



Jewish Federation
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

BACK To SCHOOL



Jewish Federation
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

INVITES YOU TO JOIN US FOR OUR

2026

Annual Meeting

& COMMUNITY SHEM TOV AWARDS

AUGUST 30TH, 5PM

Jewish Federation of New Hampshire
www.jewishnh.org | info@jewishnh.org
273 South-River Road, Unit 5, Bedford, NH 03110

The strength of a people,
The power of a community.

Look for the 2026 Annual Report included
in this issue of the Jewish Reporter.

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As summer winds down and families across New Hampshire soak up the last of summer and begin preparing for a new school year, I've found myself reflecting on a year of my own. This summer marks my first full year as Executive Director of the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire, and much like the beginning of a school year, it feels like a natural moment to pause, look back at what we've learned, celebrate what we've accomplished, and think about where we're headed next.

When I stepped into this role, I knew Federation played an important role in our state's Jewish community. What I didn't fully appreciate until I spent the year traveling across New Hampshire was just how much passion, dedication, and love for Jewish life exists in every corner of our state. Over the past twelve months, I've had the opportunity to visit synagogues

One Year at JFNH

Erik Martin

**JFNH
Executive
Director**



and community centers, attend celebrations, meet with community leaders, sit with families, students, and seniors, and hear countless stories about what Jewish life in New Hampshire means to the people who call this state home. Those conversations have reinforced something I have long believed: while our communities may be spread across hundreds of miles, we are far stronger when we stand together.

This past year demonstrated what is possible when we work together. Federation was proud to expand PJ Library pro-

gramming across the state, serving more than 560 children and their families through books, family engagement opportunities, and PJ Our Way programs. We welcomed community members to events ranging from the New Hampshire Jewish Film Festival and Yom HaShoah commemorations to our Israel Bazaar and Jewish Heritage Night with the Fisher Cats. We brought nationally recognized speakers to New Hampshire, including Druze educator and October 7 survivor Raif Rashed, and created opportunities for meaningful conversations about Israel, Jewish identity, and the challenges facing our community. These programs looked different from one another, but they all shared a common goal: helping New Hampshire Jews connect with each other and with their Jewish story.

One Year at JFNH continued on page 5

CONGREGATIONS

JRF: Jewish Reconstructionist Federation **URJ:** Union for Reform Judaism
USCJ: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

BETHLEHEM

BETHLEHEM HEBREW CONGREGATION
Rabbi Hazzan Jeremy Lipton - Summer & High Holidays
39 Strawberry Hill Road
PO Box 395, Bethlehem
Unaffiliated-Egalitarian
(802) 284-8890
www.bethlehemsynagogue.org
Weekly services from July through Simchat Torah with Zoom services and Torah study from November to June. Please check our website for service times and event information.

CONCORD

TEMPLE BETH JACOB
Rabbi Robin Nafshi
67 Broadway, Concord
Reform, Affiliated URJ
(603) 228-8581
www.tbjconcord.org
office@tbjconcord.org
Services: Friday night - 7:00 PM
Saturday morning - 9:30 AM

DERRY

ETZ HAYIM SYNAGOGUE (URJ)
Rabbi Lisë Stern
1-1/2 Hood Road, Derry
Reform, Affiliated URJ
(603) 432-0004
www.etzhayim.org
office@etzhayim.org
Services: Fridays 7:15 PM
Saturday 9:30 AM
Torah Study - Saturday 10:45 AM
Check the website for updates
Monthly Family Pizza Shabbat at 5:30 PM
Please visit www.etzhayim.org/calendar for optional Zoom link.

HANOVER

THE ROHR CHABAD CENTER AT DARTMOUTH
Rabbi Moshe Gray
19 Allen Street, Hanover
Orthodox, Chabad
(603) 643-9821
www.dartmouthchabad.com
chabad@dartmouth.edu
Services: Friday Evening Shabbat services and Dinner
Shabbat morning services
Call for times.

KOL HA'EMEK UPPER VALLEY JEWISH COMMUNITY

Rabbi Mark Melamut
Roth Center for Jewish Life
5 Occom Ridge, Hanover
Nondenominational, Unaffiliated
(603) 646-0460
www.uvjc.org
office@uvjc.org
Services: Friday night Shabbat service at 6:00 PM
Saturday morning Shabbat service at 10:00 AM

KEENE

CONGREGATION AHAVAS ACHIM
Rabbi Dan Aronson
84 Hastings Avenue, Keene
Nondenominational/Unaffiliated
(603) 352-6747
www.keenesynagogue.org
rabbida@keenesynagogue.org
office@keenesynagogue.org
Services: Regular Friday night services at 7:00 PM
Weekly Shabbat Torah study at 9:30 AM.
Shabbat morning services on the 2nd Saturday of each month at 9:30 AM.
Meditation and Pirkei Avot study on the 4th Saturday of each month at 10:30 AM.
All services are in-person and online.
Check the website for schedule changes and Zoom links.

LACONIA

TEMPLE B'NAI ISRAEL
Rabbi Andy Bachman
210 Court Street, Laconia
Reform, Affiliated URJ
(603) 524-7044
www.tbinh.org
info@tbinh.org
Services: Every other Friday night at 7:30 PM

MANCHESTER

BERNICE AND IRVING SINGER CHABAD CENTER FOR JEWISH LIVING
Rabbi Levi Krinsky
1234 River Rd., Manchester
Orthodox, Chabad
(603) 647-0204
www.chabadofnh.com
rabbi@chabadofnh.com
Services:
Shabbat morning at 10:00am
Sunday morning at 9:00am

TEMPLE ADATH YESHURUN
Cantor Harriet Dunkerley
152 Prospect Street, Manchester
Reform, Affiliated URJ
(603) 669-5650
www.taynh.org
office@taynh.org
Services: Shabbat services the first Friday of the month at 6:00 PM
All other Friday nights at 7:00 PM with some exceptions.
Alternating Shabbat services or Torah study Saturday mornings at 10:00 AM

TEMPLE ISRAEL MANCHESTER
Rabbi Rafi Kantor interim
66 Salmon Street, Manchester
Conservative Affiliated USCJ
(603) 622-6171
office@templeisraelmht.org
www.templeisraelmht.org
Shabbat Services: Every month we offer one Friday night Shabbat with a catered community dinner (rsvp required), and two Saturday Shabbat services followed by a light kiddush (no rsvp necessary). Every Wednesday, we offer a 7:00 AM in person

morning minyan and a 6:30 PM Torah study via ZOOM. Please check our website www.templeisraelmht.org, call our office at (603) 622-6171 or email office@templeisraelmht.org for information on specific service dates and times.

NASHUA

TEMPLE BETH ABRAHAM
Rabbi Jon Spira-Savett
Conservative
(603) 883-8184
www.tbanashua.org
rabbijon@tbanashua.org
office@tbanashua.org
Services (generally):
Every Friday at 8:00 PM
Every Saturday at 10:00 AM
Evening Minyan Monday - Thursday at 7:30 PM
All services are in-person and on Zoom (check our website for schedule changes and Zoom links).

NEWINGTON

UNH & SEACOAST CHABAD JEWISH CENTER
Rabbi Berel Slavaticki
2299 Woodbury Avenue, Newington
Orthodox, Chabad
(603) 584-4111
Rabbi@JewishSeacoast.com
www.JewishSeacoast.com
Services:
Saturday morning at 10:00am followed by Kiddush.

NORTH CONWAY

KEHILAT HAR LAVAN
Hazzan Marlana Fuerstman
PO Box 474, Bartlett
(207) 256-0060
harlavancommunity@gmail.com
Services: Wed. mornings 9:00 AM online via Zoom
Enter meeting ID https://zoom.us/j/381930069
Holiday service times, locations TBA.

PORTSMOUTH

TEMPLE ISRAEL
Rabbi Marc Hersch
200 State Street, Portsmouth
Conservative, Affiliated USCJ
(603) 436-5301
www.templeisraelnh.org
templeoffice@templeisraelnh.org
Services: Friday, 6:00 PM
Saturday, 10:00 AM
Tues. minyan 5:30 PM
Temple Israel has a fully licensed M-F preschool.

Mazal tov to Rabbi Beth Davidson of Temple Adath Yeshurun on her retirement!

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Please send all materials to:
thereporter@jewishnh.org

To submit Calendar items for the print and online JFNH Calendar and E-News, go to <https://jewishnh.org/community-calendar>, click the red "Suggest an Event" button, then fill in the form with your event information.

Opinions presented in the paper do not necessarily represent the views of the Federation. Photos submitted by individuals and organizations are published with their permission.

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Shabbat Candle Lighting Times: (Manchester)



August 7	7:41 PM
August 14	7:31 PM
August 21	7:21 PM
August 28	7:09 PM

New Shoes, Old Blessings

Is 'back-to-school' season a little like Havdalah? Havdalah marks the transition from Shabbat back into ordinary life. This year, I've found myself wondering if the end of summer deserves its own version of that ritual. Something to mark the change from the summer calm and lack of expectations, and acknowledge that we're squeezing in that last beach trip before we turn our brains back on and return to routine.

I was talking with a friend recently who said she really doesn't like Havdalah because it means Shabbat is ending. I thought about how Judaism does such a good job of creating boundaries in time

Dinah Berch

**JFNH
Program
Coordinator**



through ritual. Transitions are acknowledged and recognized through ritual — a sensory experience that moves us from one moment to the next. But what about annual transitions like going back to school? Do we have a Jewish way to mark that, to ease the transition and acknowledge the change?

For my family it might go a little like this: First, we ritually bathe in the waters of Lake Wentworth or Bear Brook Pond for one last time. Then we receive our end-of-summer haircuts and our back-to-school showers to cleanse the last of the summer sunscreen and bug spray from our skin. We prepare ourselves mentally for the stiffness of new shoes and the itchiness of brand-new clothes. We sharpen our pencils and inhale that weird scent of carbon and wood; we label all the folders and pen cases and notebooks with stickers emblazoned with our name. We taste-test the new snacks, bought in bulk and added to snack drawers for bleary-eyed school mornings. We drink water from our new, self-cooling water bottles and grimace at the memory of bitter water fountains. We go to bed early in our rooms our mother cleaned while we were at camp — but we don't sleep. And in the morning is the back-to-school photo shoot including crazy signs that say what we think we want to be when we grow up. For posterity (and blackmail).

I might have rolled my eyes when my father said the parents' blessing and a *Shehechyanu* over us on the first day of school each year, but as a parent, I'm beginning to understand. Judaism invites us to acknowledge transitions: pause, name them, bless them, and experience them with intention. In the PJ Library world

New Shoes... continued on page 6

Shehecheyanu

A Blessing the first time you experience something

Baruch ata Adonai,
Eloheinu melech
Ha'olam
Shehecheyanu, v'kiy'manu,
v'higiyanu laz'man hazeh.

ברוך אתה יי
אלהינו מלך
העולם
שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיענו
לזמן הזה

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all,
who has kept us alive, sustained us, so that we
could reach this moment

PJ Library

**Jewish Federation
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Blessing the Children

The traditional "blessing of the children" is particularly meaningful as a new school year begins, when parents and grandparents can share with their children their hopes and wishes for the new year. Parents (and grandparents) place their hands on a child's head and say:

Yevarechecha Adonai
veyishmerecha.
Ya'er Adonai panav eilecha
viyechuneka.
Yisa Adonai panav eilecha
veyasem lecha shalom.

יְבָרְכֶךָ יי וישמרְךָ. יאֵר יי פָּנָיו
אֵלֶיךָ ויחַנֶּךָ. יִשָּׂא יי פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ
וַיַּשֵּׁם לְךָ שָׁלוֹם.

May God bless you and keep you safe. May God's light shine on you and grace your life. May God turn toward you and give you a world of peace.

Or an alternative version:

Always be safe. Shine light in the world. And feel truly at peace with yourself

PJ Library

**Jewish Federation
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Continue the Conversation

These PJ Library books explore new beginnings, school, friendship, courage, and growing into new experiences.



Avi the Ambulance Goes To School
by Claudia Carlson
(ages 3-4)
A reassuring story for little ones who are wondering what school will be like.



No Rules for Michael
by Sylvia Rouss
(ages 3-4)
A gentle reminder that new routines can take practice.



Sammy Spider's First Day of School
by Sylvia Rouss
(ages 4-5)
A classic first-day-of-school story filled with familiar jitters and excitement.



The Only One Club
by Jane Naliboff
(ages 4-5)
Celebrates belonging, kindness, and making room for new friends.

Email Dinah at dinah.berch@jewishnh.org with questions.

Welcoming the New Shaliach, Antisemitism in NH, and the 5-Month Marker

I am beginning this article on one of the hottest days of the summer so far—it's 103°F outside! I wonder what weather we'll be enjoying by the time you read this. A friend recently reminded me of the famous New England weather quote often attributed to Mark Twain: "If you don't like the weather in New England now, just wait a few minutes." I hedge my bets by keeping a coat at the office for our air-conditioned indoor temperatures. (Full disclosure: I have been known to wear two coats at once on particularly frosty indoor days at JFNH!)

Which leads me to wonder what our incoming shaliach, Elad Aharoni, is going to think of our famously unpredictable weather. I'm thrilled to report that Elad will arrive in mid-August, with an official start date of September 1, 2026.

Jessie Mocle

**JFNH Director
of Community
Advocacy**



As you'll see from his article in this edition, Elad is an enthusiastic, energetic go-getter who will be a tremendous asset to our community. We're all excited to welcome him.

Israel Committee volunteer Evelyn Miller and I recently took inventory of the furniture and household items left by our previous shaliach. We are currently putting together an Amazon wish list and would be grateful for any community support.

Welcoming New... continued on page 6

Statewide Calendar of Events

DISCLAIMER: Events are submitted weeks in advance of publication, and are subject to change. For information on format changes, rescheduling, and so on, please contact the event's host.

