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Federation campaign kicks off

By ROCKNE ROLL
The Jewish Review

"This is the year to stand up and make a difference," Jewish Federation of Greater Portland Chief Development Officer Wendy Kahn said.

A crucial, indispensable opportunity to make that difference is now open as the Federation kicks off its 2025 Campaign for Community Needs.

Last year's campaign was a major success, raising more than \$4 million dollars along with \$2.2 million contributed to the Israel Emergency Fund and significant contributions to other fundraising initiatives. Those contributions supported work to strengthen, support and enhance Jewish communal life in Portland and beyond – work that is far from fin-

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In this image from a livestream recording, Congregation Neveh Shalom Cantor Eyal Bitton sings at Vigil for the Hostages Monday, Sept. 2 at the synagogue. Hundreds gathered in person and online to mourn the loss of six hostages murdered by Hamas the weekend prior. (Courtesy Congregation Neveh Shalom)

'To rend our clothes as mourners'

Neveh Shalom hosts vigil for six murdered hostages

The Jewish Review staff

"In an ideal world, the only gatherings we'd have would be to celebrate blessings.... But today, we find ourselves in the midst of what feels like ongoing curses," Rabbi Eve Posen said from the *bimah* of Congregation Neveh Shalom's main sanctuary Monday, Sept. 2.

Her words alluded to the opening of *Parsha Re'eh*, read from Deuteronomy just two days before: "See, this day I set before you blessing and curse." The curse that brought Posen to the *bimah* and more than 300 people to the synagogue, with another 250 watching via livestream, was the

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On the latest Podcast:



"The Essence of Elul" with Rabbi Josh Rose

Neveh Shalom's Rabbi Kosak to step down

The Jewish Review staff

Rabbi David Kosak will step down as Senior Rabbi of Congregation Neveh Shalom at the end of next June, the congregation announced last Friday.

Rabbi Kosak's departure, which coincides with the end of his current contract with Portland's largest Conservative synagogue, will conclude 10 years at the shul. He spoke to the synagogue's dynamic growth during his tenure as something he has been proud to be a part of.

"It had long been my intention to remain an essential part of this vibrancy. Yet the sudden onset of Bell's Palsy last September has been a powerful reminder that life is fragile and health is never guaranteed," Rabbi Kosak said in a letter to CNS President Mark Kalenscher that was included in the announcement. "After a period of deep and prolonged reflection, it has become clear that the next phase of my rabbinate will unfold outside of the pulpit."

"On behalf of the congregation, the CNS Board of Directors expresses its profound gratitude to Rabbi Kosak for serving this congregation as our Senior Rabbi for over nine years," Kalenscher wrote in an open letter that also accompanied the announcement. "He is an invaluable member of our kehillah whose spiritual leadership, wisdom, and

unwavering dedication have enriched our community in countless ways."

Rabbi Kosak joined Neveh Shalom in 2015 as the third Senior Rabbi of the congregation created from the merger of Congregations Neveh Zedek and Ahavai Shalom in 1961. After ordination from the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies in 2006, he served as associate rabbi of Beth El Synagogue Center in New Rochelle, N.Y. and later as senior rabbi of Congregation Shaarey Tikvah in Beachwood, Ohio. He has not announced his future plans as of press time. The congregation will be putting together a transition committee in the coming weeks to determine next steps.

"In the meantime, we encourage you to join us in expressing our gratitude to Rabbi Kosak for his extraordinary service," Kalenscher wrote on behalf of the Neveh Shalom board. "His influence will continue to shape our community for years to come."

Rabbi Kosak's departure will add to a busy summer of clergy transitions for Portland synagogues next year, with retirements already announced for Congregation Shir Tikvah Rabbi Ariel Stone and Congregation Beth Israel Senior Cantor Ida Rae Cahana, who will be succeeded by CBI's B'nei Mitzvah and Family Educator Cantor Rayna Green.

CBI rolls out events schedule to mark Cantor Cahana's retirement

By **ROCKNE ROLL**

The Jewish Review

Congregation Beth Israel has kicked off a year of events to pay a fond farewell to Cantor Ida Rae Cahana as she approaches her retirement after 13 years as the Senior Cantor of Portland's largest Reform shul.

"The purpose of the year is really to be a kind of celebration of my tenure, but also. A bit of connective to just demonstrate to folks you know, here's what a Cantor does. You know, not just singing, but also teaching and the experiential pieces of ritual and lifecycle

Titled "Shir Joy," a play on the Hebrew word for "song," the series began last night with "Davening: A Musical Memoir of a Grandfather's Prayer," a world-premiere concert with Oregon Symphony Orchestra musicians performing Deena Grossman's new work, and continues with a Sunday, Sept. 28 Selichot service titled "Teshuvah Through Art" – the 7 pm service is preceded by a 5 pm art workshop by Lolly Jamerson focused on the Japanese practice of kintsugi, where broken objects are mended with a gold-infused lacquer that highlights the cracks rather than trying to disguise them.

"I thought that was such an amazing metaphor for what we do during this time of reflection," Cantor Cahana said. "We're all broken in one way or another, and we try to find our way back towards our better selves, towards more healing, towards God. We want to be able to see and remember those cracks and how we're still holding and we're still together."

On Friday, Nov. 8, the Jewish World Ensemble performs a meditative selection during the Kabbalat Shabbat service on the anniversary of Kristallnacht. Cantor Cahana and CBI's house band will perform at "Llama Lo" – Hebrew for "Why not" following services on Friday, Dec. 20 as a pre-Chanukah celebration. Another concert on Friday, Dec. 27 features organist Bruce Neswick and trumpeter Aaron Kahn performing a custom arrangement of Handel's "Judas Maccabeus" among other pieces on the third night of Chanukah.

Saturday, Jan. 25 – International Holocaust Remembrance Day - marks the opening of an exhibit at the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education honoring three generations of Cantor Cahana's in-laws: Holocaust survivor Alice Lok Cahana's paintings, Rabbi Ronnie Cahana's poetry and the work of photojournalist Kitra Cahana. The three are Cantor Cahana's mother-in-law, brother-in-law, and niece, respectively. The exhibit will be open through May.

