

The Other End of the Rainbow? From 1994 to 2025



JOHN STRAUSS
CJCF President

In 1994, the Canton Jewish Community Federation embarked on a long-range plan, chaired by Beverly Gross and Neil Genshaft. At that time, a long-range planning committee was called into action by Dr. Ron Gelb, President of the CJCF. There was a recognition that the community was shrinking, and in the long term, thought would have to be given to how to maintain the services and functions of the Jewish community despite those factors.

Intermarriage, individuals' drifting from organized religion and demographic realities such as aging,

were all seen as factors. The efforts undertaken were organized and suitably serious, resulting in a large three ring binder, with a table of contents, records of many meetings, agendas and even the menu for the next meeting, many individual volunteers, survey results, etc. I cannot say for certain, but I believe that those efforts lay the groundwork for "Geshet" and "Kadima", efforts that culminated in the decision to combine the forces of Temple Israel, Shaaray Torah and the Federation under one roof, and to sell the old JCC and former Temple properties. I moved to town in 1994 and really did not get involved in Federation affairs until around 2000. I travelled to Israel in 2001 with Rabbi John Spitzer, Dr. John Given, Bev Gross, Robert Sharkes, Robert Friedman and a few others for my first visit. That marked the launching of my involvement with Federation. What did I know about the long range plans and problems of the community at that point? I was buried in studying for my adult Bar Mitzvah, learning about Israel, running a fledgling furniture business and becoming best friends with our shaliach, Tamir Porter.

Rabbi Spitzer is thankfully still with us, but everyone else on my original trip is either no longer with us on this Earth or no longer with us in Canton. Many members involved in the original 1994 planning process are similarly no longer in Canton, in one form or another. Names like Jim Green, Rita Gorowitz, Neil Berro, Sam Ron, Lorri Fogel, Adele Gelb, Carol Tulgan, are sprinkled throughout the report. The first question that the committee asked was, "How does the

community benefit from the CJCF?" That question could still be asked today. It is in some ways a difficult question to answer. The report shifts to the amount of time taken up by the process: "Twenty-Five meetings, two hours in length have been held...approximately 241 man hours (sic.) given to the community by volunteers who all lead busy lives in business, professions or at home..." Keep in mind that in 1993, there were 799 Jewish families living in Canton and about 1655 total population of Jews in Canton.

The goal of the committee was to form a long range plan of three to five years. Now, thirty years later, I cannot attempt to catalogue what has changed and what is the same, what plans worked and which plans did not, but I can make some observations.

Although smaller, in many ways, the community is still dealing with the same existential questions. In 1994, there was a JCC with a Director, a CJCF with a different director, separate buildings for the Temple and Shaaray Torah, a viable Hebrew School, a religious school in each congregation and a much larger Jewish Welfare Campaign, only 1/3rd of which stayed in the community. In addition, the "older" generation of leaders is not here in various ways and we need a new younger generation to take up leadership roles. Nevertheless, the Jewish Community of Canton "punches above its weight", by raising a significant amount of money in the JWF Campaign, being involved in our Partnership2gether as one of the smaller communities, and producing many civic minded leaders in all facets of life around town, from City Government, to business to charitable work.

The question, "How does the community benefit from the Federation?" is still out there. I have a few answers, but would be interested in your thoughts. I would add a few questions: 1) What do you want to see from the Federation in the coming year? 2) What does the Federation do well? 3) Do you still want a physical paper copy of the SJN mailed to your home, or would you be happy to read it online? 4) Would you be happy to share more with Akron as we are doing on Yom Ha'atzmaut, with the Partnership2gether and with shlichim such as Rami? There were similar questions asked in 1995 during the community meetings. They were served tuna fish sandwiches at their meeting and here all you get is my email address: johnstrauss@me.com. Send me comments and thoughts!

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432 30th Street N.W. • Canton, OH 44709

Phone: Editorial 330-445-2405

Phone: Advertising 330-445-2410

Fax: 330-455-5268

email: sjnads@yahoo.com • www.jewishcanton.org

Ori Akrish, *Executive Director*

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COMING
TO CANTON!



P2G | SPEAKER EVENT

We are excited to host a delegation of the Western Galilee partnership at Beit Ha'am May 9 - 11, 2025!

The community is invited to hear them share their stories at Temple Israel service on Friday, May 9, and the Shaaray Torah Shabbat service and festive kiddush meal on Saturday, May 10.



GOLAN ROSENBERG

Director of the Matte Asher Community Center, Golan will share as the voice of all the communities affected by the war. Golan is also the P2G Community Engagement Co-Chair and is leading the successful program, "First Home in The Homeland," which absorbs Ukrainian and Russian immigrants and refugees in Kibbutz Yehiam and the larger community of the Matte Asher Regional Council.



MEITAL BEHAM

Meital has served as Evacuee Community Manager on behalf of the Regional Council of Matte Asher at three separate communities for the majority of the war's duration. She and her family were evacuated from the home they share in Kibbutz Matzuva on October 8. Meital is actively involved in volunterr work at the Kibbutz.



SHIMON BUSKILA

Shimon is the father of Jordan Buskila, who was murdered at the NOVA party on October 7. He will share how he and his family have chosen to honor the memory of Jordan since his death. Shimon works as the VP of Marketing at the Kibbutz. He and his family are members of Kibbutz Kfar Masaryk, which was co-founded by the great-grandparents of his wife, Merav Buskilaco.

