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Happy Passover



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Rosen JCC names lobby in honor of Victoria Siegel



Shown here (l-r): David Siegel, Harris Rosen and Jacqueline Siegel in front of the plaque of Victoria Siegel.

By Christine DeSouza

On March 15, Joel Berger, CEO of the Rosen JCC, unveiled its newly named lobby in honor of David and Jacqueline Siegel's daughter, Victoria, who died of a drug overdose at the age of 18 on June 6, 2015.

The Early Childhood Learning Center's two-year-

olds opened the program miming a song that said "Give a little hug and make the world a better place." Later, thanking the JCC for this honor, Jacqueline Siegel shared that Victoria had been two years old when she first brought her to the JCC.

Harris Rosen was on hand to witness the unveiling and humbly, in a soft voice,

said that this is "David and Jacqueline Siegel's moment," and thanked the Siegels.

Berger stated that one year ago, David Siegel, through the Westgate Resorts Foundation, pledged \$50,000 to the campus. Since that time, the southwest Orlando JCC has grown tremendously in membership, Early Childhood registration, and the



Christine DeSouza

The Early Childhood Learning Center's 2-year-olds.

after school program; and has held 303 events, which brought more than 20,000 people through those lobby doors, in the last year.

"Victoria would have been so proud to have her name here," said David Siegel. He then shared that when people enter the JCC's lobby and see her name, "don't think of the money given to have this naming, think of a life wasted and gone way too soon."

Seeing the promise of the little children who sang earlier, he said "these two-year-olds will have such a wonderful life—if they don't use drugs."

Siegel then shared about his advocacy against drugs through the Victoria's Voice Foundation (www.victoriasiegelfoundation.org).

"There are 170 deaths from drug overdose every day," he stated. "Think about it, if North Korea bombed a naval ship, killing 170 sailors, we'd be at war. And yet, that's how many lives are lost daily because of drug overdoses. When is enough enough?"

He then stated parents should have their children drug tested beginning at age 14, and that schools should do random drug tests.

"It takes tough love to

win," he said, encouraging parents to have tough love.

The Rosen JCC's dedication to strengthening family life aligns directly with the Westgate Resorts Foundation's mission of building strong families and a strong workforce. The Foundation grants more than \$1 million annually toward this mission. Additionally, David and Jacqueline Siegel's personal mission is to guarantee the future generation is not lost to drug addiction. The Rosen JCC provides a positive environment for families and neighbors to connect and create healthy relationships that don't include drugs.

Federation announces interim, long-term leadership plans



Rhonda Forest

The Jewish Federation of Greater Orlando recently announced its leadership path for the next two fiscal years (starting Sept. 1, 2018) and confirmed the responsibilities of interim lay and executive

leadership that will be in place until that time.

The organization has continued reshaping its priorities in serving the Central Florida Jewish community. Effective March 1, Rhonda Forest stepped down as president of the JFGO Board of Directors to allow her to focus on her service as acting executive director through the end of the current fiscal year on Aug. 31. Forest had been balancing her lay and managerial obligations since last fall, serving as board president while overseeing the day-to-day operation of the Federation. She will now focus solely on the executive role at the Federation in close association with the board of directors.

Current Treasurer Brad Jacobs and Vice President Larry Haber are interim co-presidents of the JFGO

board and will lead the board through the end of Federation's current fiscal year. Jacobs will also maintain his duties as treasurer, Michael Soll remains immediate past president, and Ming Marx will continue as secretary through the interim period.

Led by Soll, the board has embarked on a search for a permanent executive leader to fit the current strategic direction of Federation. Soll and the JFGO board will be soliciting community input on the role of the executive director and of the Federation in the larger Jewish community. It is expected that a permanent executive will be named by the fall.

New lay leadership for 2018-20 will be voted on during the next JFGO annual meeting in August. The Federation has also approved a succession

plan that leverages the collective experience of its current board. The slate of officers to be put forth for approval in August includes:

President: Brad Jacobs, the current treasurer;

Treasurer: Daniel Krise, a current board member and finance professional;

Vice President: Ming Marx, the current secretary (and Bornstein Leadership Development Program alum), with the candidate to replace him as secretary to be named.

After the Federation hires a permanent executive leader, Forest would become immediate past president and Soll would return to the board as an at-large community representative.

Co-presidents Jacobs and Haber commended the Federation board for its support and guidance during the past

several months of transition in the wake of the departure of Executive Director Olga Yorish in August 2017.

"We are truly impressed with the quality of the current board of directors and your willingness to roll up your sleeves to make things happen," Haber and Jacobs said in a joint statement to the board.

The Federation's board of directors is composed of a dynamic group of young and veteran community leaders and professionals dedicated to serve the Jewish community. The Board welcomed the opportunity to refine the Federation's strategic direction with the needs of a new generation in mind. The organization will continue to focus on functions that are essential to the community and can be executed most effectively by

the Federation, such as leadership development, outreach, issues advocacy, and support of Israel and global Jewish causes. Funds will be raised to execute a budget set to accomplish JFGO's core work, with additional resources used to help the community's organizations and synagogues meet their own goals.

The Federation has maintained stewardship of the Maitland Jewish Community Campus while meaningfully reducing community debt in conjunction with matching grants from the Harris Rosen Foundation and the Jewish Capital Alliance, and generous community-minded donors. JFGO is now in discussions with campus agencies regarding a collaborative effort to bring new permanent efficiencies to campus and community operations.

Citrus Club hosts benefit for the Jewish Pavilion

Raise a toast to a good cause while enjoying spectacular views of downtown Orlando at the Citrus Club's April 16 happy hour honoring the Jewish Pavilion and its important work with senior citizens. A ticket purchase of only \$15 to the Club's "United For A Purpose" event provides an evening of hors d'oeuvres and a drink, along with raffle prizes and networking. Proceeds from the event will be donated toward the Pavilion's mission, which serves to connect the elder-care population to the Jewish community through engaging educational programming and festive holiday celebrations.

This is the second year in a row for the Citrus Club to host one of its philanthropic happy hours benefitting the Jewish Pavilion. Typically, the

Club only allows one event per organization. But because last year's Jewish Pavilion happy hour resulted in record attendance, the Club has invited the Pavilion back for a second year.

The relationship between the Citrus Club and the non-profit is the result of hard work done by Carina Gerscovich, who serves on both the board of the Jewish Pavilion and on the Citrus Club's Young Executive Board.

"She single-handedly organized a fantastic fundraising event at the Citrus Club last year and did such a great job," said Nancy Ludin, CEO of the Jewish Pavilion, regarding Gerscovich. "We are so excited that she will chair 'United For A Purpose' again this year."

The Citrus Club is located at 255 South Orange Ave.,

Suite 1800; and the event will be held from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Attendees are encouraged to make use of Orlando's SunRail system for transportation to the event, as it will make both rush-hour travel and downtown parking more manageable. The Citrus Club is located one block away from SunRail's Church Street stop. Members of the Jewish Pavilion's Friends Board will be hosting boarding groups at SunRail stops beginning in Lake Mary and running at consecutive stops to Winter Park to assist with any questions about this unique style of travel to the party.

Tickets are \$15, and parking is \$5 after 5 p.m. To purchase your tickets for this fun evening, visit <https://jpav.ticketspice.com/2018-cocktails-for-a-cause>.



Charnel Wright, Carina Gerscovich, Anna Marie Christmas, Stacey Marine attending last year's event at the Citrus Club.

The Jewish Pavilion has been bringing community to the doorsteps of elder-care

residents since 2001. You can personally make a difference. Become a fan at Face-

book.com/jewishpavilion. Make a donation or learn more by visiting JewishPavilion.org.

Special evening with author Joanie Schirm who shares incredible Holocaust stories

Central Floridians will have the opportunity to hear a compelling Holocaust survival story from local author Joanie Schirm. On April 3, she will speak on her incredible global research of her father's letters from nearly 80 years ago, which detail his flight from Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia, taking refuge in China, and moving to the USA. This special event is sponsored by Holocaust Memorial Research and Education Center of Florida, and The Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Orlando. The presentation will be at 7 p.m., at the Holocaust Center, 851 N. Maitland Ave., Maitland. It is free and open to the public.

Schirm's father, Oswald "Valdik" Holzer, M.D., was a young Jewish physician in Prague, as the persecution of Jews intensified during the approach to World War II. In May 1939, he fled Czechoslovakia, and traveled more than 8,000 miles to China. His first location was Shanghai, which was then a rare refuge for many European Jews. During the next 21 months he corresponded with 78 other people during his time in China. Fortunately, he saved the approximately 400 letters, which provided the riveting narratives of his life and the lives of his friends and family. However, Dr. Holzer kept these let-

ters locked in a box, which Schirm found after his death in 2000.

Recalling her father's stories about WWII and the Holocaust, she knew these letters had great historical significance. Schirm had the correspondence translated that were not in English. And she began the detective work of finding the people in these letters, and their relatives. Her years of genealogy work, and research for publication resulted in two highly-acclaimed books: "Adventurers Against Their Will" in 2013, and "My Dear Boy," which will be published in early 2019 by Potomac Books.

These sobering, yet fas-

inating books have led to scores of public appearances, news articles, and interviews for Schirm. The years of hard work and focus on the stories of Dr. Holzer have enabled Schirm to educate thousands of people on the horrors of tyranny and anti-Semitism. Her book also won the 2013 Global Ebook Award for nonfiction biography.

Schirm is now working on a permanent exhibit at the Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center of Florida that is expected to open in the fall.

The Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center of Florida, and The Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Orlando are committed to helping us learn about our heritage, and to share it with others. The HMREC conducts educational events and programs to promote peace and understanding, and to oppose hatred and prejudice. The JGSGO, founded in 1990, meets monthly from September through June, and has additional presentations streamed on the web

to help you research your family history.

Additional details about Schirm and her books, including links to buy the books, are on her website, www.joanieschirm.com.

For more information on The Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center of Florida, visit <http://www.holocaustedu.org/>, or its Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/HMREC>. The website for the JGSGO is www.jgsgo.org, and its Facebook page is <https://www.facebook.com/JGSGreaterOrlando/>, and its Twitter page is <https://twitter.com/jgsgorlando>.

Contact the JGSGO at info@jgsgo.org, or leave message at 407-494-4230.



Joanie Schirm

jgsgo.org, or leave message at 407-494-4230.

New Cub Scout Pack and Boy Scout Troop in Mount Dora

Rabbi Jeffrey Solomon of the Traditional Congregation of Mount Dora is starting a Cub Scout Pack and Boy Scout Troop that will meet once a week at the synagogue (the day of the week has not been decided yet).

All boys and girls of all faiths, ages 10 to 17, are welcome to join Cub Scout Pack 18 and Boy Scout Troop 18. (Rabbi Solomon wanted the number to be 613, but it was taken.)

Rabbi Solomon explained that there are scouting packs and troops in the area, however most of the activities are held on Saturdays, which



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

presented a challenge to some scouts. Pack/Troop 18 will hold activities on Sundays, allowing for Shabbat to be observed.

Registration of adult leaders and children is underway, and a two-night backpacking

trip to the Ocala National Forest was already planned during Spring Break (this past week) for those registered.

"They will learn how to pack 'smellables' (items that have an odor, such as toothpaste) in bear proof bags and store them in trees," Solomon said of the adventure, in which he hoped they would return safe and sound.

For more information about the scouting pack and troop, contact Rabbi Solomon at 352-735-4774. Traditional Congregation of Mount Dora is located at 848 N. Donnelly St., Mount Dora.

HMREC partners with Florida Department of State

Secretary of State Ken Detzner and the Florida Department of State announced the second annual "March of Museums" celebrating the variety and versatility of museums in Florida's communities. In 2017, the department piloted March of Museums with partner museums in Tallahassee. Building on this successful launch, the 2018 March of Museums has expanded statewide to include the vast and diverse array of museums that populate the Sunshine State.

"As Florida's chief cultural officer, I am proud of the success of last year's 'March of Museums' and I am excited to expand this initiative statewide," said Detzner. "From art to animals, from sports to science, and from history to horticulture, Florida has an incredible array of museums that encourage exploration and learning. March of Museums celebrates the important services museums provide to our communities."

The department is hosting MarchOfMuseums.com, which offers a listing of museums by region, including the Holocaust Memorial Resource & Education Center of Florida and other statewide partner museums. The website also highlights the mission, collections, and/or events of each institution during the

month of March. The department encourages visitors and Floridians to take advantage of this initiative to visit one of the partner museums for a new experience, to spend some time at one of their favorite museums and to share their pictures on their favorite social media platform using #MarchOfMuseums.

Pam Kancher, executive director for the Holocaust Memorial Resource & Education Center of Florida said, "March of Museums is an exciting opportunity to experience museums in our community. At this time we are proud to offer two temporary exhibits in addition to our permanent collection: Parallel Journeys and In Fitting Memory. Parallel Journeys tells the stories of six teenagers who were witnesses, perpetrators, and victims of World War II and the Holocaust. While In Fitting Memory photographs the art and politics of Holocaust Memorials. If you haven't visited the Holocaust Center recently, this is a wonderful opportunity."

The Holocaust Memorial Resource & Education Center of Florida has partnered with the Florida Department of State to encourage Floridians and visitors to Florida to experience the many ways that museums serve the community. Visit MarchOfMuseums.com for more information.

To learn more about the Holocaust Center's mission to create a more inclusive and caring community, visit holocaustedu.org.

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'Céline' redux? France's publishing problem

By Ben Cohen

(JNS)—Mention the name "Celine" to most people in the United States—or Europe, for that matter—and they will think you're talking about the long-serving Canadian pop diva. But among French intellectuals, there is only one "Celine": Louis-Ferdinand Céline, one of a handful of writers who redefined the mission and style of French literature in the 20th century.

This Céline, whose heyday was in the 1930s, detested the Jews. No surprise there, given the unhealthy number of writers and artists outside Germany who sympathized with the Nazi program for the Jewish people. There were quite a few, after all, in our own language. Take, for instance, the American writer Ezra Pound, who regaled listeners to his radio show, broadcasted from fascist Italy, with stories "about Jew-ruined England. About the wreckage of France, wrecked under y_d control. Lousy with k____s."

With cases like these, there's an inevitable debate about whether one can or should separate the artist's vulgar hatreds from his

or her works of art—rather like the furious arguments lots of Jews used to have about the appropriateness of listening to the operas of Wagner. And every so often, these debates enter the news cycle as ghosts of a past that has again become part of the present. That is exactly what has happened with Céline, at a time when anti-Semitism has re-established itself as a serious and enduring problem in France.

In brief, here is the backstory: Last December, the legendary French publishing company Gallimard announced that it would be reissuing three monstrously anti-Semitic pamphlets written by Céline between 1937 and 1941. When Céline died in 1961—having been condemned as a "national disgrace" for his collaboration with the Vichy regime, with whom he fled to Germany during the Allied offensive of 1944—he left explicit instructions that these pamphlets never be published again.

In fact, they have been, in French-speaking Québec, where the intellectual property rights of these works have expired. But publishing them in France under the imprint of one of the country's most prestigious publishers is a

proposition of an entirely different magnitude.

That was why French President Emmanuel Macron explicitly addressed what has become a bitter domestic controversy in his remarks this week at the annual dinner in Paris of the Conseil Représentatif des Institutions Juives de France, or Crif, France's Jewish representative organization. In a clever swipe at Poland's recent draconian Holocaust legislation, Macron pointed out that there are no "memorial police" in France; therefore, these matters are decided by conscience, not law. Macron personally left no doubt that he thought Gallimard should refrain from publishing the pamphlets.

What is the content of these pamphlets that make them so fearful? In 2010, the New York Review of Books carried a feature that revisited the original editions of these works—*Bagatelles pour un massacre*, *L'école des cadavres* and *Les beaux draps*—and quoted from them liberally.

The venom, frankly, is chilling. "The sordid schemes, the betrayals, a nose that points to, lowers toward, and falls over their mouths," Céline wrote in *Bagatelles pour un massacre*. Small wonder that the author of the New York Review piece, Wyatt Mason, deemed these texts to be typical of a writer "who, from 1937 to 1944, spent all his flagrant literary energy and aptitude calling—shouting—for the death of every Jew in France."

By the end of the war, 75,000 members of a pre-war Jewish population of 340,000 had indeed gone forcibly to their deaths. Céline was a direct participant in this genocide, every bit as culpable as the semi-literate French peasant alerting the SS to a Jewish family in hiding to make a few bucks. Reading his words, one hears

the sounds of violence: shattering glass, boots on human flesh, the discordant strains of the Nazi anthem, the "Horst Wessel" song. And that is exactly how these words were intended.

One can only hope that Gallimard will heed the advice of France's president, and abandon its Céline project out of its own volition. There isn't really a free-speech issue at stake since all these pamphlets are available on the Internet. Thus, the dilemma for Gallimard is whether a publisher of its stature should be distributing anti-Semitic ravings in the name of literary endeavor.

No one could possibly believe that Céline's words can be read dispassionately in France today, where anti-Semitic attacks of the most brutal kind occur with disturbing frequency. I have written on several occasions in this column about the torture and murder of a Jewish pensioner, Sarah Halimi, in April 2017. To study the account of her ordeal at the hands of a young Islamist intruder is to step into a Céline-like world of hatred, where every word uttered is echoed in physical violence.

Until France rids itself of these paroxysms of Jew-hatred—there was also the torture and murder of Ilan Halimi in 2006; the 2012 massacre of a teacher and three small children at a Toulouse Jewish school; the 2015 hostage situation and slaughter at the Hyper Cacher market in Paris; and much more—it cannot pretend that republishing Céline's pamphlets is somehow incidental and unrelated to what French Jews are facing now.

