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The New Jewish Voice

A PUBLICATION OF UNITED JEWISH FEDERATION

Creating a Lasting Impact

(Courtesy of UJF) On Wednesday evening, May 27, at 7:30 pm, United Jewish Federation of Stamford, New Canaan and Darien (UJF) will celebrate the completion of six years of the Life & Legacy program, and the second year of the Legacy Plus program. Life & Legacy promotes legacy giving as a cultural norm and is a communal effort to help Jewish organizations build endowment funds to ensure their future in perpetuity. UJF successfully launched the program in 2020, and with ten local synagogues and Jewish agencies participating, the entire community has experienced tremendous success in all aspects of the program.

Host Committee members Nan and Paul Gordon, Susan Kostin, and Nancy Mimoun invite all current Life & Legacy members to come together to celebrate the community's collective achievement. Nan Gordon stated, "Paul and I joined Life & Legacy the very first chance we had. We can't think of a better way to support this Jewish community that we love so much, than to directly invest in its future. We're so excited for the sixth annual Community Celebration, and we look forward to seeing our friends there, too!"

The event will take place at a private location, which registrants will be notified of one week prior. Attendees will enjoy light bites, a dessert reception, and an opportunity to hear directly from fellow Life & Legacy members about how their support will make a difference for the future of Jewish Stamford, New Canaan, and Darien.

Nancy Mimoun added, "It's almost hard to believe it's been six years since our community became part of Life & Legacy. I'm extremely grateful for the ability to ensure that all my favorite local synagogues and Jewish agencies will have the funding they need long after I'm gone. Leaving a Jewish legacy is so important."

"A crucial element of the program is donor stewardship. Once a gift is made, or promised, donors need to feel remembered by the institutions they are leaving money to. It can be an invitation for coffee, a call, a note, or anything that makes the donor feel valued. This is an important element of the Life & Legacy initiative with much attention and focus being placed on this topic", shared Eric Ross, UJF Deputy Director.

The ten organizations taking part in Life

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Building Community

(Courtesy of Schoke JFS) What makes a community feel connected? Often, it's the people who quietly show up, packing bags, making calls, offering rides, or simply spending time with someone who needs it. At Schoke Jewish Family Service (JFS), volunteers are the thread that ties so much of this work together.

Throughout the year, and especially during busy seasons like Jewish holidays, volunteers step in wherever help is needed. Some assist with food distribution, ensuring families have access to fresh, nutritious meals. Others organize drivers, assemble packages, or support events that bring people together. Many offer something just as powerful: their presence, helping to reduce isolation and build lasting connections.

What makes volunteering at Schoke JFS so impactful is its flexibility and expansive reach. Opportunities are available for individuals, families, students, and community groups alike. Whether it's a hands-on service project, a B'nai Mitzvah initiative, or a group volunteer day, there are countless ways to get involved and make a difference.

Behind these efforts is a growing commitment to making service accessible, engaging, and meaningful. With expanded programming and new ways to connect, more people than ever are finding opportunities to give back in ways that align with their interests and schedules.

Volunteering doesn't just support programs; it strengthens the fabric of the community itself. Each act of service, no matter how small, helps ensure that neighbors feel supported, seen, and cared for.



Aubri Doughty, Community Partnership Manager, shares a meaningful moment with a young volunteer in action.

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A Paws-itive Visit to 5th Grade Religious School

(Courtesy of UJF) Fifth grade students at Temple Sinai Religious School gathered for their Sunday class with their teacher, United Jewish Federation's Community Shlicha Eden Refaelovich, and welcomed special guests UJF Security Director Jim Comstock and Pogo, his retired K9 bomb squad dog. Eden is grateful for the opportunity to create meaningful connections between the students and Israel, and to enrich their learning and joy through engaging visits like these.



From UJF's Chief Executive Officer

Celebrating Israel, Strengthening Community

BY DIANE SLOYER



Diane Sloyer, UJF CEO

Across our communities, the connection to Israel, the Jewish homeland, is felt deeply. As I write this, Israel still fights for her freedom, and the rebuilding and mental health crisis continues to be a focus for UJF.

Recently, UJF convened all sectors of our community for moments of celebration, solidarity, and shared purpose, in support of the State of Israel. The connection came to life in a particularly meaningful way as we welcomed three Israeli soldiers who were injured in the line of duty. Their visit reminded us why celebrating Israel is about more than flags, songs, and stories—it's about people, resilience, and the unbreakable bonds between our communities.

During their weeklong stay, they visited synagogues and Jewish schools but also reached far beyond our own walls. They met with local police officers and firefighters, veterans, public officials, and students from private and non-Jewish schools. They shared their experiences, listened to others, and in doing so, built bridges of understanding and compassion across all parts of our community.

The sight of an Israeli flag flying beside the American one, or a local police chief embracing an Israeli veteran, is powerful. It reminds us that celebrating Israel is also celebrating shared values—courage, community, and the determination to protect what matters most.

Bringing such programs to life, however, takes serious commitment. Behind every inspiring encounter stands the collective effort of professionals, volunteers, and donors who dedicate time and resources. The realities of our world today mean that these celebrations—whether it's an Israel-focused cultural event, speaker series, or community gathering—carry substantial security costs. Protecting our guests, our venues, and everyone who attends is a priority, and it represents a growing financial burden on local agencies and our Federation.

At United Jewish Federation, we are proud to stand at the heart of a community that understands this balance: to celebrate meaningfully, to protect responsibly, and to connect deeply. Together, we ensure that our support for Israel continues to inspire, educate, and unite—through every program, every encounter, and every shared story.

Building Community Through Volunteering

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Volunteer Opportunities Include:

- Mitzvah Matches (social connection and food delivery visits)
- B'nai Mitzvah and Youth Service Projects
- Freedberg Family Kosher Food Pantry and Distribution Support
- Anachnu Holocaust Survivor Program Support
- Community Packing Events and Service Days
- Customized Service Experiences for Individuals and Groups
- Preparing and Distributing Food for Jewish Holidays and Thanksgiving
- Participating in a Local Supermarket Food Drive
- Preparing and delivering Mitzvah Baskets to Local Synagogues

To learn more about how you can get involved and to find meaningful opportunities that fit your schedule, visit www.ctjfs.org/volunteer or contact Aubri Doughty at Adoughty@ctjfs.org or 203-998-7854.

CANDLE LIGHTING TIMES

May 1	7:33 pm
May 8	7:40 pm
May 15	7:47 pm
May 22	7:54 pm
May 29	8:00 pm
June 5	8:05 pm
June 12	8:09 pm
June 19	8:12 pm
June 26	8:13 pm

UJF President's Message

Coordinating Communal Security

BY MICHAEL SCHLESSINGER, UJF IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT



Michael Schlessinger, UJF Immediate Past President

Beverly Stein asked me, as UJF immediate past president, to fill in for her at a recent Federation Board meeting. Reviewing the proposed agenda for the meeting, I asked Diane why there was no mention of the then-quite recent attack on Temple Israel in West Bloomfield, Michigan. Her response (something like "you're right we should say something about that") led to reflection about the "normalization" of such events, and ultimately to an animated discussion at the meeting.

The discussion was divided, roughly 50/50, between the tactical and the strategic. Tactically, we heard about ongoing efforts – and there are many -- to tighten security at our local institutions. On the heels of the most recent attack, UJF's security provider, CSI (Community Security Initiative), was able to secure short- term grants to help offset the cost for increased security. Naturally, improving security is a priority around which we all coalesce. Our younger Board members, in particular, bring a passion to this topic that is at once inspiring and heartbreaking.

Strategically, there was less passion, or perhaps just less clarity about what to do. Jewish philanthropy was recently called out by Bret Stephens in his State of World Jewry address at the 92nd Street Y. His core observation – that our communal efforts to combat antisemitism have not worked and should be redirected to cultivating Jewish identity – was intentionally provocative, but few would disagree that some reassessment is in order.

The major takeaway from our Board meeting was that we need a Security Council that meets regularly, to reinforce and enhance Federation's leadership role in keeping this community safe. Many good ideas were thrown out at the meeting, and this Council will pursue them with focus and energy. We are grateful to Greg Waldstreicher, UJF Executive Committee member, for stepping up to chair this crucial effort.

My hope is that the Council will also keep in mind and try to tackle the strategic. While we continue to invest in concrete security -- guards, reinforced walls and bollards, surveillance equipment, UJF Regional Security Director Jim Comstock and CSI -- let us not lose sight of the challenges that lie beyond the "securable perimeter." These include growing divisions within our community (between young and old, left and right, diasporic and Israeli), the search for more effective approaches to combatting online lies and distortions, understanding the newfound unity of radical left and right in "anti-Zionism" and "Palestinianism," and surging pressure on us as American Jews to hide or renounce our Jewish identities.

In the wake of October 7th, I remember characterizing our collective experience as one of "disorientation," which evokes a temporary state. Two and a half years later, the bewilderment remains. As does the conviction that, as in the past, we will survive and flourish.

Celebrating Six Years of Life & Legacy!

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& Legacy are: Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy, Chabad of Stamford, Congregation Agudath Sholom, Friendship Circle, Schoke Jewish Family Service, Stamford Jewish Community Center, Temple Beth El, Temple Sinai, United Jewish Federation of Stamford, New Canaan and Darien, and Young Israel of Stamford.

To date, the Stamford, New Canaan, and Darien Jewish community has formalized over 66% of their 633 commitments. The estimated value of all of these commitments is nearly $17 million. As a community, 33 of these gifts have already been fully realized, totaling $1.2 million.

Register today at www.ujf.org/LLCelebration. To learn more about how to become eligible to attend by making a legacy commitment, please contact UJF Deputy Director Eric Ross at eric@ujf.org or (203) 321-1373, ext 1004.

UPCOMING DEADLINE

July-August 2026 Edition
Deadline: Monday, June 8, 2026

Email submissions to **sandy@ujf.org**
You should receive notification that your submission was received!

Stamford JCC to Honor Community Leaders at 2026 JGala

(Courtesy of JCC) The Stamford Jewish Community Center (JCC) will hold its annual JGala on Thursday, June 4, at 6:30 pm at Rockrimmon Country Club, honoring community leaders whose dedication and service have made a lasting impact on the JCC and the greater Stamford community.

This year's honorees are Toby Lazarus and Allan Lichtenberg, whose longstanding commitment, leadership, and generosity have helped strengthen the Stamford JCC and the community it serves. Through their deep connection to the Center and their enduring dedication to Jewish communal life, Toby and Allan have helped sustain and enrich the JCC as a welcoming home for connection, engagement, and belonging. Their example reflects a profound commitment to ensuring that this community continues to thrive for generations to come.

