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TEXAS JEWISH POST ✡ SINCE 1947

INSIDE



Town Hall

JFS to discuss
Community Health
Center plans, pp.2-3

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Quick Look

7	Dallas Doings
8	Around the Town
9	Business
10	Jewish Foodie
11	Simchas
12-13	Columnists
15	Obituaries

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HEART OF SERVICE

Dallas Mayor Eric Johnson visits Torah Day School, p.6



Photo: Malke Brookler/Details by M.
Rabbi Avi Pekier, head of school, and preschool students
welcome Dallas Mayor Eric Johnson to the Torah Day School
campus Thursday, Jan. 19, 2023.

JEWISH FOODIE: INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

New cookbook features survivors' recipes, p.10

• Light Shabbat candles:
• 5:37 p.m. Friday, Jan. 27
• Shabbat ends:
• 6:47 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 28

JFS Health Center Town Hall meetings scheduled

Feb. 1 and 12

By Deb Silverthorn

Jewish Family Service (JFS) of Greater Dallas is readying to add primary and preventative medical care services to its more than 150 wraparound services. Town Hall meetings regarding JFS’ Community Health Center (CHC) will be held at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 1, at the Aaron Family JCC and at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 12, at Temple Shalom.

The CHC, once approved as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), will become a federally designated organization providing outpatient, comprehensive primary and preventive care and mental health/substance abuse services to persons of all ages, regardless of their ability to pay or health insurance status. In the future, JFS plans to add oral care, women-specific care and more.

“JFS has been providing all the other components of the social de-

terminants of health for the past 72 years. With the Community Health Center, we will close the loop and provide whole-person care to the clients we already serve who don’t have a medical home,” said Cathy Barker, JFS president and CEO.

Despite there already being seven FQHC sites in the Dallas area, JFS reports that only 5% of the population in Dallas that should be served by a community health center are actually seen in one that exists. Whether because of economics, distance or many other issues, most go without preventative or treatable care, only worsening their conditions over time. JFS’ Community Health Center will help fill the gap in providing medical services for existing and future clients.

“We hope the community will come out to the Town Hall meetings so we can get the message out, let people know what we are doing. The more places we have to serve the community and, through the Community Health Center we’ll



Photos: JFS

The Jewish Family Service Community Health Center will build on previous successful community outreach endeavors. The JFS Counseling Program at Jubilee Park Community Center opened its doors to the community in May 2017. Its mission is to bridge the gap in mental health disparities in the Jubilee Park neighborhood by providing affordable care and culturally responsive services, assisting in these zip codes: 75223, 75210, 75214, 75226, 75227. Pictured at the ribbon cutting of the two-story health clinic Sept. 13, 2022, are JFS staffers, from left, Britton Williams, Deizel Sarte, Ariela Goldstein, Nancy Hall, Cathy Barker and Dr. Gustavo Barcenas.





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JFS's dedicated counseling space at the Jubilee Park Community Health Center

have the opportunity to help so many. It's a great thing that's happening," said Dr. Michael Landgarten, a nephrologist, member of JFS' board of directors and chair of JFS' physicians' board.

A member of JFS' board, Weezie Margolis, is bringing her MBA in hospital management and experience to the forefront as chair of the FQHC Task Force. Also dedicated to the project are JFS' CFO Steven Brown and the agency's COO Deizel Sarte, who both came to JFS after working for FQHCs. Moving forward, a chief medical officer will be hired, as will a complete medical staff.

"I love JFS' mission and the work and 1000% I am so happy about the Community Health Center becoming a reality. We are going to be able to provide for our current clients of all ages, and many who have never crossed our path, with care of diabetes, high blood pressure, preventative care for so many conditions. If seen regularly, so many of these patients will avoid emergent situations or those just too late to manage," Margolis said.

JFS' Community Center, expected to open in November of this year, will be the first in the country under the umbrella of agencies supported by the Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies. Seen as a model, it is expected to be only the first of many. The Dallas team is setting the bar, stepping onto the runway and making it happen.

"The model of integrating the provision of all health services is one that the nation is moving forward with, and it is beautiful to see JFS Dallas taking the lead. We are very excited. JFS Dallas' staff is already fully engaged with our network, actively participating," said Reuben Rotman, founding president and CEO of the Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies, of which JFS Dallas is a member.

In early May, the NJHSA will gather in Dallas for its annual convention with more than 400 profes-

sionals, board members and human health support staffers from the U.S., Canada and Israel coming together. On the calendar of events are site visits of the JFS Counseling Program at Jubilee Park Community Center, the PLAN (People Living Active Now) Clubhouse and JFS' Food Pantry.

"A presentation of this journey by Dallas, to those attending the conference, will certainly be a highlight. Being able to cross-care our clients will be so meaningful and we know every client will be better served. When Dallas succeeds, we all will," said Rotman.

It is required that JFS operate a primary care clinic, meeting all government standards, for a year before applying to become an FQHC. Once the application is submitted, it can take up to nine months to receive the approval.

How will this be paid for?

The primary care model for JFS' Community Health Center is focused on building a strong pediatric component to create the desired payor mix under current Texas Medicaid limitations; children and

adolescents are covered under the program, with a current panel of limited services available for adults. A second clinic is planned to open as early as 2025.

JFS has already raised \$2.5 million needed for startup costs of the first two years with estimates that the medical clinic and behavioral health services will be financially self-sustaining in year three of operations. A capital campaign is underway to raise funds. The locations of the clinics, expected to be near the current site — whether they are to be built from the ground or built out of existing facilities — are still under consideration.

"Adding medical to our already amazing suite of services is an incredible opportunity that comes after years of dreams, much study, planning and expectation. I am so proud of the many who are bringing this to fruition," said Eric Goldberg, JFS board chair.

To register for either town hall event, visit tinyurl.com/JFS-CHC-Town-Hall-RSVP. For further information, contact Leah Guskin at 972-206-1690.

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Community Spotlight



Elise Power

It's hard to believe that Elise Power has only lived in Dallas just shy of two decades. She has developed deep roots in the community through her extensive volunteerism and professional life. Elise is currently the Jewish community liaison for Faith Presbyterian Hospice. She has served Jewish families in their time of need for almost 30 years in various capacities including as CEO and executive director. She has been presented with numerous awards for being a trailblazer and agent of change in the hospice field including the "Each Moment Matters Award." In addition to her work, Elise is passionate about the community organizations with which she's involved and about her family. She has been active in Jewish Association of Professional Sales and Jewish Business Alliance, Jewish War Veterans Auxiliary, the Jewish Community Center, Temple Emanu-El and Dallas Chapter of Hadassah, where she served as president for three years. She is also proud to call herself a Lion of Judah with the Jewish Federation of Greater Dallas. Elise is a member of the Daughters of World War II. Her father, Hal, was buried in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors. In 2017, Elise was presented with "The Next Generation: Carrying the Torch Award" by the Daughters of World War II. The lights of Elise's life are her fiancé David Becker, her children and grandchildren.



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Houston synagogue tightening security

Woman broke in twice, damaged a Torah and harassed children

By Matt Samuels
Jewish Herald-Voice

(Houston Jewish Herald-Voice and JTA) — A Houston synagogue is shoring up its security practices after a woman who said she was motivated to vandalize it by Messianic beliefs entered without being detected.

Ezra Law broke into Congregation Emanu El in the early hours of Jan. 14, causing damage to both the building and a sacred Torah. After spending six hours in the building — including drinking wine and spilling it on one of the sacred Torahs — she was discovered by security personnel before Shabbat services and subsequently arrested.

Law was soon released on bond, but instead of showing up at her court arraignment, she returned to Emanu El on Friday to disrupt a preschool class, screaming at young children before fleeing. Law was arrested again later that day and was released for a second time on Sunday.

That night, she posted online that she had targeted the synagogue in retaliation for being turned away previously because of her belief in Jesus.

The incident, which unfolded on the one-year anniversary of a gunman taking four people hostage at a synagogue in Colleyville, Texas, has shaken the Houston Jewish community. It has also prompted a review of the lapses that twice allowed Law to enter the Emanu El building.

In the first incident, Law was able to remain undetected and alone in the building because the alarm system had been deactivated while scheduled maintenance was being conducted the previous evening. In the second, she entered the building through a door that had been propped open for workers who were loading equipment into the foyer.

“Our personnel failures and the breaches in Emanu El’s security over this past week are totally unacceptable, and we make no excuse for them,” Senior Rabbi Oren Hayon said in a joint statement with Emanu El President Stuart Gaylor and Executive Director David Lamden.

The incident at Emanu El comes as Jewish communities around the country have spent significant sums to develop security systems and train members on security practices, often with the support of Jewish community organizations, in a campaign that accelerated after the 2018 Tree of Life synagogue shooting in Pittsburgh that killed 11 Jews during

Shabbat services. Colleyville’s rabbi credited that training with enabling him to keep his congregants safe and ultimately escape their captor during the hostage crisis there.