"Our whole family will be here, including my brother-in-law, who is paralyzed from the neck down, but I know he's going to make it because he's got amazing determination," Cantor Cahana said. "That will be very, very special."

See **SHIR JOY**, page 6



Click the logo for the latest episode of The Jewish Review Podcast

UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS



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Women's Philanthropy logo.




SEPTEMBER 22

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- Learn when you should turn to Jewish Federation professionals for help and how they can serve as an ally to you and a resource to the school.
- Meet other parents who have had to deal with antisemitism in their child's school.

With Presenters

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MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2024 | 7PM
CONGREGATION NEVEH SHALOM
Coffee, tea, and socializing beginning at 6:30PM

QR code and Jewish Federation logo.

SEPTEMBER 23

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We're building amazing NextGen (young adults 21-45) Jewish experiences in Portland.

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For more information on any of these events or programs, please contact Leah Ivler @ leah@jewishportland.org. Visit www.jewishportland.org for information about additional Federation programs and services.

SEPTEMBER 24

Community Study focus groups need YOU!

By ROCKNE ROLL

The Jewish Review

The Jewish Federation of Greater Portland wants to hear from you.

Yes, you!

In partnership with Panoramic Strategy, the Federation will be convening ten focus groups in November to look more deeply at the information gathered in the 2023 Community Study and consider how to best support Jewish life in Portland in the years to come.

Sidney Dranoff, Senior Director of Strategic Services at Panoramic Strategy, explained that while the Community Study gathered a wealth of data as to “who,” “what,” “where” and “when,” “why” is of enormous importance and can’t really be assessed until you ask the people who are involved – or not involved.

“(Focus groups are) not used for counting or getting specific numbers. It’s really getting underneath people’s thoughts; asking a question and then asking, ‘Why did you say that?’” she said. “You can always ask ‘How likely would you be to go to an event on a scale of one to five?’ But understanding why they said four or five or one or two is really important.”

“You can’t ask every question you want to ask on a survey that people are filling out,” Federation Chief Planning and Engagement Officer Caron Blau Rothstein said, “but in a focus group you can talk to people and hear what they’re saying and probe a little further in a different way.”

As the Federation is seeking to grow the base of engagement in Jewish communal life, the input of those not currently engaged is essential to this undertaking.

“We are encouraging people to share the opportunity with their friends who maybe aren’t on a list or belonging in some sort of noticeable way,” Blau Rothstein said. “It’s as important to know why people connect as why people don’t yet feel connected.”

There’s an incentive, too – everyone completing the interest survey for the focus groups will be entered in a raffle for a \$50 gift card, and all those selected for participation in the focus groups will also receive gift cards.

That ‘groups’ is plural is key – Panoramic Strategy will be convening 10 focus groups covering a large breadth of different life stages and situations, aiming not only to capture a broad range of demographics but the breadth of opinions and feelings within those demographic groups.

“Young Jewish families don’t all think the same way, but what young families have to say and what they’re thinking about is probably different than what empty nesters are thinking about,” Blau Rothstein said. “This is an important opportunity to get a better understanding of who’s here, why they do or don’t do what they do, and how Jewish community fits into their lives or doesn’t.”

The results, much like the more quantitative Community Study, will be compiled into a report and shared widely, not only for those currently serving Portland’s Jewish community, but for those who might be looking for a way to do so.

“This is meant as a document accessible for everybody. This is not an internal document. This is a communal document,” Blau Rothstein said. “I hope it’s inspirational as well as informative.”

The focus group interest survey is available now at form.jotform.com/JFGP/focus-groups-survey.

Suher, former CSS Pres., to receive Stampfer Award

By ROCKNE ROLL

The Jewish Review

Brian Suher was instrumental in the creation of the Rabbi Joshua Stampfer z”l Community Enrichment Award back in 1999. Twenty-five years later, he’ll receive that very honor as the award is presented for the first time since the COVID pandemic Sunday, Sept. 22 at Congregation Neveh Shalom.

“I said I’d do it if Alan Montrose would also assist,” Suher recalled; Montrose agreed, and is now the award’s co-chair.

Suher had known Rabbi Stampfer almost since birth. The late Neveh Shalom rabbi was present at Suher’s bris, and his mother was previously director of Neveh Shalom’s Foundation School. His biggest impact, however, came from his attachment to Camp Solomon Schechter, which began as a camper and with his father, who

worked with Rabbi Stampfer on the purchase of the camp’s current facilities in Tumwater, Wash.

“I still have memories as an 8- or 9-year-old, riding up to Tumwater and seeing the property with my dad and Rabbi Stampfer for the first time,” Suher said. “That became a very long love affair of mine.”

After some time away, Suher returned to Portland in 1980 and immediately became philanthropically involved, particularly with the Mount Hood Kiwanis Camp. From there, he was recruited onto the board of Camp Solomon Schechter board in the mid-80s, where he eventually served as President.

“I took more of a hands-on role and worked with the architects and the contractors, found the financing and we added a ton of new cabins,” Suher recalled.

Camp Solomon Schechter added 16

new cabins during Suher’s tenure, a near-doubling of the camp’s capacity, and maintained a balanced budget throughout. Suher also recruited donors to provide additional equipment for facilities maintenance as well as buying a used golf cart that, among other uses, helped an aging Rabbi Stampfer get around the property.

“It was always a joy to take him up,” Suher said.

As a contemporary of Rabbi Stampfer’s children who grew up at Neveh Shalom, he remained connected to the shul, to Rabbi Stampfer, and to many of the organizations that the Rabbi developed, which have been so integral to Jewish life in Portland.

“He just had a gift for motivating people,” Suher said of Rabbi Stampfer.

Those people included the cadre of Community Enrichment Award honor-

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Letters from Camp

Going home, Kalsman's campers take camp with them

By ROCKNE ROLL

The Jewish Review

As July wanes into August, the subtle shortening of the days marks the end of the summer for Jewish overnight camps around the country. Camp Kalsman in the North Cascade Mountains of Washington State, where the yellowing needles of Larch trees mark the shift of the seasons, is no exception and it's a bittersweet time for all those involved.

