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Happy Passover



Cinco de Mahj at COS



Co-chairs Debbie Bellinkoff (l) and Es Cohen stand behind auction items for the Cinco de Mahj event.

Mark your calendar for May 5, as Congregation Ohev Shalom's Sisterhood hosts its annual mahjong tournament. This year's event, Cinco de Mahj will have a festive slant.

The cost of the tournament is \$36 per person, and \$45 after April 26. The tournament will include snacks, a delicious lunch, a silent auction

with baskets filled with items such as restaurant gift cards, products, services and lots of fun items. New this year is a cash prize award for the top score. Registration begins promptly at 11 a.m. One round of mahjong will be played, followed by lunch, then two more rounds of mahjong. The new 2019 card will be used in this year's tournament.

The mahjong tournament is one of the Sisterhood's major fundraisers. All monies raised at the Cinco de Mahj tournament benefit the various children, family and older adult programs and services. Here are a few "Did You Know" examples of the many special ways the Sisterhood positively impacts the lives of our synagogue:



Participants in deep concentration at last year's mahjong tournament.

- Summer camp scholarships to assist families is more than \$2,500 in allocations

- Twice a year our students away at college receive wonderful boxes of goodies, and this represents more than \$2,000 in allocations

- Transportation for the students is provided to conventions, which amounts to \$2,000 in funding

- The Sisterhood provides High Holiday snacks for the Religious School students.

- FREE first-year USY dues to all bar and bat mitzvah students, representing \$2,000 of its budget

- For special events, the Sisterhood makes a contribution to the Yom Kippur Break Fast, gala and much, much more!

Come meet new friends, see "old" friends that you haven't seen in a while and have fun. The registration form can be found on Ohev Shalom's homepage at www.ohvshalom.org below the 'Join our Mailing List' section or contact co-chairs Debbie Bellinkoff at 407-739-7130 or Es Cohen at 407-765-6806.

The Jewish Academy of Orlando nurtures a culture of giving



Jewish Academy students raise money through their snack store and give to those in need, fulfilling a core value of the school.

Jewish Academy of Orlando cultivates a culture of giving back to the community and to those in need by supporting school-driven and student-led fundraisers, recognizing students for acts of giving, and opportunities for students to participate in community service projects.

From the youngest of ages to the school's alumni, the act of tzedakah (righteous acts of giving) is deeply rooted in the school's curriculum. Two favorite student activities are the kindergarten-managed Healthy Snack Store, which benefits Jewish Family Services of Orlando, and the second graders' Fun Run benefiting Habitat for Humanity.

The culture of giving extends beyond the classroom. Knesset, the school's

student-government organization, encourages giving to community and national organizations through fundraisers for organizations including Pet Alliance, Make-A-Wish Foundation, Red Cross, and St. Jude's Children's Hospital.

"One of our core values is that we are a caring community that gives back to those in need," stated Alan Rusonik, head of school. "We encourage our students to be grateful for their many blessings, and we give students of every age multiple opportunities to give back."

Part of the school's Jewish Values curriculum and a core value of the school is tikkun olam (repairing the world). Students are encouraged to give tzedakah on their own and are afforded the opportu-

nity each Friday at Kabbalat Shabbat. As well, each week, individual students are recognized for acts of kindness through the Mindful Mitzvot (commandments/good deeds) program. Often times, the children are recognized for their generosity in giving.

This culture of giving has grown organically through the student community. Following hurricanes Maria in Puerto Rico and Harvey in Texas, students initiated drives to benefit the Red Cross for those affected by the storms.

Even alumni keep the tradition of giving. Many alumni return and engage the school community to give as part of their b'nai mitzvah projects by holding fundraisers or food drives to benefit those in need. "We are committed to our

caring community," Rusonik added. "By creating this culture of giving, we are giving our students yet another tool to change the world."

Jewish Academy of Orlando serves central Florida students of all faiths from grades kindergarten through fifth. The school delivers a whole-child education fostering academic excellence and character education rooted in Jewish values. Jewish Academy of Orlando is accredited by the Florida Council of Independent Schools. Beginning in fall of 2019, the school will offer a transitional kindergarten. To learn more about Jewish Academy of Orlando, please visit: jewishacademyorlando.org or follow the school on Facebook [facebook.com/JewishAcademyOrlando](https://www.facebook.com/JewishAcademyOrlando).

Golf tournament supports Orlando Senior Help Desk

By Lisa Levine

Hit the greens for a good cause at the seventh annual Pavilion Golf Society golf tournament on Sunday, May 5, at the Rosen Shingle Creek Golf Club. Hosted by the Jewish Pavilion and benefiting the Orlando Senior Help Desk, this popular tournament offers golfers a mimosa breakfast followed by a round of golf on the resort's challenging Arnold Palmer-designed course.

After completing the 18 holes in teams of four, participants will be treated to a gourmet luncheon and can bid on exciting packages in a live auction. The money

raised helps support the Orlando Senior Help Desk, a free hotline offering guidance on choosing senior living options, home health services, elder law, hospice, adult day care and more. This service of the Jewish Pavilion assists all callers, regardless of religious affiliation, with caring and compassion.

Players and guests can also try their luck in a putting competition—with enticing grand prizes of a Mercedes car or Indian/Harley motorcycle. Anyone who attends the event can pay on-site to participate in the putting competition, even those who are not playing in the tournament. Contestants get two attempts to

make the putt for only \$20, with \$10 for each additional attempt. The competitions for the car and motorcycle are separate; rules will be detailed at the event.

Registration for the golf tournament costs \$130 per person or \$500 for a foursome. Tournament golfers each receive a \$35 Shingle Creek return play coupon. Tickets for non-golfing guests to attend the gourmet luncheon are also available for \$40. Participants have the option to make it a staycation with a special offer from the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort to enjoy a Friday- or Saturday-night stay for only \$159.

For local businesses, hole sponsorships are a great way to support the Orlando Senior Help Desk while promoting their brand and interacting with golfers as playing groups approach the sponsored tee. The sponsorships are available at attractive price points, starting at \$250 without players.

To learn more, call the Jewish Pavilion at 407-678-9363, or register online at JewishPavilion.org/2019-golf-tournament.



Golfers can get into the team spirit at the Jewish Pavilion Golf Tournament, which benefits Orlando Senior Help Desk.

And the Israeli prime minister is...

Because of the time frame of Israel's election on April 9, Heritage went to press (Wednesday morning, April 10) before the final results were announced. However, election results are available in the online edition of the newspaper.

The Trump team's Middle East peace plan: It's beginning to look a lot like one state

By Ron Kampeas

WASHINGTON (JTA)—Trump administration officials have been silent and notably leak-free about what exactly is in the Middle East peace plan that Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, is shaping—until now.

In speeches to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, it became clear that the plan will likely not accommodate a Palestinian state, or at least the sovereignty that attaches to statehood.

David Friedman, Trump's ambassador to Israel and one of three members of the peace team, in his AIPAC speech outlined why Israel should seize the opportunity of the still-to-be-seen peace plan: It allows Israel to maintain security control of the West Bank, and a future U.S. administration might not be so understanding.

"Can we leave this to an administration that may not understand the existential risk to Israel if Judea and Samaria are overcome by terrorists in the manner that

befell the Gaza Strip after the IDF withdrew from this territory?" he asked, using the preferred Israeli name for the West Bank. "Can we leave this to an administration that may not understand the need for Israel to maintain overriding security control of Judea and Samaria and a permanent defense position in the Jordan Valley?"

The Jewish Telegraphic Agency asked Jason Greenblatt, Trump's top Middle East negotiator and the third member of the Kushner peace team, whether this meant that Israeli control of the West Bank was in the deal, as opposed to a Palestinian state making its own defense and foreign policy decisions.

"I'm not going to address speculation of what may or may not be in the plan," he replied in an email. That was like his replies to many previous inquiries from reporters about anonymously leaked details. This time, however, the question was about on-the-record remarks by one of the plan's architects to a hall packed with 18,000 activists.

The next day, House Appropriations Chairwoman Nita Lowey, D-N.Y., asked Secretary of State Mike Pompeo three times if the Trump administration believed in the two-state solution. Each time he demurred.

Instead, Pompeo in his Hill testimony referred to the other big Israel and territory news: Trump's formal recognition of Israel's sovereignty in the Golan Heights, which like the West Bank was captured in the 1967 Six-Day War.

"We believe this increases the likelihood that we get resolution of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians," Pompeo said. "We think it speaks with the clarity that takes this away from any uncertainty about how we'll proceed."

Tamara Cofman Wittes, a top Middle East policy official in the Obama administration, said she was able to read two possible meanings into what Pompeo meant by "clarity."

"One is that [it] relates to the content of the Trump peace plan," suggesting

that the plan will recognize Israel's claim to at least part of the West Bank, said Cofman Wittes, a senior fellow in the Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution. "The other is that it relates to what will happen if the Trump peace plan is not accepted" by the Palestinians—the United States would greenlight an Israeli annexation.

(Spoiler alert: The Palestinians, already snubbing administration officials since Trump recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital in 2017, are not likely to accept a plan that keeps Israeli troops in the West Bank.)

Pompeo, asked whether the United States would now recognize other countries' annexation of occupied lands, said "absolutely not." (A number of pundits have said the Golan recognition could embolden Russia to do the same in Crimea.) However, in defending recognition of the Golan as Israeli territory, Pompeo seemed to set out the case Israel could invoke in annexing the West Bank.

"Israel was fighting a defensive battle to save its nation, and it cannot be the case that a U.N. resolution is a suicide pact," he told reporters Thursday, apparently referring to Security Council Resolution 242 immediately following the 1967 war, which established the land-for-peace principle in the Israeli-Arab conflict.

It was a message that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu echoed almost precisely the day before.

"There is a very important principle in international life," he said. "When you start wars of aggression, you lose territory, do not come and claim it afterwards. It belongs to us."

"It sounds like the Trump administration has no interest in advancing a contiguous completely sovereign Palestinian state," Dahlia Scheindlin, a policy fellow at Mitvim-The Israeli Institute for Regional Foreign Policies, told JTA.

That would be consistent with policies that Scheindlin said the Netanyahu government is advancing: expand-



U.S. Ambassador to Israel David Friedman speaks to AIPAC in Washington, D.C., on March 26, 2019.

ing existing settlements, creating greater access between the settlements and Israel within the Green Line, and limiting Palestinian construction of Area C of the West Bank, the area that is still under total Israeli control.

A version of this post first appeared in *The Tell*, Ron Kampeas' weekly newsletter on Jewish news from Washington. [Subscribe to it here.](#)

Greenblatt blasts Palestinian Authority, UN for financially rewarding terrorists

(JNS)—U.S. special envoy Jason Greenblatt blasted the Palestinian Authority and the United Nations for aiding and abetting the Palestinian financial payments towards terrorists and their families.

In a closed-door U.N. Security Council meeting on Friday, instigated by Indonesia and Kuwait, Greenblatt defended Israel's choice last month to reduce Palestinian tax revenues due to the P.A.'s "pay to slay" initiative, which has been a primary obstacle in peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, sources told *The Washington Free Beacon*.

The Trump administration's Mideast peace plan, which Greenblatt and oth-

ers have been crafting for almost the past couple years, is expected to be released after Israeli elections on April 9.

"The time has come to make it clear that the Palestinian Authority, if it aspires to the status of a government, it must behave like one," reportedly said Greenblatt. "It is unacceptable for the Palestinian Authority to pay these terrorists and their families a reward for criminal acts."

The United States was the only Security Council member to back the Israeli move while the rest called on the Jewish state to unfreeze and allocate the remaining tax revenues.

"It is entirely inappropriate to focus on Israel as the

source of this crisis," said Greenblatt. "It is the Palestinian Authority that has chosen to manufacture the current crisis."

"The Palestinian Authority is refusing to accept over \$150 million in revenue to protest the fact that \$11 million is being withheld, only to make a political point," he added. "Does that sound like a governing authority that is concerned with the welfare of its people?"

Senior Palestinian official Saeb Erekat slammed Greenblatt's remarks as "patronizing and disingenuous," and defended the payments.

"The welfare of thousands of families has now become at tool for the Israeli government and the Trump administration to dehu-

manize Palestinians, while whitewashing the effects of the Israeli occupation over millions of Palestinian lives," wrote Erekat on Sunday in *Haaretz*.

"Such payments are a social responsibility; they also contribute to the costs of reinserting released prisoners back into society, among other important considerations," he added.

Erekat also said that "the Palestinian leadership has taken a position of principle by not accepting Israeli piracy. We either receive all the money that under signed agreements is legitimately ours, or we won't accept it. No step will be taken that may legitimate such gangster-style tactics of the Israeli occupation."

Evangelical leader asks for investigation into Ilhan Omar



Laurie Cardoza-Moore

Laurie Cardoza-Moore has called on President Trump to have Ilhan Omar's connections to the subversive

Muslim Brotherhood thoroughly investigated.

"If an organization which seeks the demise of America has managed to infiltrate Congress, it might be time for the commander-in-chief to take action," Cardoza-Moore, president of Proclaiming Justice to The Nations and show host of the program "Focus On Israel," stated to 4,000 media professionals at the National Religious Broadcasters convention in California earlier this week.

"Tens of thousands of American patriots have signed our petition to have Ilhan Omar ousted from Congress over her anti-Semitism and connections to the subversive Muslim Brotherhood. I have personally requested

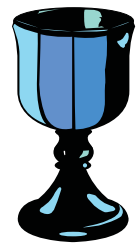
that the attorney general and speaker of the House investigate these ties; which pose a real threat to the security of America. We cannot afford to be silent, with terror supporters in Congress," she said.

In a direct message to the president, Cardoza-Moore added: "I want to thank you for having the courage to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem and recognizing Israel's rights to the Golan Heights. I am also making a plea; two weeks ago we petitioned Attorney General Barr to launch a full and thorough investigation into Ilhan Omar's ties to Muslim Brotherhood front groups and her fundraising activities for CAIR and Islamic Relief USA. We have also petitioned

Speaker Pelosi to remove Ilhan Omar from Congress because of these associations and her anti-Semitic attacks. President Trump, I am respectfully asking you, Sir, to charge AG Barr to execute this request. Ilhan Omar has repeatedly made anti-Semitic statements that could incite violence against our Jewish communities and the State of Israel."

Proclaiming Justice to The Nations, a 501c3 non-profit organization, was established to educate Christians about their biblical responsibility to stand with their Jewish brethren and Israel against the rise of global anti-Semitism. "Focus On Israel" reaches a global weekly audience of over 2 billion viewers.

A Happy and Peaceful Passover to all our friends



Andy, Karen, Nathaniel and Gabrielle Reiff

SONNY'S
BBQ LOCAL PITMASTERS SINCE 68

HAPPY PASSOVER
from your friends at Sonny's BBQ

Why does America support Israel?

By Jonathan Feldstein

While an array of recent controversies have developed from members of Congress around the U.S.' support of Israel, the fact is America is and was always pro-Israel. This is built on the foundation of early American leaders who understood the significance of Israel, based on common Judeo-Christian values and solid biblical imperative.

Of course, when the American founding fathers supported Israel, it was not based on the existence of a modern state. They understood that Israel (i.e., Jewish people) and the Land of Israel were inseparably linked. Long

before there was ever an Israel-Arab conflict, and when Moslem Ottomans controlled the Land of Israel, the U.S.'s founding fathers aspired to bless Israel and to restore Jewish sovereignty there.

It is legendary that minutes after Israel declared independence in 1948, U.S. President Harry Truman was the first to recognize the Jewish state. Since then, America has been solidly pro-Israel. However, according to Ilka Kreimendahl in "Peacemaker USA: The Role of the United States in the Arab-Israeli Conflict in the 1990s," long before Truman, America's support of Israel was unambiguous. In fact, he notes, the "first pro-Zionist declaration that

was ever made by an American president" came from U.S. President John Adams.