To submit Calendar items for the print and online JFNH Calendar and E-News, go to <https://jewishnh.org/community-calendar>, click the red "Suggest an Event" button, then fill in the form with your event information.

Sunday, August 2

5th New Hampshire Jewish Festival

12:00 PM, Hampton Beach State Park, NH1A, Hampton
The New Hampshire Jewish Festival expresses the heart and soul of Jewish New Hampshire. For one day it intertwines the sounds and brings together every facet of the Jewish community to celebrate Jewish life & culture! Featuring performances by renowned American Israeli Rapper Nissim Black and internationally celebrated violinist Yaeko. Music, food, vendors, crafts and unity art. Presented by Seacoast Chabad Jewish Center. Contact info@thejewishfestival.com with questions or register at thejewishfestival.com. Free program; donations welcome.

"Vanished Streets: Unseen Photographs for Jewish London"

2:00 PM, Yiddish Book Center, via Zoom
In conjunction with an exhibit of Shloimy Alman's photographs, currently on view at the Yiddish Book Center, London-based artist, writer, and curator Rachel Lichtenstein and director of Jewish Renaissance Aviva Dautch will share the story behind these "unseen" photographs and the vanishing streets of East London. When Shloimy Alman fell in love with the East London area, he knew he had to document what he saw. "I am not a photographer. I make no claim. I started this to be able to show my children Jewish life in England." This talk will be on Zoom. For more information, please contact the Yiddish Book Center at 413-256-4900 or programs@yiddishbookcenter.org.

Tuesday, August 4

Jewish Heritage Night: Fisher Cats vs. Portland Sea Dogs

5:00 PM, Delta Dental Stadium, 1 Line Drive, Manchester
Join the New Hampshire Fisher Cats and the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire for a special Jewish Heritage Night at Delta Dental Stadium as we celebrate Jewish culture, traditions, and the Jewish community throughout New Hampshire and beyond. Gather with family, friends, and community members for a night of baseball, connection, and celebration as the Fisher Cats take the field. A portion of each ticket purchased using the registration link bit.ly/nhjewishheritagenight2026 will support the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire. Come celebrate community, culture, and America's pastime with us at Delta Dental Stadium! For groups of 20 or more please call Nate Newcombe at 603-606-4110 or email at nnewcombe@nhfishercats.com to book. Get your ticket by visiting bit.ly/nhjewishheritagenight2026. Please contact Erik Martin at erik.martin@jewishnh.org with questions. Kosher food available for purchase at the concessions!

Wednesday, August 5

Books of Jewish Interest Club

4:00 PM, Bethlehem Public Library and on Zoom
This summer, Books of Jewish Interest returns with a thoughtful lineup of readings centered on a theme that has shaped Jewish history and identity for generations: the search for a homeland. In *My Hijacking*, Martha Hodes recounts her experience as a twelve-year-old traveling with her older sister when their flight, TWA 741, was hijacked en route from Frankfurt to New York in 1970. In her work, she explores themes of trauma, memory, and homeland. For more information, please visit our website: www.bethlehemsynagogue.org

Thursday, August 6

White Mountain Jewish Film Festival presents "Next Stop, Greenwich Village"

6:00 PM, Colonial Theatre, Bethlehem
NEXT STOP, GREENWICH VILLAGE (1976): Writer-director Paul Mazursky's transparently autobiographical film has considerable charm and appeal. His alter ego in this case is Larry Lapinsky (Lenny Baker), an aspiring actor in his early twenties who leaves his Brooklyn home, kvetching mother (Shelley Winters), and hen-pecked pop (Mike Kellin) and moves to Greenwich Village, a few subway stops and several worlds away. The guest speaker is Rick Winston, film programmer, historian and author. As always, your ticket includes our festival's famous patio party beginning at 6PM with complimentary refreshments and an assortment of beverages. The guest speaker will introduce the film and then stay for a Q&A as the houselights go on afterwards. Movie Time – All Films: Box office opens: 5:30PM/ Patio opens: 6:00PM/ Guest Speaker: 6:30PM/Film: 7:00PM. General Admission \$10; BHC and JFNH Members: \$9. Tickets are sold at the door or can be purchased online. Please visit our website for more information: www.bethlehemsynagogue.org

Sunday, August 9

CAA's 57th Annual Kosher-Q

11:30 AM, Congregation Ahavas Achim, 84 Hastings Avenue, Keene
Imagine the sound of BBQ chicken sizzling on the grill as its mouth-watering scent fills the air. With kosher BBQ'd chicken, fresh picked local corn steamed in the husk, rolls, cold drinks and juicy watermelon - this celebration of community, tradition and delicious kosher BBQ is sure to delight all! There will be veggie burgers as well! Enjoy your meal under the trees with friends and family or order your meal "to go." And don't forget about our incredible gift raffles! So much to win! Tickets may be purchased at the Kosher-Q for \$20 per adult, \$10 per children age 12 and under. Credit cards now accepted! Do you have something to donate to be raffled off for our fundraiser? Call Paul Bieber ASAP at 603-242-3521 to make a donation! Contact Mike Davern at office@keenesynagogue.org or 603-352-6747 with questions.

Thursday, August 13

Schmooze and Brews with Jews

5:30 PM, Every month on the 2nd Thursday
Join us for these after-hours to get together at a location in Keene. Casually hang out to Schmooze with Jews over Brews! No registration is required. Just check out our website to see where the current meet up location will be and just show up. Go to www.keenesynagogue.org for more up to date information or contact Daniela Yitzchak at 603-352-6747 or at office@keenesynagogue.org.

Friday, August 14

Sounds in the Sanctuary

4:00 PM, Bethlehem Hebrew Congregation, 39 Strawberry Hill Road, Bethlehem
Sounds in the Sanctuary welcomes back an audience favorite, Dr. Richard Kogan. A professional psychiatrist as well as concert pianist, Dr. Kogan offers a signature concert in which he performs the work of a single composer punctuated with historical and psychological commentary. This year, he presents "Schumann: Music, Mood Swings, and Madness." A light reception will follow. Tickets are available at the door (cash or check only) or online at our website. \$25 General Admission/\$20 BHC Members. For more information, please visit our website: www.bethlehemsynagogue.org.

Sunday, August 16

Young Jewish Professionals Summer BBQ

6:30 PM, Seacoast Chabad Jewish Community Center, 2299 Woodbury Ave, Newington
Join Young Jewish Professionals for an unforgettable summer evening filled with great food, great company, and great vibes at our Summer BBQ! Suggested Donation: \$36 per person. Are you a young Jewish professional in the area? Come meet, connect, and enjoy a meaningful community experience with us! Don't miss out—bring your friends and make it a night to remember! Register now: JEWISHSEACOAST.COM/CONNECT. Email Hannah Cohen at hannah@jewishseacoast.com with questions.

Wednesday, August 19

Books of Jewish Interest Club

4:00 PM, Bethlehem Public Library and on Zoom
This summer, Books of Jewish Interest returns with a thoughtful lineup of readings centered on a theme that has shaped Jewish history and identity for generations: the search for a homeland. Our final selection of the summer is *Melting Point* by Rachel Cockerell. In this richly researched book, Cockerell draws on newspaper accounts, letters, memoirs, speeches, documents and interviews to trace the development of the Zionist movement and the early ideas that contributed to the founding of today's Jewish state. Among the fascinating stories she uncovers are the 1907 plans to establish a Jewish homeland in Galveston, Texas. For more information, please visit our website: www.bethlehemsynagogue.org.

Thursday, August 20

White Mountain Jewish Film Festival Presents "Unspoken"

6:00 PM, Colonial Theatre, Bethlehem
UNSPOKEN (2024): Unspoken follows the story of Noam, a closeted teenager in a religious community who discovers that he might not be alone. When he finds a love letter written to his grandfather by another man before the Holocaust, he sets out to find this mysterious person and uncover his grandfather's identity as well as his own. The guest speaker is Rabbi David Edleson of Temple Sinai in South Burlington, Vermont. As always, your ticket includes our festival's famous patio party beginning at 6PM with complimentary refreshments and an assortment of beverages. The guest speaker will introduce the film and then stay for a Q&A as the houselights go on afterwards. Movie Time – All Films: Box office opens: 5:30PM/ Patio opens: 6:00PM/ Guest Speaker: 6:30PM/Film: 7:00PM. General Admission \$10; BHC and JFNH Members: \$9. Tickets are sold at the door or can be purchased online. Please visit our website for more information: www.bethlehemsynagogue.org.

Tuesday, August 25

Etz Hayim Synagogue Religious School Open House

6:00 PM, Etz Hayim Synagogue, 1 ½ Hood Road, Derry
WELCOME RETURNING AND NEW ETZ HAYIM STUDENTS!
Join us for an Ice Cream Social Open House to meet Rabbi Lisè Stern, our teachers, tour our newly renovated classrooms, learn about our programs and enjoy ice cream together. Etz Hayim offers Sunday Family Camp for ages 4-6 with parent participation required; Youth Education for ages 7-18, B'nai Mitzvah program and Confirmation. Our Education Program is free!* For more information, visit <https://www.etzhayim.org/learn> or contact Irina at hsadmin@etzhayim.org. *Our education program is supported by the L. Lou Schloss Memorial Education Fund and in part by a grant from the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire.

Friday, August 28

Sounds in the Sanctuary

4:00 PM, Bethlehem Hebrew Congregation, 39 Strawberry Hill Road, Bethlehem
Violinist Isabelle Durin, accompanied by pianist Maxime Zecchini, presents a program entitled "Exile to Hollywood: Jewish Composers in the Golden Age of Film." A light reception with the musicians follows. Tickets are available at the door (cash or check only) or online at our website. \$25 General Admission/\$20 BHC Members. For more information, please visit our website: www.bethlehemsynagogue.org.

Sunday, August 30

Shofar Factory & Honeybee Experience plus Hebrew School Open House

10:00 AM, Seacoast Chabad Jewish Center, 2299 Woodbury Ave, Newington
Discover why the Seacoast Hebrew School of the Arts has become one of New Hampshire's largest and fastest-growing Hebrew Schools! Join us for our exciting Open House featuring our Shofar Factory & Honeybee Experience. Meet our teachers, tour our beautiful classrooms, make your own kosher shofar, experience a live honeybee exhibit, enjoy a build-your-own waffle bar, and participate in fun hands-on Rosh Hashanah arts and STEM activities. Whether you're already enrolled or exploring Hebrew School for the first time, this is the perfect opportunity to experience our creative, engaging approach to Jewish education. Registration for the 2026–2027 school year is now open. Reserve your spot today at SeacoastHebrew.com/Shofar. Contact Rochy at rochy@jewishseacoast.com with questions.

TAY's 3rd Annual Family Picnic

12:00 PM, The Warshaw Home, Candia
Bring a dish to share with friends new and old. TAY will bring the hot dogs, burgers and drinks. Enjoy pony rides, swimming and yard games. RSVP to office@taynh.org for the address or with questions.

JFNH Annual Meeting & Community Shem Tov Awards 2026

5:00 PM, Bedford Event Center, 379 South River Road, Bedford
The community is invited to join the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire, in person or virtually, for our Annual Meeting and Shem Tov presentation. Doors open at 5:00 PM with a light dinner served. The program will begin promptly at 5:30 PM. Volunteers from synagogues across the state will be honored with Shem Tov awards for their hard work and dedication to the communities they serve. Join us

Calendar continued on page 5

Federation Voices

One Year at JFNH

continued from page 1

We also strengthened Federation itself. Thanks to the generosity of our donors and the hard work of countless volunteers, we exceeded our annual campaign goal and put Federation in a stronger position than ever to serve our community. We expanded our professional team, welcomed new leadership to our Board of Directors, strengthened partnerships with synagogues and community organizations, and continued investing in the infrastructure necessary to support a thriving statewide Jewish community. None of these accomplishments happen by accident. They happen because people across New Hampshire continue to believe that a strong Federation matters.

Of course, much of this year was also

shaped by challenges. Antisemitism continues to rise across the country, and New Hampshire has not been immune. Federation spent significant time this year advocating on behalf of our community, working with elected officials, law enforcement, schools, and partner organizations to ensure that Jewish voices are heard and Jewish concerns are taken seriously. We have supported families facing antisemitic incidents, advocated for policies that promote understanding and accountability, and worked closely with security partners to help keep our community safe. This work will remain a core priority in the year ahead because every Jewish person deserves to feel safe, respected, and welcome in the communities they call home.

At the same time, we know that being Jewish is not and cannot be about responding to threats. It must be about celebrating who we are. One of the things I

am most excited about in the coming year is the opportunity to deepen the connection between the New Hampshire Jewish community and Israel. Through educational programs, cultural experiences, community conversations, and the arrival of our Israeli shaliach, we will create new opportunities for people of all ages to engage with Israel in meaningful ways. We want Israel to feel less like a headline and more like a living part of our shared Jewish story.

More broadly, Federation is beginning to focus on a simple but powerful idea: helping every Jew in New Hampshire feel proud of who they are, where they come from, and the community they belong to. Over the coming year, you'll see new efforts designed to celebrate Jewish identity, strengthen community connections, encourage civic

engagement, and create opportunities for people to explore what being Jewish means to them. No matter how a Jew identifies, defines, practices, or expresses their heritage, we want them to know there is a place for them in our community.

As we enter this new season, I find myself feeling optimistic. The start of a school year reminds us that growth is always possible, that learning never truly ends, and that every new chapter brings opportunities we could not have imagined before. The same is true for our community. We have accomplished a great deal together over the past year, but I believe our best work still lies ahead. With your partnership, your support, and your commitment to Jewish life, I am confident that we will continue to build a New Hampshire Jewish community that is connected, resilient, engaged, and one we are proud to be a part of.

Calendar

continued from page 4

for an evening of friendship and connection together with community members from around the state.

*Suggested minimum donation of \$18.00/ticket to attend meeting in person; no charge for attending virtually but registration is required. Visit givebutter.com/jfnh2026 to register. Please contact Erik Martin at erik.martin@jewishnh.org with questions.

