



NJ resident takes helm of national women's Zionist group

Our Towns 4



Marking the completion of a Talmud study cycle

Exit Ramp 23

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Thousands of Jews and non-Jews from the tri-state area and several other states, including Virginia, Ohio, and Massachusetts, attended the march across the Brooklyn Bridge as a show of solidarity in the face of anti-Semitism.

Princeton rabbi remembered as devoted friend and family man

Adam Feldman lauded for making the world 'a better place'

Shira Vickar-Fox
 NJJN Managing Editor

Spinkled amid mourners' dark, somber clothing were the bright red of the Philadelphia Phillies and the dark green of the Eagles. The garb was not out of place: In the funeral announcement of Rabbi Adam Feldman, who died Dec. 24, the family welcomed Phillies, Eagles,

or Sixers apparel as a "reflection of Rabbi Feldman's love of life and Philadelphia sports."

On Sunday, Dec. 29, at least 1,000 mourners packed into the sanctuary and social hall of The Jewish Center (TJC) in Princeton to remember Feldman, the synagogue's senior rabbi, who died last week while on a family vacation in Hawaii. He was 55.

People stood along the walls to honor a beloved rabbi whose roots run deep in the Conservative movement and whose ties of friendship among people of all faiths run wide.

"The world is a much better place with a friend like Adam," said Cheryl Magen, director emeritus of Camp Ramah in the Poconos, who met Feldman at the camp in 1984. At the time he was the head of sports and told Magen that while teams and equipment matter, what's really important to him is teaching campers "how to lay tefillin."

Continued on page 11

'Proud, unafraid, and fed up'

In wake of Monsey and Jersey City, 25,000-strong rally brings out broad cross-section of Jewish community

Doug Chandler
 Special to NJJN

Jill Schwartz-Chevlin of West Windsor, a senior medical officer at Landmark Health and chair of the Hadassah Physicians Council, said she felt personally affected by the recent attacks on Jews, so she joined the tens of thousands of Jews from the tri-state area — and several other states — who gathered in Columbus Park in Brooklyn following the Jan. 5 march across the Brooklyn Bridge.



West Windsor residents Jill Schwartz-Chevlin, from left, her daughter Sabrina Chevlin, and even family dog Tara, prepare to walk over the Brooklyn Bridge during the Jan. 5 solidarity march.

PHOTO BY BRIAN CHEVLIN

"When one Jew is attacked, all Jews are attacked, no matter the denomination," said Schwartz-Chevlin, a member of Beth El Synagogue in East Windsor. "Most of our [Jewish] rallies have been for Soviet Jewry and

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Feldman's lasting impact on community, page 8 →

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'Inspiring' Garden State Jew



Babs Siperstein, at left, with Gov. Phil Murphy at the signing of her namesake law.

COURTESY OFFICE OF GOV. PHIL MURPHY

JTA lists Barbra "Babs" Siperstein of Edison as one of nine "inspiring" Jews who died in 2019. The transgender rights and Israel activist died Feb. 3 of complications from cancer. She was 76.

Two days previously, on Feb. 1, the Babs Siperstein law went into effect in New Jersey, allowing residents to change their gender identity without proof they had undergone gender reassignment surgery.

"In the long and proud history of New Jersey's LGBTQ community, few voices spoke with the power and passion of Babs Siperstein," said Gov. Phil Murphy after her death. "She was a tremendous advocate and good friend and was never shy to push us to open our hearts and minds, and to move our thinking ever forward."

In 2009, after completing sex reassignment surgery, she officially changed her Hebrew name from Eliezer Banish to Baila Chaya at a ceremony at her Conservative synagogue in Freehold.

Other Jews on the JTA list include former Israeli defense minister Moshe Arens; Lori Gilbert-Kaye, who was killed in the April shooting at a Chabad in California; author Herman Wouk; and actress Peggy Lipton, who is the mother of "Parks and Recreation" cast member Rashida Jones. — NJJN Staff

Jewish pride on stage

There weren't many Jewish winners at the Golden Globes — the Hollywood award show which aired Jan. 5 — but JTA reports on some favorite Jewish moments.

They include director Quentin Tarantino speaking Hebrew to his wife, Israeli singer Daniella Pick. Tarantino won awards for his film "Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood" and at the end of an acceptance speech said, "Todah giveret, I love you," which translates roughly as "thanks, ma'am."

Movie star and comedian Tiffany Haddish wore a star of David necklace.

Sam Mendes, whose mother is Jewish, won best director for his World War I drama "1917." And in presenting the film "Jojo Rabbit," which mocks Nazis, Sacha Baron Cohen continued his criticism of Facebook's policies regarding ads, hate speech, and fake information.

"The hero of this next movie is a naive, misguided child who spreads Nazi propaganda and only has imaginary friends," Cohen said. "His name is Mark Zuckerberg."



Tiffany Haddish wearing her Star of David. JON KOPALOFF/GETTY IMAGES

Vive la Israel



An Israel Cycling Academy rider at the start of a U.S. race in 2015. DOUG PENSINGER/GETTY IMAGES

The Israel Cycling Academy (ICA) will be the first Israeli team ever to participate in the Tour de France. The 2020 race will start in Nice on June 27.

The cyclists will ride under the banner of Start-Up Nation Central, a Tel Aviv-based non-profit organization that connects companies around the world to Israeli innovation.

"Our goal is to get Israel's powerful tech ecosystem behind the cycling team, as it becomes a formidable competitor, and leverage the knowledge gained from testing these technologies on Israel Start-Up Nation cycling team to benefit other athletic teams," said Eugene Kandel, CEO, Start-Up Nation Central.

Tour de France is the world's third most watched sporting event, after the summer Olympic Games and the soccer World Cup.

In addition to the partnership with Start-Up Nation Central, the ICA riders will continue to serve as Peres Center for Peace and Innovation "Peace Ambassadors," a title they were bestowed in 2018. The center's logo will appear on their uniform to help spread a message of peace and coexistence.

The team heading to Nice has 30 riders of 16 different nationalities, including U.S. cyclist Travis McCabe from Arizona. — ISRAEL21c



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Our Towns

East Windsor resident takes helm of women's Zionist organization

Michele Alperin

NJNJ Contributing Writer

Janet Gurvitch, the new president of NA'AMAT USA, first learned about the Zionist women's organization, then called Pioneer Women, from her grandmothers. Now her daughter-in-law and granddaughter are also members, making her, she told NJNJ, "the third of five generations of members of NA'AMAT."

Gurvitch, of East Windsor, was elected on Nov. 7 at NA'AMAT USA's 43rd convention, in Israel.

Founded in New York City in 1925, Pioneer Women drew its members from the Eastern European immigrant generation who were committed to Zionist ideals. The organization's mission was set: to provide social welfare services for women and children in prestate Israel, help immigrants acclimate to their new life there, and encourage American-Jewish women to play a greater role in Israel and Jewish community affairs.



New NA'AMAT USA president Janet Gurvitch, left, joins first vice president Debbie Kohn at the NA'AMAT convention in Israel.

The idea behind Pioneer Women, known since 1981 as NA'AMAT, was to "be equal partners in building the State of Israel," Gurvitch said. Her own family lived out this ideal. One of her grandmothers, who owned an egg farm in Toms River, exported

turkey chicks to Israel to help in the creation of the turkey industry there.

The members of NA'AMAT USA partner with 300,000 counterparts in NA'AMAT Israel to support social services for women and children in Israel. For example, its daycare cen-

ters serve 17,000 children; students who do not do well in traditional academic settings often thrive in the organization's 17 technological high schools; and 200 NA'AMAT scholarships enable qualified women to pursue graduate and post-graduate work in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

At the November convention, Gurvitch said, delegates were taken to many of the organization's projects and installations. Among other sites, they visited NA'AMAT's Kanot Youth Village, near Gedera, a residential high school for disadvantaged, challenged, and at-risk teens; the Glickman Center, a new shelter for battered women and their families in Sderot; and the Golda Meir daycare center in Tel Aviv.

In the States, NA'AMAT USA advocates for legislation advancing women's rights, child welfare, and educational initiatives. Its membership is organized among four areas across the country, with each encom-

Beth El welcomes newly minted Rabbi Nover

Rabbi Matt hopes to create meaning for modern Jews

Michele Alperin

NJNJ Contributing Writer

Everyone knew I was going to be a rabbi growing up," said Matthew S. Nover. "I'd be the kid always trying to stump the rabbi, the kid who was excited to go to religious school."

It seems everybody was right; in July, the newly ordained Rabbi Nover joined Beth El Synagogue in East Windsor as assistant rabbi and education director.

Although Fort Worth, Tex., where Nover grew up, did not have many observant Jews, he said it was a community "that cared more about people being involved in Judaism than 'This is the one true way to be Jewish.'" His family belonged to a Conservative synagogue, but he interacted with people at the Reform synagogue and the local Chabad and was a member of BBYO, United Synagogue Youth (USY), and Young Judea.



Rabbi Matthew Nover celebrates Chanukah.

His nuclear family, he said, was "not very observant, but they cared about Judaism and being Jewish." They were serious about celebrating the holidays and always had Passover seders, he

said. His grandfather, who lived 15 minutes away and was a regular shul-goer, exerted influence on his grandson's life choices.

Nover was ordained in 2019 at the

Rabbinical School of the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS), then joined Beth El, where his responsibilities are twofold. As assistant rabbi, he helps with all clergy functions and lifecycle events, leads parts of Shabbat and holiday services, coordinates volunteers to lead services, and reads Torah. As education director, he runs the pre-K-to-10th-grade education program and some adult education courses, coordinates with committees, and runs independent programs, like a weekly Coffee and Chat with Rabbi Matt at a local Dunkin' Donuts.