Two-hundred years ago this month, Adams wrote to a leader of the American Jewish community, Mordecai Noah: "I could find it in my heart to wish that you had been at the head of a hundred thousand Israelite's indeed as well-disciplined as a French army—marching with them into Judea & making a conquest of that country & restoring your nation to the dominion of it. For I really wish the Jews again in Judea an independent nation."

Adams was born in 1735, in a Puritan home. The Puritans saw parallels between themselves breaking away from England and the Jews' exodus from Egypt, wandering into the vast and unknown wilderness and reaching the promised land. For the Puritans, the Bible was their guide, and their playbook. They adopted biblical customs and even gave their children Hebrew names.

As a fledgling democracy, Adams and other early American leaders saw parallels between the civil values they held and which they set as

the standard for the United States, and values codified in the Bible.

Adams' admiration of the Jews and what they gave to the world was deep seeded. In 1808 he wrote, "They are the most glorious nation that ever inhabited this Earth. The Romans and their Empire were but a Bauble in comparison of the Jews. They have given religion to three quarters of the Globe and have influenced the affairs of Mankind more, and more happily, than any other Nation ancient or modern."

Early American support for Israel was not limited to Adams. Abraham Lincoln, who personally dreamt of visiting Israel, wrote that he hoped the oppression of Jews could be relieved by "restoring the [Jews] to their national home in Palestine...a noble dream and one shared by many Americans."

In subsequent generations before Israel's establishment as a state, similar bipartisan support was echoed by presidents as diverse as Teddy Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson and Herbert Hoover.

Support on page 18A

Another anti-Semite in the Democratic Party

By Stephen M. Flatow

(JNS)—He has engaged in "crude anti-Semitism," according to the Anti-Defamation League. He has "consistently impugned the loyalty of American Jews," said the American Jewish Congress. And he has compared Israel to the Nazis, which according to the U.S. State Department, is anti-Semitic.

Yet, irony of ironies, longtime Democratic Party official James Zogby has emerged as one of the most prominent voices in the party defending Congresswoman Ilhan Omar and denying that her remarks about Jews being disloyal were anti-Semitic.

Zogby is a longtime leader of various anti-Israel groups—first the Palestine Human Rights Campaign, then the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee and currently the Arab American Institute.

At the same time, he has also been prominent in Democratic Party leadership circles. He was deputy manager of Jesse Jackson's 1984 and 1998 presidential campaigns. In 1995, he was appointed co-convenor of the National Democratic Ethnic Coordinating Committee. He served as "Senior Advisor on Ethnic Outreach" for both Al Gore's presidential campaign in 2000 and Barack Obama's first presidential campaign, in 2008.

Since 2001, Zogby has been a member of the executive committee of the Democratic National Committee. In 2006, he was also named co-chair of the DNC's Resolutions Committee. As a member of that committee, in 2012 he objected to the insertion of language affirming that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and helped draft the pro-Palestinian language that appeared in the 2016 party platform.

After Minnesota Congresswoman Ilhan Omar recently accused Jews of being disloyal to America and paying members of Congress to support Israel, Zogby leaped to her defense. In a series of articles, interviews and a recent conference call for the news media, together with J Street president Jeremy Ben-Ami, Zogby has insisted that there was nothing anti-Semitic about Omar's statements, and that the whole controversy is the fault of racist Zionists.

"Because [Omar] has dared to challenge the way supporters of Israel have worked to silence debate on U.S. policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, she has become a victim of incitement and hate crimes, and the target of legislation meant to shame her," according to Zogby.

He says that Ms. Omar didn't slander Jews; she merely "challenged the power of AIPAC to intimidate politicians and silence debate on Israel/Palestine." As a consequence, the poor congresswoman has endured "shameful bigoted assaults on her as a Muslim woman."

Zogby has actually gone so far as to implicitly praise Omar's statements about Jews, characterizing her remarks as "the discussion Omar's courage has helped to open."

I wonder how much of this is related to Zogby's own history of making anti-Semitic remarks. Perhaps he sees Omar as a kindred spirit.

During the 1982 Lebanon War, Zogby compared Israel to the Nazis and described Israeli military actions against terrorists in southern Lebanon as "a Holocaust," according to the Anti-Defamation League. The official U.S. State Department definition of anti-Semitism includes "drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis."

In 1991, Henry Siegman, executive director of the American Jewish Congress, wrote that Zogby had "consistently impugned the loyalty of American Jews by suggesting that they put the interest of Israel ahead of the interests of the United States, and their lobbying activities in support of Israel subvert the democratic process. Such accusations are the standard fare of anti-Semitism."

In 1999, Zogby publicly charged that there were too many Jewish employees in the State Department. The ADL characterized his statement as "crude anti-Semitism."

All this is an addition to Zogby's long list of other outrageous statements, including accusing then-Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres of carrying out "state-sponsored terrorism"; praising Hezbollah terrorists as "the Lebanese armed resistance"; and justifying Palestinian terrorist attacks against Israel as "desperate acts of striking out against the master."

Not to mention such other lunatic statements by Zogby as his accusation that Israel "ethnically cleansed [the land] of Arabs" (when there are obviously still several million Arabs residing in Judea, Samaria and Gaza); and his recent declaration that celebrity chef Rachael Ray committed "cultural genocide" against the Palestinians because she referred to hummus as an Israeli food.

If the Democratic Party leadership wants to convince the public that it rejects Congresswoman Omar's statements, it should start by disowning James Zogby and removing him from all positions in the party. Having an unrepentant anti-Semite publicly defending an anti-Semitic congresswoman, while continuing to hold positions in the party leadership, isn't going to do the trick.

Stephen M. Flatow, an attorney in New Jersey, is the father of Alisa Flatow, who was murdered in an Iranian-sponsored Palestinian terrorist attack in 1995. His book, "A Father's Story: My Fight for Justice Against Iranian Terror," has just been published.

Don't eat off the seder plate

By Andrew Silow-Carroll

(JTA)—Every year at Passover, many Jews enjoy inviting non-Jewish guests to the seder, the big family meal during which they recount the tale of the Exodus. Such invitations are extended in a tradition of interfaith cooperation and the conviction that at least one person at the table should actually enjoy himself.

For non-Jews who might be intimidated by attending their first seder, we offer the following tips on seder customs and ways to avoid what Yiddish-speakers call a "tsimmes."

Tip #1: Avoid the tsimmes. The word is Yiddish slang for a fracas, but is also the name of a casserole made of sweet potato, carrots, dried fruit, honey and brown sugar. It has been known to induce diabetes between the soup course and the drive home.

Try to get a seat at the main table and not at the card table surrounded by folding chairs. This is known as the "Children's Table," or if the children are all grown, the "Cynical Cousins' Table."

Do not refer to the holiday as "The Passover." No Jew since Jesus has ever called it "The Passover."

The heart of the seder is the communal reading of the Haggadah, which tells the story of the Jews' liberation from Egypt in the same way that your hairdresser tells you about her weekend at Cabo: She'll eventually get to the point, but not without a few digressions.

You may be asked to read a passage from the Haggadah. Do not feel intimidated; there is no way you'll do this any worse than the people sitting at the Cynical Cousins Table.

You'll notice that the centerpiece of the seder table is a plate containing the following foods: a charred piece of meat, a blackened hard-boiled egg, a wilted lettuce leaf and a glob of what looks like industrial spackle. Do not eat any of these delicacies, no matter how tempting they appear.

Passover tells a specifically Jewish story, but its messages of faith and liberation are universal. There is no reason for you as a gentile to feel judged or looked-down upon. Unless you are Egyptian, then hoo-boy.

One of the evening's highlights is the singing of "The Four Questions." In this ancient recitation, the youngest guest inquires about the unusual customs performed only during the seder: for example, eating matzah, dipping our food and reclining on pillows. You'll notice that no one ever answers the questions. Welcome to my childhood.

About that matzah: To commemorate the haste in which they left Egypt, Passover requires that Jews only eat this cracker made from wheat that in its journey from field to supermarket has not been allowed to rise or acquire any discernible flavor. When "tasting" your first piece, remember to nod and smile and keep a full glass of water or other liquid nearby.

Do NOT compare matzah to a communion wafer, unless you actually enjoy long awkward silences.

During the seder, guests are each required to drink four cups of wine. This sounds like more fun than it is: The cups are parceled out over about eight hours and typically contain kosher wine.

Yes, there are good kosher wines. But at \$40 a bottle, they are kept for special occasions.

You are right, Passover is a special occasion. I meant special occasions where there aren't 18 guests required to drink four cups of wine. What am I, a Rothschild?

Another highlight of the seder is the singing of "Dayenu," a Hebrew word meaning, roughly, "We would have been satisfied"—leading many scholars to suspect it couldn't have been written by a Jew.

After plowing through the Haggadah and eating various combinations of symbolic foods, it is now time for the festive meal. Congratulations! You made it! You're almost home! (Unless, of course, your hosts are observant Jews, when the reading of the Haggadah will pick up again right after dessert. No, I'm not kidding.)

The festive meal will often begin with a serving of something called "gefilte fish." This is sometimes referred to as "carp pâté," but only by people who have never seen or tasted pâté. When "tasting" your first piece, remember to nod and smile and keep a full glass of water or other liquid nearby.

In addition to gefilte fish, you can expect to encounter other unfamiliar foods at the table: charoset, cholent, chamin, keshk, machmar, gribenes, holishkes, bimulek, kneidlach, mandelbrot, teiglach and halek. Most of these taste a lot better than they sound. Except gefilte fish. Gefilte fish tastes exactly the way it sounds.

After dessert, the children will either hide or find a piece of matzah known as the "afikomen" and then engage in an aggressive bargaining session with their parents over its return. One pink-faced uncle may joke, "No wonder we're so good at business!" DO NOT LAUGH AT THIS JOKE.

As the seder moves toward its conclusion, someone will open the front door and invite the prophet Elijah to join the seder. Considering Elijah has been dead for 3,000 years and there are millions of Jewish households making the same request, you might find yourself thinking this is implausible. And I might find myself thinking, "Really? More implausible than Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny, wise-guy? Do you think you're better than us?" Of course, I will have had at least three cups of wine at this point.

The Elijah ceremony also includes the recitation of a rather angry prayer that begins, "Pour out Your wrath upon the nations that do not recognize You." It sounds pretty bad, but first you must consider what the late Jewish historian Salo Baron once said about the impact of persecution on the collective Jewish self-consciousness and—wait. I can't do this. It's pretty bad.

Can I get you another cup of wine? At this late point, many Jewish families like to joyously sing a song called "Chad Gadya," which is about a dead goat, a beaten dog, an injured cat, a slaughtered ox and a visit by the Angel of Death. It is a children's song. One pink-faced uncle may joke, "No wonder we're so screwed up!" DO NOT LAUGH AT THIS JOKE.

The seder now concludes with everyone saying "Next year in Jerusalem!" to which your hostess may respond, "Next year at somebody else's house!" You may now get up from the table and—hey, come back! You forgot your coat!

Andrew Silow-Carroll is the editor in chief of JTA.

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Israel's tourism triumph

By Edwin Black

(JNS)—The virulently anti-Israel movement known as Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement is roiling through college campuses, overflowing into city councils, encroaching into corporate boardrooms and now chomping at the essence of Israel's special niche in the world: its travel and tourism industry. Everywhere, the boycotters have been asking to isolate Israel. BDS even convinced Airbnb to stop listing Jewish locations in Judea and Samaria, also known as the West Bank (a term invented after Jordan invaded in 1948, when the United Nations' partition suggestion failed to create two states). In Ireland, a bill advancing through Parliament may criminalize visiting the old city and even purchasing lunch or a keepsake.

Whereas similar boycotts against other countries have inflicted withering effects on national economies, in Israel, it simply hasn't worked. The opposite is true. Yes, boycotters are busy demonizing Israel. Yet despite this, Israel's tourism industry has rocketed to a singular triumph and now employs tens of thousands.

Flights are packed, with new nonstop flights being added across the globe. Even though new luxury hotels are going up as fast as the Mideast sun will dry concrete, rooms remain in high demand and, therefore, remain scarce and expensive. Israel has become world-famous for creative cuisine and trendy eateries, so if you want to get a table at one of the most popular restaurants, you'll need to book weeks in advance.

Travel and tourism to Israel has dramatically changed. It's not just synagogue sisterhoods and Jewish organizations. Swelling up from Israel's "Startup Nation" is top chef culture and the hard-won penetration of markets beyond America and West Europe, coupled with its sophisticated travel industry, which combine to make Israel a destination for the entire world. Traditional Jewish-American travelers from Miami to Seattle must now compete with Silicon Valley techies, Chinese students, Indian tourists, East European Christian pilgrims and diverse businessmen and women from across the planet. The numbers are multiplying.

In 2016, 2.9 million total worldwide visitors visited Israel. By the close of 2018, that number had boomed to 4.1 million—and the totals keep climbing. Within the coming decade, Israel expects to employ 98,000 people in its tourism sector.

When Israeli tourism prospers, so does the Palestinian community. Christian pilgrims make a beeline for Bethlehem. Thus, tourism breeds economic interdependence and strengthens co-existence.

Arrivals stream in from everywhere.

Today, most North American travelers to Israel are not Jewish; they are Christian, often seeking biblical discovery. From North America, Jews comprise about 40 percent to 45 percent of the travelers, while Christians generally hover at about 60 percent year to year, according to official estimates. While the Jewish-Christian percentages remain the same, the growth spurt for North America has seen the overall numbers increase by 42 percent since 2016.

In 2009, only 20,000 Indians visited Israel, reports Israel's tourism office in New

Delhi. Some years ago, Israel hosted Indian travel agents knowing that in India, such agents book most of the travel. Reciprocal travel programs tapped such markets as India's Kerala Christians. Dramatically improved diplomatic relations between New Delhi and Jerusalem combined with thrice-weekly direct Air India Boeing 787 Dreamliner service—which was granted special Saudi fly-over permission, saving more than two hours—has created a steady flow of Indian visitors. This year, Israel expects more than 80,000 Indian arrivals, with travel officials working to achieve a further 65 percent increase. That may happen if, as planned, the Israeli film industry entices Bollywood producers to use Israeli locations.

In 2015, only 30,000 tourists visited Israel from China. But when direct flights between Ben-Gurion International Airport and numerous Chinese cities were added, the number more than trebled to 100,000-plus annually. Today, China is Israel's greatest growth market. Celebrity Chinese chefs are now flown in, and Chinese-speaking guides are easily found.

Air connections are the lifeblood of Israel's tourism, as well as its international viability.

Nowadays you can fly nonstop to Israel from numerous North American cities. From New York's JFK, Delta is launching a twice daily nonstop. From Newark's Liberty, United also flies nonstop twice a day. From Washington, D.C.'s Dulles International Airport, United will soon inaugurate thrice weekly direct service. From Toronto, Air Canada offers daily nonstop flights. From Montreal, Air Canada will fly twice weekly during the summer. From San Francisco, United flies daily, primarily for the surging nexus to Silicon Valley.

North American carriers all compete with El Al, which is by far the dominant carrier linking our continent with Israel—boasting 45 nonstop flights weekly that carry more than 50,000 passengers per month. For many Israel-bound travelers, El Al is the one and only carrier. And it has vastly improved. With the exception of the Jewish Sabbath and holidays, Israel's star-emblazoned national

carrier flies day or night, rain or shine, good news or bad news, rockets or not. Its unique extra security, where young security staffers at the airport ask intense personal questions to evaluate risk, are sometimes viewed as a mix between reassurance, ritual and a Jewish guilt trip. "You're coming to Israel? Why now?" Or the classic: "Who do you know in Israel?" Answer: "Everyone."

El Al has conquered labor problems, on-board religious tiffs, and more to expand and enhance its daily service to and from multiple U.S. cities. Not only can you fly El Al nonstop direct from New York, Newark and Miami, but now also from Boston, Los Angeles, Toronto, and this summer, from Orlando, Las Vegas and San Francisco. In spring 2020, Chicago service will begin.