Wednesday, September 1

Beyond Apples and Honey: Reimagining Rosh Hashanah Rituals for Grandparents

7:00 PM, Jewish Grandparents Network via Zoom
As grandparents, we want our family—and especially our grandchildren—to find meaning and joy in our Rosh Hashanah celebrations. Rabbi Vanessa Ochs, Ph.D., author and Professor Emerita in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Virginia, will guide us in ways to

reimagine our Jewish New Year observance by adapting old traditions and bringing in new rituals. Zoom presented by the Jewish Grandparents Network. Send questions to Terry Kaye at terry@jewishgrandparents.org. Register for the Zoom webinar at jewishgrandparentsnetwork.org/event/beyond-apples-and-honey-reimagining-rosh-hashanah-rituals-for-grandparents/

Thursday, September 3

Hadassah September Chapter Meeting

1:00 PM, Jewish Federation of New Hampshire, 273 South River Road Unit #5, Bedford
Please join us at the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire for the September Chapter Meeting of Hadassah Manchester. Contact Michele Bank at (603) 488-5657 or at michele.bank@gmail.com for questions.

Rosh Hashanah begins at sundown on Friday, September 11th. Watch the next issue of *The Reporter* for High Holiday services and programs.

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Welcome the new Shaliach!

My name is Elad Aharoni, and I will be your shaliach for the next few years. I am thrilled to be working in New Hampshire and cannot wait to meet you!

A little about me: I am 25 years old and was born and raised in Eilat, Israel. Growing up between the Red Sea and the Negev Desert fostered a deep appreciation for nature, outdoor exploration, and adventure that continues to shape my interests today.

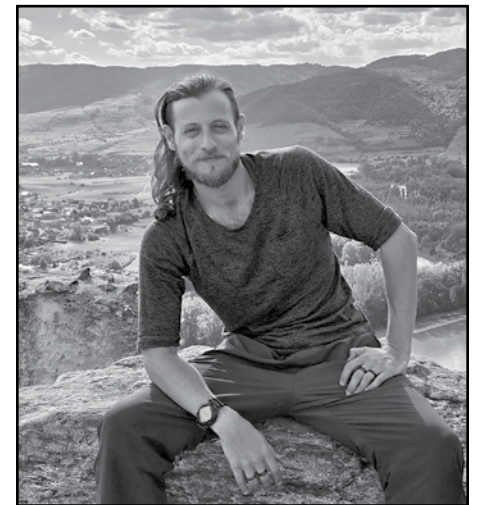
Much of my youth was spent in the Israeli Scouts, where I developed a passion for leadership, informal education, and community building - and I picked up several survival skills along the way! These

experiences instilled in me the value of teamwork, responsibility, and creating meaningful experiences for others. I later participated in the Diller Teen Fellows program through The Jewish Agency, first as a fellow and subsequently as a junior counselor. These experiences strengthened my connection to Jewish peoplehood and deepened my understanding of Jewish communities around the world.

As a member of a competitive debate team, I cultivated strong communication and public speaking skills, as well as a profound appreciation for thoughtful dialogue, intellectual curiosity, and the respectful exchange of ideas. Through travel

and international experiences, I have had the opportunity to connect with people from diverse backgrounds, broadening my perspective and enriching my understanding of different cultures and communities.

I care deeply about Israel, Jewish identity, community engagement, and fostering meaningful connections among people. I am honored to have the opportunity to join the New Hampshire Jewish community and look forward to sharing my experiences while learning from the individuals and families I meet. I am also eager to explore New Hampshire's beautiful landscapes and experience all that the state has to offer.



Welcoming New Shaliach...

continued from page 3

port in helping us make Elad's new apartment feel like home. If you're able to help move furniture from the JFNH basement, purchase an item from the wish list, or assist with preparing the apartment for his occupation, please contact me at jessie.mocle@jewishnh.org.

Since the tremendous success of the Israel Bazaar on June 7, I have been hard at work helping establish the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire's new Israel Committee. We now have a talented and engaged group of volunteers planning meaningful programs focused on Israel education and advocacy. Led by Chair Craig Rothenberg and Secretary Richard England, and joined by dedicated volunteers Jeremy Berger, Helena England, Doug Katz, Ed Kershenbaum, Evelyn Miller, Diane Sacks, Steve Soreff, and Robbie Stanhope, the committee is already developing exciting educational and community opportunities.

Among the programs currently in development are several community screenings of *October Shadows*, which tells the stories of survivors of the October 7 attacks. For more information about the film, please visit <https://www.pbs.org/show/october-shadows-an-explorations-of-trauma-and-healing-after-october-7/>. The committee is also working on an exciting opportunity to participate in a

Birthingright Israel voluntourism trip, with additional details to be shared soon.

We're also in the process of launching a JFNH Antisemitism Committee. Following Dinah Berch's outstanding Lunch & Learn on June 25, 2026, featuring State Representatives Paul Berch and Jessica Grill, several attendees expressed interest in helping establish this new committee. I was delighted by the enthusiasm and look forward to formalizing the group over the coming month, with the goal of beginning its work in September.

Regarding antisemitism here in the Granite State, I recently coordinated reports of swastika graffiti found on several Route 101 overpasses heading toward the Seacoast, as well as another at Odiorne Point State Park in Rye. Thankfully, all of the graffiti has since been removed.

Our Security Specialist, Mark Atlee of Combined Jewish Philanthropies, reminds us of a simple but important message: **"If you see something, say something."** If you encounter antisemitic graffiti or experience antisemitism yourself, please reach out to me at jessie.mocle@jewishnh.org. Mark has also alerted us to a recent increase in antisemitic spam emails circulating throughout New Hampshire. If you've received suspicious or hateful messages, please forward them to me so we can report them through the appropriate channels. Even incidents that seem minor help us identify patterns and better understand the challenges facing

our community.

To strengthen our ability to track incidents statewide, the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire has begun updating our website at <https://www.jewishnh.org>. As part of this project, we will be expanding our antisemitism resources to include new online reporting tools that will help us document incidents and identify trends. The success of this effort depends on community participation! Soon, you'll be able to report incidents affecting both K-12 schools and the broader community through simple online forms. Until those pages are live—or if you would simply rather speak with a person than complete a form—please don't hesitate to contact me directly at jessie.mocle@jewishnh.org.

Finally, I want to encourage you to reach out to me anytime. I have an open-door policy, and it would be my pleasure to connect with you by email, over the phone, or over a cup of coffee. As I approach my five-month anniversary with JFNH, I can honestly say that I love my job. Much of that joy comes from the relationships I've been fortunate to build since arriving in February.

You're always welcome to stop by the



JFNH office—after all, it's your Federation too. (Just call first to check if we're home!) I think I speak for my colleagues when I say that we are here to serve you and to help unite the diverse Jewish communities across New Hampshire. A wise friend recently reminded me that part of my job is to help keep the family together, and I've adopted that as one of my professional goals. The easiest way to reach me is by email at jessie.mocle@jewishnh.org. I'm only a message away, and we'll take it from there!

And don't be shy—I'm Canadian. We start training in friendliness and politeness at a very young age! I will enjoy getting to know you.

Enjoy the rest of your summer, and when the time comes, please join me in giving our new shaliach, Elad Aharoni, a warm New Hampshire welcome!

New Shoes, Old Blessings

continued from page 3

we call this experience "a Shehechyanu moment". *Shehechyanu* (pronounced sheh-heh-chee-yah-noo) is the blessing many Jews recite to mark meaningful firsts and special occasions. Like Havdalah, my father's ritual marked the threshold we were crossing together. Jewish ritual has a way of lingering at thresholds. It slows us down just enough to smell the spices, say the blessing, look around, and realize we've arrived some-

where new. Summer is over. A new season has begun.

Try this at home

Before the first day of school, take one minute together to say the parents' blessing, recite *Shehechyanu*, share one hope for the year ahead, or simply pause to recognize that your family is crossing into a new season.

As your family crosses into a new school year, PJ Library is here to support you every step of the way. I hope to see you at an upcoming event—or hear from you anytime.



Jewish Federation
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

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Antisemitism in New Hampshire: Views from the State House

At the end of July, the Federation hosted a Lunch and Learn presentation on antisemitism in New Hampshire. Paul Berch and Jessica Grill, both members of the NH House, offered their assessments of antisemitism to a packed audience that included several former and prospective state representatives. Rep. Berch alerted the audience to the “normalization of antisemitism” at the State House in comments by some House members and bills submitted for

House consideration. Rep. Grill discussed an antisemitic threat she personally received and an effort to hijack the state’s Commission on Holocaust and Genocide Education.

A lively and wide-ranging Q&A followed these two presentations. Several audience members wanted to know about the situation in the public schools of New Hampshire, especially whether Jewish pupils face antisemitism and what specific curricula are being used to imple-

ment the state mandate for Holocaust and genocide education. Another audience member argued that it is time to move beyond Holocaust education and focus on today’s Jews.

Another question raised was safety in the state’s synagogues. Erik Martin, executive director of the Federation, said that no synagogues have been attacked but that Temple Israel in Portsmouth has experienced two cases of vandalism. After being asked whether antisemitism was more of a problem in one party at the State House, the two legislators replied that it is present “on both sides of the aisle.”

The Q&A turned to the question of how to combat antisemitism in New Hampshire. Rep. Grill suggested that the impact of antisemitic content in social media on young people needs to be addressed. Rep. Berch noted that the State of New Hampshire enacted the IHRA definition of antisemitism two years ago



On Thursday, June 25th, the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire welcomed community members for a Lunch & Learn featuring New Hampshire State Representatives Paul Berch and Jessica Grill. Participants enjoyed lunch while learning about recent antisemitic activity and legislation in New Hampshire, followed by a thoughtful and engaging Q&A discussion. The program was offered both in person and via Zoom to make it accessible to community members across the state. A recording of the presentation is available upon request.

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Through the program your family will be enriched by experiencing the joys of Jewish life.

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FOUNDATION

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 **Jewish Federation**
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

PLANNED GIVING

Secure the future of our Jewish community

As you envision the future of the Jewish community that means so much to you, consider creating a planned gift with the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire that will touch the lives of generations to come.

ENDOWMENT AND PLANNED GIVING

By making a planned gift to a JFNH endowment fund, you can ensure that your generosity and vision will have an impact that extends far beyond your lifetime. Endowment funds that were established decades ago are still providing important support to our community today. At JFNH, we have the knowledge and expertise to help you design a planned gift that meets your needs while also endowing your personal vision for the future.

- **Unrestricted Endowment.** A gift to JFNH’s Unrestricted Endowment will support the full spectrum of initiatives and programs essential to the future of our Jewish community.
- **Perpetual Annual Campaign Endowment (PACE).** You can create an endowment to perpetuate your Annual Campaign gift. This is a wonderful way to sustain your lifelong investment in the community you have helped build.
- **Restricted Endowment.** Our planned giving professionals will work with you to craft a gift that supports the work of a valued partner organization or an area of particular interest to you, such as caring for the most vulnerable, engaging people of all ages in Jewish learning, and supporting Israel.

WAYS TO ENDOW YOUR VISION

- **Bequests:** A bequest through your will, trust, or retirement account is an easy way to create an endowment. We will work with you and your advisor to create a gift that clearly reflects and honors your intentions.
- **Retirement Plan Assets:** You may designate JFNH as a beneficiary of a qualified retirement plan such as an IRA, 401(k), or 403(b). To do so, simply contact your plan administrator and complete the appropriate beneficiary designation form. By naming JFNH as a beneficiary, you may avoid significant and often unanticipated estate and income taxes that would otherwise be paid by your heirs.
- **Life Income Gifts:** A Charitable Gift Annuity or a Charitable Remainder Trust can provide an immediate tax deduction and lifetime income for one or more beneficiaries. After the death of the last beneficiary, the remainder becomes part of an endowment fund to be used in accordance with your wishes.
- **Life Insurance:** You may purchase a life insurance policy that names JFNH as both owner and beneficiary. After your passing, JFNH will redeem the policy and the proceeds will support JFNH’s endowment.

LEARN MORE:
Contact Foundation Chair through the JFNH Office at
603-627-7679

 **Jewish Federation**
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
THE STRENGTH OF A PEOPLE
THE POWER OF COMMUNITY.

Israel Bazaar: A Smashing Success

By Jessie Mocle

On June 7, 2026, more than 200 members of New Hampshire's Jewish community gathered to celebrate Israel at the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire's annual Israel Bazaar. Although thunderstorms had been forecast, the rain held off, allowing attendees from across the state to enjoy a full day of community, learning, culture, and celebration.

The event opened with welcoming remarks from Erik Martin, Executive Director of the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire, followed by special guest Benny Sharoni. Consul General Sharoni expressed his appreciation for seeing so many members of the Jewish community gathered together for such a heimish and welcoming event. Rabbi Beth Davidson, Rabbi Robin Nafshi and Rabbi Jon Spira-Savett led the welcoming benediction and

all present proudly sang *Hatikvah*, voices ringing throughout the dining hall.

Synagogues from across New Hampshire offered Israel-focused educational activities and resources for both children and adults. Attendees also had the opportunity to visit informational exhibits presented by organizations including Le-ket Israel and Israel Nature, which highlighted efforts to support food security in Israel and preserve Israel's natural landscapes. New this year, Jewish artisans and vendors added to the festive atmosphere by offering their goods in a marketplace inspired by a traditional Israeli shuk.

Kosher refreshments were provided by Chabad of New Hampshire and the CTeen program. Throughout the afternoon, attendees enjoyed Israeli dance instruction and lively community dance sessions led by Rina Wagman. Families also took advantage of the Kona Ice



truck, while children participated in creating custom JFNH tie-dye T-shirts. The day concluded with families gathering around the firepit to make s'mores and enjoy one final opportunity to connect with friends old and new.