Last year, Houston’s Jewish federation launched a security program as part of the Secure Community Network, a Jewish security nonprofit, and hired a retired FBI agent named Al Tribble to serve as community security director. Tribble, whose job is to train synagogues, schools and other local Jewish institutions on how to keep their community members safe, has been involved in the response to the incidents at Emanu El.

Hayon said Emanu El has taken several steps to increase security, including during religious school classes on Wednesdays and Sundays and by boosting the visible police presence on campus.

The synagogue, a Reform congregation with thousands of congregants from all around Houston, is continuing to determine the extent of the damage caused by the intruder, which includes a broken window and wine stains on the back of a Torah scroll and carpeting.

“The damage is immeasurable,” an assistant Harris County district attorney, Erica Winsor, told local media.

“The events of this past week have made many of us concerned about our safety and that of our loved ones,” Hayon told the **Jewish Herald-Voice**. “Our security team is committed to ensuring the safety and security of congregants, staff and especially our children.”

Security personnel detained Law after discovering her inside the synagogue on Jan. 14 until Houston Police officers arrived to arrest her. As a condition of her release on bond, she was forbidden from being within 1,500 feet of the congregation.

After her release, Law posted messages targeting Emanuel El on her social media accounts. “Cost of spilling red wine on the Rabbi’s robes at Congregation Emanu El Synagogue Houston: \$1,500,” read one of the posts. “Cost of the royal blood of Jesus Christ that was spilt on the cross for your sins so that you may have reincarnation in my kingdom: Priceless.”

Law’s Instagram profile, where she has continued to post about her vendetta against Emanu El even after her second arrest, suggests that she is in her 20s and at one point worked in tech and traveled frequently, including, she posted once, to Israel. The account, which posted several times since 2015 about celebrating Jewish holidays, became devoted in



Photo: Jewish Herald-Voice

Congregation Emanu El in Houston is reassessing its security protocols with security nonprofits and consultants.

the last several weeks to posts about Jesus and the conversion of Jews to Christianity.

Late Sunday, Law posted a screenshot of an explanation that she said planned to deliver in court, saying that she had retaliated against the synagogue after being turned away because of her belief in Jesus and had taken refuge after the second incident in a Messianic synagogue. (Messianics adopt Jewish practices but believe in the divinity of Jesus, and proselytizing to Jews is a core activity.)

“I would like to point out that I only visited Congregation Emanu El Synagogue out of the kindness and generosity of my heart to share the gospel with them,” Law wrote, adding that she had not meant to spill red wine on a Torah and wanted to pay for the repairs.

Hayon said that after the first incident Emanu El took several steps to increase security, including during religious school classes on Wednesday and Sunday and increased the visible police presence on campus. In addition, after multiple conferences with law enforcement, the district attorney’s office and Tribble, the synagogue and others distributed Law’s social media posts and photograph to all Emanu El staff members, encouraging them to remain vigilant.

Yet when Law returned to the Emanu El campus on Friday, she was able to enter through an open door and sit among early childhood students and staff who were holding a Shabbat service in a chapel.

The school director and synagogue cantor recognized Law and swiftly summoned security personnel. Guards attempted to remove Law from the chapel but she fled the building before police arrived. She had been inside the building for less than five minutes.

One day later, Law was apprehended and arrested by law enforcement for a second time. She was again released on bond on Sunday.

“Over the past few days, we have learned much about the shortcom-

ings of our security systems and the protocols that were not followed carefully during these times of crisis,” Hayon, Gaylor and Lamden said in their letter to community members. “We have every reason to believe that our campus is safe for you and your families, and that all classes and programs at Emanu El this week will continue as scheduled.”

Emanu El is actively assessing — with the assistance of third-party professionals and consultants — and evaluating its systems, controls and protocols. Several immediate changes include reducing the access points onto the Emanu El campus; employing a two-step verification process for visitors; and increasing vigilance, reinforcement and communication about existing security protocols.

As a result, students at neighboring Rice University may no longer will be able to cut through Emanu El’s campus to get to and from graduate apartments, which are located just north of the synagogue.

Emanu El also is providing emotional and spiritual care to its staff and community. This support will include the presence of its clergy’s pastoral counseling resources and trauma-informed counseling professionals, provided by Jewish Family Service Houston.

“All of us recognize that this has been a difficult week for everyone, and that our homes and our hearts have been weighed down by anxiety, fear and uncertainty,” the Emanu El statement read.

“It is precisely by opening ourselves up to vulnerability and tenderness that we allow our synagogue to do its most effective work — but for this same reason, if our synagogue ever becomes a place where we feel unsafe or insecure, the pain of that breach becomes even more acute and hurtful.”

A version of this story originally appeared in the Houston **Jewish Herald-Voice** and is reprinted with permission.



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‘Shalom Y’all, The History of Jews of the South’

Legacy Midtown Park will host weekly JCC program Feb. 8–March 15

By Deb Silverthorn

“Shalom Y’all, The History of the Jews of the South,” a program of the Aaron Family JCC, comes to The Legacy Midtown Park beginning at 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 8, through March 15. The weekly program is open to the public.

“Jews have played significant roles throughout time, and we’ll go back in time several hundred years of how we got here. The Jews of the South have incredible stories to tell and many of our own community have certainly helped write that history,” said Beri Kaplan Schwitzer, director of adult education and engagement at Temple Emanu-El, who created the curriculum and will lead the programs.

“I love the J, I love my place at Temple and, in celebrating our 150 years, I am learning so much about not just Temple’s history but how it overlaps with Dallas’ history,” she said.

The class explores the history of the Southern Jewish people through their origin stories and immigration, the impact of the Civil War and influential Jewish Southerners, assimilation and civil rights.

“I love creating new outlets of Jewish history, everything you never learned as a child. I’ve taught about Jewish pirates and Jewish thugs who knew Torah and much more. It’s a lot of fun and we’re a really interesting people — there’s so much more to learn about our past,” said Schwitzer.

The “Shalom Y’all” class came about after decades of Schwitzer’s own research of her and her husband Joel’s families. After Joel’s grandmother passed away, Schwitzer found a photo album with little identification for those pictured. More than 20 years later, the educator by profession and genealogist by hobby has accounted for everyone.

“I grew up in southern Nevada where the Jewish community really started in the 1950s,” said Schwitzer. “But my husband’s family, we traced back to the 1700s in Louisiana — the congregations they were a part of, the cemeteries in which they are buried. I wanted to know, who were these people?”

The class, modified from one Schwitzer previously taught as part of the J’s Adult Jewish Learning program, is one of many the J provides at The Legacy Midtown Park. The proximity of the organizations

brings the community together.

“Beri brings to life the history of those who built the Jewish South and those of so many in our community who built it up,” said Rachelle Weiss Crane, the J’s director of Israel engagement and Jewish living.

“We are honored to have her ex-



Beri Schwitzer

pertise and her enthusiasm provide a truly engaging program. We are thrilled to share this experience through Temple Emanu-El and to once again bring such a great opportunity to the community and have it be at The Legacy Midtown Park,” said Weiss Crane. “Shalom Y’all” will feature clips

from the movie by the same title, by filmmaker Brian Bain, a third-generation Jew from New Orleans who made a 4,200-mile road trip through the American South. The Schwitzers, in researching their own family history, learned that people they’d known for years were relatives. “Sitting in services at Anshai, listening to the a cappella Kol Rina choir, we never knew we were watch-

ing family. It turned out Bruce Katz is a fourth cousin. Jewish geography is real. My goal is always to bring our history to life, to share something new, to walk through the path those before us set,” said Schwitzer. For more information, or to register, visit jccdallas.org/event/shalom-yall. Course fees are \$100 for JCC members, \$125 for nonmembers and no charge for residents of The Legacy.

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Libby Friedman and Carol Alkek,
residents at The Legacy Midtown Park.



Mayor Eric Johnson visits Torah Day School of Dallas

Staff Report

Mayor Eric Johnson visited Torah Day School of Dallas Thursday, Jan. 19. Johnson was greeted by preschool students and then addressed an assembly of the middle school. Rabbi Avi Pekier, head of school, asked Johnson to speak on the topic of teamwork and work ethic. Johnson shared his view to the fifth through eighth graders, that working with others is “critical to everything you do in your personal life and in your academic life and someday your professional life whether you realize it or not.”

The mayor explained that regardless of how talented or strong someone is, it is impossible to thrive without the help of others. “There is no such thing as being so strong, so smart, so anything that you don’t need other people.



Photo: Malke Brookler/ Detalles by M. Rabbi Avi Pekier takes Dallas Mayor Eric Johnson on a tour of Torah Day School of Dallas following Johnson’s inspirational speech to middle schoolers Thursday, Jan. 19, 2023.