Israel's tourism triumph would not have been possible without an airline triumph as well. That triumph in the skies has finally happened.

Edwin Black is "The New York Times" bestselling author of "IBM and the Holocaust" and many other books. He can be found at www.edwinblack.com.

Jew-hatred poses as anti-racism in 'The New York Times'

By Jonathan S. Tobin

(JNS)—Discussions about intersectional theory used to be confined to the fever swamps of the far left. But this idea—the idea that seeks to link the struggle for civil rights in the United States with the Palestinian war on Israel's existence and every other cause that can be falsely portrayed as one of the underprivileged against the privileged—has now gone mainstream.

The latest evidence of the success of this attempt to dress up anti-Semitism in the clothing of human-rights advocacy arrives with the new edition of The New York Times Sunday Magazine, which includes an article titled, "How the Battle Over Israel and Anti-Semitism Is Fracturing American Politics" by Israel critic Nathan Thrall.

Thrall's object is to justify

BDS campaigns that anchor the debate about the subject in "Black-Palestinian solidarity" and the effort to view the war on Israel through the "racial justice prism." The result is an 11,000-word essay that seeks to subtly paint Zionism as inherently racist and efforts to destroy Israel as idealistic efforts to defend human rights. The article's thesis is also to portray the pro-Israel movement's effort to push back at anti-Semitic attacks as tainted by prejudice against African-Americans and fueled primarily by the heavy-handed efforts of Jewish donors to manipulate the Democratic Party.

One of Thrall's primary sources is former Deputy National Security Advisor Ben Rhodes, who seeks to depict the struggle for the future of the Democratic Party as one that will be determined by whether its leaders learn to overcome the "fear factor"

about losing the support of Jewish donors.

Thrall, an author of a book seeking to justify U.S. pressure on the Jewish state, gives a deeply sympathetic hearing to Rhodes' account of how the worries of Democratic politicians about retribution from the "donor class" (i.e., Jews) inhibited the Obama administration's efforts to hammer Israel even more than it did.

The article also amplifies Rhodes' specious claim that Obama's inability to persuade Israel's supporters to back him on the issue was due to racial prejudice. He claims that supporters of Israel assumed that Barack Obama was pro-Palestinian because he was black. Rhodes' thesis, which Thrall endorses, is that this alleged fear of Obama was the result of the pro-Israel community's understanding that the Jewish state really was "an oppressor." According to

Rhodes, Obama's critics were "acknowledging, through your own fears, that Israel treats the Palestinians like black people had been treated in the United States."

This argument has it backwards. Jewish Democrats bent over backwards to maintain their faith that Obama had been sincere in his professions of support for Israel when he ran for president in 2008, in spite of evidence to the contrary, both then and later. Far from being prejudiced against him, most American Jews stuck loyally to Obama, despite his belief that more "daylight" was needed between Israel and the United States. They even supported his efforts to appease an Iranian regime that was bent on genocide.

The assumption that Palestinians and Israeli Arabs are treated the same way as the African-American victims of Jim Crow in the pre-civil-rights

era in the South is a big lie. Israeli Arabs have equal rights under the law. Nor does the nation-state law passed last year by the Knesset impinge on any of their rights. The standoff about the future of the West Bank is because the Palestinians have repeatedly rejected offers of peace and statehood. They would have had attained independence long ago had they been willing to recognize the legitimacy of a Jewish state, no matter where its borders might be drawn. Those who accept these fallacious arguments are either ignorant of the conflict or expressing their own anti-Semitic mindset.

That's the problem with the BDS movement. Its supporters are not so much against

alleged Israeli oppression as they are about the existence of Israel since they view the presence of even one Jewish state on the planet as one too many.

One example is the Jewish Voice for Peace group's "Deadly Exchange" protest mentioned by Thrall. It depicts the exchange programs that allow U.S. law enforcement and first responders to get Israeli training as responsible for police murders of blacks in American cities. That is a classic anti-Semitic blood libel. Yet it is presented by Thrall as one more example of how idealists are rejecting Israel.

Accepting the notion that

Tobin on page 18A

Do we go overboard with Passover observance?

By Jason Miller

(Rabbis Without Borders via JTA)—There are two funny images I like to circulate this time every year as we approach the Passover holiday. The first is a cartoon of a truck with large text on the side reading Morty's Passover Cleaning. On the driver's side door is the word "chametz" inside a circle with line struck through it. Underneath the large Morty's Passover Cleaning text on the side of the truck it reads: Orthodox \$89.95, Conservative \$49.95; Reform \$19.95.

The second image is of a person's office cubicle completely covered in aluminum foil—even the desk chair, computer, keyboard and mouse. Most likely this photo was taken of the scene of an office prank, but I like to

circulate it with the question, "Do we go overboard when it comes to Pesach cleaning?"

Let's look at the first photo. Is there some truth to this? I always maintain there has to be some truth to a joke for it to be funny, so let's say that on the whole, yes, Orthodox Jews would spend more money for Passover cleaning than Conservative Jews and Conservative Jews would spend more money for Passover cleaning than Reform Jews. Perhaps this image strikes us as offensive, but we'll unpack that in a moment.

I remember as a kid before we got granite countertops watching my mother cover all the countertops in tin foil and then redoing this process each morning of the holiday because some of the tin foil had ripped the night before, causing little sections of the

white Formica counter to be revealed. This was done despite the fact that our house was completely spotless after having been thoroughly cleaned for the holiday. The thinking was that the counter is of a porous material and would have retained some of the hametz from the year, which would contaminate our Passover food.

We all spend exorbitant amounts of money on this eight-day holiday (only seven in Israel) to get special food that has been labeled kosher for Passover. We take spring cleaning to the next level, and then up a few more levels to make sure there is no hametz in our homes. We stockpile enough kosher for Passover food to feed an army, as if we're planning to never return to a grocery store again or that the supply of matzah may run out.

Are our intentions misguided?

Most rabbis encourage congregants to fully embrace the strictures of Passover, and I certainly want everyone to observe the holiday with fervor and joy. But I question what can only be characterized as the intense OCD-like tenacity with which we tackle the minutiae of Passover observance.

After all, our ancestors in Europe weren't buying kosher for Passover bottled water!

Rabbi Jason Miller is an educator, entrepreneur, social media expert and blogger. He is president of Access Computer Technology, a computer consulting firm based in Detroit, and is the founder-director of Kosher Michigan, a kosher certification agency.

Dry Bones



www.drybones.com

What's Happening

A COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LIGHT SHABBAT CANDLES AT
APRIL 12
7:31 p.m.
APRIL 19
7:35 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, APRIL 12

Ahavas Yisrael—Kabbalat, 30 minutes before sundown.
 JFS Orlando—Restock Challenge kick off. Food donations can be dropped off at The George Wolly Center, 2100 Lee Road, Winter Park through April 30. Monetary donations (Matching donations: For every \$1 the Weiner family and the Winter Park Wealth Group will match .50) can be made out to JFS Orlando and mailed to the same address or made online at www.JFSorlando.org.
 Jewish Pavilion Seders—noon: Gentry Park, Grand Villa and Allegro (full meal); 3 p.m.: Village on the Green and Siena/Oakmont Village (full meals); 4 p.m.: Cordova/Oakmont Village (full meal). Info: 407-678-9363.

SATURDAY, APRIL 13

Torah Portion—Metzora: Lev. 14:1-15:33; Haftarah: Malachi 3:4-24.
 Temple Israel Shabbaton—Begins at 9:30 a.m. with Latino Shabbat morning service followed by a kosher Kiddush lunch. Guest speaker is Dr. Luis Fleischman, 2 p.m. Mincha service, 3:30 p.m. Shabbat dinner follows. Info: 407-647-3055.

SUNDAY, APRIL 14

The Holocaust Memorial Resource & Education Center—Exhibit "Facing Prejudice" runs through June 30. Also opening is "Dr. Seuss Wants You!" and runs through June 7 (This exhibit is not appropriate for children under 12).
 COS Seniors—2 p.m. Willie Cintron will entertain. Cost: \$5, COS Seniors; \$8 nonmembers.
 The Holocaust Memorial Resource & Education Center—Book Club, 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m. at the Holocaust Center. Discussion of "The Tattooist of Auschwitz" by Heather Morris. Discussion led by Renee Kaplan.

MONDAY, APRIL 15

Israeli Folk Dancing—7:30-8:15 p.m. instruction, 8:15-10 p.m., requests. Cost: Free for JCC members, \$7 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.
 JCC 39ers—Meet & Mingle, 1 p.m. in the Senior Lounge, the program will be "Hava Nagila" presented by Sheldon Brook.

Jewish Pavilion Passover wishes

Each spring, The Jewish Pavilion celebrates Passover with over a thousand seniors. Please help provide the following: Jarred Charoset
 Passover candy and cakes Publix Giftcards
 matzah Donations
 Gefilte Fish

“How in the world am I supposed to know what’s going on?”

These are some of the comments we receive from readers when they miss an issue of *Heritage Florida Jewish News*.

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Jewish Pavilion Seders—1:30 p.m.: Westminster Tower; 3:30 p.m.: Serenades by Sonata.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17

Jewish Pavilion Seders—4 p.m.: Ocoee Inspired Living.

THURSDAY, APRIL 18

Congregation Beth Shalom—Rabbi's Torah Roundtable Discussion Group with Rabbi Karen Allen, 11 a.m. at the Sumter County Administration and Library Building, 7375 Powell Road, Wildwood.

FRIDAY, APRIL 19

Ahavas Yisrael—Kabbalat, 30 minutes before sundown.
 Jewish Pavilion Seders—noon: Orlando Lutheran Towers; 5 p.m.: Valencia/Oakmont Village (full meal).

Jewish Pavilion schedule

The following is the calendar for Passover seders at the local assisted-living facilities where the Jewish Pavilion program directors plan events. Members of the community are always welcome to attend these seders, which are free, with the exception of facilities where full meals will be served. These are: Cascade Heights, Oakmonte Village, Mayflower, Allegro and Village on the Green. Those who would like to attend a seder at one of these facilities, must call the facility to reserve a seat.

April 12th, Friday

noon - Cantor Lance Rhodes, Gentry Park
 noon - Julie Levitt, Grand Villa
 noon - Susan Bernstein, Allegro

3 p.m. - Susan Bernstein, Village on the Green

3 p.m. - Susan Bernstein, Siena/Oakmont Village

4 p.m. - Susan Bernstein, Cordova/Oakmont Village

April 15th, Monday

1:30 p.m. - Cantor Lance Rhodes, Westminster Tower

3:30 p.m. - Susan Bernstein, Serenades by Sonata

April 17th, Wednesday

4 p.m. - Cantor Lance Rhodes, Ocoee Inspired Living

April 19th, Friday

noon - Cantor Lance Rhode, Orlando Lutheran Towers

5 p.m. - Susan Bernstein, Valencia/Oakmont Village

April 22nd, Monday

11 a.m. - Penny D'Agostino, Merrill Gardens at Solavita

2 p.m. - Penny D'Agostino, Windsor at Celebration

April 23rd, Tuesday

2 p.m. - Susan Bernstein, Palmetto Landing (Formerly Brookdale Tuskawilla)

April 25th, Thursday

1:30 p.m. - Cantor Lance Rhodes, Kinnert

April 26th, Friday

10:30 a.m. - Cantor Lance Rhodes, The Rose Garden (formerly Plantation Oaks)

April 29th, Monday

1 p.m. - Cantor Lance Rhodes, Brookdale Ocoee

Times and dates subject to change. Please check the website at www.jewishpavilion.org or advise the program director that you plan to attend so that they can update you.

Quote of the Week

"The Exodus from Egypt occurs in every human being, in every era, in every year, and in every day."

—Rabbi Nachman of Breslov (1772–1810)

“April Activity” by Yoni Glatt Difficulty Level: Manageable koshercrosswords@gmail.com

Across

1. Tack on
4. Doubled month
8. Zion and Theodore Roosevelt, e.g.
13. 3-D hosp. exam
14. Haan of footwear
15. "Hello" singer
16. One that might observe Christmas and Passover?
18. Adam and Eve's lack, theoretically
19. "Move over"
20. ___ Harabanim (Kosher supervisors, often)
22. CCC divided by C
23. One entertaining on Shabbat
24. Activity that is frowned upon during services?
26. Org. supporting Aliyah
28. LAX inspection org.
29. Reed who rocked
31. Initial wager
34. Maimonides had a good one or two
38. Pre-Passover activity for many...or a hint to solving 16, 24, 50, and 63-Across
42. Item in a drive
43. Wail
44. Use an eye
45. Hearing need
48. Sukkah covering, perhaps
50. Kitchen sign making a request from G-d?
55. Kind of insurance
58. Something to flip
59. Exam for a budding atty.
60. Last word of many a fairy tale
61. Obtuse item
63. She's best known for playing Grace Adler?
65. Dodgers great Pee Wee
66. ___ Refaim
67. Eavesdropping org.
68. Ultimately arrive
69. 1040 IDs
70. Rank for Gantz: Abbr.\n

Down

1. Those who might be mistaken for Hassidic Jews

2. A Malfoy
3. They're long gone
4. Bank abbr.
5. Gov. arm that oversees the ATF
6. Alternative to Tylenol
7. Do the floors again
8. Large Chinese immigrants?
9. "Bleak House" girl
10. Fourth portion read in a Parsha
11. Big name in fashion
12. Former baseball commissioner
17. Bit
21. Telecom letters
24. Light ringing sound
25. Investment goal
27. Positive word
29. Dangerous acid that doesn't burn?
30. Popular brand of nail polish
32. Network celebrating early Hollywood
33. "Don't Bring Me Down"

- rock gp.
35. Fighting, a charge
36. Gaza to Jerusalem dir.
37. Some like to keep theirs secret
39. Summer treat
40. Has 39-Down
41. Gasteyer of "Mean Girls"
46. Not up
47. N.F.L. linemen: Abbr.
49. Nadal's nickname
50. Play too loudly
51. It shouldn't be mixed with wool, according to the Torah
52. Barely beat, with 'out'
53. Mythical hot spot
54. Word on an express lane sign
56. In knots
57. Instrument with keys
60. Biblical vessels
62. Tigers that lost to the Spartans in this year's NCAA tournament
64. Jacob's youngest, for short

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| 68 | | | | | | 69 | | | | | 70 |

See answers on page 16A.



Scene Around

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



Arthur and Patricia Pines



Alanna Wolfe and Troy Lipschutz

Love is in the air...

(To replace love & sex since I became a widow, I found chocolate, sleeping and sitting, in that order!)

Mazel tov to ARTHUR and PATRICIA (Trish) PINES on their recent marriage. These are two loving, wonderful people who deserve each other. They have always been very kind to me. I know Arthur for many years through my friendship with his mom, DORIS PINES. I met Trish some years ago at one of their family events. (True, Trish is very pretty and I can't handle competition, but I love her anyway and wish them much happiness!

Also, Mazel tov to Doris's lovely granddaughter, ALANNA WOLFE on becoming engaged to a great guy, TROY LIPSCHUTZ, (Again, Alanna is too beautiful to be around for me, but I wish her much happiness with her wonderful guy and this wonderful family!

Israel can cure the world!...

(I truly believe that, what, with all the advances they've made curing major diseases and health conditions!)

I recently read this in the World Jewish Congress digest and pass it along to you:

"As reported by the Times of Israel, Israeli startup PulseNmore LTD is in the final stages of developing a revolutionary device that can connect to any smartphone, display ultrasound images on its screen and then send them to a doctor.

The invention could revolutionize ultrasound testing and the frequency with which expectant mothers can check on their unborn child, according to Prof. ISRAEL MEISNER, head of the Obstetric Ultrasound Unit at Rabin Medical Center in Petah Tikva.