The Israel Bazaar once again demonstrated the strength, vibrancy, and unity of New Hampshire's Jewish community. Through education, culture, food, and fellowship, the event provided a meaningful opportunity to celebrate Israel and strengthen communal bonds. By all measures, the day was a tremendous success.



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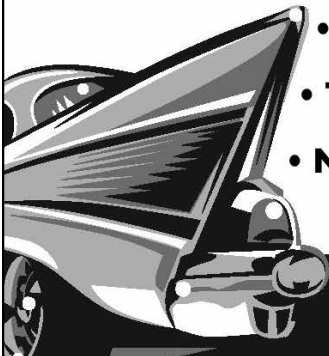
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PJ Library Playlists

Love PJ Library Books? Try the FREE Soundtracks

Scan the QR Code or go to <https://pjlibrary.org/music-hub>.

Just like PJ Library's books, our music collection invites families to learn, enjoy, and dance to the beat of their own Jewish drum. "The Day Begins" is curated for ages 0-4 and brings a loving start to your child's day. "Let's Be Friends," for ages 5-8, celebrates the joy of friendship. "Fix It," for ages 9-12, explores themes of helping others and repairing the world. Both Spotify and YouTube versions are available — perfect for summer road trips and family car rides!






PJ Library

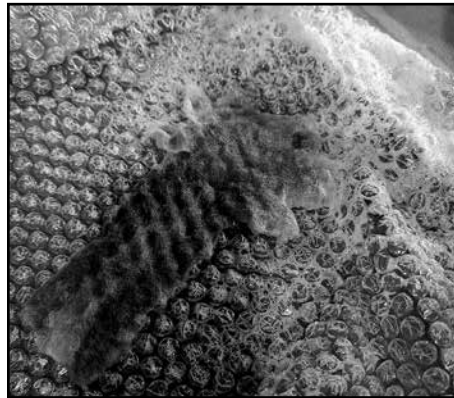
Email Dinah at dinah.berch@jewishnh.org with questions.



A PJOW Book Club Event at Billings Farm & Museum

On Sunday, May 31st, From Page to Pasture: A PJOW Book Club Event at Billings Farm & Museum brought PJ Our Way readers ages 8–12 from the Upper Valley communities of New Hampshire and Vermont together for a hands-on farm and book discussion experience. Participants read either *Faraway Summer* by Johanna Hurwitz or *Duck Dreams* by Elizabeth Segel, then toured Billings Farm & Museum, where they met cows, sheep,

and pigs and learned about butter making. They also discussed themes and foods from the books and created felted bookmarks as part of the program. The program was a partnership between PJ Library Vermont, PJ Library New Hampshire, Woodstock Area Jewish Community Shir Shalom, and Kol HaEmek Upper Valley Jewish Community. This program was well attended, and we look forward to the next Upper Valley partnership event.





Jewish Federation
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

NEW HAMPSHIRE FISHER CATS VS PORTLAND SEA DOGS



JEWISH HERITAGE NIGHT

Tuesday, August 4

Doors Open | 5:00

First Pitch | 6:03

Delta Dental Stadium

Manchester, NH

Celebrate Jewish life in New Hampshire at the ballpark!

Event Highlights

- ☞ Special Jewish Heritage Night Celebration
- ☞ Fully Kosher Concession Stand Available Throughout the Game
- ☞ Special Jewish Heritage Night Programming

\$16.05 per ticket

Scan the QR Code to Purchase Tickets or visit JewishNH.org



Fridge Flyer

Shavua Tov Story Time

A program for families with children ages 2-5

NEW SEASON! REGISTER NOW

Join us for a 20-minute interactive story time on Zoom one Sunday each month from 8:30am to 9:00am. Register once for \$18.00 per family to receive monthly crafts in the mail for the year! The zoom link will be provided to registered families each Monday ahead of the program. Grandparents and grandfriends welcome too! Scan QR code to register or go to bit.ly/shavuatov26.



August

30

August Theme: Rosh Hashanah

Sunday, August 30th, 8:30am

Register by August 20th for craft.



October

11

October Theme: Fall Festivals

Sunday, October 11th, 8:30am

Register by October 2nd for craft.



November

8

November Theme: Shabbat

Sunday, November 8th, 8:30am

Register by October 30th for craft.



Watch for more dates, coming soon!




Questions about PJ Library subscriptions or programs?
Email Dinah Berch at dinah.berch@jewishnh.org or call 603-627-7679.

A Hebrew School That's Inspiring the Next Generation

Creativity. Confidence. Jewish Pride. That's what happens every Sunday at the **Seacoast Hebrew School of the Arts**.

Just a few short years ago, we set out with a dream—to create a Hebrew School where children would be excited to learn, proud to be Jewish, and eager to come back every week. Today, that dream has grown into **one of the largest Hebrew Schools in New Hampshire**, with **over 40 children enrolled** and more families joining our community each year.

At the **Seacoast Hebrew School of the Arts**, a program of the **Seacoast Chabad Jewish Community Center**, we've reimagined what Hebrew School can be. Here, children don't simply sit in a classroom—they explore, create, discover, build, and experience Judaism through exciting, hands-on learning that sparks curiosity and creates lasting memories.

Our innovative curriculum blends **arts, STEM, creativity, and Jewish values**,

transforming every Sunday into an unforgettable adventure. Whether students are designing projects, conducting science experiments, building engineering challenges, creating holiday art, cooking traditional foods, or discovering the beauty of Jewish traditions through interactive experiences, every lesson is engaging, meaningful, and fun.

One of the hallmarks of our program is the nationally acclaimed **Aleph Champ Hebrew Reading Program**. Using a karate-inspired belt system, each child progresses at their own pace, building confidence while mastering Hebrew reading. Students are motivated to reach new levels, and parents are continually amazed at how quickly their children learn to read Hebrew fluently—all while genuinely enjoying the process.

What truly makes our Hebrew School special is our incredible team. Alongside experienced educators, many of our

teachers are enthusiastic **University of New Hampshire students**, bringing warmth, energy, and inspiration into every classroom. Even more meaningful, several of our own Hebrew School graduates have returned as teen assistants, giving back to the very program that helped shape their Jewish identity. Watching our students grow into leaders is one of our greatest joys.

Beyond learning Hebrew and Jewish traditions, our Hebrew School is about building lifelong friendships, strengthening Jewish identity, inspiring confidence, and creating a warm community where every child feels valued, celebrated, and proud to be Jewish.

It's no surprise that families from across the Seacoast continue to choose our program year after year. Every Sunday our classrooms are filled with laughter, creativity, discovery, and the excitement of Jewish learning.

There has never been a better time to experience what makes our Hebrew School so special. **Join us for our exciting Hebrew School Open House and Kickoff Event!** Meet our incredible teachers, tour our beautiful classrooms, enjoy our hands-on **Shofar Factory & Honeybee Experience**, and discover firsthand why so many families are choosing the Seacoast Hebrew School of the Arts.

Reserve your spot today at SeacoastHebrew.com/Shofar, and be sure to see the attached flyer for complete event details.

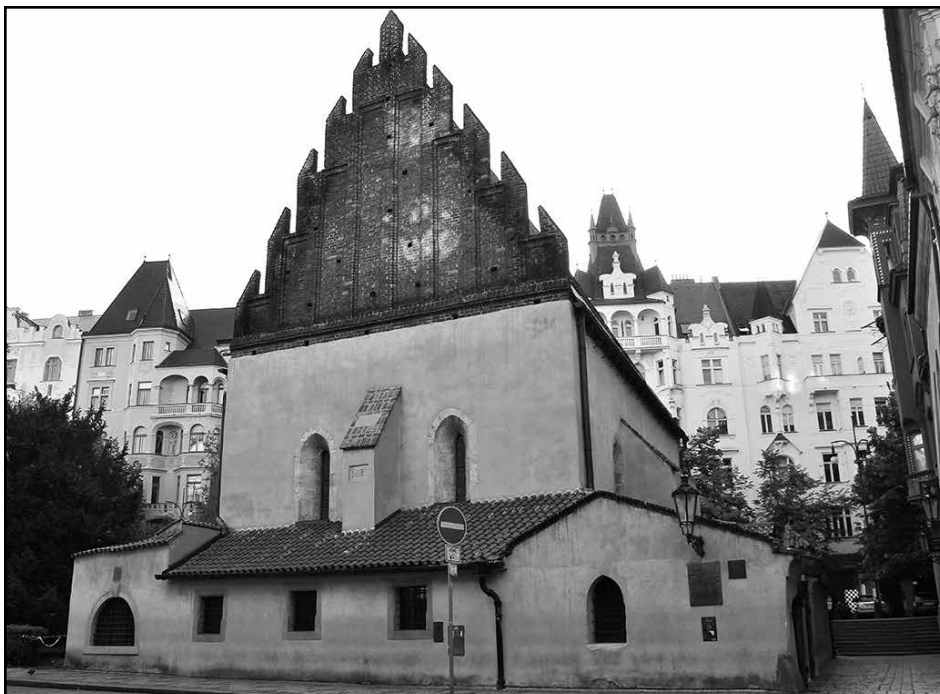
Registration for the 2026–2027 school year is now open! If you're ready to give your child a joyful, engaging, and meaningful Jewish education, enroll today at **SeacoastHebrew.com**.

Come see why the **Seacoast Hebrew School of the Arts** has become **one of New Hampshire's fastest-growing and most exciting Jewish educational programs**.

We can't wait to welcome your family!

Jewish Trivia

The oldest (active & continuous!) synagogue in the world is Old New Synagogue in Prague, which dates back to 1270. The building remains a celebrated piece of Gothic architecture. The legend goes that the clay body of the Golem of Prague is still kept in the attic of this synagogue, and the attic is not open to the public.



Etz Hayim Synagogue Religious School: Welcome Returning and New Etz Hayim Students!

Our Education Program is free!* Join us for the Ice Cream Open House on Tuesday, August 25, 2026 at 6:00-7:00 PM. Come meet Rabbi Lisë Stern, our teachers, tour our newly renovated classrooms, learn about the following programs and enjoy ice cream together!

- **SUNDAY FAMILY CAMP (Ages 4-6)**
 - Sunday Camp meets from 10:00-12:00 one Sunday morning per month. The Sunday Program focuses mostly on holidays as they fall on the Jewish calendar and also includes some work with prayers and Hebrew letters, as well as Jewish themes and values. We use a mixture of crafts, songs, dance, games, activities and stories to help our students experience Judaism. Parent participation is required for this program, so that parents can help support their child's learning during our class time.
- **YOUTH EDUCATION (Ages 7-18)**
 - Our Youth Education program meets weekly for students in grades 2+. **Synagogue membership is required for the following programs.**
 - **Kitah Aleph (Grade 2) and Kitah Bet (Grade 3):** Aleph and Bet classes work to provide students with the

basics of learning Hebrew letter recognition and decoding in order to learn to read, as well as learning about holiday observance, Tzedakah and Jewish living.

- **Kitah Gimel and Kitah Dalet (Grades 4 and up):** Gimel and Dalet teachers work with students to build on their Hebrew reading skills with emphasis on prayers surrounding the Amidah and Torah service as well as Jewish ethics and living based on the Torah.
- **Bar/Bat Mitzvah** - The B'nai Mitzvah program prepares students to take their place as adults within the Jewish Community. This program includes a focus on leading prayer, Jewish history, Judaica, and preparation of D'Var Torah.
- **Confirmation** - These classes focus on advanced Jewish education.

For more information, visit <https://www.etzhayim.org/learn> or contact Irina at hsadmin@etzhayim.org.

**Our education program is supported by the L. Lou Schloss Memorial Education Fund and in part by a grant from the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire.*

See what's happening in the community at www.jewishnh.org

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THE 5TH NEW HAMPSHIRE JEWISH FESTIVAL

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Our Thoughts Turn Both Reflective and Generative

As summer draws to a close and the New Year nears on the horizon, our thoughts turn both reflective and generative. We Jews look back on the year that was, taking stock of our actions in the past; and forging, with hope, a new path to begin again. This is, first and foremost, the essence of the Days of Awe. For our multi-generational Jewish communities, each of us is obligated as an individual to open our hearts and souls to reflection; to seek forgiveness from those we may have hurt or offended; and to reconnect

Rabbi in the House



Rabbi Andy Bachman
*Temple B'nai Israel,
Laconia*

with goals or aspirations we may have set for ourselves but never reached. Maybe this year will be the time to do what it is we feel called upon to do.

Across New Hampshire, where Jews have lived in small towns and the larger cities since the late 17th century, we have practiced and preserved and honored our unique traditions while also living with and among our neighbors from various backgrounds and traditions of their own. This very American reality has, in the best of times, fostered a sense of what the American founders described as “E Pluribus Unum” – Out of Many, One – and adorning the Great American Seal with this inspiring and

aspirational descriptor of American diversity and unity as a nation.

At a time of concerning and even alarming division in our country, our houses of worship offer havens of faith, values and community connection for anyone who recognizes that all the world’s faith traditions teach that the human is made in God’s Image. Each of us, regardless of our background or origin, carries within themselves, a spark of the Divine. In Judaism, we teach that “the world rests on three things: on Learning, on Prayer and on Deeds of Loving Kindness.” When we learn, we expand our minds and grow in new and exciting ways. In our prayer and spiritual practices, we can discover pathways to transcendence and an understanding that there is meaning to be found in the vast, infinite universe we are blessed to inhabit; and in deeds of loving-kindness, we are privileged to encounter the intimate interconnectedness of our communities and our shared humanity.

We learn the truth that underlies the adage “There is more that unites us than divides us.” We could all use more of that these days.

This summer I had the privilege of visiting several towns in Bavaria, Southern Germany, which once were home to Jewish communities spanning centuries. The scourge of Nazism and the Holocaust destroyed Jewish life there but not their memory. In Ellwangen, Landsberg and Gunzenhausen, Jewish memory and Jewish history is kept alive by a noble, humble generation of teachers and local historians whose own act of reconciliation is preserving the stories, the names, and where possible, the places – cemeteries, homes, synagogues – where Jews once lived.