His wife, Heather, is director of USY's New York and New Jersey regions. They have a 3-year-old daughter.

To guide the selection committee that chose Nover, Beth El used focus groups to ascertain what the congregation was looking for in an assistant rabbi. What rose to the top, said Jay Kornsgold, senior rabbi, was "a good

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passing councils and, within them, local clubs. The national office is in Canoga Park, Calif.

With about 7,500 members today, representing a drop from its highest level of about 50,000 around 1980, NA'AMAT USA is taking a more proactive approach as it looks to the future, Gurvitch said.

"Even in our heyday, we felt we were the best-kept secret; we focused on the work we did and very little on promotion," she said. "But we are now looking to have events and draw people to join us via social media." These events range from speakers to "shopping for a cause" in support of women and children in Israel, to networking and promoting greater support for the State of Israel. NA'AMAT is also looking to format its activities in a way more conducive to women in today's world "who are not looking to volunteer in clubs"; for example, formal meetings may be held just a few times a year.

NA'AMAT USA is also planning an observance of International Women's Day on March 8. This global event both celebrates the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women and is a call to action for accelerating gender parity. Because the day has received little support in the United States, even from major women's organizations, Gurvitch said, "NA'AMAT feels it is important to join our sisters worldwide in making people aware of International Women's Day."

In recent years, she said,

NA'AMAT celebrated the day "by highlighting its support for scholarships for young women in Israel who are looking to obtain degrees in law and STEM studies." NA'AMAT scholarships have been named in honor of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Rona Ramon (widow of Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon, who died in the Columbia space shuttle disaster), and the late Nechama Rivlin, researcher, science secretary, and First Lady of Israel.

Gurvitch also expressed concern about the rise of anti-Semitism and said that "anti-Zionism is another form of anti-Semitism, and we have to get people to be aware of that."

Active at the local levels of NA'AMAT when she lived in New York, Gurvitch became involved in the Brooklyn Council. She was part of a club that created a "teddy bear patrol" to provide stuffed animals for children visiting the Brooklyn District Attorney's office with a mother who had suffered abuse. Members also collected personal items for women's shelters and wrote letters and attended demonstrations in support of NA'AMAT's national advocacy on such issues as a woman's right to choose, paternity and maternity leave, and the right to a living wage.

Gurvitch's rise to higher levels of NA'AMAT was nourished by the organization's commitment to encouraging women to become leaders. After national officers recognized her for her service at the council level — where she chaired luncheons and fashion shows, created program-

ming for holiday celebrations, and offered fund-raising workshops — she was invited to attend leadership training workshops. To enable her to learn about the national body, the organization sponsored her attendance at a NA'AMAT convention. She was also sent to a leadership seminar in Israel because, Gurvitch said, she was seen "as someone who might have the potential to be a national leader."

Her first national role was as chair of the membership portfolio. Next she was named director of the Eastern Area, a position that, she said, "was part leadership, part networking and getting to know people and imbuing them with the spirit and passion for the work we do." To forward those goals she created a women's retreat in the Catskill Mountains.

As national co-vice president of fund-raising for the last six years, Gurvitch started a program for b'nei mitzvah students to raise money for NA'AMAT projects in Israel; Tech for Teens provides equipment for NA'AMAT's technological high schools, and Teens for Tots supports

its daycare programs.

Gurvitch, who has lived in New Jersey since 2001, has three sons and four grandchildren. She is a member of three congregations: Beth El Synagogue in East Windsor, Beit Shalom in Monroe, and the synagogue her sister belongs to in Omer, Israel. As a child, besides attending religious school, Gurvitch went to the Labor Zionist summer camp Kinderwelt in upstate New York.

Gurvitch's volunteer activities with NA'AMAT have benefited her personal development, she said. "Being a volunteer...has been very supportive of my growing confidence and the skills I've attained through NA'AMAT — whether speaking skills or getting out of my comfort zone," she said.

Being a NA'AMAT leader "has been empowering for me and gotten me to try new things for myself personally," Gurvitch said. She attributes her willingness to start a new career as a financial planner at age 50 — almost 20 years ago — to her "early experience as a volunteer, to try things and not be afraid of failing." ■

Beth El to hold scholar-in-residence

BETH EL SYNAGOGUE in East Windsor is hosting Rabbi Elliot Goldberg as scholar-in-residence Jan. 31-Feb. 1. Goldberg is a Jewish education consultant with more than 20 years of experience in day schools and a lifetime of summers at Camp Ramahs.

Goldberg will speak on three occasions. The first is at Shabbat dinner, 7:15 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 31. His topic: "I Don't Believe in the God I Learned about as a Child, are there Other Options?" Dinner is by reservation only; vegan and vegetarian meals are available upon request. \$20 adult, \$15 child if reservation received before Jan. 24, \$23 adult, \$18 child until Jan. 28.

At a kiddush lunch at 12:15 p.m. on Feb. 1 Goldberg will present "Riding with the Tide: Strategies for Swimming in the Sea of the Talmud," an experiential program which will recreate a Talmudic conversation. Lunch is free but reservations are required.

The closing lecture will be held on Saturday evening at 7:30 p.m. Goldberg will discuss "Yehuda Amichai: Israel's Favorite Poet."

The scholar-in-residence program is supported by the Jack and Francine Gang Adult Education Fund. Sponsorships are available, please contact Danna Livstone at drlivstone@gmail.com.

To RSVP for Shabbat dinner and lunch (by Jan. 24) and for more information contact admin@bethel.net or 609-443-4454.

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Solidarity

Rally

Continued from page 1

other causes. This was different, a march to show solidarity with our fellow Jews and putting forth the message these recent attacks here are unacceptable.”

Organized by the UJA-Federation of New York and the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York (JCRC), the march drew an estimated 25,000 people to protest the rising number of anti-Semitic hate crimes in the city and nearby locations, to express their solidarity with the traditionally observant Jews who have come under attack, and to say that they won't be cowed or intimidated by the scourge.

Those crimes have included a vicious machete attack in Monsey, N.Y., which injured five; a brazen attack on a kosher supermarket in Jersey City,

which killed two chasidim, a policeman, and an employee of the business; and a rash of assaults against chasidic Jews in Crown Heights and other Brooklyn neighborhoods.

The attacks were also the reason Hagit Sten, a Plainsboro resident and member of Congregation Beth Chaim in Princeton Junction, attended the march with fellow congregants Jack and Laura Nash Greenberg.

“This series of attacks cannot go unnoticed,” said Sten. “We have to show, as Jews, we won't stand for them.”

After gathering at Foley Square and crossing the Brooklyn Bridge, the marchers ended their trek with a rally in Brooklyn's Cadman Plaza, where they heard more than a dozen speakers, including politicians, writers, activists, and leaders representing the major denominations.

Speaking to NJJN after the event,



Approximately 25,000 people attended the Jan. 5 march from Manhattan to Brooklyn. PHOTO BY BRIAN CHEVLIN

UJA-Federation CEO Eric Goldstein said his organization and the JCRC began organizing the march within hours after the Monsey attack. “People needed an outlet. People are feeling very concerned; they're feeling anxiety; and they're feeling anger,” he said.

The two organizations received assistance from the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Committee, and the New York Board of Rabbis, Goldstein said.

Hindy Poupko, the federation's deputy chief planning officer, said she and her colleagues “had begun talking about doing something like this for a whole year.” Their objective was “to tell the traditional Orthodox community that we're aware and deeply concerned about what's been going on.” But things became much more urgent after the Monsey attack, when it became clear that “this was the time for large-scale mobilization effort.”

Poupko said organizers wanted to ensure that participants wouldn't just hear speakers, but also walk across the bridge, “demonstrating with their own two feet that our community is

proud, unafraid, and fed up” with the violence and hatred. Bringing the marchers into Brooklyn, she said, would further express solidarity with the two populations that have been targeted in most of the attacks — the Chabad and Satmar chasidic movements, both based in the borough.

Cheryl Fishbein, president of the JCRC, said organizers also “made a conscious effort not to politicize” the event and “to make sure that everybody felt represented.” They felt strongly that the march and rally should be a community-based, grassroots event, she said.

Schwartz-Chevlin, has been involved with the Jewish Women's Renaissance Project, a leading outreach group that has sent over 15,000 Jewish women to Israel since 2009, and her children have attended the Jack M. Barrack Hebrew Academy in Bryn Mawr, Pa.

“Through my work in Hadassah in Greater Mercer County over the years, along with the Jewish Women's Renaissance Project, our Judaism has always been at the center of our family.”

She thought it was important her

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husband, Brian Chevlin, who serves as a member of the Jewish Federation of Princeton-Mercer-Bucks board of directors and as general counsel for the North American operations of the French distiller Pernod Ricard, daughter Sabrina, a recent Barnard College graduate, and son Benjamin, who works in New York, were at the event as a family. (Her other daughter, Lindsay, is in Israel preparing for service in the Israel Defense Forces.)

“Our Jewishness has always been important in our family, as well as helping other Jews in what we do,” said Schwartz-Chevlin. “An event like this, in America, is something we needed to be a part of.”

Chevlin, who makes frequent business trips to France, is hoping the more virulent form of anti-Semitism he is a witness to there is not taking root in the United States.

“I see what is happening in France with anti-Semitic attitudes,” he said. “For some reason, we are seeing more anti-Semitic acts here. Our community can’t let that continue.”