'The new development has one big advantage, which is a calming effect,' Meisner said. 'Women sometimes don't feel movement, call their doctor and are told to go to an emergency room. Here there's the option to put a phone on her stomach and see her baby. To prevent misunderstandings: this is not an ultrasound to check for defects or pregnancy measurements,' he said, ' This is a device with the sole purpose of calming a woman down, to give her the chance to see her fetus, connect to it when she is stressed, and understand that it is looking okay.'

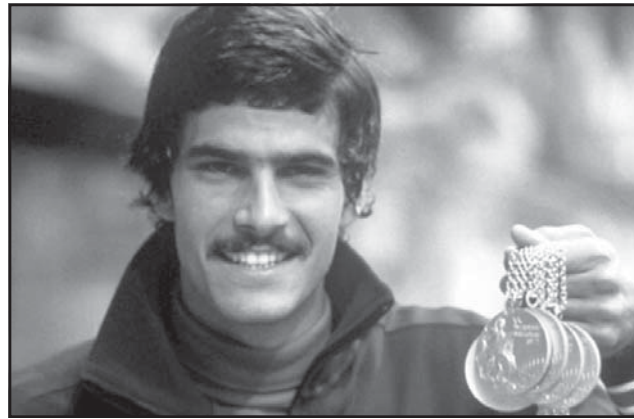
PulseNmore says its device, which has been successfully tested in the United States, can be used for up to 25 ultrasound checks and will retail at around \$190 once it receives certification from the Israeli Health Ministry."

(This doesn't concern me as I'm never remarrying. I don't want to become pregnant!)

Remembering Jewish history...

On March 28, 1932, the first Maccabiah Games were held. This series of athletic competitions for Jews throughout the world is held in Israel every four years. Named for the Jewish warrior Judah Maccabee, the games were born out of various sports clubs that existed in Eastern European countries in the late 1800s.

The first Maccabiah was held in Palestine in 1932, with 390 athletes from 14 countries participating. The second was held in 1935. Most of the 1,700 athletes from 27 countries remained in Palestine due to rising anti-Semitism throughout Europe.



Mark Spitz

Among the notable Jewish athletes who have competed in the Maccabiah: swimmers MARK SPITZ and JASON LEZAK, gymnasts MITCH GAYLORD and ALY RAISMAN, golfer COREY PLAVIN, basketball players ERNIE GRUNFELD and DANNY SHAYES and tennis player DICK SAVITT.

JCC39ers Cinema Sundays...

On April 14th at 2 p.m. in the JCC Senior Lounge, the movie "Prince of Egypt" will be shown. Refreshments will be available.

JCC39ers Meet & Mingle Mondays...

This is a reminder that the movie "Hava Nagila" will be presented by co-President SHELDON BROOK.

The event starts at 1 p.m. in the JCC Senior Lounge. Complimentary refreshments will be available after the performance.

Getting fit at the Maitland JCC...

For April fitness information, phone TARA HARRIS, director of sports, fitness and aquatics, at 407-645-5933 X 259.

Shout-outs...

(Okay, I know what your thinking... here she goes eating out again. But if you tasted my cooking you would understand!)

I am grateful for the attention to my comfort at the Metro Diner in Casselberry by temporary manager, TROY RICE, who also works at the Kissimee restaurant. And, of course, by the terrific service of my waitress, JENN COOPER.

(She took all the calories out of my order!)

One for the road...

It's Daniel and Rivkah's 50th wedding anniversary (mazel tov) and to celebrate, their son Aaron invites the close family to a Golden Wedding dinner at his house.

During the evening, Aaron gets very emotional every time he hears his dad call his mom by such endearing terms as 'darling,' 'petal,' 'sweetheart' and 'my lover.' It's clear to Aaron that his parents are still very much in love.

While Rivkah is out the room, Aaron goes over to his father, kisses him and quietly says, "Dad, I'm so pleased for you both. I think it's fantastic that after 50 years you're still calling mom by those loving pet names." But Daniel, looking very embarrassed, says, "Things are not always what they seem to be, son. I must tell you the truth—I forgot your mother's name about 5 years ago."

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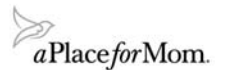
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How Coca-Cola prompted the advent of Passover-friendly food companies



Mark H. Anbinder via Flickr.com

A kosher-for-Passover bottle of Coca-Cola, distinguished from ordinary Coca-Cola bottles by its yellow cap and special "hechsher."

By Alina D. Sharon

(JNS.org)—In the 1930s, Rabbi Tobias Geffen of Atlanta began to investigate the hidden ingredients inside mass-produced foods and to evaluate whether those ingredients conflict with kosher laws. He then set a precedent by getting The Coca-Cola Company to make a kosher-for-Passover version of its soft drink, convincing the company to substitute the grain alcohol used in the processing of its drink to alcohol derived from molasses.

Geffen's achievement was a response to the fact that in the 1920s, "Coke became an incredibly popular beverage in America," and "Jews adopted a custom of making it available to children during the

Passover seder in lieu of wine," historian Roger Horowitz—whose book, "Kosher USA: How Coke Became Kosher and Other Tales of Modern Food," was published in April 2016 by Columbia University Press—told JNS.org.

This step by Coca-Cola stood out at a time when few mainstream food manufacturers were making kosher-for-Passover products.

"Coke was an enormous consumer product in the 1930s, and jealously guarded its formula," Horowitz said. Much of the company's decision, he explained, rested on its confidence in Geffen that he would not reveal the drink's secret ingredients, and the episode was "an enormous asset in persuading other conventional food

firms to secure kosher certification."

Geffen personally issued a kosher-for-Passover certification on Coke, eventually passing the baton to another rabbi. Meanwhile, the founder of the Orthodox Union's (OU) kashrut division and kosher-certification labeling, Abraham Goldstein, was another figure dedicated to the science of figuring out what's inside foods and whether those ingredients are acceptable for Passover as well as for kosher-observant consumption year-round. He was particularly interested in ice cream, surveying its manufacturers to determine what they were putting inside their products and ultimately deciding that Breyers ice cream, for instance, is acceptable to eat during Passover.

But Goldstein was simply reviewing foods as they existed at the time. The fact that Coca-Cola chose to make a distinct version of its drink for Passover, therefore, was a big exception.

Rabbi Moshe Elefant, Chief Operating Officer of the OU's kosher-certifying arm, told JNS.org that subsequently, the OU began to certify Coke for Passover around 1989-1990, after the company removed high fructose corn syrup from its Passover drink and replaced it with sugar. These bottles are known today for their distinct yellow caps.

When the OU certifies a

product as generally kosher, it is typically sufficient for rabbinical supervisors to make occasional visits to a company to make sure that the product is being produced in accordance with kosher standards. When it comes to Passover, however, making a product that is kosher for the holiday requires full-time rabbinical supervision. One other food that illustrates this situation is quinoa, a type of grain that was only in recent years certified as both kosher and kosher for Passover by the OU.

"One of the staples of the kosher diet now is sushi. But there's a problem with sushi on Passover because sushi is made with rice, and Jews of Ashkenazi descent don't eat rice on Passover. How are you going to survive eight to nine days without sushi? You make it with quinoa," Elefant said.

After many public requests for the OU to certify quinoa, rabbis needed to make their decision based on ancient texts and rules that were written in an era when quinoa did not exist.

"After much deliberation and discussion, we determined that quinoa is not part of that legume family. Then we sent a rabbi to the mountains of Peru, where quinoa grows and is packaged," where he needed to see if "the quinoa is packaged or processed in the same machinery or equipment as non-kosher for Passover products, [which] would for lack of a better word contaminate the quinoa," Elefant explained.

As a result—and similarly to how kosher-for-Passover Coke is produced—about once a year, producers of kosher-for-Passover quinoa make a certain amount of quinoa specifically for Passover. It is labeled "OUP," with full rabbinical supervision of the production process. Then the rabbis go home, and come back later for the next production round.

Today, many food ingredients, as well as the final food product, are often made far away from the grocery shelves, particularly in the Far East, Elefant said. Therefore, the OU has become a highly global operation, with a presence in 80 countries. In addition, "the equipment used to manufacture food is all obviously new equipment that didn't exist in the time of the Talmud," he said.

In the current era of mass food production, the OU has needed to find out how to make production equipment kosher without the guidance of original source

material with instructions on the issue.

Contemporary rabbis need to be "extremely knowledgeable in understanding the machinery that manufactures food," and in knowing how to conduct the koshering process without breaking "a piece of equipment that costs millions of dollars," Elefant said.

One issue that comes up with regard to Passover and food, according to Roger Horowitz, involves oils that may be used during the holiday. For instance, corn oil cannot be used, so rabbis must figure out how to control the oil while it is being shipped in trucks across long distances in order to make sure the oil is not contaminated. All tankers need to be washed and sealed by rabbis before they can be reloaded, and any holding tanks must also be monitored by rabbis. Then, inside the factories, sophisticated control systems are also in place.

"You have to embed kosher requirements into the very food system, and what's remarkable is how successful Orthodox Jews have been in embedding those requirements in our industrial food system," Horowitz said.

Elefant cited another example of a product the OU has certified for Passover—canned tuna. "Over the years, we have made [specialized Passover] runs of tuna for Chicken of the Sea, Bumblebee, etc.," he said.

"The tuna fish itself as a fish is inherently kosher for Passover. But all the other ingredients to make the tuna, [like] the vegetable broth that they sometimes put into the tuna...are not necessarily kosher for Passover," added Elefant.

In yet another illustration, coffee doesn't always require an OUP label to be considered as kosher for Passover. The OU also recommends one-ingredient foods that are considered kosher for Passover without requiring the foods to be labeled with an OUP. Decaffeinated coffee, however, can only be consumed on Passover if the decaffeination process does not involve an alcohol made out of grains or corn. Brands that the OU deems appropriate for Passover include Nescafé's Taster's Choice and Folgers.

"We had to review the entire decaffeination process to make sure there's no issue," Elefant said, noting that in these cases, the products were deemed appropriate for the Jewish holiday as they are. Yet in the case of Bosco chocolate syrup, which has also been

labeled OUP, a separate version of the syrup needed to be made for Passover.

Statistics compiled by Lubicom Marketing Consulting (an agency working with kosher food producers) for last year's Kosherfest trade show revealed the production of 600 new products for Passover, and that 40 percent of annual kosher food sales came during the roughly month-long period including and surrounding Passover.

Passover is the "most widely observed holiday on the Jewish calendar," said Lubicom President Menachem Lubinsky, with an estimated 70 percent of all U.S. Jews attending at least one Passover seder.

Lubinsky added that making special Passover runs of products does not stop at food.

Aluminum foil companies producing kosher-for-Passover foil "have to use cleaning agents that are [suitable] for Passover. They do a special run and they have an OUP on them. The amount of those products that is consumed for Passover is enormous...[and] it's good business [for the company to produce them]."

On the marketing side of the issue, Lubinsky sees a growth in the advertising of kosher-for-Passover products.

"You see a lot of supermarket ads that highlight Passover specials. There are also a lot online apps with Passover products. I see technology being used in a big way," he said.

When a mainstream, non-Jewish company approaches Lubicom with an interest in marketing a special kosher-for-Passover version of its product, Lubinsky first determines if the product is unique, and if it is, he suggests that the company "be very user-friendly in teaching consumers how to use the product" through recipes, meal ideas, and tie-ins with other products that are also kosher for Passover.

As for Coca-Cola, when it had removed high fructose corn syrup from its ingredients in 1990, it did so in response to Passover consumers' demand. But in more recent years, Elefant noted, consumers "are actually trying to stay away from high fructose corn syrup" for health reasons, prompting a growing number of food producers to remove the substance from many products and use natural sugars or fruit sugars as substitutes. This makes such products easier to certify as kosher for Passover.

In the end, Elefant said, "it always boils down to dollars and cents."

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Matzah mania! Who knew that mixing flour and water could be so nuanced?



Ariel Palmon via Wikimedia Commons

Hand-made matzah comes out of the oven.

By JNS.org

(JNS)—How hard can making matzah be? Mix flour and water, and bake.

Actually, there are various ways that one can go about producing matzah—and the results are all a little different.

When you're standing in the supermarket just before the holiday trying to choose matzah, it might help to know what you are looking at. It's not just the orange box versus the blue box, or even hand-made versus machine-made. According to leading kashrut supervisors at the Star-K and Orthodox Union (OU) kosher-certification providers, there can be differences between the flour, the baking process, and even the time it takes for the matzah to be produced.

The flour

Rabbi David Stein, head of the Star-K in Israel, says the differences between matzah start even before the wheat is harvested. There are three types of flour: shmurah mi'sh'as k'tzirah (made from grains that have been supervised from the time of their

harvesting until the actual baking of the matzah), shmurah mi'sh'as techina (made from wheat guarded from the time it is milled into flour), and shmurah mi'sh'as lisha (watched from the time the flour is mixed with water).

In all three cases, the "watching" aspect ("shmurah" in Hebrew) is meant to ensure that the wheat does not get wet and transform into chametz (a leavened product). The longer the grains are watched, the more kosher—and generally, the more expensive—the matzah will be.

Hand vs. machine

The most obvious difference between types of matzah is how the matzah is produced: hand and machine are the two most common types. Rabbi Moshe Elefant, chief operation officer of the OU's kashrut department, says hand-made matzah precisely reflects that description.

"This is the way it was always done before the advancement of machinery, and the way it is still done in many communities," Elefant says.

The reason that many people still opt for hand matzah is for the intention behind the process, explains Elefant. Not only is it a Torah commandment to eat matzah on Passover, but according to some opinions, the Torah requires us to perform the act of making matzah "l'shmah," for the sake of the mitzvah.

"Many people prefer hand matzah for the seder because the baker has to have that intent of making matzah and a machine does not have the ability to have intent," says Elefant.

Yet making matzah is an inexact science, Stein says, explaining that not all machine matzah or all hand matzah is made the same. "If you don't know where you are getting your hand matzah, it is better to get machine matzah," he says.

There are three types of machine matzah as far as the level of kashrut is concerned, but much more variation in hand matzah practices. Stein says the Jewish sages teach that it takes at least 18 minutes for matzah dough to be

come flour. The kashrut level of matzah changes depending on how careful the factory is about these 18 minutes.

In the most lenient facto-

ries—the so-called "regular" machine matzah factories—the matzah-making machine isn't cleaned almost all day long.

"Some regular factories will have someone standing there with a vacuum cleaner that

Matzah on page 18A



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— Cantor Lance Rhodes, program director



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Tips and recipes to make Passover a culinary delight



Myrna Ossin in her kitchen displaying a plate full of one-bite brownies and her three published books.

Local resident and gourmet chef Myrna Ossin has created a Passover cook book, "What To Do With Your Leftover Matzah, The Fifth Question," that will meet all the needs and answers all the questions of what to prepare for the Passover Seder and meals for the following seven days. Included in this book are 60 tested (she and her husband, Archie, tried them all) recipes with photos; a timeline and "to do" list for preparation of the seder; a list of various serving utensils and items needed; menu plans for the week, which include vegan, vegetarian and Shabbat options; a shopping list with information about how much to make for family and guests; and even a metric conversion chart.



This rabbi-reviewed book also gives brief explanations of the ritual elements of the service and how to prepare the seder plate. There are also concise explanations of the kosher rules and historic differences between Sephardic and Ashkenazi traditions.

Ossin studied dietetics at the University of Wisconsin and has taught cooking for many years. She has written and published three other books: "Favorite Recipes of Central Florida," "Culinary Arts and Crafts Cooking" and "Lists for Living, Lists for Life."

"What To Do With Your Leftover Matzah, The Fifth Question" is available on Amazon.

The following are two of Ossin's recipes.