On the last day of session at Kalsman, Jackie Silver, the camp's development director, explains that breakfast and a photo slide show are followed by a special goodbye.

"We go to the basketball court and we get in a big circle with everybody in it and we all join arms and we sing a few songs; 'Leaving on a Jet Plane' and a few others," Silver explained.

The last three are always the *Shema*, the camp's special version of *Hashkiveinu*, and a version of John Denver's "Country Roads" that references Jordan Road, the main throughfare used to access camp. It's a song that's sung throughout each session at Kalsman, but always on the first day and the last day.

"Usually with a lot of tears, we sing, 'Take Me Home, Jordan Road' and we sing *Hashkiveinu* and the *Shema* one last time," Silver explained, "then everybody hugs and everybody cries and the parents come and then they go home."

One of the magic parts of Kalsman, however, is that when campers go home, a part of camp goes with them, and not just as fond memories, fun pictures and dirty laundry. Camp Kalsman is



Campers at Camp Kalsman dance during a Shabbat Shira earlier this summer. (Arthur Mansavage/URJ Camp Kalsman)

affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism and maintains close connections with Reform synagogues throughout the Pacific Northwest and beyond. These connections are visible throughout the summer as clergy from those synagogues come to camp to sing, teach and pray with campers – both those they know from synagogue back home and those from farther afield.

"It's an opportunity for our campers to get to know Jewish educators and rabbis and other adults in the Jewish world that are not the people that they grow up with," Silver said. "I think it's really cool for our kids to see people that they know and feel really comfortable with, but also to learn from other people as well."

There's also Community Shabbat services at camp sporadically throughout the summer – which is far more than just a Friday night service at Kalsman. The evening begins with the Torah being paraded through camp, picking up each age group of campers in order, youngest first, on the way to service. The campers –

dressed in white for Shabbat, per camp tradition, proceed to services, then to dinner.

"Then, from dinner, the kids literally run into the sports field," Silver said, for Shabbat Shira, something of a Shabbat afterparty. The camp's band is waiting for them, as well as those visiting faculty who are musically inclined, and the songs and dances go well into the night until each age group – again, youngest first – performs one final group dance and heads to bed in turn, leaving just the high schoolers.

"Whenever we have people visiting for Community Shabbat, that is the thing that wows them," Silver said. "It is such a beautiful way to celebrate Shabbat. Something that has been a phrase this summer especially has been 'Jewish joy,' and I think the Shabbat Shira is what fully encapsulates that at Kalsman."

Back home, Kalsman comes to its campers throughout the year through Camp Days at synagogues throughout the area – bringing camp songs to services and camp activities to the day beforehand like tie-dye-

ing and a unique Camp Kalsman activity, Potato Golf.

"You use a broom to try to hit the potato into the hole, and it's very silly," Silver explained. "The kids love Potato Golf, so it's a fun way to bring camp home during the year."

The idea of community engagement and endeavor has been part of Camp Kalsman's identity since its founding following a donation from camp namesake Lee Kalsman.

"We had a few temples that had their own summer camps going on, and we had a bunch of temples come together and say, 'This is really important, we have to come together as community to make this happen,'" Silver said.

Happen it has – 18 summers and counting as of this year. And while the last group of campers has departed down Jordan Road for the summer, a little bit of the experience of Kalsman will meet them when they get home. It's quite an experience, as Silver can attest.

"I've been able to experience Kalsman as a camper, as a counselor-in-training, a counselor and now on like the leadership team," she recalled, "and at every level it is just filled with this magic that I can't explain."

This is the final installment of the "Letters From Camp" series. For more on Jewish summer camps, listen to "Campfire Kehillah with Avi Orlow" on The Jewish Review Podcast, available on all major platforms and visit the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland's camp resources page at jewishportland.org/inclusion-camping.

SUHER (continued from page 4)

ees that Suher now joins.

“It’s stayed vital and that’s one of the meaningful parts of this,” Suher said of the award. “Not only are we looking into the future, but we’re continuing to involve people who have really been great contributors to the fabric of Portland and the Jewish community.”

This year’s dinner begins at 5 pm at Congregation Neveh Shalom. Tickets are \$72 and available online at members.nevehshalom.org/form/community-enrichment-2024.

VIGIL (continued from page 1)

announcement of the murder of hostages Hersh Goldberg-Polin, Eden Yerushalmi, Carmel Gat, Almog Sarusi, Alex Lobanov and Ori Danino by Hamas in Gaza that weekend.

“For 332 days we’ve come together with hope in our hearts that the hostages would come home, and in recent weeks that hope was palpable,” Rabbi Posen said. “There’s no meaning that helps us out of our desperate discomfort with this awful reality.”

When the news came, just as Shabbat was ending in Portland, Rabbi Posen told *The Jewish Review* that she quickly connected with the rest of Neveh Shalom’s staff and others to ensure that this vigil was available to both the Neveh Shalom community and the broader Jewish community in Portland, as an opportunity to sit *shiva* for those who had been killed.

“We’ve come together this evening to mourn. To rend our clothes as mourners. To fulfill our need to know that we are not alone. We need justice, a cessation to war, and the return of the remaining hostages,” she told the assembled audience. “We can cry our hot and angry tears. And then, with the strength of one another, we must pick ourselves up and begin again to do the impossible work of making our world a better place.”

Following her remarks, Rabbi David Kosak, Neveh Shalom’s Senior Rabbi, read from Psalm 130.

“There’s a capacity of the Book of Psalms to find for us the words that we struggle to find at a difficult moment,” he said. Fitting-

ly, he read, in Hebrew and then English, from the Psalm, “Out of the depths I call you, oh Lord. Oh, Lord, listen to my cry, be attentive to my pleas for mercy.”

Efrat Avsker, spoke of her brother, Ohad, and 100 others who are still in captivity.

“This number is dwindling, and not because hostages are being freed alive,” she lamented.