The event drew steam last week with an editorial in *The New York Times*, which called on readers, Jewish and non-Jewish, to join the march. Among those leading the march were most of New York’s senior politicians, including Gov. Andrew Cuomo and Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand and Chuck Schumer, who is Jewish. N.J. Attorney General Gurbir Grewal also attended.

“What has happened in Brooklyn, what has happened in Monsey, N.Y., was an attack on every New Yorker, and every New Yorker has felt the pain,” Cuomo told reporters ahead of the march. He vowed to introduce a law that would define anti-Semitism as domestic terrorism and to increase the ranks of the state police force and the state Hate Crimes Task Force.

Other marchers included Yitz Jordan, a rap musician also known by his stage name, Y-Love. He spoke of the unique dilemma faced by Jews of color like himself whenever tensions heighten between Jews and their black and Latino neighbors, saying they are often “caught in the middle. I’ve been asked [by different people] on social media, ‘Why am I silent about anti-Semitism but vocal about racism?’ and ‘Why am I silent about racism but vocal about anti-Semitism?’”

“People from both groups expect you to pick a side — that one should take precedent over the other,” Jordan said. “But that’s just not a dichotomy. I’m just as much black as Jewish.”

Jordan also said “there’s no black anti-Semitism. There’s just anti-Semitism. There may be black perpetrators of anti-Semitism.”

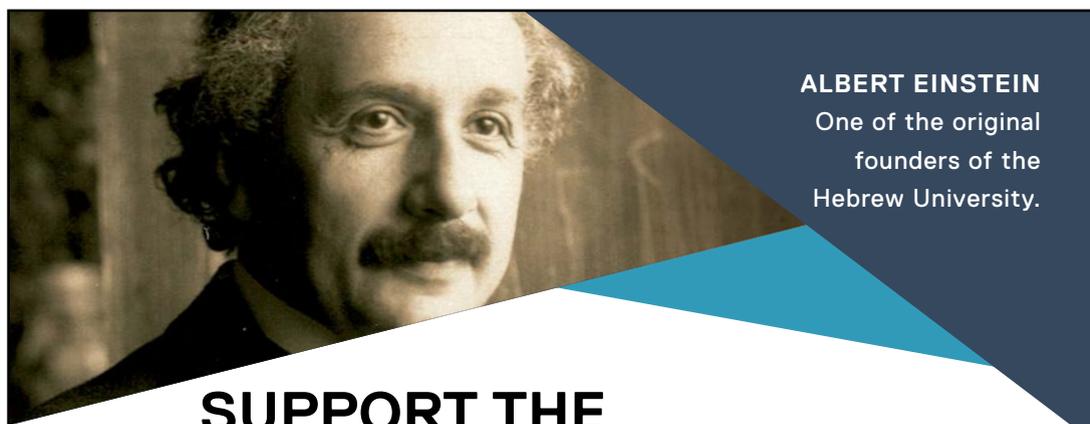
Speakers at the rally included members of the black, Latino, Christian, and Muslim communities, as well as leaders representing the Orthodox communities in Crown Heights, Williamsburg, and Jersey City. Bari Weiss, *The New York Times* opinion editor and author of the recently published book “How to Fight Anti-Semitism,” offered defiant remarks, and Jewish reggae singer Matisyahu performed.

Devorah Halberstam, whose son Ari was murdered on the Brooklyn Bridge in 1994 by a Lebanese-born terrorist, began her speech by exulting, “We all walked across the Brooklyn Bridge.”

“This is not just a march,” she told the crowd. “We are here to send a clear message. We are proud of who we are. We will never take our yarmulkes off our heads. We are here today in

strength and courage.” ■

NJN staff writer Jed Weisberger contributed reporting.



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Northeast Region Executive Director

Giving 'thanks to God' for the gift of Rabbi Adam Feldman

Civic and religious leaders in Mercer County mourn friend

Michele Alperin

NJN Contributing Writer

When students from Princeton High School were caught playing a drinking game called "Jews vs. Nazis," the superintendent of Princeton Public Schools notified Rabbi Adam Feldman.

One of Feldman's responses occurred the next morning when he brought his congregant Vera Goodkin, a Holocaust survivor and retired professor, to the high school to meet the students. Goodkin recalled the rabbi introducing her in the following way: "Dr. Vera Goodkin was about your age when her life was turned upside down and she has a story to tell."

Speaking to NJN, Goodkin said she has long admired the rabbi's ability to "make everything relevant and age appropriate."

The untimely death of Feldman, spiritual leader of The Jewish Center (TJC) for 14 years, on Dec. 24, has created a void in the greater Mercer County community. Leaders told NJN they felt they had lost more than a colleague; they're mourning a friend.

"I loved his devotion, his loyalty, his wisdom, and his love, and I rise before you to give thanks to God for the gift of his life in my life," said Reverend David Davis, senior pastor at Nassau Presbyterian Church during Feldman's funeral on Dec. 29.

Davis met Feldman and became a longtime friend of his through their work at the Princeton Clergy Association and later the Board of Religious Ministries at Princeton Hospital.

"Building relationships with other community leaders through the Princeton Clergy Association was especially important to Rabbi Feldman," Da-



Father Ignatius Okoroji, Rev. Matthew Rhodes, and Rabbi Adam Feldman in the new chapel at Princeton Medical Center. RICHARD TITUS PHOTOGRAPHICS

vis told NJN, "so that when things happen in our community we act out of the relationship: whether threats of violence, acts of hatred, acts of anti-Semitism in the schools, or the need to gather in prayer."

Feldman valued interfaith partnerships, which was apparent in 2017 at the start of U.S. bans on travelers from Muslim countries. "He was the mover, shaker, and organizer of vigils to support the Muslim community," Goodkin said.

She also noted that he had a close relationship with Princeton Theological Seminary. "He would often go there and lecture on Judaism and would often invite some of the students, the future clergy, to attend our services," she said. "You throw a pebble in a lake and it sort of spreads."

Princeton Mayor Liz Lempert called Feldman "a friend, advisor, partner, and inspiration to so many of us in the Princeton community."

TJC congregant Kim Marks said Feldman was a respected community leader whose ties made him an effective advocate for the Jewish community.

"The strong relationships he had with other leaders in the community meant that his phone calls were always answered, his advice always listened to, and his suggestions always incorporated," she said.

Feldman was also an advocate for the Princeton Police Department. After the High Holiday season, he would send a letter to the local papers publicly thanking the department for protecting TJC congregants at the synagogue and in services held at Riverside School.

Chief of Police Nicholas Sutter called Feldman a huge supporter "and friend to me and the department." Sutter said the rabbi was always "here for us, not just in times of crisis, but in all types of times of need."

Sutter said he often shared his own stresses and

difficult decisions with Feldman, a certified police chaplain, and he "brought calm, logic, and perspective to situate me that I certainly didn't have on my own."

Feldman was a founding member in 2013 of their chaplaincy program in which trained chaplains tend to the spiritual and therapeutic needs of the officers and personnel. He also grew the chaplaincy department in the Princeton HealthCare System (PHCS) and was co-chair with Davis of its Board of Religious Ministries.

Rev. Matthew Rhodes, director of the Department of Religious Ministries of PHCS, said Feldman's lifework was illustrated in how he could appreciate "the integrity and differences of people, even see beauty in those differences, and come together in closeness."

Rhodes said he would turn to Feldman for guidance. During a particularly tough time he sought advice from the rabbi who told him that "difficult situations in ministry are a rite of passage," Rhodes recalled, and said Feldman added, "it is on days like that that you really become a rabbi or a minister."

Davis and Feldman shared a friendship with Imam Hamad Ahmad Chebli of the Islamic Society of Central Jersey in Monmouth Junction. "I miss him too much," Chebli said of Feldman, and recalled his "warm arms and open heart."

The three men studied texts together "to understand each other's religion, not from the media, but from the main source: the Torah, the Bible, and the Koran" and then shared what they learned with their respective church, synagogue, and mosque, according to Chebli.

Mark Merkowitz, executive director of the Jewish Federation of Princeton Mercer Bucks, cited Feldman's support of federation and leadership in the new Jewish Community Relations

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Congregants recall Rabbi Feldman as a caring leader who put community first

Michele Alperin
NJJN Contributing Writer

Over his 14 years at The Jewish Center (TJC), Rabbi Adam Feldman partnered with lay leaders and staff to provide guidance and pastoral care for congregants, teach and nourish them, balance Jewish law and communal needs, and serve as the synagogue's emissary to the larger Princeton community. He did so quietly, often behind the scenes.

Tragically, Feldman died on Dec. 24, the second day of Chanukah, while on vacation with his family in Hawaii. He was 55. His congregants and co-workers, past and present, shared some of their memories of the rabbi with NJJN.

Gil Gordon, president of TJC from 2013 to 2015, first met Feldman during the congregation's rabbinic search in 2004. "From that initial chat until the last time I spoke with him [on the Shabbat before Feldman's death], he was brimming with energy and passion for life, Judaism, congregational needs, and more," Gordon wrote in an email.

One way he served the congregation, Gordon wrote, was by balancing communal norms with his commitment to Jewish law as set by the Rabbinical Assembly's Committee on Jewish Law and Standards. Although Feldman wouldn't bend on "the issue of a non-Jewish parent having a



Cantor Jeff Warschauer, who joined The Jewish Center in 2018, with Rabbi Adam Feldman.

PHOTOS COURTESY THE JEWISH CENTER

Torah service honor of any kind," according to Gordon, he still found ways to include them, such as allowing them to give the child the tallit, to stand on the bimah during the child's aliyah, and to join in blessing the child with the Three-Fold (Priestly) Benediction.

"The Jewish Center community didn't always

realize how novel that was and that even today it is still not the norm," Gordon said. "He would go up as close to the line as he possibly could where he thought there was a benefit."