Ben Cohen writes a weekly column for JNS on Jewish affairs and Middle Eastern politics. His writings have been published in *Commentary*, *the New York Post*, *Haaretz*, *The Wall Street Journal* and many other publications.



Everywhere

The Passover seder—A uniquely Jewish experience

By Mel Pearlman

There is a webpage, JewBelong and other web pages on the Internet, whose alleged purpose is to bring Judaism to new heights of "contemporary cool," and thereby attract young Jews back to Judaism. The result of their methodology is to dilute Judaism. The current effort is to incorporate and to politicize the seder with contemporary issues, to change the symbolism on the seder plate to include symbols for gay rights and other causes, to read selections from Christian and Muslim sources, and to promote a progressive political agenda that has nothing to do with the original Passover story.

Fortunately, this strategy is not going to work for a myriad of reasons. First and foremost is the false presumption that traditional Judaism is not "with it" and therefore, is in need of change to make it "relevant" to the issues of the day. How many times have we heard that in the last several decades! The truth is that contemporary issues the progressives wish to deal with can already be found in the Passover story. It is not for the Jewish people to distort this story, but to embrace and continue it.

We should welcome non-Jews to participate in the seder tradition, but we should not dilute it. There are many lessons to be learned from the telling of the Passover story for both us and our non-Jewish friends and neighbors that can guide us through the many issues facing contemporary life.

The traditional Passover seder tells the story of the singular momentous event in the formation of the Jewish nation: Not only does it tell the miraculous story of a people in slavery being rescued by G-d and their hurried exodus from Egypt, but also of their transformation from a tribal people to a nation. It tells a story of a messenger from G-d who leads his people out of Egypt and then assumes the role of a political leader who has to deal with everyday issues of a developing society. The Passover story is a story of an infant nation, having only recently become bound to a rule of law and ethics, so sophisticated for the primitive

times in which these events occurred, trying to define itself.

G-d freed the slaves with His strong hand, but he required the Jewish people to wander 40 years in the desert, to transform from a dependent slave mentality to a mentality of independence and freedom. This wandering was not only physical, but also spiritual. Even though G-d had made a covenant with Abraham that the Jewish people were to inherit the Land of Israel, the Jewish people were compelled to do battle to earn their rights to the Promised Land.

The Torah mandates us to tell this story, our story, in every generation as if we ourselves were delivered from slavery unto freedom. Why are we obligated to continually remind ourselves that we were slaves in Egypt? It is to give us a deeper appreciation of freedom and equality. It is to strengthen our conviction to help others who have not reached a high level of equality. It is to give us the strength and wisdom to free people from their own prejudices and hatreds. It is to yearn for and work for peace. It is to continue our journey through history and assure our own survival and our heritage, so we can continue to be a catalyst for progress for all humanity.

In you wish to comment or respond to any of the contents herein you can reach me at melpearlman322@gmail.com. Please do so in a rational, thoughtful, respectful and civil manner. If you wish to respond by ranting and raving, please go into your bathroom, lock the door and shout your brains out.

Mel Pearlman has been practicing law in Central Florida for the past 45 years. He has served as president of the Jewish Federation of Greater Orlando; on the District VII Mental Health Board, as Special Prosecutor for the City of Winter Park, Florida; and on the Board of Directors of the Central Florida Research and Development Authority. He was a charter member of the Board of Directors and served as the first Vice President of the Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center of Central Florida, as well as its first pro-bono legal counsel.

Moving well beyond the Iranian 'check' point

By Michael Oren

(Israel Hayom / Exclusive to JNS via JNS)—While Israel is mired in domestic scandals and coalition crises, the greatest threat the country has known since the eve of the Yom Kippur War—perhaps since the War for Independence—is steadily taking shape. This menace, posed of course by Iran, essentially consists of a wide range of growing threats closing in on us. The Iranians, who invented the game of chess, are exceedingly adept at playing several boards simultaneously, with the winner's prize no less than control of the entire Middle East and beyond.

The bottom chessboard is regional. The Iranians cunningly took a step back and allowed the superpowers to destroy their main enemies in the region. The Americans weakened the Taliban and eliminated Saddam Hussein, and, along with Russia, they annihilated the Islamic State group. The Iranians also helped Shiite militias exhaust and chase American forces from Iraq. The resulting vacuum in Iraq and Syria was filled by the Iranians and their proxies.

Today, Iran is penetrating deeper across the Middle East and is guiding the Shiite majorities in eastern Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. It has also established a foothold among the Houthis rebels in Yemen. Just several days ago, Bahraini forces thwarted a coup attempt orchestrated by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps. At the same time, the Iranians have forged unprecedentedly strong alliances with Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. Together with their complete control over Lebanon, the Iranians have laid siege to virtually the entire Middle East.

The upper chessboard is the international sphere, where the Iranians have secured a nuclear deal. This achievement grants them all the advantages of military nuclear capabilities without the costs. While Iran doesn't have to fear a military strike on its nuclear facilities, sanctions relief and lucrative business deals have provided the immense funds it uses to realize its regional aspirations. In around 10 years, when the nuclear deal expires, no country will step in to stop Iran if it continues developing nuclear weapons, for fear of squandering its vast investments in the Islamic republic.

In the meantime, the Iranians have displayed an incredible capacity to maneuver between Western powers. Thus, for example, during Tehran's rapprochement with Washington under the Obama administration, it also struck

a tangible military alliance with Russia, which helped it restore its status as a player in the Middle East. This dexterity is particularly discernible on the main chessboard: Syria.

Influence in Syria, which links Tehran to Beirut; and Damascus to Iraq and the Persian Gulf, is a preeminent Iranian interest. In Syria of all places, however, Iran's status is questionable due to the lack of a Shiite population there. Therefore, it is working to cleanse Syria of its Sunni majority and bolster the Alawites, who are essentially an offshoot of Shiite Islam, and their regime.

To replace the banished or killed Sunnis, Iran is importing Shiites from across the Middle East from as far as Pakistan and Afghanistan. To this end, the Iranians enlisted Moscow's help and in return agreed to Russia's continued presence in the war-torn country. Through their extensive economic ties with Iran, meanwhile, the Europeans are funding the ethnic cleansing of Syria and inducing the tsunami of refugees reaching their shores. All Iran has to do now is establish a military foothold in Syria to overcome the last obstacle on its path to regional hegemony: Israel.

Iran wants to force Israel into a state of perpetual check; in other words, paralysis before death. Surrounded by tens of thousands of missiles held by Hamas and Hezbollah, and in range of the Iranian army's long-range missiles, Israel will struggle to impede Iran from entrenching itself in Syria. When this undertaking culminates, the Iranians will be able to take the Israeli "king" and declare checkmate.

This can be prevented. The Israeli government has thus far set clear red lines prohibiting the Iranians from building missile bases and ports in Syria, and from transferring sophisticated weaponry to Hezbollah. These red lines must be stringently enforced, but international support must also be enlisted. Israel has to develop a diplomatic and legal "iron dome" capable of defending us if Israel Defense Forces's soldiers are forced to enter Hezbollah's strongholds in southern Lebanon. No less importantly, Israel must remove the Palestinian stumbling block on the path to a strategic alliance with the Sunni world and the creation of a united Middle Eastern front to counter Iran.

The Iranians might be experts at chess, but rest assured, Israel has champions of its own.

Michael Oren is a former Israeli ambassador to the U.S. He currently serves as deputy public diplomacy minister.

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED ON THIS PAGE ARE NOT NECESSARILY THE VIEWS OF HERITAGE MANAGEMENT.

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A new consensus on Israel

By Stephen M. Flatow

(JNS) J Street and the radical wing of the Democratic Party have worked hard in recent years to chip away at the party's traditional support for Israel. And they've made some progress, to judge by recent public opinion polls, in the changes in the Democratic Party platform and the number of Democratic congressmen who have signed J Street's letters criticizing Israel.

But a speech at the AIPAC conference, made by the senior U.S. senator from New York, Chuck Schumer, has struck a powerful blow against those trends in his party. As the Senate Minority Leader, he is the most powerful figure in the Democratic Party today.

What he said to AIPAC has established 10 principles of a new American political consensus concerning Israel and the Palestinian Arabs. And J Street is far outside of it:

Tearing down Jewish

settlements will not bring peace.

"Now, some say there are some who argue the settlements are the reason there's not peace," said Schumer. "But we all know what happened in Gaza. Israel voluntarily got rid of the settlements there, the Israeli soldiers dragged the settlers out of Netzarim, and three weeks later, the Palestinians threw rockets into Sderot. It's sure not the settlements that are the blockade to peace."

Giving more Israeli lands to the Palestinians will not bring peace.

"Some say it's the borders," Schumer told the AIPAC conference. "But they forget during the negotiations in 2000, Ehud Barak was making huge territorial concessions that most Israelis didn't like, it was [Palestinian head Yasser] Arafat who rejected the settlement. It's not the borders, either."

Making concessions on

Jerusalem will not bring peace.

Schumer: "And [the obstacle to peace is] certainly not because we've moved the embassy to where it should belong in Yerushalayim [Jerusalem]. It's not that either." **Most Palestinians do not accept Israel's existence.**

The reason "why we don't have peace," Schumer said, is "because the fact of the matter is that too many Palestinians and too many Arabs do not want any Jewish state in the Middle East."

The Torah says the Land of Israel belongs to the Jews.

It may not be politically correct to acknowledge Israel's biblical right to the Jewish homeland. But it's a fact that is acknowledged by millions of Jews and tens of millions of Bible-believing Christians. We don't have to feel embarrassed to say it, just as the senator was not embarrassed to say: "Of course, we say it's

our land. The Torah says it." **Israel remains vulnerable.**

A generation that has grown up with an Israel that seems almost invincible has to be reminded that creation of a Palestinian state would reduce Israel to just nine miles wide, as it was before the 1967 Six-Day War. Schumer recalled walking through the corridors of his high school in Brooklyn that spring, his radio glued to his ear, "deathly worried that Israel would just be pushed into the sea by the Arab onslaught... Now, the younger generation never experienced this. They haven't lived through a time when Israel's very existence was balanced on the edge of a knife."

The Palestinian Authority isn't "moderate."

The great myth of the Oslo era was that the Palestinian leadership genuinely made peace and rejected terrorism. "Too many believe that

this Palestinian Authority is moderate and really wants peace." But it does not, declared Schumer.

The Palestinian Authority actively supports terrorism.

It's not just that the P.A. leaders are unreasonable and extreme; they directly support terrorism. "The dark truth," Schumer said, is "that the Palestinian Authority, every day, actively aids and abets terrorism."

The P.A.'s payments to terrorists must cease.

The P.A. can't disguise its payments to imprisoned terrorists and the families of dead terrorists. It can't pretend they are "social welfare" payments. It cannot route them through a third party. What it must do, Schumer said, is to "cease making payments to the families of terrorists."

The P.A. must stop glorifying terrorists.

It's not a case of "we have

our heroes, and they have theirs." It's not a matter of "what they do is their business." Glorifying terrorists encourages more terrorism. "The P.A. as to stop calling them martyrs," said Schumer, and "stop giving them parades."

The leadership of the Democrats, as represented by Schumer, has now in effect joined hands with the leadership of the Republicans—and the majority of the American public—when it comes to Israel.

J Street and other harassers of the Jewish state have been left behind in the dust. A powerful new pro-Israel consensus has been reaffirmed. I hope it continues to grow.

Stephen M. Flatow, a vice president of the Religious Zionists of America, is an attorney in New Jersey. He is the father of Alisa Flatow, who was murdered in an Iranian-sponsored Palestinian terrorist attack in 1995.

Why is Trump betraying terror victims?

By Jonathan S. Tobin

(JNS)—It turns out that in some cases, the Trump administration can behave just like its predecessors.

President Donald Trump has been rightly accused of smashing precedents as the commander-in-chief, and many of his subordinates have behaved, spoken and tweeted in ways unlike anything we've seen before. Some of this unorthodox behavior is indeed troubling. But other decisions, including his willingness to buck the foreign-policy establishment on issues like the status of Jerusalem and trying to hold the Palestin-

ian Authority responsible for its support of terrorism, have been a long overdue breath of fresh air.

On one significant legal issue, however, it appears that Trump has gone establishment. Yet rather than cheer it as a rare sign of maturity or stability, this decision is a regrettable reversion to the same sort of failed policies of the past that Trump has rejected in other instances.

The issue is the decision of the U.S. Solicitor General to side with the Palestine Liberation Organization in a dispute with those seeking to hold it accountable for its crimes as required by U.S.

law. American victims of Palestinian terror attacks, as well as the family members of those who were killed in such attacks, originally filed the case of Sokolow v. Palestine Liberation Organization in 2004. They sued under the Anti-Terrorism Act passed by Congress in 1992, which allows U.S. nationals to sue international terror groups for damages in U.S. federal district courts.

The Sokolow case stems from six specific shootings and bombings carried out by Palestinians in Jerusalem from 2002 to 2004 during the second intifada terrorist war of attrition orchestrated by

the Palestinian Authority—the political arm of the PLO. A jury in a federal district court heard voluminous evidence of the gruesome crimes carried out by the Palestinians, as well as the clear proof that these acts were committed at the behest of their leaders. The jury ruled for the survivors and their families in a 2015 decision that awarded them \$656 million in damages.

But a year later, an appeals court overturned that decision when it ruled that U.S. courts didn't have jurisdiction in the case and claimed that the Palestinians hadn't specifically targeted Americans. That caused the terrorists to

cheer, and it brought great relief to the Obama administration, which had opposed any effort to punish the PLO. It felt that anything that undermined the P.A. was, by definition, a blow to the cause of peace. Like all previous administrations, Obama and his team regarded the Anti-Terrorism Act to be an attempt by Congress to interfere with the executive branch's ability to conduct foreign policy.

That stand, in addition to the appellate ruling, contradicts the plain intent of the law, which was crafted specifically to deal with instances of international terror.

Given Trump's tough talk

on terror—reportedly, he yelled at and pounded the table when he demanded that P.A. leader Mahmoud Abbas stop paying salaries and pensions to terrorists and their families—you would think he would reject the Obama position. But that's not what happened.

The Solicitor General is asking, along with the PLO's lawyers, that the U.S. Supreme Court not hear the terror victims' appeal. The government's arguments are highly technical in that they are asking the court to consider the PLO a "person,"

Tobin on page 18A

From a Passover of alienation to a Passover of empathy

By Hanan Schlesinger

(My Jewish Learning via JTA)—One of the most oft-repeated themes of the Torah is that we must remember that we were slaves and strangers in the Land of Egypt, and that God redeemed us with an outstretched hand. Both the experience of slavery and the experience of redemption are meant to radiate one central and fundamental call to action that the Torah comes back to again and again:

Slavery and strangerhood: Love the stranger and care for him, provide for him and show him empathy. Feel his pain and act to alleviate it, deal kindly with him, for you yourself know what it means to be a stranger and a slave.

Redemption: Walk in the footsteps of God, who redeemed us from Egypt, and redeem the slave and the downtrodden. Provide for them as God provided for us. Just as God's mercies are upon all His creatures, so ought our mercies to be upon all His creatures.

The world is divided into us and them. That is the way that it has to be. In order to experience the security and the love of the family, the clan, the nation, there have to be those who are not part of our inner concentric circles.

At the same time, however, one of the most central di-

rectives of the Torah is that this division must never be so stark as to alienate the us from the them. Our love and concern must radiate out beyond the us toward the them. Our sense of us must empower our people to reach out to them.

We recall and relive our experience in Egypt on the holiday of Passover, the centerpiece of the Jewish year and the focal point of the process of handing down the tradition to the next generation. And the focal point of Passover is the seder night with its Haggadah text. The Haggadah tells us: "In every generation one must see himself as if he personally went out of Egypt." We spend the whole night bringing alive the events of slavery and redemption.

Toward what end? What is the takeaway? Clearly the answer ought to be to develop within us the historical memory that will constantly remind us and inspire us to love the stranger and redeem him from his suffering.

Yet this message is completely missing from the Haggadah. It certainly harps on our misery in Egypt, but instead of using that experience to nurture empathy for those who suffer, it sees in it a paradigm for the panorama Jewish history, reminding us "in every generation they

rise against us to annihilate us, and the Holy One Blessed be He saves us from them."

The reason for this lacuna—at least one of the reasons—may be that during the 1,000-plus years during which the Haggadah text developed, we Jews were the slaves and the strangers, and the dominant cultures were antagonistic to our way of life and often to our very existence. We were the other and little love was lost on us. Our forefathers were too busy surviving to find room in our hearts and in our texts to teach ourselves about love of the stranger and empathy for his suffering. The larger message of Passover was postponed for the distant future.

That future may have arrived. Reality today is different, in Israel and to a large degree in many parts of America, from that which our forefathers knew. We are no longer the other that we used to be, and there are other peoples, cultures and ethnic groups that have taken our place. In Israel we are the dominant culture and in America we are part of the mainstream.

These are the conditions of life that the Torah envisioned, and not the circumstances under which our forbearers have lived for the past 2000 years. As such, it is time for our Haggadahs and our cel-

ebration of Passover, as well as our Jewish consciousness and our behavior, to reflect that change and to go back to basics.

Let the seder be our forum to proclaim and inculcate an ethic of empathy for the other emanating from two intertwined experiences: 1, Never again! Never again shall any people suffer what we suffered in Egypt. And 2, we take it upon ourselves to continually

struggle to redeem the other, just as God redeemed us.