“It was overpowering in a sense of communal loss, but personal loss as well,” Rabbi Posen told *The Jewish Review* after the vigil. “So to have Efrat there to speak was a space of reminding us that there’s still hope; her brother, as far as she knows, is still alive.”

CNS Executive Director Marlene Edenzon and Jewish Federation of Greater Portland President and CEO Marc Blattner shared biographical details of each of the six victims before Cantor Bitton lead the recitation of *El Malei Rachamim* – “God full of mercy.”

CNS educators Mel Berwin and Etti Segal shared a poem, “Instinct,” by Israeli author Sarai Shavit, written from the perspective of a parent reassuring a child in the midst of ongoing terror – Segal in the original Hebrew, Berwin in English, before Rabbi Posen led the assembly in the Mourner’s Kaddish.

Cantor Bitton closed the service – as a show of solidarity and, perhaps, a nod to the hope that Rabbi Posen spoke of – with Israel’s national anthem, *HaTikvah* – “The Hope.”

SHIR JOY

(continued from page 2)

The tail end of January brings a weekend of events with Cantor Evan Kent, including a performance at the Friday, Jan. 31 Kabbalat Shabbat service, a performance of his one-man show “Shards” on Saturday, Feb. 1 and work with religious school students as well as an adult education talk on Sunday, Feb. 2.

“Evan is an extraordinary storyteller and musician and teacher, and he’s bringing an original one-man show which is about the history of his family and how he discovered it.

A pair of musical events – “Shir Joy” on Sunday, Apr. 19 featuring Thomas Lauderdale of Pink Martini among a star-studded cast of Cantor Cahana’s friends and “May The Fourth Be With You” on Sunday, May 4 with The Trinity Cathedral Choir, organist Katie Webb and CBI’s Kol Echad Choir – leading up to Cantor Cahana’s last Kabbalat Shabbat service on Friday, June 27.

“I want to sit back in a sparkly dress and have all my friends sing and play,” Cantor Cahana said of the “Shir Joy” Concert. “My last service at the end of June will just be fun and kind of nostalgic, featuring different eras of synagogue music.”

While most of these events are free and held at CBI’s Main Sanctuary in Downtown Portland, there is a \$36 materials fee for the kintsugi workshop and a limited number of seats are available. Pre-register online at bethisraelpdx.shulcloud.com/form/elul5. Information about all of these events is available online at bethisrael-pdx.org/joinus.

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Reed campus gets holy vibes from Chabad

By **ROCKNE ROLL**

The Jewish Review

One of the most notable pop culture phenomena of the early 2020s has been the proliferation of “vibes.” As it happens, Chabad at Reed College Rabbi Dov Bialo has been putting out vibes of his own.

Torah Vibes.

The vibes are free and readily available each week in front of the Chabad House on the north edge of the Reed campus. Rabbi Bialo keeps each edition to one page, usually only one side. Creating them is a process that goes far beyond a typical rabbinical missive dissecting the week’s parsha.

“I try to take something that I’ve studied and that I’ve also like integrated into my life. Either it’s been inspirational or something that moved me,” Rabbi Bialo explained. “Then after I’ve zoomed into my own life, I zoom out a little bit and see how that might inspire others.”

It’s a different approach for a different audience – a much broader audience.

“The goal is that not only Jewish people, but anybody from all walks of life should be able to get a little bit of inspiration into their own life from the teachings of the Torah,” Rabbi Bialo said.

Rabbi Bialo feels strongly that taking the time to proactively consider and cultivate one’s personal values is an important part of human life. While Jewish values are naturally rooted in the Torah, its teachings can inform those who shape and select their values in other ways.



The Torah Vibes display outside of the Chabad House adjacent to Reed College in Southeast Portland. Rabbi Dov Bialo's weekly Torah Vibes offer an inspirational message to Jews and non-Jews alike. (Courtesy Chabad at Reed College)

“When we decide proactively what our values are, we know how to direct our life in a more mindful way,” Rabbi Bialo said. So, I always try to share a Jewish value, and I’ll also share a universal takeaway that could be applied to everybody.”

The project started a couple years ago as a celebration of the birthday of the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, z”l, and was aided by an unlikely source. The Chabad House was undergoing a renovation project at the time with a two-person contracting team – one Jewish, one not. Rabbi

tions, funding for the work ran short. The non-Jewish contractor ended up making a significant donation to finish the project, but that’s not all.

“As soon as he heard what my plans were for the Rebbe’s birthday, he decided that he was going to put the display together at his own expense, on his own time. He has since passed away, so it was a last project that we did in partnership.”

A Jew and a non-Jew working together to put the Torah’s teachings into the world to benefit Jews and non-Jews alike – a most fitting way to honor the Rebbe.

“The Rebbe not only focused on the Jewish people as a whole, but the Rebbe had a very strong message to all of humanity that we’re all here for a purpose, and that it’s important for us to contemplate that idea of why we’re here,” Rabbi Bialo said.

Pick up the latest Torah Vibes at Chabad at Reed in Southeast Portland or visit chabadreed.com.

Bialo got to know both men over the course of the project. As they approached the finish line for the renova-



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CAMPAIGN (continued from page 1)

ished and as necessary as ever – perhaps more so.

“In the moment it is hard to think about what the right approach is for an individual,” Campaign Co-Chair Jack Birnbach said. “However, our community has many years - unfortunately centuries - of experience of what works. This is part of the investment that our community has made and continues to make.”

“It was very clear what the Federation was able to provide, and people were really appreciative of the webinars, the information, all the updates,” Campaign Co-Chair Leslie Beard said of the days after last year’s Oct. 7 attacks. “I think people really felt supported.”

But the Federation supports so much more than just dealing with war and antisemitism.

“These are difficult times here in the United States and in Israel,” Kahn said, “but there is also the desire to find joyous Jewish life and engagement amid the realities of the current climate.”

-
This work isn’t possible without the volunteers that help drive it, from Beard and Birnbach chairing the campaign to all the campaign ambassadors that make the phone calls and send the emails. And just as the campaign has grown in terms of funds raised and number of donors (up 12 percent last year), it’s also grown its volunteer base.