This whole life that we live here on earth is really about how we relate to others. Some of us are stronger than others. Our job is to help

those who aren’t as strong if we have strength.”

Johnson used several examples of characteristics. Ultimately he said, “We’re meant to shore each other up where others are weak ... Together. That’s how we move forward. That’s how we advance a culture. That’s how we advance a society.”

With regard to work ethic, the mayor advised the students to finish what they started and that it’s better to turn an opportunity down than to accept it and not complete it.

“If you take on the task, finish it. If you agree to do it do it, then give it your all. Don’t do anything half-heartedly. That’s something I’ve lived by for a long time,” Johnson said.

Dallas City Council Member Cara Mendelsohn introduced Johnson to the students. Mendelsohn represents District 12, which includes the Torah Day School campus. In her very per-



Photo: Malke Brookler/ Detalles by M. About 150 students heard from Dallas Mayor Eric Johnson on the topics of teamwork, work ethic and integrity Thursday, Jan. 19, 2023.



Photo: Sharon Wisch-Ray City Council Member Cara Mendelsohn visits with second graders at Torah Day School of Dallas Thursday, Jan. 19, 2023.

sonal introduction, Mendelsohn shared many things she admires about the mayor and what he’s accomplished on both the city and state levels. He has “a heart of service,” she said.

Following the speech, Johnson toured the Torah Day School campus, visited with students in their classrooms and met privately with Torah Day School’s leadership.

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Dallas Doings

Learn about the Federation’s Community Mission to Israel at open houses in February

The Jewish Federation of Greater Dallas has planned a community mission to Israel Nov. 7-13, dubbed Jewish Dallas Israel at 75. Those interested can learn more about the mission at open houses next month. At 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 2, Shearith Israel’s Rabbi Ari Sunshine will discuss the mission at the synagogue, 9401 Douglas Ave. Sunshine will serve as one of the rabbis-in-residence for the mission. At 1 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 5, Rabbi David Stern will discuss the mission at Temple Emanu-El, 8500 Hillcrest Road. Stern is also serving as one of the rabbis-in-residence for the mission. To register for an open house, visit <https://bit.ly/3HrQMIO>. To learn more about the mission in advance of the open houses, visit www.jewishdallas.org/mission. There you will find highlights, various tracks to personalize the mission and costs.

Faust, Becker to star at CBT Men’s Club OscarFest

Movie mavens James Faust and Stephen Becker will be the guest speakers at the annual Congregation Beth Torah Men’s Club/Sisterhood lox-and-bagels OscarFest on Sunday, Feb. 5.

The Oscar edition of the monthly breakfast features discussion about the upcoming Academy Awards and the changing state of moviemaking in general.



James Faust



Stephen Becker

Faust, artistic director of the Dallas Film Society and the AFI Dallas International Film Festival, has served on juries and panels of film festivals around the world. “I’ve been in love with film since the day I snuck into a drive-in with my parents when I was 4 years old,” he told the website Art House Dallas.

Becker, a former arts editor at **The Dallas Morning News**, is senior producer of

the popular **KERA** interview show “Think,” which airs on nearly 200 public radio stations around the country. As **KERA**’s resident film buff, he reports and opines about movies on the air and on its website.

The public is invited to the lox-and-bagels breakfast, which begins at 9:30 and costs \$10, \$5 for students. Congregation Beth Torah is located at 720 W. Lookout Drive in Richardson, near the crossroads of Bush Turnpike and Central Expressway.

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Photo: Sheri Allen
From left, Martha Brown, Anntoinette Baker, Genie Long and Jane Oderberg at the Makom Shelanu movie night Jan. 7, 2023



Photo: Sheri Allen
Nathan Saul and David Saul at the Makom Shelanu movie night Jan. 7, 2023



Photo: Sheri Allen
Stuart Yarus and Judith Williams at the Makom Shelanu movie night Jan. 7, 2023



Photo: Sheri Allen
Richard Allen leads a lively discussion at the Makom Shelanu movie night Jan. 7, 2023.

Movie Night at Makom Shelanu!

On Jan. 7, 30 people attended Makom Shelanu movie night at TCU to enjoy Havdalah, pizza and a screening of the movie, “Gentleman’s Agreement.” This groundbreaking

movie celebrates its 75th anniversary this year, originally premiering on Nov. 11, 1947. Starring Gregory Peck as a journalist posing as a Jew to write an exposé for his newspaper on antisemitism, it won the Academy

Award for best picture. Richard Allen, professor in the Film, Television and Media Department at TCU, led an in-depth discussion afterward, giving everyone interesting behind-the-scenes history, as well as insights and observations about how antisemitism was addressed at that time, in comparison to today. Attendees shared their thoughts and questions as well.

—Submitted by Sheri Allen

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Congregation Beth Shalom to hold Brotherhood event

Congregation Beth Shalom will hold its popular Brotherhood Breakfast Series Sunday, Feb. 5, showcasing a double feature by the award-winning Holocaust Education Film Foundation. “From the Holocaust to Hollywood: The Robert Clary Story” (of “Hogan’s Heroes” fame) and “Surviving Birkenau: The Susan Spatz Story” will be screened. The films’ producer, Mr. Ron Small, will join the gathering for a Q&A following each film.

A complimentary breakfast will be served at 9 a.m., with the program beginning at 10. Reservations are a must! Please call Laura at 817-640-5448 or email info@bethshalom.org. This event is free and open to the community, thanks in large part to a generous grant from the Tarrant County Jewish Federation.

The Congregation Beth Shalom Brotherhood looks forward to welcoming everyone to the program.

—Submitted by Stuart Snow

Matthew and Seth Sherwin celebrate their b’nai mitzvah

On Jan. 5, Matthew and Seth Sherwin, twin sons of Blanca Constable-Sherwin and Daniel J. Sherwin, celebrated their bar mitzvah at Congregation Ahavath Sholom. Matthew and Seth are the grandsons of Ken Sherwin, the



Photo: Submitted by Carole Rogers
Bar mitzvah boys, Matthew, left, and Seth Sherwin

late Felice Sherwin, Cliff Constable and the late Margarita Constable. In advance of their simcha, Blanca Sherwin shared her thoughts about her sons’ journey to Jewish adulthood.

“Mazel Tov! Blessings and Gratitude!

“On Thursday, Jan. 5, 2023, Matthew and Seth Sherwin will have their bar mitzvah celebration surrounded by community friends and family that have had a great part in getting them to where they are today.

“You see, Matthew and Seth were diagnosed with autism at a very young age and though their autism does not define them, the challenges they were faced with became a part of a village. That village included their parents, grandparents, therapists, educators (both religious and academic) and many more friends and family alike. But one thing that remained consistent from a very young age was their Jewish foundation.

“At 13 months old, Matthew and Seth began their Jewish education at Chabad of Fort Worth with Rebbetzin Chana Tovah Mandel; they received their first plush Torah and learned to embrace and respect it. They learned the importance of tzedakah, being a mensch and performing mitzvahs. Soon after, when old



Photo: Submitted by Carole Rogers
The Sherwin twins, Matthew and Seth, embraced Torah from the start.

enough, Matthew and Seth attended Camp Gan Izzy with Rebbetzin Rishi Gurevitch for several years. There they made many memories and friends that to this day hold a special place in their hearts. They learned prayers, halacha, laws and beliefs of the Jewish faith. They also attended many services, holiday celebrations and events, led by Rabbi Dov Mandel and Rabbi Levi Gurevitch, where they fell in love with the chants and prayers so much, we had to have the recordings.

“As the mother of Matthew and Seth, I am forever grateful to the Mandels and Gurevitches for always welcoming the twins and giving them a strong Jewish foundation. Their love for Judaism, who they are, advocacy for the Jewish people and Israel has since been part of their daily routine.

“In 2021, Matthew and Seth began attending Hebrew School at Congregation Ahavath Sholom to prepare for their bar mitzvah celebration. There, they have worked with Rabbi Andrew Bloom and Miss Elaine for countless hours to be ready for their big day.

“Thank you to everyone for your knowledge, guidance, the experiences and the memorable journey to get them here. Toda Raba!”

Mazal tov to the Sherwin family from your friends at the TJP!

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2022 was tough year for tech firms seeking funding

Israel's Silicon Wadi is better off than Silicon Valley

By Judith Segaloff

(JNS) With the plummeting NASDAQ, rising inflation and interest rates, war in Ukraine and nervous investors, funding for Israeli technology startups is in the doldrums, declining by 43% in 2022 from the \$27 billion 2021 bonanza year. Experts warn that as tech investment slows, the Israeli economy as a whole may suffer.

According to some, however, the prospects in Israel are not nearly as bleak as they are in the United States.