Linda Milstein, former vice president of religious affairs, talked about what Feldman did to bring the different constituencies in the congregation together. For one, he allowed many types of concurrent services on Shabbat, as long as everyone joined together for the kiddush luncheon following services. It was, Milstein wrote, "a great example of Rabbi Feldman's ability to create a sense of community in a congregation with diverse views and experiences."

Said Linda Meisel, president from 2017 to 2019, "Rabbi Feldman saw lay leadership as a partnership, and I think that was a real strength. He was also very skillful at helping the leadership manage change," as TJC faced shifts in the size of the congregation, personnel, membership, and demographics.

Current president Randall Brett told NJJN that Feldman "tried to keep in mind on every occasion the best interests of the whole congregation as he understood them." The rabbi "was always there for you when you needed him, sometimes at his personal expense. He went through his own troubles, as every human being does, and he put that aside when people needed him."

Continued on next page

Mourning friend

Continued from previous page



Rabbi Adam Feldman, at right, laughs with Rabbi Jay Kornsgold of Beth El Synagogue in East Windsor.

PHOTO COURTESY THE JEWISH CENTER

Council (JCRC).

"He was instrumental in setting the direction for who and how the JCRC should develop relationships with local non-Jewish clergy and our greater Mercer municipalities," he said.

In an email to NJJN, Steve Cochrane, superintendent of Princeton Public Schools, wrote, "I pray that all of us who knew him can continue to pass on his light, and in the face of darkness, honor his memory with acts of love and laughter, healing and hope." ■

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Caring leader

Continued from previous page

Abigail Rose, co-chair of the Social Action Committee, recalled especially the support and guidance of Feldman in her efforts to include a rainbow flag in The Jewish Center lobby. When she encountered some resistance on the board, the usually quiet Feldman spoke up, saying, “This is the right thing.”

And, Rose said, “When the flag

came and we were talking about where to put it, Rabbi Feldman decided it should go right next to the entrance to the sanctuary. He said, ‘It should be in a prominent place.’”

Colleagues remembered the leeway and guidance he gave them to develop as professionals — in partnership with him. Sharon Diamondstein, who joined the staff as director of congregational learning in the summer of 2018, wrote in an email, “I have learned from him to believe in my decisions, to take

risks, and to move forward in new directions.”

Former assistant and associate rabbi at The Jewish Center, Annie Tucker, now senior rabbi at Temple Israel Center in White Plains, N.Y., wrote about her memories of Feldman in a pre-Shabbat message (a form of communication she learned from him). As “part of a professional team that felt more like a family,” she wrote, “Adam truly allowed me to grow and develop in every possible way at TJC and to share our congregation as a partner.”

Neil Wise, former director of programming and development, said that in working together to create a vibrant synagogue, Feldman “allowed my creativity and craziness ... to let me go off the beaten path.”

For Amy Rubin, who served as administrator for many years, a moment that illustrated the mutual trust between her and Feldman occurred after a congregant collapsed during services. Because the rabbi knew she was capably handling the emergency, she wrote in an email to NJJN, he “doubled down on leading the service, bringing the community’s attention back to Shabbat, back to Torah. ... He placed the experience of the congregants there to worship, to come closer to God, above his own need to be involved.”

Feldman was available to support religious school students, too. When she was upset that her history teacher suggested that Adolf Hitler may have had a Jewish grandparent, Molly Mitlak asked the rabbi for advice. She wrote in an email that Feldman connected her with a Rutgers University professor of Holocaust history who supplied her with Hitler’s lineage. Mitlak showed it to her teacher, who then sent a retraction to the entire class.

Another time, a 12-year-old student revealed that he had been the victim of anti-Semitic bullying. Feldman first made sure the boy was OK, then turned to his own rabbi for support and reached out to the principal and superintendent.

Two congregants spoke passionately about his effectiveness as a teacher. Mike Cruickshank wrote that Feldman “was never about lifeless responses to deadpan inquiries.... It was never about ‘Just the facts ma’am.’ Everything was meant to go beyond the surface, to get to deeper issues, just like in the Torah.”



Rabbi Adam Feldman, at right, with his family, from left, wife Sara Bucholtz and their children Talia, Ilan, and Dena Feldman.

Neal Masia, a member of one of the study groups Feldman led around town, wrote: he “was somehow able to inspire a group of very busy dads, all with kids and frenetic professional lives, to put everything aside once a month and think really hard about being Jewish.... He delighted in the many times when we would debate the issues — either in the Torah or just the issues of the day — and was so proud that he had created this group where we could all learn from each other.” Remembering how the rabbi emphasized the importance of gratitude, the group will show theirs by continuing the group in his honor.

Feldman was a strong supporter of The Jewish Center’s involvement with refugee resettlement of a Burmese family in 2006, a Syrian family in 2015, and six more individuals and families through an offshoot of The Jewish Center’s Social Action Committee, the TJC Interfaith Refugee Resettlement Committee, chaired by Louise Sandburg. She wrote that “Rabbi Feldman was always willing to talk about how, as Jews, we all had refugee family stories to tell, as well as obligations to help refugees.”

Cantor Jeff Warschauer, who came to The Jewish Center in 2018, said that “Rabbi Feldman welcomed me warmly into the community, he was always there to help, and he was a wonderful guide and mentor to me. I will miss him very much.”

And Judi Fleitman, vice president of administration for TJC, told NJJN that Feldman “was such a source of strength and gave such wise and compassionate counsel to me and so many others,” adding that “now, when I, and we, need his guidance most, he’s not here.” ■



The Jewish Center staff, religious school teachers, and b'nai mitzvah tutors following a lunch thanking synagogue staff. Rabbi Adam Feldman is in the back row, third from the right.



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Feldman

Continued from page 1

Magen asked those gathered to be the kind of friend Feldman was to her: “Someone whose commitment is sincere and unwavering, someone who is your conscience, your cheerleader, and your confidante. Someone who checks in regularly, who makes time for you, someone who says they value you and your friendship, someone who really celebrates your victories with you and supports your failures.”

Rabbi Alan Lucas of Temple Beth Shalom in Roslyn Heights, N.Y., led the ceremony. His friendship with Feldman goes back decades to when they met at a United Synagogue Youth (USY, the youth group affiliated with United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism) event when Feldman was in high school in Cinnaminson. More recently, Feldman was Lucas’s assistant and associate rabbi for six years before coming to TJC in 2005.

Feldman’s death, which occurred on the second day of Chanukah, was sudden and unexpected. Lucas looked to a similar situation in the Bible when a family faced the untimely death of a loved one and instead of eulogies and lamentations, the text advised, “This is a time to be silent,” he said. “This is a time when one cannot capture in the net of language that which is in the heart.”

Yet he also noted that amidst the grief, shock, and anger over Feldman’s death, “the sense of frustration changed to one of appreciation of the special gift that was Adam’s life.” And, Lucas said, the family asked him to share that “we gather not only to mourn our loss but to celebrate what we had.”

Cantor Lorna Kalet of Congregation B’nai Israel in Millburn and Pastor David A. Davis of Nassau Presbyterian Church in Princeton also participated in the funeral. Kalet, who knew Feldman from working together at Camp Ramah in the Poconos, sang Psalm 23 (“The Lord is my shepherd. . .”) and Davis read the English translation, his voice choking at times.

Davis, a longtime friend of Feldman, knew him from the Princeton Clergy Association and the Board of Religious Ministries at the Princeton Medical Center, a hospital chaplaincy group which they co-chaired. Among Feldman’s numerous community initiatives was growing the hospital’s volunteer chaplaincy program into a professional one. He was also a founding member of the chaplaincy program of the Princeton Police Department.

Lucas said Feldman was a “master” at “creating relationships that are bound by love and marked with passion.” He loved being a rabbi, according to Lucas, most of all because it offered him the “opportunity to be with people at the most significant moment of their lives,” whether that was sharing the joy of b’nei mitzvah or comforting grieving congregants.

Feldman received ordination in 1999 from The Rabbinical School of the Jewish Theological Seminary. Following his graduation from Rutgers University and before rabbinical school, Feldman worked for several Jewish organizations, including Camp Ramah in the Poconos and the Berkshires, USY, and Highland Park Conservative Temple-Congregation Anshe Emeth, where he directed youth and adult programming and worked alongside Rabbi Yakov Hilsenrath, who died in 2014. Lucas called Hilsenrath “a major influence” for Feldman of “what a rabbi could be and what a rabbi should be.”

Lucas read remarks about Feldman from former TJC cantor Hazzan Joanna Dulkan, who wrote “the light of



Rabbi Adam Feldman, who died on Dec. 24, was senior rabbi at The Jewish Center in Princeton for 14 years.

this season will be permanently diminished for those of us who love him. . . . He was a living shamash sharing his own light to make us shine brighter knowing that it didn’t diminish his own.”

Lucas closed his eulogy with a parable of a young boy questioning the impermanence of a Chanukah flame. He is told by an old man that while a candle burns for a short time, while it’s lit “it burns brightly and it brings light and warmth and kindness to the world.”

Feldman is survived by his wife of 24 years, Sara Bucholtz, who grew up in Maplewood, and his three children. Two daughters are graduates of Golda Och Academy in West Orange — Talia in 2017 and Dena in 2019 — and his son Ilan is a sophomore. He is also survived by his parents, Leonard and Nikki Feldman of Mt. Laurel, and sisters Lisa and Amy.