The JCC will present its Emerging Leader Award to Ariel Poser Bedik, whose connection to the JCC spans generations. Ariel grew up at the Stamford JCC and now shares that same sense of belonging with her own children. Inspired by generations of family leadership and volunteerism in Stamford's Jewish community, Ariel serves on the Stamford JCC Board of Directors and has played an active role in key projects, including Kidzone and the Playground campaign, helping to strengthen engagement, connection, and community for families across Stamford.

In addition, the JCC will present the Arlene & Irwin Ettinger Legacy Award to Brian Kriftcher. Through years of dedicated leadership, Brian has helped shape the Stamford JCC in meaningful and lasting ways. He has served multiple terms as President of the Board, offering vision, steady leadership, and deep commitment to the Center's growth and success. Among his many contributions, Brian brought his highly successful PEACE Basketball program to the JCC, creating a lasting programmatic gift that reflects his belief in the JCC's mission and its power to build community. His leadership, innovation, and service have strengthened the JCC in ways that will continue to be felt for years to come.


Toby Lazarus and Allan Lichtenberg


Ariel Poser Bedik


Brian Kriftcher

The annual JGala is the Stamford JCC's largest fundraiser of the year, supporting its mission to be a welcoming, inclusive, and nurturing community for all. Proceeds help provide scholarship assistance, support inclusive programming, and sustain programs and services that build community across generations.

This year's JGala Co-chairs are Cheryl Bader-Goldblum, Tara Shapiro, and Sara Simon, and the event's Sponsorship Co-chairs are Natalie Behrend, Lindsay Rosen, and Stuart Roth. For tickets or more information, visit www.stamfordjcc.org/jgala or contact Rebecca Isenstein at risenstein@stamfordjcc.org or 203-487-0943.

Parents: Help Shape the Future of PJ Library

(Courtesy of UJF) Families in the community are being encouraged to take an active role in shaping local programming by joining the newly revived PJ Library Parent Committee, which will meet on the evening of Wednesday, June 3.

Organizers are seeking parents from a variety of community backgrounds who are interested in creating engaging programs for children and parents alike.

The initiative aims to strengthen community ties while ensuring PJ Library offerings continue to reflect the needs and interests of local families.

Parents who are interested in getting involved are encouraged to reach out to the UJF Director of Programming and Engagement at jillian@ujf.org for more information.

A Source of Pride for All

BY ERIC ROSS,
UJF DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Temple Beth El and Temple Sinai are once again partnering with United Jewish Federation of Stamford, New Canaan, and Darien (UJF) to host a Community Pride Shabbat on Friday evening, June 5, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. This collaborative effort is open to all to join in celebrating the diversity that exists here in our own Jewish community.

The Community Pride Shabbat will begin at 5:30 pm with a picnic dinner – blankets and lawn chairs are recommended. At 6:15 pm, Rabbi Michael Knopf and Cantor Katie Kaplan from Temple Beth El and Rabbi Jay TelRav and Cantor Micah Morgovsky from Temple Sinai will lead a beautifully curated Kabbalat Shabbat service, interspersed with meaningful readings and song. For security purposes, this event will be held at a private location – and weather permitting, will be held outdoors once again. Attendees will receive a special Pride Shabbat To-Go Bag, with everything needed to welcome Shabbat at home.

The word "pride" is an integral concept within the LGBTQIA+ community, representing broad themes like solidarity, collectivity, and identity, as well as resistance to discrimination and violence. Since 1970, June has been widely celebrated as Pride Month to commemorate the Stonewall Riots, a series of gay liberation protests that took place in June of 1969. After receiving official designation in 2000 by President Clinton, Pride Month has grown to become an annual celebration of the many contributions made by the LGBTQIA+ community to history, society, and culture worldwide.

This is a free community event and open to all ages, but advance registration is required at www.ujf.org/Pride. Those who sign up will receive an email with the Stamford location one week prior to the event.



Engaging Israel: Complex Conversations on the Jewish Future

(Courtesy of Temple Beth El and *Temple Sinai)* Temple Beth El and Temple Sinai of Stamford are proud to announce a dynamic, multi-part Israel engagement initiative this spring. This collaborative effort will bring together members of both congregations for thoughtful learning, meaningful dialogue, and shared exploration of Israel, pluralism, and Jewish identity. This exciting partnership between Temple Sinai and Temple Beth El reflects a shared commitment to collaborative programming and community-wide engagement on issues central to Jewish identity today.

Rabbi Michael Knopf of Temple Beth El stated, "This initiative is about creating space for thoughtful, nuanced conversation. By bringing diverse voices and perspectives into our congregations, we hope to deepen understanding, strengthen connections to Israel, and explore the evolving expression of Jewish life and values."

Rabbi Jay TelRav of Temple Sinai added, "To engage with each other in the spirit of *machloket l'stem shamayiim* (sacred debate) we must have the chance to really hear all sides of the matter to ensure we're informed and not just passionate."

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THE NEW JEWISH VOICE

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JCC Annual Outing to Support Vital Community Programs

(Courtesy of JCC) More than 150 golfers, tennis players, and pickleball enthusiasts are expected to participate in the Jewish Community Center's 31st Annual Golf, Tennis & Pickleball Outing on Monday, June 1 at Sunningdale Country Club in Scarsdale, NY.

Dubbed "FORE the Kids," this year's outing introduces two exciting updates: a new venue at Sunningdale Country Club and the addition of pickleball, offering even more ways for participants to enjoy a day of friendly competition while supporting a meaningful cause.

Proceeds from the event benefit vital JCC programs, including early childhood education for children with special needs, inclusion programming, summer experiences, and youth sports. These funds help ensure The J can meet families where they are and continue providing accessible, high-quality programs that strengthen the community.

The event includes a welcome brunch, a shotgun start for golf, tennis, and pickleball, followed by a cocktail hour and awards dinner to conclude the day.

Craig L. Price serves as Event Chair, with Matt Lesser as Golf Chair and Eric Bass and Eric Roth serving as Tennis Co-Chairs.

For reservations or information, please contact Shannon Jacobs at 203-487-0965 or sjacobs@stamfordjcc.org.

Exploring Judaism's Message for All Humanity

(Courtesy of Chabad of New Canaan) Judaism has long spoken not only to the Jewish people, but to humanity as a whole.

A new four-week course, "For All Humankind," from the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute (JLI), explores this dimension of Jewish thought, offering participants a chance to engage with Judaism's broader moral vision and how it speaks to questions of dignity, responsibility, and purpose in everyday life.

Beginning April 29 and hosted at Chabad of New Canaan, the four-week course is text-based, drawing on classical Jewish sources spanning thousands of years of scholarship. Participants will study a curated sourcebook of original texts that makes foundational Jewish writings accessible while deepening Jewish literacy. Through guided study and discussion, participants will clarify the roots of key moral ideas, gain language to articulate Jewish perspectives on ethics and purpose, and explore Judaism's view of history, progress, and human responsibility.

The course will meet on four Wednesdays, from April 29 to May 20, at Chabad of New Canaan Jewish Center, 137 Putnam Road in New Canaan. Sessions will be offered twice weekly, at 10:00 to 11:30 am and 7:00 to 8:30 pm, allowing participants to choose the time that best fits their schedule. This course is being offered for both online and in-person attendees.

"It's time to unlock the message that Judaism has for the world," said Rabbi Levi Mendelow, Director of Chabad of New Canaan, who will lead the course. "What people often find is that their Judaism gives language and structure to values they already recognize, and that the world needs to learn. The course connects those ideas back to their sources and shows how they form a coherent worldview with relevance far beyond the Jewish community."

"At a time when questions of values and meaning are widely discussed, the course offers a structured way to revisit foundational ideas through Jewish texts and see them in a new light," Rabbi Mendelow continued.

The Rohr Jewish Learning Institute (JLI), the adult education arm of Chabad-Lubavitch, offers courses in more than 900 communities worldwide. Like all JLI programs, this course is designed to be accessible at all levels, with no prior background required. The accompanying textbook serves as a curated collection of classic sources central to Jewish thought and Jewish literacy.

Registration is available at www.myjli.com. The cost is $120, which includes the course textbook.

The course also offers Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credits for attorneys and legal professionals.

For further information, please contact Rabbi Mendelow at rabbi@chabadnewcanaan.org or at 203-972-7708.

Tea, Tales, and "Happily" at The J

(Courtesy of JCC) Join the Stamford Jewish Community Center on Wednesday, May 6 from 6:30 to 8:00 pm for an "Author Tea" with award-winning writer Sabrina Orah Mark. Bring your mother, daughter, sister, aunt, best friend—or come on your own and connect with new friends—for an evening of warmth, conversation, and inspiration. Sabrina will share stories behind her acclaimed book *Happily: A Personal History—with Fairy Tales*, a powerful and whimsical collection of essays originally featured in *The Paris Review* and winner of the National Jewish Book Award for memoir. Through her unique voice, she explores themes of family, identity, and motherhood in ways that are both moving and imaginative. Enjoy an intimate tea featuring scones, fresh fruit, and sweet treats, (kosher-style,) as you meet the author and celebrate great books and community. Don't miss this memorable evening together. Each guest will make a corsage to take home.

Attendees can register online at www.stamfordjcc.org or contact Lisa Rosenstein at 203.487.0986 or at lrosenstein@stamfordjcc.org.

Building Bridges Through Interfaith Dialogue

(Courtesy of UJF) United Jewish Federation (UJF) Community Shlicha Eden Refaelovich, together with UJF Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) Director Gary Jones, visited St. John's Lutheran Church on March 22 and were warmly hosted by Pastor Martha McCreight. During their visit, they participated in the Sunday service, learned about the church's history and traditions, and engaged in meaningful conversations and dialogue with members of the congregation.



Pastor Martha McCreight, UJF Community Shlicha Eden Refaelovich and JCRC Director Gary Jones at St. John's Lutheran Church.

"It was an interesting, special, and insightful Sunday. I'm grateful for the opportunity not only to learn, but also to share and connect through the conversations that followed the service. Especially in times like these, interfaith relationships allow us to build meaningful connections that foster understanding and unity across diverse communities. It is truly meaningful to be part of this, and I feel grateful to bring a piece of myself and Israel into these connections. I look forward to many more opportunities like this in the future. Thank you to Pastor Martha for hosting us," shared Eden.