When tech funding slows, other businesses tend to slow down as well. Suppliers of components, raw materials and services lose revenue, and investors may have to write off capital. Service providers such as accounting, legal, travel and marketing firms may have to lay off staff.

JNS interviewed a number of industry scions to understand how funding tech companies has changed. Pre-seed and seeding rounds of funding are the embryonic stages that help a business build its infrastructure. A more mature company seeks additional capital to get its operations started. These funding rounds are labeled "A, B, C," etc. At some point a few lucky companies advance from privately-held initiatives to the initial public offering (IPO) stage.

Shlomi Uziel, CEO of Quai.MD, is in the process of moving from the pre-seed stage to acquiring seed funding. His artificial intelligence platform addresses care variability in electronic settings, creating uniform protocols for hospitals in every aspect of health care from diagnosis to billing, keeping the care and the reimbursables consistent. He has forged partnerships with the Medical University of South Carolina and is about to seal an alliance with Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

But Uziel says that in today's market there is a Catch-22.

"Venture capitalists are generalists and therefore expect initial revenues, but in the health care world you are working with hospitals and health care systems, so it's a longer game," he explains. "We need funding to complete the product. The cycle to get the product is longer, the cycle to get to revenue is longer. My solution is to look for ventures that really understand the health care systems, such as hospital venture arms," he says.

Markets are cyclical

Jonathan Medved, founder and CEO of OurCrowd, a global venture platform for accredited investors, has faith. He says the slowdown is all part of a predictable cycle. More than 75% of money deployed in Israel is coming from abroad and most invest with a 3-, 4-, 5- or even 10-year window to exit. Markets are cyclical, he says.

"2021 was an outlier year, drawing \$26 billion-\$27 billion in funding," explains Medved. "COVID-19 was enormous for investments in all things digital. Stocks went up and it was the best year for funding. 2022 was \$16 billion, up from 2010's \$10 billion. Israel is still home to 98 unicorns — [privately-held] tech companies worth a billion dollars or more. For a country this size, that is unbelievable."

Medved explains that when the funding numbers drop by 40%, the valuation of companies goes down. The plunging NASDAQ had a direct impact on venture capital and startups that had not yet gone public, as the valuation is established by investors through comparative analysis. With all the prices down, the prices of venture capital companies are

down across the board, by amounts ranging from 30 to 90%.

That has two impacts. It upsets the investors who thought their shares were worth more than they are. But on the upside, new investment is more affordable. In fact, explains Medved, seed investments are up 22%.

The slowdown is most likely to affect late-stage funding for companies getting closer to going public. The number of IPOs is down and likely to continue to slow down as special purpose acquisition companies (SPACs), publicly traded companies that are formed for the purpose of acquiring existing private ones and taking them public via mergers, got hit hard in 2022.

Higher interest rates and fears that the acquired company may have a harder time growing and generating revenue should there be a recession made it more difficult for SPACs to raise capital and find suitable acquisition targets, closing IPO windows. Firms at the series C or D funding phases can no longer go public. Startups that were initially advised to focus on building the company and not worry about producing cash immediately, now must pivot to keep themselves afloat. Some

may self-fund in what is known as bootstrapping. Others may streamline their operations, focusing on revenue instead of growth. Formerly they were centered on growth instead of profit.

The 'VC Winter'

Serial entrepreneur and venture capitalist Michael Fertik is the managing partner and founder of the Palo Alto, California-based Heroic Ventures and a frequent investor in Israeli startups. In May 2022, he warned his clients in a letter of the "VC [venture capital] Winter" that we are currently experiencing. Fertik told JNS that he is cautiously optimistic about the future.

"Barring any global armed conflicts, I believe the next nine months will be better. Deals are going to start happening again. We have already hit the bottom, and valuations are very low. The money will start flowing again, but the hump is not going to be short-lived," he says.



Photo: Zvi Roger/Wikimedia Commons

The Matam High-Tech Park at the southern entrance to Haifa. The buildings in the foreground belong to Intel and Elbit Systems.

"The venture community in Israel (and outside the U.S.) has never been through this kind of shock before," he adds, pointing out that in 2008 the Israeli VC community was tiny. "Venture capital people who are 35 have never been through a recession."

Roy Fridman, CEO of Jerusalem-based C2A Security, is one of the entrepreneurs who changed his company's strategy to accommodate the new reality.

see TECH, p.14

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Food memories after the Holocaust

By Tina Wasserman

When I premiered my first book at the URJ Biennial in Toronto I shlepped 2 gallons of chicken soup through customs (frozen and in my checked luggage). Why? I had the soup heating up by the entrance to the lecture hall where I was to speak, and 250 people passed through that door before settling into their seats. After I finished my lecture about the history of Jewish food since the expulsion from Spain in 1492, there was more than enough time for questions; the questions came fast and furious about recipes from ancestors that weren’t written down on paper but were etched in the memories of the audience. The chicken soup had done its trick. The attendees’ food memories were subliminally jogged.

Many questions were directed toward Hungarian recipes. I wondered why these recipes had been lost. I then realized that there were only three reasons food memories even had a chance of survival. Either people escaped before the war, they were hidden as non-Jews during the war or they survived the camps. Then there were only a few years before Communism arrived and religious practices were stifled. No wonder so many recipes were lost.

Jan. 27 is Holocaust Remembrance Day, the day that Auschwitz and Birkenau were liberated. Coincidentally I have been reading two books about food memories from and about Holocaust survivors. “Miriam’s Kitchen” relates the impact Miriam and her food had on her daughter-in-law’s reigniting food and religious practices in her home with her young children. The other book was given to me by my children who immediately knew it would have significant meaning for me: “Honey Cakes and Latkes, Recipes from the Old World by the Auschwitz-Birkenau Survivors.” Many books purport to have good recipes that turned out to be 1950s American cuisine (hello, tuna noodle casserole). But this book is the real deal and with poignant comments about the origins of the recipes: the last meal eaten together before the Nazis rounded up the family and sent them to Auschwitz, the simple recipe that was given to a child after the war to fatten him

from his post-camp emaciation.

Last year the secretary general of the Council of Europe said the following words that are prescient in our modern times and especially in our country today: “Today we remember the horrors of the Holocaust. In doing so, it is important to remind ourselves of how the terror started. What became the Shoah did not start with physical attacks. It began with...hateful words, slander and conspiracy theories that fed on anti-Jewish sentiment that had long existed in parts of Europe. We all have the obligation to make sure that this can and will never ever happen again.”

In honor of those who kept the memory and passed it down to us, I share these recipes with you.

Rachel’s Fantastical Chicken Soup

There were, unsurprisingly, many recipes for chicken soup in the “Honey Cakes and Latkes” book. Some were simple, chicken with added flanken and soup greens and dill added at the end; others were elaborate, many-ingredient soups, but always with dill. My mother must have learned how to make chicken soup from her cousins who escaped just before the war broke out, because my recipe is almost identical with Rachel Roth’s Fantastical Chicken Soup, which she often recited to prisoners as they were forced to stand in the freezing cold for night roll call.

Ingredients:

- 4 pounds chicken
- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- 3 sprigs fresh parsley
- 3 sprigs fresh dill
- 1 tablespoon coarsely ground black pepper, or to taste
- 1 tablespoon salt, or to taste
- 2 large onions, quartered
- 5 carrots, peeled and halved
- 3 stalks celery, sliced into ½-inch pieces
- 8 ounces thin noodles
- ¼ small Savoy cabbage

Directions:

1. Put the chicken in a large stockpot. Cover with water and bring to a boil over high heat.
2. Add the garlic, parsley, dill, pepper and salt, then cover, reduce the heat to low and simmer for 2 to 2½ hours.



Photo: Stock

Chicken Soup

3. Add the onions, carrots and celery for the last hour of the cooking time.
4. Remove and bone the chicken, pulling meat into large chunks.
5. Add the noodles and cabbage to the pot and cook for 5 minutes, or until the noodles and cabbage are softened.
6. Return the chicken to the broth to heat through before serving.

Note:

- The numbering of steps is my addition for simplicity. The words are all Rachel’s.

Tina’s Tidbits:

- Although the recipe doesn’t stipulate, it is best to cut up the chicken if you are using a 6-quart pot. Otherwise, the amount of water will be deceptively high and really not yield a good quantity of soup.
- You can strain the soup and then add the carrots back with the chicken chunks if you want a clear broth.

- Obviously, nothing was wasted when cooking in prewar Europe so all the vegetables were eaten.

- If you are using a kosher chicken (which I highly recommend even if you do not keep kosher) you might go easy on the salt until the end of cooking since kosher chickens have already been salted and soaked but still retain some of the saltiness.