We Find a Way: From Dire Wolves to Jewish Survival



ORI AKRISH
Executive Director

The other day, my son looked up from his phone, as casually as if he were telling me about the weather, and said, “Hey, did you know they’re bringing back dire wolves?”

He’d seen something on TikTok and was very excited up about it. Now, knowing how quickly misinformation spreads online—especially among kids—I’ll admit, I raised an eyebrow.

“Dire wolves? Like the CGI ones from *Game of Thrones*?”

He gave me that look—the classic *I can’t believe you don’t already know this face*.

“No, the actual real ones. From like 10,000 years ago. A company is bringing them back. It’s super cool but... didn’t they watch *Jurassic Park*?”

And just like that, he hit on the moral of the story before I even had time to Google anything.

Turns out he was right on both counts. The company is called Colossal Biosciences, and they’re using genetic technology to recreate a creature that’s been extinct since the Ice Age. The dire wolf—*Canis dirus*—once roamed the Americas with power and pride, larger than the modern gray wolf and with a bite that could crush bone. It disappeared around 10,000 years ago, likely a victim of climate change and shifting ecosystems.

Now, scientists have essentially edited the DNA of modern wolves to bring back some version of this legendary predator. They’ve already named the first pups Romulus, Remus, and (naturally) Khaleesi.

And that’s when Dr. Ian Malcolm from *Jurassic Park* popped into my head: “No, I’m simply saying that life... uh... finds a way.”

For those who haven’t seen the movie, Dr. Malcolm is the chaotic genius scientist who warns that, in their attempt to control nature, humans might unleash something unpredictable. It’s one of those iconic lines that makes every scientist in a leather jacket sound 20% cooler.

But then, as I thought more about it, I realized—this wasn’t just a movie quote anymore. It suddenly felt a lot more real. The idea that life, against all odds, will find a way to adapt and endure. Here’s why: if there’s any group of people who should, by all accounts, no longer exist, it’s us—the Jewish people.

We’ve been scattered across continents, forbidden to speak Hebrew, forced to convert, expelled from country after country, and nearly exterminated in the Holocaust. Time and again, history wrote us off as a people nearing extinction. But here we are.

Purim just passed, reminding us that Haman had a plan for our annihilation. Passover followed, reminding us that Pharaoh had one too. Both of them failed. We found a way.

And not just to survive—but to thrive, to evolve, to hybridize in the best sense of the word.

Today’s Jews are a fusion of traditions, geographies, languages, and cultures.

Sephardic, Ashkenazi, Mizrahi, Ethiopian, Indian, Persian, American, Israeli—we’re not some carbon copy of our ancestors; we’re a beautifully adapted version, still guided by ancient (Torah) wisdom, but walking confidently into the future.

So when I read about scientists bringing back the dire wolf—not a perfect replica but a reimagined version that carries the spirit and genes of the original—I couldn’t help but think: hey, same. Sure, we’re not extinct. But we’ve come close more times than we care to count- and yet we keep howling.

Jewish thinkers have long talked about *netzach Yisrael*—the eternity of the Jewish people. Not because we’re frozen in time, but because we adapt. Like wolves in a changing ecosystem, we figure out how to hunt, how to thrive, how to raise our pups in a new world that doesn’t always make sense.

The dire wolf coming back may be a PR move, a scientific experiment, or a cautionary tale in the making (seriously—*Jurassic Park* was a warning!) But the idea that something ancient can live again, reshaped and reimagined for a modern age, is kind of poetic.

So thanks to my son—for the cool science tip and the existential reminder. Whether it’s through Torah, TikTok, Talmud, or some mashup of all three, we’re still here. And we’re not going anywhere.

Because, as it turns out, life—*our life*—finds a way.

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JFS Staff

Heather Hershey-Tompkins, Executive Director
330-445-2402 | Hhtompkins@jewishcanton.org

Peggy Stabholz, Case Manager
330-445-2859 | Pstabholz@jewishcanton.org

Leanne Lehn, Administrative Assistant
330-445-2850 | Llehn@jewishcanton.org

Friends Campaign



HEATHER HERSHEY-TOMPKINS
JFS Director

May 1st starts the Friends Campaign with Jewish Family Services (JFS). The money collected from this campaign is used to fund the many services that Jewish Family Services provides to the clients. In 2024 144 individuals were involved with JFS and more than 300 calls come in and out of our offices in a month. Without these funds the clients would not be able to receive the needed services. 100% of your donation go directly to helping Jewish individuals in this community.

JFS food bank is used regularly by 20 families and over 85 hours a year is spent by JFS staff purchasing and putting away food and supplies, following up with families and either delivering or having the families pick up the groceries at Beit Ha'am. Clients that use the food bank are low income individuals and families who struggle to make end meet.

JFS provides over 30 hours towards visits and outreach each month and additional hours are put towards case management services. JFS make sure that all of the client's needs are met. That means JFS help them with laundry, shopping, accompanying them to doctor's appointments and even helping them complete paperwork for metropolitan housing, food stamps, representative payee, and HEAP applications for gas and electric.

JFS also provides representative payee and guardianship services to the Jewish community. Many hours are spent with these individuals to make sure their needs are met. On an average JFS spends around 12 hours a month with each representative payee client and guardianship ward.

Majority of the clients with JFS are over 60 years old, and because of this JFS has incorporate monthly adult activities for them. JFS knows how important it is for adults to get out and socialize.