Legislative Priorities Impact on the Jewish Community

(Courtesy of UJF) Each year, Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) lobbies for a number of appropriations sign-on letters that highlight the Jewish community's priority funding asks. These letters are signed by members of Congress and sent to the relevant members of the House Appropriations Committee, indicating support for these funding items as the committee begins its work on the FY27 appropriations bill. JFNA, working on behalf of 142 Federations throughout North America, specifically supported six bipartisan letters which showcase a range of issues, including security funding, support for Israel's vital defense needs, support for Holocaust survivors, and more:

Nonprofit Security Grant Program Funding ($1 billion)
- Leads: Reps. Gabe Amo (D-RI) and Michael McCaul (R-TX)
- Total Signatures: 150

Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism Funding ($3 million)
- Leads: Reps. Grace Meng (D-NY), Chris Smith (R-NJ), Maria Salazar (R-FL), Dan Goldman (D-NY), Sarah McBride (D-DE), David Kustoff (R-TN), Don Bacon (R-NE), Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL), Ted Lieu (D-CA), and Abraham Hamadeh (R-AZ)
- Total Signatures: 76

Middle East Partnership for Peace Act (MEPPA) Funding ($50 million)
- Leads: Reps. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL) and Ann Wagner (R-MO)
- Total Signatures: 99

U.S.-Israel Missile Defense Cooperation Funding ($500 million)
- Leads: Reps. Grace Meng (D-NY), Don Bacon (R-NE), Brad Schneider (D-IL), and Mike Lawler (R-NY)
- Total Signatures: 138

Holocaust Survivor Assistance Program Funding ($10 million)
- Leads: Reps. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL) and Troy Balderson (R-OH)
- Total Signatures: 81

Support for collaboration between DHS Fusion Centers and at-risk institutions
- Leads: Reps. Dan Goldman (D-NY) and Max Miller (R-OH)
- Total Signatures: 16

To view the letters and which of our local members of Congress signed on, visit http://www.ujf.org/SignOnLetters

We urge you to utilize this as a guide and consider thanking members for their support. While we encourage all members of Congress to sign onto these letters, we also

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Your Federation - Boots on the Ground



(Courtesy of UJF) With antisemitism on the rise, United Jewish Federation (UJF) and its Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) continues outreach and relationship building efforts on behalf of the local Jewish community.

On April 14, Gary Jones, UJF JCRC Director and Diane Sloyer, UJF CEO met with New Canaan elected state representatives and the Superintendent of New Canaan Public Schools at the New Canaan Board of Education.

Pictured here *(l-r)* Gary Jones, CT State Representatives Savet Constantine and Lucy Dathan, Diane Sloyer, New Canaan Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Bryan Luizzi, and CT State Rep. Tom O'Dea.

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Shavuot Scholar-in-Residence at Agudath Sholom

(Courtesy of Agudath Sholom) Congregation Agudath Sholom (CAS) is honored to welcome Rabbi Nathaniel (Nati) Helfgot as its Scholar-in-Residence for Shavuot, Friday and Saturday, May 22–23.



Rabbi Nathaniel (Nati) Helfgot

A distinguished rabbinic leader, educator, and thinker, Rabbi Helfgot serves as the spiritual leader of Congregation Netivot Shalom in Teaneck, New Jersey. He brings decades of experience at the forefront of Torah learning, communal leadership, and thoughtful engagement with contemporary Jewish life.

Ordained by Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary and holding a master's degree in education from the Azrieli Graduate School of Yeshiva University, Rabbi Helfgot currently serves as Chair of the Department of Talmud and Rabbinics at SAR High School. Over the course of his career, he has helped shape the intellectual and spiritual lives of students and communities across the country, including leadership roles at Yeshivat Chovevei Torah and Ma'ayanot Yeshiva High School.

Beyond the classroom and pulpit, Rabbi Helfgot has been a leading voice in major rabbinic and intellectual forums, including the Rabbinical Council of America, the International Rabbinic Fellowship, and the Orthodox Forum. His scholarship spans both halakhic depth and contemporary relevance, reflected in his authored and edited works, including *Divrei Berakhah U'Moed - Halakhic Essays on the Topics of Holidays and Blessings*, and *Community, Covenant and Commitment: Selected Letters and Communications of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik*.

Widely sought after as a speaker, Rabbi Helfgot is known for his ability to illuminate Torah in a way that is both rigorous and deeply resonant, bridging timeless tradition with the questions and opportunities of modern life.

Shavuot Learning Opportunities

- **Thursday Night (Shavuot):** Two featured presentations at Agudath Sholom's All-Night Learning
- **Friday Morning:** Shavuot Sermon
- **Friday & Shabbat:** Two pre-Mincha classes

Join CAS this Shavuot as Rabbi Helfgot helps guide the community through the themes of Torah, covenant, and spiritual growth—bringing insight, clarity, and inspiration to this sacred time.

For more information, please visit: www.cas-stamford.org

Voices United in Celebration of Yom Yerushalayim

(Courtesy of Agudath Sholom) On Thursday evening, May 14 at 7:00 pm, Congregation Agudath Sholom will host a powerful and uplifting Yom Yerushalayim celebration, featuring the debut of its new choir—an initiative designed to bring voices together in harmony, unity, and hope.

At the heart of the evening is a simple but profound idea: *Jerusalem is a city that unites—and music has the power to do the same.*

In a program that commemorates the miracles of 1967 and celebrates the enduring centrality of Jerusalem in Jewish life, community members will join together in song under the direction of acclaimed choirmaster Daniel Henkin, whose innovative "Instant Choir Experience" has inspired communities across the country.

Unlike traditional choirs, this initiative is designed to be accessible and inclusive—no auditions required—offering participants the opportunity to rehearse and perform fully harmonized pieces in a short time while creating what Henkin describes as "one unforgettable experience."

"I am thrilled to help launch our new choir initiative at Agudath Sholom," said Shoshy Ciment Rosen, chair and visionary behind the program. "When it comes to Jewish choral music, Daniel Henkin is truly second to none, and he is an exceptional fit for our community. The response to this initiative has been overwhelming, reflecting a clear desire for more musical engagement. I'm excited to see our community come together through this new creative outlet and look forward to our upcoming performance on Yom Yerushalayim."

The evening will feature not only music, but also meaningful elements designed to deepen reflection and connection, including communal prayer, archival video clips from the Six Day War, and words of inspiration and advocacy.

"Yom Yerushalayim is not only about remembering a moment in history," said Rabbi Daniel Cohen. "It is about recognizing the ongoing miracle of Jewish unity and the role each of us plays in shaping the future. When individual voices come together, something greater is created. That is the story of Jerusalem—and that is the story we hope to tell through this choir."

The program aims to harness the emotional and spiritual power of music to create a sense of shared purpose, elevating the evening beyond commemoration toward a renewed sense of collective mission and hope for the Jewish people.

For more information or to RSVP, visit: www.cas-stamford.org or contact Rabbi Daniel Cohen at rabbicohen@agudathsholom.org.

Celebrating Shavuot with Chabad of Stamford

(Courtesy of Chabad of Stamford) Chabad of Stamford is preparing a rich and engaging schedule of Shavuot events, marking the giving of the Torah with meaningful and enjoyable experiences for all ages. The community is warmly invited to join a variety of programs running from Thursday, May 21 through Saturday, May 23.

In anticipation of the holiday, children are encouraged to take part in a new initiative, writing a community Sefer Torah. Each child can acquire a letter for just $1, with families invited to include all children under bar and bat mitzvah age. Every child will receive a personalized certificate to commemorate their role in this meaningful mitzvah, while additional dedication opportunities are available for adults.

Adding a sweet touch to the holiday, Chabad will once again offer its popular homemade cheesecakes, a beloved Shavuot tradition and a perfect addition to any holiday table.

The festivities begin on Thursday, May 21, with a pre-Shavuot Farmers Market hosted by Gan Yeladim from 10:00 to 11:30 am. The market will feature fresh challah, cheesecakes, produce, baked goods, and handcrafted items created by the children, everything needed to help families prepare for the holiday.

Later that evening, at 9:15 pm, the community is invited to an engaging all-night learning program, "TED Talks," named after a cherished community member. Participants are encouraged to share or explore Jewish topics of interest. Following a festive meal, learning will continue late into the night in the spirit of *Tikkun Leil Shavuot* (a night of learning).

On Friday, May 22, at 11:00 am, a Shavuot celebration will feature the reading of the Ten Commandments, an interactive children's program, and a dairy buffet, along with an ice cream party. The program will be offered again at 6:00 pm.

Shavuot concludes on Saturday, May 23, with morning services including *Yizkor*, followed by a community "Ess'in" lunch. Guests are welcome to join with an advance RSVP.

For more information or to RSVP, please contact Chabad of Stamford at programs@stamfordchabad.org or call 203-324-2223. Full details can be found at www.stamfordchabad.org/shavuos

Lag B'Omer BBQ and Color Run

(Courtesy of Chabad of Stamford) Chabad of Stamford warmly invites the community to its annual Lag B'Omer Family BBQ and Color Run on Tuesday, May 5, at 4:00 pm, an afternoon filled with energy, connection, and fun for all ages.

Lag B'Omer, the 33rd day of the Omer, is a joyful break in a traditionally somber period on the Jewish calendar. It commemorates the end of a historic plague among Rabbi Akiva's students and honors the legacy of the great sage Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai. Marked by bonfires, outdoor gatherings, and celebrations of Jewish unity, the day has become a beloved time to come together with family and friends.

In that spirit, the event will feature a festive BBQ with hot dogs, hamburgers, and marshmallows roasted over the traditional *medurah* (bonfire). Families can also enjoy music, games, and a variety of fun activities.

A highlight of the celebration is the return of the Color Run, where participants can walk or run through clouds of vibrant, non-toxic colored powder, adding an extra burst of excitement and color to the day.

Chabad of Stamford looks forward to welcoming the community for this special celebration of joy, unity, and Jewish pride.

For more information, please contact programs@stamfordchabad.org, call 203-3CHABAD, or visit www.stamfordchabad.org.

Chabad of Stamford Distributes 1,000 Shmurah Matzahs

(Courtesy of Chabad of Stamford) In the lead-up to Passover, Chabad of Stamford launched an ambitious community initiative to distribute 1,000 hand-baked Shmurah Matzahs to local residents, bringing both tradition and spiritual meaning to Jewish homes across the city.