Stuffed Potato Meat Pies

Makes 8-12

Ingredients:

3 large eggs, separated

1 cup matzah meal

2 cups mashed potatoes, without dairy

salt and pepper

1 cup chopped cooked meat—chicken, beef, hamburger or ground turkey

1 egg, slightly beaten

1 Tbls water

Directions:

In a small bowl, whip egg whites until stiff. In another bowl, combine egg yolks with matzah meal, mashed potatoes, 1/2 tsp. salt and 1/8 tsp. pepper. Mix well and carefully fold in egg whites. Use 2/3 of the mixture to form balls the size of a small egg. Reserve the rest of the batter. Flavor chopped meat with salt and pepper. Make a depression in each batter ball and fill with meat mixture. With the remaining potato batter, seal each. In a small dish, mix an egg with the water. Heat oil in a small fry pan until it is very hot (325 degrees). Test the oil to see that it sputters when a drop of water is sprinkled in it. Dip each ball in egg/water mixture and fry in very hot safflower or peanut oil until browned on both sides. If the oil is not hot, the balls will absorb too much grease and be very oily. They should only fry about 3 minutes on each side until brown and then flipped over with a large spoon to fry the second side. Drain on a paper towel and serve warm.

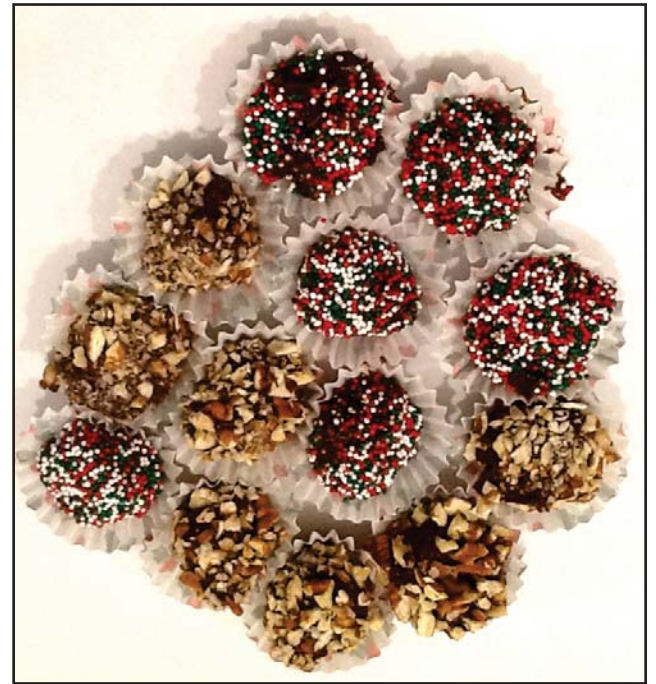
These can be refrigerated and reheated to serve. Cool and place on a tray covered with a piece of plastic wrap to freeze. After freezing, store in a plastic freezer bag. Reheat as needed in a hot oven (350 degrees) until warmed through, about 10 minutes.

Chocolate Mocha Truffle Candy

(These candies become a show-stopper at the end of a meal)

Makes about 20 pieces

Ingredients:



Chocolate Mocha Truffles

15 oz. can Passover condensed milk

1 tsp. instant coffee powder

8 oz. semi-sweet Passover chocolate or chips

4 oz. very dark or Passover chocolate, shredded

1/2 tsp. kosher salt (not iodized)

1 tsp. vanilla bean paste

1/4 cup cocoa powder for garnish

1/4 cup shredded Passover coconut (optional)

1/4 cup chopped pecans (optional)

Directions:

In a food processor, pulse the chocolate to tiny pieces. In a large microwave bowl, mix the coffee powder and salt into the condensed milk. Heat the milk in the microwave for one minute. Stir in the chocolate pieces until melted, making sure there are no lumps. If needed, heat the mixture for another 30 seconds. Stir in the vanilla bean paste. Allow the mixture to cool in the refrigerator until you are able to work with it to make 1-inch balls. Roll the balls in cocoa powder, nuts, coconut, Passover jimmies or nonpareils, and place on a cookie tray lined with parchment paper.

Freeze the truffles until firm and store in a freezer bag squeezing out all the excess air. Allow them to defrost before serving.



7-Layer Chocolate Strawberry Matzo Cake (pictured)

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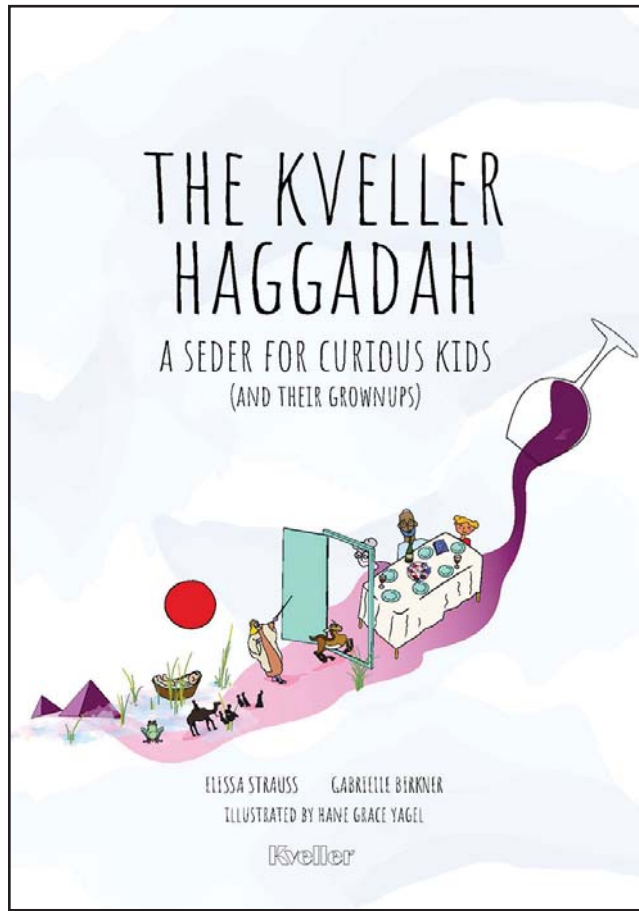
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A family Haggadah imagines a ‘complicated, engaging and fleshy’ Passover



The Kveller Haggadah is “for curious kids—and their grown-ups.”

By Emily Burack

(JTA)—The Passover seder can be boring for kids. A new Haggadah is trying to change that.

Published by Kveller, a Jewish parenting site, the Kveller Haggadah is “for curious kids—and their grown-ups.” The Haggadah’s co-creators are Elissa Strauss, a columnist on parenthood for CNN, and Gabrielle Birkner, the co-author of “Modern Loss: Candid Conversation About Grief. Beginners Welcome” (HarperWave, 2018) and a former managing editor of JTA.

Strauss and Birkner don’t skate around the darker parts of the Passover story; they approach them head-on. And it obviously includes the classics. The Haggadah also has beautiful illustrations on every page by 70 Faces Media’s multimedia editor, Hane Grace Yagel, making the centuries-old text engaging and fresh.

“Every year, people ask Kveller, ‘which Haggadah should we use this Passover?’” Kveller editor Lisa Keys said. “And we never had a good answer for that.” Until now.

“This is not a ‘Haggadah for kids,’” Keys said. “It’s a highly accessible, dynamic Haggadah that engages children and grown-ups.”

JTA spoke with Birkner and Strauss about their creative process behind the Haggadah, their own Passover seder experiences and what they hope families take away from the Kveller Haggadah.

JTA: The two of you “created this Haggadah to be informative and spiritual, and even a tiny bit weird.” Can you talk what inspirations you drew from?

Strauss: We were inspired by a mix of the very new and very old. We thought a lot about the latest and most popular narrative forms for kids, things like podcasts and video games, and tried to figure out what kids like about them. Video games often contain narratives that are very high-stakes, and children love that. They want to feel like the world they are immersed in is exciting, and what is happening matters. Well, the same can be said of ancient Jewish texts. They are intense, high-stakes and operate under the assumption that if the story is good, children will pay attention. Also, children tend to be highly preoccupied with ethics, just like the rabbis of yore. They don’t just want to know what to do, they want to know why they should do it, too.

Birkner: It would be cliché to say my kids inspired me. It would also be true. This Haggadah treats children like the curious, creative and capable humans we know them to be—little people who are drawn to epic stories, who believe in things they can’t see, and who always want to know why, why, why. This text stokes and rewards their curiosity. In the case of the Kveller Haggadah, Elissa and I brought our identity as parents of young (and curious)

children. We sought to create a Haggadah that is substantive and spiritual, made for kids but engaging for all.

What was the most challenging part to write?

Strauss: The part about asking God to smite our enemies is top of the list for me. We included it because the Haggadah isn’t just about learning lessons from the past; it’s about feeling as though we lived through it. Instead of ignoring the rage, we want to acknowledge it, and then consider it. Anger is a common response to injustice. What should we do with it?

Birkner: It was challenging to think through how to incorporate Moses into our text. Traditional Haggadah don’t really mention him. The focus is on God’s “outstretched arm,” not the hands of a mere mortal—no matter how remarkable. (By contrast, some contemporary Haggadah highlight Moses’ role and downplay God’s role.) In the Kveller Haggadah, God is at the center of the seder rituals and the focus of our gratitude. But Moses’ life and leadership are explored in the Exodus story (another thing that is omitted from traditional Haggadah, but not ours), and in some of our supplementary content, such as Rabbi Ruti Regan’s reflections on Moses’ disability.

Did you learn anything new about Passover (and the seder) while working on the Haggadah?

Birkner: So much. There’s something on almost every page that I didn’t know when we started out, from why we wash our hands twice before the Passover meal (even if they’re clean) to why we say “Next year in Jerusalem” (even if we have no plans to be there). I learned what Passover looked like in the Temple era (a whole lot different) and why we eat the afikomen for dessert (even though it’s not the least bit sweet). I also learned about what’s traditionally left out of Haggadah—Moses and the Exodus story, as I mentioned earlier—but also the answers to the Four Questions.

What is your favorite part of the seder to do with your kids?

Strauss: Elijah’s cup. It’s such a deeply mystical concept, and we are not a deeply mystical family. But when we pour that glass, and chant his name, we turn into just the kind of people who believe the spirit of an ancient prophet may actually enter our home. I love how the Haggadah takes us there, making us ripe for miracles, if only for a few minutes.

Birkner: I love saying the Shecheyanu blessing with

them on the first night. Kids live in the moment, and the Shecheyanu thanks God for this... very... moment. It’s essentially a mindfulness prayer. This year, I think they’ll be fascinated to learn how memory (the theme of this Haggadah) works—and about why it’s their job to be the keepers of memories.

What do you remember from your seders growing up?

Strauss: The food, which is by design, of course. The

matzah, the charoset, the maror, the parsley dipped in the saltwater which somehow tastes rich and exotic in the context of the seder. Then the egg, representing both the hope of getting to eat dinner, and the hope of renewal, for all of us. It’s food poetry.

Birkner: Growing up—and to this day—my mother gets super-creative with her Passover seders, which seem

Family on page 18A

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How to choose a Passover Haggadah



By Julie Wiener

(MyJewishLearning via JTA)—With thousands of published Haggadahs available for purchase, choosing the one that is best for your seder can be overwhelming. For an overview of the many possibilities, we recommend “HowIs This Haggadah Different?”

Here are some things you might want to consider when selecting a Haggadah:

Cost

Remember, you’ll need a copy of the Haggadah for each guest (or every two guests, if people are comfortable sharing). Unless you plan to buy one copy and then do some extensive photocopying—we should note, that’s illegal for copyrighted publications—you’ll have to multiply the book’s price by the number of guests.

There are also many free downloadable PDF versions online, like at mezuzahstore.com and chabad.org, or you could choose to make your own.

Length

If your guests are expecting the traditional seder, complete with Hebrew, they might be uncomfortable with

an abridged Haggadah, an LGBTQ Haggadah or one that emphasizes contemporary examples of oppression and slavery. On the other hand, if many are first-time seder-goers or lack the patience for a really long seder, something like “The 30-Minute Seder” or a book that relates the Exodus to modern social issues might be just the thing.

Children

Since children generally don’t like sitting still at the table for long, we recommend an abbreviated or child-oriented Haggadah. There are many great children’s and “family” Haggadahs that engage adults as well as kids. Be sure to check out this list on Kveller for the best Haggadahs for kids. For the older kids, think about acting out skits from the seder.

Technology

The first two days of Passover are yom tov, days like Shabbat, when traditional Jewish observance forbids activities like writing and using electronics. If this is not an issue for you, however, a number of Haggadahs are now available as e-books and apps, usually at lower prices than printed versions (with the added

advantage that you will not need to find a place to store them after the seder). While many are just digital versions of printed Haggadahs, others incorporate multimedia features.

A free one from JewishBoston.com has music and other materials in addition to the standard text. One on iTunes has text and music, plus interactive commentary and games.

Beauty

Haggadahs come in an array of designs and styles, with art ranging from contemporary to ancient. The downside of a gorgeous tome, however, is that there’s a good chance one of your guests will spill wine all over it. (That can happen with any Haggadah, but you probably won’t mind so much if it’s inexpensive or more about function than aesthetic.)

For a beautiful (and modern) Haggadah, check out the New American Haggadah and The Bronfman Haggadah. The Syzk Haggadah, created in the 1930s, features illustrations in the style of illuminated manuscripts.

Julie Wiener is managing editor of MyJewishLearning.

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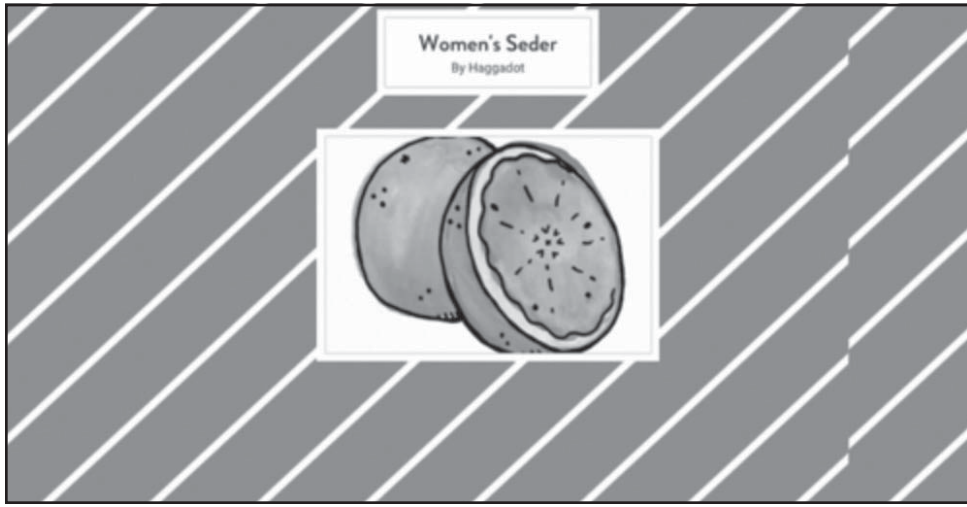
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How to make your own Passover haggadah



The cover of a Passover Haggadah that was customized for a women's seder and created through the Haggadot.com platform.

By Maayan Jaffe-Hoffman

(JNS)—The Hebrew word “haggadah” means “narration” or “telling.” As the Passover seder’s instruction manual, the haggadah is perhaps the most important tool for fulfilling the Passover mitzvah of telling the story of the Jewish exodus from Egypt (a mitzvah that is mentioned six times in the Torah).

The Rambam (Maimonides) in his Mishneh Torah explains that relating the miracles and wonders that were done for our fathers in Egypt on Passover night is a positive commandment, and that it is a mitzvah to inform our children about it. Many interpret this to mean that telling the Passover story is actually two mitzvahs: a mitzvah to tell the story among adults and a mitzvah to teach children about the story.

ArtScroll and Maxwell House have done their parts to make a simple seder manual accessible and inexpensive. But sometimes just reciting the words of the seder isn’t enough to engage seder participants—or even to help them to understand the Passover story.

“What I learned is that my family had never really understood the service they had been using for many, many years,” says Barbara Bayer of Overland Park, Kan., who about 30 years ago decided to write a haggadah, which she continues to revise each year. “I went to simple sources that told the story simply and succinctly and the family loved it and still does.”