“I think everyone has felt touched by the Federation’s work in new ways,” Beard said, “and that’s motivating them to want to help build the campaign.”

“Marc Blattner is fond of saying that Jewish volunteers are ‘one Jewish person asking a second Jewish person to help a third Jewish person,’” Birnbach recalled. “One of the great things about being a volunteer is that you get a much greater understanding of what Federation does. We touch so many parts of the Jewish community.”

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Those interested in hearing more about the work the Federation does and how they can support it will enjoy a pair of events scheduled for the coming months.

First, author Dara Horn visits for “Together for Tomorrow,” Monday, Oct. 28 at 7 pm at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center. Horn is best known for her 2021 collection of essays “People

Love Dead Jews,” in which she argues that society’s focus on the persecution and death of Jews throughout history has dehumanized Jews instead of protecting them. “People Love Dead Jews” received a National Jewish Book Award in 2021, was a finalist for the Kirkus Prize for nonfiction writing, and was selected for multiple “books of the year” lists.

“This evening promises to be a gathering of hearts and minds, standing together in solidarity and strength,” Kahn said. “Together, making a difference is possible.”

On Nov. 17, Comedy For Peace, the brainchild of Jewish Israeli comedian Dotan Malach, brings Jewish and Muslim comedians to the same stage for two shows of “no politics, just laughs,” at the MJCC at 3 pm and 7 pm. Kahn described the collaboration with Comedy For Peace and their serendipitous coming-together with the Federation as *bashert* – Hebrew for “meant to be.”

“Comedy for Peace reached out to us just as we were discussing what type of experience we wanted to bring to the community. We know we’re in difficult times, engaging in difficult conversations, and we have an election coming up,” Kahn said. “What he and his troupe offer is the perfect remedy for what has been a long gut-wrenching year and what we at the Jewish Federation hope brings light and joy to the next year and to our Jewish community. We are looking forward to a better year.”

More details about both events will be available in coming weeks.

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As Federation’s campaign grows, there’s also a focus on including and inviting the next generation of Jewish community leadership into that process. The boldest example yet of that focus is this year’s launching – or re-launching – of Portland’s chapter of the Ben Gurion Society.

Named for founding Israeli Prime Minister David Ben Gurion, Federations across North America feature Ben Gurion Societies to recognize young adults who make significant contributions to their local annual campaigns. While the Ben Gurion Society previously existed in Portland, its reboot has been driven not just by Federation to include more young people in the campaign, but by young adults themselves

wanting to be a part of growing their Jewish community.

“We want to start building our next generation of leadership,” Federation Associate Campaign and Engagement Officer Laura Jeser said, “and we are hearing from our young adults (ages 21 to 45) that they want to start learning about leadership and philanthropy. They have this desire to give back to the community.”

Nationally, Ben Gurion Society Members typically contribute at least \$1,000 to their local annual campaign. In Portland, there will also be two additional membership tiers: Chai Bridge Builders (\$540 per year) and Tzedakah Trailblazers. (\$216 per year) All those contribution levels come with exclusive events and perks as well as recognition at Federation events and beyond as laying the foundation for the future of Jewish Portland.

Portland’s Ben Gurion Society is being supported by an advisory council of Jessica Hilbert, Jeremy Greenberg, Whitney Kagan, Noah Mullin and Ben O’Glasser. Those interested can learn more – and having some fun at the same time – at the Next Gen Level Up event Tuesday, Sept. 24 from 5:30-7:30 pm at Level Up Arcade in Northwest Portland. A \$20 ticket provides unlimited arcade game play, a complimentary beverage, snacks, and the chance to connect with likeminded Jewish young adults. Pre-registration by Sept. 17 is required online at jewishportland.org/levelup.

-
“Over the course of the past five years, we’ve constantly said, ‘This year is like none other.’ While this is a factual statement within the context of the Jewish community and the world, there continues to be some steady hands. Some constants. The Jewish Federation is one of those,” Kahn said.

The work that the Federation does isn’t possible without help – a lot of help. And every bit of that help is essential to supporting a vibrant Jewish community in Portland.

“If you haven’t given before, make a gift this year,” Kahn said. “And to all of our past donors, please make your best gift and dig deep – we have a lot to do this year involving security, antisemitism, the implementation of the community study, engagement of young families and young adults and so much more!”



L'SHANAH TOVAH!

**WISHING YOU A
HAPPY ROSH HASHANAH!**

We wish you and your family
a sweet and prosperous 5785.



Jewish Federation
of Greater Portland

**FOR HIGH HOLY DAYS RESOURCES VISIT
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NEXT ISSUE

Issue date Deadline

SEPT 25 SEPT 19

By **JESSICA ANDERSON**

In April and May of 2022, a man later identified as Michael Bivins, set fire to the Muslim Community Center of Portland with congregants inside of it, shattered windows of Congregation Shir Tikvah at Eastside Jewish Commons and a black-owned business, Everybody Eats PDX, and spray painted “Die Juden” on Congregation Beth Israel - an explicit reference to the Holocaust - the day after the synagogue hosted the community Holocaust Remembrance Day observance. Many of you may remember our community’s growing awareness that an unidentified individual had targeted multiple organizations and remained at large. Now you have a chance to take part in demonstrating that bias crimes affect everyone in a community and not only the impacted organizations.

Thankfully, Bivins was arrested. He has been charged with 15 State and Federal crimes including Arson, Bias Crime, and Damaging Religious Property. In addition to these charges, many are also aware that he was a suspect in an uncharged bias crime that occurred during the same period. This crime caused great destruction and could have caused the deaths of numerous people.