Anneliese’s Waffles

For many of us, the secret ingredient in our food recipes is the love for our past and our present families. Anneliese Nossbaum’s waffle recipe was tied to her will with a ribbon. She made these waffles on the same waffle iron for decades and even sent them frozen to Israel when her children lived there. She felt it was an expression of her love. I am sure you all can relate. I once overnighted 5 pounds of my rugelach to my son in Thailand for his birthday. My love was in every bit of the dough and cinnamon and sugar!

Ingredients:

- 3 eggs
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup sugar, plus more for sprinkling
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 3 cups sour cream
- A little milk, as needed, for consistency

Directions:

1. Generously grease a waffle iron with nonstick cooking spray and leave to preheat.
2. In a large bowl, beat the eggs with the butter.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk the flour, sugar and baking powder.
4. Mix the flour mixture into the egg mixture, then add the sour cream.

Add some milk, a drop at a time, if needed, to reach a somewhat thick, pourable consistency.

5. Using a soup ladle or spouted measuring cup, pour a small amount of batter into the waffle iron to create a thin layer. Hold the lid open for a few seconds before closing.
6. Let cook for about 2-3 minutes, or until golden on both sides (the cook time may need to be adjusted depending on the waffle iron — hers was old).
7. Remove the waffle from the iron and let cool slightly before sprinkling with sugar.
8. Repeat with the remaining batter.

Note:

- Waffles can be frozen and defrosted at room temperature.

- These waffles are thin and crepe-like, not fluffy Belgian waffles.

Tina’s Tidbits:

- This recipe could be cut in half by using 1 large egg and 2 tablespoons egg whites or even 2 large eggs since eggs in the old country were probably larger.
- Whole-fat, thick Greek yogurt could be substituted for the sour cream if need be.
- The high liquid content of these waffles creates the more delicate waffle.



WEDDING
Degani-Ackerman

Sophie Degani and Jared Ackerman married Dec. 22, 2022, overlooking the ocean in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, surrounded by their closest friends and family. Jared's cousin, Avi Posen, officiated.

Sophie is the daughter of Lorre and Ram Degani of Dallas. She is the granddaughter of Hana and the late Mike Degani and Bette and the late Mike Epstein, all of Dallas.

Sophie is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin with a degree in political communications and of Emory University School of Law. She is a practicing attorney.

Jared is the son of Sharon and Darcy Delbridge and Ron Ackerman of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. He is the grandson of Rachel and Sol Fink and the late Lois and Sidney Ackerman, all of Winnipeg.

Jared is a graduate of University of Winnipeg and Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where he majored in business. He is a music industry professional.

Coreen Zonana, Michelle Friedman, Ayla Blumberg and Radha Kotliarsky were bridesmaids.

Milan Ackerman was the best man. Jesse Degani and Ben Degani were groomsmen.

Following the ceremony, the reception continued with a mariachi band performing during the cocktail hour, a delicious dinner and a lively dance party.

Sophie and Jared plan to honeymoon in Italy in June 2023, where they hope to see as much of the country as they can (and eat as much pizza and pasta as possible).

They make their home in Atlanta, Georgia.

WEDDING
Holiner-Tobolowsky

Camille Anna Holiner and Robert Harris Zale Tobolowsky wed Dec. 17, 2022, in San José del Cabo, Mexico. Kathryn Koshkin, the groom's sister, officiated.

Camille is the daughter of Wendy and Dr. Joel Holiner of Dallas. She is the granddaughter of Helen Gorosh and Ethel and Harlan Holiner, all of blessed memory. Camille earned her undergraduate degree at Tulane and her doctorate in clinical psychology from Nova Southeastern University. She has joined her father as a full-time clinical psychologist at The Holiner Psychiatric Group.

Robert is the son of Julie and George Tobolowsky of Dallas. He is the grandson of Donald "Poppa" Zale of Dallas and the late Barbara "Honey" Zale, and the late Josephine and Jack Tobolowsky. Robert earned his Bachelor of Science in economics and finance from Southern Methodist University. He is co-founder and managing partner of the real estate firm, Willowood Group.

Following the wedding ceremony, a colorful and vibrant reception was held on the beach. The couple honeymooned in Hawaii.

They reside in Dallas.



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In their words . . .

Columnists, opinion from the TJP



The obligation to seek medical help

Dear Rabbi Fried,

There was recently discussion on the radio about the will of God for people to be sick and doctors treating them. If God made them sick, how can a doctor “play God” and cure them, seemingly in contradiction to His will? I know we Jews go to doctors, but is there an answer to this question?

Rose W.

Dear Rose,

The greatest Torah scholars and sages throughout the millennia were also leading doctors. To name a couple of note, Maimonides was chief physician to the Sultan of Egypt (imagine how his mother swooned “my son the doctor”), Nachmanides was a leading physician in Spain and many of the Sages mentioned in the Talmud were doctors as well.

The source for this custom is in the Torah. When discussing the damages one is liable to when wounding another Jew, the Torah says one should pay worker’s compensation, as it says “*verapoh yeirapeh*,” “you should surely heal him” (Exodus 21:19).

The Talmud learns from here that a doctor has permission to cure a sick person (Talmud, Bava Kama 95a). The classical commentary to the Talmud, Rashi, explains that one might have asked, “G-d struck him and you’re going to heal him?” Therefore the Torah informs us that one has permission by G-d Himself to cure a sick person, and it’s not considered “playing G-d” or infringing upon His will to do so.

The Code of Jewish Law (Yoreh Deah 336:1) goes a step further, stating: “The Torah has given permission for a doctor to cure, and it is a mitzvah to do so and is included in the mitzvah to save a life. Furthermore, if one (is capable to cure and) withholds himself from curing the sick person, it is tantamount to spilling his blood.”

The rationale for the above ruling can be found in the following fascinating story cited in the Midrash. Two sages, Rabbi Ishmael and Rabbi Akiva, were walking with a layman. They were ap-



ASK THE RABBI

By Rabbi
Yerachmiel
D. Fried

proached by a sick man, who described his illness to the rabbis and asked them if they knew a cure. They replied that they did and prescribed it to the ill person. When he left, the layman asked them, who afflicted that man with sickness? They replied, the Holy One, Blessed Be He. He said to them, are you so wise that you entered into a domain that is not yours, He (G-d) afflicted and you will cure?

The rabbis replied, “And what is your livelihood?” He said, “I work the land and behold here is the hoe in my hand.” They asked him, “And who created the ground, who created the vineyard?” He replied, “The Holy One, Blessed Be He.” They asked him, “And how are you entering a domain that is not yours (by you plowing and changing the land)? G-d created the ground, go and eat the fruits that He has produced (without making your own changes)!”

He replied, “Don’t you see the hoe in my hand? If I don’t go out and plow the land, smooth it out, fertilize it and weed it, the ground will produce nothing.” The rabbis proclaimed, “Don’t you see the answer from your own livelihood? Just as a tree not treated properly, fertilized and watered will not only not produce, but will die, also the body of man is like the tree; at times the fertilizer is the medicine he needs, and the ‘man of the land’ is the doctor.” (Midrash Shochar Tov, Shmuel 4:1)

We learn from this Midrash that for a doctor to cure is included in the general will of the Creator that man should repair and perfect the world, and therefore is not contradicting His will.

see FRIED, p.14

Action!

Ok, so the last few articles have been about listening, speaking, and thinking. Now it’s time to act!

We have varying degrees of what we can control in our lives. Much of our happiness stems from how we manage, adapt and function in response to what life throws at us.

The actions we take are indeed more within our control than other factors. In nature, a large part of life depends on natural consequences; if we didn’t plow and farm our fields on time, we would have starved. When camping, if we don’t prepare proper shelter, we may come to harm.

In our current worlds, we have a more insulated life from the natural world, but the basic ideas and consequences exist.

After having listened to those who are important to us, spoken our minds clearly, put thought into what transpired, it’s time to act. The problems for many of us are that we haven’t been able to make healthy, rational decisions that are fundamental to a healthy life.

Within reason and our abilities, we can decide how hard to work, how much to study, how to behave with others and what actions to take in various situations.

While listening, speaking and thinking are essential, it is our actions that define us. How we behave is what is visible to others, not our intentions, thoughts or feelings.

An example: I choose my words carefully. Given that my profession depends on my skills at listening and speaking, I may put more focus on them than most, but the idea is sound for everyone. I do my best to have my words match up with my actions.

When my children were small and needed a vaccination, if they asked if it would hurt, I would say, yes it will, but only briefly. Afterwards, if I said another situation wouldn’t cause pain, they would tend to trust me.

When asked to do something, if I really don’t want to,



ASK DR. K

By Alan
Koenigsberg,
M.D.

I do my best to say no, even though it might upset someone or frustrate them. Then, if at a later date, I agree to do something, they believe I will do it and I do follow through.

Many of us over-commit, become resentful and exhausted and feel guilty and overwhelmed. We need to learn to say no kindly and more often.