To accomplish this goal, the organization enlisted the help of a dedicated group of yeshiva students, including two local sons, Yisroel and Levi Shemtov, who brought along eleven fellow students to assist in the effort. Over the course of the week, the group worked tirelessly with help from local volunteers, packing matzah late into the night and delivering it throughout Stamford during the day.

In addition to distributing matzah, the yeshiva students connected with community members through meaningful encounters, including opportunities to wrap tefillin and engage in conversations about Jewish life and tradition. These interactions added a personal and spiritual dimension to the initiative, strengthening bonds within the Stamford Jewish community.



***(l-r)* Solomon Green, Yisroel Shemtov, Baruch Danow and Ethan Green**

Shmurah Matzah holds deep spiritual significance. According to Kabbalistic teachings, it is known as both the "food of faith" and the "food of healing," symbolizing nourishment for both body and soul.

Partnership Delivers Passover Essentials to Families in Need

(Courtesy of Schoke JFS) Thanks to a strong partnership between Schoke Jewish Family Service (JFS), Met Council, and Jewish Family Services of Greater Hartford, the agency received a generous supply of Passover essentials, everything from matzah ball mix and tuna to gefilte fish, tomato sauce, borscht, oil, macaroons, potato starch, quinoa, eggs, and chicken.

This collaborative effort ensures that families across multiple communities have the foods they need to celebrate the holiday with dignity and tradition. Met Council coordinated delivery to the Schoke JFS office, where Jewish Family Services of Greater Hartford collected their share for local distribution. Schoke JFS is grateful to United Jewish Federation for their generous support toward holiday food distribution and for the power of partnership in helping support neighbors this Passover.



***(l-r)* Katie Hanley, Chief Executive Officer of JFS Hartford; Matt Greenberg, Schoke JFS President & CEO; Erika Gadson, Chief Operating Officer; and Jen Bernstein, Director of Food Programs, coming together in partnership to support the community.**

Legislative Priorities Impact on the Jewish Community

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

recognize that members receive requests for hundreds of sign-on letters during the appropriations process. A member not signing onto a letter does not necessarily indicate an active decision on their part against the request, so we would urge caution in reading too much into individual decisions without more information. Additionally, many (but not all) members of the Appropriations Committee have a standing policy not to sign these letters, as they have an opportunity to advocate for funding from within the committee itself.

To learn more about the work of UJF's JCRC and JFNA's work, contact Gary Jones at gary@ujf.org.

Engaging Israel: Complex Conversations on the Jewish Future

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

The series launched at Temple Sinai on April 19 with a presentation from ROOTS, an organization whose mission is to transform enemies into partners through direct human contact, deep listening and recognition of the other's history and experience. The presentation brought together an Orthodox Jewish Israeli and a Palestinian, both residents of the West Bank, in genuine dialogue and partnership.

The Israel engagement initiative will continue as a multi-part educational series with scheduled events as follows:

SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE WEEKEND WITH RABBI ARIE HASIT

May 8–9 — Temple Beth El, 350 Roxbury Road, Stamford.

- Friday, May 8, 7:00 pm-- Rabbi Hasit will give the d'var Torah, focused on current events in Israel and building an inclusive Jewish state. The service will be followed by dessert and Q&A.
- Saturday, May 9, 10:00 am--Rabbi Hasit will give the d'var Torah, drawing on themes relevant to creating a pluralist society in Israel.
- Saturday afternoon--Following kiddush lunch, Rabbi Hasit will lead a study session on "Women's Leadership as Old as the Torah."

TIKKUN LEIL SHAVUOT

May 21, 7:00 to 10:00 pm, Temple Beth El

Together, educators of both Temple Sinai and Temple Beth El will facilitate an evening of study and conversation exploring our relationship to Israel and the Jewish future.

CONGREGATIONAL BOOK EVENT WITH RABBI ARTHUR GREEN

May 31, 5:00 to 7:00 pm, Temple Beth El

Rabbi Green will join congregants from both synagogues to discuss his latest book, *Can Judaism Be Saved? Its Future After Gaza.* A wine and cheese reception will follow.

Additional events and speakers may be added in June. For more information, please contact either of the congregations' executive directors: Erica Newman, Temple Beth El, 203-322-6901, execdir@tbe.org or Jeremy Stein, Temple Sinai, 203-322-1649, Jeremy@templesinaistamford.org.



Pre-Passover Bowling with Friendship Circle

(*Courtesy of Friendship Circle*) On March 22, more than 20 Friendship Circle participants, families and volunteers gathered in Westport at Nutmeg Bowl for a busy afternoon. Everyone got into the Passover spirit by making a very special sensory version of the Ten Plagues to use at the Seder. Each plague has a special sensory aspect to help enrich the learning experience.

Everyone was also treated to matzah and sparkling grape juice in anticipation of the upcoming holiday, and the importance of each of these was explained. After the Passover program, everyone moved to the bowling lanes to enjoy the popular Friendship Circle Bowling League.

Family Coordinator Risha Nemes said, "It was a great combination of learning and activity that everyone really enjoyed. These Sunday afternoons at the bowling alley are so much more than just a game. I love to see the friendships between the participants and volunteers grow and the fun that everyone shares together!"



Jonah has a fun time bowling with a Friendship Circle teen volunteer.



Friendship Circle participants created special Ten Plagues kits for their Sensory Passover Seder.

Passover at Brighton Senior Home

(*Courtesy of Chabad at Harbor Point)* Members of Chabad of Harbor Point's Young & Jewish group spent an afternoon with residents of the Brighton Gardens senior home. It was a warm and cheerful event filled with laughter, songs, and shared memories of Seders from years past. The gathering created a meaningful and enjoyable connection across generations.



Friendship Circle Makes Passover Extra Special

(*Courtesy of Friendship Circle*) On Wednesday night April 1, Friendship Circle participants and their families gathered to celebrate the first night of Passover with a Sensory Seder. The evening was hosted at the home of Malya and Rabbi Zalman Shmotkin and included all the traditional aspects of the holiday celebration. Families were part of an interactive experience of the story of the Jews freedom from Egypt, including the traditional four cups, *maror*, *charoset* and all the special foods and symbols of the holiday in a warm and inclusive environment.

Guests received a special ten plagues kit to be used while reading the Hagadah. The kit was full of sensory items and fidget toys, so that participants could experience the ten plagues in the way that they learn best.

Friendship Circle Director Malya Shmotkin said, "It is hard to believe that once again it was time to celebrate the Passover Seder together this year! It was truly the highlight of my family's holiday to join together with our Friendship Circle family and share the stories and traditions of Passover together."

To become involved with the Friendship Circle, please reach out to Director Malya Shmotkin at Malya@friendshipct.com



The table is set for a Friendship Circle Sensory Seder.



Guests received sensory Ten Plagues kits.





DON'T FORGET TO USE THE COMMUNITY CALENDAR.
THE CALENDAR CONTINUES TO BE IMPORTANT TO AVOID CONFLICTS.
WWW.UJF.ORG
QUESTIONS? EMAIL TALY@UJF.ORG

Zachor - We Remember

(Courtesy of UJF) United Jewish Federation (UJF) brought together the greater Stamford, New Canaan and Darien communities for the annual Yom HaShoah commemoration honoring the six million Jews whose lives were extinguished in the Holocaust, recommitting to remembering, educating, and standing strong as a Jewish people.

In addition to the community's clergy, participants heard the story of two survivors, Janet Singer Applefield and Ernest Nemeth, ages 91and 100 respectively.

This year, the remembrance feels especially urgent. Antisemitism is once again on the rise, around the world and here at home. In the past few weeks alone, the New Canaan hockey team was targeted with antisemitic hate from students at Fairfield Prep; a teacher at Stamford High discovered swastikas etched on classroom windows and desks; a local building that once housed the JCC and Yeshiva Beis Binyomin was defaced with hateful symbols; and most recently, another swastika appeared in Darien's High School. And these are only the incidents the community has heard about. UJF needs each of you to be the community's eyes and ears—to speak up, to report, and to help us confront hate wherever it surfaces.

The same hatred that once led to unspeakable tragedy still seeks to divide us today. But our response must remain what it has always been—resilience, faith, and unity.

The strength of our community lies in our shared identity and our unwavering commitment to one another. It is up to us to remember, to speak out, and to stand together as one Jewish people—with courage, with hope, and with love for Am Yisrael.



UJF JCRC Director Gary Jones and UJF CEO Diane Sloyer with CT State Rep. Tom O'Dea Jr., UJF President Beverly Stein, and Robin Fischel.



100 year old Holocaust survivor Ernest Nemeth with UJF Security Director Jim Comstock.



Robin Fischel, Shushannah Walshe, Becky Kevelson, CT State Rep. Tom O'Dea Jr, Lauren Shansky, and Wendy Siegel.



Rabbi Michael Knopf, Temple Beth El.



Cantor Micah Morgovsky, Temple Sinai, leads attendees in the *El Maleh Rachamim* memorial prayer.



Sam Fischel, Deb Millery, Ron Kovis, Ernest Nemeth, Harry Webski, Doris Warmflash, CT State Rep. Tom O'Dea Jr, and Barbara Webski.



Rabbi Daniel Cohen, Congregation Agudath Sholom.



Rabbi Eli Kohl, Young Israel of Stamford.



Steve Zales, President of Temple Sinai, Cantor Micah Morgovsky of Temple Sinai, Liat Feller, Sharon Feller, and Shelly Welfeld.



Shara Israel.



Shira and Ofer Vadel.



Stephne Behrend, Beverly Stein, and Susan Kostin.



Karen Berk.



Carl Rosen and Joan Kranz.



Author Janet Singer Applefield.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF AVIVA MALLER

INTERFAITH SEDER BRINGS







Strengthening

(Courtesy of UJF) The Jewish Community Relations Council of United Jewish Federation of Stamford, New Canaan and Darien held its annual Interfaith Seder at Temple Sinai on Thursday, March 26.

The Seder was co-led by Rabbi Jay TelRav, spiritual leader of Temple Sinai and Reverend Mark Lingle, Associate to the Bishop of the New England Synod, ELCA. The Haggadah prepared especially for this evening, addressed universal themes of kindness, welcoming the stranger and gratitude—themes of the Passover narrative that are common to all attendees and serve to emphasize the unity of all people of good will.

The Interfaith Seder was attended by more than 130 people, marking the second year in a row that attendance has increased substantially. Among the attendees were more than ten elected officials, including Stephanie Thomas, the Secretary of State of Connecticut. In addition, fourteen clergy from a variety of faith groups attended and participated.









