. "We believe that each one of these students can achieve whatever they want. But they need resources because there's a socioeconomic gap. We know how to do it. That's my job."

Just over a year ago, Tal became the CEO of Amal, which was established in 1928 by the Histadrut labor federation as




Karen Tal, right, visits with a student at an Amal school in Petah Tikva, Israel, Nov. 24, 2023. (Photo by Larry Luxner)


a nationwide secular educational network for Israelis from Jewish, Muslim, Christian and Druze backgrounds. Today Amal schools are known for their focus on science, technology and entrepreneurship — and coexistence.

As at many schools in Israel, Hamas's Oct. 7 attack and the ensuing war have been severely disruptive. Some Amal schools are located in cities that have been evacuated due to the conflict, many students are mourning family members killed in the war, and there are staffers who have

See **COEXIST** on page 26



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GLOBE

'Origin' story: How Ava DuVernay's new movie connects the Holocaust, slavery and caste

By Andrew Lapin
JTA

Early in the new drama "Origin," the Pulitzer Prize-winning

Black author Isabel Wilkerson (played by Aunjanue Ellis-Taylor) calls her cousin from Berlin to share that, as part of her research into American racism, she intends to learn more about the Nazis' treatment of Jews.

Her cousin is unimpressed.

"Leave Jewish folks alone," Marion (Niecy Nash) advises Isabel. "They don't need you. Write about us."

But this movie's version of Wilkerson can't abide by that. In her mind, the fates of Jews and Black people are connected by the hidden system of "caste": arbitrary societal hierarchies that encourage cruelty and subjugation. This is the thesis undergirding "Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents," the 2020 bestseller by the real-life Wilkerson, which deems Nazism and American racism — alongside India's own rigid caste system — as the caste systems that have "stood out" the most "throughout human history."

And "Origin," the new film by Ava DuVernay now in theaters and based in part on this book, is devoted to making those connections plain.

Here's a Jewish guide to what "Origin" has to say about the Nazis and their connection to Wilkerson's broader thesis.

What is 'Origin' about?

Written and directed by DuVernay ("Selma," "When They See Us"), "Origin" is a dramatization of the writing of Wilkerson's "Caste" that uses historical recreations and the author's own family story to capture the book's cerebral tone.

The film opens with the 2012 murder of Black teenager Trayvon Martin in Florida, later recreating Nazi-era Germany, the Jim Crow South and other moments it connects through the idea of caste.

Well-regarded 20th-century Jewish texts make up some of the onscreen Wilkerson's research process, including a quote by Holocaust survivor Primo Levi and glimpses of the 1956 anthropological book "Israel Between East And West," by Raphael Patai. Palestinians are also name-dropped at one point, with a scholar from the Dalit caste — the "untouchable" lowest tier of India's caste system — telling Wilkerson he feels a kinship with them as well as Black people.

The book "Caste" itself has sometimes been attacked in recent years as an example of "critical race theory," an academic analysis of racist structures that conservatives say amounts to indoctrination and have sought to ban from classrooms. Wilkerson's book is one of about a dozen at the center of an ongoing lawsuit involving a Texas public library that had tried to remove a selection of titles against the wishes of some residents; an-

other is the picture book "In The Night Kitchen," by the Jewish author Maurice Sendak.

"Caste" is also being targeted by a Texas Republican state representative as one of 850 books that he says "might make students feel discomfort, guilt, anguish, or any other form of psychological distress because of their race or sex."

Jim Crow and the Nuremberg Laws

One Nazi-era event dramatized in "Origin" is the 1935 drafting of the Nuremberg Laws, the race-purity strictures that declared Jews to be racially inferior and outlawed relations between them and Germans.

The film emphasizes the fact that the real-life Nazi officials who came up with the laws drew heavy inspiration from the Jim Crow South's segregation laws, which made it a crime for Black and white people in the South to enter relationships, attend the same schools or share the same public spaces.