It’s important to me that my words and my actions line up; this engenders trust.

As an aside, I recommend not making excuses; just acknowledge if you made a mistake and accept the consequences. We all make mistakes and accepting the consequences is the adult way to go.

If a friend asks me to lunch, and 1 p.m. is possible but I may be late, I don’t just say, OK, let’s meet at 1. I’ll say 1 p.m. sounds good and I’ll do my best, but I may be 10 or 15 minutes late. Being respectful of other people’s time is very important. Don’t make false promises out of guilt.

As humans, we tend to procrastinate when facing unpleasant tasks, like mammograms, colonoscopies, homework, studying, taxes and the like. We don’t want to learn about bad news or do unpleasant tasks. It’s understandable.

However, part of being an adult is making adult choices, taking actions that indicate maturity. So please make those mature decisions, engage those thinking brain cells as best you can and make good choices and good actions!

Alan Koenigsberg, M.D., is a practicing psychiatrist and clinical professor of psychiatry at UTSW Medical School in Dallas.

What happens when we procrastinate?

Dear Families,

We don’t always realize how the Torah addresses issues about our present-day lives. But reading a commentary today from Rabbi Yitzchak Zweig, I learned “and you shall guard the matzot” (Exodus 12:17), which then went to not delaying a mitzvah, which then led to why we procrastinate. Of all of my “sins,” I am not usually a procrastinator except for certain tasks. For example, writing my weekly column — I say it is because I am looking for the right thing to share, but still I often wait until beyond the last minute.

Rabbi Zweig shared a study by a Jewish Russian psychologist named Bluma Zeigarnik who said it is easier for people to remember incomplete tasks than those that are already completed. The idea is that the mind has some cognitive tension that comes from having an unfinished task, and this keeps it in mind. Of course, when we don’t complete those tasks, we continue to have “cognitive tension” so our thoughts are always on those unfinished tasks and we get overwhelmed and stuck!

However nice it is to have a study to explain our procrastination and how we deal with it, what does this have to do with guarding matzo before leaving Egypt? Rashi explains that “matzot” is spelled the same as “mitzvot” and therefore just as we must hurry to prepare the matzo, we must also hurry to do a mitzvah.



SHALOM FROM THE SHABBAT LADY

By Laura
Seymour

The discussion continues on the need to hurry; making matzo is not the same as hurrying to do a mitzvah. Usually the mitzvah can wait but matzo has a time limit.

So what happens when we procrastinate in doing a mitzvah? For many of us, we define a mitzvah as a “good deed.” Jewishly, a mitzvah is a commandment and we have 613 of them — but don’t worry, we do not need to do all (that is another lesson). However, to talk about our lives today in all the various aspects, why do we procrastinate doing a “good deed”? We know there are things we should do to help others, to help the community, to help the world — but we stop. We make excuses; we look the other way. Yet, as the study showed, not doing what we should and having the task still waiting before us causes “cognitive tension.” Let’s call that tension GUILT! We know we should do things and we don’t; we hope that there will be time. Maybe we should think of every task as a mitzvah and rush to do it or at least not procrastinate. A mitzvah is an opportunity for personal growth — doing good helps everyone grow. So here is my column for the week — a little late! Hopefully next week I will remember to hurry!

Laura Seymour is Jewish experiential learning director and camp director emeritus at the Aaron Family JCC.

Hashem is involved in our lives

This Shabbat, 6 Shevat/Jan. 28, is the third yearzeit of my wife Reb-betzin Annette Wolk, Channah Bay-la bas Yehoshua, z”l. These words are offered in her memory.

Pharaoh, at times, seems like a sympathetic soul. G-d tells Moses that the purpose of the Ten Plagues is *V’yadu Mitzrayim ki Ani Hashem* — that Egypt will know that I am Hashem.

After several of the Plagues, Pharaoh utters statements that indicate he has learned that lesson.

Etsbah Elokim hee — It is the finger of G-d.

Hataatee hapa’am — I have sinned this time.

Hashem ha’tsadik — The Lo-rd is the righteous one.

Aren’t all these admissions by the king of Egypt enough for Hashem? What more is required of Pharaoh?

The answer comes in the very first mitzvah



D’VAR TORAH

By Rabbi Howard Wolk

Parashat Bo

given to the Jewish people as a whole. It appears in this week’s Torah portion.

“Hachodesh hazeh lachem rosh chodoshim — This month is for you the head (first) of all the months.” That the month in which the Israelites left Egypt (Nisan) will be the first of all the months of the year.

What do the Exodus from Egypt and the month of Nisan represent? What kind of connection is there between Pharaoh and declaring Nisan as the head of months?

The connection teaches us that G-d is involved in the lives of His people. Nisan demonstrates Hashem’s ongoing relationship with His nation.

One level of belief, a foundational belief, is Hashem as Creator. That is why the Torah begins with the Creation story. The rabbinic commentator, Rashi, cites a verse from Psalms: *“Koach maah’sahv hi’gid l’amo*

— He wished to teach His people the power of His actions.”

From Genesis we learn that G-d created the world in a purposeful manner.

But this type of belief alone is not sufficient. There are many Jews and non-Jews who believe in G-d as Creator. But they do not perceive Him as being vital in their daily lives.

There are people who view G-d as the Grand Watchmaker. Upon completing his work, He gives a push to the mainspring. The world began to function. But He maintains no relationship with His handiwork.

Our belief is that G-d has an ongoing relationship with each person. We enjoy an “I-Thou” connection with Hashem.

Pharaoh could see G-d as Creator, not as one who battles on behalf of the Children of Israel.

The Exodus story shows us that G-d *does* concern Himself with us.

Therefore, “This month is for you, the head of all the months.” This is the month

in which His concern for the people of Israel became manifest. That is why Nisan is the first month and consecrating it is the first mitzvah.

Pharaoh did not possess this type of realization. He denied this reality. Therefore, he was punished.

The month of Passover is the first of the calendar months as an instructive lesson to us of G-d’s ongoing concern for us and His involvement in our lives.

Annette, z”l, was always keenly aware of Hashem’s presence in her life. This was always manifest in her life teachings — to her children, grandchildren and me. Likewise, she brought the spark of G-d’s presence to all her many students.

May her memory always be for a blessing.

Rabbi Howard Wolk is community chaplain of Jewish Family Service of Dallas, rabbi emeritus of Congregation Shaare-Tefilla and a past president of the Rabbinic Association of Greater Dallas.

How can our homes inspire awe?

It’s 6:15 p.m., and I just came home from a long but good day of work and pickleball practice with my team. The only thing on my spent and tired mind is downing a giant glass of ice water and confronting Barry with my hungry belly about where we can grab a quick dinner tonight. I hurriedly pass through the rooms of our home to freshen up and, with my mindfulness-trained self, notice absolutely nothing around me. A dear friend of my maternal three-generational family used to say, “Never fool with a Pearle when he’s hungry...” While there is some truth to her observation, could a kavanah concerning the contents and décor of my home possibly shift my grouchy, day-end perspective into one of noticing, or perhaps, inspire a feeling of awe?

Psalm 65:9 reads, “They who dwell at the ends of the earth stand in awe of Your signs; You make the dawn and the sunset shout for joy.”

This is the experience I most want to have, this awe. I yearn to be nearer to the Creator. I read about and pray about and often reflect about what it means to be in this state. I have experienced this joy on every vacation that has offered us “a view,” from balconies offering up a sunset not blocked by buildings, to cruise ships in the middle of Elohim’s vast blue waters, to quiet walks at a meditation center, picking blueberries from an overstocked bush. But back to my 365-day-a-year home... How about feeling a little of that awe as I stand near my toaster and push the knob down on my “everything bagel” from Cindi’s?

So, I’m hatching a plan and hope you’ll consider a sacred experiment with me. We can check in with each other next month



MY JEWISH JOURNEY

By Debbi K. Levy

and see if we notice God’s wonders a little more frequently, or more potently, if we purposefully curate the objects, items, colors and spaces within our homes. I would like to propose a few possible awe-inspiring ideas and hope that you, in turn, will share yours with me when we run into each other around Big D.

Foremost, let us bring creation inside. Add more plants, fresh cut flowers, ficus trees and orchids.

It would be difficult for our eyes to pass by such beautiful living plants without so much as a glance. Potted seasonal flowers outside our front doors and on patios remind us of the changing seasons we are granted, and of their corresponding color spectrum. Even a simple ivy plant, with a few stones and the dirt (earth) on top showing, can usher us in only a second or two to a place of grounding.

The plants in the Garden of Eden we can only imagine, and crawling and swimming around that greenery and foliage were some of The Eternal’s creatures that have lovingly earned the nickname, “Creature Teachers.” Are you a pet lover? A novice in the pet arena? I hope I can help cultivate a curiosity that will encourage a new friend to live in your home sanctuary.