Making your own haggadah is not as complicated as one might think. For starters, there are many Web platforms that allow you to create a customized seder manual by providing curated sources from across the Jewish community. Haggadot.com, for instance, offers readings, artwork, and video clips to enliven the seder. The clips can be assembled in one of the website’s templates.

Other sites, such as live-seders.com, allow users to download an English translation of the complete traditional Ashkenazi haggadah text, which can be cut and pasted to create your own piece. Jewishfreeware.org carries a range of editions of haggadot, each one directed to specific interests and needs, in terms of the haggadah’s length and rituals of choice. All the files are downloadable and some are editable.

Once you’ve found your base, personalizing the haggadah for your seder experience can be loads of fun and really creative, according to those who do it.

Renee Goldfarb of Solon, Ohio, says one year she set up a laptop, projector, and screen at the Passover table and showed a relevant video for each of the 15 steps of the seder. Suzanne Levin-Lapides, on the other hand, compiled her family haggadah from the texts of various seders for women she had attended in her Baltimore community, adding an orange to her seder plate as a symbol of feminism as well as the inclusion of LGBT individuals and other marginalized groups within the Jewish community.

At the Katz family home in Kemp Mill, Md., the Passover seder has been turned into a play by their 12-year-old daughter, Abigail.

“My daughter likes to do fun things around the holidays,” says Jill Katz with a chuckle of pride.

In this case, Abigail, who was 7 when she wrote the first version of her family seder, realized that among her family’s many guests, not everyone came from the same background. She says she wanted to create something that would make seder participation fun for everyone. “Basically, it is like a script and everyone has a part,” says Abigail. “People take turns explaining what we do at each part of the seder and act out stuff also, like the splitting of the sea and the 10 plagues.”

The play’s actors—each assigned a seat at the table and a number based on what part they’ll be reading that evening—serve as narrators. Those who don’t know Hebrew are given English parts. Sometimes, everyone works together.

“We have two cloths for the splitting of the sea story. Everyone goes in a line and then people take turns being Moshe and they take a fake staff and put it into the cloths and then they split them. It’s

really fun,” Abigail says.

Rachel Shekhtman of Kochav HaShachar, Israel, has an idea she adapted from one of her children’s school projects: dress up your children and their friends before the seder, and take pictures of them as different characters or acting out various scenes. Then, print the photos and create a haggadah in which the youths become the Passover story’s stars.

“Let’s say [you’re dealing with] the four sons or the 10 plagues—make cheap costumes, get some toy frogs or red food coloring to dye some water, and take pictures as you go,” Shekhtman explains. “Talk to them about what they are acting out as you take the pictures. Then when they get to that part of the haggadah, they will remember what they learned and make the connection between the lesson and the text.”

She adds, “They’ll see themselves in the haggadah.”

If you’re aiming for something more traditional—and less about the little ones—Yosef Silver of Overland Park has an idea. He keeps a do-it-yourself seder file on his computer, which he updates with new insights every year. Part of the experience is finding passages and interpretations from across Jewish perspectives that still jibe with his Orthodox traditions.

Each year, when his new haggadah file is ready, Silver sends a copy via Dropbox to his guests so they can review it and add their own thoughts in advance of the big day. One of the highlights of Silver’s expanded seder is a fifth cup of wine, added as an expression of redemption.

“I think people need to think more out of the box,” says Jill Katz. “People are often set on, ‘You have to say this and that.’ Even if you are rigid with the law... it is important to understand what you are saying. The halacha (Jewish law) is that you are supposed to relate to the story you are telling, and that is what people should keep in mind.”

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; 407-479-8377.

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.bethshalomflorida.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.crjorlando.org; Shabbat services, 7 p.m. 1st, 2nd and 3rd Fridays; 6 p.m., 4th and 5th Fridays; Saturday: 10 a.m.

Congregation Match 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) / Temple Israel (C), 579 N. Nova Rd., Ormond Beach, 386-675-6615 / 386-252-3097; Friday Shabbat Service 7 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m.

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 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 Elkcarn 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.

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Weekly roundup of world briefs

Maxwell House is offering a 'Marvelous Mrs. Maisel' Haggadah

By JTA staff

(JTA)—Real life tradition and television nostalgia collide in a collaboration between the venerable Maxwell House Haggadah and the hit Amazon series "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel."

The coffee company is offering a limited edition version of its Haggadah featuring illustrations and other shtick based on the show about an aspiring Jewish comedian and her extended family of Jewish relatives in late 1950s New York.

The "Maisel" Haggadah is a throwback to an earlier edition of the Haggadah that the company has been offering as a holiday giveaway since 1932. Illustrations of Midge Maisel and other characters are scattered throughout the new version, which also has handwritten notations by Rachel Brosnahan's character as well as faux wine stains.

The limited-run Haggadahs are available to those who order Maxwell House coffee via Amazon.com. Passover begins on the evening of April 19.

"There is an organic link between the Maxwell House and 'The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel' brands and we quickly aligned on the idea of creating Midge's Haggadah—a combination of the 1958 classic version and Midge's amazing personality," Naor Danieli, brand manager for Maxwell House, said in a statement.

2,600-year-old seal bearing name of First Temple-era official discovered in Jerusalem

By Marcy Oster

JERUSALEM (JTA)—A 2,600-year-old seal bearing the name of an official in the court of a First Temple period king of Judah was discovered in the City of David in Jerusalem.

The seal reads "(belonging) to Nathan-Melech, Servant of the King."

It was discovered during an archeological dig inside a large public building that was destroyed in the sixth century BCE—likely during the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BCE. Large stone debris, burnt wooden beams and numerous charred pottery shards also were discovered in the building, all indications that they had survived an immense fire.

The dig was conducted by archeologists from the Israel Antiquities Authority and Tel Aviv University.

The stamp and its seal impression that were discovered in the dig are each about one centimeter in size.

The name Nathan-Melech appears once in the Bible, in the second book of Kings 23:11, where he is described as an official in the court of King Josiah, who took part in the religious reform that the king was implementing.

"Since many of the well-known bullae and stamps have not come from organized archaeological excavations but rather from the antiquities market, the discovery of these two artifacts in a clear archaeological context that can be dated is very exciting," Prof. Yuval Gadot of Tel Aviv University and Dr. Yiftah Shalev of the Israel Antiquities Authority said in a statement.

Visitor to Auschwitz-Birkenau site caught trying to steal piece of iconic rail tracks

By Marcy Oster

(JTA)—A visitor to the site of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Nazi death camp was caught trying to steal a piece of the camp's iconic rail tracks.

The American visitor, 37, who was apprehended by police in Oswiecim in southern Poland, was charged with attempted theft of an item of cultural importance, the Associated Press reported. The incident was first reported by police and Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum officials on Sunday.

The man admitted his guilt and was released until further legal action is taken. He could face up to ten years in prison.

He had attempted to remove a metal piece from the tracks where people were unloaded from train cars at the entrance to the death camp.

Netanyahu to meet Putin in Moscow 5 days before election

By Marcy Oster

JERUSALEM (JTA)—Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow five days before Israel's national elections.

The Prime Minister's Office announced Tuesday that a meeting between the two leaders will take place on Thursday. The announcement comes a day after an announcement that Netanyahu and Putin spoke by phone and discussed "regional issues."

Netanyahu later told reporters that the talks were about Syria, whose president, Bashar Assad has been backed by Russia in the country's ongoing civil war. Assad also has allowed Hezbollah and Iran to gain a foothold in Syria, from where it could attack Israel.

The two leaders last met in Moscow in February. They have met 12 times since September 2015, Haaretz reported.

Netanyahu has promoted his diplomatic prowess and personal ties with world leaders during the current election campaign.

Players and coaches from LA youth hockey team suspended for cursing Jews and Hitler salute

By Marcy Oster

(JTA)—Three coaches and 15 players from a youth hockey team in Los Angeles have been suspended over a video posted on social media showing a player making a Nazi salute as other players make anti-Semitic remarks.

The Los Angeles Jr. Kings announced the suspensions of coaches and players from the 14U Bantam AAA team on Friday.

The 9-second video was posted March 9 on social media, The Athletic NHL website reported. In the video, players can be heard saying "Are you a Nazi?" "f**k the Jews" and "f**king Jews."

Steve Yovetich, president of Los Angeles Jr. Kings Hockey, said in a statement: "We are a club that prides itself on being a community; one that fosters values such as friendship, respect and teamwork, and upholds ideals like diversity, equality and tolerance."

It added: "The events on

March 9 are regretful to many, especially the players and parents. We will work together to educate and grow, and in this regard lead with action."

Yovetich said the players will be required to participate in "a mandatory educational program comprised of sensitivity and social media training administered by outside professionals experienced in impactful positive youth education."

San Diego Jewish Academy breaks world record for sandwich-making

By Marcy Oster

(JTA)—The San Diego Jewish Academy broke a record and did a mitzvah.

The school set a Guinness World Record for the most sandwiches made in under three minutes. The sandwiches went to feed homeless people in its Southern California city.

Students, faculty and parents made 868 sandwiches in those 180 seconds, a giant leap from the previous record of 490 and well above the goal of 600. And these weren't just two pieces of bread with a slice of cheese slapped inside—the sandwiches also included a slice of tomato and a lettuce leaf.

The results of Monday's record-breaking attempt by more than 550 sandwich makers must still be certified by Guinness, which could take up to 12 weeks. But the school is still a winner—the food went to residents of a temporary shelter in San Diego and to others living on the street, according to the Alpha Project, a city organization dedicated to helping the homeless.

Representatives from the Alpha Project attended the event and provided education for the participants on the challenges of homelessness in their community.

The sandwich-making project was part of the school's programming on tikkun olam, or repair of the world.

Bernie Sanders raises \$18 million in first quarter for presidential bid

By Ron Kampeas

WASHINGTON (JTA)—The popularity of Bernie Sanders appears to be holding up as he makes a second run for the presidency.

The Vermont senator raised \$18 million from 525,000 donors in the first 41 days of his campaign, even better than the numbers from his previous bid.

His campaign announced the take on Tuesday. It said 99.5 percent of the donations were \$100 or less—Sanders takes pride in running campaigns mostly based on small donors.

The strength of the numbers should put to rest the idea in some quarters about Sanders' resiliency from his 2016 effort, when he mounted the only serious challenge to Hillary Clinton, who eventually won the Democratic nomination but lost the presidency to Donald Trump.

Sanders had raised \$15 million in the first quarter of his 2016 run, when he became first Jewish candidate to win major-party nominating contests.

He is only the third of the 16 or so candidates running for the 2020 Democratic nomination to announce his first-quarter funding numbers.

The others to announce: Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., took in \$12 million, and Pete Buttigieg, the mayor of South Bend, Indiana, brought in \$7 million.

Iran to 'resist' US recognition of Israeli sovereignty over Golan Heights

(JNS)—Iranian President Hassan Rouhani warned on Friday that his country will "resist" the United States officially recognizing this week Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights.

The Iranian president said U.S. President Donald Trump's declaration this week is "trampling on international regulations about the Golan."

Rouhani said Iranians "should resist, and that way gain victory" over America and Israel.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who stood by Trump's side at the White House on Monday, called the decision a "historic justice" and a "diplomatic victory."

"Israel won the Golan Heights in a just war of defense," he added, referring to the 1967 Six-Day War and Israel's control of the Golan Heights since then.

Walmart CEO in Israel to meet with Israeli startups

(JNS)—Walmart CEO Doug McMillon is in Israel this week along with a group of senior executives, reported the Israeli financial news site Calcalist, citing several sources familiar with the matter, who said the delegation met with Israeli officials and startups.

The multinational retail chain recently acquired Israeli startup Aspectiva Ltd., a Tel Aviv-based product-review insight firm. In recent months, Walmart announced investments in other Israeli startups.

In October, the retailer said it would invest reportedly \$300 million in "interactive multimedia video creation and distribution firm Eko" to create "an original interactive content venture," reported Calcalist.

That same month, the U.S. company became an investor in Team8 LLC, a think-tank and company creation platform.

Finally, Walmart might invest in the Israeli food-processing company the Strauss Group Ltd., according to the Israeli financial news site and print outlet Globes.

Anti-Semitism Awareness Act reintroduced by Senate reps

(JNS)—Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.) and Sen. Bob Casey (D-Pa.) reintroduced the Anti-Semitism Awareness Act this week, which would require the Department of Education to adopt the State Department's definition of anti-Semitism in evaluating incidents on college campuses and at other educational institutions.

"Anti-Semitism, and harassment on the basis of actual or perceived shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics with a religious group, remains a persistent, disturbing problem in elementary and secondary schools and on college campuses," the bill states. "Students from a range of diverse backgrounds, including Jewish, Arab Mus-

lim, and Sikh students, are being threatened, harassed, or intimidated in their schools (including on their campuses) on the basis of their shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics including through harassing conduct that creates a hostile environment so severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit some students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by schools."

Towards the end of last year, Scott sought to insert the measure as a rider into must-pass spending legislation. A 35-day government shutdown ensued, due to U.S. President Donald Trump not getting \$5 billion for a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border.

The bill passed the Senate in 2016, but the House of Representatives did not take a vote due to time constraints.

"It is crucial to have clear and concise language defining anti-Semitism in the event that violence and hatred occurs. The unfortunate rise in these incidents across the country must be met with swift and unwavering condemnation," said Scott in a statement. "We must stand together against racism and bigotry by ensuring that justice is served against those who seek to divide us."

"The rise in incidents of religious discrimination and religiously motivated hate crimes around the world is completely unacceptable," continued Casey. "We have to not only condemn it, but work to stop it. This legislation is aimed at a particularly troubling manifestation of the growing problem of discrimination against those of Jewish faith or Jewish ancestry."

Israeli government to fund MDA emergency medical services in Judea, Samaria

(JNS)—Israel's government has announced that it will release funds allocated for Magen David Adom to provide enhanced emergency medical services in Judea and Samaria.

"Years ago, because of heightened concerns about security and the distances between communities in Yesha, the Israeli government asked MDA to provide enhanced services in Judea and Samaria to allocate resources greater than what would normally be provided for an area with 400,000 Israelis," explained Ronen Bashari, MDA's head of operations.

"Despite that we were providing services there each year at a cost to us of 13.6 million shekels [about \$3.8 million], our reimbursements from the government have dwindled to 7.5 million shekels [about \$2.5 million] a year," said Bashari.

"Our services there will [now] be fully funded for 2019, easing the financial pressure Magen David Adom has been under while we've continued to fully provide EMS services," he said.

As a stop-gap measure, MDA had proposed reallocating resources in Judea and Samaria to save money, while still providing the same level of service. But the proposal would have put an additional workload on MDA's volunteer EMTs and called for dispatching more ambulances from their homes to reduce the hours of operation, as well

as the costs associated with that, of MDA's 17 emergency medical stations there.

"We are committed to the health and safety of Israelis in Judea and Samaria," said Bashari, "just as we are committed to the health of all of Israel's citizens. So we are delighted with this decision."

CNN's Christiane Amanpour makes a big Israel geography mistake

By Marcy Oster

JERUSALEM (JTA)—CNN's Christiane Amanpour identified Haifa, a city in northern Israel, as being located in the contested West Bank.

The network's chief international anchor made the gaffe on Wednesday during her global affairs interview program on CNN while introducing Palestinian human rights lawyer Diana Buttu. Buttu was to respond to an interview with Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, Danny Danon, who discussed the Trump administration's as yet unveiled Middle East peace plan.

"Diana Buttu is a human rights lawyer and she joins me from Haifa, on the West Bank," Amanpour said.

In a segment of the interview posted on the CNN website, the introduction is left off.

The clip of the introduction was tweeted by Hillel Neuer, executive director of the NGO UN Watch. He said in his tweet that "Haifa is not 'on the West Bank.' It's in Israel. Where Jews & Arabs live together in harmony."