Rabbi Hanan Schlesinger lives in Alon Shvut, Gush Etzion, and serves as the director of international relations for Roots/Judur/Shorashim, the Israeli Palestinian Local Initiative for Understanding, Nonviolence and Transformation. He also frequently travels to Dallas, where he serves as the executive director of the Jewish

Studies Initiative. His website is www.ravhanan.org.

This piece appeared originally on Rabbis Without Borders, a dynamic forum for exploring contemporary issues in the Jewish world and beyond. Written by rabbis of different denominations, viewpoints and parts of the country, Rabbis Without Borders is a project of Clal-The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership.

Dry Bones The Exodus From Egypt



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What's Happening

A COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LIGHT SHABBAT CANDLES AT
MARCH 23
 7:20 p.m.
MARCH 30
 7:24 p.m.

For inclusion in the What's Happening Calendar, copy must be sent on separate sheet and clearly marked for Calendar. Submit copy via: e-mail (news@orlandoheritage.com); mail (P.O. Box 300742, Fern Park, FL 32730-0742); fax (407-831-0507); or drop it by the office (207 O'Brien Rd., Ste. 101, Fern Park) Deadline is Wednesday noon, 10 days prior to publication.

MORNING AND EVENING MINYANS (Call synagogue to confirm time.)

Chabad of South Orlando—Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. and 10 minutes before sunset; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.; Sunday, 8:15 a.m., 407-354-3660.
 Congregation Ahavas Yisrael—Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.; Sunday, 9 a.m., 407-644-2500.
 Congregation Chabad Lubavitch of Greater Daytona—Monday, 8 a.m.; Thursday, 8 a.m., 904-672-9300.
 Congregation Ohev Shalom—Sunday, 9 a.m., 407-298-4650.
 GOBOR Community Minyan at Jewish Academy of Orlando—Monday—Friday, 7:45 a.m.—8:30 a.m.
 Temple Israel—Sunday, 9 a.m., 407-647-3055.

FRIDAY, MARCH 23

Ahavas Yisrael—Kabbalat, 30 minutes before sundown.

SATURDAY, MARCH 24

Congregation Beth Shalom—Shabbat service 10 a.m. Info 352-326-3692.

HERITAGE FLORIDA JEWISH NEWS

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MONDAY, MARCH 26

Israeli Folk Dancing—7:30-8:15 p.m. instruction, 8:15-10 p.m., requests. Cost: Free for JCC members, \$5 nonmembers. Info: 407-645-5933.
 Congregation Beth Am—Mommy and Me class with Cantor Nina Fine, 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m. \$7 per family; free for CBA members Info: 407-862-3505.
 Jewish Federation of Greater Orlando—Choices, 6 p.m. at The Roth Family JCC gym. Info, www.jfgo.org/choices

TUESDAY, MARCH 27

Temple Israel—Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Neely, noon—1 p.m. A parashat discussion class. Open to the public, no RSVP needed. Info: 407-647-3055.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28

Temple Israel—Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Neely, noon—1 p.m. A parashat discussion class. Open to the public, no RSVP needed. Info: 407-647-3055.

FRIDAY, MARCH 30

First Night of Passover

Ahavas Yisrael—Kabbalat, 30 minutes before sundown.

Deadline near for JFGO Israel travel scholarships

The application deadline is approaching for 2018-19 Ronald Colman Israel Scholarships, administered by the Jewish Federation of Greater Orlando.

The Federation will accept online applications through 5 p.m. March 30. Applicants should visit www.jfgo.org/jten for details. A review committee will select the scholarship recipients, who will be notified no later than April 30.

The Ronald Colman Israel Scholarship Fund was made possible by a generous endowment established by the

Colman family to encourage Jewish teens in the Greater Orlando area to participate in educational experiences in Israel. The Federation administers the program and awards the scholarships each spring. The program is open to all Jewish teens in grades 9 to 12 who are permanent residents of Central Florida. Gap-year programs are not eligible.

Additional application criteria:

- Teens who apply must be traveling on an organized educational youth/peer Israel program, including adventure

travel, community service, volunteer work or academic programming.

• Family trips are not eligible. Scholarship funds are for programs in summer 2018 and program during the 2018-19 school year (such as the Alexander Muss High School in Israel). Funds will be distributed directly to the sponsoring organization of the selected trip.

For additional information, please contact the Jewish Federation's Jennifer Cohen at jcohen@jfgo.org or 407-645-5933, ext. 239.

Quote of the Week

"The Seder nights... tie me with the centuries before me."

— Ludwig Frank (1874–1914), Aufsätze, Reden und Briefe, ausgewählt und eingeleitet, 1924

Challenging puzzle "Passover Prep" by Yoni Glatt koshercrosswords@gmail.com

Across

1. Distrusting sort
6. Luxury Swiss watch
10. Charoset ingredient
14. Chant in the Ramones' "Blitzkrieg Bop"
15. The first "A" of A.A. Milne
16. *Aseret* ___ *Teshuvah* (repentance time)
17. Elizabeth or Ashley
18. Jr. preceder
19. What many do at a Seder
20. Prepare for Passover
23. Portman's "Vfor Vendetta" co-star
24. Marlins' locale, briefly
25. CBS show produced by Jerry Bruckheimer
28. Prepare for Passover
34. Sinai or Habayit preceder
35. Lahren of Fox News
36. Ring advantage
37. Above
39. Amazon voice-activated assistants
42. Lie adjacent
43. Buy more Time?
45. "It's the end of the world ___."
47. Parseghian of Notre Dame
48. Prepare for Passover
52. "Danny and the Dinosaur" author Hoff
53. Trigonometry abbr.
54. 610, to Caesar
55. Alternative to 20, 28 and 48-Across
61. When many a seder ends
64. What many do during the course of a seder
65. Pianist's practice piece
66. Abba of Israel
67. Parsha Kedoshim follower
68. Those who have more than four cups at a seder, maybe
69. Charoset ingredient
70. Make like a bubbie to a grandchild
71. Bamboozles

Down

1. Partner of van.
2. What annoying fans may do
3. Wall St. fixture
4. "___ Huckabees"
5. Get in touch
6. Reckless
7. Burn balm
8. Actress Zuniga of "Spaceballs"
9. Where one might hear elevator music off an elevator
10. Noah of "The Librarian"
11. The Beatles' "___ Mine"
12. PBS funder
13. Karem or Gedi
21. Western resort lake
22. She said "Don't be humble... you're not that great."
25. Many an overseas contact, for Jews
26. Impervious to bugs
27. 1987 Beatty- Hoffman bomb

28. Relatives of flats
29. Weak, as a brew
30. Pressed
31. SHO subsidiary
32. Drum kit part
33. Yam, in Hebrew
38. Invigorate, with "up"
40. ___ Kosh B'Gosh
41. Alfred Nobel, for one
44. 1993 standoff site
46. Forgoes
49. Cheered (for)
50. Word preceding dog or Pie
51. Like some birds
55. Stein and Stiller
56. A gait
57. What "poh" means
58. Ahi, e.g.
59. Another name for Esau
60. Take away
61. Football's Dawson
62. Disney simian
63. Ink

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
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61	62	63			64				65				
66					67				68				
69						70				71			

See answers on page 18.



Scene Around

By Gloria Yousha—Call 407-657-9405 or gloriayousha@gmail.com

Great music. Great memories...

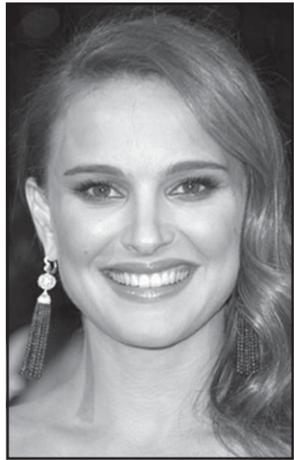
Unlike the music of today, (much of it Rap spelled with a silent C)... thanks to my dear friend, TONI McDONNELL, I was able to watch a television show on the UCF Channel featuring the big bands and the music I appreciate. And I appreciated Toni telling me about it! I especially enjoyed seeing the legendary Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra that I eventually became the vocalist with.

I repeat... Great Music. Great Memories!

Honors well deserved...

I received this news from the World Jewish Congress (WJC) and pass it along in part:

“NATALIE PORTMAN, an award-winning actress, director



Natalie Portman



U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg

and social activist has been named the winner of the 2018 Genesis Prize, also referred to as the Jewish Nobel.

The Genesis Prize honors individuals who serve as an inspiration to the next generation of Jews through their outstanding professional achievement along with their commitment to Jewish values and the Jewish people.

Portman, who was born in Israel and moved to the United States as a child, has maintained a close connection to her Jewish heritage and Israeli roots.”

The Genesis Prize Foundation also awarded U.S. Supreme Court Justice RUTH BADER GINSBURG its first Lifetime Achievement Award, praising her ‘groundbreaking legal work in the field of civil liberties and women’s rights’”

(Be proud. I am!)

JCC 39ers Meet & Mingle Mondays...

On Monday, March 26th, in the senior lounge of the Roth JCC on Maitland Avenue, A video presentation of “The Jewish American” will be shown by SHELDON BROOK. It starts at 1 p.m.

(I enjoy all of Sheldon’s videos!)

More about the 39ers...

Their will be a “Dine Around Town” on Thursday, March 29th, 1 p.m., at the Copacabana Cuban Café, 249 West State Road 436 in Altamonte Springs.

To RSVP, phone FLOR-ENCE at 407-859-8592.

(Yum! And Cuban food has NO calories. And if you believe that I have a bridge to sell you!)

A Jewish Pavilion Mensch...

“Three cheers for GEANNE SHARE who serves on the board of directors for the Jewish Pavilion and the Orlando Ballet. She facilitated two partnerships that enable students from the Orlando Ballet Company and school, to perform for seniors as part of the Jewish Pavilion Purim celebration. Performances took place at the Mayflower and Westminster in Winter Park. The residents absolutely loved the ballet dancers and immensely enjoyed the Purim plays as well. Both celebrations ended with the distribution of Hamantashen and other snacks.

Geanne is very active in the community as a volunteer and philanthropist and both organizations are so fortunate to have her leadership.”

(What joy she brought to the residents!)

A reminder...

On Sunday, March 25th, fabulous musician, ALLAN VACHE and his clarinet will appear at the Altamonte Chapel, 825 East SR 436, Altamonte Springs, with his musicians to perform, introducing his new CD “It Might As Well Be Swing.” The concert begins at 12:30 p.m.

His musicians that afternoon are MARK McKEE on piano, BEN KRAMER, on bass and WALT HUBBARD on drums. For more information, phone 407-339-5208.

A Shout-Out...

MARY JOHNSON, (a Brooklyn gal like me!) is a waitress at TooJay’s Restaurant in Altamonte Springs. Not only is she efficient, she is an absolute LOVE! She made me and my friends smile and feel so welcome. Thanks, Mary!

(And NO calories, right?)

One for the road...

Moshe is always telling jokes and thinks he could make a great stand-up comedian. So when one of his friends suggests he do a try out, Moshe volunteers to entertain patients in one of the wards at a nearby hospital. Moshe starts by telling the patients some jokes and finishes by singing some funny songs. Just before he leaves, he says to the patients, “I hope you all get better.” One elderly male replies, “I hope you get better, too.”



Geanne Share

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OSCEOLA COUNTY

Cindy M. Rothfield, P.A., 822 W. Bryan St., Kissimmee • Most Publix Supermarkets • Verandah Place Realty, 504 Celebration Ave., Celebration • All Winn Dixie Supermarkets • St. Cloud City Hall, 1300 9th St, St. Cloud • St. Cloud Library, 810 13th St, St. Cloud • Southern Oaks, 3865 Old Canoe Creek Rd, St. Cloud • Plantation Bay, 4641 Old Canoe Creek Rd, St. Cloud • Osceola Chamber of Commerce, 1425 Hwy 192, St. Cloud • Valencia College, 1800 Denn John Ln, Kissimmee • Kissimmee City Hall, 101 Church St, Kissimmee • Kissimmee Library, 211 E. Dakin, Kissimmee • Robinson’s Coffee Shop, 114 Broadway, Kissimmee • Osceola County Courthouse, 2 Courthouse Sq, Kissimmee • Barnies, 3236 John Young Pwy, Kissimmee • Reily’s Gourmet Coffee, 3831 Vine St, Kissimmee • Shalom Aleichem, 3501 Oak Pointe Blvd, Kissimmee • Books-A-Million, 2605 W. Osceola Pwy (522), Kissimmee • Lower East Side Deli, 8548 Palm Parkway, Lake Buena

Preping for possible Mideast war

By Yaakov Lappin

(JNS) The Israeli and U.S. militaries are in the midst of a large-scale missile-defense exercise, designed to simulate responses to a Middle East war on multiple fronts.

The scenario at the heart of the planned, biannual drill involves the Israeli home front coming under heavy enemy fire from several directions simultaneously.

The Juniper Cobra 18 exercise, held since 2001, practices the rapid deployment of American air-defense units and equipment to Israel from Europe in the event of armed conflict, in addition to the integration of U.S. capabilities into Israel’s air-defense layers.

“If conditions arise, and we are requested by the government of Israel, through our government, we will deploy,” said Lt.-Gen. Richard M. Clark, commander of the United States 3rd Air Force. Clark, who is based at Ramstein Air Base in Germany, added: “Once we get word, we can get here in days. I could be on the ground in one day. The fighting forces can be here within 72 hours.”

Brig.-Gen. Zvika Haimovich, who heads the Israeli Air Defense Command of the Israel

Defense Forces, said it was the largest U.S.-IDF exercise to date, adding that it is expected to play out in the course of more than four weeks.

Some 2,500 American personnel are taking part in the endeavor. Most were mobilized to Israel, while some stayed in Europe and the United States. Around 2,000 IDF personnel are taking part as well.

The United States European Command, based in Germany, sent a number of American air-defense systems to Israel.

“We will practice fighting shoulder to shoulder,” explained Haimovich. “We are practicing responses to real, complex, multidirectional threats. The emphasis is, above all, on cooperation between commanders and people.”

“Savlos, and more accurate, precise, multidirectional fire—those are our assumptions” of what a war will involve, he said. “It doesn’t matter if these come from the south, north, or east... unfortunately, we live in an environment in which we need to keep up our skills every year,” he said.

“Key and critical part” of the plan

The exercise costs millions of dollars to hold and

two years to plan. The commanders declined to provide specific details on the threat scenarios they were simulating—the general scenario they described would appear to outline a war involving Iran, Hezbollah and Hamas firing heavy barrages of rockets and missiles on Israeli cities and towns.

The arrival of accurate rockets and missiles in enemy inventories has played a role in the planning of the drill.

The first part of the drill involves computer simulations, in which Israeli and American air-defense systems are linked to one another and practice shooting down computer-generated threats. In the second stage, live-fire targets will be shot down by U.S. and Israeli Patriot systems, and by an Israeli Iron Dome battery.

Israel is fielding all of its air-defense systems in the exercise. These include Iron Dome; the recently deployed David’s Slings system, designed to intercept medium- and long-range ballistic missiles and cruise missiles; and the Arrow 2 and Arrow 3 systems, which intercept missile threats in the atmosphere and in space, respectively.

An interception officer operating the David’s Sling

system said the system has been operational “for almost over a year.” He added that it is “deployed across Israel.”

Col. David E. Shank, commander of the 10th Air and Missile Defense, U.S. Army-Europe, told JNS that two versions of American Patriot systems are in Israel for the drill. America’s Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system, or THAAD, which is designed to shoot down ballistic missiles as they descend, was also deployed. A powerful transportable radar was brought by the Americans to Israel.

Clark told JNS that the American Aegis Combat System, which is a ship-based missile-defense system, is also playing a “key and critical part” in the exercise.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Navy’s Mount Whitney, a command and control, arrived from its base in Italy and docked at the Haifa port to take part in the drill.

Ultimately, said Clark, the ability of America and Israel to moor their systems will define success. He acknowledged that this would have to be done under fire during wartime.

“From the first day we arrive, we have to be able to link up,” he affirmed. “Every day, we get a little better.”

Sudoku (see page 18 for solution)

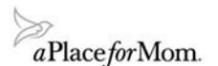
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Trump administration backs PLO in terror lawsuit, angering conservatives

By Ron Kampeas

WASHINGTON (JTA)—The Trump administration sided with the Palestine Liberation Organization in a terrorism lawsuit that the Supreme Court may soon consider, drawing an angry rebuke from conservatives, including one of its most steadfast Jewish community defenders, the Zionist Organization of America.

In 2015, a federal jury in Manhattan ruled in favor of American victims injured in six terror attacks that occurred in Israel between 2002 and 2004, handing down a \$656 million decision against the PLO. An appellate court overturned the decision a year later.

Solicitor General Noel Francisco supported the appellate court's finding in a Supreme Court filing last month, mostly on technical grounds.

The Trump administration's argument "hurts the American terror victims, aids and comforts terrorists, and makes them less concerned about facing consequences for their hideous actions," said a March 7 statement by Morton Klein, the ZOA president, and Susan Tuchman, the direc-

tor of its Center for Law and Justice.

The Supreme Court will say by March 29 whether it will consider the appeal by the litigants in the case known as Sokolow v. Palestine Liberation Organization.

The lead plaintiff, Mark Sokolow, told JTA in an interview that he was shocked by the solicitor general's filing. He noted that the Obama administration had intervened on behalf of the PLO in 2015, persuading the Manhattan District Court to substantially lower the bond—usually the equivalent of the judgment, in this case \$656 million—which allowed the PLO the resources to file its appeal.