So when considering if or what to donate to JFS for the Friends Campaign keep in mind what the clients are saying about JFS:

- "I owe my life to JFS because I do not have family who live in the area. JFS is my family."
- "I remember when I struggled to receive services in my community. I no longer struggle and worry about this now because JFS is always there for me."
- "It's almost difficult to find the words in describing what the JFS has accomplished for ourselves, but acts of loving kindness could easily be the description."
- "To the JFS staff, I remain forever grateful."
- "I could have not done it without JFS, they saved my life."

JFS touches many lives. These individuals and families depend on JFS to be there for them. With your support, JFS can continue to bring quality services to a lonely senior, a hungry child, and a depressed and overwhelmed parent. So when you receive the Friends Campaign information and envelope in the mail, please remember all the individuals and families you will be helping with your donation. Also, you never know when you or a loved one may need a helping hand. JFS would like to be that helping hand and friend.

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Counting the Omer Then and Now



RABBI JOHN SPITZER

This year, because of the way the lunar calendar falls, the entire month of May, which includes the conclusion of the Hebrew month of Iyyar and the beginning of the month of Sivan, is devoted to sefirat haOmer, Counting the Omer. This practice has Torah origins in the Book of Leviticus:

"You shall count from the eve of the second day of Pesach, when an omer of grain is to be brought as an offering, seven complete weeks. The day after the seventh week of your counting will make fifty days, and you shall present a new meal offering to God (Leviticus 23:15-16)." We begin the count following the first day of Pesach and count daily for seven weeks (49 days) concluding with the Festival of Shavuot.

The practice of counting the Omer is remembered in the synagogue where a special prayer is said daily keeping track of the number of days from our liberation from Egypt to our being bound by the Covenant at Sinai. While there is no Jerusalem Temple today to bring the sheaves of grain as a sacrifice, there are creative ways to give the requirement to count meaning. I remember being in a synagogue in Nashville where, each day, one of the children of the religious school would bring a box of cereal and place it in the foyer, building, day by day, a visual remembrance of the Omer offering in the form of Cheerios, Rice Checks and Corn Flakes. With Shavuot these offerings were distributed to local food banks. I thought that to be pretty neat!

Counting the Omer of our Lives

It seems to me that counting the Omer, not unlike Cheshbon Nefesh (making a reckoning of our souls during the month before the High Holy Days) is a way of using our desire and perhaps need to count things to focus on what the journey from Liberation to Obligation looks and feels like. The counting is a spiritual artifice to help us focus on the passage of time, the growth we hope for, and the thanksgiving we feel for the privilege of life and the opportunities presented to us to "get it right."

The Psalmist wrote (Psalm 90), "The days of our years are threescore years and ten, or even by reason of strength, four score years...So teach us to number our days that we may get us a heart of wisdom." Our faith urges us to count the number of our days by bringing an omer of love, an omer of gratitude, and an omer of faith each day...and perhaps some Rice Krispies for those in need as well.

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A division of the Canton Jewish Community Federation



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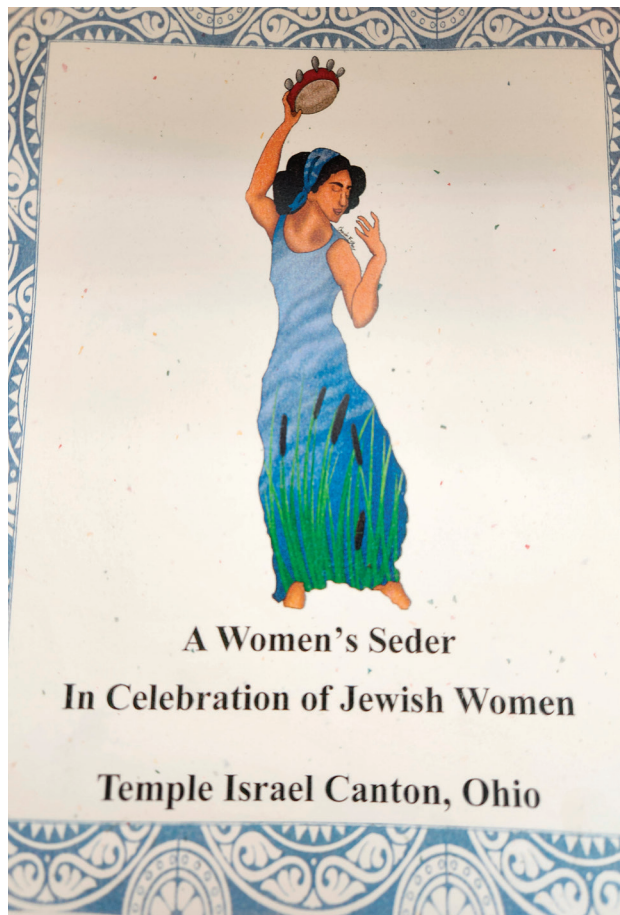
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CHRIS LANGE

A Seder to Remember

Having worked at the Canton Jewish Community Federation for just a little over two months, I was surprised and delighted to receive an invitation to attend the Temple Israel Sisterhood Women's Seder on April 6. I am not Jewish, and so I was somewhat uncertain as to what to expect. I had vague notions of eating fish with scales and eyes intact - the prospect of which I found rather daunting to contemplate - and being required to dance in a large circle while holding hands with strangers. Above all, I was filled with a sense of dread that I would commit some terrible faux pas during this centuries-old and sacred tradition.