Haifa, located in northern Israel, is the third largest city in Israel and has a mixed Jewish and Arab population.

Brazil's president says Nazis were leftists following his visit to Yad Vashem

By Josefin Dolsten

(JTA)—President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil said that Nazism was a leftist movement following his visit to the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem.

The far-right leader was asked on Tuesday during his visit to Israel if he agreed with a recent claim by his foreign minister, Ernesto Araujo, that Nazis were leftists.

"There is no doubt, right?" Bolsonaro replied, according to Reuters. He went on to say that the Nazi party's official name, the National Socialist German Workers' Party, contains the word "socialist."

Yad Vashem's website follows the wide historical consensus that Nazism was the product of "the growth of radical right-wing groups in Germany."

Bolsonaro was visiting Israel just days before Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is up for re-election. Prior to the trip, the Brazilian leader walked back his promise to move his country's embassy to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv, saying that his government may instead open a "business office" in Jerusalem.

Netanyahu has appeared eager to embrace the new leader of Latin America's largest economy, despite criticism by Bolsonaro's opponents at home that the president is hostile to black, indigenous and LGBTQ people, as well as protections for the environment and human rights.

3 items that say Passover: Which do you choose?

By Edmon J. Rodman

LOS ANGELES (JTA)—Can the essence of Passover fit into a box? Fans of Manischewitz and Streit's will undoubtedly answer, "Yes, in a matzah box."

But a successful Kickstarter campaign called Hello Mazel aims to reinvent that box, promising a package filled with Passover-related "Jewish awesomeness" that will be delivered to your door (or someone else's).

The project was a smash on Kickstarter, to the tune of more than \$152,021 with 1,395 backers.

Investors who pledged a minimum of \$50 will receive a box in April containing "three twists on the tastes of Passover, a Haggadah like none you've ever used, and a seder plate that is not a seder plate," says the enigmatic pitch.

Thinking inside the box, I wondered what would go into a box of my own creation. Perhaps a jar filled with the essence of full-strength maror to revive them to the awe of liberation. Also a seder clock; one that doesn't mark the time but rather the steps of the seder, so that people who had wandered off could find their place. Also, something to clean wine stains from my shirt—that alone would be worth 50 bucks.

I already have plenty of packaged Passover foods that twist my insides, a box of Haggadahs I only use once a year and so many seder plates we have a "discussion" each Passover on which one to use. So I was curious about what Hello Mazel was really offering. Was it basically just a Jewish take on the trendy subscription boxes of arti-

sanal what-have-you? Or was this a box that could also feed the soul?

Most of all, I wondered: What could a box filled with Passover stuff do to actually bring Jews together?

To get a better understanding of the Hello Mazel's Passover box—one of four promised packages that Hello Mazel plans to deliver this year—I spoke with Yoav Schlesinger, executive director of The Kitchen, the San Francisco-based, rabbinically-led spiritual community that is putting the project together.

The Kitchen, which describes itself as "a religious startup," says on its web site that Judaism is about "provoking awe and purpose."

To that end, they had to "rethink what might go in a box of Jewish stuff," Schlesinger explained. As a goal, they wanted something that was "unexpected and inspirational," he said.

For now, the item-by-item contents of this "highly designed" box remain known only to the Kitchen. However, speaking about the box's mix of food, ritual object and text, Schlesinger says he hopes the food will provide an entry point to the Jewish content, and the Jewish content will provide a "framework in which to understand why the foods are relevant."

Moving beyond "symbolic ethnicity"—a term coined by sociologist Hebert Gans describing a nostalgic relationship with Judaism that relies on a "love for and pride in a tradition that can be felt without having to be incorporated in everyday behavior"—Schlesinger said one question driving the project

was: "How do we get Torah to more people and into more people's hands?"

As an answer, The Kitchen's crew created a Haggadah, a prototype of which Schlesinger and others successfully tested at their own seders last year.

"We reinvented and re-engineered a way of telling the Passover story, which is what the seder and Haggadah are meant to do," he said.

The Haggadah could serve as either a supplement or a replacement, Schlesinger added.

"For a seder newbie it certainly would be an appropriate first-level, Haggadah-like experience," he said.

As for the seder plate, its design has them reaching creatively, looking for a way to present something that is "heavy, expensive and beautiful" in a box that's 10 by 12 by 4 inches (and also needs to contain the rest of the offerings).

Long accustomed to my table's round seder plate, I began to picture how a new form might add difference to this night of distinctions.

Would it be in the form of a hand? Would it come like a jigsaw puzzle for those seated at the table to solve?

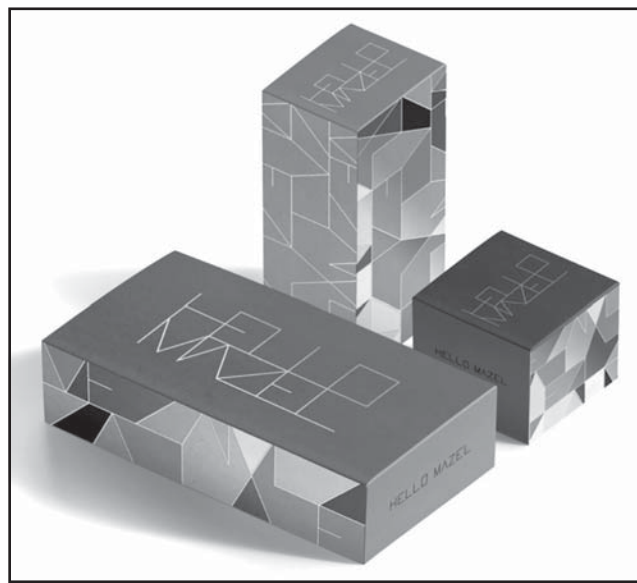
The food items are "kosher style," so Schlesinger acknowledges the box "is not going to be for everyone." He also realizes its limitations. He isn't sure, for instance, that the hope of opening the box at the seder table and "it releases magic" is a reasonable expectation, Schlesinger told me. What is reasonable, he said, is that it will create "some inspiration."

"What about putting an inflatable rabbi in the box?" I asked, jokingly wondering what kind of magic I needed to keep everyone's attention at my own seder table.

Unfazed, Schlesinger, whose father is a rabbi, liked the idea—he said it reminded him of the popular novelty known as "snakes in a can."

Yet I still wondered how even a brilliant new Haggadah could hold everyone's interest—especially that of a generation used to doing practically everything online.

Schlesinger responded that Judaism—contrary to recent



screenshot by Edmon J. Rodman

Investors who pledged a minimum of \$50 will receive a Hello Mazel box containing "three twists on the tastes of Passover."

attempts to project it into virtual communities—has always been about the senses, the "tactile" experience of "touch, feel and taste."

"What is a moment we can share?" he asked. "Not just a digital space"; how do we "recapture the experiential moment?"

Opening a box—whether filled with objects from Hello Mazel or from our own imaginations—might just be the way.

Edmon J. Rodman is a JTA columnist who writes on Jewish life from Los Angeles. Contact him at edmojace@gmail.com.

A 'Sesame Street' seder and 4 other new children's books for Passover

By Penny Schwartz

BOSTON (JTA)—Four questions. Four cups of wine. Four types of children. At Passover, the number four figures prominently in the rituals of the seder, the ceremonial holiday meal that can be mesmerizing and mystifying.

Four new delightful and brightly illustrated books for young kids will enliven, and help explain, the popular eight-day spring holiday, which this year begins on Friday evening, April 19. One features kids' favorites from the long-running TV series "Sesame Street."

A fifth new title, set in ancient Jerusalem, is a perfect complement to the seder that ends with a tune sung to the phrase "Next year in Jerusalem."

"A Seder for Grover," Joni Kibort Sussman; illustrated by Tom Leigh, Kar-Ben; ages 1-4

In this first of four planned "Sesame Street" board books from Kar-Ben, publisher and children's author Joni Kibort Sussman teams with longtime "Sesame Street" and Muppet book illustrator Tom Leigh to offer little ones an entertaining introduction to the Passover rituals and traditions.

The youngest kids and their grownup readers will want to join Grover, Big Bird and their "Sesame Street" friends at Avigail's Passover seder to eat matzah, read the Haggadah and ask the Four Questions Cookie Monster can come along, too—but only if he eats special Passover cookies. Grover tells his friends it's good to invite guests to the seder. Even Moishe Oofnik the grouch is included.

"Pippa's Passover Plate," Vivian Kirkfield; illustrated



by Jill Weber, Holiday House; ages 4-8

In this lively, rhyming story, an adorable mouse named Pippa is preparing for the seder. She sets the table and stirs the chicken stew. But where's the special shiny gold seder plate placed in the center of the table to display the ritual foods eaten at the ceremonial meal?

The kids will have fun as they follow Pippa in her search—from inside her house to the garden, fields and ponds outdoors. Along the way, the feisty Pippa asks for help from a cat, snake and wise owl, who are big and scary and make Pippa "cringe and quake."

Author Vivian Kirkfield's playful verse introduces kid to the seder rituals, while award-winning artist Jill Weber ("The Story of Passover") puts readers in the scene with the cute gray and pink mouse. Her bright, large format illustrations are brightened with yellows and greens to match the spring-time festival. The last page features Pippa's Passover plate, which identifies all of the symbolic seder foods.

"The Best Four Questions," Rachele Burk; illus-

trated by Melanie Florian, Kar-Ben; ages 3-8

Marcy is the youngest child in the family who has just learned to read, and it's her turn to ask the Four Questions at her seder. But Marcy's older brother, Jake, isn't so happy to relinquish the ritual that has won him plenty of praise from his relatives. Marcy, a vivacious and inquisitive girl, turns down all offers of help to practice reciting the Four Questions.

Older kids may figure out that Marcy doesn't realize that she's expected to read the traditional questions from the Haggadah. She's come up with her own questions all by herself. Here's one: How many matzah balls in Grandma's chicken soup? Read to see how the family and Jake react.

Rachele Burk's lively and engaging storytelling underscores the tenet of Passover that encourages participants to ask questions. Melanie Florian's brightly colored animated illustrations capture Marcy's enthusiasm for the festive holiday.

"Matazah Belowstairs," Susan Lynn Meyer; illustrated by Mette Engell, Kar-Ben; ages 4-8

In Susan Lynn Meyer's

humor-filled tale, two families share a home in Apartment 4B, where they are eager to celebrate Passover. Young Eli Winkler is welcoming his human family's guests to their seder in their "Abovestairs" apartment. Under the Winkler's floor is the young Miriam Mouse and her mouse family, who live "Belowstairs" and occasionally enter the Winkler apartment through a tiny round mouse hole.

This year, the Winklers have stored their matzah in a tightly sealed tin box and Miriam Mouse hasn't been able to find any stray pieces—not even crumbs—for her family's holiday. When the determined Miriam crawls through her hole, she spies Eli's father hiding the afikomen, the piece of matzah needed to conclude the seder meal. Who will find the hidden matzah first, Eli or Miriam Mouse? Kids will delight when Miriam Mouse finds the perfect solution for both families.

Mette Engell's large and colorful illustrations provide readers the unusual view from the mouse perspective. In a double-page illustration,

Books on page 18A

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How to host your own Passover seder



Brandon L. Saunders

By Rina Bergman and Alyssa Adler

(Alma via JTA)—Being an adult can be rough sometimes—like when you live too far from your family to go home for Passover or can't find the time or money to do so. If this sounds like you, believe us, you're not alone.

The good news is this in no way dooms you to an evening of eating matzah and drinking Slivovitz on the couch. With a bit of planning and some fine-tuned delegation, you'll

be hosting your own friend-seder in no time.

Below, you'll find some of our favorite friend-seder tips. Consider it an afikomen present from your friendly neighborhood Passover fairies.

(Oh, one more thing before we start: Are you new to your city? Been there. Don't be shy about reaching out to local synagogues and community centers to see what they have going on—they can point you in the right direction of people to celebrate the holiday with.)

Pre-seder

Lesson plan

What do you want your seder to look like? Maybe you're a five-minute, in-and-out kind of Jew. Maybe you like singing and banging onto the table long into the night. Whatever you choose, do you. And make sure that's decided ahead of time.

Need something to get you started? This Haggadah is Rina's family's favorite—and can help you visualize what kind of seder you want to lead.

Invites

Make a list of people you want to have over, then start inviting immediately. People

figure out their Passover plans early, so make sure your seder is on your invitees' radar. The guests don't all have to know each other—icebreakers suck in the moment, but once you've all gone around the table sharing your first AIM screen name, a bond has been formed.

If you're inviting non-Jewish friends -- Rina did all the time in college -- being extra explanatory at the seder is key, especially if they've never been to one before. Giving them a heads-up before they arrive is a good call, too—send them something like this guide from Interfaith Family so they have an idea of what to expect.

Potluck

Take it from us: You don't want to spend the entire day before Passover cooking for the seder. Delegate! You know your friends better than we do, so if someone's known to cause kitchen fires, maybe they just bring the wine. Or the matzah. Or the citrus-shaped jelly candies (it wouldn't be a Passover seder without those bad boys). Need some recipe ideas? Might we suggest these lemon garlic green beans, this Brussels sprouts salad, this (vegan!) sweet potato spinach quinoa gratin, this broccoli, cheddar and spinach frittata, or this incredible chocolate mousse.

Know your kitchen

Keep your oven in mind: Both of our ovens are tiny, as in most commercial baking sheets don't fit inside of them (thanks, New York City!). This means when we cook large meals, it takes a little longer than it would if we had ovens for, say, adults. Maybe you have a massive oven that can cook multiple dishes at a time—we envy you. If, however, your oven would be more fitting for a nursery school play kitchen like ours, then you need to strategize. We're talking oven and stove-top space, cooking duration and temperature.

Oh, and your pans: Possibly even more important are your pans. Look at your menu and figure out how many pans and dishes you need—if you're lacking, now is the time to grab some more, either disposable or reusable.

The actual seder part

Haggadahs

The good thing about a Passover seder is that it literally comes with an instruction guide, the Haggadah, so you don't have to actually memorize any of the steps or prayers. But not all Haggadahs are created equal, even if their cover is identical. We learned this the hard way. Things become a little sticky when everyone's Haggadah is a different edition and no one knows what page they're supposed to be on.

Do yourself a favor and order some online a few days before your seder. Or, if you're in a city with a Judaica store or Jewish bookstore, hit them up (and support small business!).

Traditions

Ask your guests about their traditions and what they want to bring to the table. If your friend's grandma makes the best charoset this side of Broadway, let her family tradition shine through. If another friend spent the 10 plagues throwing ping pong balls at his brothers, then table props it is. Ice-breakers suck as a rule, but these are great ways for everyone to get to know each other. If you're looking to shake things up, Alyssa's family always reads this wacky version of the Four Questions—feel free to join in on the fun!

And to make it run smoothly...

Set the table the night before. Just one less thing to worry about.

Have fun!

As two type-A personalities, we understand how easy it is to get caught up in the chaos. Remember, this holiday is all about enjoying your freedom. Don't let the chains of hosting bind you this Passover—what's most important is that you're with good company and you drink copious amounts of wine (or maybe sangria?!).

What it means to keep kosher for Passover

By MJL Staff

(My Jewish Learning via JTA)—Keeping kosher for Passover means abstaining from hametz, the fermented products of five principal grains: wheat, rye, spelt, barley and oats. Though matzah, the unleavened bread eaten on Passover, is made from grain, it is produced under highly controlled conditions to ensure that it does not ferment.

Ashkenazi Jews who keep kosher for Passover have also traditionally avoided eating kitniyot, a category of foods that includes corn, rice, beans

and lentils, though the Conservative movement's rabbinic authorities overturned the kitniyot prohibition in 2015. Sephardic Jews do not abstain from kitniyot. A minority of Jews add an additional stringency by avoiding "gebroschts"—unleavened matzah products that become wet, such as matzah balls or matzah meal.