The Obama administration argued then that the award would cripple the ability of the Palestinian Authority to function, thus posing a risk to U.S. interests in the region.

"We did not think anything along those lines would come out of this administration," Sokolow said, citing President Donald Trump's invocations of "America first" when it comes to foreign policy.

Trump has gone much further than the Obama administration in using American funds to pressure the Palestinians to hew to U.S.

policies. His administration has frozen \$65 million in transfers to the United Nations relief agency assisting Palestinian refugees and their descendants. It backs a bill in Congress that would cut U.S. funding to the Palestinians until the Palestinian Authority stops paying the families of Palestinians who attack Israelis and Americans.

(The Obama administration withheld funds commensurate with the payments to Palestinian attackers; the bill Trump backs would cut almost all funding to the Palestinians.)

On the other hand, Trump is deeply invested in a bid led by his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, to revive Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

Sokolow, his wife and two of his daughters were injured in a Jerusalem suicide bombing in 2002 that killed an 81-year-old man. His fellow plaintiffs are families of victims of terrorist attacks in Israel that killed 33, including several Americans, and wounded over 450. Their suit argued that the late PLO Chairman Yassir Arafat had paid attackers and their families.

They were suing under the Anti-Terrorism Act, which allows American victims of

international terror attacks to sue for damages in the United States.

Francisco's filing touched on issues of preserving the executive branch's prerogative to intervene in such cases in order to protect American foreign policy interests—the core argument of the Obama and Bush administration's interventions in the lawsuit, which was launched in 2004. But most of it turned on technical constitutional arguments.

The PLO is entitled to due process, the solicitor general argues, because it qualifies as a "person" under U.S. law. The filing also says that the presence of two PLO offices in the United States does not meet the test of establishing the PLO as a legitimate U.S. target for litigation, and that the terrorists would not have necessarily known that some of the casualties were American. The latter claim mitigates another application of U.S. law that allows lawsuits against entities that deliberately target U.S. interests.

The legalities drew special ire from critics of the filing.

"The United States has in effect assented to the jurisdictional hurdles imposed by the Second Circuit, which

will prevent many if not most victims of international terrorism from suing to hold their terrorist attackers accountable," the ZOA said.

In October, Republican and Democratic lawmakers in both chambers of Congress urged the solicitor general to support Sokolow's appeal. Rep. Kathleen Rice, D-N.Y., initiated a letter in the U.S. House of Representatives signed by 67 Republicans and Democrats. Rice is Sokolow's representative in the House.

Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, who helped author the 1992 Anti-Terrorism Act that underpins the plaintiffs' case, initiated a letter signed by 23 senators of both parties. Grassley a year ago joined a number of other senators in filing an amicus brief in the case; the House has also filed an amicus brief.

Lawmakers have yet to weigh in on the solicitor general's filing, but cries of outrage are already reverberating in conservative media, usually a redoubt of Trump support. Joel Pollak, a top editor at Breitbart News, in an exclusive interview with U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions asked about Francisco's filing.

"The question some of [the plaintiffs] have raised is why

the Trump administration is taking the opposite side from them—why it's fighting their attempt to claim damages from the Palestinian government. Is there any prospect of a change in that policy?" Pollak asked.

Sessions seemed caught off guard.

"Those present very difficult legal questions," he said. "And our team is working on it. So I will have to get back with you on the status of that case."

Brian McNicoll, a columnist for the conservative Townhall website, chided Sessions and Francisco.

"Doesn't it seem like the administration of the most pro-Israel president in a generation might be interested in winning justice for Americans injured or killed by terrorists?" he asked.

James Glassman, a top State Department official in the George W. Bush administration, wrote in a op-ed for The Hill that siding with the PLO in this case would not help advance the peace process.

"In fact, it is counterproductive," he said. "Imposing actual, financial costs on those who use and support terrorism is the right way to achieve peace."

Stump the seder guests: A mystery for each day of the holiday



Amos Ben Gershon/GPO

President Reuven Rivlin with his grandson, looking with a candle for any sign of chametz as he prepares for the Jewish holiday of Passover (April 2, 2015).

By Deborah Fineblum

(JNS)—Why is this year going to be different from all other years? Because this year, you can stump your guests with the meaning behind many of the mysterious rites that comprise the Passover seder.

Let's face it, you finally wrap up those frenzied days of cleaning and cooking. And then your guests arrive (Passover is an even bigger family reunion than Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year), and by the time you pass out the Haggadahs and the seder actually begins, you often slog through it on autopilot.

Passover is celebrated for

eight days outside of Israel, with two seders held on the first and second nights of the holiday. Israelis celebrate for seven days and hold just one seder the first night. This year, Passover begins after sundown on the 15th day of the Jewish month of Nisan, correlating to Friday, March 30, which is also Shabbat.

But Pesach or Passover in English, which refers to G-d "passing over" the households of the Hebrews in Egypt during that deadly 10th plague or killing of the first-born, has its fair share of mind-boggling traditions. Here are eight customs, one for each day of the holiday:

• The Burning of the Cha-

metz. It's not enough to trash the chametz (leavened food). We are commanded to actually burn it in a formal bi'ur ceremony the morning before the first seder (having searched for it the evening before with a candle and feather). We learn that chametz represents our haughtiness, and setting it aflame is a dramatic way of excising that puffed-up part of us, which we replace with a humble matzah," said Rabbi Ron Fish. "But the truth is, by then we've finished with all the exhausting preparations and are feeling pretty joyous." At some synagogues, including Temple Israel in Sharon, Mass., where Fish serves as senior rabbi, the tradition is to burn the chametz with last year's Sukkot lulavs, which keep the fire burning bright.

• Reclining on Pillows. The Gemara teaches us to lie back on pillows at the seder, a reminder that we have been freed from slavery. "I love it most when we recline to eat that first taste of the matzah," said Rabbi Abraham Sutton, an author and meditation teacher based in Kiryat Ye'arim (also known as Telz-Stone), Israel. We wait for this moment the whole night. Holding my matzah in my right hand, I close my eyes, and chew slowly and consciously."

• Seder Plate. Bitter herbs? A burnt egg? Ground-up apples and nuts? A bone? Not your typical meal. But each of the foods on the seder plate teaches us something. Shira Smiles, an author who teaches Torah around Jerusalem, credits Rav Pincus with the thought that the six items on the seder plate—shank bone, egg, bitter herbs, karpas (green vegetable), charoset (made of nuts, apples, wine



Nati Shohat/Flash 90

An Israeli family joins in the Passover seder last year on the first night of the Jewish holiday in Tzur Hadassah.

and cinnamon) and chazeret (often romaine)—correspond to six qualities, from compassion to accepting our own pain, needed for growth. "Pesach enables us to have a deeper understanding that it is only with challenges that we can become who [G-d] envisions us to be," she said. "The seder plate is a visual aid of how we need to emulate [G-d] and develop more kindness, set boundaries, and appreciate the beauty in the struggles of life."

• Hillel Sandwich. After what seems like an eternity, we nibble some matzah and then build an ancient sandwich—a tradition traced to the first-century sage Hillel, who no doubt included the Pascal lamb (korban or "sacrifice") in his version. "But in our post-Temple times, we are left with the bitter herbs and matzah with a little charoset,"

said Rabbi Shneur Zalman Bendet, co-director of Chabad of Greater St. Paul in Minnesota. "Matzah represents the ability to break free from our shackles, the bitter herbs represent suffering, and charoset symbolizes the cement—the elbow grease it takes to serve G-d," he said.

• The Four Cups. Each cup of wine is designed not to increase inebriation, but to serve as signposts along the seder journey. The number four is a motif throughout, according to Rabbi Elan Adler, formerly of Baltimore and now teaching Torah in Jerusalem and the nearby neighborhood of Ma'ale Adumim. One of the lesser-known fours comes from Exodus 6:6-8, where G-d promises four things: "I will take you out, I will rescue you, I will redeem you, and I will take you as my nation." Adler said "as we bless each cup,

we thank G-d for actualizing each of His words with such majesty, letting us know that freedom is a process which doesn't happen overnight."

• The Four Questions. Known as a way to get the kids to inquire about the dramatic story of G-d's rescue of the Israelites from Egyptian slavery, they remind Rabbani Y. Sara Cohen, a teacher in Brooklyn, N.Y., and on Torahanytime.com, of a story. When her community was hit with several tragedies, a young man asked: "Rabbi, what's going on here? These young children, the parents... how could this have happened to such innocent people?" The rabbi replied: "Bring me a Pesach Haggadah." He opened it up and handed it to the young man, who replied that "these are the four questions." The

Stump on page 18A

National spotlight shines on Jewish judge in Ohio for role in battling opioids



Judge Dan Aaron Polster

By Amanda Koehn

(Cleveland Jewish News via JNS)—Judge Dan Aaron Polster of the Northern District of Ohio is presiding over a case involving more than 400 federal lawsuits brought by communities around the country against drug companies and pharmacy chains for their role in perpetuating the opioid epidemic.

The case and Polster—a member of Congregation Shaarey Tikvah in Beachwood, and Park Synagogue in Cleveland Heights and Pepper Pike—were covered in a March 6 front-page story in The New York Times. It discussed Polster’s urging

of lawyers to settle the case in a way that will provide meaningful solutions to the crisis, rather than focusing on a trial and “finger-pointing,” and how that stance has caused an uproar in the legal community.

“I don’t think anyone in the country is interested in a whole lot of finger-pointing at this point, and I’m not either,” Polster said, according to a Jan. 9 legal transcript of the first hearing. “People aren’t interested in depositions, and discovery and trials.”

Polster told the Cleveland Jewish News that his view of the world through a Jewish lens—and the Jewish obligation to help others—has

conditioned him to try to make an impact and affects how he goes about his work.

“I take our obligation of tikkun olam [often defined as the ‘repair of the world’] very seriously,” he said, adding that what he said at that first hearing best reflected how those intentions of helping others may apply to these lawsuits.

“I requested that everyone try and work together to come up with some steps that we can take this year, in 2018, to begin to abate the crisis because we are losing 50,000 people or more a year,” he said.

The transcript read: “With all of these smart people here and their clients, I’m confident we can do something to dramatically reduce the number of opioids that are being disseminated, manufactured and distributed. Just dramatically reduce the quantity, and make sure that the pills that are manufactured and distributed go to the right people and no one else, and that there be an effective system in place to monitor the delivery and distribution, and if there’s a problem, to immediately address it and to make sure that those pills are prescribed only when there’s an appropriate diagnosis, and that we get some amount of money to the government agencies for treatment.”

The lawsuits allege that drugmakers used deceptive marketing to push the sale of opioids and targeted vulner-

able populations, such as the elderly and veterans, despite knowing that the drugs are addictive. They are also accused of negligent product oversight and ignoring suspicious, large orders of the drugs, according to the Associated Press.

On March 6, the city of Cleveland was added to the list of cities filing lawsuits against drug manufacturers and distributors, including other Ohio cities, the state and Cuyahoga County.

The city and county have been disproportionately affected by the opioid epidemic. According to Dec. 31, 2017 data projections from the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner, 822 people died last year from drug overdoses. Of those deaths, 522 died from heroin, fentanyl or a combination of both. For context, the county saw 666 overdose deaths in 2016 and 370 drug deaths in 2015, according to the medical examiner.

By filing lawsuits, the city and county aim to acquire financial reparations for the costs the city has faced due to the epidemic.

Drugmakers targeted in the lawsuits include Allergan, Johnson & Johnson and Purdue Pharma, in addition to three large drug-distribution companies, Amerisource Bergen, Cardinal Health and McKesson. Drug distributors and manufacturers named in the lawsuits have said they don’t believe litigation is the

answer but have pledged to help solve the crisis, the A.P. reported.

The Times article said Polster was chosen by a judicial panel to hear the case based on Ohio being hard-hit by the crisis, its central location to defendants and his experience with multidistrict litigation, or consolidation of many similar cases.

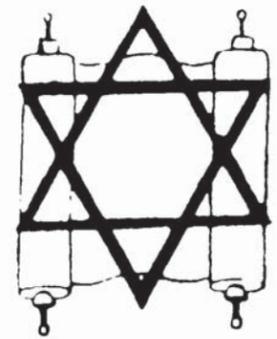
Polster told the Cleveland Jewish News that the Times reporter, Jan Hoffman, shadowed him while he tutored a third-grader through the Jewish Federation of Cleveland’s

Public Education Initiative, among other legal engagements he had that day. He said she “got a pretty accurate picture of me, my strengths and weaknesses.”

Most recently, Polster and the lawyers involved in the case met March 7 in a closed meeting. According to court documents, “the parties reported important and substantial progress on several fronts, but also identified barriers to a global resolution.”

“Everyone,” insisted Polster on the matter at hand, “is working hard.”

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My primitive Passover scavenger hunt

By Linda Pressman

(Kveller via JTA)—When I see the giant gefilte fish and matzah display at Costco in late February, it sends me into a panic. I think, is it time for gefilte fish already? I think that finding the holiday foods, including that gigantic jar of gefilte fish, is not easy and maybe I should stockpile now. I start thinking about how many people I'm having

for Passover—a lot or a little? One manageable table or an impossible four?

Most of the year I'm a pretty normal American woman. I look normal. I dress in a fairly normal manner. I walk in grocery stores and have a vaguely normal shopping list. Yes, there are certain Jewish holidays here and there where I'm maybe shopping for 20-pound bags of potatoes in the winter, apples and honey,

round challahs and smoked fish in the fall, or poppy filling in March. All a little odd.

But then there's Passover. Costco, of course, can only satisfy a few needs for this holiday. Though I'm willing to bounce back and forth between its kosher smoked fish case and the Passover display, both forming a miniature Pale of Settlement in the store for Jewish shoppers to cling to, eventually I must venture



Gefilte fish is an easy find at Passover.

out to the Jewish section of the regular grocery stores, to their Pesach tables, and to the kosher stores to get everything else I need.

Shopping for Passover is like being on the worst scavenger hunt ever. My grocery list looks like it was written in medieval Poland. I need a really big brisket. Like maybe an entire cow. And chicken livers. Like the whole chicken.

And maybe 10,000 eggs. I need horseradish—red and white. I need fish and potatoes, matzah and parsley. Coconut and carrots. Apples and walnuts and honey and wine. Oh, and they wouldn't happen to have four shank-bones hanging around, would they? One time when my mother was alive, she had a craving for real kishke. I went

to the store with her instructions: I needed rendered fat and casings. The butcher seemed mystified.

How did I become my mother? Or, rather, my grandmother, great-grandmother and great-great-grandmother, all the way down the line? How did I get so fascinated with the butchers at all the grocery stores in town, interrogating the staff about their briskets, their chicken livers, the weights and when they're expected?

When I've bought everything on my list, I start cooking very meticulously. I cling to the idea that if I'm organized about this, I can be ready. I can't really be ready.

Sometimes while I'm out shopping, I run into the rest of the world. There they are, happy normal people, out

shopping for regular groceries, like bread, or in the Easter aisle buying chocolate eggs, squishy Peeps and giant chocolate Easter bunnies. I'm somewhat surprised that the world is just ticking along as normal, and there's not an emergency in their kitchens like there is in mine. Because no matter how far ahead I start, no matter how much I'm sure I'm finished the night before, it never fails that two hours before the seder I have to call my sister for emergency backup, for parsley sprig placement or peeling boiled eggs.

Back at the store, I find the last thing on my list, horseradish root for the seder plate—a gnarled, primitive-looking thing that I grasp in my matching gnarled hand—and I head home.



Locals pose with Rep. Webster at AIPAC

Over 60 delegates from Central Florida traveled to Washington, D.C., to attend the annual AIPAC Policy Conference. The delegates included a strong showing of local college students and several high school students as well.

After 2 1/2 days of general sessions filled with incredible speakers as well as breakout sessions, the group successfully lobbied our local congressmen, including Stephanie Murphy, Darren Soto and Valerie Demmings. Thanks to the AIPAC trip offered to congressmen, all three traveled to Israel last summer and very clearly understand why Israel is so important to the United States.

Shown here are (l-r), UCF Hillel student Scott Gerstel, UCF Hillel student Spencer Lasday, Gene Josephs, Congressman Daniel Webster (FL-11), Orly Diamond, Dr. David Diamond, Judith Hara, AIPAC staffer Briana Felsen, and Bob Hara.

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In celebration of KCOA's '8 Over 80'

The Kinneret Council on Aging, a non-profit agency that provides ongoing programs and services to residents of Kinneret Apartments, held their 2018, 8 over 80 Gala on Sunday, Feb. 25, 2018.

Over 200 guests attended the festive gala to celebrate the accomplishment of the honorees. Guests were entertained with video's featuring each honoree and their unique accomplishments. A delicious dinner was also provided by George's Gourmet Catering. All in attendance agreed that this delightful event was a wonderful gathering of family and friends.