Community Relationships

One of JCRC's central missions is to build bridges between the Jewish community and interfaith and intergroup community friends. According to JCRC Director Gary Jones, "These opportunities for diverse people to join together to celebrate our shared values are critically important to developing and cultivating meaningful relationships, which will serve the Jewish community (and other communities) in good and bad times."

"I would like to thank Reverend Lingle and Rabbi TelRav for creating such a warm and welcoming environment for our guests. In addition, we thank our partners in creating the event: the Mayor's Multicultural Council, the Interfaith Council of Southwestern CT and UConn Hillel. Finally, we couldn't possibly have this kind of successful and meaningful bridge-building event without the hard work and creativity of our Interfaith Seder Committee Members: Deborah Goldberg, Leslie Heyison, Lorraine Kweskin, Julie Rose, Marie Orsini Rosen and Marilyn Sofer," Gary continued.



***(l-r)* Gary Jones, UJF JCRC Director with interfaith clergy Shelley Donaldson, Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian Church of Stamford; Rev. ReBecca Sala, Stamford Hospital's Manager of Spiritual Health and Well-Being; Marie Orsini Rosen, Interfaith Council of Southwestern CT Board of Directors; Rabbi Michael Knopf of Temple Beth El in Stamford; Rabbi David Evan Markus of Congregation Shir Ami in Greenwich; Rev. Cynthia Ownby, Lead Minister at Stamford Church of Christ; Reverend Mark Lingle, Associate to the Bishop of the New England Synod, ELCA; Pastor James Hinton and Senior Pastor Elizabeth Dukes of Rose of Sharon Ministries; Rabbi Jay TelRav of Temple Sinai in Stamford; Rev. Joseph Rose, Rector of St. Francis Episcopal Church; and Rev. Michael Hyman, Union Baptist Church member and former Stamford Board of Education President.**





Bits & Pieces


Sandy Golove

BY SANDY GOLOVE

To submit information to Bits and Pieces, call (203) 912-9945 or email sandy@ujf.org.

MAZEL TOV TO GROWING FAMILIES:

Suellyn Bache on the birth of a great-granddaughter, Isabelle Ruth Oppenheim.

Rachel Bandler & Moshe Cohen on the birth of a son.

Rachel Feit & Elie Weiner on the birth of a son.

Chaya & Rabbi Levi Feller on the birth of a daughter; and to the grandparents, **Malya & Rabbi Zalman Shmotkin**.

Marissa Friedman & William Gamber on the birth of a son, Eli Simon Friedman Gamber; and to the grandparents, **Meira Rosenberg & David Friedman** and **Jenifer & Ed Gamber**.

Noa & Douglas Herman on the birth of a daughter; and to the grandparents, **Jacqueline & David Herman and Shira & Daniel Naor.**

Carla & Scott Howard on the birth of a grandson, Asher Robert Howard.

Chanie & Rabbi Yossi Kamman on the birth of a son**.**

Amalia & Leon Kotlyar on the birth of a daughter.

Mielcha & Rabbi Joshua Munk on the birth of a daughter; and to the grandparents, **Leah & Peter Munk.**

Eliza & Uri Pearl on the birth of a daughter.

Esther & Adam Rattner on the birth of a daughter; and to the grandparents, **Abbe & David Rattner and Karen & Allan Gibofsky**.

Becca Rimsky & Dan Stecker on the birth of a son.

Roshana & Steven Saunders on the birth of a son.

Aderet & Gavriel Shechter on the birth of a son.

Eliza Scheffler & Andy Granowitz on the birth of a daughter, Bluma Scheffler Granowitz; and to the grandparents, **Loralee & Philip Granowitz**.

Sarah & Arielle Snow on the birth of a daughter, Eden Hallie Snow; and to the grandparents, **Dina Miller Marlowe & Seth Marlowe**.

Paige & Dylan Sodaro on the birth of a daughter, **Fay Elliot Sodaro**; and to the grandmother, **Shelly Welfeld**.

Helene Zimmerman on the birth of a great grandson.

MAZEL TOV ON MARRIAGES/ ENGAGEMENTS:

Darren Bahar on his engagement to **Toby Schwartz**; and to the parents, **Rachel & David Bahar**.

Allison & Fred Greenbaum on the engagement of their son, **Richard Greenbaum to Alli Buller**.

Liz & Scott Krowitz on the marriage of their son, **Andrew Krowitz to Julia Ditkoff**.

Dayna Langfan & Lawrence Heller on the marriage of their son, **David Heller to Maiya Aiba**, daughter of **Lisa Sorce & Isao Aiba**.

Aviva & Michael Maller on the engagement of their son, **Jacob Maller to Danielle Arlotta,** daughter of **Laurie & Thomas Arlotta**.

Rhonda Schaffer Maron and Jeffrey Maron on the marriage of their son, **Max Maron to Yael Diamond.**

Rachel Seligson and David Jelen on their engagement.

Malya & Rabbi Zalman Shmotkin on the marriage of their son, **Levi Shmotkin to Chaya Sudak**.

MAZEL TOV TO B'NEI MITZVAH:

Addison Avnir: daughter of **Jessica & Dan Avnir**.

Carolina Patel: daughter of **Elisabeth Hershman & Raj Patel**.

Blake Rosen: daughter of **Lindsay & Peter Rosen**.

Matthew Sosnovich: son of **Jessica & Eytan Sosnovich**.

Ella Stolarsky: daughter of **Lindsey Rossler-Stolarsky & Tomer Stolarsky**.

WE MOURN THE LOSS OF:

Howard Alkoff: husband of **Arelis Alkoff; and father of Amy, Aida and Alan Alkoff**.

Rhea Comen: wife of **Alan Comen** and mother of **Julie Rakowitz, Karen Zink and Wendy Blondin**.

Trudy (Gertrude) Greenspan: mother of **Susan Wright, Leslie Seidman and Steven Greenspan**.

Carol Himelstein: mother-in-law of **Robin Himelstein**.

Robert Krasnor: father of **William Krasnor**.

Tibor Krausz: father of **Emilio Krausz**.

David Lander: brother of **Steven Lander**; and life partner of **Carla Davidson.**

Rabbi Yaakov Lazarus: brother of **Lisa Linzer**.

Arthur Malman: husband of **Dorothy Malman** and father of **Elizabeth Greenberg, Susan Altman, and Stacy Feldman *z"l*.**

Malcolm Albert Plotkin: brother of **Lorraine Kweskin**.

Debra Price: sister-in-law of **Sherry Kfare**.

Tzipora Steinmetz: mother of **Steven Steinmetz**.

Bruce Stone: husband of **Gail Stone** and father of **Julie Stone and David Stone**.

Seymour Winchel: uncle of **Debra Faizakoff**.

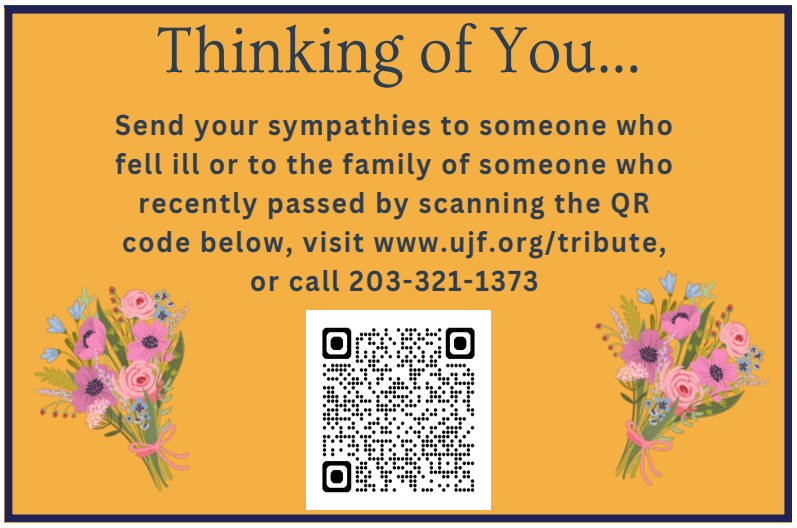
Adele Youngstein: mother of **Alan Youngstein**.

Honoring a Memory

(Courtesy of UJF) Jennie Fishman, an active UJF volunteer and Social Media coordinator, organized a Dignity Grows packing event in memory of her friend Mary Marsico, bringing over 30 women together raising over $2,000 and packing 250 hygiene tote bags for women and girls in need. To host a pack or learn more, contact Jillian Moore at Jillian@ujf.org.







A Powerful Evening of Community and Light



Chabad of Stamford honors Robert Yaghoubian and Neda Khaghan *(4th and 5th from right)* at their annual gala dinner.

(Courtesy of Chabad of Stamford) This year's Chabad of Stamford Annual Gala Dinner was a meaningful and memorable celebration of community, continuity, and the impact of those who bring light to others, with over 450 in attendance.

Chabad of Stamford was honored to recognize Dr. Robert Yaghoubian and Dr. Neda Khaghan with the prestigious Lamplighter Award, and to present the Gan Partnership Award to Karen Karniol-Tambour. Jacob Contente was celebrated with the CTeen Volunteer Award for his dedication and remarkable contributions to the community.

The evening also recognized two extraordinary public leaders whose impact transcends politics. The *Ayshes Chayil Award* (Woman of Valor) was presented to Congresswoman Elise Stefanik, and the Community Service Award to Mayor Caroline Simmons, honoring their leadership, advocacy, and steadfast support for the Jewish community. For Chabad, these awards were not about left or right, but about right versus wrong

Congresswoman Stefanik emphasized the urgency of combating antisemitism and supporting the Jewish people with moral clarity. "We must continue to lift up leaders who call out insidious antisemitic hate with moral clarity and without fear." She went on to say, "We are in the midst of the most righteous fight as President Trump launched Operation Epic Fury to defeat the largest state sponsor of terror once and for all, the Iranian ayatollahs who chant Death to Israel and Death to America. And I know for certain, standing shoulder to shoulder with Israel and allies across the Middle East, we will win this fight."

Mayor Simmons spoke warmly about the Stamford Jewish community as a thriving and integral part of the city, noting its resilience and importance in forging solidarity and partnership, especially during challenging times both at home and abroad.

Rabbi Moshe Shemtov, who offered a blessing to the honorees and attendees, reflected on the evening's shared purpose of unity. For him "it was a powerful evening as the Stamford community came together, strengthened by words of hope, purpose, and goodness shared by the night's speakers and honorees. This community exemplifies the values we hope to see in the world every day."