I experienced a profound and moving sense of gratitude and awe for these marvelous people who, in many ways, stand between a lasting memory and the oblivion of erasure.

Ironically, perhaps, this brings to mind one of the most powerful ideas of our Days of Awe. Tradition says that at Rosh Hashanah, God opens the Book of Life and prepares to write in it the names of those who have merited another year of living. Repentance, Prayer and Tzedakah, the rabbis teach, can change for the better the Divine decree. Each of us, with our actions, stand between memory and oblivion, between good and evil, between kindness and cruelty.

May we choose life, blessing and peace in this New Year 5787 – for ourselves, our families, our neighbors, our communities, our nation, and our world.



High Holiday Greetings with a donation of \$18 or above will be listed in the September Reporter. Please print your greeting *clearly* below:

High Holiday Donation: \$18

Additional Donation: \$

Total Donation Enclosed: \$

(your name/family name)

Deadline: August 8th

Name:

Phone:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Mail this form with your payment to:
Jewish Federation of New Hampshire, 273 South River Rd. Unit 5, Bedford, NH 03110

If you prefer, scan and email this form to info@jewishnh.org
OR call us at 603-627-7679 OR scan the QR code to submit your greeting and pay online.



Payment Information:

Make check payable to “JFNH” or Mastercard/Visa #

Expires: Security Code: Your Signature:

In the Community

Temple Israel Welcomes Rabbi Marc Hersch as Its Next Spiritual Leader

PORTSMOUTH, NH — Temple Israel of Portsmouth is pleased to announce the appointment of Rabbi Marc Hersch as its next spiritual leader, effective July 1, 2026.

Rabbi Hersch joins Temple Israel following his ordination from The Jewish Theological Seminary of America (JTS) in New York City, a premier institution of Jewish education. An educator, pastoral caregiver, and community builder, Rabbi Hersch brings experience serving congregations, students, and families across the country.

"We are elated to welcome Rabbi Hersch to Temple Israel and the Seacoast community," said Ian Kaner, President of Temple Israel. "Finding a way to keep Judaism relevant at a time when people turn away from religious or social support is a challenge. Rabbi Hersch has demonstrated a deep commitment to relationship building and Jewish connection. We are utterly thrilled for the future of our congregation under his leadership."

Most recently, Rabbi Hersch served as Rabbinic Intern at United Synagogue of Hoboken, New Jersey, where he taught

learners of all ages, led programming for young professionals, and guided individuals through the conversion process. His rabbinic training also included service to congregations in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Georgia, and Texas, providing him with experience working with diverse Jewish communities.

In addition to congregational leadership, Rabbi Hersch completed Clinical Pastoral Education in New York City, providing spiritual care and support to patients and families in a hospital setting. He has also mentored student leaders through Columbia/Barnard Hillel and Camp Ramah in Georgia.

Prior to entering the rabbinate, Rabbi Hersch worked as a special education teacher in Chicago through Teach For America. He then earned dual bachelor's degrees from Columbia University and The Jewish Theological Seminary through their Joint Program, studying history and Talmud.

"As a self-described 'Big Tent' congregation," said Rabbi Hersch, "Temple Israel struck me as a place to build deep

relationships with so many. My focus now is on meeting all members of our congregation and the greater Seacoast community. Together, we can build a community that is supportive, inclusive, and spiritually meaningful."

Temple Israel conducted a comprehensive national search to identify its next rabbi. Search Committee Co-Chairs Amy Hyett and Susan Grodman led a months-long process that included congregational listening sessions, candidate interviews, community engagement opportunities, and extensive evaluation by lay leaders. Susan Grodman said, "We interviewed a diverse group of candidates during this process. Rabbi Marc's energy, spirituality, intelligence, and ability to connect with all types of people really stood out. We are all so excited to have him join our synagogue and the Seacoast community!"

Temple Israel serves one of the largest and most active Jewish communities in New Hampshire and southern Maine. Founded in 1910, Temple Israel Portsmouth is a diverse and vibrant Jewish con-



gregation serving the greater Seacoast region. The congregation offers religious services, educational programming, cultural events, social action initiatives, and opportunities for lifelong Jewish learning.

Rabbi Hersch will begin his tenure on July 1, and will participate in a series of community events and engagements for congregants and community members to meet him throughout the summer.

For more information about Temple Israel, visit: www.templeisraelnh.org



Reva Tankle, president of Temple B'nai Israel (TBI) of Laconia, presents the check from the net proceeds of TBI's "We Care" concert on May 23, 2026 totaling over \$9,000. The concert benefited the Laconia Police Relief Association. Receiving the check are LPRA president, Detective Peter Horan, and LPRA treasurer, Detective Kendra Neri. The proceeds from this concert bring the total raised through the "We Care" initiative that has benefited multiple community organizations to \$460,000 since its inception. The next TBI "We Care" concert will take place on October 24, 2026 in Meredith, NH featuring the Beatles tribute group, Studio 2, and will benefit the Lakes Region Visiting Nurse Association. Tickets will go on sale in July.

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In the Community

Etz Hayim Synagogue Welcomes Rabbi Lisë Stern

By Milt Zweig, President of Etz Hayim

Dear Members and Friends of the Etz Hayim Congregation, it is with great joy and excitement that we welcome Rabbi Lisë Stern as the new spiritual leader of our Etz Hayim family. Rabbi Stern officially begins serving our congregation on July 1, and we are delighted to embark on this new chapter together. Rabbi Stern brings a deep love of Jewish learning, a compassionate pastoral presence, and a commitment to building meaningful relationships across our community. We are confident that her wisdom, warmth, and vision will enrich our congregation and inspire us as we continue to learn, grow, and connect together in faith, learning, and service.

The arrival of a new rabbi is both a milestone and a blessing. It is an opportunity to celebrate our traditions while embracing new ideas and possibilities for the future. We invite every member of our congregation to extend a warm welcome

to Rabbi Stern, introduce yourselves, and participate in the many opportunities to learn, worship, and celebrate together in the months ahead. We look forward to sharing Shabbat, holidays, lifecycle celebrations, educational programs, and countless meaningful moments with her as our rabbi. May Rabbi Stern's tenure be filled with blessing, good health, wisdom, and joy. May our congregation continue to flourish under her leadership, and may we go from strength to strength.

A Note from Rabbi Stern:

Greetings Etz Hayim community! I'm honored and thrilled to be your new rabbi, excited to pray and learn Torah with you, to experience the cycle of holidays and celebrations as we circle through the year. I came to the rabbinate in a roundabout way, spending a couple decades writing cookbooks, editing food magazines, and raising three children. I still identify as a foodie, although I now spend more time writing about

Torah than tortillas. I was ordained by Hebrew College in Massachusetts in May and took courses in pastoral and interfaith work along with Hebrew and Talmud. My work while in school included chaplaincy roles in a trauma hospital, psychiatric hospital, residential addiction recovery program, and an independent senior living organization, along with pulpit positions in synagogues. I'm very excited to work at Etz Hayim, and to learn and grow with you. In the months to come I will be delighted to see folks coming to celebrate Shabbat Friday night or Saturday morning, praying, singing, and studying together.

- Rabbi Lisë Stern



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This program is brought to you in partnership with:



Photo Courtesy Lost Mural Project & Eric Bessette. Funding in part by The Jewish Federation of New Hampshire, The Ben and Zelma Dorson Fund, The Maurice Foster Fund, The Saul Sidore Fund, The Paul and Fran Gordon Fund and The Singer Family Trust Fund

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Scan QR Code to register or call the JFNH office at 603-627-7679. Email Dinah at dinah.berch@jewishnh.org with questions.



Temple B'nai Israel of Laconia is Named Best Place to Worship in the Lakes Region for the 7th Year in a Row!

Temple B'nai Israel did it again – by being named the Best Place of Worship in the Lakes Region for the 7th year! The great news was announced at a special awards ceremony organized by *The Laconia Daily Sun*. We appreciate all of the support in making TBI the spiritual home in the community we all love. TBI serves as a vibrant & welcoming hub for Jewish life in the Lakes Region and Central New Hampshire. Em-

bracing a full spectrum of spiritual practices from traditional conservatism to modern reform, TBI offers many learning opportunities for adults & children. It is also celebrated for hosting an annual Jewish Food Festival as well as twice a year We Care Concerts where net proceeds are given to deserving local non-profits, further solidifying its role as a cornerstone of community support and engagement.

See what's happening in the community at www.jewishnh.org

Retiring Rabbi Beth Davidson Honored by Temple Adath Yeshurun & Manchester Jewish Community

Temple Adath Yeshurun in Manchester honored Rabbi Beth Davidson with a special Shabbat service and dinner on June 19, attended by members of the congregation as well as the broader community, before she retired from the pulpit.

The congregation presented Rabbi Davidson with a book of memories, reflections, and words of appreciation honoring her 22 years of dedication, leadership, and friendship at TAY. Reflecting on the many memories shared in the book, Mandy Frank, president of Temple Adath Yeshurun, said, "Rabbi Beth stood beside us during life's most meaningful moments, shared wisdom with us in Torah study, sermons, and classes, lifted our spirits during worship, and helped create a community rooted in belonging, friendship, and purpose."

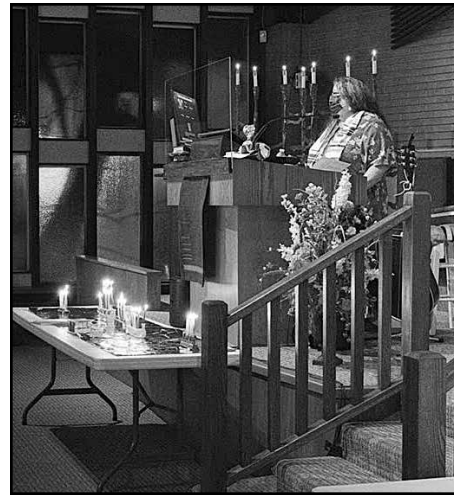
Honoring Rabbi Davidson's wishes, TAY established the Rabbi Davidson Interfaith Program Fund to celebrate her legacy of service. Contributions to this special fund will help continue the values, programs, and spirit that Rabbi Davidson has brought to the interfaith community throughout the years. Rabbi Davidson was also honored with the title of Rabbi Emerita.

"Pirkei Avot opens by describing Torah as something passed from generation

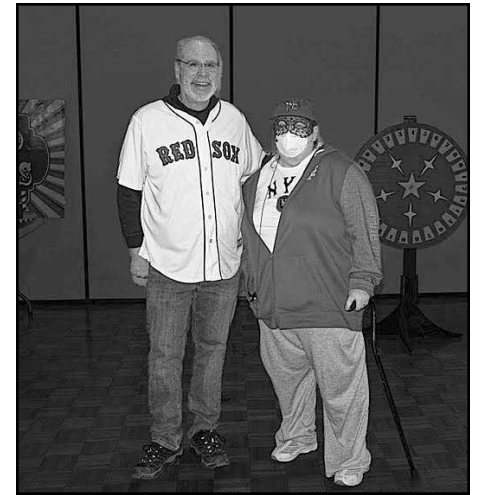


to generation, each teacher becoming another link in an unbroken chain," Frank said during the service honoring Rabbi Davidson. "Judaism has always understood itself this way: each generation receives what came before, adds its own gifts, and passes them on. During the past 22 years, Rabbi Beth has been one of those essential links... not only connecting us to Jewish tradition, but connecting us to one another. She has taught us, celebrated with us, comforted us, challenged us, prayed with us, and built this community alongside us."

With gratitude and best wishes, Temple Adath Yeshurun celebrates Rabbi Beth



Davidson's retirement and honors the extraordinary legacy of leadership, service,



and compassion she has built over the past 22 years.



Temple B'nai Israel of Laconia's Adult Education recently presented an engaging program focused on the Cairo Geniza, a repository for worn-out prayer books and discarded Hebrew texts, often referred to as "holy rubbish." Traditionally, once a Geniza is full, its contents are meant to be respectfully buried. However, the medieval Geniza at the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Cairo became a unique archive, accumulating a vast array of secular materials alongside religious texts. This collection includes approximately 400,000 fragments of Jewish manuscripts and administrative documents, dating from the 6th to the 19th centuries, making it the largest and most varied collection of medieval manuscripts globally. The Geniza offers invaluable insights into the economic and cultural dynamics of the Mediterranean, particularly between the 10th and 13th centuries, featuring a wide range of writings from liturgical texts to philosophical and scientific works. Additionally, it contains everyday items like legal documents, shopping lists, personal letters, and merchants' account books, preserving the personal narratives of individuals from centuries past. The event concluded with a delicious Israeli lunch, enjoyed by all attendees.





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Jazz Icon Anat Cohen to Play Bethlehem's Colonial Theatre

World-class jazz, vibrant global sounds, and unstoppable charisma will light up the North Country on Sunday, September 6, 2026, at 2:00 PM, when the historic Colonial Theatre, in partnership with Bethlehem Hebrew Congregation, hosts the internationally acclaimed Anat Cohen Quartet.

This highly anticipated matinee performance is presented as a bonus addition to the annual "Sounds in the Sanctuary" concert series. Jewish jazz enthusiasts throughout New Hampshire are encouraged to come up to Bethlehem for the day, enjoy the mountains, poke into the boutiques on Main Street, attend the concert, and finish off with a meal in one of Bethlehem's top notch restaurants. (And you'll still make it home before dark!)

Bringing the Clarinet to the World

Born in Tel Aviv, Israel, and based in New York City, Anat Cohen has spent the last two decades redefining the boundaries of jazz woodwinds. Renowned for her expressive virtuosity and an infectious, joyful stage presence, Cohen has achieved something rare in modern music: she made the clarinet cool again.

NPR's *Fresh Air* famously praised her for "bringing the clarinet to the world," while *The Wall Street Journal* raved, "What's not to love... she plays everything we love—modern jazz, world music, 'hot' New Orleans style jazz—and does it all brilliantly."