The honorees for the 2018 event were: Lillian Berkowitz, Doris Gilbert, Bette Ann Leider, Rosalind Levitt, Eva London Ritt, Gerald Robison, Charles Schulman, and Dick Weiner

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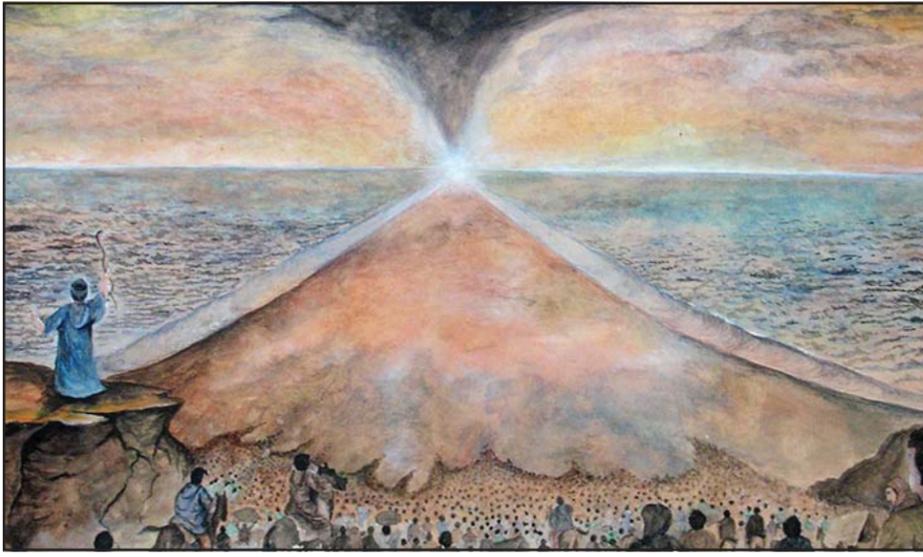
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The 8 over 80 honorary dinner was held in the Delaney Dining Room at Kinneret Apartments and benefitted the KCOA which provides programs for residents that are not included in the resident's monthly rent. These programs include onsite weekly exercise classes, cultural activities and holiday celebrations as well as excursions including trips to Publix, Walmart and area restaurants. KCOA also continues to fund the popular twice-monthly food pantry, which provides a bountiful grocery bag to residents at no cost. This program offers an array of healthy foods to residents, many who enjoy cooking their own meals. Currently over 120 residents are participating in this program.

Why Passover is about a lot more than good food



Ramesh Raju/Wikimedia Commons

By Joshua Ratner

(My Jewish Learning via JTA)—What is the essence of Passover? On the one hand, it seems obvious: Passover is about gathering together with loved ones to recall, through sumptuous home rituals, the exodus from Egypt. We gather round our seder tables and quickly become engulfed in the warmth of family and friends, the culinary delights of a delicious meal, and the comforting, vaguely familiar words and songs we recite year after year.

Passover is, indeed, a beautiful opportunity for rejoicing and celebrating. But it also can be much more.

When looking closely at the Passover Haggadah, we can see that the rabbis who crafted it did not choose to make Passover a holiday solely focused on celebrating the past. Like the Fourth of July (or Chanukah), Passover could have been a day to recall passively our independence from an oppressive regime as a historical remembrance; to commemorate the past and salute our Founding Fathers (or Maccabees). Instead, Moses (as Founding Father of the Israelites) is largely shut

out of the story—he appears but once.

While remembrance of the Exodus—from the enslavement of the Israelites to the Ten Plagues to the crossing of the Red Sea—forms a major portion of the content of the “Maggid” (retelling) section of the Haggadah, that remembrance is but a means to a larger end. The end of the Maggid section reveals why. It says:

“In each and every generation people must regard themselves as though they personally left Egypt, as it says, ‘Tell your child on that very day: This is what God did for me when I left Egypt.’” The Holy One of Blessing did not redeem only our ancestors, but God even redeemed us with them, as it says, ‘God brought us out of there in order to bring us to and gave us the land that God swore to our ancestors.’”

The seder specifically and Passover more broadly are about remembering God’s deliverance of the Israelites not as a one-time, historical event but as something that is perpetually happening in the present. Redemption from slavery to freedom is intended to be an experience that we, too, can and should have

during our seders. But why?

I believe that the seder is a literary means of experiential education. The Haggadah wants each of us to recall that we were once estranged, disenfranchised and marginalized, so that each of us will cultivate a sense of empathy for the estranged, the disenfranchised and the marginalized in our society today. We honor our past by acting in our present.

So as we get ready for Passover, cleansing our houses of hametz, preparing our Haggadah selections and invite lists, may we also take action to cleanse our society of poverty, bigotry and hatred.

There has been an explosion of new and creative social justice-themed Haggadahs and seder inserts created in recent years by Jewish organizations. Last year alone, there were new additions about global justice (American Jewish World Service), LGBTQ rights (Keshet), hunger and military families (Mazon), wealth inequality (RRC), racial justice (RAC), mass incarceration (T’ruah), and refugees (Repair the World/HIAS), to name but a few. So please consider using any of these, tweet at #ActOnPassover or make use of other

resources that speak to you and help you concretize our ongoing mandate to seek out freedom and redemption for all of God’s children.

And may each of you be blessed with a happy, fulfilling and meaningful Passover. Chag sameach!

Rabbi Joshua Ratner is the rabbi of Congregation Kol Ami in Cheshire, Connecticut. He also worked as an attorney for five years prior to entering rabbinical school.

This piece originally appeared on the Rabbis Without Borders, a dynamic forum

for exploring contemporary issues in the Jewish world and beyond. Written by rabbis of different denominations, viewpoints and parts of the country, Rabbis Without Borders is a project of Clal-The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership.

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'The Shape of Water' through a Jewish Lens

By Dr. Mark Klafter

There are no Jewish characters in the cinematically and thematically beautiful 2018 Academy Awards best picture winner "The Shape of Water." However, out of all nine nominees, this Guillermo del Toro masterwork best speaks to the Jewish experience: empathy for others, defense of what is

right—even if not politically expedient—and remaining true to core principles of our religion. There even are some striking Jewish historical parallels in this adult "fairy tale for troubled times" set in 1962, in which society's outsiders go against seemingly insurmountable odds to save the ultimate outsider. Protagonist Elisa Esposito,

stunningly portrayed by actress Sally Hawkins in a mute role, pleads in sign language to her neighbor Giles in a seminal moment: "If we do nothing, neither are we."

Reaching out to others who are in need has long been a bedrock principle of the Jewish people. Dating back to biblical times, the Hebrews were conscious of sharing food and

other resources at the time of the Exodus from Egypt, and subsequently welcomed strangers into their dwellings (Sukkot). Immigrants have played a major role in the miraculous formation (and transformation) of the modern State of Israel; I have personally seen challenges of immigrants in Beer Sheva, and although there remain



Elisa meets the sea creature for the first time.

barriers to successful assimilation of Ethiopians and Russians, such efforts have made the Jewish state (and our people) stronger. Of course, the empathy of others has also allowed our people to survive all too many dark chapters in history. Del Toro gets that in referencing the power of human love of "the other."

In interviews during the successful film festival season, the fantasy movie writer and director also drew reference to our society's rejection and dehumanization of those who don't look or politically think like us. He and now many others see "The Shape of Water" as an elixir to fight the cynicism and hate seen on the extremes that has become all-too-fashionable. Not surprisingly, some cynics who are close-minded to a story that emits a sense of love of others have dismissed this film as "sappy," speaking to one of the unfortunate realities of our time.

Historically, we have been most successful and fulfilled when allowed to just be ourselves by embracing Judaism and Jewish culture—instead of staying between the lines of coloring-book societies. Neighbor Giles, a commercial artist, lives in a time in which his best way to muddle through in society as a gay man is to be closeted. Before we learn of the luncheonette manager's discrimination against blacks and gays we discover his tendencies to change his manner of speaking in order to appear to fit in. It's ironic to see who are most miserable in the film—and in our world. Similarly, the primary antagonist, Strickland, buys the teal Cadillac as an outward display of success, and we are visually pelted with images on the highway of this ideal stereotypical definition of a perfect life.

Meanwhile, Elisa and black co-worker Zelda are outsiders who remain true to themselves. Their actions, taken together with Giles (and with the assistance of the Russian conscientious objector Dmitry, also an outcast) results in their ability to save a precious

life—and themselves in the process. History has shown us that during times in which Jews have chosen (or were forced) to remain silent or even convert, both the Jewish people and society at large have suffered. In Israel and the US, where Jews can remain true to their core principles and culture, we have become a light unto other nations.

In addition to the various technical and artistic nods to classic films, biblical references in "The Shape of Water" make welcomed appearances: from the directly-referenced story of Samson and Delilah to the less obvious Book of Ruth, which was the film playing in the theater below Elisa's apartment. Fittingly, Ruth was a poor widow and outsider with few outward attributes. She was committed to be there for her mother-in-law, Naomi, while adopting faith in the G-d of Israel. Elisa is, in a sense Ruth, while Giles and Zelda socially and ethically also possess "Ruthian" characteristics.

Even Jewish symbolism was peppered throughout this landmark film. The concept of the ritual bath (mikvah) was emulated in the form of the various water scenes ranging from bathtubs to water tanks to the stunning climax. While the egg offering between Elisa and the "creature" is obviously a reference to fertility, in Judaism (and biology) it represents the potential to become an independently living and breathing entity. The egg in the seder plate represents the Jews at the time of the Exodus from Egypt—potential "life" of a people.

Water, itself, forms the shape of the container. Judaism is changing and evolving, depending on the vessel carried. Our goal as Jews is to mold that vessel so that future generations can carry the substrate of life itself in a way that can also shape humanity for the greater good.

Dr. Mark Klafter, a former Jewish Federation of Greater Orlando Community Relations Council co-chair, is a neurologist practicing in Orlando.



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Andy, Karen, Nathaniel and Gabrielle Reiff

Foreign ambassadors break matzah in Israel

(JNS)—More than 70 ambassadors and senior foreign diplomats sat down to a festive “model seder” dinner in Tel Aviv, organized by the Israel Project and the World Jewish Congress.

The pre-Passover seder, taking place for the third year in a row, was led by former Israeli ambassador to the United Kingdom Daniel Taub, who provided the guests with a small taste of the holiday's traditions. Among the diplomats attending were ambassadors from Rwanda, Belgium, Argentina, Angola, the Dominican Republic and the Philippines, as well as senior diplomatic representatives from the United States, the United Nations, the European Union, Great Britain and China.

Israel's Minister of Construction and Housing Yoav Gallant greeted the ambassa-



Avishai Zigman

The Israel Project and the World Jewish Congress host a pre-Passover seder for foreign diplomats in Israel.

dors minutes before heading off to vote on the state budget in the Knesset. He reassured the group that “as you know, things in Israel don't always go smoothly or easily, but I promise that this budget will be approved.”

Gallant said the “Jewish people marks its freedom during the holiday of Passover, and that Israel, celebrating 70

years of independence this year, takes pride in its ability to defend itself by itself.”

Said Lior Weintraub, vice president of the Israel Project: “This pre-Passover dinner has become a tradition, in which we take pride hosting foreign ambassadors and distinguished guests, while exposing them to the unique culture and Jewish tradition.”

OBITUARIES

IRA N. DAITZMAN

Ira Daitzman, age 85, of Orlando, passed away on Monday, Feb. 26, 2018, at Florida Hospital Orlando.

He was born in Union City, New Jersey, on Aug. 11, 1932, a son of the late Samuel I. and Ruth Shifrin Daitzman.

Mr. Daitzman attended Union Hill, N.J., High School, and graduated from NYU Stern School of Finance, where he became a member of the Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity. He earned his B.A. and served for two years in the US Army. During his tour of duty, on Jan. 2, 1954, in Fayetteville, North Carolina, he married his high school sweetheart, Marion Eisen. Mr. Daitzman earned his C.P.A. license and moved to Orlando, Fla., in 1961, forming a partnership with Mr. Albert Katz. That partnership lasted for 47 years. He was an active volunteer at Temple Israel of Winter Springs and an avid biker.

Mr. Daitzman is survived by his wife of 64 years, Marion Daitzman of Orlando; their daughters, Lynn (Mark) Fenster of Orlando, and Gerri (Mark) Lifshitz of Scarsdale N.Y.; and their son, Michael (Lesley) of Wellesley, Mass. He is also survived by five grandchildren—Avi (Sara) Lifshitz of Migdal Haemek, Israel, Rachel (Mordy) Greenspan of New York, N.Y., Jesse (Katie) Lifshitz of New York, N.Y., and Sam and Jacob Daitzman of Wellesley, Mass., and four great-grandchildren. Additionally, Mr. Daitzman is survived by his brother, Myles (Maxine) of Sun City, Ariz.; his sister, Janice (Richard) Wentz of Santa Clara, Calif.; his sister-in-law, Gladys Haber of Greensboro, N.C., and seven nieces and nephews.

Services and interment were held at Temple Beth El/ Cedar Park Cemetery in New Jersey.

In memory of Ira N. Daitzman, the family requests contributions to Temple Israel, 50 S Moss Road, Winter Springs 32708; Jewish Family Services, 2100 Lee Road, Winter Park 32789; or The Jewish Pavilion, 421 Montgomery

Road—Suite 231, Altamonte Springs 32714.

Arrangements entrusted to Beth Shalom Memorial Chapel, 640 Lee Road, Orlando 32810. 407-599-1180.

IRA MURRAY GRELL

Ira M. Grell, age 89, of Daytona Beach, passed away on Sunday, March 11, 2018, at University Center East Nursing Home in DeLand. Mr. Grell was born on Jan. 4, 1929, in Brooklyn New York, to the late Louis and Cecelia Gerber Grell. He graduated New York Technical High School and served in the United States Army. He spent his working career as a customer service engineer, retiring from Pitney Bowes.

In addition to his parents, Mr. Grell was predeceased by his first wife, Laurel, and a son, Jonathan Bernard Grell. On Oct. 17, 2000, he married the former Ann Hausner, his wife who survives him. He is also survived by his son Andrew (Melodee) of New York; his grandson, Lewis Jesse Grell, and his step-daughter, Diane Miller.

A graveside service was held at Star of David Cemetery of the Palm Beaches with Rabbi Jonathan Kaplan officiating.

Arrangements entrusted to Beth Shalom Memorial Chapel, 640 Lee Road, Orlando 32810. 407-599-1180.

ETTA GOLDSTEIN

Etta Flaster Goldstein, age 98, of Altamonte Springs, passed away at her residence at Brookdale Altamonte Springs on Saturday, March 10, 2018. Born on Jan. 3, 1920, in New York City, she was one of four children and the only daughter born to the late Abraham and Rebecca Fishman Flaster. Raised by her mother and brothers following the early death of their father, Etta was fortunate to be able to complete high school.

She had a varied working career, but ultimately worked as a clerk/typist for the Nassau County NY Police Department before retiring. In 1979, Etta and her late husband, Bernard, who passed away in 1994, relocated to the Williamsburg area of Orlando. Etta maintained her own

home until moving to what was then Merrill Gardens in the early 2000s.

Etta is survived by her sons Alan (Marsha) of Apopka and Leonard (Hazel) of New Hampshire; and her grandchildren—Jeremy (Tammy), Matthew (Lyla), Adam (Ann) and Heather; and her great-grandchildren—Valerie, Madison, Violet, Johanna, Caleb, Mackenzie, Haley and Isaac. She was predeceased by her brothers, Hyman, Murray and George.

A graveside service was held at Beth Israel Cemetery in Gotha, with Rabbi Arnold Siegel of Jewish Family Services officiating. In memory of Etta F. Goldstein, the family requests donations to Hospice of the Comforter, 480 W Central Parkway, Altamonte Springs 32714.

Arrangements entrusted to Beth Shalom Memorial Chapel, 640 Lee Road, Orlando 32810. 407-599-1180.

ARNOLD H. TRAVITSKY

Arnold Howard Travitsky, age 71, of Altamonte Springs, passed away on Tuesday, Feb. 27, 2018, at Hospice of the Comforter in Altamonte Springs. Born on June 18, 1946, in Brooklyn, N.Y., he was a son of the late Abraham and Fannie Pakula Travitsky.

An engineering salesman by profession, Arnie earned his associate's degree and served in the United States Army. In 1969, he married the former Teri Brenner, his wife of 49 years, who survives him. The family relocated to the Orlando area from New York in 1979.

In addition to his wife, Arnie is survived by his daughter, Nicole Travitsky, of Altamonte Springs; his son, Keith (Flory) Travitsky of Daytona Beach; and his grandson, Aaron Travitsky and granddaughter, Seli Travitsky, and his pet, Magic.

A memorial service was held at Beth Shalom Memorial Chapel with Rabbi Arnold Siegel officiating. Arrangements entrusted to Beth Shalom Memorial Chapel, 640 Lee Road, Orlando 32810. 407-599-1180.

Central Florida Synagogues

Orlando Weekday Morning Minyan (Conservative/Egalitarian), services Monday-Friday 7:45 a.m. (9 a.m.—national holidays); 2nd floor Chapel—Jewish Academy of Orlando; 851 N. Maitland Ave., Maitland. For information call 407-298-4650.

Celebration Jewish Congregation (R), services and holiday schedules shown at www.JewishCelebration.org; 407-566-9792.

Chabad Lubavitch of North Orlando (O), 1701 Markham Woods Road, Longwood, 407-636-5994, www.jewishorlando.com; services: Friday 7:00 p.m.; Saturday at 9:30 a.m.

Chabad of Altamonte Springs (O), 414 Spring Valley Lane, Altamonte Springs, 407-280-0535; www.jewishaltamonte.com.

Chabad of South Orlando (O), 7347 Sand Lake Road, Orlando, 407-354-3660; www.jewishorlando.com; Shabbat services: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. and 10 minutes before sunset; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.; Sunday, 8:15 a.m.

Chabad of the Space & Treasure Coasts (O), 1190 Highway A1A, Satellite Beach, 321-777-2770.