Among observant Jews, it is common practice to avoid most processed food that is not explicitly labeled kosher for Passover. This is true even for products like cheese or juice that do not contain

any hametz, but may have been processed in a plant alongside products containing hametz. Some products that are kosher year-round are modified slightly to be kosher for Passover—most famously Coca-Cola, which substitutes cane sugar for corn syrup in some regions over the holiday and is marked by a distinctive yellow cap.

A guide to kosher-for-Passover foods is published each year by the Orthodox Union, which also maintains a searchable database of Passover foods on its website. The O.U. also has information

on food products that can be used without explicit Passover certification.

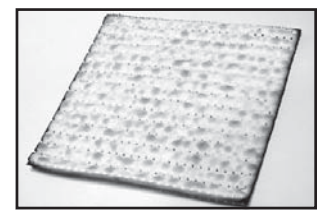
There are a range of additional practices common to Jews who keep kosher for Passover. Chief among them is ridding the home of any hametz products. This is typically done in the days leading up to Passover when homes are cleaned of all hametz. For hametz products that are too valuable or difficult to discard, it is also possible to sell the hametz to a non-Jew. Generally, an arabi performs this service on behalf of his congregants and then repurchases the hametz

for them when the holiday concludes. In these cases, the seller rarely delivers the food to the purchaser, but instead packs it away.

Making a kitchen kosher for Passover is an elaborate process. Countertop surfaces and sinks are either kasher ed (made kosher) with boiling water or covered for the duration of the holiday, depending on the material. Metal pots and utensils can usually be kasher ed with boiling water, and various appliances have their own requirements. The O.U. has a guide to kitchen preparation.

Given the difficulties involved, many observant Jews maintain separate Passover cookware, dishes and utensils that are used only during the holiday.

Many Jews who do not follow all these restrictions nonetheless make some dietary changes in honor of the holiday. Some people



David R. Tribble/Wikimedia Commons

avoid eating hametz but do not thoroughly purge their kitchens of it, while others cut out bread and pasta, yet continue to eat some traditionally forbidden items.

In recent years, many affluent observant Jews have opted to avoid the rigors of cleaning their kitchen for Passover by going on special kosher-for-Passover cruises or to kosher-for-Passover resorts. The trend, while costly, not only makes the holiday easier to observe, but often provides a welcome opportunity for an extended family to get together without the burden of having to host and cook for large numbers of guests.

Passover seder: How to be a good guest

By Julie Wiener

(My Jewish Learning via JTA)—If you've never been to a Passover seder, you might be feeling a bit intimidated at the prospect. Relax. The seder is an opportunity for celebration, discussion and lots of tasty food. Here are some things to know before you go:

What should I wear?

People usually dress up a little for the seder, but it's best to ask your host ahead of time, as seder attire can run the gamut from jeans and T-shirts to suit-and-tie. You'll probably eat a lot, however, so don't wear anything with a tight-fitting waist!

What should I bring?

Again, it's best to ask the host ahead of time. If he or she requests food or wine, make sure to find out whether the family keeps kosher and how strictly they observe Passover dietary laws.

Even if your host does not keep kosher, you should avoid bringing baked goods,

like breads or cakes, as these flout the tradition of avoiding leavened foods, unless the products are labeled kosher for Passover. Flowers are always a good option as well.

Is there a prayer service before the meal?

The seder, which commemorates the Israelites' Exodus from slavery in Egypt (the first 15 chapters of Exodus), is a service of sorts, replete with blessings, rituals, songs and readings.

To get a better feel for what happens and in what order, we recommend you check out this article about the seder and this one about the Haggadah.

Will the seder be in Hebrew?

Some families do conduct the seder all in Hebrew, but many primarily stick to English, with the exception of reciting some prayers and blessings in Hebrew. To familiarize yourself with some of the Hebrew terms used throughout the seder, check out our Must-Know Passover Terms.

How long does the seder last?

Seder length varies even more than seder attire. Some families read every page of the Haggadah, the book that details all the Passover rituals, blessings and readings, along with all sorts of supplemental readings, while others do a very abbreviated version. That means the seder can range from under 30 minutes (followed by a leisurely meal) to literally all night.

Traditionally the seder has two parts: readings and rituals for before the meal is served, and readings and songs that follow the meal. However, many families—particularly those with small children—dispense with the second part and focus on the pre-meal rituals. You can ask your host to provide a ballpark estimate in advance.

Julie Wiener is managing editor of MyJewishLearning.

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Wishing You A Happy Passover



From
Mardi, Ron, Ben Shader & Kimberly & Steve

Support

From page 4A

By the end of the 19th century, evangelist William Blackstone submitted a petition to President Benjamin Harrison to establish a Jewish state. This was signed by some of the most prominent Americans, including the chief justice of the Supreme Court, future president William McKinley and John D. Rockefeller.

Long before the establishment of the modern State of Israel, Israel was firmly part of U.S. foreign policy. Despite recent anti-Semitic aberrations to this wide support over two centuries, support for Israel remains strong both among political and religious leaders as well as Americans overall. A recent Gallup demonstrated this with 69 percent of Americans having a favorable opinion of Israel.

This remains constant over decades. By the time

World War II ended, both houses of Congress called for a Jewish state, and both the Democratic and Republican parties had pro-Zionist platforms. Polls then showed Americans supporting a Jewish state 2:1.

Today, support for Israel remains wide, largely bi-partisan, and dynamic. Last week, nearly 20,000 gathered in Washington as part of AIPAC's annual policy conference. AIPAC is one of the largest and most consistently pro-Israel organizations in the U.S. It is mistakenly and pejoratively sometimes referred to as the "Jewish lobby." Yet American support for Israel is not limited to Jewish Americans. Indeed, far outnumbering American Jews are millions of American Christians and others for whom support of Israel is a biblical obligation based on the imperative of Genesis 12:3 where God promises he will "Bless those that bless you."

Underscoring this, at the same time as AIPAC took place

in Washington, another no less significant gathering took place on the opposite coast with thousands of pro-Israel Christians gathering for the National Religious Broadcasters convention. This is not a pro-Israel group the same way that AIPAC is, by definition. However, the NRB attendees are no less so.

Seven decades after its miraculous rebirth and prospering against all odds, there are many more reasons why America supports Israel. Despite all the challenges to its existence, Israel remains the only thriving democracy in the Middle East, ensconcing and protecting the rights of all its citizens uniquely.

Israel protects the rights of all regardless of gender, religion, or ethnicity, and guards and protects holy sites for all religions. Christians know that Israel is the only place in the Middle East where Christians can worship openly and freely. This is especially significant considering wide-

spread persecution and even murder of Christians among Moslem countries.

The U.S. and Israel have a common interest militarily. As the outpost of Western democracy in the Middle East, this partnership has served well to keep encroaching ideologies of Communism and Islamic extremism in check. Americans also know that not only has the U.S. not ever had to send troops to Israel's defense, but Israel's military innovations have served U.S. interests well. Through joint military cooperation, the U.S. has also benefitted from Israel's use of American military hardware in combat. This makes the U.S. stronger as the armies have close and collaborative relationships.

Common military interests underscore the fact that America and Israel have common enemies. This is obvious today with Iran leading the world's Islamic extremists that threaten both Israel and the U.S. Yet, it's

not uniquely recent. It was the same Mordecai Noah, to whom President Adams wrote in 1819, who served as an American diplomat in northern Africa where he rescued Americans enslaved by Moslem captors.

Underscoring that while American support for Israel rests on many pillars but is chiefly grounded in common biblical values, many Christians and Jews alike are concerned that America will lose its blessing from God if it turns its back on Israel. There's a common belief that under the Obama administration America experienced the withdrawal of God's blessing. The Trump administration's affirming Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, recognizing Israeli sovereignty over the Golan, and withdrawal from the flawed Iran deal that threatens Israel have many reassured that in honoring Israel, America will continue to be blessed.

Speaking with a Christian

friend about why Americans support Israel, he replied "My reasons are quite simple. It comes down to one verse. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. (Genesis 12:3) Simply, God loves His chosen people, and so do we."

The history of American support for Israel makes Zionism, the movement to restore the Jewish people to the Land of Israel, as American as baseball and apple pie.

U.S.-born and educated Jonathan Feldstein immigrated to Israel in 2004. Throughout his life and career, he has fellowshipped with Christian supporters of Israel and shares experiences of living as an Orthodox Jew in Israel. He writes a regular column for Standing With Israel at charismanews.com and other prominent web sites. He can be reached at firstpersonisrael@gmail.com.

Tobin

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there is a natural affinity between the effort to achieve equal rights for African-Americans and Palestinian efforts to destroy Israel requires a willingness to ignore the truth about Israel and that of the movement to destroy it.

More to the point, the article presents criticism of the anti-Semitic invective of Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) as the result of racism.

The reason why Obama was criticized for his Middle East stands had nothing to do with his race, and everything to do with his refusal to accept that hatred for

Israel and anti-Semitism was the obstacle to peace, not the pro-Israel community's racism or Israel's intransigence. If Omar is singled out for criticism, it's not because she's black or Muslim, but because, like the BDS movement she supports, she's guilty of flagrant anti-Semitism.

There was a time when intersectional myths seeking to conflate anti-black racism with Zionism and the Jews would be dismissed as prejudiced anti-Semitic claptrap that didn't deserve a hearing in a prominent forum like the Times. But that was before some on the left began their suc-

cessful efforts to divide the Democratic Party and to legitimize anti-Semitism.

In the battle for the soul of the Democratic Party, it is Israel's foes that have embraced hate, not its defenders. It is they who talk about Jewish money, while trying to delegitimize the Jewish state and whitewash its enemies.

Liberals who wish to reclaim their party's integrity, and that of the flagship publication of their movement, have an uphill struggle in front of them.

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Matzah

From page 9A

will clean the dough as it falls off," says Stein. "Some don't, and the machine goes straight through the cycles without cleaning. Really, anything that falls would be botul ('insignificant' in Jewish law), but this is not the best situation."

The next level of machine matzah is 18-minute matzah. This is matzah produced in a factory where the machinery is designed to be dismantled and thoroughly cleaned every 18 minutes.

In either case, there is always a team of dough kneaders who ensure the dough not being fired is constantly needed; as long as the dough is being kneaded, it will never become chametz.

A final and strictest level is matzah "chabura." According to Stein, in this situation, all dough must make it into the oven within 18 minutes, whether or not it's being kneaded. After 18 minutes, the machinery and all of the tools, bowls, and other materials are thoroughly cleaned.

"These people make sure there is no chametz left over," says Stein. "The price of this level—and each different level—is significantly different."

Today, most machine matzah consumed around the world is imported from Israel, where there are dozens of matzah factories. Only one machine matzah factory—the facility of Manischewitz—exists in the United States, according to the OU.

Non-traditional traditions

There are some smaller communities, especially variant sects of Hasidim, that add extra levels of stringency to their matzah baking practices. For example, according to Stein, there are those who mill their matzah by hand.

"This is not a very popular chumra (stringency)," says Stein, noting that today this is mostly practiced by the Sanzer Hasidim of Kiryat Sanz, in the Israeli city of Netanya.

Another stringency is "kefirah shel yad," hand-reaped matzah.

Finally, there are those who hold that the matzah eaten at the seder must be made in the afternoon on the same day

Passover starts. The holiday begins on the 14th day of the Hebrew month of Nissan, when the Passover sacrifice was brought to the Jewish Temple. The matzah being baked that afternoon models the time of the sacrifice. Such an enterprise requires great care.

"People who do this will start at chatzot (mid-day)," says Stein, who does this himself in his synagogue in Rehovot, Israel.

Alternatives

Today, there is a growing community of gluten-free individuals who cannot eat matzah made of wheat flour and water. For those people, oat matzah is produced. Stein says he knows of no hand-made oat matzah factories,

but that the product is becoming plentiful on the grocery store shelves.

"It is very difficult to eat oat matzah if something isn't done to take the bitterness out," says Stein. "The oat matzah is very expensive."

Sephardim eat a softer version of Ashkenazi matzah. There is "nothing theoretically wrong with this," says Stein.

"Ashkenazim don't eat it because we are afraid. The Ashkenazi minhag (custom) is to eat only matzah that is crisp and thin," he says.

Egg matzah—which is no longer made with eggs, but rather with apple juice or grape juice, according to Elefant—is another type of matzah that Sephardim love

and Ashkenazim should stay away from, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

"The halacha (Jewish law) says that other liquids mixed with chametz make the flour rise quicker," says Elefant. "Avoid it, if you don't have to have it." The same goes for chocolate-covered matzah.

"On Pesach, we try to avoid foods that are chametz or can become chametz with one exception: matzah," Elefant says with a chuckle.

He continues, "Pesach is a holiday of customs and traditions. Each family and community has its own traditions that are passed down from generation to generation. One thing remains consistent: matzah... The matzah we eat is forever."

Family

From page 11A

to get bigger and more elaborate each year, stretching beyond the dining room and into the living room. She'll make two kinds of brisket and three kinds of charoset. She'll create a "Passover Jeopardy!" table game, and she'll print out songs about the 10 plagues and insist we

sing them to the tune of "Oh My Darling, Clementine," or something. And let's just say I'm not the first woman in my family to make her own Haggadah.

Do you have any special Passover traditions you passed along in your family?

Strauss: We are strictly anti-Cuisinart when it comes to charoset. That and the idea

that if kids are in the room, the seder should speak to them.

Birkner: My mom takes seriously the idea of welcoming the stranger. Throughout my 20s, I would often call her on the day of the seder and let her know so-and-so and so-and-so's cousin don't have anywhere to celebrate the holiday and would be coming

with me. She'd add two more place settings, no questions asked. In addition, our family seders almost always include one or more guests experiencing a Passover seder for the first time—including, some years, clergy from other faith traditions.

What do you hope families take away from the Haggadah?

Strauss: My big gripe with a lot of contemporary expressions of Judaism is that they push us to choose between accessibility and substance. This is a false choice. One shouldn't have to attend a yeshiva or be Orthodox to gain access to a complicated, engaging and fleshy Judaism. It should be made available to all. I hope families who use

our Haggadah gain an appreciation for the depth and richness of our tradition, and that it makes them hungry for more.

You can download the Kvell Haggadah at kveller.com/haggadah.

Kvell is published by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency's parent company, 70 Faces Media.

Books

From page 16A

Eli is kneeling and wide eyed when he discovers Miriam under a bookcase with the afikomen wrapped in a bright blue napkin embroidered by his grandmother.

"Shimri's Big Idea: A Story of Ancient Jerusalem," Elka Weber; illustrated by Inbal Gigi Bousidan, Apples & Honey Press; ages 4-8

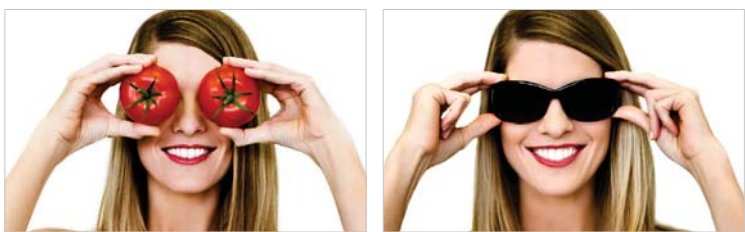
In this gracefully told story, Elka Weber takes kids back in time to ancient

Jerusalem, where a curious boy named Shimri is told he's too young and small to help his older and bigger family members plow the fields and draw water from the faraway well. But His Grandma Eliora reassures him that "Big ideas can come from small mouths," and urges him to look closely and listen.

Shimri learns that King Hezekiah is looking for ideas on how to bring water inside the city's walls and wonders if the king will listen to a

small boy's solution to the problem. Weber's timeless, folk-style tale will strike a chord for young readers who will share Shimri's frustration.

The warm desert tones of Inbal Gigi Bousidan's illustrations evoke the landscape and lifestyle of ancient Jerusalem. An author's note explains the fictional story is inspired by Hezekiah's Tunnel, which was dug during the eighth century BCE, an engineering feat for its time.



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