A multiple Grammy Award nominee, Cohen has been named "Clarinetist of the Year" by the Jazz Journalists Association every year since 2007, and has consistently topped both the critics' and readers' polls in *DownBeat* magazine for



over a decade.

A Passion for Global Sound

What makes a Cohen performance truly spellbinding is her refusal to recognize musical borders. While deeply rooted in standard jazz structure, her repertoire seamlessly weaves together traditional Israeli melodies, American swing, New Orleans hot jazz, and Brazilian choro and samba.

"Music has no borders and no flags," Cohen has noted of her eclecticism. Her upcoming performance in Bethlehem promises to reflect this international spirit, shifting from soul-stirring lyricism to high-energy, danceable syncopation.

Event Details & Tickets

- **What:** The Anat Cohen Quartet live in concert
- **When:** Sunday, September 6, 2026, at 2:00 PM (Doors open at 1:00 PM)
- **Where:** The Colonial Theatre, 2050 Main St, Bethlehem, NH
- **Sponsor:** Bethlehem Hebrew Congregation & the *Sounds in the Sanctuary* series Given Cohen's international stature and dedicated following, music lovers are strongly encouraged to secure their seats early. For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit: www.bethlehemcolonial.org.

Do you live in Keene, Laconia, Bethlehem, Hanover, or another NH community and want to help produce the Jewish Reporter?

We are looking for people all over the state who are interested in writing about their local Jewish community.

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Book Review

Reviewed by Merle Carrus

'Are They Dead Yet?' by Sam Roberts

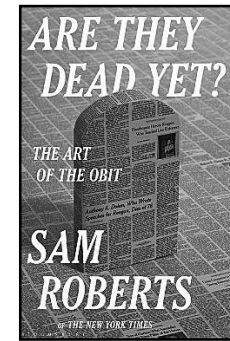
Okay, I realize the title of this book could scare off some readers or make others question my reading interests. However, *Are They Dead Yet?*, written by Sam Roberts, offers a truly interesting, entertaining look at the history and importance of newspaper obituaries.

I have always been fascinated by the question who gets to have their obit mentioned in a major newspaper, especially the *New York Times*. Obituaries are a part of a person's legacy. But which people are worth remembering? When you read the obituary of a famous person, you learn not only about how they died but also how lavishly they lived.

Though it is the standard way to see if someone has passed, the obituary has become more than a death notice: It is a celebration of the person's life. It is a short biography of the person and their accomplishments during their lifetime, a way of memorializing a person. Looking at someone's life through ups and downs, with advantages or disadvantages, with opportunities or difficulties, and seeing how they applied those challenges to become their best selves.

It has long been a joke that people would get up in the morning, break open the newspaper, and read the obituaries first. This gallows humor is credited to Ben Franklin who is thought to have said, "I wake up every morning at nine and grab the morning paper. Then I look at the obituary page. If my name is not on it, I get up." Franklin began publishing obituaries in *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, which he bought in 1729. He was certain that a contemporary record of deaths would draw readers.

As a young Jewish boy growing up in Brownsville, New York, Roberts was six years old when he witnessed the hearse carrying Julius and Ethel Rosenberg's bodies from Sing Sing prison to the funeral home for their funeral. This event, and the fact that his parents and many other adults in his neighborhood were survivors of the Holocaust, had a major impact on the author. Death haunted him throughout his childhood and even as an adult. Over the decades, Roberts worked as a reporter, columnist, and editor at both the *New York Daily News* and the *New York Times* which has culminated in tenure now at the *New York Times*, working as an obituarist. In this book, *Are They Dead Yet?*, he gives examples of many obits written over the



centuries. Some are funny and some are surprising, but they are all fascinating. He also outlines the worldwide history of the obituary.

Roberts writes that people want to be remembered

and the public is always curious about the lives well-known people have led. In small towns, local newspaper obituaries connect one generation to the next. They provide the biographical data of an individual. Obituaries provide a family to connections that link generations, sharing the birthplace, a daughter's maiden name, and married name. This will give researchers valuable tools for following family roots and genealogy.

Interestingly it is also supposed to be an honest accounting of their life. It should not sugarcoat their history or embellish any shortcomings. Though obituarists conform to the advice that "One can't defame the dead," Roberts also reminds us of Voltaire's saying, "To the living we owe respect, to the dead we owe the truth."

Roberts quotes Nigel Starck, author of *Life After Death: The Art of the Obituary*, who argues that obituaries provide a glue that bonds society not in grief but in aspirational reevaluation of our own lives. "There is nothing inherently gloomy about the newspaper obituary page", Starck writes. "Done well, it should capture life rather than wallow in death."

Sam Roberts covered urban affairs in New York as a reporter, columnist, domestic correspondent and editor for *The New York Times* and *The New York Daily News* for more than 50 years. Currently he works as an obituaries writer for *The New York Times*, and is the founding host of "The New York Times Close Up," which first appeared in 1992 on NY1 News and is now available on CUNY-TV. Sam is also the author of a dozen nonfiction books, including *The New Yorkers: 31 Remarkable People, 400 Years*, and the *Untold Biography of the World's Greatest City: A History of New York in 101 Objects*; and *The Brother: The Untold Story of the Rosenberg Atom Spy Case*. He was born in Brooklyn and graduated from Cornell University.

Jewish Journeys

Don't Look Away: Lessons of Hope - Part 2

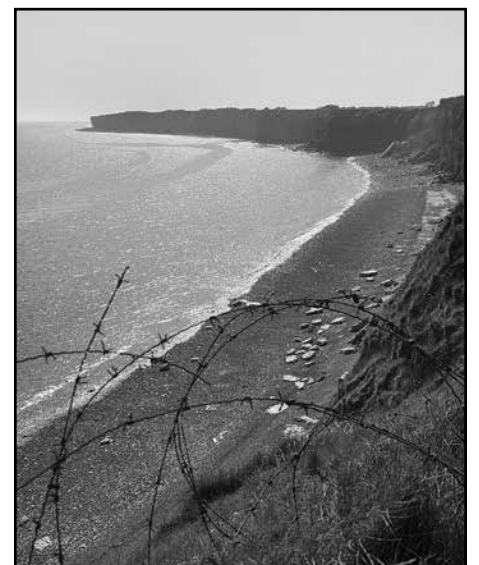
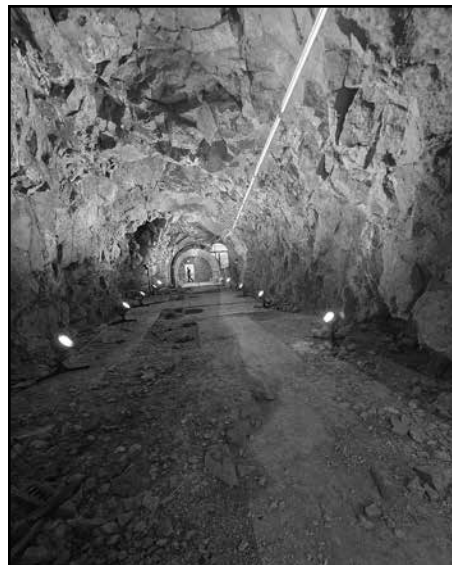
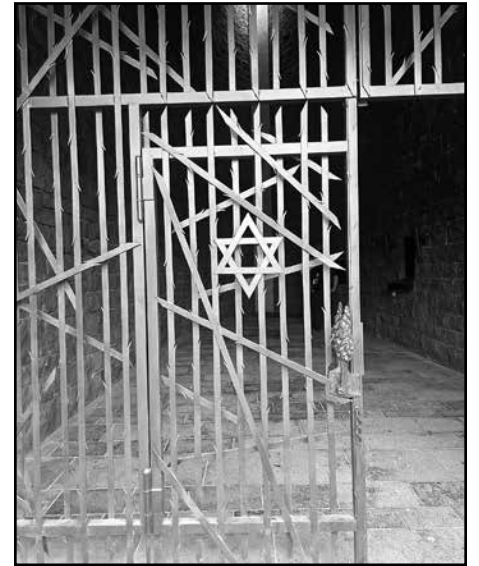
By Lydia Sarnevit, M. Ed, EMT, NSPI
OEC Technician

For the most part, I have chosen to travel with a purpose. One of the first adventures was to Israel with Harvard University's Leon Levi Expedition in Ashkelon. Over the years, this was followed with trips including Alaska, Antarctica, and most recently a World War II tour of Europe. These trips are educational, and some required hard work or navigating challenging terrain, or — like this last trip—emotional fortitude with ample time to reflect on what I had seen and where I had walked. Similarly, you may recall a previous article I authored, regarding time in Israel post October 7th and with American Friends of Magen David Adom. Last time I wrote about Israel and, finding heroes and hope.

Recently, I participated in a WWII tour of Europe with Beaches of Normandy Tours. This tour started on the beaches of Normandy, France and, culminated in Germany paying respects to the victims of Dachau concentration camp and seeing Eagle's Nest firsthand. This was both a meaningful and emotional journey. There were certainly challenges and obstacles to being able to see the signs of hope.

Albert Einstein once said, "The world will not be destroyed by those who do evil but by those who watch them without doing anything." Denial of the Holocaust, especially with an overwhelming abundance of primary evidence, thousands of first-hand accounts by survivors, the finding of guilt by the Nuremberg Trials, as well as extensive physical and forensic evidence is exactly an example of the evil of inaction. These words of Einstein are highly relevant today with an insurgent increase in blatant acts of antisemitism worldwide.

The historical sights and museums visited abroad, especially in Germany, do their due diligence to describe Hitler's leadership as a "cult" and there is extensive primary documentation of the atrocities in writing, artifacts, and photos. The museums and sights have extensive collections of authentic Nazi and Third Reich militaria. Looking at these items evokes a profound mix of unease, disgust, and somber reflection. This is certainly one of history's darkest chapters, ironically with the physical reality of the memorabilia acting as grounding for the harsh, abstract atrocities documented to have occurred. With time, I was able to remind myself of the importance of his-



torical preservation of these items, their educational value, and of our military victory of that time.

We are familiar with the events of the Holocaust but walking through the gates of Dachau and reading the words "*Arbeit macht frei*" ("Work sets you free") immediately instills a sense of the dark history

that transpired there. Much stood out, but in particular, the depiction of medical experimentation on humans, torture, and death is written bluntly and on display, at Dachau. For instance, displays describe medical experimentation, "Disregarding every principal of medical ethics." Also, the complacency of death as

follows, "Death became an everyday event. Dying took place without any sign of piety or sympathy." There were no signs of hope here, or so I thought, until I turned around and noticed row "18" on one of the garden beds. Symbolically linked to the number 18, the Hebrew

Don't Look Away continued on page 20

The Great Birthright Israel Escape

By Hannah Rubin

June 20, 2025. On what would have been the first day of my second month in Israel, I found myself aboard a crowded cruise ship in the eastern Mediterranean. Party music blasted from speakers by the pool while hundreds of college students milled around the deck in bikinis or swim shorts, Solo cups in hand. As I searched in vain for an open lounge chair, I was distracted by a group pointing uneasily at what looked like tiny planes streaking across the bright blue sky.

Of course, they weren't planes—we all knew better. Our overstuffed "cruise" ship had been repurposed by Birthright Israel as an evacuation vessel. In a strangely comical reversal of history, several Israeli navy boats escorted us from Israel to Cyprus. On board were several thousand college students like me who had come to Israel for travel, internships, or volunteer programs.

There were missiles in the sky, and this was real life, not a movie or a history reading. Before the events of the previous week, I probably would have scrambled for cover. But after the chaos of the past seven days, I was almost entirely numb. I knew Iran wasn't aiming for the ocean. We were safer than we had been before.

I stayed on deck, watching the Iron Dome's successful interceptions create little puffs of smoke on the horizon. Looking around, I realized most of my peers hadn't even noticed what was going on. The whole situation felt surreal: I'd left a country at war only to embark on a floating pool party.

When there were no more Iranian missiles to be seen, I leaned against the railing on the boat stern, replaying in my mind the events of the past month as the Israeli coastline receded. Only thirty days before, I had walked through the famous atrium in Ben Gurion Airport, surrounded by 35 other students I had only just met at Logan Airport in Boston. Jet-lagged but excited, I was eager to make new friends and explore the country on my 10-day Birthright trip before beginning a neuroscience internship at Tel Aviv University. I couldn't wait to improve my Hebrew and learn more about Israeli culture. Little did I know I would not only learn a great deal about—but also experience—another fundamental aspect of Israel's history and present: war.

The trip began with little allusion to what was to come. We hiked Mount Arbel in the Galilee and ate *Lahuhe* in Safed. We slept in tents in the Negev and

woke up at 3 am to watch the sun rise over Masada. However, having visited Israel in summer 2023 with my family, I knew things were different this time. Our *madrichim* (group leaders) told us the location of the hotel safe room each night. Two years before, I hadn't even realized Israel *had* safe rooms. From day one, my peers and I were told to download a safety alert app called Home Front Command. The first week, we didn't need it.

But I'll never forget the first time we did. My Birthright group was walking through Mount Herzl National Cemetery, paying tribute to those who had died during the events and aftermath of October 7th. We were standing in the shade of a pine tree grove when all our phones buzzed simultaneously with the three minute alert, the notification that missiles were expected in the area. The siren itself was deafeningly loud. We quickly discovered that this was because we were directly next to a bomb shelter, which had a loudspeaker. Walk past enough missile shelters, and they start to look like regular buildings.

My peers joked about how all forty of us would fit into the small shelter as we crammed ourselves in, but in the context of the cemetery, the siren felt like another blow. *Even after all this death*, I thought, *why does the fight have to continue? When will it be over?*

After waiting ten minutes, our tour guide Or gave us the thumbs up to leave the shelter. She had been listening for the sounds of interceptions above us. You have to wait ten minutes in the shelter, I learned, so that all the debris has time to land.

Several days later, we volunteered at an evacuated kibbutz, Kibbutz Sufa, in the Gaza Envelope. We were within three kilometers of the border, and the ongoing conflict became a soundtrack to our planting and repairwork, punctuating the sunny day with sounds of distant pops and explosions.