A highlight of the evening was the dedication of a new Torah for Chabad, with a *sofer* (scribe) beginning the meticulous process of writing it. With 304,805 letters in a Torah scroll, the precision and care required underscores the reverence of this sacred undertaking.

Known for being meaningful, engaging, and joyous, the Chabad Annual Gala Dinner this year captured the spirit of connection and shared values under the theme *"Connected by Tradition and Empowered to Grow."* Attendees gathered to celebrate the collective impact of Stamford's community and to look toward a bright and hopeful future.



Chabad of Stamford honors Congresswoman Elise Stefanik *(speaking)* with its Ayshes Chayil Award at their Gala dinner

BCHA Celebrates 70 Years



BCHA Young Leadership Awardees Peretz and Kate Cik, and Guests of Honor Rhoda and Avram Freedberg.

(Courtesy of Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy) Over 450 parents, community members, faculty, and students gathered to celebrate 70 years of Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy (BCHA) and raise over $950,000 in support of the school and its mission.

The dinner is BCHA's premier fundraising event, celebrating the school, its students, and its mission to educate and empower the next generation of Jewish leaders.

This year's event was held at the Hyatt Regency in Old Greenwich and was chaired by Dinner Co-Chairs Sandi and Stuart Waldstreicher and Rachel and Greg Waldstreicher,as well as Dinner Journal Chair Howard Wolfe.

The evening honored several dedicated members of the community. Rhoda and Avram Freedberg were recognized as Guests of Honor for their ongoing devotion to BCHA. Kate and Peretz Cik received the Young Leadership Award for their commitment to the school. The B.L. Manger Foundation was also recognized with a special honor for its enduring loyalty and support in helping BCHA fulfill its mission.

BCHA also recognized retiring Head of School Rabbi Tzvi Bernstein for his leadership in helping the school grow and for the lasting impact he has had on students, families, and the broader community.

In addition to the honorees, guests heard vibrant student speeches that beautifully captured the joy and excitement of learning at BCHA, along with moving remarks from dignitaries, Senator Richard Blumenthal and Stamford Mayor Caroline Simmons. Through a proclamation issued by Mayor Simmons, March 8 will henceforth be known as "Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy Day" in Stamford.

As BCHA celebrates 70 years, the evening served as both a heartfelt expression of *hakarat hatov* (recognizing the good) for all those who built and sustained the school, and a joyful look ahead to a bright and promising future.

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JBS can be watched 24/7 on Optimum CH 138, DIRECTV CH 388, ROKU, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV (Amazon Prime) ZipWave TV CH 29 and www.jbstv.org

Hands-On Learning at New Canaan Hebrew School

(Courtesy of Chabad of New Canaan) As the Jewish population of New Canaan continues to expand, so does the wide-array of services offered by the Chabad of New Canaan. One of the flagship initiatives is the Hebrew School. With the teachers' creative approach to learning and love of Jewish history, traditions, and customs, students at New Canaan Hebrew School learn through hands-on, experiential learning. From recreating the story of Elijah on Mount Carmel with a "burning cake," to stepping inside Abraham's tent, and using robotics to map the journey to Jerusalem, each activity helps make learning meaningful and memorable. Enrollment for the 2026–2027 school year opens this May.

For sixteen years, the Chabad New Canaan Jewish Center, under the leadership of Rabbi Levi and Michal Mendelow, has been dedicated to strengthening and building the New Canaan Jewish Community by offering local Jewish resources that bring more positivity, Jewish education, charitable activity, good deeds and more.

The Mendelow's embrace Judaism, not affiliation. Regardless of your background, and however you choose to define your level of Jewish observance or identity, the Chabad New Canaan Jewish Center can add spirituality, joy, study, community and connection for you and your family.

For more information, visit www.newcanaanjewish.org



Children enjoy time in "Abraham's tent."



Students use robotics to map the journey to Jerusalem.



Children participate in class at New Canaan Hebrew School.

BCHA Spring Musical Draws Sold-Out Crowds

(Courtesy of Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy) Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy (BCHA) presented *Disney's Descendants: The Musical* on March 19, 20, and 22, drawing sold-out audiences for each performance and highlighting the strength of its student performers and theater program.

The cast delivered a confident and energetic production, bringing well-known characters to life through strong acting, vocals, and choreography. Students balanced a demanding rehearsal schedule with their academic responsibilities, demonstrating notable dedication and teamwork throughout the process.

Behind the scenes, thanks to a talented group of dedicated parents and volunteers, the production was equally remarkable. The set design, costumes, lighting, and choreography all reflected the strength and dedication of the school's theater program.



BCHA Junior Yakira Hochman performs in *Disney's Descendants: The Musical.*

"Without our show family working around the clock, the musical wouldn't be the success it is year after year," said Janice Chaikelson, BCHA's theatre director.

The production also reflected the broader BCHA community, with strong support from families and attendees who filled the auditorium each night.



BCHA's ensemble cast performs *Disney's Descendants: The Musical.*

Painting with Parents At Gan Yeladim

Little artists at Gan Yeladim Preschool explored creativity without limits, using mixed media from both indoors and outdoors during a special "Painting with Parents" morning, where families created masterpieces inspired by Seurat, Cézanne, and Mondrian, then enjoyed a delicious, colorful breakfast together, celebrating art, color, and connection.



Tracing Fairfield County's Jewish History

Jewish Immigration to Fairfield County after the Civil War

(Courtesy of Jewish Historical Society of Fairfield County) Jewish immigration to Fairfield County, Connecticut, following the Civil War reflects a significant transition—from small, established German and Sephardic populations to larger waves of Eastern European immigrants who laid lasting communal roots. Between the post–Civil War period and the early 20th century, growing Jewish communities took hold in this region with concentrations in Stamford and Bridgeport.

Remarkably, more than 200 years passed after the first Jewish settlement in New Amsterdam before a formal Jewish congregation was established in Fairfield County. Congregation B'nai Israel of Bridgeport, founded in 1859 by German immigrant families, began with the creation of a Jewish cemetery and later established a Hebrew school in 1863. In Stamford, Congregation Anshie Kneses Israel of Stamford—today known as Congregation Agudath Sholom —built its first synagogue and Talmud Torah between 1903 and 1908 on Greyrock Place. Temple Sholom in Greenwich followed, founded in 1917.



Bernhard Brothers - Tobias Bernhard (1841-1914) on left and Henry Bernhard (1846-1919) on right in their buggy in front of their store, T. Bernhard & Brother on Main Street, Stamford, CT

Earlier Jewish presence in Stamford predates these institutions, despite longstanding local misconceptions. Some historical accounts incorrectly identify Jacob Fox as the first Jewish resident (1859), while others point to Tobias Bernhard (1868). However, research by Irwin Miller, founding president of the Stamford Jewish Historical Society, confirms that at least five Jewish families were already living in Stamford during the Civil War era.

EARLY JEWISH LIFE IN STAMFORD

By 1868, local records documented a small but active Jewish commercial presence. Huntington's *History of Stamford* lists five Jewish-owned businesses, including Fox (clothing and trunks), Benas (cigars), Benjamin (billiards), Bernhard (fancy goods and millinery), and Cohen (men's clothing and apparel).

In the years that followed:

- **1869:** Samuel Cohen opened a dry goods store on Atlantic Street.
- **1870:** Isaac Fox opened the first Jewish-owned saloon on Main Street.
- **1874:** Peter and Charles Fox expanded the family's ventures with a saloon on Gay Street.
- **1874:** Wolf Cohen relocated his tailoring business to Park Row, specializing in custom menswear.

Wolf Cohen's son, Samuel H. Cohen, became Stamford's first Jewish attorney and, at just 23 years old, was appointed Probate Judge in 1876. He later opened a law office on Main Street with his brother Byron.

The arrival of Eastern European Jews marked a new phase of community growth. Jacob Rosenblum, believed to be Stamford's first Eastern European Jewish resident, arrived from Lithuania by way of Sharon, Pennsylvania, in 1881. Starting out as a peddler and scrap dealer, he went on to become Stamford's first kosher butcher, as listed in the city directory.

RELIGIOUS LIFE AND COMMUNITY FORMATION

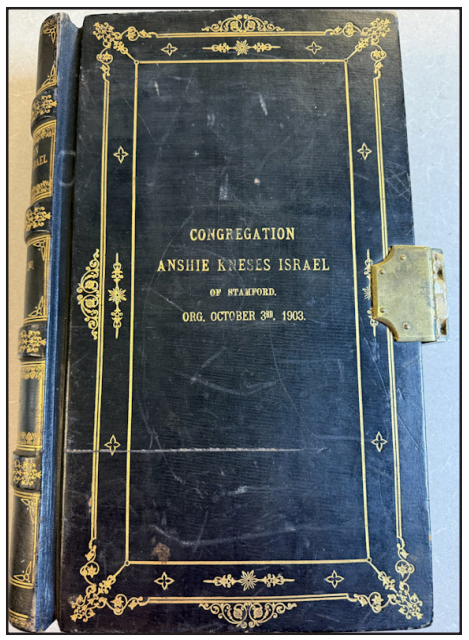
As Jewish residents transitioned from transient individuals to permanent settlers, the need for organized religious, social, and cultural institutions became increasingly clear.

In 1887, the first known High Holiday services in Stamford were held in Jacob Rosenblum's tenement apartment on Stillwater Avenue in the "Algiers" neighborhood. Around the same time, Shabbat services were conducted in modest spaces, including an attic on Cedar Street and a boarding house run by Joe Blum.

By 1889, twenty-two Jewish residents signed a charter to organize Stamford's first congregation, formally established in 1903 as Congregation Anshie Kneses Israel (now Congregation Agudath Sholom). Shortly thereafter, in 1891, seventeen members founded the Agoodat Solima Association, a Jewish cemetery society that purchased land on West Hill Road.

PRESERVING AND SHARING OUR STORY

Today, the Jewish Historical Society of Fairfield County (JHSFC) continues to uncover, preserve, and share these stories—documenting the lives, institutions, and experiences that shaped Jewish life across the region.



1903 ledger with donations and notes from Congregation Anshie Kneses Israel of Stamford now known as Congregation Agudath Sholom.

JHSFC serves as both an archive and a resource for all who seek to explore this rich history. The organization welcomes inquiries, volunteers, artifacts, and donations to continue telling a story that is still unfolding. To explore these stories firsthand or conduct your own research, you are invited to schedule a visit to the JHSFC Archives at info@jhsfc.org.