The sight of a few familiar faces as I stepped into the entrance of Beit Ha'am was reassuring. The banquet room was packed - I was told later that more than 100 guests were in attendance - and filled with the cheerful din of friends greeting one another and new introductions being made. What a pleasure it was to finally put names to the faces of several women in the Canton Jewish community with whom I had previously only spoken by phone.



The tables were decorated beautifully, a different Seder plate on each. I was both puzzled and intrigued by the items nestled inside the shallow indentations on the plate: an egg, slices of apple and orange, pomegranate seeds, coffee beans, and artichoke pieces.

Someone pointed toward the center of the room, where a group of state and local elected officials were seated: Congresswoman Emilia Sykes, Stark County Family Court Judge Michelle Cordova, Common Pleas Court Judge Natalie Haupt, City Council Member at Large Crystal Smith, and Municipal Court Judge candidate Katie Erchick-Gilbert.

Eventually, it was announced that the Seder would begin, and we made our way back to our seats. We were welcomed by Eileen Saltarelli, who explained that this would be a "different" kind of Seder. Rather than hear traditional stories of the Jewish forefathers, we would honor the foremothers whose stories of courage and perseverance are too often relegated to a minor place in history.

A series of blessings and readings followed. We prayed for Israel and the liberation of those still being held hostage in body and spirit. We honored the courage of the women of the Exodus: Miriam, Yocheved, Shifrah, and Pu'ah. We denounced the Pharaoh of the past and contemplated the pharaohs of our own day: hunger, oppression, poverty, and war.

Young ladies, whom I was told were fresh from their respective Bat Mitzvahs, led us in the candle lighting ceremony marking the separation of the ordinary from holy time. I watched their faces, wreathed in smiles, as they took up the mantle of preserving their heritage and traditions for future generations.

Eventually, the significance of each item on the Seder plate was explained: the fruit of the date palm trees, known for their resilience and ability to thrive in arid climates, representing perseverance, abundance, and growth; the artichoke, symbolizing the joy of process and delving below the surface to experience the heart; the coffee beans, a reminder of the bitterness and stress women often face when juggling many responsibilities; and so on.

Together, we raised our glasses to honor the Jewish matriarchs - Sarah, Rebecca, Leah, and Rachel. We



then lifted Miriam's cup, represented by a white wine glass partially filled with water, symbolizing the wells of life-giving water that were found wherever she went. As we passed the cup around, each of us added a teaspoon of water from our own glasses as we "visualized connecting to her well spiritually." We also acknowledged our unique place in the world as nurturers and, as such, our responsibility to speak up for the voiceless, the vulnerable, and the marginalized.

This was followed by raising The Cup of The Future, followed by The Cup of Challenge in dedication to the women of the past and in celebration of the women of the future, who will face their own unique challenges.

We broke the middle Matzah, carefully wrapping up half, and laughed together as P.J. Wells led us in a song about the Exodus set to the tune of "Louie, Louie" by the Kingsmen: "Pharaoh, Pharaoh, whoa, whoa, let my people go! Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah..."

With each new layer of the Seder revealed, I felt a growing sense of connection to the women around me. No longer was I an outsider looking in, but rather, a member of a sisterhood transcending age, color, religion, and creed. Despite my earlier misgivings about being made to dance, I now felt ready to throw off my shoes, clasp hands with the women beside me, and twirl about the room with abandon.

The meal was announced, and I noticed for the first time that there were large tables laden with food on the side of the room opposite from where I sat. There were different varieties of charoset; Israeli salad; fruits and cheeses; and flourless cakes, brownies, cookies, and other sweet concoctions. As we waited in line to fill our plates, I overheard a few women disparaging their own dishes and "boring" Passover fare, in general (a Jewish colleague told me later that this, too, is a Seder custom). To my unjaded palate, everything tasted delicious.

The Seder closed with a reflective reading expressing hope for peace and universal freedom for future generations. I reluctantly said my goodbyes, my heart full and my spiritual "well" replenished. I was part of something truly special, and I knew that I would always cherish this experience.

I am filled with gratitude to Leanne Lehn and Eileen Saltarelli for inviting me. Also deserving of recognition are Bobi Berringer, Shoshanah Inwood, and Eileen Saltarelli for planning and putting the Seder together; Ron and Yiska Finstuen and Kyle Arce, for their hard work behind the scenes; Ivah Parker, who designed the beautiful program covers; the women who prepared all of the delicious food; and the marvelous ladies of this Jewish community, who made me feel so welcome.





Chadash Passover



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Cheesecake: A Slice of Heaven for Shavuot