Wilkerson's book notes that the Nazis could not understand why the Americans hadn't included Jews in their race laws "when it was so obvious to the Nazis that Jews were a separate 'race' and when America had already shown some aversion by imposing quotas on Jewish immigration." The film's version of Wilkerson tells a relative at one point, "The Jews and the Nazis were the same color," emphasizing that caste isn't necessarily

about skin color.

"The man in the crowd"

Another Nazi-era event DuVernay dramatizes is a famous photograph of German shipyard workers in 1936 delivering the "Heil Hitler" salute. One man in the photo is standing with his arms folded, apparently refusing to pledge his loyalty.

It's an image that has gone viral in recent years and that Wilkerson included as an opening anecdote in "Caste" to illustrate the power of being a lone voice against injustice. In the years since the photograph was taken, the man has been identified by a living relative as August Landmesser, a one-time Nazi Party member who had fallen in love with a Jewish woman the year before the photo was taken.

"Origin" imagines the courtship between Landmesser and his Jewish lover, Irma Eckler, as playing out in secret, via clandestine meetings in jazz clubs, defying the Nazis' caste structures. Eventually, the couple have children and try to flee across the border but are arrested for violating the Nuremberg Laws, which forbade "pureblooded" Germans like Landmesser from romancing Jews.

In real life, according to a family history authored by one of the couple's daughters, Landmesser was sent to prison and then drafted to fight for the Nazis

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GLOBE

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in 1944, declared missing in action and believed dead before the war ended. Eckler was sent to a concentration camp and sent her last recorded letter in 1942.

Nazi book bans and Remarque

Perhaps inspired by recent book-banning efforts in the United States, DuVerney's film also heavily emphasizes the Nazis' own book-burning practices. A segment showing Wilkerson's research visit to Berlin lingers on the city's book burning memorial, "The Empty Library," an underground illuminated sculpture of empty white shelves. Designed by the acclaimed Israeli artist Micha Ullman, the sculpture's image in the film is given more screen time than even the city's more famous Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, and is accompanied by flashbacks of a public Nazi book burning taking place.

One book in particular is frequently name-dropped in the film as a target of the Nazis, although its Jewish history is considerably more complicated: the World War I novel "All Quiet On The Western Front." The book's German author, Erich Maria Remarque, was frequently accused by the Nazis of being Jewish, though he wasn't; his antiwar novel, which is heavily critical of Germany's military failures, was seen by the Nazis as demoralizing, as was its initial 1930 film adaptation, directed by a Jew. The book was recently remade into a Netflix movie that was heavily decorated with Oscar nominations.

Subjugation vs. extermination

Also during Wilkerson's Berlin visit in

the film, she gets into an argument with a German academic over the efficacy of linking slavery to the Holocaust.

While slavery persisted for several generations and involved unspeakable suffering, the companion states, the fundamental aims were different: slavery was an arm of capitalism designed to exploit humans for profit, while the Holocaust was a project to exterminate all Jews from the earth.

It's an argument that has often proved heated in the U.S. in recent years, as some Jews have fought against race-based history concepts that they claim prioritize Black suffering over their own. A Jewish leader in the right-wing parent activist group Moms For Liberty told JTA last year that she was inspired to campaign against public education after her daughter faced a quiz question in school whose "correct" answer was that slavery was worse than the Holocaust, which she said she considered "a Holocaust-minimizing question."

Undeterred, the film's Wilkerson continues to insist on the resemblance between the two on the basis of caste: that both institutions served to designate a lower class of people who could be mistreated by an upper caste as "an undifferentiated mass of nameless, faceless scapegoats."

A late-in-the-film montage makes this point explicit, as it cuts between scenes of Jewish women and children being abused at a concentration camp; Black women being abused onboard a slave ship, and the murder of Trayvon Martin.