Memorial contributions may be made to The Jewish Center, Princeton Health Religious Ministries Department, or Camp Ramah in the Poconos. ■

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Editorial

Avi Chai's legacy continues

In 1984, the investor and philanthropist Zalman Bernstein set up a foundation committed to “the perpetuation of the Jewish people, Judaism, and the centrality of the State of Israel to the Jewish people.”

Within a few years it began to focus most on sustaining and strengthening Jewish day schools and residential summer camps. Continuing after Bernstein's death in 1999, the Avi Chai Foundation, under the chairmanship of his widow, Mem Bernstein, and the tireless assistance of board member Arthur Fried and North American executive director Yossi Prager, was an unmatched force in Jewish education and Israel advocacy. It contributed more than \$350 million over 35 years for research, schools, and institutions devoted to the idea of “best practices” and to understanding what works and what doesn't when it comes to engaging the next generation of committed Jews.

On Dec. 31, by design, Avi Chai closed shop, having spent down its assets in order to avoid the fate of other private and family foundations that have suffered “mission



drift” over time. But the \$1.2 billion in total grants it disbursed assured that its legacy will continue — including here at NJJN and its sister publication, The New York Jewish Week, where initiatives supported by Avi Chai helped make possible a

number of our educational projects, including Fresh Ink for Teens, our online site whose content is written for and by high school students; The Conversation, an annual retreat for a wide variety of thoughtful and accomplished Jewish men and women;

and most especially Write On For Israel, a two-year leadership training and educational program for high school juniors and seniors that Avi Chai founded with us in 2002. Thanks in part to its crucial support, the program continues and more than 750 students have taken part in seminars here and in Israel, gaining the tools they need to be effective leaders in the pro-Israel movements on campus.

We are forever grateful for the support Avi Chai provided to our educational projects over the years. One begins to realize the scope of the foundation's reach and effectiveness in considering the hundreds of institutions and countless numbers of students and others who benefited from its generosity and commitment.

In all of its endeavors, Avi Chai functioned as a “venture philanthropy,” funding programs and studies meant to have an impact not just through the next fiscal year, but well into the future. Its commitment to the generations that will outlive it is captured in a verse from the Talmud: “Just as my ancestors planted for me, I too am planting for my descendants.” ■

America is home, despite a wave of anti-Jewish hate

In the three weeks between the deadly shooting at a kosher grocery in Jersey City and a vicious home invasion in Monsey, N.Y., on the seventh night of Chanukah, there were 11 recorded violent attacks on Jews and their institutions in the New York area. In most of these, identifiably Orthodox Jews were punched, slapped, chased, or threatened with a weapon. This tally doesn't include the graffiti and incidents of verbal harassment, like the thugs who taunted cast members on the street after a recent performance of the Yiddish production of “Fiddler on the Roof.”

The fear engendered by this epidemic is real and understandable. In Orthodox neighborhoods, children tell their parents they worry about going outside. Wives warn husbands not to wear their kippot on the streets. Synagogues are wondering if it is time

to train a volunteer cadre of armed congregants.

For many, the attacks have shredded their faith in the American enterprise. On social media, users wonder if the safety and welcome Jews have felt in America was a short-lived experiment, and whether the current crisis suggests that, as history tried to warn us, Jews can never be safe in the diaspora. Reacting to the Monsey attack, the head of Israel's Yisrael Beiteinu party, Avigdor Liberman, declared that “the main solution to such phenomena is immigration to Israel.”

Immigration to Israel should be encouraged on its own merits, but the deep despair over the wave of anti-Semitism is a misreading of history and the present reality. The attacks are vicious and unacceptable. But societies turn inhospitable for Jews not when street thugs turn violent, but when authorities and

law enforcement either stop caring or encourage them. The “American experiment” is not over when top elected officials direct efforts to combat anti-Semitism, and when leaders of all faiths gather to condemn bigotry and defend their Jewish partners.

All that has happened during the current wave. In the wake of the recent murders in Jersey City, Gov. Phil Murphy said he commits “to take every step possible to keep our residents safe.” Attorney General Gurbir Grewal wrote a five-point plan for fighting hate and anti-Semitism.

In New York, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced more than \$10 million in additional funding for security at Jewish institutions. He directed state police to increase patrols in Orthodox neighborhoods. And he issued a joint statement with over 130 faith leaders condemning anti-Semitism. Similarly, New York

City Mayor Bill de Blasio announced new interfaith Neighborhood Safety Coalitions, increased NYPD presence, and new school lesson plans.

Nationally, the response from politicians has been heartening. Statements of support have been overwhelming and bipartisan. President Donald Trump denounced the attack and called on the country to unite in battling anti-Semitism.

That doesn't mean that authorities can't or shouldn't do more, or that they haven't failed some of our communities in the past. There is still too much tolerance for those who deploy anti-Semitic rhetoric. But as bad as the past weeks have been, actions and statements by leaders offer assurances that Jews are not alone, and the bigots have been given no sanction. We have the tools, courage, influence, and allies to get through this. ■

Is Trump 'resistance' harming fight against anti-Semitism?

Jonathan S. Tobin
Special to NJJN



Those who regard the push to impeach and remove Pres. Donald Trump from office as a righteous cause see themselves in the front ranks of the fight against hate. But in one of the many ironies

that have become so commonplace in politics in the age of Trump, the same people who believe they are attempting to save the republic if not civilization itself from the scourge of the 45th president are becoming unwitting impediments to the actual struggle against anti-Semitism.

That was made clear during the course of the two weeks preceding the House of Representatives vote to impeach Trump when many liberal or left-wing Jews seized upon the president's actions and statements as further proof of the justice of the "resistance" to him. Trump's speech to the Israeli-American Council (IAC) in which he both invoked old and dangerous tropes about Jews and money while urging Jews to be more supportive of Israel sparked fresh outrage among his critics.

Days later, his signing of an executive order seeking to extend protections of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act to Jewish students who are being intimidated by anti-Semitic Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) propaganda on college campuses was interpreted by many on the left as a dog whistle to Jew haters on the far right and an attack on free speech. To his detractors, this seemed to sum up the threat he supposedly poses to American freedom in one bold stroke.

But however much the majority of Jews may despise Trump, it's time for even those most obsessed with what they consider to be his awfulness to pause and consider whether their instinct to resist him is really more important than combating anti-Semitism.

Part of the problem here is the way the "everyone I can't stand is Hitler" paradigm has reached absurd levels with respect to attitudes toward the president. It's all well and good to oppose his conduct or his policies and even to support impeaching him if you are willing to countenance what turned out to be a partisan show.

Yet the last weeks seem to crystallize the way the discussions about anti-Semitism have not so much been influenced by partisan politics as they have completely taken them over. We

already knew that many on the left have become blind to Jew hatred coming from their end of the spectrum and many conservatives seem equally unwilling to confront hate on the right.

But the discussion of Trump's executive order showed that we've gone far beyond the hyper-partisanship that is the essence of public debate in contemporary America. The willingness of so many on the left to not merely ignore the fact that Trump was taking action against

anti-Semitism but to claim his executive order was either an attack on free speech (a consideration that no one thinks applies to federal restrictions on colleges promoting racism against blacks or Hispanics) or a racist redefinition of Jewish identity that was inspired by white supremacist attitudes demonstrated that rational debate is

no longer possible about the subject.

Trump is responsible for helping to undermine civil debate on this and most other issues. The president's comments to a supportive IAC audience provided ammunition for his critics. By saying that Jews should be especially opposed to Sen. Elizabeth Warren's wealth tax and making a passing remark about Jewish real estate brokers in New York being "brutal," he seemed to be invoking traditional anti-Semitic tropes about Jews and money.

His words were inappropriate but were also delivered in the context of a speech in which he criticized Jews for not being supportive enough of Israel and in which he gave a ringing and unqualified condemnation of anti-Semitism from both the left and the right. That makes it hard to argue that he's actually encouraging Jew hatred. Or at least it would be if so many of us weren't driven off the deep end by him.

However it would be foolish to assume that we'll go back to normal once Trump leaves office either in 2021 or 2025. The politicization of anti-Semitism and the lack of restraint and good sense as well as the refusal to credit political foes with good intentions under any circumstances in the discussion of the issue have become normalized.

Trump bears some of the blame for that but the same is true of his detractors whose impulse is to demonize both the president and his defenders. If the "resistance" isn't willing to recognize that Trump is not only NOT an anti-Semite but actually someone who has done a great deal to fight it, then it has become part of the problem rather than its solution. ■

Jonathan S. Tobin is editor in chief of JNS.org and a columnist for the New York Post. Follow him on Twitter at: @jonathans_tobin.

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Gallery



TORAH DEDICATION — Kehilat HaNahar, The Little Shul by the River in New Hope, Pa., dedicated a new Torah on Dec. 18 at an event led by scribe and Jewish educator Julie Seltzer. Left photo, KHN member Steffany Moonaz and other congregants look on as Seltzer points out special details of the new Torah; at right, members Scott Abrams and Judy Dornstreich practice calligraphy.

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IMMIGRATION POLICY — Dr. Lauren Braun, left, and Dr. Carl Lindskoog, associate professor and assistant professor of history at Raritan Valley Community College, discussed the implications of U.S. immigration policy at Kehilat HaNahar, The Little Shul by the River in New Hope, Pa., on Dec. 1. They are shown with Rabbi Diana Miller, center.

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YOUNG MUSICIANS — Beth El Synagogue of East Windsor hosted members of The Peddie School Music Club on Nov. 10.



CHANUKAH CELEBRATION — Chabad of the Windsors held their annual Chanukah celebration on Dec. 22. The Program included a menorah lighting ceremony dedicated to the memory of the victims of the recent Jersey City attack with participation by local law enforcement.