Here are 12 tips for successful Cheesecake baking from my favorite bakers

By Best-selling cookbook author Jamie Gellar

1. Only use fresh cheese. –Chef Shaily Lipa
2. Room temperature ingredients - Do not use cheese that has been taken directly from the fridge. The same rule applies to eggs. –Raheli Kurt
3. Use cheese with a minimum 5% fat content, and always remove the liquid before adding it to the batter, especially with low-fat cheeses. This can be done with a cheesecloth or simply by draining the liquid out of the container. –Raheli Kurt
4. The higher the fat content, the creamier the cake, but 9% cheese is a good choice for a more healthful, balanced option. –Chef Claude Bensimon
5. To avoid lumps in your batter, make sure all your ingredients are at room temperature before preparing the cake. If it's still lumpy, pass it through a sieve; I know it's crazy but that's what will make your cake patisserie quality. –Chef Tom Franz
6. Don't over-mix the batter; it will cause air to enter and later make cracks on the surface of your cake. –Chef Tom Franz
7. I recommend putting the cake in the oven when it's cold, and then turning it on. The temperature will rise slowly and the cake won't be traumatized and collapse or crack. –Chef Tom Franz
8. To ensure a moist cake, place hot water in a pan at the bottom of the oven while it's baking. –Chef Shaily Lipa
9. Don't open the oven door while baking! –Chef Claude Bensimon
10. When your cheesecake is done, let it cool in the oven; this will ensure your cake is high and without cracks. –Chef Tom Franz
11. If your cheesecake cracks, or collapses, so what? –it's still amazing. Dust it with powdered sugar, or coat it with sweetened sour cream, fresh fruit, or chocolate ganache—whatever you have available; no one has to know, it'll be our little secret! –Chef Tom Franz
12. Do not cut the cake until completely cooled. In fact, cheesecake tastes even better a day or two after baking. –Raheli Kurt



Israeli Cheesecake Recipe

Vered Guttman, Israeli chef and food writer

- 8 oz. shortbread cookies or tea biscuits
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 3 lb. quark cheese (or 1 lb. cream cheese, 1 lb. Icelandic yogurt and 1 lb. labneh, see note above*) at room temperature
- 1 cup sugar
- 8 tablespoons instant vanilla pudding mix
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- Zest of one lemon
- 1 lb. sour cream
- ¼ cup powdered sugar

1. Preheat the oven to 300 degrees. Grease a 9 inch spring-form pan.
2. In the food-processor crumble cookies until fine. With the food-processor still running add the melted butter. Flatten the crumbed cookies into the bottom and sides of the pan.
3. If you're using quark cheese, especially if it's NOT an Israeli brand, it's better to strain the cheese and let some of the water run out. To do that, pour the cheese into a fine sieve, or a few layers of cheesecloth, and let stand for an hour or until it's a bit thicker.
4. For the filling – mix cream cheese the bowl of a food processor until smooth. Transfer to a bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whip attachment. Add labneh and yogurt and mix briefly. (If you're using quark, simply put in all in the bowl of a stand mixer.)
5. Add sugar and instant pudding and mix to combine, make sure the mixture is smooth with no pudding powder pockets. Add eggs and lemon zest and mix briefly. Stop the mixer, scrape the sides with a spatula, then mix just a little more to combine. You do not want to whip the eggs.
6. Pour cheese mixture into pan and bake for 1 hour.
7. While the cake is in the oven mix sour cream and powdered sugar in a medium bowl.
8. After one hour take the cake out of the oven and use an icing spatula to very gently spread the sour cream on top. Start from the sides of the cake and slowly work towards the center. The center of the cake will be very soft at this point so be careful not to break it.
9. Return the cake to the oven for another 10 minutes. At this point the center of the cake will still be very shaky and this is fine. Turn the oven off, place a folded towel to keep the oven door slightly open, and leave the cake to cool down in the oven for another couple of hours. Cover pan with aluminum foil and refrigerate overnight before serving



From 5 a.m. tipoffs to bar mitzvah trips, Israelis are reveling in Deni Avdija's breakout season

Jacob Gurvis



to a laugh out of the lengths Israeli newspapers will go to highlight his success.

"Every media group in Israel, sports or no sports, will have a daily headline about something Deni did," he said. "Oh, you won't believe the prestigious list Deni is on, click here.' And then you go down, you find out he finished sixth in the voting for top player in the west in the month of February."

Avdija's season, however, is no joke — and neither is the Deni-mania sweeping Israel. For a nation at war, grappling with a hostage crisis and riven by protests, the success of a hometown boy, 7,000 miles away in Oregon, is something everyone can unite behind.

"He is the story, and he's a much bigger story now as his numbers are much, much bigger," said Manor, who has lived in Portland for 15 years. "But he carries a very big weight on his shoulders, and his personal success with Israelis always translates to national pride. And when you're at war, you want pride."

To put Avdija's numbers in context: Before joining the Trail Blazers, he had averaged a solid if unspectacular 9.8 points per game over his four seasons with the Washington Wizards.

In his past 16 games, however, those stats have ballooned to 24.9 points and 10.6 rebounds per game. This season, he has had eight 30+ point performances and his first two career triple-doubles. Overall, he's averaging a career high of 16.9 points per game this year.

His success hasn't saved Portland, which is due to miss the playoffs for the fourth straight year. But it has buoyed his Israeli and Israeli-American fans.

"As an Israeli basketball player, he's the best I've seen, and many people think he's going to be the greatest Israeli player of all time," said Moshe Halickman, who covers basketball for the popular Sports Rabbi website. "He's the top Israeli

NBA player we ever had. Omri Casspi really did something big by being the first Israeli in the NBA, but Deni is turning into a star in the league."

There are sportswriters like Manor, Halickman and the YouTuber Pini Barel, whose social media sometimes resembles an Avdija highlight reel. And then there are fans like Yaakov Tzedek, 32, of the coastal town of Or Akiva, who compensates for the 10-hour time difference between Israel and Portland by watching Avdija over an early breakfast.

"I do watch all the Trail Blazers games, usually live or very close to live broadcasts," said Tzedek — a commitment that entails turning on the game at 5 a.m. Tzedek, who runs a media company among other business ventures, also manages a Facebook page for Israeli fans of Avdija.