Chabad of Stamford Launches "CommUNITY Torah"

(Courtesy of Chabad of Stamford) This March Chabad of Stamford officially launched the Stamford "CommUNITY Torah," an ambitious and unifying new initiative and the beginning of a lasting legacy. The CommUNITY Torah project aims to involve community members in the writing of a new Torah scroll, offering participants the opportunity to inscribe letters and portions in their names.

"This is not just a Torah, it is our Torah," said Rabbi Moshe Shemtov during remarks at the event. "Every Jew has a place in the Torah, and through this initiative, every individual in Stamford has the opportunity to take part in writing it and connecting to something eternal."

Rabbi Shemtov emphasized that the project carries special meaning in light of recent challenges faced by the Jewish community. "At a time when unity is more important than ever, the CommUNITY Torah stands as a powerful symbol of resilience, pride, and togetherness," he said. "This is a story we are writing not just with ink, but with the collective spirit of our people."

Participants in the project can choose from a range of dedication opportunities, including inscribing a letter, a name, or a verse. Each dedication is commemorated with a personalized certificate, marking a lasting connection to the Torah.

The initiative is open to all, families, individuals, longtime residents, and newcomers alike, offering what many describe as a rare, once-in-a-lifetime mitzvah opportunity.

"This is more than a project, it is a movement," Rabbi Shemtov added. "Together, we are writing our Torah, and together, we are writing our story."

Community members interested in participating in the Stamford CommUNITY Torah are encouraged to reach out for more information or guidance on dedication options by contacting programs@stamfordchabad.org or calling 203-3CHABAD



***(l-r)* Rabbi Moshe Shemtov, Larry Greenberg, Mendy Tiefenbrun, Eric Goldberg, Craig L Price, Sasha Zislis and Ian Lazarus start the process of filling in the first few letters of Stamford's new community Sefer Torah.**

Schoke JFS Chairman's Society Unites for Purposeful Night

(Courtesy of Schoke JFS) On Thursday, March 17, Schoke Jewish Family Service (JFS) Chairman's Society gathered at the Stamford Museum and Nature Center for an inspiring evening of gratitude and reflection. Centered around *The Power of Purpose: Jewish Responsibility in a Fragile World*, Rabbi Menachem Creditor led a thought-provoking conversation on the importance of compassion, responsibility, and intentional action.

Members took time to reflect on the meaningful impact of their support and the difference that comes from showing up with purpose. The evening also featured the first unveiling of Schoke JFS's Time Capsule, offering a powerful moment of connection between past, present, and future.

Being part of the Chairman's Society is about more than philanthropy—it's about joining a community of changemakers committed to creating lasting impact through generosity and shared values.

For more information about the Schoke JFS Chairman's Society, contact Eli Schaffer eschaffer@ctjfs.org.



A powerful moment of legacy and vision as Eli Schaffer, Schoke JFS Chief Strategy Officer, unveils the Schoke JFS time capsule.



JFS leadership and inspiration come together: *(l-r)* Erika Gadson, Chief Operating Officer; Eli Schaffer, Chief Strategy Officer; Matt Greenberg, President & CEO; Rabbi Creditor, guest speaker; Erika Llanos, Senior Development Manager; and Aubri Doughty, Community Partnership Manager.

Aaron's Place

A Kosher Comfort Room

Aaron's Place, on the ground floor of Stamford Hospital provides kosher snacks, drinks and meals, in a comfortable environment.

If you are caring for a hospitalized loved one or waiting for tests, this comfort room is a place to regroup and refresh.

Information is available at the hospital front desk. The code, in Hebrew letters, is on the door of the room.

For more information about Aaron's Place, visit www.ujf.org/aaronsplace

Aaron's place is a project supported by the United Jewish Federation, the Sichel Family, Stamford Hospital, and private donations.

LIFE & LEGACY

Life & Legacy Testimonial

Each edition of the New Jewish Voice features the testimonials of community members just like you who have declared their intent to leave a legacy gift to a Jewish organization in the Stamford, New Canaan and Darien Jewish community. This program is funded by United Jewish Federation and the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.

Learn why they look to secure our Jewish future and discover your reasons to join them. Together, we can all work to guarantee the future of the Jewish community we love. For more information, contact Eric Ross at (203) 321-1373 or at eric@ujf.org.

MARGUERITE AND KEN NEUHAUS TESTIMONIAL

We arrived in Stamford, somewhere in the wilds of Connecticut, expecting a brief stay, certain we'd return to the familiar Jewish hubs of New York. Instead, we found a community that didn't just welcome us—it embraced us with its warmth and non-judgmental inclusion, underpinned by its Jewish institutions. Forty years later, this 'temporary' stop has become the foundation of our family's life. It was and is the ideal place to raise a family and instill the critical values of *chesed* and *menschlichkeit* in our children.

Our forty-year journey in Stamford is proof that a community is built on more than just location—it's built on shared values and mutual concerns. While our community has grown, the need to protect its spiritual and ethical 'building blocks' is more urgent than ever. By pledging to carve out a piece of our estate through the Life & Legacy program, we are simply ensuring that the institutions that gave us a home and helped raise our children continue to thrive for those who come after us.



Marguerite & Ken Neuhaus

JERRY AND BRACHA SILBER TESTIMONIAL

Bracha and I grew up very much knowing that we are Jewish, although our upbringing took very different paths. For elementary school, I went to a Jewish Day School on Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn, NY, and then moved on to public school. Bracha emigrated from Russia when she was nine, and grew up on a kibbutz in the north of Israel.

Jews have thrived for thousands of years. It is our hope and expectation that this will continue for many thousands more. We are happy to do our small part to leave a legacy to worthy Jewish institutions when we are no longer here. This hopefully will be an example for our children and others to follow.



Jerry & Bracha Silber



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- Engage community leaders addressing memory, justice, and Jewish resilience.
- Honor victims at AMIA, embassy, and dictatorship memorials.
- Participate in tikkun olam supporting vulnerable Argentine communities.
- Celebrate Shabbat with Buenos Aires' dynamic Jewish congregations.
- Explore Argentine Jewish identity at museums, schools, and community centers.
- Experience tango, culture, and creativity shaping Argentina's national soul.
- Encounter indigenous heritage at the Triple Frontier and La Aripuca.
- Marvel at Iguazú Falls' breathtaking power and natural wonder.
- Return home inspired by peoplehood, memory, and global Jewish connection.

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Israeli Innovations That Changed the World

BY ABIGAIL KLEIN LEICHMAN/ ISRAEL21C

Tell an Israeli his or her invention idea is preposterous, and you've just given that inventor a reason to see it through.

Whether it was planting crops in the desert or building a crowdsourced navigation app, many groundbreaking Israeli innovations were initially dismissed as impossible – until bold action turned them into reality.

An educational culture that encourages questioning and independent thinking, and innovating on the fly, leads Israelis to read the word "impossible" as "I'm possible."

And that leads to innovations that impact the entire world for the better.

"Israel's impact in tech has become too broad to characterize by one invention or another," says Saul Singer, coauthor of the 2009 bestseller *Start-Up Nation: The Story of Israel's Economic Miracle* and the 2023 follow-up, *The Genius of Israel: The Surprising Resilience of a Divided Nation in a Turbulent World*.

"Nearly everything in our digital world, including the AI revolution, runs on Israeli technology. NVIDIA, for example, wouldn't be where it is today if it hadn't bought Melanox for $7 billion. The global CTO of NVIDIA is Israeli and is based in Israel. But it's not just NVIDIA. Apple and Intel's chips are largely designed in their large development centers here," Singer tells ISRAEL21c.

"Without Israeli cybersecurity, the world's largest companies and banks would lose their 'Iron Dome.' And this year, Iron Beam will be deployed, bringing the cost of shooting down drones and rockets from $50k to the price of a cup of coffee," he continues.

"But it's not just chips, cyber and defense. Today you could list many Israeli breakthroughs in healthcare bigger than PillCam [see below]. For example, AlphaTau uses darts that can dissolve any solid cancer tumor without touching healthy tissue. Healthy.io created the first FDA-approved urine test that you can do with your phone. InsightTec is treating tremors with noninvasive surgery using ultrasound.

"The list goes on in agritech, climatech and alternative proteins," Singer says.

"Remilk, for example, is producing real milk without cows — and without the greenhouse gas emissions, massive land and water use, hormones, and ethical challenges that come from producing cow's milk."

Here are some other amazing Israeli inventions once thought impossible.

1. IRON DOME

The Israeli defense establishment thought Brig. Gen. Daniel Gold had lost his mind in 2005 when he broached the idea for the mobile, all-weather missile-defense system that came to be known as Iron Dome.

Yet Gold forged ahead in blatant disregard of a Defense Ministry directive, quietly putting a team in place to build the system over the course of the two years it took to wrest official approval. In 2012, this former "Don Quixote" won the Israel Defense Prize for spearheading the Iron Dome project, which has been deflecting Hamas missiles fired from Gaza since 2012.

"I saw what was going on and I said to myself, with all the technology that exists in Israel, we must use it to protect human life. We will find a way," he told ISRAEL21c. "It always takes the political and military echelons a long time to think about what they want to do, and in the meantime we started to create a solution."

2. GROWING CROPS IN THE DESERT

In 1959, Shai Ben Eliyahu and Hagai Porat had the ridiculous notion of founding an agricultural venture at Ein Yahav, a dusty army base in Israel's Arava Desert.

"They were considered *meshugenners*, crazy people," says Aylon Gadiel, former director of Southern Arava R&D, one of two research-and-development centers in the Arava.

"You couldn't live in the Arava, let alone grow vegetables there. The Jewish Agency told them 'No.' So every Friday they went to the Tel Aviv headquarters of Mapai [Labor Party] and sat there until eventually David Ben-Gurion wrote them a letter."

The founders dug a well to water a small vegetable garden, believing that the climate was perfect for veggies despite the arid soil.

"It was proven that it is possible, and one reason is the development of drip irrigation in the beginning of the 1960s," says Gadiel. By 1967, the government was helping to build infrastructure, and in 1986 the Jewish Agency launched Arava R&D to develop cutting-edge agriculture and aquaculture technologies.

Today there are approximately 750 small farms throughout the once-deserted Arava, a 112-mile strip of land from the Dead Sea to the Red Sea. They produce vegetables, fruit, cut flowers and herbs for domestic sale and export.

According to Maayan Kitron, director of Central and Northern Arava R&D, some of the farms are now trying to cultivate apricots – another step on the Arava's path from impossible to possible.