Hanukkah was the portal for me becoming the recipient of a new betta fish. I was totally surprised! Since that last night of Hanukkah, with the grandchildren offering up the apt name of “Hanukkah” for this fish, I have re-homed this little gifted fish in a small, 5-gallon countertop aquarium. Don’t stop reading, please, not-pet-people. Please stay with me. So, I have this betta

see LEVY, p.15

The shared values between Judaism and public health

Reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic

Whether we look at Heseds (Jewish community centers) in Eastern Europe or Jewish youth groups and day schools here in the United States, Jewish communal leadership, generally, has been prudent and intentional in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Following the evolving scientific research, Jewish leadership has followed an inclusive population-health prevention approach, looking out for our entire community.

In many ways, the COVID-19 pandemic challenged our individualistic human nature. Most often, people wore surgical masks not to protect their own health, but the health of those around them. Most often, people socially distanced to protect those they care about — think about the number of grandkids who did not get to hug their grandparents, or the number of friends who refrained from sharing a long-overdue embrace. Most often, people disrupted their daily routines when they felt fine and quarantined to prevent serving as a vector to others in their community. Most often, prayer services to celebrate and to mourn, community gatherings to remember and relive and family traditions to unite and share were significantly altered to protect the health and well-being of our community.

Thanks to public health education campaigns, vaccines and our own actions, the COVID-19 pandemic is, generally, no longer described by high-levels of hospitalizations and deaths. It, largely, does not inspire fear.



GUEST COLUMN

By Joshua Yudkin

More commonly, people describe living in a post-COVID-19 time. Nonetheless, at the time of writing this article, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that, in the past week in Texas, there were 37,637 new cases of COVID-19, 508 persons hospitalized from COVID-19 and 150 deaths from COVID-19. Over 30% of Texans have still not been vaccinated.

Community leaders continue to wrestle with decisions about mandatory masking inside and required vaccination for programming. While many of us have been blessed with strong health, our community is filled with new life, seasoned life and at-risk life. Following the example of Abraham, Judaism emphasizes *hachnasat orchim*, or being radically welcoming. Echoing the way *Pesach Sheni*, literally the Second Passover, was created to ensure all Jews had access to participating in our tradition, true Jewish community is radically inclusive. Highlighting the Jewish practice of *pikuach nefesh*, or saving a life, the rabbis remind us in the Talmud that “whoever saves a single life is considered to have saved the whole world, because we are created in the image of G-d.”

As we look forward, there are a few important lessons that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted for our community. First, public health practices are based in Jewish teachings. In other words, public health practices of protecting our entire community are based in Jewish values. Second, we have a moral obligation to protect our community’s most vulnerable — yes, even if that means we

see YUDKIN, p.14

TECH
continued from p.9

The first cybersecurity DevOps platform for automotive, C2A uses a set of practices that combines software development and IT operations in an effort to shorten the systems development lifecycle and provide continuous delivery with high software quality, to enable customers to achieve high levels of cybersecurity at a lower cost.

The DevOps platform works for electric vehicles and electric infrastructure and for all electric and internal combustion engine vehicles. Between Series A and B round funding, the platform was focused on in-vehicle security, which because of the manufacturing process involved was a long-term

proposition. Fridman joined the company in 2022 and immediately refocused it on goals that would produce short-term revenues.

“2023 will be a year of execution,” he explains. “I must ramp up my revenues and I’ve planned my cash burn to get past the winter and through 2023, but in parallel to that, I have refined my strategy to be focused on revenue generation. This is what investors expect now. The market is not great but any company with a great product will be able to raise the next round if they can present what the investors expect of them.”

The bottom line

Fridman says the company’s original business plan did not change.

“The bottom line didn’t change. Profitability didn’t change,” he says. “What changed was *when* I was going to ask for funding and *how aggressive* I would have to be. I streamlined the company and built the team. I have the right strategy and the right product.”

Hillel Fuld, an adviser to startups and a journalist, similarly believes the funding crisis is not a crisis at all. It’s a correction.

“I don’t share in the hysteria,” Fuld explains. “Companies were being valued at hundreds of millions — even billions — of dollars. The legitimate companies will be left standing.”

He points out that Israel’s Silicon Wadi is in a much better situation than its Silicon Valley counterparts. In the past, he says, Israeli entrepreneurs would be frustrated because their businesses were valued at a fraction of the funding of American companies. But the leaner Israeli companies are better equipped to deal with the downturn and will ultimately require less downsizing.

Fuld believes that layoffs are sometimes necessary for CEOs to focus on profitability. “When funding dries up, CEOs must choose between making money and growth. They must focus all resources on monetization and building great products. The perks must go.”

The trauma of layoffs

“I don’t minimize the trauma of layoffs in the least,” Fuld explains. “Ultimately, people will acquire a new skill — something that companies need. A person who brings in dollars and cents to a company is valuable to that company and will not be laid off.”

According to Medved, the biggest expense for most of these startups is manpower. “Typically, the manpower expenses can be 60-80% of the total.”

An Israeli executive recruiter who works in the tech field, and declined to be named, says he has been dealing with hundreds of workers who were laid off by technology companies and companies that have scaled back on hiring or cut workers because of financial issues.

Some workers are finding new jobs but they often are forced to take significant pay cuts for lateral moves, he says. Finding junior positions for candidates straight out of computer science programs with army experience has become more competitive. People being laid off, according to this recruiter, are not usually the top workers, and because of the glut of available staff, companies are being more selective and taking things slower when hiring. Well-established companies are still hiring, particularly for specialized positions such as DevOps and R&D. He believes that most candidates at the

end of the day will find their next job, but they may have to compromise on salary.

Fuld points out, “It’s a global correction. Anyone redundant — whether in-house or ancillary — will have to figure out how to become necessary. A PR agency that charges \$15,000 per month but doesn’t produce results is not going to survive the cut.”

The good news is that the Israeli economy is driven by the tech economy. According to Innovation Israel, over 50% of exports are technology-related.

“Israel has become branded as a tech juggernaut,” says Medved. “It has been an extraordinary engine that has driven our economy forward. There are so many risk factors today ranging from the war in Ukraine to supply issues and the American stock market, but Israeli tech is in so many different sectors. It has become an element of our diplomacy. Other countries want to work with us, and it’s all centered on Israeli technology. In fact, OurCrowd just announced an AI launch in the UAE.”

OurCrowd is also involved in a venture with Saudi Arabia’s state-owned oil giant Saudi Aramco.

On Feb. 15, OurCrowd will host its annual Jerusalem tech summit that will feature some of the startups that went public, with product demonstrations from private companies in telemedicine, transportation, food and agriculture tech and health technology.

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FRIED
continued from p.12

There is also a level of cognizance that a sickness is a wake-up call from Above to improve one’s ways. There were pious people in past generations that would cure themselves with repentance, heeding the wake-up call and circumventing the need for the doctor. We, however, are

not on any such level and don’t have the license to circumvent doctors and the way of the world, which is to be involved in healing processes.

This does not mean, however, that we are not to heed the wake-up call and utilize any illness as an opportunity for prayer, repentance and growth.

I once was relating a course of treatment being administered to a colleague of mine to my rabbi

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in Jerusalem, a rare pious *tzadik*. He was satisfied with what I told him, and I interjected that we need to add a chapter of Psalms to the treatment. He became upset at me and said, “We don’t add the Psalms to the treatment — we add the treatment to the Psalms!”

May we all be blessed with good health!

Rabbi Yerachmiel Fried is dean of Dallas Area Torah Association.

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YUDKIN
continued from p.13

are inconveniencing ourselves. We do this not only because it is the right thing to do but also because it works. Third, community is based in common values and common practices. Both public health measures and Jewish tradition are based in community participation. In the same way that social distancing and masking does not work without a community, Jewish tradition requires community — we need a minyan to read from the Torah and

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mourn and *edim*, or witnesses, at a wedding.

Public health and Judaism both celebrate and protect life. American bacteriologist C.E.A. Winslow defined public health as the “the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organized efforts and informed choices of society, organizations, public and private communities and individuals.” Judaism is also dedicated to protecting, promoting and prolonging life. Our Torah is called *Etz Haim*, the Tree of Life. Our tradition teaches us that we were all created

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betzelem Eloqim, or in the image of G-d. Our tradition stresses *kedushat haim*, the sanctity of life.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a reminder that public health and Judaism are both forces for life. As we enter 2023, what actions will you take to live your life to its fullest?

Joshua Yudkin currently serves as an executive committee member of the Jewish Federation of Greater Dallas’ Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) and is a co-founder of JUST Conversations. He is an epidemiologist by training who was recently awarded a Fulbright research grant and works at the intersection of community building and public health.

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Gloria Bookstein

Gloria (Goldie) Bookstein, 86, from Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, and Dallas, passed peacefully in her sleep on Jan. 16, 2023.