Even uninhabited, the kibbutz was charming. It was impossible to imagine that, not so long ago, the pops and explosions had been almost where I stood. A sign posted on the *mamad* (safe room) said in big English letters: 15 SECONDS TO REACH A BOMB SHELTER. Fifteen seconds to reach the shelter after the siren began, that was it. That day, I tried to keep a *mamad* in sight at all times.

The first few kilometers of the highway back to Tel Aviv hugged the Gaza Envelope. The missile shelters accompanying every bus stop felt out of place against the lush green of the endless

farmland. I imagined how the fields would look in the spring, peppered with the blood red flowers called *kalaniyot*. I thought about what I'd heard Or say, about how life in the border kibbutzim is 99% paradise and 1% hell. There, people fortify their own bedrooms because there is so little time to lose. People paint animals and patterns on the *mamads* so that the structures do not scare the children.

When my Birthright trip ended, it was early June. I spent a week in a cheerful hostel in central Tel Aviv before moving into my internship housing. It was impressive how fast I'd gotten accustomed to the occasional missile siren. Following the alert at Mount Herzl, the sirens had become a regular, though fortunately sporadic, part of daily life. Shabbat evenings and holidays were the preferred striking times for the Houthis, and I soon memorized the route from the hostel lobby to the *mamad* in the basement. However, weekdays and afternoons were by no means off limits. On one such occasion, I had just paid for a pistachio McFlurry and had seconds to decide whether to wait for it or look for shelter. The seasoned McDonald's employees just continued to work.

Fear conditioning led me to develop a visceral response to the sight or sound of a Home Front Command alert from my cellphone; my muscles would tense, and my heartbeat would quicken. Despite this, I never truly felt in danger. I knew *mamads* were almost certain to protect their inhabitants.

In every other respect, my first three weeks in Israel were incredible. My research internship began, and I would take the 25 bus line from Allenby Street to the university each day. In the afternoons, I'd go on runs through Neve Tsedek towards Charles Clore Beach, people-watching and enjoying the views of Jaffa and the Mediterranean.

The afternoon of June 12, I had just finished one such run and rushed to get changed into a nice outfit for a Slifka event hosted nearby. As the sun began to set, I walked several blocks down the street to the gathering, relishing the coolness and peace of the evening. My classmates and I discussed our plans for the summer. My friend talked about having me over for Shabbat later that month. Two hours later, I walked back to my own apartment. That was the last time I felt safe enough to go so far from a *mamad*.

Friday, June 13 at 2:30 am. It was the start of Tel Aviv Pride Weekend, and the people celebrating outdoors were noisy! There was shouting, excited conversation,

and even police sirens right beneath my window. I covered my ears, rolled over, and tried to fall back asleep, drifting in and out of slumber. Just after three, the commotion quieted down. *Thank goodness!* I thought, and finally fell asleep.

Friday at 3:30 am. My roommate Hagar opened the door to the bedroom that Noam and I shared. "I just wanted to make sure you heard what's happening," she said. I fumbled to pick up my phone. At 3:04 am, a notification from Home Front Command warned us to remain near a protected space, as an Israeli operation in Iran would likely prompt counterattacks. All gatherings were strictly prohibited. The country was under a state of emergency.

Friday at 9:30 am. The *madrichim* warned us we would likely get a siren in the next hour. As it turned out, we got to wait a little longer. Stuck in our apartments, my roommates and I played cards and Jungle Speed to pass the time.

Friday at 9 pm. Sirens announced what would be the first of hundreds of waves of Iranian missiles. We brought snacks into the fortified room in the apartment and prepared for a long night.

Saturday at 1 am. More missiles. None of us had slept yet. This time, we heard explosions in the distance. They sounded like thunder. That's when I felt scared. Noam and Hagar translated the N12 live news footage for my roommate Alexis and me. Over the next few days, Bat Yam and the Weizmann Institute—places within kilometers of us—would be targeted and hit.

Saturday at 5:30 am: My phone began to wail with the siren notification. After returning to my bedroom after the 1 am siren, I'd fallen into an uneasy sleep but somehow managed to miss the three minute alert. I shook Noam awake and we rushed into the *mamad* again. And again. Later that day, our program staff informed us that we would have to pack up and leave Tel Aviv. *For how long?* They didn't know. *Would we return?* They weren't sure about that either.

And so, in a sequence of events that would stun even a seasoned traveler, my peers and I were shepherd from our Allenby 114 apartments six hours south through the Negev to a hostel in Eilat. Three nights later, we were relocated to a nicer resort down the street. After two nights, we were loaded onto three buses at 6 am and driven north towards Israel's largest port, Ashdod. From there, we took a 17-hour "cruise" to Limassol, Cyprus. After 14 hours in the Larnaca airport, we

Birthright continued on page 20

Holocaust Survivors on Bikes, And Other Stories of Jewish Resilience

By Dina Michael Chaitowitz

On June 26, 2026, I, along with 300 other people, rode a bicycle from Auschwitz-Birkenau to the Jewish Community Center (“JCC”) in Krakow. The ride was a fundraiser for the JCC, a miraculous organization that supports over 50 Holocaust survivors; runs the first Jewish preschool in Krakow since the Holocaust; aids Ukrainian refugees (500,000 to date, 99 percent of whom are not Jewish), Israelis who moved to Krakow from other parts of Europe where they felt unwelcome, and people who only recently discovered their Jewish roots; attracts young Jewish people from all over the world; and in general is rebuilding Jewish life in Krakow. The fundraiser is called “Ride for the Living” (“RFTL”).

I opted for the four-day RFTL program, which included a tour of Auschwitz-Birkenau the day before the ride; a Shabbat dinner with over 600 people after the ride; tours of the Jewish Quarter; talks with Holocaust survivors; a Havdalah service and cocktail party; and a lot of festiveness and enthusiasm.

I am writing to share the conversations we had with the Holocaust survivors in the hopes that their lives and words will inspire you to join the ride – or the alternative walk – next year.

We first met with Zosia Radzikowska, a 91-year old Holocaust survivor and one of the founders of the JCC. She and her mother survived the Shoah by securing false “Aryan” papers and posing as Catholics. Zosia is careful not to use the word “Holocaust.” The term “holocaust” originates from the Greek word “holokauston,” which means “a sacrifice burned whole,” or a religious sacrifice. Zosia says what happened was not a holocaust; it was a shoah – an utter destruction. Zosia’s father was unable to hide in the same way as his fair-haired wife and daughter, be-



The author sitting down with 89-year old Holocaust survivor Leon Malmed.

cause, as Zosia puts it, it is “very easy to prove that a man is a Jew.” He was sent to and murdered at Auschwitz. When Zosia returned to Krakow after the war, she spent two years in a Zionist school, which she enjoyed very much. Unfortunately, it was the early fifties and the height of Stalinism, and Zionists were considered enemies of Poland’s communist government. Thus, the school was closed. For over forty years, Zosia had virtually no connection to Judaism and lived a secular life. She became a prominent lawyer and a criminal and fiscal law professor in the Faculty of Law and Administration at the Jagiellonian University. Even with all that she had already accomplished, in the 1980’s, Zosia worked as an editor of an underground anti-communist newspaper. And then in the 1990’s, in her fifties, she reclaimed her Jewish identity (proving, as JCC CEO Jonathan Ornstein mused, the value of early Jewish education). Zosia had a Bat Mitzvah ceremony in her eighties, for which she learned trop, read her Torah portion, and prepared a D’var Torah (which she regularly delivered at the JCC; check out the You Tube videos, “What’s the Parsha, Pani Zosia?”). When



Ride For the Living participants in front of Auschwitz II-Birkenau.

asked for advice for living through these turbulent times, Zosia said, “Don’t be indifferent - when bad things happen, react”; “travel and meet people”; and “stay strong and positive.” How can you not feel inspired to challenge yourself, live a full life, and do good work after learning about this woman?

Our meeting with Zosia was on Thursday, the day before the ride. She wished us good luck on the ride, and said she would see us at the community Shabbat dinner, scheduled for 9:00 pm on Friday. Some of us wondered if we would last till dinner time after 60 miles on a bike and in record-breaking heat, but Zosia inspired us. What a magnificent lady!

Ninety-seven-year-old Bernard Offen greeted us on the morning of the ride. Bernard survived five concentration camps, including Auschwitz-Birkenau. On the morning of the ride, he woke up with the rest of us, at 5:00 am in the morning, got in his spandex shorts, and hopped on a bike (a tandem bike powered by JCC CEO Jonathan Ornstein). It was over 90 degrees that day and just be-

ing outside was a challenge for many. Bernard thanked us for riding with him “from the place of darkness into the place of light.” He explained that he and his father arrived at Auschwitz-Birkenau in August of 1944 but that, “in the end, after the selection, he [his father] went one way, and I went the other way, and I’m here to bear testimony to that and welcome you all and thank you for remembering all of the people who were murdered here.” He concluded, “Love you all.” Love you, Bernard Offen.

The next day, we met with Leon Malmed, an 89-year-old Holocaust survivor. Leon, his parents, and older sister (Rachel) lived in Compiègne, France. In July of 1942, the French police came to their house and placed his parents under arrest. Their neighbors, Henri and Suzanne Ribouleau, promised they would take care of the children. Leon was only four and half years old; Rachel was nine. Leon’s parents were deported to Auschwitz and murdered. Leon and Rachel spent three years in hiding with the Ri-

Bikes continued on page 20

Experience Israel Like Never Before – A Once-in-a-Lifetime Journey for New Hampshire Women

Have you always dreamed of visiting Israel in comfort while deepening your connection to the Jewish people, our history, and our heritage? This October, that dream can become a reality.

The Seacoast Chabad Jewish Center is thrilled to invite women from across New Hampshire to join the Land & Spirit Women’s Israel Journey, an extraordinary luxury experience presented by the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute. From October 19–25,

2026, participants will enjoy an unforgettable week exploring Israel while staying in exceptional five-star accommodations and traveling with expert educators and guides.

This is far more than a tour. It is a journey of identity, inspiration, resilience, and belonging. Together we’ll walk the streets of Jerusalem, experience the beauty of the Galilee, connect with the people of Israel, and create lifelong friendships with women from our own community.

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portunity.

For more information or to reserve your place, please contact:

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Hosted by the Seacoast Chabad Jewish Center in partnership with the Land & Spirit – Rohr Jewish Learning Institute.

Come discover the Land. Strengthen your Spirit. Create memories that will last a lifetime.

Jewish Journeys

Don't Look Away

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word "Chai" (חי) means "life."

This time bearing witness, I was overcome by emotions of anger and struggled to find signs of hope. This took extra time, patience, introspection, and some conversations with trusted friends. Particularly challenging was Kehlsteinhaus and Eagle's Nest. Walking down the same tunnel Hitler had walked and the contrast of walking where evil had walked in what is now a scenic national park with breathtaking views of the Bavarian Alps. Again, I felt more anger with conflict. Then, I was drawn to a lone butterfly perched atop a beautiful flower and realized there were good intentions to turn something horrible into something meaningful.

This journey also brought me to hal-

lowed ground at the sight of the beaches of Normandy where many lives were lost on D-day and many WWII historical sights. The compelling stories told of brave individuals during that time provided a sense of hope. Being present there over this past Memorial Day only added meaning to this voyage. At the church in Angoville-au-Plain, France, the site of an aid station for the 2nd Battalion, all soldiers including German soldiers were medically and impartially treated here and this special place can be felt upon entering the church.

Clearly, Albert Camus was correct in saying, "Man is not entirely to blame he did not start history; nor is he entirely innocent, since he continues it." We are living in a time where the repetitive pattern of blame and outward display of hate toward Jews in not unprecedented and continues to be alarming. As a Jewish mother,

I should not have to ponder among my friends who would hide my children, but this intrusive thought has occurred.

We are the holders of history and the path it follows. We have a responsibility, as Einstein and Camus point out, to act. Now is the time to say, "Enough." Acts and crimes of hate need to be identified as exactly what they are with swift action and appropriate consequences. Education for tolerance is a continued need. My hope is that we are inspired to counteract hate and antisemitism by shifting our focus from fear and anger to positive, actionable change. Just as the intent of my voyage to Israel after October 7th, sometimes you just need to go see for yourself. Once again, although rather challenging to do so on this tour, I discovered there were heroes, upstanders, and helpers as well as signs of hope, *tikkvah* (תיקווה).

Lydia Sarnevitiz began a year devoted to traveling starting in December 2025 both internationally and domestically, visiting 5 out of 7 continents so far. Prior to her time off to travel, she served in a variety of capacities including a Juvenile Probation and Parole Officer and public-school administrator. She is a NREMT certified Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), a National Ski Patrol certified ski patroller, an OEC Instructor and volunteer member of both NH Medical Reserve Corps and DBART. Lydia is the past Director of Education for the Upper Valley Jewish Community located on the campus of Dartmouth College, and the Strategic Planning Coordinator and then Coordinator for the Jewish Federation of Greater Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Lydia and her children Andrew, Jacob, and Ziva live in New Hampshire.

Birthright

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took a 4 am flight to Rome, and after 24 hours, we finally boarded a plane to Boston. My parents both took time off work to pick me up at the airport. Only then did I learn how worried they had been.

Standing on the deck en route to Cyprus, I felt a strange mixture of relief and guilt. Relief that I no longer had to listen anxiously for missile sirens while I was in the shower, that I would know I was safe when I slept. For me, the ordeal was over. But that didn't feel quite right, because for Israelis, this ordeal was but one of many. An "easy" escape route had been organized for my peers and me. If I had

family in Israel, I asked myself, would I have taken that escape route? It felt like an undeserved get-out-of-jail-free card. I felt unnecessarily powerless; I wished I could have stayed and done something.