"I actively follow the [Blazers], mainly because of Deni," he said. "Honestly, it's just really fun and exciting to watch. I wouldn't say it's life-changing, but it definitely brings a lot of pride to Israel and gives us some joyful, quiet moments — especially in a year like this, when things have been so difficult here."

Halickman said the signs of Avdija's celebrity status in Israel are everywhere — from his 2021 sponsorship deal with the Israeli version of corn flakes to a newfound job description: the bar mitzvah gift of choice for jet-setting Israeli boys.

"In Israel, there was a trend, like around 10 years ago, that Israelis who had a bar mitzvah ... went on trips to watch Lionel Messi for Barcelona's soccer team. And the new trend is kind of turning into Israelis flying to watch Deni play," Halickman said. "It's amazing also to see how Deni treats the Israeli crowd. He's taking pictures, autographs, speaking to them."

That was the case even before Oct. 7, 2023. During previous conflicts back home, Avdija drew Stars of David on his shoes to express his support for Israel. He also shared Hanukkah with his teammates, spoke at the Wizards' Jewish Heritage Night and attempted to grow the NBA's popularity in Israel.

Since the Hamas attack that began the war in Gaza and sparked a global surge in antisemitism, Avdija has become even more vocal about his national pride, telling one Israeli outlet that he "tried to do what I could to bring some pride to Israel through basketball and my efforts off the court." A few weeks after Oct. 7, Avdija hung around the court postgame, with an Israeli flag draped around him,

Cont'd / See JTA Page 16

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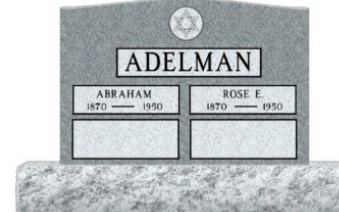
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Life Cycle Events

DEATHS

Rosalie Nathan passed away on March 30, 2025. Rosalie was the sister of Ingrid Cohn; aunt of Martin and Daniel (Elisa) Cohn; and is also survived by her children: Scott (Winnie Kwok) and Alisa (Gabe) Lannon.

Estelle Rebecca Wilkof Blau passed away on April 12, 2025. Estelle was preceded in death by her husband, Alan B. Blau. She is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Edward Benjamin Blau II and Laura Wise-Blau; daughter and son-in-law Shelley and Robert Schweitzer; and her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

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May

Thursday, May 1		Yom HaAtzma'ut
Friday, May 2	5:30 – 6:15 P.M.	TI Oneg Shabbat
	6:15 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.	Shabbat Service
Saturday, May 3	10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.	Stollen moments
Tuesday, May 6	5:45 P.M. – 6:45 P.M.	Men's Group
Friday, May 9	5:30 – 6:15 P.M.	TI Oneg Shabbat
	6:15 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.	Shabbat Service
Saturday, May 10	10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.	Stollen moments
	TBD	P2G Delegation Event
Wednesday, May 14	9 A.M. – 12 P.M.	Mahjongg Tournament
Thursday, May 15	7:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.	Federation Board Meeting
Friday, May 16		Lag B'Omer
	5:30 – 6:15 P.M.	TI Oneg Shabbat
	6:15 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.	Shabbat Service
Saturday, May 17	10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.	Stollen moments
Tuesday, May 20	5:45 P.M. – 6:45 P.M.	Men's Group
	8:00 P.M. – 8:30 P.M.	Temple Board Meeting
Friday, May 23	5:30 – 6:15 P.M.	TI Oneg Shabbat
	6:15 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.	Shabbat Service
Saturday, May 24	10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.	Stollen moments
Monday, May 26		Yom Yerushalayim
		Memorial Day-Admin. Office closed
Friday, May 30	5:30 – 6:15 P.M.	TI Oneg Shabbat
	6:15 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.	Shabbat Service
Saturday, May 1	10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.	Stollen moments

June

Sunday, June 1		Erev Shavuot
Monday, June 2		Administrative office closed
Tuesday, June 3		Administrative office closed
Saturday, June 7	10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.	Stollen moments
Saturday, June 14	10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.	Stollen Moments
Sunday, June 15	TBD	Rami Feinstein Concert
Tuesday, June 17	7:00 – 8:30	Temple Board Meeting
Saturday, June 21	10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.	Stollen moments
Saturday, June 28	10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.	Stollen Moments

July

Friday, July 4		Administrative office closed for Independence Day
Tuesday, July 15	7:00 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.	Temple Board meeting
	7:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.	Federation Board meeting



SAVE THE DATE

**P2G HATIKVA
ISRAEL SUMMIT
2025**

SUMMIT: OCTOBER 28-30

PRE-SUMMIT: OCTOBER 26-28
(FOR THOSE NEW TO P2G AND THE WG REGION)

POST-SUMMIT ADD-ON: OCTOBER 31 - TBD
(OUTSIDE VENDOR, NOT SUBSIDIZED)

YOUNG ADULTS SEMINAR: OCT. 30-NOV. 2
(ADD-ON TO SUMMIT OR ON ITS OWN)

More info coming soon!