Jon Bernthal and Aunjanue Ellis-Taylor in a scene from "Origin." (Array Filmworks/Neon)



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NEWS/GLOBE

SUPER SUNDAY

Continued from page 1

are longtime givers, who appreciate being contacted by someone who shares their values.

"There are traditional Super Sunday donors I've heard from," Wagner says, "who enjoy knowing that's when they're getting their call and having their conversation, then being acknowledged and thanked for their continuous commitment."

Volunteers, too, tend to get a lot out of the experience. "It gives individuals who are participating a real opportunity to look across the table to other colleagues who are also participating," says former Louisville mayor Jerry Abramson, a longtime Super Sunday volunteer, "and draw from them the energy and excitement that's occurring as phone calls are made and financial commitments are secured."

"For me it's an easy ask," Salamon says. "It's easy to talk about all the good work and where the money's going supporting the Jewish community. Typically, 'I'm calling somebody who's already committed to giving, so it's just thanking them for their support and talking about the new things that are going on.'"

Veteran Super Sunday volunteers know the typical prep drill. "There's a little pep talk after the beginning," Salamon says. "Then you're given a list of callers, you find a little area in the room and start calling away."

Busy, but low tension. "I used to telemarket, and I was terrified of calling people," she recalls with a laugh. "In college I got this job selling replacement windows

over the phone, and that was really hard. So this is like nothing."

There is a bit of luck involved – will the person answer the call, or let it go to voice-mail? "I'm actually surprised – I'll leave messages and people will call back," Salamon says. "They know it's Super Sunday; they expect the call."

How would Salamon advise a prospective volunteer? "I'd encourage anyone who hasn't done it before to get over their fear of picking up the phone and asking for money to give it a go," she says. "It's not that hard."

Indeed, "every year there are also first-time givers who bring a lot of pride to the volunteer making that call," Wagner says. It's hugely satisfying when "a volunteer has a conversation with a donor who's excited to participate – perhaps for never before, or not for a long while."

Numerous donors have already given to the Federation's emergency campaign supporting Israel after the October 7 attacks by Hamas. They recognize that the Annual Campaign, which addresses predominantly local needs, continues to merit their support.

"Many of them have made significant contributions to the Israeli emergency humanitarian fund," Abramson says, "and those are the same ones we have counted on for years, and who continue to be supportive of the services offered through the Jewish Federation. I'm very proud to be a part of the Super Sunday team."

If you'd like to participate or want more information, contact Lee Anne Alsup at 502-238-2707 or lalsup@jewishlouisville.org. To give to the Annual Campaign, go online at jewishlouisville.org/donate.

COEXIST

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been called away as reservists for military duty. Schools in Tiberias and Hadera have taken in students evacuated from their homes near the Lebanon-Israel border.

Tal is also concerned about students falling behind academically — especially after time lost due to the pandemic. A lot of Tal's work over the last three months has been raising money for Amal educators to deal with the current moment.

"We need more resources to help deal with the trauma," Tal said. "We understand that we cannot give each of our students a private meeting with a psychologist. So we want to train the trainers. If our educators will be stronger, so will the students."

Twice a week, Tal visits a different high school or college in Amal's network. During a visit to one Bedouin school in Al-Said, a village east of Beersheva, the principal recounted how he drove to the Nova trance party the morning of Oct. 7, rescued several young Jewish students and brought them back to his village for safety.

Students and faculty at Arab schools are having a particularly difficult time dealing with mixed emotions amidst the war, according to Tal. She recounted a teacher who related how sad and confusing it is to be targeted on the one hand by Hamas terrorists, who murdered both Jews and Arabs in their rampage, and on the other hand to hear from relatives in Gaza enduring airstrikes by Israel.

Tal described how she's trying to promote coexistence among Amal's Arab-Israeli students.