One night at school, months later, I was reflecting on my experience and wondering what I would do if I could return to Israel this summer. Lying in bed, I pictured the sparkling waters of the Jaffa Harbor and the muted greens and browns of Mount Arbel. Halfway through my imagined walk with an iced coffee down Rothschild Street, I realized I hadn't gotten any red alert notifications in a while.

I opened the Tzofar app on my phone and scrolled through the history. True to my memory, there had been no recent si-

rens in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem. Then a familiar city caught my eye: Eilat. Hostile Aircraft Intrusion. Sirens in the Gaza Envelope multiple days in a row. Sirens near the Lebanon border. Suddenly, I felt chilled. Was this life in the country I longed to return to?

Yes, I thought. In a nation dealing with hostility and terrorism from so many of its neighbors, values like peace, security, and the continuation of the Jewish people take on an additional meaning. Growing up in the US, I had taken those things for granted, but they are ideals that my Israeli peers quite literally continue to fight for.

Was this life in Israel? Yes, and also no. Living under threat of conflict is

scary, and back in the States, it is hard to comprehend. But even when the values that my Israeli peers fight for are more of a prayer than a definitive reality, life goes on. *And I want to be a part of it*, I decided. *Next time, I won't stand by.*

When I leaned against the boat railing, watching the Israeli coast fade into the horizon, I made a promise to myself. The moment would not be defined by a great escape. Instead, it would represent the opposite: a great beginning.

Hannah Rubin is a rising senior at Yale University studying psychology. After graduating, she intends to become a psychiatrist to treat Israelis and Americans with PTSD.

Bikes

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bouleaus (later awarded the status of "Righteous Among the Nations" by Yad Vashem). The three years were harsh, as they were living on severe food restrictions and ever fearful of being discovered. After the war, he was separated from the Ribouleaus by misguided relatives, and then he was also separated by those relatives from his sister. Despite these horrific and traumatic events, Leon survived and prospered. He eventually immigrated to the United States and worked in the high-tech industry in Silicon Valley. He took up cycling in his sixties, started competing at the age of 78, and has won multiple gold medals. He completed the 60-mile ride but, unlike me, he did not think there were any hills (I lost count at 20). I asked what accounted for his positive outlook on life: "I like

to win," he said. "I was just born that way. You have a choice in life. You can go the easy way, not think too much, not educate yourself. Or you can say, 'No, I'm going to do this.' There will always be people better at things than you, but that is good. You can learn from them." And he added, "I just love life. And I like to meet people." As for what is going on in the world, Leon admonished, "People say, 'Never again.' But it is not enough to say those words. We have to do everything in our power to make sure that it doesn't happen again. We have a voice and we have to use it." Such an extraordinary person.

In her book, *People Love Dead Jews: Reports from a Haunted Present*, author and educator Dara Horn urges Holocaust educators not to simply highlight the destruction of Jewish communities during the Holocaust, but to also teach about the vibrancy and diversity of Jew-

ish life both before and after the Holocaust, and the values and traditions that have sustained Jewish people throughout the centuries. The RFTL is the best sort of Holocaust education, I think. We not only witnessed the remnants and heard stories of that terrible time, but we were immersed in a burgeoning and vibrant Jewish community. JCC CEO Jonathan Ornstein opened the ride with this comment: "We will show the world the most important lesson, or one of the most important lessons, we can learn. We are Jewish despite Auschwitz not because of Auschwitz. We are not a nation of victims. The Jewish response to tragedy has always been, and must always be, to rebuild." Amen.

I hope some of you will join me on next year's ride. It is currently scheduled to take place June 24, 2027 to June 27, 2027. In addition to the main 60-mile ride, there is a shorter 14-mile subroute

and a three-mile walk from the Plaszow Concentration to the JCC. You also do not need to sign up for the four-day program. So, something for everyone. You can indicate your interest here: <https://form.jotform.com/253163731686361>.

Finally, I hope you will consider making a contribution to the JCC (which, by the way, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization) through my fundraiser. The RFTL is one-fourth of the JCC's annual budget and the JCC is 85 percent toward its goal; I am 84 percent toward my personal goal of \$5,000. This link will direct you to my fundraising page: <https://secure.qgiv.com/event/rftl2026/account/2236907/>. Your contribution will help the JCC in its important revitalization effort. Thank you!

Feel free to reach out with any questions. My email is dmichaelchaitowitz@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you.



Hadassah Celebrates Our Donors

By Michele Bank

In June, several members of the Manchester Chapter of Hadassah participated in the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire's Israeli Bazaar. Visitors stopped by our table to learn more about Hadassah, collect informational pamphlets and pick up Hadassah swag. Children also enjoyed a matching game featuring Israeli birds.

Our next chapter meeting will be held on Thursday, September 3, at 1 PM. Upcoming local chapter events include a session on the art of Hebrew alphabet letter writing and a CPR course. The CPR course will focus specifically on chest compression, not mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. This is a vital lifesaving skill for all to learn. Dates for these events to be announced.

Donations to Hadassah help our mission to support Israel and its people. Our mission is to have the best medical care and research throughout Israel, to care for Israel's youth and to advocate for women in Israel and everywhere. Donors who commit to donating a specific

amount of money to Hadassah on a yearly basis are very special, and the Northern New England Region would like to thank you for your commitments. On Wednesday, August 5 at 7 PM, Hadassah Northern New England invites you to a special Donor Celebration. This gathering serves as a special tribute to our dedicated Keepers of the Gate and Chai Society Donors. We are honored to host Hadassah National President Carol Ann Schwartz as our featured guest for a delightful Kosher wine and dessert reception, to be held in Burlington, MA. Annual Givers—Keepers of the Gate—agree to provide guaranteed donations yearly. These yearly commitments provide steady, reliable money that Hadassah can rely on and use right away to fund everyday needs.

Sustaining members are those that also commit to provide guaranteed donations yearly, but do so with monthly, quarterly or other regular payments. These donations are also crucial to the success of Hadassah. Anyone who donates to Hadassah at a cumulative chai level (Chai Member: \$180, Chai Silver: \$360, or Sha-

lom Chai: \$720 goal), will automatically become a Chai Society member. This means, for example, if you donated \$100 you are \$100 closer to being a member of the Chai Society. If you are donating to events such as the HNE Walk, the amount you donate will count towards being a Chai Society member.

If you are not yet a Keeper of the Gate or Chai Society donor, but would like to join this compassionate giving community, there are several ways to proceed. You can become a Chai Society Donor by paying annually with an annual payment of \$180 or by paying monthly. To begin donating toward your \$180, \$360, or \$720 goal (Chai, Silver Chai, Shalom Chai) go to [Hadassah.org/donate](https://www.hadassah.org/donate), choose "Give Today" and set up a monthly donation of \$15, \$30, or \$60.

To become a Keeper of the Gate (which requires an annual commitment of \$1000 or more) or to step up to a new Keeper level go to [Hadassah.org](https://www.hadassah.org) and click on the Donate button.

With August being National Make-A-Will Month, it is the perfect time to create or update your will. Taking this step

can give you peace of mind, knowing you have provided for your loved ones and supported the causes you care about most. By remembering Hadassah in your estate plan, you help ensure that our life-changing work continues in Israel, the US, and worldwide. Making a legacy gift may be easier than you think. It can be as simple as: adding a sentence to your will, using a codicil to update your existing will, or designating Hadassah as a beneficiary of your retirement plan, life insurance policy, or another account. If Hadassah is already in your estate plan, please let us know, we would love to welcome you into our 1912 Legacy Society.

Time sensitive - Ahava, the Dead Sea Skin Care Product company, is offering Hadassah members a 30% off discount on their products, with 5% then to be donated back to Hadassah. The offer is available via their website, [ahava.com](https://www.ahava.com), using code HADASSAH30. This offer will be available through August 31.

For additional information about Hadassah or the above information, please contact michele.bank@gmail.com.

Mitzvahs

JBIL Library Helps Ensure Everyone Can Fully Participate in the Jewish High Holy Days with Free Accessible Prayer Books, Digital Downloads, and Community Programming

Order Deadline August 28 for Organizations and Individuals

NEW YORK (July 16, 2026) — With the Jewish High Holy Days quickly approaching, JBI Library is broadening its free collection of accessible prayer books, liturgical materials, digital resources, and community programming so that people who are blind, have low vision, or have a print disability can fully participate in worship, reflection, and other traditions.

This year, JBI is expanding access

through an extensive collection of free High Holy Day materials in braille, large print, audio, and digital formats, including the newly available **braille edition of *Machzor Lev Shalem***, the Conservative movement's High Holy Day prayer book. In addition to physical materials mailed free of charge, JBI also offers a growing collection of downloadable prayers and liturgical resources that can be accessed instantly through its website (jbilibrary.org), helping patrons prepare for or participate in services

wherever they are.

"Meaningful participation in the High Holy Days begins with access," said Michelle Shapiro Abraham, Executive Director of JBI Library. "Whether someone prefers braille, large print, audio, or digital materials, our goal is to remove barriers so every person can pray, reflect, learn, and connect with the Jewish community in the way that works best for them."

Alongside its accessible library, JBI will once again offer High Holy Day pro-

gramming designed to foster learning, reflection, and community. More information on these programs will be announced in early August.

To browse materials, place an order, or download prayers, visit: <https://jbilibrary.org/our-library/high-holy-day-materials>

For assistance, contact one of JBI's librarians at library@jbilibrary.org or 212-545-8025. To ensure delivery before Rosh Hashanah, orders should be placed by **August 28, 2026 for both organizations and individuals.**

Randi Gelfman Continues Her Search for a Living Kidney Donor: Please Consider a Gift of Life

By Randi Gelfman

Dear friends,

My name is Randi Gelfman, I live in Parsonsfield, Maine, and I have been a member of Congregation Bet Ha'am in



South Portland, Maine for many years. Some of you may know that I have kidney disease. Over time, my kidney disease has gotten worse, causing my kidneys not to

work well enough to keep me alive. My treatment options at this time are limited to dialysis or a kidney transplant. I have been on dialysis since May 2023 – 3 days a week for 4 hours each day, which is helping my kidneys do their job of removing

wastes, toxins, and extra fluids. But the longer you are on dialysis, the less time you have to do the things you love, and the more your kidneys deteriorate.

However, a life-giving living donor kid-

Kidney Donor continued on page 22



JFNH Tributes

Received by July 10, 2026

Annual Campaign

In honor of Mara Friedman's 60th Birthday. With love, Mindee, Mia and Kersten

In honor of Jan Schiff – Dr. Isaac Schiff

Film Festival

In honor of Pat Kalik and Ross Fishbein – Roberta Brayer

Kushner-Tumen Family Children's Fund

In memory of Cliff Lopate's mother – Norman and Andrea Kushner

PJ Library

In support of the efforts of Dinah Berch and PJ Library – Joanne Samuels

How to submit an obituary

The Reporter publishes obituaries for any member of the community, past or present, for a \$36 fee. Please send obituaries and one photo, if desired, as a separate jpg attachment to thereporter@jewishnh.org or to the office along with payment at: JFNH, 273 S. River Road Unit 5, PO Box 10041, Bedford, NH 03110

Simchas

New! B'nai mitzvah, engagement, wedding or new baby in the family? Share your happiness with the community with a notice in the *Reporter's* new *Simchas* section. Your \$36 payment will support JFNH's nonprofit mission. Submit a short notice and photo to thereporter@jewishnh.org or JFNH, 273 S. River Road Unit 5, PO Box 10041, Bedford, NH 03110

Kidney Donor

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ney transplant would offer me much more freedom and the ability to live a longer, healthier, and more meaningful life. A transplant would also give me more time to do the things I love most, such as spending time with my family and friends, my partner Nick, my pets, helping others, and being outdoors.

Finding a kidney is not easy. People who are on a wait list for a kidney from a deceased donor often have to wait 5-10 years, and the kidney lasts on average only 10-15 years. But the wait list for a living kidney donor is often shorter, and the kidney typically lasts 15-20+ years. It also has much better function.

In order to donate, living kidney donors get a careful and thorough evaluation with their own team of health professionals to see if you could be a match for me and to ensure that living donation is as safe as possible for you.

I want to share with you some basic information about kidney donation:

1. You only need one kidney to live a long, healthy life.
2. The surgery for a donor is done laparoscopically, meaning through tiny incisions,

and the recuperation period is fairly quick, generally only a few weeks.

3. The cost of an evaluation and surgery would be covered by my insurance.
4. Although my blood type is O+, you do not necessarily need to have the same blood type or tissue type to be a match.
5. There is no age limit to be a donor. You just have to have a healthy kidney.

In order to express your interest in becoming my kidney donor, you can fill out the form at this link: www.mghlivingdonors.org. Upon submission, the Mass General Living Donor Team (617-643-7193) will be in touch with you. To learn more about kidney donation, you can call Randi's Transplant Navigator, Jullie Hoggan at 702-530-4156, or go to the National Kidney Foundation's website: www.kidney.org/livingdonation. There are also many other websites that can help you learn about kidney disease and donation. Thank you for taking the time to read my story. Major ways you can help me are to share it with your friends, family, and on social media.

With appreciation and gratitude,
Randi Gelfman
rsselfman@gmail.com

JFNH Tribute Cards: A Double Mitzvah

Sending a tribute card from the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire is one of the best ways to honor someone for any *simcha*, e.g. birthday, anniversary, bar/bat mitzvah. It is also the perfect way to say "Thank you" or to send your condolences.

Your JFNH tribute card serves double duty by helping to support the vital programs serving the New Hampshire Jewish Community.

All tributes will be listed in The Reporter.

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When submitting a Letter to the Editor, please include your name, town of residence, and contact information. Letters to the Editor must be under 300 words in length to be considered for publication. Send your letter by email to the reporter@jewishnh.org with "letter to the editor" in the subject line.

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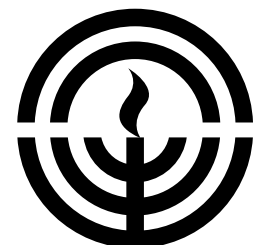
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