Within the month, Bivins is slated to appear in court to plead guilty. Following this, a judge will determine his sentence, based on agreements made between the defense and the prosecution. Our country’s legal process allows for direct victims and those affected by these crimes to voice how the events affected them, to



Jessica Anderson is the Portland-area Director of Community Security. She was previously an FBI agent for 24 years. This position is funded by SCN (the official safety and security organization of the Jewish community in North America) and a local three-way partnership of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, Oregon Jewish Community Foundation Endowment Fund and multiple Jewish organizations in the region.

influence the sentence, and to help shape the Judge’s understanding of the effect of the person’s actions. As members of the Portland Jewish community, you can take part in this phase of the judicial process. Several community members have worked diligently over the past two years to follow the case and prepare for the submission of a Community Impact Statement to the court. In this case, the goal of the statement is to show that bias crimes impact an entire community, to strengthen the legal response to these crimes, and help prevent them in the future.

Read the community impact statement at <https://docs.google.com/document/d/17o-q4OnawlnqnQCjza1BMeA-we4T4hnbJxtPAT8ypz57Q/edit?usp=sharing>

The hope is that hundreds of community members will indicate their support of this statement. No individual names will be submitted to the court - only the names of directly affected institutions and the total number of signatories from the community at large. Within the form, you have two options – you can anonymously sign the Community Impact

Statement, you can opt to be notified of the hearing date, or both. The court’s victim advocate group says that it’s very helpful if many members of a community show up to a plea bargain hearing - they help demonstrate to the court the impact and importance of the proceeding. This plea hearing will be on a single date and is not an ongoing trial.

To sign up as a supporter of the Community Impact Statement, please fill out the Google form here <https://forms.gle/skC7hK9tFPmKwV356>. Feel free to share the links with others whom you know care about bias crimes being committed against any group, in Oregon, and who seek to stand and be counted.

Reporting remains a critical step in stopping bias crimes, and we know incidents are underreported. Please report and encourage others to do so as well. Incidents can be reported on the JFGP Security page at <https://www.jewishportland.org/security>.

You may also contact the Oregon Department of Justice’s Non-Emergency Bias Response Hotline at 1-844-924-2427 or report online at <https://justice.oregon.gov/CrimeReporting/BiasCrime>.

Israel, civilian casualties and double standards

By BOB HORENSTEIN

Yarmouk, where 160,000 Palestinians had once lived, was a vibrant refugee camp, bustling with activity: shops hawking their wares, food stalls selling falafel and shawarma, children playing soccer. But then came the indiscriminate bombings, the constant artillery and sniper fire, and, gradually, widespread famine and disease.

Their homes destroyed, their streets in ruins, and with no basic services, tens of thousands of Yarmouk's Palestinian residents fled to neighboring lands or were internally displaced. Nearly 4,000 of them were killed during the violence.

You probably think I'm talking about Gaza. You would be wrong, however. Yarmouk is just outside of Damascus—in Syria. It was once that country's largest Palestinian refugee camp until it was totally destroyed by Syrian government troops during the bloody civil war that began in 2011 with the ruthless repression of anti-government protesters. According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, 617,000 people—164,000 of them civilians—have been killed since the war's start.

And yet, in the US, even as the Palestinian (and overall civilian) death toll climbed, there were no rallies against the Bashar Assad regime in our public squares. No protest encampments on university campuses. No grassroots calls for a ceasefire. There was only a deafening silence.

Absent were the social justice warriors from Columbia and Harvard, radical teachers' unions, and pro-Palestinian solidarity movements as Syria's Palestinians were being slaughtered. Could it simply be that since it wasn't Israel committing these atrocities, no one bothered to pay attention?

The double standard is hard to miss. On October 7, Hamas committed the worst single-day massacre of Jews since the Holocaust, and by the next day the anti-Israel Left

had launched its campaign against the Jewish state. Israel had barely begun its response against Hamas in Gaza when there were already accusations of "genocide" and calls for an unconditional ceasefire.

New York Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, for example, waited only three days before issuing a demand for "an immediate ceasefire and de-escalation." Apparently, AOC, a member of the far-left "Squad," didn't understand that a premature ceasefire—when Israelis were just coming to grips with the sheer brutality of the attack—would deprive Israel of its legitimate right to defend itself and shield Hamas from the consequences of their murderous rampage.

Throughout history, the primary obligation of any state has been to defend its inhabitants against outside aggression. But when Israel does it—and only when Israel does it—Israeli political and military leaders are almost instantly portrayed as war criminals.

In other words, even a large-scale massacre of Jews doesn't entitle the Israelis to a little leeway in trying to prevent another one from happening. It matters not the lengths that Israel goes to avoid civilian casualties against an enemy that embeds itself deeply among the civilian population and stores weapons in and fire rockets from apartment buildings, schools, hospitals, and mosques.

Undeniably, the IDF has been less than perfect in conducting the war in Gaza, and any soldier who has violated the rules of engagement needs to be held accountable. Still, the relatively low civilian-to-combatant casualty ratio is "unprecedented in modern warfare" according to John Spencer of the Modern War Institute at West Point. "Israel has implemented more precautions to prevent civilian harm than any military in history," argues Spencer.

In fact, Israel has done better than the US did in its wars in Iraq and



Bob Horenstein is the Director of Community Relations and Public Affairs for the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland.

Afghanistan. Notably, to defeat 5,000 Islamic State terrorists in Mosul (compared to 30,000 Hamas fighters in Gaza), the American-led coalition killed around 10,000 civilians in nine months. I don't recall anyone accusing the US of genocide.

This double standard also exists in media coverage. I have in a file folder an article from the *New York Times* dated June 20, 2004. It's a report of an American airstrike that reduced to rubble four homes in Falluja, Iraq, killing 17 civilians. I kept it because I was astounded that this tragic "mistake" wasn't front page news—it was buried on page 10. Just another day at the office. By contrast, whenever the IDF inadvertently harms civilians, it is routinely the lead story of major American media outlets.

Israel, moreover, continues to face what I call structural antisemitism. Consider the UN Human Rights Council, which counts as members such human rights stalwarts as China, Cuba, Libya, Qatar, Russia, and Venezuela. It has made the Jewish state the only country to be the subject of a permanent agenda item. In a typical year, more resolutions are adopted against Israel than all other countries combined (between 2015 and 2020, Israel was condemned 112 times, Syria a mere eight).