Congregation Ahavas Yisrael/Chabad (O), 708 Lake Howell Rd., Maitland, 407-644-2500; www.chabadorlando.org; services: Sunday, 9 a.m.; Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.; Shabbat services: Friday, 6:30 p.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.; Family service, 4th Friday of the month.

Congregation Bet Chaim (R), 181 E. Mitchell Hammock, Oviedo, 407-830-7211; www.betchaim.org; Shabbat services: Friday, 8 p.m.

Congregation Beth Am (C), 3899 Sand Lake Road, Longwood, 407-862-3505; www.congbetham.org; Shabbat services: Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.

Congregation Beth El (C), 2185 Meadowlane Ave., West Melbourne, 321-779-0740; Shabbat services, 1st & 3rd Friday, 8 p.m.; 2nd & 4th Saturdays, 9:30 a.m.

Congregation Beth Emeth (R), 2205 Blue Sapphire Circle, Orlando, 407-222-6393; Shabbat service: monthly, 8 p.m.

Congregation Beth Israel (Rec), Collins Resource Center, Suite 303, 9401 S.R. 200, Ocala, 352-237-8277; bethisraelocala.org; Shabbat service, second Friday of the month, 8 p.m.

Congregation Beth Shalom (R-C), 315 North 13th St., Leesburg, 352-326-3692; www.bethsholomflorida.org; schedule of services on website.

Congregation Beth Shalom (Progressive Conservative), Orange City congregation holds services at 1308 E. Normandy Blvd., Deltona; 386-804-8283; www.mybethshalom.com; Shabbat services: Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.

Congregation B'nai Torah (C), 403 N. Nova Rd., Ormond Beach, 32174, 386-672-1174; www.mybnaitorah.com; Shabbat services: Friday, 8 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.

Congregation Chabad Lubavitch of Greater Daytona (O), 1079 W. Granada Blvd., Ormond Beach, 386-672-9300; Shabbat services Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.

Congregation of Reform Judaism (R), 928 Malone Dr., Orlando, 407-645-0444; www.crorlando.org; Shabbat services, 7 p.m. 1st, 2nd and 3rd Fridays; 6 p.m., 4th and 5th Fridays; Saturday: 10 a.m.

Congregation Mateh Chaim (R), P.O. Box 060847, Palm Bay, 32906, 321-768-6722.

Congregation Ohev Shalom (C), 613 Concourse Parkway South, Maitland, 407-298-4650; www.ohevshalom.org; Shabbat service, Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.

Congregation Shalom Aleichem (R), 3501 Oak Pointe Blvd., Kissimmee, 407-935-0064; www.shalomaleichem.com; Shabbat service, 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month, 8 p.m.

Congregation Shomer Yisrael (C), 5382 Hoffner Ave., Orlando, 407-227-1258, call for services and holiday schedules.

Congregation Sinai (C/R), 303A N. S.R. 27, Minneola; 352-243-5353; congregation-sinai.org; services: every Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Shabbat Service every Saturday, 10 a.m.

Orlando Torah Center (O), 8591 Banyan Blvd., Orlando; 347-456-6485; Shacharis-Shabbos 9 a.m.; Mon.—Thurs. 6:45 a.m.; Sun. and Legal Holidays 8 a.m.; Mincha/Maariv Please call for times.

Southwest Orlando Jewish Congregation/Ohalei Rivka (C), 11200 S. Apopka-Vineland Rd., Orlando, 407-239-5444; Shabbat service, Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.

Temple Beth El (R), 579 N. Nova Rd., Ormond Beach, 386-677-2484.

Temple Beth Shalom (R), P.O. Box 031233, Winter Haven, 813-324-2882.

Temple Beth Shalom (C), 40 Wellington Drive, Palm Coast, 386-445-3006; Shabbat service, Friday, 8 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.

Temple Beth Shalom (C), 5995 N. Wickham Rd. Melbourne, 321-254-6333; www.mytbs.org; Shabbat services: Friday, 7 p.m.; Saturday: 9:30 a.m. Minyan, Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.; Thursday, 10:00 a.m.

Temple Beth Shalom (R), 1109 N.E. 8th Ave., Ocala, 352-629-3587; Shabbat services: Friday, 8 p.m.; Torah study: Saturday, 10:00 a.m.

Temple B'nai Darom (R), 49 Banyan Course, Ocala, 352-624-0380; Friday Services 8 p.m.

Temple Israel (C), 50 S. Moss Rd., Winter Springs, 407-647-3055; www.tiflorida.org; Shabbat services: Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m.; Sunday 9:00 a.m.

Temple Israel (R), 7350 Lake Andrew Drive, Melbourne, 321-631-9494.

Temple Israel (C), 579 N. Nova Road, Ormond Beach, 386-252-3097; Shabbat service, Friday, 7 p.m.; Saturday: 10:30 a.m.

Temple Israel of DeLand (R), 1001 E. New York Ave., DeLand, 386-736-1646; www.templeisraelofdeland.org; Friday Shabbat service, 7 p.m.; Saturday, 10:00 a.m. followed by Torah study.

Temple Shalom (formerly New Jewish Congregation) (R), 13563 Country Road 101, Oxford, 352-748-1800; www.templeshalomcentralfl.org; Shabbat services: Friday, 7 p.m.; last Saturday of the month, 9:30 a.m.

Temple Shalom of Deltona (R/C), 1785 Elkcam Blvd., Deltona, 386-789-2202; www.shalomdeltona.org; Shabbat service; Saturday: 10 a.m.

Temple Shir Shalom (R) Services held at Temple Israel, 50 S. Moss Rd., Winter Springs, 407-366-3556, www.templeshirshalom.org; Shabbat services: three Fridays each month, 7:30 p.m.

Traditional Congregation of Mount Dora (T) Mount Dora, 352-735-4774; www.tcomd.org; Shabbat services: Saturday, 9:30 a.m. sharp.

(R) Reform (C) Conservative (O) Orthodox (Rec) Reconstructionist (T) Mehitsa

Nine things you didn't know about Passover

By MJL Staff

(My Jewish Learning via JTA)—Here are nine things that many likely wouldn't know about the Festival of Freedom:

1. In Gibraltar, there's dust in the charoset.

The traditional charoset is a sweet Passover paste whose texture is meant as a reminder of the mortar the enslaved Jews used to build in ancient Egypt. The name itself is related to the Hebrew word for clay. In Ashkenazi tradition, it is traditionally made from crushed nuts, apples and sweet red wine, while Sephardic Jews use figs or dates. But the tiny Jewish community of this small Brit-

ish territory at the tip of the Iberian Peninsula takes the brick symbolism to another level, using the dust of actual bricks in their recipe.

2. Abraham Lincoln died during Passover.

The 16th American president was shot at Ford's Theatre on a Friday, April 14, 1865, which coincided with the fourth night of Passover. The next morning, Jews who wouldn't normally have attended services on the holiday were so moved by Lincoln's passing they made their way to synagogues, where the normally celebratory Passover services were instead marked by acts of mourning and the singing of Yom Kippur hymns. American Jews were so af-

ected by the president's death that Congregation Shearith Israel in New York recited the prayer for the dead—usually said only for Jews—on Lincoln's behalf.

3. Arizona Is a hub for matzah wheat.

Hasidic Jews from Brooklyn have been increasingly sourcing wheat for their Passover matzah from farmers in Arizona. Excessive moisture in wheat kernels can result in fermentation, rendering the harvest unsuitable for Passover use. But rain is scarce in Arizona, which allows for a stricter standard of matzah production. Rabbis from New York travel to Arizona in the days leading up to the harvest, where they inspect the grains meticulously to ensure they are cut at the precise moisture levels.

4. At the seder, Persian Jews whip each other with scallions.

Many of the Passover seder rituals are intended to recreate the sensory experience of Egyptian slavery, from the eating of bitter herbs and matzah to the dipping of greenery in saltwater, which symbolizes the tears shed by the oppressed Israelites. Some Jews from Iran and Afghanistan have the tradition of whipping each other with green onions before the singing of "Dayenu."

5. Karaite Jews skip the wine.

Karaite Jews reject rabbinic Judaism, observing only laws detailed in the Torah. That's why they don't drink the traditional four cups of wine at the seder. Wine is fermented, and fermented foods are prohibited on Passover, so instead they drink fruit juice. (Mainstream Jews hold that only fermented grains are prohibited.) The Karaites also eschew other staples of the traditional seder, including the seder plate and charoset. Their maror (bitter herbs) is a mixture of lemon peel, bitter lettuce and an assortment of other herbs.

6. Israeli Jews have only one seder.

Israeli Jews observe only one Passover seder, unlike everywhere else where traditionally two seders are held, one on each of the first two nights of the holiday. Known as "yom tov sheni shel galuyot"—literally "the second festival day of the Diaspora"—the practice was begun 2,000 years ago when Jews were informed of the start of a new lunar month only after it had been confirmed by witnesses in Jerusalem. Because Jewish communities outside of Israel were often delayed in learning the news, they consequently couldn't be sure precisely which day festivals were meant to be observed. As a result, the practice of

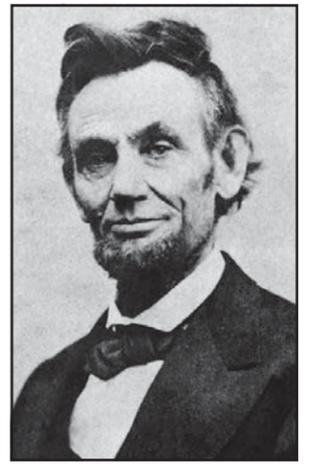
observing two seder days was instituted just to be sure.

7. You're wrong about the orange on the seder plate.

Some progressive Jews have adopted the practice of including an orange on the seder plate as a symbol of inclusion of gays, lesbians and other groups marginalized in the Jewish community. The story goes that the practice was instituted by the feminist scholar Susannah Heschel after she was told that a woman belongs on the synagogue bimah, or prayer podium, like an orange belongs on a seder plate. But according to Heschel, that story is false. In that apocryphal version, she said, "a woman's words are attributed to a man, and the affirmation of lesbians and gay men is erased. Isn't that precisely what's happened over the centuries to women's ideas?"

8. "Afikomen" isn't Hebrew.

For many seder participants, the highlight of the meal is the afikomen—a broken piece of matzah that the seder leader hides and the children search for; the person who finds the afikomen usually gets a small reward. Most scholars believe the word "afikomen" derives from the Greek word for dessert. Others say it refers to a kind of post meal revelry common among the Greeks. Either theory would explain why the



Abraham Lincoln was assassinated during Passover in April 1865.

afikomen is traditionally the last thing eaten at the seder.

9. For North African Jews, after Passover comes Mimouna.

Most people are eager for a break from holiday meals when the eight-day Passover holiday concludes. But for the Jews of North Africa, the holiday's end is the perfect time for another feast, Mimouna, marking the beginning of spring. Celebrated after nightfall on the last day of Passover, Mimouna is marked by a large spread of foods and the opening of homes to guests. The celebration is often laden with symbolism, including fish for fertility and golden rings for wealth.

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Making Grandma's charoset (or how I learned to love Passover)

By Edgar M. Bronfman

(JTA)—When I walked into the house through the back door one day as a young man, I was shocked to see my mother in the kitchen. To put it mildly, this was not one of her favorite places. When I asked her why she was there, a look of panic crossed her face.

"Now that Grandma's gone," she explained, "I have to make the charoset."

Sensing her culinary discomfort, I volunteered to take over.

With a look of vast relief, she fled the scene. Guided by the memory of my grandmother's charoset—the sweet, chunky, fruity mixture

that symbolizes the mortar used by the Hebrew slaves to build Egypt's real estate—I chopped up apples and walnuts and added raisins.

I mixed them together, then added a couple of spoonfuls of honey and a generous splash of port wine.

During the seder, my charoset received wild compliments all around.

"Who made this?" my father asked, clearly pleased. Without hesitation, my mother told him I had done so. When asked for my secret, I proudly answered, "Good port."

I don't think it's a stretch to suggest that my hands-on involvement, combined with the warm, welcoming embrace of my efforts, contributes to my love of Passover, the holiday most deeply embedded in the Jewish consciousness.

Though its earliest origins may be as a spring festival, and to be sure, many elements of the spring agricultural celebration remain, those elements gradually evolved into the eight-day holiday we celebrate today during the month of April.

In celebrating Passover, we fulfill the injunction "Remember this day, on which you went free from Egypt, the house of bondage, how the Lord freed you from it with a mighty hand." (Exodus 13:3)

The theme of a journey from subjugation to freedom is at the heart of the Passover story, and there is a strong emphasis on repeating the liberation story every year and to each generation. This stern direction to remember

our own story of liberation and keep it alive across generations lifts it into universal resonance.

The Exodus from Egypt is not to be seen as a one-time historical occurrence with a beginning and an end: oppression, struggle, victory. It is not only those slaves, but all slaves, that concern us; not only that struggle, but all struggles. Each generation must learn anew how to overcome the wrongs of the world; the job will never be done. Children will not be born into a perfect world created for them by their parents. They can only continue to hold the torch, and their parents' role is to teach them how to carry on the fight for justice. That is why the Passover ritual is central to Judaism. It is so crucial that whoever does not keep it, the Bible tells us, will be cast out and will no longer be considered a part of Israel.

In other words, this is the premise of Judaism: If you are to be a part of the people, you must struggle to maintain or realize freedom all your life.

Philanthropist Edgar M. Bronfman, formerly CEO of the Seagram Company Ltd., was the foundation chairman of the international board of governors of Hillel and also president of the World Jewish Congress. From the author's posthumously published book "Why Be Jewish: A Testament." Copyright (c) 2016 by WBJ Publications, LLC. Reprinted by permission of Twelve/Hachette Book Group, New York, NY. All rights reserved.

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Shmura matzah for Passover: The real reason it's so expensive

By Uriel Heilman

NEWYORK (JTA)—It costs more per pound than filet mignon. It might be burnt or taste like cardboard. It's so delicate it often breaks in the box, rendering it unfit for Passover ritual use.

Yet every year, Jews from Brooklyn to Bnei Brak line up to fork over their hard-earned money to buy boxes and boxes of the stuff.

This isn't your regular box of Streit's matzah. We're talking, of course, about handmade shmura matzah: the artisanal, disc-shaped matzahs considered extra special because the ingredients are "guarded" against leavening, or chametz, not just from the time the wheat is ground into flour, but from before the wheat is even harvested. "Shmura" is Hebrew for guarded.

The extra level of scrutiny—and the labor-intensive process required to make handcrafted matzah—is largely what accounts for its high price: anywhere from \$20 to \$60 for a single pound.

"The amount of hours of labor going into this between me and my staff is incomparable," said Yisroel Bass, who runs a farm in Goshen, New York, that produces organically grown shmura matzah

(\$34 per pound for regular shmura, \$37 for spell).

"Renting out a bakery costs a lot of money—the space and the staff. Equipment breaks every year. Every farm has its expenses, and organic farms end up having more overhead. We can't buy the synthetic fertilizer; we have manure," Bass told JTA. "And God forbid I have a bad year and the rabbi comes and says the wheat is no good, I just spent a whole lot of time and money on a product nobody wants. The cost has to reflect that."

Despite its price—and, some say, its taste—there's a thriving market for handmade shmura matzah (there's also machine-made shmura, which is cheaper and usually square but more strictly scrutinized than regular matzah). Many observant Jews won't use anything other than handmade shmura matzah on their seder table. Some won't eat non-shmura anytime during Passover. The same Jews who light expensive olive oil menorahs on Hanukkah rather than wax candles or buy premium etrogs for Sukkot will lay out extra cash before Passover to buy handmade shmura matzah. (The practice of going above and beyond is known as "hidur mitzvah," beautifying the commandment.)

"For the consumer, it is an opportunity to purchase the only sacred food that we have today in our faith," said Rabbi Shmuel Herzfeld of Ohev Sholom synagogue in Washington, D.C. "It is a bargain. Buy less brisket and more shmura matzah."

Mitchell Weitzman, a lawyer from Baltimore, says shmura matzah has sentimental value.

"There is just a sense of authenticity about having shmura matzah on the table," Weitzman said. "It's a feeling more than anything else—certainly more than serving up Passover-style Fruit Loops the next morning."

Others say they like the taste and eat it year round, stocking up right after Passover when the price drops dramatically owing to reduced demand.

"I keep a box of shmura matzah in the trunk of my car," said Tali Aronsky, a public relations doyenne who lives in Israel. "Keeps crispy in all weather and great in a pinch."

Religious Jews consider shmura matzah baked after midday on the day before Passover—known as "matzot mizvah"—as especially meritorious to eat, and the matzah is priced accordingly. At the Satmar Bakery in the Williamsburg section of Brook-



Uriel Heilman

Every shmura matzah is inspected for quality and adherence to kosher standards before it is boxed.

lyn, a pound of the Passover eve-baked stuff retails for \$60. The line of customers at the Rutledge Street store usually snakes around the block.

The Satmar Bakery employs a number of stringencies rare even in the world of shmura matzah. It harvests its wheat in Arizona, where the dry climate helps guard against accidental leavening (moisture precipitates leavening).

Matzah farmers in the

Northeast typically harvest their wheat crop in May or June—around the Shavuot holiday (also called Hag Habikurim, which means Festival of the First Fruits). The wheat is plucked after the kernels start to harden but before they sprout new shoots. Kosher supervisors monitor the grain even as it's growing to make sure the wheat isn't sprouting.

From the time it is picked until being milled months later, the wheat must be

guarded and stored in a climate-controlled environment. Too moist, it could become chametz. Too dry, it will fail to bake properly. At the Yiddish Farm in upstate New York, Bass says he uses fans and computer monitoring to bring the moisture level down to the desired 11-12 percent level.