CHANUKAH CANDLES — Chabad of the Windsors held a pre-Chanukah candle making workshop on Dec. 15.



Camp Guide

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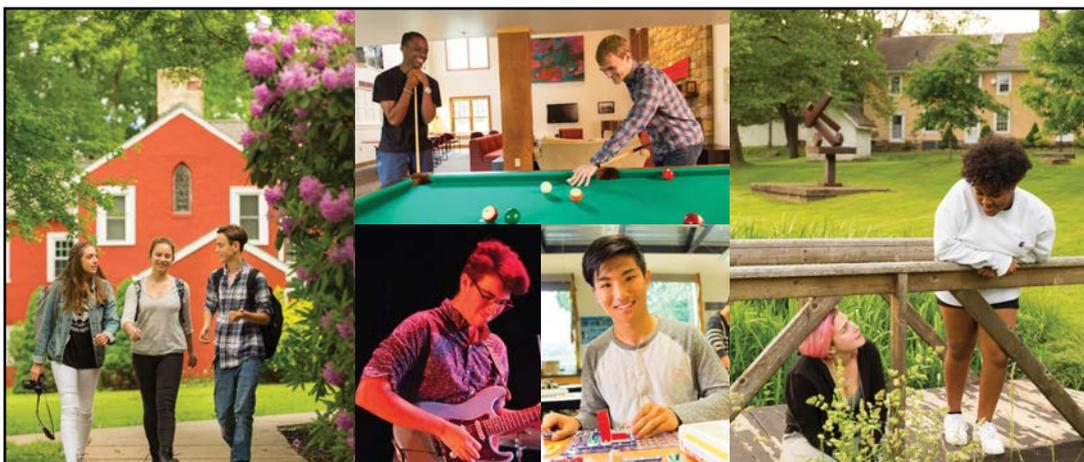
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Women's League and Men's Club welcome you to their own social, educational and community service programs.

The **MOSAIC, a Center for the Arts and Culture** at Adath Israel, sponsored Deadbeats

& Hustlers, who entertained in November, and Bruce Warren from WXPB filled the house in December.

- Jan. 16 brings Rachel Wainer Apter, director of the NJ Division on Civil Rights, speaking on The State of Hate in New Jersey. She will lead a provocative presentation on the rise of anti-Semitism.

- On Feb. 2, an Illustrated Historical Tour of Jewish Paris will be led by Gary Kraut, an award-winning travel writer.

- On Feb. 23, MOSAIC brings us a Musical Performance: One Community — Many Voices — A Concert of Unity and Harmony with local churches, mosques, and synagogues participating.

- On April 26, a Lecture in Song by Fred Miller will feature Composers of Bucks County: Hammerstein and Sondheim

- On May 3, there will be a special opportunity to see the hidden places when we visit Ellis Island and take a private Hard Hat Tour. Separately, on May 1, the Sacks-Wilner Holocaust Education Program will commemorate Yom HaShoah.

There's so much more, and remember **WE** are family; you'll love being part of this family! **WE** welcome you to services and all happenings at the synagogue. Please call or come in to meet Rabbi Benjamin Adler, Hazzan Arthur Katlin, and the many active members. **Our doors are always open! It's a home for every Jewish family!**

Obituaries

Martin Siegel

Martin R. Siegel of Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., and New Hope, Pa., died Dec. 17, 2019. Born in Trenton to Irving and Alice (Novros) Siegel, he resided in the Mercer County area his entire life, having lived in Trenton and Yardley, Pa., for 26 years and Princeton for 33 years.



Mr. Siegel attended lower schools in Trenton, Milford Academy in Connecticut, and Duke University before serving in the U.S. Army Artillery in Germany in 1953-54.

He joined his father as the second generation of his family to work at the heritage fine jeweler, Hamilton Jewelers, where he was elected president in 1968. Hamilton grew from a local store to a nationally recognized industry leader with clients from all 50 states and around the world. A pioneer in launching new products to the local market, he was among the first in the United States to order special Rolex timepieces from Switzerland with rare gem-set cases, bezels, and stone dials for the clientele in Palm Beach.

He continued to serve the firm as chairman from 1994 until his death, a role that allowed him to mentor hundreds of Hamilton employees.

He was an active athlete, being an avid soccer and tennis player as a child, continuing his passion for tennis and, in later years, golf. As a young man, he excelled in tennis, having won the Trenton Junior tennis title in 1951 at age 18, played on the Duke University team, and later served as chair of the Tennis Committee at Greenacres Country Club for many years.

He served and supported hundreds of Mercer, Bucks, and Palm Beach County organizations throughout his life along with his wife, Denise. He was a trustee for 18 years at Helene Fuld Medical Center in Trenton, and a board member of The United Savings and Loan Company for 12 years. In 1982 he received the Crusade Citation from the American Cancer Society for his leadership. In 1984 he worked to found a diabetes educational and informational center at Princeton Hospital, and was recognized for his contributions to the field of diabetes education. He received a citation from Trenton's City Council for his dedication to the Trenton Little League, which he supported for over 50 years. He also sponsored foster children in Latin America for over 20 years.

In 2003 the Greenwood House Home for the Aged recognized the Siegels for their leadership at a gala where President Bill Clinton spoke, and honored them for their longstanding involvement

with the home.

Also in 2003, the State of New Jersey Senate and General Assembly passed a joint legislative resolution honoring him for his "meritorious record of service and leadership," citing that "by his deeds and by his example, he has earned the respect and admiration of all who know him as a man of remarkable character and exceptional determination."

In 2005, the Martin Siegel Community Fund of the Princeton Area Community Foundation was established to commemorate his 50th year at Hamilton Jewelers, in order to benefit local educational, medical, and arts organizations in the region.

In 2011, National Junior Tennis and Learning of Trenton, an organization which enriches the lives of under-resourced youth by combining tennis and education, dedicated a tennis court located at Cadwallader Park in Trenton in his honor. Last May, Greenwood House once again honored the Siegels for their community leadership.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Denise (Ulanet); four sons, Hank (Lisette), Jeffrey (Heidi), Scott (Lucy), and Peter (Kari); and seven grandchildren.

Services were held Dec. 20 at Adath Israel Congregation, Lawrenceville, with arrangements by Orland's Ewing Memorial Chapel, Ewing. Memorial contributions may be made to The Martin Siegel Community Fund of the Princeton Area Community Foundation, or Greenwood House in Ewing.

Evelyn Kohn Azarchi

Evelyn Kohn Azarchi, 89, of Yardley, Pa., died Dec. 14, 2019.

Mrs. Azarchi worked in the family business, doing bookkeeping and accounting.

An active member of the Jewish community, she was active at Greenacres Country Club and a donor to Jewish causes. She was volunteer secretary for the Jewish Historical Society of Trenton.

She enjoyed gourmet cooking, Mahjong, bridge, tennis, art, and antiques.

Predeceased by her husband of 60 years, Arthur, she is survived by two daughters, Lynne (Steve Steinhauser) and Karen; and two grandchildren.

Private services were held Dec. 16 with

Continued on next page

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arrangements by Orland's Ewing Memorial Chapel, Ewing. Memorial contributions may be made to Jewish Federation of Princeton Mercer Bucks.

Myra Schached

Dr. Myra Schached, 70, of Lawrenceville died Dec. 27, 2019.

She was predeceased by her husband, Dr. Martin.

Private services were held with arrangements by Orland's Ewing Memorial Chapel, Ewing.

Ruth Engelman

Ruth L. Engelman, 95, of Paoli, Pa., died Dec. 18, 2019.

Predeceased by a son, David (Tricia) Green, she is survived by her children, Stephanie Matkov, Cynthia Laskin, Keith Laskin, Lee (Joanne) Engelman, Suzy (Larry) Block, Judy (Bert) Quinn, and Mimi (Art) Ungar.

Services were held Dec. 19 with arrangements by Orland's Ewing Memorial Chapel, Ewing.

Frances Friedman

Frances Friedman (Weinstein), 92, of Ewing died Dec. 23, 2019. She was born and raised in Trenton, with the exception of spending one year in Brooklyn during the Great Depression.

Having skipped third grade, Mrs. Friedman graduated from Trenton High School and then worked for Prudential Insurance. After spending many years as a stay-at-home mother, she began working for the State of New Jersey.

A longtime member of Adath Israel Congregation in Lawrenceville and Hadassah, she enjoyed crossword puzzles and Mahjong.

Predeceased by her husband, Samuel, whom she married in 1952, and a son, Jeffrey (Charyl), she is survived by two sons, Howard (Robin) and Mitch (Sherry); and seven grandchildren.

Services were held Dec. 26 with arrangements by Riverside Memorial Chapels, Ewing. Memorial contributions may be made to Adath Israel or Greater Princeton Hadassah.

Annabelle Temkin

Annabelle Joy Block Temkin, 90, of Morrisville, Pa., died Dec. 25, 2019. Born in Derby, Conn., she was a resident of Lower Makefield Township, Pa., for 57 years.

Mrs. Temkin and her husband, Abraham, were the proprietors of M. Temkin Store Fixtures, a restaurant supply business on South Broad Street in Trenton. She was also an elementary school teacher at the Carol Robbins School in Trenton for 25 years.

She was the president of her high school sorority "Pi Eta" and belonged to "Iota Alpha Pi" sorority during her college years. She was a graduate of Rider College, where she earned three degrees.

She was a longtime member of Ahavath Israel Congregation and Adath Israel Congregation.