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AGUDAS ACHIM

Orthodox

Thursday, May 1
Torah class (Isaiah) via Zoom
4:30 p.m.
The Eighteenth Day of the Omer
Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel
Independence Day
Friday, May 2
The Nineteenth Day of the Omer
Mincha & Kabolos Shabbos
7:30 p.m.
Candle lighting 8:05 p.m.
Sunset 8:23 p.m.
Count the Twentieth Day of the Omer after 9:10 p.m.
Saturday, May 3
The Twentieth Day of the Omer
Shabbos Parshas Tazria-Metzora
Shacharis & Mussaf 9:30 a.m.
Earliest Mincha 1:58 p.m.
Shabbos ends 9:10 p.m.
Maariv 9:20 p.m.
Havdalah 9:37 p.m.
Sunday, May 4
Rabbi Scheinbaum's class via Zoom 11:00 a.m.

The Twenty-first Day of the Omer
Monday, May 5
The Twenty-second Day of the Omer
Tuesday, May 6
Mishnah class via Zoom 4:45 p.m.
The Twenty-third Day of the Omer
Wednesday, May 7
The Twenty-four Day of the Omer
Thursday, May 8
Torah class (Isaiah) via Zoom 4:30 p.m.
The Twenty-fifth Day of the Omer
Friday, May 9
The Twenty-sixth Day of the Omer
Mincha & Kabolos Shabbos 7:30 p.m.
Candle lighting 8:12 p.m.
Sunset 8:30 p.m.
Count the Twenty-seventh Day of the Omer after 9:18 p.m.
Saturday, May 10
The Twenty-seventh Day of

the Omer
Shabbos Parshas Achrei Mos-Kedoshim
Shacharis & Mussaf 9:30 a.m.
Earliest Mincha 1:58 p.m.
Shabbos ends 9:18 p.m.
Maariv 9:30 p.m.
Havdalah 9:44 p.m.
Sunday, May 11 Rabbi Scheinbaum's class via Zoom 11:00 a.m.
The Twenty-eighth Day of the Omer
Monday, May 12
The Twenty-ninth Day of the Omer
PESACH SHEINE (the Second Passover)
Tuesday, May 13
Mishnah class via Zoom 4:45 p.m.
The Thirtieth Day of the Omer
Wednesday, May 14
The Thirty-first Day of the Omer
Thursday, May 15
Torah class (Isaiah) via Zoom 4:30 p.m.
The Thirty-second Day of the Omer
Friday, May 16
The Thirty-third Day of the Omer
LAG BaOMER

Mincha & Kabolos Shabbos 7:30 p.m.
Candle lighting 8:19 p.m.
Sunset 8:37 p.m.
Count the Thirty-fourth Day of the Omer after 9:25 p.m.
Saturday, May 17
The Thirty-fourth Day of the Omer
Shabbos Parshas Emor
Shacharis & Mussaf 9:30 a.m.
Earliest Mincha 1:59 p.m.
Shabbos ends 9:26 p.m.
Maariv 9:35 p.m.
Havdalah 9:51 p.m.
Sunday, May 18
Rabbi Scheinbaum's class via Zoom 11:00 a.m.
The Thirty-fifth Day of the Omer
Monday, May 19
The Thirty-sixth Day of the Omer
Tuesday, May 20
Mishnah class via Zoom 4:45 p.m.
The Thirty-seventh Day of the Omer
Wednesday, May 21
The Thirty-eighth Day of the Omer
Thursday, May 22
Torah class (Isaiah) via Zoom 4:30 p.m.

The Thirty-ninth Day of the Omer
Friday, May 23
The Fortieth Day of the Omer
Mincha & Kabolos Shabbos 7:30 p.m.
Candle lighting 8:25 p.m.
Sunset 8:43 p.m.
Count the Forty-first Day of the Omer after 9:33 p.m.
Saturday, May 24
The Forty-first Day of the Omer
Shabbos Parshas Behar-Bechukosai
Shabbos Chazak
Shacharis & Mussaf 9:30 a.m.
The Molad (new moon) for the month of Sivan: Tuesday (May 27) 9:14 a.m. + 3 chalakim
Earliest Mincha 2:00 p.m.
Shabbos ends 9:34 p.m.
Maariv 9:45 p.m.
Havdalah 9:57 p.m.
Sunday, May 25 Rabbi Scheinbaum's class via Zoom 11:00 a.m.
The Forty-second Day of the Omer
Monday, May 26
The Forty-third Day of the Omer
Yom Yerushalayim

[Jerusalem reunification day]
Tuesday, May 27
Mishnah class via Zoom 4:45 p.m.
The Forty-fourth Day of the Omer
Wednesday, May 28
The Forty-fifth Day of the Omer
Rosh Chodesh Sivan
Thursday, May 29
Torah class (Isaiah) via Zoom 4:30 p.m.
The Forty-sixth Day of the Omer
Friday, May 30
The Forty-seventh Day of the Omer
Mincha & Kabolos Shabbos 7:30 p.m.
Candle lighting 8:31 p.m.
Sunset 8:49 p.m.
Count the Forty-eighth Day of the Omer after 9:39 p.m.
Saturday, May 31
The Forty-eighth Day of the Omer
Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar
Shacharis & Mussaf 9:30 a.m.
Earliest Mincha 2:01 p.m.
Shabbos ends 9:40 p.m.
Maariv 9:50 p.m.
Havdalah 10:03 p.m.