After the wheat is milled into flour—also under close supervision—the baking process may begin.

How Never Again evolved from a Holocaust slogan to a universal call for [fill in the blank]

By Emily Burack

(JTA)—After a gunman took the lives of 17 students and staff at their high school in Parkland, Florida, students there launched a national campaign to promote gun control. They called for a major protest in Washington, D.C., on March 24, and are encouraging similar protests and student walkouts across the country.

And they took a name for their campaign, #NeverAgain, that has long been linked to Holocaust commemoration.

Parkland junior Cameron Kasky is credited with coining the hashtag. A Twitter account for the movement, NeverAgainMSD, is described as "For survivors of the Stoneman Douglas Shooting, by survivors of the Stoneman Douglas Shooting."

Some supporters of the students' efforts are put off by their use of Never Again. Lily Herman, writing in Refinery29, said "it's very uncomfortable to watch a term you've used to talk about your family and people's own heritage and history be taken away overnight."

Malka Goldberg, a digital communications specialist in Maryland, tweeted, "When I saw they're using #NeverAgain for the campaign it bothered me, b/c many Jews strongly [associate] that phrase w/ the Holocaust specifically. For a second it felt like cultural appropriation, but I doubt the kids knew this or did it intentionally."

Hasia Diner, a professor of American Jewish history at

New York University, is unfazed by the students' use of the phrase. While some may object to the phrase Never Again being reappropriated for gun control, it "does not mean that reaction is appropriate or reasonable," she told JTA.

While some have traced the phrase to the Hebrew poet Isaac Lamdan's 1926 poem "Masada" ("Never shall Masada fall again!"), its current use is more directly tied to the aftermath of the Holocaust. The first usage of Never Again is murky, but most likely began in postwar Israel. The phrase was used in secular kibbutzim there in the late 1940s; it was used in a Swedish documentary on the Holocaust in 1961.

But the phrase gained currency in English thanks in large part to Meir Kahane, the militant rabbi who popularized it in America when he created the Jewish Defense League in 1968 and used it as a title of a 1972 book-length manifesto. As the head of the American Jewish Committee, Sholom Comay said after Kahane's assassination in November 1990, "Despite our considerable differences, Meir Kahane must always be remembered for the slogan Never Again, which for so many became the battle cry of post-Holocaust Jewry."

For Kahane, Never Again was an implicitly violent call to arms and a rebuke of passivity and inactivity. The shame surrounding the alleged passivity of the Jews in the face of their destruction became a cornerstone of the JDL. As Kahane said, "the motto Never Again does not

mean that 'it' [a holocaust] will never happen again. That would be nonsense. It means that if it happens again, it won't happen in the same way. Last time, the Jews behaved like sheep."

Kahane used Never Again to justify acts of terror in the name of fighting anti-Semitism. In the anthem of the Jewish Defense League, members recited, "To our slaughtered brethren and lonely widows: Never again will our people's blood be shed by water, Never again will such things be heard in Judea."

Later, however, Kahane's violent call for action was adapted by American Jewish establishment groups and Holocaust commemoration institutions as a call for peace, tolerance and heeding the warning signs of genocide.

These days, when the phrase is used to invoke the Holocaust, it can be either particular or universal. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu tends toward the particular when he uses it to speak about the need for a strong Jewish state in the wake of the Holocaust.

"I promise, as head of the Jewish state, that never again will we allow the hand of evil to sever the life of our people and our state," he said in a speech at the site of the former Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp marking International Holocaust Memorial Day in 2010.

But Netanyahu has also used the phrase in its universal sense of preventing all genocides. After visiting a memorial to the victims of the Rwanda genocide in

2010, Netanyahu and his wife, Sara, wrote in the guestbook, "We are deeply moved by the memorial to the victims of one history's greatest crimes—and reminded of the haunting similarities to the genocide of our own people. Never again."

Then-President Barack Obama also used the phrase in its universal sense in marking International Holocaust Remembrance Day in 2011.

"We are reminded to remain ever-vigilant against the possibility of genocide, and to ensure that Never Again is not just a phrase but a principled cause," he said in a statement. "And we resolve to stand up against prejudice, stereotyping, and violence—including the scourge of anti-Semitism—around the globe."

That's similar to how the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum uses the phrase. In choosing the name Never Again as the theme of its 2013 Days of Remembrance, it used the term as a call to study the genocide of the Jews in order to respond to the "warning signs" of genocides happening anywhere.

And Elie Wiesel, the Holocaust survivor and author who came to be associated with the phrase, also used it in the universal sense.

"'Never again' becomes more than a slogan: It's a prayer, a promise, a vow ... never again the glorification of base, ugly, dark violence," the Nobel laureate wrote in 2012.

Never Again is a phrase that keeps on evolving. It was used in protests against the Muslim ban and in support of refugees, in remembrance of

Japanese internment during World War II and recalling the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. And now the phrase is taking on yet another life: in the fight for gun control in America.

Shaul Magid, a professor of Jewish studies at Indiana University who is presently a visiting scholar at the Center for Jewish History in New

York, told JTA, "For [Kahane], Never Again was not 'this will not happen again because we will have a country' but 'we Jews will never be complacent like we were during the war.' That is, for Kahane, Never Again was a call to militancy as the only act of prevention. In Parkland it is a call for gun control. In a way, a call for anti-militancy."

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Weekly roundup of world briefs from JTA

David Friedman rips PA for not condemning deadly attacks on 3 Israelis. Abbas calls the ambassador 'son of a dog.'

JERUSALEM (JTA)—The U.S. ambassador to Israel, David Friedman, criticized the Palestinian Authority for not condemning two terror attacks in recent days that left three Israelis dead.

Later Monday, at the opening of a Palestinian leadership meeting, P.A. President Mahmoud Abbas called Friedman a "son of a dog" and a "settler" after noting that the ambassador views settlements as legitimate and supported them as a private citizen, The Times of Israel reported.

"Son of a dog" is a mild pejorative in Arabic, according to The Jerusalem Post.

Friedman responded while at an anti-Semitism conference in Jerusalem using the term "son of a bitch," The Jerusalem Post reported. He added: "Anti-Semitism or political discourse? I leave this up to you."

Friedman had posted his original remarks on Twitter very early Monday morning.

"Tragedy in Israel. 2 young soldiers, Netanel Kahalani and Ziv Daos, murdered in the North, and father of 4, Adiel Kolman, murdered in Jerusalem, by Palestinian terrorists. Such brutality and no condemnation from the PA! I pray for the families and the wounded—so much sadness," he wrote.

Kolman was stabbed by a Palestinian assailant from the West Bank on Sunday afternoon and succumbed to his injuries that night. Hundreds attended his funeral Monday morning in the West Bank settlement of Kochav HaShachar.

Kahalani and Daos were killed in a car-ramming attack in the West Bank on Friday in which two other soldiers were seriously injured.

Last month, Friedman in a tweet accused unnamed Palestinian leaders of praising a terror attack that left a West Bank rabbi dead. A spokesman for Hamas had praised the murder of Rabbi Itamar Ben Gal; no members of the Palestinian Authority praised the attack.

Ronald Lauder, in rare criticism, rebukes Netanyahu over settlements and Orthodox hegemony

WASHINGTON (JTA)—Ronald Lauder, the president of the World Jewish Congress, said Israeli government policies threaten the country's democratic character and even its existence.

Openly breaking with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in an op-ed published Monday in The New York Times, Lauder also pressed hard for a two-state solution—a significant stance because the cosmetics billionaire has the ear of President Donald Trump, who is about to unveil a Middle East peace proposal.

Trump has said he is agnostic about whether two states is the preferred outcome for Israel and the Palestinians, and Netanyahu over the past year has retreated from endorsing two states.

Much of the column was

an exhortation of Netanyahu's policy in terms more commonly heard on the pro-Israel left, including the argument that Israel cannot be both a Jewish state and a democracy unless it relinquishes control of the lives of the Palestinians living in the West Bank.

"The Jewish democratic state faces two grave threats that I believe could endanger its very existence," Lauder wrote.

"The first threat is the possible demise of the two-state solution. I am conservative and a Republican, and I have supported the Likud party since the 1980s. But the reality is that 13 million people live between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. And almost half of them are Palestinian."

Lauder alluded to his closeness to Trump and to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, and implicitly chided Netanyahu for his repeated claims that the only thing obstructing peace is Palestinian recalcitrance.

"President Trump and his team are wholly committed to Middle East peace," Lauder said. "Contrary to news media reports, senior Palestinian leaders are, they have personally told me, ready to begin direct negotiations immediately."

Lauder also objected to the control that the Orthodox in Israel have over a range of issues including marriage and organized prayer at the Western Wall.

"By submitting to the pressures exerted by a minority in Israel, the Jewish state is alienating a large segment of the Jewish people," he said. "The crisis is especially pronounced among the younger generation, which is predominantly secular."

Lauder was close to Netanyahu for decades, backing him during his first run for prime minister in 1996 and defending him in Diaspora arenas. Over the past several years, there have been signs that they have grown apart, stemming from Lauder's refusal seven years ago to block a report unflattering to Netanyahu and his wife, Sara, that was broadcast on an Israeli television channel in which Lauder had a part ownership stake.

Lauder, chairman emeritus of the Estée Lauder cosmetic empire and president of the World Jewish Congress since 2007, has also been one of the most consistent voices of support for Trump in the Jewish community. The two have been friends since the 1980s, when they both emerged as influential moguls on the New York political and social scenes.

In 2001, Lauder, then chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, the foreign policy umbrella for the Jewish community, drew sharp criticism from the body's constituent groups when he appeared at a rally in Israel against the then government's proposed peace plan and its concessions to the Palestinians.

Israeli mayor refuses to deliver remarks in Poland censored under new Holocaust law

JERUSALEM (JTA)—In perhaps the first direct test of Poland's new Holocaust rhetoric law, an Israeli mayor pulled out of a ceremony there claiming censorship.

Eli Dukorsky, mayor of the northern Israeli city of Kiryat Bialik, was to deliver a speech in the Polish town of Radomsko to Israeli high school students. He canceled his participation in Monday's ceremony rather than deliver a speech he said was censored, Hadashot news first reported. Radomsko and Kiryat Bialik are sister cities.

The speech, which had been provided to Radomsko authorities on Friday so it could be translated into Polish, was changed in accordance with a controversial new law that criminalizes claims that the Polish nation or state was responsible for Nazi crimes.

Dukorsky was asked to omit parts of his speech in which he referred to Poles who turned Jews over to the Nazis, as well as the number of Jews murdered by Poles. The mayor also was asked to substitute the word Ukrainians for Poles when taking about complicity and use the term German Nazis instead of Nazis, according to the report.

He reportedly asked Israel's Foreign Ministry if he should deliver the censored speech and was told it was not recommended.

"We reject any attempt at censorship," Foreign Ministry spokesman Emmanuel Nahshon told Hadashot. "We support the mayor's right to deliver his speech as he planned and to not leave out any word, not even a single letter."

Dukorsky later delivered his original speech to the Israeli students in a private ceremony. He told the students about the censorship controversy.

Violators of the law that went into effect at the beginning of the month could face up to three years in prison, though government officials say prosecution under the law is unlikely.

President Andrzej Duda signed the controversial legislation last month after both houses of parliament passed the measure. Duda also sent law for review to his country's Constitutional Tribunal, which has yet to issue a ruling.

Critics of the law include Israeli leaders, Yad Vashem, the U.S. State Department and Jewish groups.

European countries reportedly propose plan to keep US in Iran nuclear deal

(JTA)—Several European countries reportedly have proposed new sanctions on Iran in a bid to keep the United States in the 2015 nuclear deal.

The new European sanctions would punish Iran for its ballistic missiles that it publicly tested and its interference in Syria's civil war, according to a confidential document seen by Reuters.

In January, the Trump administration said it would halt providing sanctions relief to Iran under the deal by May 12 unless the European powers that signed the

agreement in July 2015 agreed to "fix the terrible flaws." The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action between Iran and six world powers—Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the United States—could collapse if the U.S. pulls out.

The joint document by Britain, France and Germany said they were engaged in "intensive talks with the Trump administration to achieve a clear and lasting reaffirmation of U.S. support for the (nuclear) agreement beyond May 12," Reuters reported.

Foreign ministers of European Union countries were set to discuss the proposal on Monday in a closed door meeting, Reuters reported, citing an unnamed diplomat.

The document also indicates that the European powers would not be breaking the terms of the nuclear deal by adopting new sanctions that are not nuclear-related and that new sanctions are justified because Iran "did not commit further to stop undertaking ballistic missile destabilizing activities" under the nuclear agreement.

Meanwhile, on Sunday, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., in an interview on the CBS news program "Face the Nation" said he thinks that President Donald Trump will pull the U.S. out of the Iran deal in May.

"Right now it doesn't feel like it's gonna be extended," Corker said. "I think the president likely will move away from it, unless our European counterparts really come together on a framework. And it doesn't feel to me that they are."

Corker added that he did not think the United States pulling out of a nuclear deal with Iran would affect possible negotiations with North Korea over its nuclear weapons program.

Israeli father of 4 dies of wounds in Jerusalem stabbing attack

JERUSALEM (JTA)—An Israeli civilian guard stabbed by a Palestinian assailant in Jerusalem has died of his wounds.

Adiel Kolman, 32, a father of four from the West Bank settlement of Kochav HaShachar, succumbed to his injuries on Sunday night in the hospital. He was a civilian security guard but was unarmed and not on the job when he was stabbed several times in his upper body that afternoon in the Old City.

Kolman had worked in the archaeological digs at the City of David for the past five years, according to The Times of Israel.

The stabber, who was first identified as a Turkish national visiting Israel, was later identified as Abd al-Rahman Bani Fadel, 28, a Palestinian man from a northern West Bank village near Nablus. He was shot and killed at the scene by an Israel Police officer.

Fadel had entered Jerusalem using a five-day permit that allowed him to look for work, according to the Israel Security Agency, or Shin Bet. The father of two, his brother and uncle are part of Hamas' leadership in the West Bank, Haaretz reported. He was not

active in Hamas, however, according to the newspaper.

Hamas praised the attack, saying it was an action to mark 100 days since the Trump administration recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital and announced it would move the U.S. Embassy there. Palestinian groups, including Hamas, had designated Friday as a Day of Rage to protest the announcement.

Parts of the Old City were closed down after the attack.

"Four more children lost their father last night. For the bereaved the pain is unbearable," Israel's president, Reuven Rivlin, said in a statement. He called the attack "brutal and abhorrent."

The attack comes two days after two Israeli soldiers were killed and two left in serious condition in a Palestinian car-ramming attack in the West Bank.

Keith Ellison says critics pressing him on Farrakhan ties are trying to divide blacks and Jews

WASHINGTON (JTA)—Rep. Keith Ellison, the deputy chairman of the Democratic Party, said he has never had a relationship with Louis Farrakhan, the virulently anti-Semitic leader of the Nation of Islam.

He accused critics who are pressing him to explain his relationship to Farrakhan of trying to divide Jews and blacks, but also only alluded to his longtime association with the Nation of Islam.

"I do not have and have never had a relationship with Mr. Farrakhan, but I have been in the same room as him," Ellison, D-Minn., wrote over the weekend on Medium, the blogging website.

"The right's attempt to split the Jewish and Black communities is not going to work," he said. "Now more than ever, when the right-wing is working to divide us by skin color, faith traditions and by our place of birth, human solidarity is critical to seeing us through this perilous time."

Ellison, the first Muslim elected to Congress, said his encounters with Farrakhan since Ellison's election to Congress in 2006 have been perfunctory, if that.

"About a decade ago, he and I had a brief, chance encounter in Washington, D.C.," Ellison said, an apparent reference to a video that emerged recently of Farrakhan and Ellison in the same room at a mosque in Virginia's Washington suburbs.

"In 2013, I attended a meeting in New York City with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and nearly 50 others where I advocated for the release of an American political prisoner," Ellison said, referring to reports that recently re-emerged of the dinner in New York, which was held during the U.N. General Assembly. "I didn't know Mr. Farrakhan would be there and did not speak to him at the event."

Ellison also for the first time unequivocally denied Farrakhan's claim that the two met in a Washington hotel room in 2015 or 2016.

"Contrary to recent reports, I have not been in

any meeting with him since then," he said, referring to the 2013 U.N. gathering, "and he and I have no communication of any kind."

Ellison condemned Farrakhan's anti-Semitism, referring to the letter he wrote to Minnesota's Jewish community in 2006 denouncing Farrakhan, the Nation of Islam and anti-Semitism.

"In a speech just last month he again attacked Jewish people with intolerant and divisive language," he said, referring to a Farrakhan speech that drew attention because a leader of the Women's March was present.

Jewish Democrats welcomed Ellison's posting as well as other statements from African-American lawmakers whom conservatives have targeted in recent weeks for alleged ties with Farrakhan.

"Ellison's statement leaves no ambiguity that he does not accept Farrakhan's hateful and divisive preaching and we appreciate him reiterating this conviction. We also have been pleased to read similarly unsolicited statements from Reps. Barbara Lee (D-CA) and Gregory Meeks (D-NY) in recent weeks," said a statement from the Jewish Democratic Council of America.

In the Medium article, Ellison only alludes to his own longtime relationship with the Nation of Islam.

"If you are a Black man from my generation, you remember the march," he said, referring to the 1995 Million Man March initiated by Farrakhan. "I helped organize the march in my local community in Minneapolis. And I marched in it, along with civil rights leaders like Rosa Parks and Jesse Jackson."