Predeceased by her husband, she is survived by three daughters, Sheila Davidoff of East Brunswick, Roberta (Jeremy) Spector of Princeton, and Eileen (Norman) Shoenfeld of Cypress, Texas; a sister, Millicent Fineburg of Boynton Beach, Fla.; five grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

Services were held Dec. 27 at Adath Israel Congregation with arrangements by Orland's Ewing Memorial Chapel, Ewing. Memorial contributions may be made to Adath Israel or Hadassah.

Daniel Roth

Daniel I. Roth, 74, of Princeton died Dec. 27, 2019.

Mr. Roth is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, and a daughter, Allison.

Services were held Dec. 30 with arrangements by Orland's Ewing Memorial Chapel, Ewing.

Ann Cohn

Ann S. Cohn, 80, of Monroe Township died Dec. 5, 2019. Born in Chicago, she was a former resident of Lawrenceville.

Predeceased by her husband, James, she is survived by her daughter, Rachel (Jeff) Vaupen; her son, David; a brother, John Shapira; a sister, Janet Barkun; and two grandchildren.

Services were held Dec. 8 with arrangements by Orland's Ewing Memorial Chapel, Ewing.

Abraham Krosnick

Abraham Krosnick, 96, of Washington, D.C., died Dec. 8, 2019. He resided in the Trenton area for over 78 years before moving to the Baltimore/D.C. area 18 years ago.

Mr. Krosnick worked for the U.S. Postal Service for over 35 years before retiring in 1979.

He graduated from Trenton High School.

He served during World War II.

Predeceased by his wife, Selma, in 1982, he is survived by his son, Jay (Freda) of Silver Spring, Md.; and two grandsons.

Services were held Dec. 10 with arrangements by Riverside Memorial Chapels, Ewing. Memorial contributions may be made to Congregation Shaare Tefila, Olney, Md.; or Friends of the IDF.

Janice Frankel

Janice Frankel, 92, of West Windsor died Nov. 28, 2019. Born in Brooklyn, she was a former resident of New Rochelle, N.Y., and resided in West Windsor the past 20 years.

Mrs. Frankel was an elementary school teacher in Pelham, N.Y., for 30 years before retiring.

She graduated from Queens College and earned a graduate degree from Lehman College.

Predeceased by her husband, Howard, she is survived by her daughter, Heidi Shore (Cliff Torban); her son, Jeffrey Frankel; a sister, Lenore Gerson; four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Services were held Dec. 3 at Congregation

Beth Chaim, Princeton Junction, with arrangements by Orland's Ewing Memorial Chapel, Ewing.

Irvin Glassman

Irvin Glassman, 96, of Princeton died Dec. 14, 2019. He was a native of Baltimore.

Prof. Glassman was the Robert H. Goddard Professor (Emeritus) of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at Princeton University. He retired from Princeton in 1999 after 49 years on the faculty.

He was considered one of the world's leading authorities on combustion as applied to problems in energy production, pollution, propulsion, and fire safety. In 1972, he founded Princeton University's Center for Energy and Environmental Studies. He was editor and founder of the journal Combustion Science and Technology and published more than 250 articles as well as two major books, including "Combustion," considered the leading book in his field. He was elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 1996, received an honorary doctorate of science from Princeton in 2009, and was awarded the Daniel Guggenheim Medal in 2018, which honors innovators who make notable achievements to aeronautics.

He received his bachelor of engineering in 1943 and his doctorate of engineering in 1950 from Johns Hopkins University, from which he received a scholarship.

He served during World War II in the U.S. Army as a research scientist and was honorably discharged in 1945.

He is survived by his wife of 68 years, Beverly Wolfe Glassman; three daughters, Shari (Warren) Powell, Diane (Edwin) Gienger, and Barbara Glassman (Arthur Rubin); and six grandchildren.

Services were held Dec. 15 with arrangements by Orland's Ewing Memorial Chapel, Ewing. Memorial contributions may be made to the Irvin Glassman Fund at the Trustees of Princeton University (Princeton University, Alumni and Donor Records, P.O. Box 5357, Princeton, N.J. 08543-5357).

Obituaries must be received no later than four months after the funeral.

Submit at www.njjewishnews.com/lifecycle, by e-mail to obits@njjewishnews.com, or by mail to Obituaries Editor, New Jersey Jewish News, 1719 Route 10, Parsippany, NJ 07054-4515. There is no charge for obituary listings.

A photo (color or black and white) can be included with your listing for a \$36 fee. For payment, please call editor Lori Brauner at 973-739-8116 with your credit card information or mail a check made payable to "JWVG LLC" to the address above.

Agenda

Jewish values

“Judaism’s Gifts to the World: How Major Jewish Ideas Evolved into Universal Values,” a Rohr Jewish Learning Institute course, will be instructed by Rabbi Yaakov Chaiton of Chabad of Princeton at two area locations:

At Princeton Chabad Center, 645 State Rd., the course will be offered on Tuesdays, Feb. 4-March 10, 7:30-9 a.m.

A second class will be held in Robbinsville on Wednesdays, Feb. 5-March 11, 7:30-9 p.m.

The cost is \$80 (textbook included), \$130 for couples or those who bring a friend, free to try out the first class.

Contact rabbichaiton@gmail.com or 609-480-6604.

Kosher Café

Jewish Family and Children’s Service of Greater Mercer County offers a Kosher Café lunch program Tuesdays-Fridays at 11:30 a.m. at Adath Israel Congregation, Lawrenceville. RSVP to Debi Henritzy at debih@jfcsonline.org or 609-987-8100, ext. 236.

Sephardic history

“From Golden Age To Expulsion: The Transformations of Sephardic Culture” will continue on Wednesdays, Jan. 15 and 22, at 8 p.m. at The Jewish Center, Princeton.

The course is taught by Prof. Benjamin Gampel of the Jewish Theological Seminary, who will present “The Muslims Fall and the Christians are Triumphant: And What About the Jews?” on Jan. 15 and “Riots, Inquisition and Expulsion: The Birth of the Sephardic Diaspora” on Jan. 22.

Contact info@thejewishcenter.org or 609-921-0100, ext. 200.

Health-care decisions

“Self-Determination in Our Golden Years” will be presented by Beth Hammer, a geriatric care manager at Jewish Family & Children’s Service of Greater Mercer County, on Thursday, Jan. 16, at 1 p.m. at Beth El Synagogue of East Windsor.

RSVP to Beth Englezos at bethe@jfcsonline.org or call the synagogue at 609-443-4454.

Hate in New Jersey

“The State of Hate in New Jersey” will be presented by Rachel Wainer Apter, director of the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights, on Thursday, Jan. 16, at 7 p.m. at Adath Israel Congregation, Lawrenceville.

Wainer Apter, a former law clerk for Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, will lead a presentation on the rise of anti-Semitism and the work her office does to fight hatred and defend civil rights in the state.

Light refreshments will be served. RSVP to 609-896-4977.



Rachel Wainer Apter

Organ donation

A Nosh & Knowledge program, “Organ Donation,” will be held on Thursday, Jan. 23, at 12:30 p.m. at Congregation Beth Chaim, West Windsor.

Rabbi Brian Beal will explore texts relating to the Jewish views of organ donation in a program cosponsored by Jewish Family and Children’s Service of Greater Mercer County and Greenwood House. A kosher lunch will be provided (with a requested \$5 donation), or participants may bring their own kosher-style lunch.

RSVP by Jan. 17 to Beth Englezos at bethe@jfcsonline.org.

Advanced Torah reading

An advanced Torah reading class will be taught by Rabbi Benjamin Adler on Thursday, Jan. 23, 7:30-9 p.m. at Adath Israel Congregation, Lawrenceville.

The course is designed for those who are proficient in the Torah trope system but would like to move toward mastery.

Call 609-896-4977 or go to adathisraelnj.org.

Book Club discussion

A discussion of “Dirty Wars and Polished Silver: The Life and Times of a War Correspondent Turned Ambassador” will be held on Sunday, Jan. 26, at 9:30 a.m. at Adath Israel Congregation, Lawrenceville.



The Women’s League program will be followed by a Skype session with author Lynda Shuster. The book is available for \$16 in the synagogue office.

Call 609-896-4977 or go to adathisraelnj.org.

Women’s League Shabbat

The Women’s League at Adath Israel Congregation, Lawrenceville, will lead Friday evening services along with clergy members on Jan. 31 at 7:30 p.m.

An oneg will follow the service. To participate, contact Peggy Shapiro at kendimo@comcast.net or Jan Berger at janberger17@gmail.com. Call 609-896-4977 or go to adathisraelnj.org.

Ripped from the Headlines

Rabbi Benjamin Adler of Adath Israel Congregation, Lawrenceville, will present “Ripped from the Headlines,” a discussion of Jewish views on current events, on Thursday, Feb. 6, 10:30-11:30 a.m. at McCaffrey’s Supermarket, Yardley, Pa.

Participants may purchase coffee or tea at the supermarket before attending the class in the upstairs meeting room. Call 609-896-4977 or go to adathisraelnj.org.

Jewish Paris

Gary Kraut will present an illustrated lecture, “A Jewish Tour of Paris: Exploring Historical and Contemporary Jewish Paris,” at Adath Israel Congregation, Lawrenceville, on Sunday, Feb. 2, at 10 a.m.

Kraut, a Paris-based travel writer, is the editor of the web magazine France Revisited.

Tickets are \$15. RSVP to 609-896-4977 or go to adathisraelnj.org.

Funday Sunday

A Tot Funday Sunday program, for parents and children ages 2 1/2-4, will celebrate Tu b’Shtav on Feb. 9, 9:15-10:15 a.m. at Adath Israel Congregation, Lawrenceville. Call 609-896-4977 or go to adathisraelnj.org.