SHAARAY TORAH

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* = Zoom

Thursday, May 1
Morning Service 8:00 a.m.*
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Friday, May 2
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Candles 8:07 p.m.
Saturday, May 3
Shabbat Service 10:00 a.m.
in Large Worship Space
due to Brotherhood Raffle
(In-Person; Live Stream;
Zoom)

Monday, May 5
Morning Service 8:00 a.m.*
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Tuesday, May 6
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Wednesday, May 7
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Thursday, May 8
Morning Service 8:00 a.m.*
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Friday, May 9
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*

Candles 8:14 p.m.
Saturday, May 10
Shabbat Service 10:00 a.m.
(In-Person; Live Stream;
Zoom)
P2G Delegation Visit;
Kiddush Luncheon to
follow Services
Sunday, May 11
No Services
Happy Mother's Day
Monday, May 12
Morning Service 8:00 a.m.*
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Tuesday, May 13
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*

Wednesday, May 14
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Thursday, May 15
Morning Service 8:00 a.m.*
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Friday, May 16
Lag B'Omer
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Candles 8:21 p.m.
Saturday, May 17
Shabbat Service 10:00 a.m.
(In-Person; Live Stream;
Zoom)
Monday, May 19
Morning Service 8:00 a.m.*
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*

Tuesday, May 20
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Wednesday, May 21
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Thursday, May 22
Morning Service 8:00 a.m.*
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Friday, May 23
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Candles 8:27 p.m.
Saturday, May 24
Shabbat Service 10:00 a.m.
(In-Person; Live Stream;
Zoom)
Monday, May 26
Memorial Day – Beit Ha'am

Offices are Closed
Morning Service 8:00 a.m.*
NO Evening Services
Tuesday, May 27
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Wednesday, May 28
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Thursday, May 29
Morning Service 8:00 a.m.*
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Friday, May 30
Evening Services 5:30 p.m.*
Candles 8:33 p.m.
Saturday, May 31
Shabbat Service 10:00 a.m.
(In-Person; Live Stream;
Zoom)



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Friday, May 2
5:30 p.m. Oneg Shabbat
6:15 p.m. Kid-dish Shabbat
Service

Saturday, May 3
10:00 a.m. Stollen
Moments Torah Study
Torah verses - Lev. 12:1-
13:17

Friday, May 9
5:30 p.m. Oneg Shabbat
6:15 p.m. Shabbat Service
Intro to Judaism Shabbat
Guest Speakers from Israel
- P2G
with Birthday and
Anniversary Blessings

Saturday, May 10
10:00 a.m. Stollen
Moments Torah Study
Torah verses - Lev. 16:1-24
Friday, May 16
5:30 p.m. Oneg Shabbat
6:15 p.m. Shabbat Service
with Torah Reading

Saturday, May 17
10:00 a.m. Stollen
Moments Torah Study
Torah verses - Lev. 21:1-24
Friday, May 23
5:30 p.m. Oneg Shabbat
6:15 p.m. Shabbat Service
- Sisterhood Shabbat

Saturday, May 24
No Stollen Moments Torah
Study
Friday, May 30
5:30 p.m. Oneg Shabbat
6:15 p.m. Shabbat Service
Saturday, May 31
No Stollen Moments Torah
Study

JTA continued from Page 3

as fans sang Hatikvah, Israel's national anthem. Avdija has also been spotted with the flag displayed in his locker.

Avdija's following has grown steadily since his days as a teenage star for Maccabi Tel Aviv. He's a three-time Israeli League champion and helped lead Israel to back-to-back FIBA U20 European Championship titles in 2018-2019, winning the tournament's MVP award in 2019. He remains the captain of the country's senior national team today.

Halickman remembers watching from the stands in 2018, as a 17-year-old Avdija scored 11 points off the bench for Maccabi Tel Aviv in a season-opening win over Maccabi Ashdod. Last year, Halickman traveled to D.C. to cover two Wizards games.

Some of the talk about Avdija takes on a touch of the hyperbolic. Manor compared Avdija's build and athleticism to that of NBA legend LeBron James. Both players are 6-foot-9, and both, Manor explained, embody what's known in basketball as a "tweener" — a player is both fast and strong enough to play multiple positions.

"Very early, when he was about 15 or 16 years old, people realized he's gonna be a basketball player, a professional basketball player," Manor said. "All of the other functions of character — the leadership, the confidence, the chutzpah to go and argue with the refs on every other call he doesn't get — he always has in

him. Now it's just really popped because of the circumstances."

Avdija's breakout comes during an era of Jewish basketball excellence. On Monday, the University of Florida's Todd Golden became the first Jewish coach to win March Madness since 1988. University of Michigan star Danny Wolf, himself an Israeli-American, is expected to declare for this summer's NBA draft, where he could be a first-round pick. So could Israeli Ben Saraf, who is playing professionally in Germany.

They would join a growing Jewish NBA roster that includes Avdija, Sacramento Kings big man Domantas Sabonis — who is converting to Judaism and having his own stellar season — and G League prospect Amari Bailey.

"It's going to be a lot of fun to watch," Tzedek said. "Hopefully, they'll be on different teams so we can enjoy watching them compete and support each other."

As for Avdija, the work isn't done. Halickman said the real goal is to reach the NBA playoffs, something Casspi never did in 10 seasons in the league. The Wizards made the postseason in Avdija's rookie year, but he was injured.

"That's the next goal for Deni," Halickman said. "He's doing amazing things personally right now, but what we want to see is really something successful that he'll do with a team, and I think he's in the right direction. He's only 24 years old. Long career ahead, promising team, so there's a lot to look forward to."



Mert Alper Dervis/Anadolu via Getty Images) (Anadolu via Getty Images)