This double standard shows how the nation-state of the Jewish people is treated as "the Jew among the nations." It also affirms the very reason we need a Jewish state in the first place.

A version of this article was previously published in Jerusalem Report.

Israeli folk dance classes at SWCC Sundays

Portland Israeli Folk Dance News

Back in 1972, Marna Kleinman and Bill Nelson started Israeli folk dancing at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center. The class grew to include open dancing and a performing group. Today, along with a large group of dancers of all ages, there has been an unbroken chain of dance leaders teaching classes and running open sessions all around the Portland area.

If you'd like to learn, or return to dancing after a break, the Southwest Community Center is offering a five-week beginners class starting Sunday, Oct. 6, from 2:30-3:30 pm, followed by open dancing 3:30-5 pm, for ages 14 and up. The class requires registration, and open dancing is drop-in.

Sue Wendel, SWCC beginners class instructor, has been dancing for decades. Sue teaches and leads sessions, plans celebratory events, and has learned from US and Israeli choreographers at workshops over the years. She considers Marna Kleinman a mentor, and was in the original performing group that Marna directed. Sue has taught children through adults at the MJCC, at various synagogues, schools, and within the community.

Rhona Feldman, intermediate instructor and SWCC ses-

sion leader, began dancing in Vancouver, Canada in her teens. She has been in performing groups in Seattle and New York and has taught dancers for over 15 years. Rhona attends workshops regularly where she learns new dances and has a large repertoire of classic dances as well. Recently she helped plan the 50th Anniversary of Israeli Folk Dancing in Portland community celebration held last summer. Rhona runs the SWCC weekly open dance session (right after the beginners class), 3:30 to 5 pm.

Wendel shares, "When we ask dancers to describe Israeli folk dancing in one word, the most common response is 'joy,'"

Feldman added, "It brings people together for recreation, to make new friends, and to celebrate this Israeli cultural treasure."

To register for the SWCC beginners class, please call 503-823-2840. The open session is drop-in. For current Israeli folk dance information visit "Israeli Folk Dancing in Portland, OR" on Facebook. Visit the website "PIFD News," sites.google.com/site/pifdnews for the Portland history and for basic information about all the Israeli folk dance sessions and classes in the Portland area.

OJCF to replace Social Responsible Investing pools

Oregon Jewish Community Foundation

The Oregon Jewish Community Foundation is pleased to announce the creation of two new investment pools: ESG Equity and ESG Fixed Income Pools. The two ESG pools will replace OJCF's Socially Responsible Investing (SRI) Pool. Both new pools will be invested in ESG mutual funds to provide current and future fundholders at OJCF with even greater flexibility when selecting an asset allocation that meets their investment and philanthropic goals.

The ESG Equity fund will invest in US and Internationally focused ESG funds, and the ESG Fixed Income Pool will invest in fixed income mutual funds.

The terms environmental, social, and governance (ESG), socially responsible investing (SRI), and impact investing are often used interchangeably, but have important differences. ESG examines a company's environmental, social, and governance practices alongside more traditional financial measures. Socially responsible investing uses a screening process that allows investors to independently determine investments based

on ethical considerations and socially responsible behaviors.

Current SRI Pool holding will automatically be reallocated 60% to the ESG Equity Pool and 40% to the ESG Fixed Income Pool at the first opportunity OJCF has to rebalance the pool.

But with the split of the SRI Pool into the ESG Equity and ESG Fixed Income Pools, fundholders can now vary their ESG equity and fixed income allocation beyond the current 60%/40% allocation. Using OJCF's *Investment Allocation Recommendation Form*, you may elect at any time, and from time to time, to either (i) reallocate the percentages of your SRI pool holdings between the ESG Equity Pool and the ESG Fixed Income Pool; or (ii) reallocate the percentages of your SRI pool holdings among any of OJCF's ten available investment pools.

The change will provide greater flexibility for fundholders to allocate within OJCF's ESG and Jewish Advocacy options.

Currently, fundholders also have the option to invest in the OJCF Jewish

Advocacy Strategy Pool. This *all-equity pool* invests in a subset of the companies that comprise the S&P 500 Index. The strategy is designed to be a first step for Jewish values-based investing that provides advocacy on Jewish communal concerns. The Pool *does not include any fixed income securities*.

By separating the SRI Pool into the ESG Equity Pool and the ESG Fixed Income Pool, fundholders will have the ability to direct their desired equities allocation to the Jewish Advocacy Strategy Pool and their desired fixed income allocation to the ESG Fixed Income pool to achieve a diversified portfolio while promoting both Jewish values-based and socially responsible investing strategies.

Fundholders continue to have the option to allocate their investments across any of OJCF's ten available investment pools.

Partner organizations can contact Noah Rosenberg at noahr@ojcf.org. Donors can contact Rachael Evans at rachaele@ojcf.org or call Noah or Rachael at 503-248- 9328.

[rss.com/podcasts/jewishreviewpdx](https://www.rss.com/podcasts/jewishreviewpdx)

OJCF awards \$50k in higher-ed scholarships

Oregon Jewish Community Foundation

For fiscal year 2024, the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation scholarship program awarded approximately \$50,000 in support of 11 higher education applications, and approximately \$10,000 in support of 31 campership applications. Applicants for tuition and camp scholarships came from 11 cities throughout Oregon and represent 12 higher education institutions and eight camps. Additionally, OJCF provided an aggregate of approximately \$60,000 in tuition assistance funds to Portland Jewish Academy, Maimonides Day School, and Maayan Torah Day School in support of 129 students. The scholarship committee also awarded \$5,400 to three students studying in Israel.

New to OJCF's scholarship program for this year, Ken and Kenda Singer, who have been actively involved in the Jewish community of Eugene and with the Universi-

ty of Oregon, established the Singer Foundation Fund of OJCF. The Singer Foundation Fund of OJCF provides a single four-year scholarship to eligible and deserving Jewish students set to graduate from a public high school (or equivalent) in Oregon. These scholarships aim to support students financially in pursuing a four-year university education. It is renewable annually for up to four years, provided the student meets specific criteria. Selection considerations include academic performance, financial need, and involvement in extracurricular activities, particularly within the Jewish community. OJCF is grateful to the Singers for their forethought in developing future leaders of our community.