"I have three goals: for our students to develop self-confidence, then develop and identify with the village or community they live in, and finally to develop an Israeli identity," Tal said. "My basic premise is we are not going anywhere, and the Palestinians are not going anywhere. We must live together. But this is about defining what we can and cannot do. And we should both agree that terrorism is outside the rules of the game."

Every Israeli student regardless of religion, Tal says, should learn a core body of knowledge that includes the basics for a modern Israeli society: Hebrew, Arabic, English, math, science, and the humanities. That includes not just music, art and literature, but also the study of both the Torah and the Quran, she said.

"What I want to do in Amal is not just talk about theory, but to practice values," Tal said. "My dream is that every Arab student will be able to speak Hebrew fluently, and that all Jewish students will learn Arabic — because language is a bridge to collaboration."

Despite these dark times, Tal says she has hope for the future.

"There is always a solution. Even though we are in darkness, we must find that little candle of light," she said. "It's a question of leadership and responsibility. We don't have the privilege of giving up."

This story was sponsored by and produced in partnership with The Charles Bronfman Prize, an annual prize presented to a humanitarian whose innovative work fueled by their Jewish values has significantly improved the world. This article was produced by JTA's native content team.



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NEWS

TRAUMA

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side of the world.”

Younger children, whose worldview is by definition constricted, often don't grasp geography and distance the way grownups do. A conversation might include exploring to a child that an event is “happening on the other side of the globe, and then show them a globe so they can see how far away it is,” Nowicke advises.

Talking about the war – or any potentially upsetting subject – should be reserved for a time and a place where both parent and child can participate without undue distraction.



Sarah Roos

“I think the biggest thing is having a time set aside for that one-on-one connection,” says Sarah Roos, a clinical psychologist on the staff of Jewish Family & Career Services. “And then really letting the child lead the conversation. So there might be a starter like, ‘Hey, you might have heard there’s a lot of stuff going on,’ or just starting in a very general and broad way and letting the child tell you what they know about it, their thoughts, their feelings -- all those things with the goal of reassuring the child that they are physically safe here. That’ll give you a good clue, developmentally, what would be appropriate for them. Because you don’t necessarily want to jump into a whole bunch of tedious details with someone who’s in elementary school, versus someone in high school who might have more access to information or a general knowledge base. Then there might be more of a space to have a specific conversation.”

The fundamental dilemma then becomes how much to tell a child, and how much to withhold. Seven-year-old Galil Rosin’s second grade is a case in point. “When he got back to school,” his father recalls, “we found another one of the girls in his class is a cousin of one of the kidnapped (hostages). This started bothering us. We weren’t trying to block all data from him, but at least not telling him things that he hadn’t heard. But when he heard that a very good friend of ours – a mother – was also kidnapped in Gaza and she was brought back, after a while we had to talk to him about it.”

Another reality is that his family lives close to an Arab village, whose inhabitants are also his family’s neighbors. “It was very important to tell (Galil) that is not at risk because of this. We live among people we trust. We have the army and the police and everything we need to defend us.”

Still, there is no denying the immense security breakdown on October 7. “We tried to say to him that there was a failure,” Ory Rosin says, “a specific failure at a specific time, and that can never happen again because we will never let it happen again. You are not going to kidnapped or anything like that. That is something that happened, and everyone is dealing with fixing the situation now.”

Regardless of surrounding conditions, “we try to make him understand that he can ask anything,” his father emphasizes, acknowledging that a seven-year-old

is capable of appreciating difficult circumstances.

“He’s exactly the age that we actually can see his mind developing new perspectives,” Rosin says. “Before he goes to sleep is when he’s asking the hardest questions. Lately we were talking about what’s going on in Gaza, we try to say to him that this war is bad for everyone, and that we hope less innocent people will be injured or hurt.”

Inevitably, however, some questions have no easy answers.

“Sometimes I tell him that it’s something I need to think about, so you will understand,” his father says. And while their daughter, Naomi, is too young to grasp the grimmest realities of wartime Israel, Rosin says that she – and occasionally even her brother -- had episodes of bedwetting reflecting abrupt changes in their daily routine.