Ellison's affiliation with the Nation of Islam lasted about a decade, and he was advocating for the group as late as 1998.

Mayim Bialik meets Israeli president in Jerusalem

JERUSALEM (JTA)—Israel's president welcomed American actress Mayim Bialik to his residence in Jerusalem.

On Sunday, Reuven Rivlin told Bialik that he had heard so much from his grandchildren about her, her work as an actress and her strong support for Israel. The star of the hit television series "The Big Bang Theory" is in Israel to participate in the Global Forum for Combating Anti-Semitism, which starts Monday in Jerusalem.

"My family came to live in Israel when I was born, and they lived in a few places around the country, so I grew up with a strong Zionist identity," she told Rivlin.

Bialik, 41, has a doctorate in neuroscience and plays neuroscientist Amy Fowler-Farrakhan on her show. A divorced mother of two sons, she was raised Reform and now practices Modern Orthodoxy. In many interviews she has described herself as a Zionist and has family living in Israel.

Earlier this month, Bialik asked her followers on Facebook to nominate her to light the torch reserved for a rep-

Hamas mouthpiece calls for new suicide attacks against Israel

(MEMRI via JNS)—Marking the 22nd anniversary of the Jaffa Road bus bombings, perpetrated in 1996 by Hamas, the movement's military wing, the 'Izz Al-Din Al-Qassam Brigades, posted on its website a special supplement devoted to these attacks.

The bombings, dubbed "The Holy Revenge" by Hamas, were carried out in retaliation for the Jan. 5, 1996, killing of senior Hamas operative Yahya Ayyash, who was responsible for several other suicide attacks. The special online supplement included two long articles about their planning and execution, a review of each one, photographs of their aftermath and a video documenting one of them.

Following publication of the supplement, Mustafa Al-Sawwaf, a columnist for the Hamas mouthpiece, published an article calling for the renewal of suicide attacks against Israel.

The Special Supplement On The Al-Qassam Website: Articles In Praise Of The 1996 Bus Bombings

The special supplement on the Al-Qassam Brigades website included two long articles in which Hassan Salameh, the Al-Qassam commander who masterminded the attacks and is incarcerated in Israel, describes in detail how they were planned and executed, including the recruitment of the suicide bombers. Salameh praises the martyrs and the attacks they perpetrated, and especially their love of jihad and their willingness to sacrifice their lives.

In the first article, Salameh is quoted as saying: "This is a story about the love of sacrifice of Al-Qassam members who knew the path and stayed on it, and bequeathed to those who came after them a jihad that still continues..."

Today, we remember the heroes of these operations, the martyrs whom Allah chose after they gained the honor of perpetrating large-scale attacks."

In the second article, Salameh is quoted as saying: "The mission of the martyrdom-seeker, Al-Qassam Brigades member Majdi Abu Warda, was to board the number 18 bus [in Jerusalem] with a journalist's bag on his back, loaded with explosives... Later we agreed that the target of the next [attack] would again be the number 18 bus, in a challenge to the Israeli security forces and in order to ridicule them, since they didn't expect us to choose the same target again..."

Incendiary language: 'The Zionist Occupation Is Criminal'

Following the publication of the supplement, Mustafa Al-Sawwaf, a columnist for

the Hamas mouthpiece Al-Risala, called for the renewal of suicide attacks and wondered whether the publication of the supplement on the 'Izz Al-Din Al-Qassam website is an indication that they are about to be renewed.

He wrote: "Are we about to see actions similar to those carried out by the imprisoned commander Hassan Salameh? Is the [supplement] about the Holy Revenge attacks, published by the 'Izz Al-Din Al-Qassam Brigades, [aimed at] granting permission to the heroes of the West Bank to start renewing such attacks? Is this... the code word, following which we will witness the first suicide attack, one like those that shocked Israel and forced it to seriously re-think its treatment of the prisoners and the members of the resistance...?"

"Does the execution of the martyr [Yassin] Al-Saradih [killed on Feb. 22 while

attacking IDF soldiers in Jericho] mean that suicide attacks will be the headline of the coming period? Will we witness suicide attacks that will redeem the reputation of the quality attacks that shook the Zionist entity and can cause the leaders of the occupation, who call for the field execution of Palestinians, to think again?"

"The Zionist occupation is criminal, and criminals should be met with firm action, namely with suicide attacks against anything that is Zionist. If anyone objects that this [i.e. Israel] is a civilian society and that international law prohibits its suicide attacks against civilians, we should say: 'Where was the international law when Mohammed Abu Khdeir was kidnapped, tortured and murdered? Or when the Dawabsha family was burned? Where was the international law when 'Abd

Al-Fattah Al-Sharif [the Palestinian shot by IDF soldier Elor Azaria after knifing an Israeli soldier] was executed in Hebron? And where was it when the martyr Al-Saradih was executed? Is this a civilian society or a society in which everyone is armed?..."

"Those who shed crocodile tears over international law and humanism should be punishing the occupation and forcing it to obey [the international law] before they admonish the Palestinians who have nothing but their souls to sacrifice for the sake of the occupied homeland... The Palestinians should not be condemned for their actions even if they do violate international law, which is discriminatory and equates the victim with the murderer. When international law is just, and when those who follow it are fair-minded people, only then will Palestinians be bound by it."

JTA

From page 17A

representative of Diaspora Jewry during the opening Israel Independence Day ceremony on Mount Herzl.

At the Global Forum, she is scheduled to speak about her experiences as a Jewish and Zionist actress, and about the difficulties caused by a climate of anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism.

Other speakers scheduled for the forum, an initiative by Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora minister in the international struggle against anti-Semitism, include the president of Bulgaria, Rumen Radev; a former prime minister of France, Manuel Valls; Israel's education and Diaspora affairs

minister, Naftali Bennett; Israel's justice minister, Ayelet Shaked; and a former secretary-general of the United Nations cultural organization UNESCO, Irina Bokova.

Bernie Sanders helps launch global peace movement

WASHINGTON (JTA)—Sen. Bernie Sanders helped launch what purports to be a global peace movement on the anniversary of the Iraq War, which he said precipitated much of the chaos in the Middle East.

Organizers of the Global Call for Peace said 11,000 callers from around the world, including Israel, participated in the Sunday launch.

The emphasis of the call, which was initiated by

MoveOn.org, a U.S. left-wing activist group, was on the tensions between the Koreans, but speakers also noted that it was the 15th anniversary of the Iraq War.

Sanders, I-Vt., the first Jewish candidate to win major-party nominating contests when he ran for the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination, made what he said were the failures of that

war the centerpiece of his appeal to join the movement.

"The war in Iraq was a foreign policy blunder of enormous magnitude," he said, describing the ensuing chaos in Iraq and consequently the civil war in neighboring Syria and the spread of the Islamic State terrorist group, or ISIS.

"Had it not been for the Iraq War, ISIS would almost certainly not exist," Sanders said.

"It undermined American diplomatic efforts to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict."

Sanders was among four speakers who counseled peaceful mass protests and online actions. Two others addressed the Korea crisis, lauding President Donald Trump for agreeing to meet with Kim Jong Un, the leader of North Korea, but also fretting that Trump could make good on

his hints that he would launch a war to denuclearize North Korea should talks fail.

Among the groups represented on the call was Zazim, a left-wing activist group in Israel. An email said Jewish Voice for Peace, a group that backs the movement to boycott Israel, was also among the participating organizations, but no representative of JVP spoke up during the call.

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66	E	B	A	N		67	E	M	O	R	68	W	I	N	O	S											
69	N	U	T	S		70	D	O	T	E	71	S	C	A	M	S											

1	2	5	3	8	7	6	4	9
6	3	8	4	1	9	2	5	7
9	4	7	5	6	2	3	1	8
3	8	9	1	7	4	5	6	2
4	1	6	9	2	5	8	7	3
7	5	2	6	3	8	4	9	1
2	6	4	7	9	3	1	8	5
5	9	3	8	4	1	7	2	6
8	7	1	2	5	6	9	3	4

Tobin

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and arguing that the two PLO offices in the United States don't constitute enough of a reason to allow the victims to sue. If the high court heeds the Solicitor General's plea, then not only will the PLO be off the hook for the damages, but it will effectively render the terrorism act null and void.

That has raised a storm of protest from some pro-Israel activists, including the Zionist Organization of America, which has vociferously protested the stand of the Justice Department.

Why is Trump betraying his principles in this fashion?

It's hard to give a definitive answer for any decision made by the Trump administration. It's entirely possible that Trump—an absentee

president who is allergic to deep dives into procedure, details and the nuts-and-bolts of government decision-making—had no idea that his administration was going to side with the PLO.

That may also be true of U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who when pressed about the issue during the course of an interview with Breitbart.com's Joel Pollack seemed not to be familiar with the case.

The ominous silence of the State Department, which has always been opposed to efforts to hold the Palestinians accountable, on the case may also indicate that its influence—and those within the executive branch that always oppose allowing Americans to sue foreign governments—may be at work.

Then again, Trump's lingering desire to do broker the "ultimate deal" of a Middle East peace agreement—a task he has delegated to son-in-law and senior adviser Jared Kushner—may also be behind a decision that will help keep the P.A. happy and not threaten its finances.

But whether you want to blame this on Trump's massive ego, his son-in-law's vain hopes for negotiations (which every sensible person knows are already doomed because of the P.A.'s intransigent refusal to end and admit defeat in their century-old war on Zionism) or the loyalty of the permanent bureaucracy in the Justice and the State departments to the failed policies of the past, the fact remains that this is a terrible mistake.

The Solicitor General's

stand is contradicted by the efforts of many members of both parties in the House and the Senate to stand up for the Anti-Terrorism Act. The critics are pointing out that if the PLO prevails, then it will reinforce exactly the same violent policies that make peace impossible.

That isn't acceptable and shouldn't be allowed.

Trump and Sessions need to wake up to the implications of this decision and reverse it. If they don't—or if the high court allows the reversal of the jury's decision to stand—it will ring the death knell for any accountability of terror in the courts.

Jonathan S. Tobin is editor in chief of JNS—the Jewish News Syndicate. Follow him on Twitter at: @jonathans_tobin.

Stump

From page 8A

rabbi responded: "Exactly! In Judaism, we're allowed to ask four questions: why we lean, why we eat bitter herbs, why we're dipping and why we're eating matzah—these are in the Haggadah. But yours is the fifth question, and some questions have to be stored away in the realm of emunah (faith)."

• Opening the door for Elijah. Hopefully, some of your guests will remain awake long enough to welcome the prophet before the drinking of the fourth cup of wine. The prayer that begins, "Pour out Your fury on the nations," from the 79th psalm and the welcoming of Elijah the Prophet are traced to post-Crusades 12th-century France, a time of danger for the Ashkenazi

world. So said Ruth Langer, professor of Jewish studies and associate director of the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning at Boston College. "The prayer reminds us that it's G-d, and not us, who takes vengeance on our enemies," adds Langer. "There is excitement and hope in opening the door for Elijah, showing our faith that G-d the redeemer is also our protector."

• The Afikoman. Half a matzah broken early in the seder, the afikoman is divvied up and served as the very last thing eaten of the night. Over the generations, this humble bit of matzah has often gained star status as an "evil eye" deterrent or a segula ("charm") for long life. In some families, the children steal and hide the afikoman, and the leader must find (or buy back) the

prized possession, without which no Passover seder can be complete. In other homes, the leader hides the afikoman. That's the way Daniel Dressin's family operates, and the 10-year-old from Owings Mills, Md., is gearing up for some successful negotiating this year. "It's fun competing against my brothers and cousins to try to find it," said Daniel, who when asked why it's hidden, suggests that "maybe it's like Moses was hidden when he was a baby." His mother, Rachel, had a more practical explanation: "It keeps the kids awake. And it definitely keeps them entertained."

By the way, here is a bonus question for your guests: What exactly is that mysterious (and expensive!) round, crisp shmurah matzah?

It is matzah monitored ("guarded") throughout the entire making and baking process by an observant Jew (and not a machine) to ensure that no leavening transpires.

Celebrity Jewish cookbook author Joan Nathan weighed in: "These so-called 'watched' matzo that we can buy today, round or oval-shaped, plus matzo meal made from these matzos with a kind of wooden mortar and pestle, used to be all matzo before the Age of Industrialization, when Manischewitz created a machine-made square matzo in the [United] States and earlier in France. Before, Passover people would go to a matzo oven, either in the synagogue or the community. And wealthy homeowners even had their own matzo ovens!"

No-Bake Strawberry Coconut Pie for Passover

By Sonya Sanford

(The Nosh via JTA)—I first tried raw vegan coconut cream pie years ago at Café Gratitude, one of the popular plant-based restaurants in Los Angeles. Café Gratitude is a quintessential healthy L.A. eatery. The menu features dishes with titles like “I am bountiful” and “I am cosmic” (which you are semi-forced to say out loud as written). Those dishes might include heirloom grains, fermented vegetables, turmeric or seaweed. The servers often have ethereally glowing skin and offer you an inspirational “word of the day” to think about when they take your order.

All new-agey West Coast things aside, the food is good and I have a soft spot for the place, especially when it comes to their dessert menu.

When Passover comes around, I look for desserts that could be enjoyed beyond the eight days of the holiday and do not involve matzah meal of any kind. We live in a golden era of grain-free dessert innovations, and in the past few years this wealth of creativity has greatly enhanced the offerings at my Passover table, including this riff on Café Gratitude’s vegan coconut cream pie. I’ve added strawberries for their brightness, both in color and taste, which complements the rich creaminess of the coconut.

This recipe is also easy to modify with your own favorite flavorings or ingredients. You could swap strawberries for another berry or a mix of berries. You could add a few tablespoons of cocoa powder to the filling and chocolate shavings to the garnish. Or you could add caramel and chopped nuts to the mix. Coconut is an easy base to enhance.

In all fairness, this dessert is a departure from the classic coconut cream pie you may be familiar with, and if you are a dessert traditionalist and like pies sugary and plenty sweet (not that there’s anything wrong with that), this may not be for you. What this does offer is a creamy, smooth, coconut-rich treat without grains, refined sugars, dairy or any baking required. It also offers a way to end a rich seder meal on a lighter note, and it sneakily satisfies both a wide range of potential dietary concerns as well as the laws of kashrut for Passover. And maybe, after a few bites, you might just feel slightly more bountiful and cosmic.

Ingredients:

For the crust:

coconut oil spray (or other cooking spray)

1 cup raw unsalted pecans

1/2 cup shredded unsweetened coconut

1/2 cup good quality dates, such as Medjool of Khadrawy (pitted and soaked in water for 10 minutes and drained)

big pinch of salt

For the filling:

1 cup raw unsalted cashews, soaked in water for 6-12 hours

3/4 cup sliced strawberries, fresh or thawed if frozen

1/2 cup coconut cream, refrigerated overnight (or use a can of refrigerated whole fat coconut milk and skim off the top layer of cream that solidifies)

1/4 cup coconut milk (or the remaining liquid from the can)

3 tablespoons light agave nectar, or your preferred sweetener

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

juice of 1/2 a lemon, about 2 tablespoons

pinch of salt

1/3 cup melted coconut oil

1/4 cup shredded unsweetened coconut

For the coconut whipped cream:

1 cup coconut cream, refrigerated overnight (or use a can of refrigerated whole fat coconut milk and skim off the top layer of cream that solidifies)

1 tablespoon agave syrup, or your favorite sweetener (sugar or maple syrup work fine)

1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

For the garnish:

sliced fresh strawberries

shredded coconut

Directions:

1. To make the crust: Spray a 9-inch springform pan or a pie pan with oil. Line the bottom of the pan with a round of parchment paper.

2. In a food processor, pulse the pecans, coconut, soaked dates and a pinch of salt together until the nuts are finely ground and the mixture forms a paste-like consistency and sticks together when pressed between your fingers. Press the raw crust into the pan in an even layer. Place the crust in the freezer to set while you make the filling.

3. To make the filling: Soak 1 cup of raw cashews for 6 hours or overnight. If you forget to soak your cashews ahead of time, you can cover them with boiling water and let them sit for 1 hour before using.

4. Combine the soaked cashews, fresh sliced strawberries, coconut cream, coconut milk, agave, vanilla extract, lemon juice and salt in a high-powered blender or food processor. Blend until smooth and creamy.

5. Add the melted coconut oil and blend until incorporated.



Add in the shredded coconut and pulse a few times until just mixed in; you still want that coconut texture.

6. Pour the filling into the crust. Place the pie back in the freezer and let it set for 2 hours or until very firm. Transfer to the refrigerator and store there until ready to garnish and serve. Can be made up to one day prior to serving.

7. Just before serving, make the coconut whipped cream. Make sure the coconut cream is very cold, and then combine all of the ingredients together and whip using an electric hand mixer or immersion blender until thick and whipped topping-like. If you find your coconut cream is too stiff, you can add a few tablespoons of liquid from the can to the cream. If it’s not whipping up and is too loose, you can place the mixture in the freezer in the mixing bowl for 15-30 minutes and try again. There are also many dairy-free whipped creams and toppings available to use if you prefer to skip this step.

8. Top the pie with the coconut whipped cream. Garnish with strawberries and shredded coconut and serve. Makes 6-8 servings.

Sonya Sanford is a chef, food stylist, and writer based out of Los Angeles.

The Nosh food blog offers a dazzling array of new and classic Jewish recipes and food news, from Europe to Yemen, from challah to shakshuka and beyond. Check it out at www.TheNosh.com.

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