To make a contribution to OJCF scholarships or to set up a scholarship of your own, contact Sonia Marie Leikam at 503-248-9328 or soniamariel@ojcf.org.

Events

More upcoming community events online at jewishportland.org/community-calendar

Sept. 11: From Darkness to Light with Ofri Reiner

Israel360 event with Reiner, a survivor of the Nova Festival Massacre, at 7 pm at Congregation Neveh Shalom. Pre-registration required online at members.nevehshalom.org/event/I360SoR24.

Sept. 13: JFCS Community Connection

Open community discussion group on Zoom at 10 am. For more information, visit jfcs-portland.org/services/counseling.

Sept. 14: Sam Reider & The Human Hands: The Golem and Other Tales

Acoustic fusion concert at Eastside Jewish Commons at 7:30 pm. Details and tickets at ejcpdx.org/events.

Sept. 15: The Mitzvah Project w/ Portland Backpack

Hands-on volunteer service opportunity for young adults from 1-3 pm and families with young children from 10 am-noon at Portland Backpack. For more information, visit jewishportland.org/

themitzvahproject.org/mitzvahmakers (young adults) or jewishportland.org/mitzvahmakers (families).

Sept. 16: Kidney Donation Awareness and Swabbing Event

Kidney donation event co-hosted by ReNewal and Portland Kollel at 6pm at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center. For more information, email rbd@portlandkollel.org.

Sept. 17: Shaken To My Bones Release Party

Celebration and reading from Brian Rohr's debut poetry anthology at 6:30 pm at Congregation Neveh Shalom. Preregistration required at members.nevehshalom.org/event/rohr-booklaunch.

Sept. 17: Learning/Lab

Weekly Jewish education program sponsored by Co/Lab at the Eastside Jewish Commons. Dinner at 6 pm, program at 7. For more information and to register, visit colabpdx.org.

Sept. 19: Exploring the Power of Family Stories

Writing workshop with Lisa Kagan from 1:30-3:30 pm at the Eastside Jewish Commons. For more information or to register, visit ejcpdx.org/events.

Sept. 19: Moishe Pod Portland West Torah & Tea

Torah study at 7:30 pm at Moishe Pod West PDX. Email moishepodportlandwest@gmail.com for details.

Sept. 19: Red Thread concert

East European, Yiddish and Americana music performance at 7:30 pm at the Eastside Jewish Commons. For more information or to register, visit ejcpdx.org/events.

Sept. 20: Next Generation Community Connection

Online support group for Holocaust survivors and descendants at 10 am on Zoom. Email MissyFry@jfcs-portland.org to join.

Sept. 20: Noontime Concert with Sarah Larsson

Free concert at noon at the Eastside Jewish Commons.

For more information, visit ejcpdx.org/events.

Sept. 21: ESH - A Havdalah Rave

Dance party at 8 pm at the Eastside Jewish Commons. For more information or to register, visit ejcpdx.org/events.

Sept. 22: Dignity Grows Packing Party

Hygiene supply tote packing party at 1 pm at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center. Preregistration required at jewishportland.org/packingevent.

Sept. 22: The End of the Golden Age of American Jewry

2024 Oseran Family Lecture with Franklin Foer at Congregation Beth Israel at 4 pm. More information at bethisrael-pdx.org.

Sept. 22: Rabbi Joshua Stampfer Community Enrichment Award Dinner

See story, page 4.

Sept. 23: Parent Advocacy Training

K-12 parent advocacy training with Jewish Federation. See EVENTS, page 14

Jobs Board

See the latest Jewish jobs at jewishportland.org/ourcommunity/jewish-jobs

Obituaries

Submit obituaries online at form.jotform.com/JFGP/jr-obituary

KATHRYN PEARSON

It is with deep sadness that Congregation Shaarie Torah announces the passing of Kathryn Ann Pearson, z"l. Kathryn died Saturday, Aug. 24, 2024 at the age of 71.

She is survived by her children, Jacob Smith and Hannah Smith, her sisters, Judy Pearson, Kristy Pearson-Denning, and Becky Hanchett, and her brother, Jim Pearson. The funeral was held Wednesday, Aug. 28.

NANCY MONESSON

Congregation Beth Israel mourns the loss of Nancy Mo-

nesson, z"l, who passed away on September 3, 2024 at the age of 98.

Nancy is survived by Steve and Leslie Robinson, Shaina and Matt Boal, Ben Robinson and Briana Whitehead, Charley and Ari Boal, and six stepchildren located around the world and their extended families. Nancy was preceded in death by her husband, Morris Monesson, z"l, and her son, Chris Spohn, z"l.

Donations in Nancy's memory can be directed to a charity of your choice.

Life cycle

Submit births, b'nai mitzvah, engagements, weddings, anniversaries and landmark birthdays to The Jewish Review's new online portal at form.jotform.com/JFGP/jr-life-cycle

Burial Societies

Portland has two holy societies of volunteers who prepare the deceased for burial according to Jewish tradition: Chevra Kavod haMet and the Portland Hevra Kaddisha.

For questions about end of life, death and mourning, email chevrakavodhamet@gmail.com, visit ChevraKavodHaMet.org, or contact the Portland Hevra Kaddisha at michael@cashcolan.com or 503-519-2454.

EVENTS

(continued from page 13)

eration of Greater Portland staff at 7 pm. Email rachel@jewishportland.org for more information.

Sept. 24: Ben Gurion Society Kickoff

See "Federation campaign kicks off," page 1.

Sept. 24: Yoga for Self-Love

Weekly yoga series Tuesdays at 5:30 pm at the Eastside Jewish Commons. For more information or to register, visit ejcpdx.org/events.

Sept. 26: Ethical Will Workshop

Workshop sponsored by Jewish Association for Death Education at 5 pm at the Eastside Jewish Commons. Preregistration required at lu.ma/dle9wj9.

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