The options were telling. “Until a month ago, she used to ask where we would go in case of an alarm,” her father recalls. “She doesn’t understand the meaning of the question. She’s asking it because she heard her brother ask it. And we answered her directly: ‘In case of an alarm, we go there, or we go there.’ We try not to make her worry. And when she’d be back into a routine, she’s okay. We’re very privileged, because not many children in Israel feel like that these days.”



Clint Nowicke

It’s vital to remember that children are not simply miniature adults. “A lot of times they don’t know what words to use to ask questions,” Nowicke says. “The younger the kid is, the more they’re going to focus on things that are salient to their own world. So, they’ll ask questions like, ‘How are the kids going to school if there’s a war happening?’ or ‘What’s happening to all their toys?’ Older kids (might) ask, ‘Does that mean they’re going to institute the draft again?’ Or ‘Is this going to interrupt my trip on Birthright?’ They’re a little bit more pragmatic.”

And it’s perfectly okay for parents to admit they don’t have all the answers, and to advise their children that it’s a good idea to seek out someone who might be more able to help in a particular situation.

“You can tell them, ‘I’m honestly not sure, but that’s a good question,’” Nowicke says. “Let’s go ask Rabbi David and see what he would say about it.’ Because no question or concern that a kid has is silly or not a good question, because they probably aren’t the only kid worrying about it. We don’t want to dismiss those questions, even if to us they seem simplistic.”

Whatever the situation, parents should always be aware that a child will pick up on their reactions. “It’s important for parents to have their own spaces to process what’s going on,” Roos says. “It’s okay to share some of your own feelings or thoughts about what’s going on, as long as you’re doing it in a developmentally appropriate way. But your child shouldn’t be the primary person you’re processing it with. You should have your own support and resources and friends.”



Clockwise from top left: Ory Rosin with his son, Galil; two photos showing Galil and Naomi Rosin with their parents, Ory Rosin and Laura Milo; bottom photo: Naomi and Galil Rosin with their father, Ory. (Photos courtesy of Ory Rosin)



Tips for parents on talking to their children about war and difficult subjects

It’s never easy to talk to your children about something as painful as war. What follows are some jumping off points that might help you frame issues in terms a young child can understand.

- Pick a quiet time and place free of distractions, and not too close to bedtime. Remember that a tired child likely will not be terribly receptive – and a tired parent is of little help, either.
- Let your child lead the conversation. It’s usually better to talk less and listen more.
- Never, ever, be accusatory in your tone. Your role is to put your child at ease, not to lay down the law.
- Remember that children are not miniature adults. If you expect them to process information the way you do, things likely will not end well.
- And when it comes to information, find out where it’s coming from. Is the source a group of friends, other adults, or perhaps some form of social media. While not typically an issue for very young children, adolescents who have their own smartphones may be subject to false, misleading, and even disturbing misinformation. It’s up to you as a parent to separate fact from fiction, and to explain to your child that feelings – while perfectly valid – are not necessarily the same as facts.
- It’s natural for children to harbor fears you may consider irrational, but to them are all too real. Reassure them that events happening half a world away don’t mean they are going to be repeated in your neighborhood. It may be useful to employ a map, or better yet, a globe, to visually demonstrate how distant a conflict like the war in Gaza is from where the child calls home.
- It’s okay if you don’t have all the answers. Better to admit that than to make up an answer you believe the child wants to hear, even if it’s not true. Explain that you may need additional time to consider the question, or to get advice from another, trusted person. And acknowledge that some questions may never be satisfactorily resolved.
- Try to put yourself in your child’s place. His or her world is bounded by small elements that grow larger as the child grows older. The fate of a favorite toy, as inconsequential as that sounds to you, could be of critical importance if its owner is not yet 10 years old.
- Be patient, gentle, and above all, loving.



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