Born in Detroit, which she always considered home, she later split her time between Arizona, Michigan and Texas to be near her children and family.

She was married to her beloved husband, Marvin Bookstein, for over 61 years. She worked alongside him at Nationwide Income Tax Service as well as other ventures.

She was a fabulous wife, a wonderful mother, fantastic Bobe and amazing BG (great-grandmother).

Her passion in life was music and singing in several choirs including: Bel Canto Choir, Music +1, Congregation Shaarey Zedek Choir, Zamir Chorale and Congregation B'nai Moshe Choir. Her most proud accomplishment was joining a choir in their performance at Carnegie Hall.

But even more so was her love of family and friends.

Her favorite pastimes besides singing were opera, mah jongg, theater and charitable work including Hadassah, ORT, B'nai B'rith, the B'nai Moshe Sisterhood and others.



Gloria Bookstein

She was the recipient of a kidney transplant, donated by her cousin Kenneth, which gave her an amazing quality of life over the last seven years. She lived them to the fullest. She was able to travel with her family, including a dream trip to Italy, many domestic and international trips and a favorite, Broadway.

She was a beautiful woman both inside and out.

She is survived by her three daughters, Deborah (Howard) Weinstein, Peggy Bookstein, Lori (Neal) Weinstein; nine grandchildren, Shayna (Michael) McKim, Andrew (Josh) Jonestein, Mitchell (Karen) Weinstein, Zachary Weinstein and Jordan (Tiantian) Weinstein.

She was thrilled to join the great-grandmother club and adored her great-grandchildren, Macy McKim, Toby McKim, Ethan Weinstein and Anna Weinstein. She will be missed by them and many family and friends. Goldie was the loving daughter of the late Morris and Anna Plotnik and sister of the late Sarah (Julius) Smith and the late Helen (Herbert) Kollin.

A funeral was held Jan. 20 in Detroit.

Please consider a donation in Gloria's name to the Gloria

Bookstein, z"l, Music Fund at Congregation Shearith Israel or the charity of your choice.

Betty Ruth Rosenfeld

Betty Ruth Rosenfeld left us with profound sadness and broken hearts when she departed on Jan. 17, 2023. Betty, lovingly known as "B," was born on April 11, 1927, in Dallas, to Elizabeth and Joseph Ray. She married the love of her life, Marshall, as a teenager. Betty and Marshall were self-made entrepreneurs and partners in every sense of the word. Betty was his constant companion and primary caregiver, and she never left his side during their near 60 years of marriage.

During her 95 years, B exemplified the meaning of being a cherished daughter, a supportive sister, a devoted wife, a loving mother, a cousin, an aunt, a best friend — and most of all, the proudest grandmother and great-grandmother. She lived each day providing those around her with unconditional love and those around her always felt it. B was loving, loyal, dependable, selfless and strong. She was a marvelous cook who loved to dance, sing and spend time with loved ones. She provided those closest to her with unwavering



Betty Rosenfeld

support, and she was so proud of her family and all of their accomplishments. She lived her life thinking of and taking care of others, disregarding any of her own discomfort.

B is survived by her three children: Jeffrey Rosenfeld (Charlotte), Ilene Sanders (Steve) and Michael Rosenfeld. She is also survived by her loving brother Gerald Ray and sister-in-law Helaine. She lived each day for her six grandchildren: Melissa Cohen (Trevor), Kimberlee Strumwasser (Brett) and Jordan Sanders; Matthew Rosenfeld, Megan Hodges (Ryan) and Morgan Rosenfeld (David). She had four great-grandchildren that lit up her life: Mason, Madison, Will and Blake. She will be missed by her numerous nieces, nephews and cousins. B, we love and miss you so much. We will carry your teachings with us, and you will forever be in our hearts. We know that you have happily reunited with Marshall and sisters, Norma and Ola. We would also like to thank her devoted caregivers that loved B like she was their own. In her loving memory, please consider a donation in B's honor to the National Kidney Foundation or Jewish Family Service of Greater Dallas.

Susan Slotnick



Susan Slotnick

Susan Slotnick passed away peacefully Jan. 17, 2023, at the age of 78.

Born to Rose and LeRoy Lischin on April 27, 1944, Sue grew up on the north side of Chicago with her brother Mel. She met the love of her life, Barry Slotnick, on a blind date and married him in 1964. Together they raised two children, Gary and Joan, who married the loves of their lives and made her the proud bubbe of four grandchildren: Austin, Ray, Ethan and Noah.

After way too many Chicago winters, Sue and Barry migrated south to Plano in 1995, where they became a part of the welcoming Jewish community at Beth Torah. Sue and Barry loved traveling together to places where she could snorkel, soak up the sun and enjoy great food. She will be deeply missed by her family and dear friends.

A graveside service in celebration of Sue's life was held at Sparkman Hillcrest Memorial Park on Jan. 19.

LEVY continued from p.13

fish, a few tinier fish and I bought, guess what? A new little shrimp. He is a fascinating creature! I can't get over the way he reaches for food and hangs upside down like the best yogi ever! I make my way into my kitchen upon awakening or just passing through and stop right in my tracks to study him! I cannot believe all that the Creator has fashioned and breathed life into!

What colors live in your home? I recognize I am not an expert in this field or even a licensed designer. But I do notice, mindfully, that my energy vibration is uplifted in spaces with colors that surprise, soothe and cheer me. Rainbows, sunsets and the blues of an ocean find their way to Facebook vacation posts all the time. Can we bring some of those same feelings of awe within the color spectrum of creation into our dwelling spaces?

I want to conclude with a practice that is so deeply entrenched in my life, I couldn't live in a space

without them. Designers and retailers are having a frenzy with stones, and I hope you will, too. Accessibility is no issue for purchasing gems, crystals, caverns and interesting rocks like petrified wood. They are plentiful in retail spaces these days. You can even go so far as to grid your stones as our Jewish ancestors did with Aaron's Priestly Breastplate. These stones and their grid, or order, are mentioned in the Bible in Exodus.

(28:15-17) "You shall make a breastpiece of decision, worked into a design; make it in the style of the ephod: Make it of gold, of blue, purple and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen. It shall be square and doubled, a span in length and a span in width. Set in it mounted stones, in four rows of stones."

Plants, animals, colors, stones, water features, pet kittens, anything that fits into a description of creation can be brought closer into your world, and could, very well, have a deep impact on you and how you receive and reflect that elusive feeling of awe. I invite you to consider making your home into a sanctuary filled with materials and gifts from the

Creator that carry Divine power and subtle energies to encourage from our lips, "How filled with awe is this place and I did not know it?"

Debbi K. Levy was too busy gazing at her new tropical fish and noticing their colors to write a short bio.



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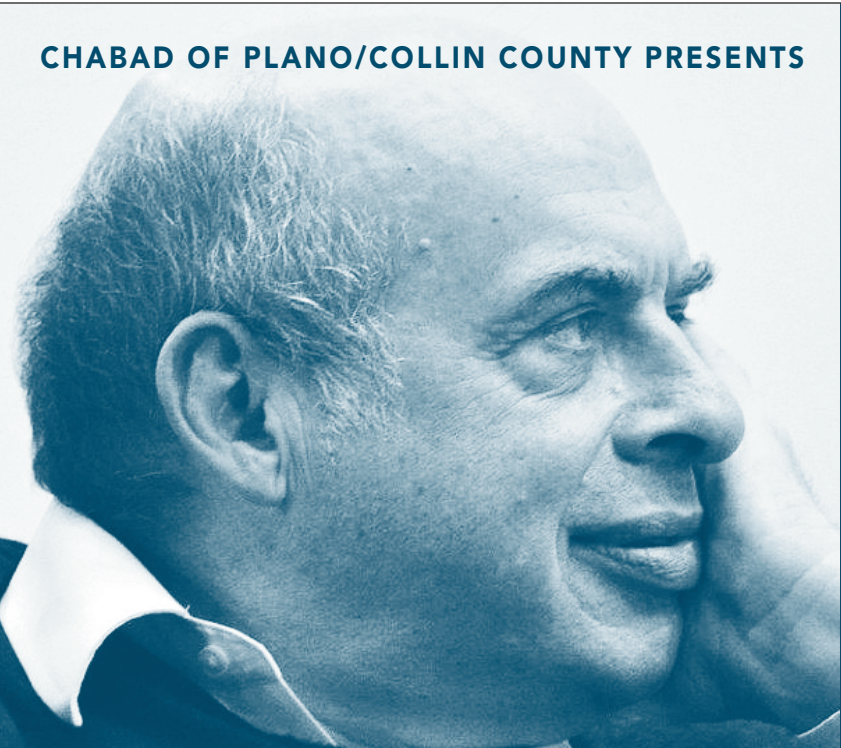
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