3. REWALK

"The day I stood up, I knew I was about to cross the threshold from impossible to possible," disabled US Army veteran Gene Laureano said in January 2013 when he strapped on the Israeli ReWalk robotic exoskeleton that enables people with lower-limb disabilities to walk.

Laureano's "impossible" was also inventor Amit Goffer's "impossible." Larger and better-funded companies in other countries had long been trying to develop a similar device when Goffer made headlines in 2008 for inventing the world's first commercially available upright walking technology. ReWalk became the most widely used and studied robotic exoskeleton, and the first available for personal ownership.

The recently introduced ReWalk 7 from Lifeward offers patients with spinal cord injuries a new level of independence with breakthrough technology for greater control, engagement and real-world mobility. Covered by Medicare in the United States, ReWalk 7 is the only personal exoskeleton that enables access to environments with stairs and curbs.

Goffer and colleagues worked on the groundbreaking invention for years before

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19





A melon field in the Arava.
(PHOTO COURTESY OF KKL-JNF PHOTO ARCHIVE)

Israeli Innovations That Changed the World

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

hitting the successful formula. He has said that in early meetings with potential marketing partners, "Many listeners did not believe me." But ever since he was paralyzed in a 1997 accident, failure was never an option. "I know how it feels to sit in a wheelchair," said Goffer of his determination to make the impossible possible.

4. POWERMAT

The idea for Powermat – a cord-free charging surface — was sparked by a 2006 conversation between entrepreneurs Ran Poliakine and Amir Ben-Shalom. Others had tried inventing such a device without success, but the men forged ahead even when potential partner companies declined to gamble on their idea.

"All of them said it was great, but nobody was willing to fire the first shot — to 'cut the cables' in favor of wireless," Poliakine told ISRAEL21c. Eventually, a deal with Procter & Gamble (which owns Duracell) led to a series of wireless charging solutions for iPhones and other smartphones.

Today, Powermat is built into some 800 million smartphones, 40 million embedded accessories, and 8 million cars worldwide. The company provides wireless power solutions for IoT, telecom (5G), automotive, robotics, consumer electronics, medical devices, and industrial applications in partnership with 40 licensees including Samsung, General Motors, Flex, Harman International, Panasonic Automotive Systems, Pivotal Commware, Maytronics, Sportable and Kyocera.

5. PILLCAM

In 2001, when Gabriel Meron introduced a "pill" that takes images of the digestive system, everyone from consumers to doctors to technologists was astonished. It seemed that Meron and his company, Given Imaging, had brought to life the sci-fi flick *Fantastic Voyage*, using a tiny ingestible camera and transmitter instead of Raquel Welch. The invention was even featured on *Ripley's Believe it or Not*.

"But as impossible as creating a successful video pill seemed to Meron and everyone but inventor Gabi Iddan, the ability to pull off all the other aspects of bringing the product to all the world's major markets, with regulatory approval, in just three years may have seemed even more daunting," notes Daniel Isenberg in his 2013 book *Worthless, Impossible and Stupid: How Contrarian Entrepreneurs Create and Capture Extraordinary Value.*

Today, PillCam products — marketed by Medtronic – are the global gold standard for "capsule endoscopy," a category that did not exist before Meron and Iddan enabled the impossible.

6. ERASABLE COMPUTER MEMORY

At the beginning of the 1970s, Israeli electrical engineer Dov Frohman invented a critical advance for personal computing: the EPROM (erasable programmable read-only memory), a chip that could retain its data when the power supply was switched off.

This first-ever erasable and reprogrammable chip won an Israel Prize for Frohman, who was among the founders of Intel, and it was responsible for Intel's decision to establish a branch of the multinational company in Israel.

Since then, many other pioneering products have come out of Intel R&D labs in Israel, including the 8088, Pentium, Centrino (which enabled the world to use Wi-Fi), Sandy Bridge, Ivy Bridge and Thunderbolt, core Ips and many others.

Intel became the largest private employer in Israel's high-tech sector, with three development centers (in Haifa, Petah Tikva and Jerusalem) and one manufacturing plant (in Kiryat Gat).

7. WAZE

When the visionary founders of Waze proposed changing the paradigm of direction assistance for drivers, nobody thought it would take off – and certainly nobody thought that in a few short years Waze would be the world's largest community-based traffic and navigation app.

The "crazy" idea that launched the crowdsourced app was to create a map from real-time users rather than basing directions on an existing static map. Waze thus revolutionized the way motorists reach their destinations.

Google bought Waze in 2013 for $1.03 billion, cementing the Israeli company as successful leader of a tech trend that has spawned about a dozen copycats.

8. TYTOCARE

Israeli dad Dedi Gilad wondered why it was impossible to have his sick preschooler's ears checked without having to miss work and schlep a feverish kid to sit in a waiting room full of other germy children, only to spend five minutes with the pediatrician.

So in 2012, he and Ofer Tzadik founded TytoCare and spent nearly three years perfecting the technology and design of a home telemedicine kit that anyone can use to take their temperature and perform guided throat, ear, eye, skin, heart, lung, blood pressure and blood oxygen examinations of high enough quality to enable a remote diagnosis.

TytoCare's suite of FDA-cleared products have been revolutionizing routine healthcare across the United States, with remote physical exam technology that delivers an in-clinic experience anywhere.

9. MOBILEYE

In 2000, when Mobileye cofounder Amnon Shashua began telling global carmakers his idea of combining a monocular camera, processor chips and software to produce affordable advanced driver-assistance systems (ADAS) and eventually self-driving cars, "the industry thought that this was not possible," he told Automotive Engineering magazine.

It was commonly believed that ADAS would require expensive radar sensors, or at the very least two cameras for stereo vision. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem professor of computer science proved the industry wrong and was named a Mobility Innovator by the Automotive Hall of Fame in 2022.

The Mobileye team took a radical and risky decision to design a full System-on-Chip, EyeQ, that could do the job as Shashua envisioned.

In 2024, Mobileye marked the shipment of the 200 millionth EyeQ system, now in its sixth iteration as part of the Surround ADAS platform. Mobileye's SuperVision, Mobileye Chauffeur and Mobileye Drive systems cover combustion and electric vehicle models. The Jerusalem-based company works with major carmakers such as Audi, BMW, Chery, Ford, GM, Honda, Nissan, Toyota and Volkswagen.

10. NANOSE MEDICAL

NaNose Medical is developing a portable Dianose sensor that analyzes breath samples using advanced nanotechnology and AI to "sniff out" biomarkers for metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MSLD, previously known as non-alcoholic fatty liver disease) or lung cancer in early stages.

"Our dream is that it will be used by every primary care physician at the point of care," says cofounder and COO Ilay Marom.

The technology was developed over a decade by Technion Prof. Hossam Haick. Haick was determined to accomplish the seemingly impossible: making an affordable diagnostic device as sensitive to disease as a dog's nose.

Nanose Medical, founded five years ago, has collected data from trials at nine hospitals and is working toward commercializing its screening tool for MASLD this year.

The company recently took part in the NVIDIA Inception program to advance its R&D efforts and expand its network within the tech and healthcare communities.

11. QUANTUM MACHINES

Quantum Machines, founded in 2018, specializes in complete hardware and software solutions to achieve "quantum control" — manipulating quantum mechanics technology to fit the desired goals of computing researchers in complex fields like cryptography and machine learning.

The company recently introduced Hybrid Control, "a revolutionary new approach for quantum developers to effortlessly achieve their ambitious milestones – previously impossible."

Quantum Machines was included by Gartner Research Group on its Cool Vendors in Quantum Computing list in 2020.

12. Pre-Cure

Creating an affordable 3D-printed tumor-on-a-chip, scalable for wide usage as a testing ground for personalized cancer treatment, is the previously impossible feat performed by Ofra Benny, an award-winning professor of pharmaceutical sciences at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Earlier models didn't give accurate results and depended on expensive pumps. Benny's innovation was a pumpless chip based on gravity.

"Currently, cancer treatments are chosen based on general criteria, without important personal information. As a result, many patients receive ineffective treatments and develop resistance," said Benny.

"There is a need for accurate, non-animal prediction models that mimic the body's physiology, so we've developed Pre-Cure, a groundbreaking cancer diagnostic platform using a unique 3D-printed biochip that creates a precise tumor environment using the patient's own tissues. This helps in selecting the right therapy and testing drug responses."

Pre-Cure, founded in 2024 through the university's Yissum tech-transfer company, did six clinical trials on different cancer indications in 2025.

Cultural Connections

United Jewish Federation Schlicha Eden Refaelovich spent a morning at K.T. Murphy Elementary School sharing interesting cultural facts about Israel as part of their multicultural fair.



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What To Do
If You Witness An Antisemitic Incident

In a Public Setting or Synagogue

- Report to Local Law Enforcement
- Report to United Jewish Federation:
  - Gary Jones: Gary@UJF.org
  - Jim Comstock: comstockj@csiny.org
- Report to the Anti-Defamation League at www.ADL.org/Report-Incident
- Report to the FBI at www.Tips.FBI.gov

On a College/University Campus

- Check the school's Code of Conduct, then report to the appropriate office
- If appropriate, report to Campus Police
- Report to United Jewish Federation:
  - Gary Jones: Gary@UJF.org
  - Jim Comstock: comstockj@csiny.org
- Report to the Anti-Defamation League at www.ADL.org/Report-Incident

At a Public School (K-12)

- Report to school administration and to the School Resource Officer (SRO)
- If the school doesn't have an SRO, report to Local Law Enforcement
- Report to United Jewish Federation:
  - Gary Jones: Gary@UJF.org
  - Jim Comstock: comstockj@csiny.org
- Report to the Anti-Defamation League at www.ADL.org/Report-Incident

At Work

- Report the incident to the appropriate Human Resources department
- If appropriate, contact Local Law Enforcement
- Report to United Jewish Federation:
  - Gary Jones: Gary@UJF.org
  - Jim Comstock: comstockj@csiny.org
- Report to the Anti-Defamation League at www.ADL.org/Report-Incident

Online

- Use the "Report" function to report the hate speech
- Take screenshots of the content, including the user's "handle" or screen-name
- Report to Local Law Enforcement, they will likely instruct you to block the user
- Report to United Jewish Federation:
  - Gary Jones: Gary@UJF.org
  - Jim Comstock: comstockj@csiny.org
- Report to the Anti-Defamation League at www.ADL.org/Report-Incident

Please Note

If there is an immediate threat of violence, physical assult, or if the incident is ongoing, please CALL 911 immediately.

United Jewish Federation