Jews Clues

Beth El Synagogue of East Windsor Seniors and Jewish Family and Children’s Service of Greater Mercer County will present “Jews Clues” on Thursday, Feb. 20, at 1 p.m. at Beth El.

Author Steven Cohen will explore how overlooked household items, Jewish holiday traditions, and even food customs can provide a glimpse into one’s family history.

RSVP by Feb. 17 to 609-443-4454 or go to bethel.net.



2019

Happy New Year Federation Year in Review

WE THANK
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The mission of the Jewish Federation of Princeton Mercer Bucks is to preserve, secure, and strengthen Jewish life and values in our community, the State of Israel, and throughout the world.



OPINION

In This Time of Crisis, the Jewish Community Must Do More — and We Will

By Eric D. Fingerhut and Mark Wilf

On Sunday, Jan. 5, a huge crowd responded to the call from UJA-Federation of New York to march against anti-Semitism. The sense of threat is so pervasive at this moment that Jewish Federations and other organizations bused thousands from other states and locales to march in solidarity with the Jews of New York, who have experienced an unprecedented wave of violent anti-Semitic attacks, most recently in Monsey on the seventh night of Chanukah.

People may be asking what the leadership of the Jewish community in America is doing. The answer is that we are dramatically accelerating work on safety and security that has been underway since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States.

Following 9/11, The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA), the umbrella for 146 local Federations and 300 other networked communities, acted on several fronts.

First, recognizing the government's responsibility to protect its citizens in their houses of worship and community centers, we urged Congress to establish the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) to bolster nonprofit institutions at risk of attack.

Since then, JFNA has worked with Congress and a broad coalition of partners to increase the NSGP to \$90 million for the coming year. This amount — a 50% increase from the prior year — was signed by President Trump days before the New Year and just one week before the attack on Rabbi Rotenberg's house in Monsey. Already, we are working with bipartisan leadership in Congress to support Sen. Chuck Schumer's call for an emergency increase in these funds to \$360 million. All told, these advocacy efforts have secured \$419 million in U.S. government funding that has been invested in increasing the security of our synagogues and communal institutions. We anticipate that much more will become available as a result of our efforts.

We are also working to ensure that the institutions that need the funding the most can receive it. Until recently, only facilities in designated "urban areas" could apply for federal NSGP funds. Today, thanks to intense advocacy and the leadership of U.S. Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY), institu-



People march across the Brooklyn bridge in a show against anti-Semitism. MATT SILVER



Eric Fingerhut



Mark Wilf

tions across the country, from urban areas to rural ones, can apply for funding. That means houses of worship in places like Rockland, New York, and White Settlement, Texas, both of which were attacked this week within 24 hours of one another, can now seek funding.

In our system of government, state and local agencies have significant responsibility for law enforcement. The state advocacy teams of our local Federations, in coalition with many others, have so far worked successfully with eight states to provide security funding for faith-based institutions. We believe every state should do the same.

However, as much as we can push on government to meet its responsibilities, we will not leave the security of the Jewish community to government alone. We know we must organize ourselves effectively to ensure the safety of our community. Following 9/11, JFNA worked with law enforcement partners and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations to create the Secure Community Network (SCN), a safety and homeland security organization established to protect the Jewish people. SCN coordinates with federal law enforcement, provides critical training and support to local communities, and works with national organizations like Hillels, Chabad on Campus, AEPi and the Foundation for Jewish Camps. In addition, SCN has the skills and resources to help institutions access and effectively use government security grants, a capacity that

will have to grow dramatically and quickly.

Most importantly, many of our largest local Federations have created their own Community Initiatives that both draw on the resources and expertise of their local communities and partner with our na-

tional system to make sure we are all working together and developing the highest standards for security. They have hired local Community Security Directors, helped with funding to harden community facilities, organized training, and maintained constant vigilance in their service areas. SCN is making sure that every community has a local system that meets the highest standards of security and coordinates with our national efforts.

The attacks on the Tree of Life Synagogue building in Pittsburgh will likely be looked back on as our community's own 9/11. Though the training provided by the Pittsburgh Federation's Community Security Initiative and SCN saved lives on that horrible day, the urgency of building out security systems across communities, large and small, is now clear to all.

The Chanukah attacks in New York, so soon after the Jersey City attack, will be viewed as a moment when the process of securing our community accelerated dramatically and began to reach critical mass. No further evidence is needed — just purposeful, effective and clear action to complete the security umbrella for the Jewish community.

We will do it.

Eric D. Fingerhut is president and CEO of The Jewish Federations of North America. Mark Wilf is chair of the board of trustees of The Jewish Federations of North America.

This article first appeared in the Philadelphia Jewish Exponent

The mission of the Jewish Federation of Princeton Mercer Bucks is to preserve, secure, and strengthen Jewish life and values in our community, the State of Israel, and throughout the world.

The rebellion of the midwives

Shemot

Exodus 1:1-6:1

Rabbi Richard Hirsh

When does liberation begin? “The king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shifra and the other Puah, saying, ‘When you deliver the Hebrew women, look at the birthstool: if it is a boy, kill him; if it is a girl, let her live.’ The midwives, revering God, did not do as the king of Egypt had told them; they let the boys live.” (Exodus 1:15-17) Pharaoh resorts to a new strategy: charging the entire Egyptian population with the obligation to drown at birth all male Israelite infants.

The actions of Shifra and Puah are remarkable for their audacity. Their significance is enhanced when viewed in contrast to Moses’ slaying of the Egyptian taskmaster, which follows almost immediately upon the actions of Shifra and Puah. When we compare the open rebellion of the midwives with Moses’ behavior, we see some significant differences.

“[Moses saw] an Egyptian beating a Hebrew ... he

looked this way and that, and seeing that no one was nearby, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. When he went out the next day, he found two Hebrews fighting, so he said to the offender, ‘Why do you strike your neighbor?’ He replied, ‘Who made you chief and ruler over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?’ Moses was frightened, thinking: ‘Then the matter is known.’ When Pharaoh learned of the matter, he sought to kill Moses, but Moses fled from Pharaoh.” (2:11-15)

Unlike the midwives whose reverence for God compelled them to defy with impunity the decree of Pharaoh, Moses is pictured as a furtive, nervous, and frightened agent of rebellion. Even the language — “[He] hid him in the sand” — suggests a desire to avoid discovery.

In the act of the midwives, rather than the act of Moses, we see the paradigm by which the freedom of the Israelites will ultimately be won: not through surreptitious slayings, but through actions which defy the very authority of Pharaoh. Pharaoh will be humbled before, then crushed by, the overwhelming power of God; the Egyptians will reap the retribution for their participation in accomplishing what the midwives

refused to carry out. As with the midwives, Pharaoh will ultimately be unable to destroy those whom God has protected.

Thus it is not surprising that this week’s Torah portion, in so many ways an overture to the events to come, concludes with the words “And the Lord said to Moses, ‘Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh; he shall let them go because of a greater power...’” (6:1) In the simple but often unobserved escape of the midwives from the wrath of Pharaoh, we discover the key to the story of the Exodus: the liberation of the Israelites, once set in motion, will perhaps be delayed, but it will not be deferred. Pharaoh’s inability, or unwillingness, to take action against Shifra and Puah signals that he will ultimately be unable to resist the Divine defiance of his presumptuous power.

Writing in his commentary on Exodus, Nahum Sarna states: “[The midwives’] defiance of tyranny constitutes history’s first recorded act of civil disobedience in defense of a moral imperative.”

Liberation has begun!

Rabbi Richard Hirsh engages in independent rabbinic projects in Wynnewood, Pa.

Our Towns

Nover

Continued from page 4

educator for our kids.” Although Nover had just been ordained, he already had extensive experience as a director of congregational learning and of a youth education program, a religious school principal, and a Hebrew high school interim director.

Moreover, Kornsgold told NJJN, Nover is “very personable, great with the kids, very enthusiastic, and his enthusiasm comes through in every thing he does.”

For example, Nover set up a system whereby students in the religious school earn points for asking challenging questions, attending services beyond those required, and sending him pictures of Chanukah menorah lightings. The points are being accumulated toward an end-of-year prize. “The idea behind it is to build excitement,” Kornsgold said.

He added that Nover “is always coming up with new ideas, trying new things educationally, and trying to make sure everyone is as comfortable as possible at synagogue.” As prayer leader, for example, he said Nover is planning an “alternate tunes Shabbat,” for Friday evening, Jan. 17 (with the understanding that if congregants don’t like the departure from their traditional melodies, he won’t repeat it).

Even though many people who knew him expected Nover to become a rabbi, he said he didn’t make the decision until he was exposed to several alternatives post-high school, including an internship in biomedical research, a year at the Conservative Yeshiva in Israel as part of the Nativ program, and a stint teaching gifted but underprivileged students through the international Breakthrough Collaborative.

Those experiences left him realizing he wanted to

do “something Jewish and something in education.” So he looked for a university with a Jewish studies program that “focused on studying texts rather than sociology or anthropology.” Rutgers University had that — and good programs in science, which he had loved as a kid.

In fact, Nover did a double major at Rutgers: Jewish studies and physics. “The way I understand the world is, science is how the world works and religion is why, and it gives you a whole different level of appreciation for everything when you can see both of those at the same time,” he said.

Clearly drawn to teaching, he enrolled in the William Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education at JTS, where he earned a master’s degree in education, with specialties in Hebrew language and day school education. He also earned a master’s certificate through the iCenter for Israel Education. He graduated in 2014, then took a year to see the world and earn some money before entering JTS’s Rabbinical School.

During his rabbinical training, Nover said, he appreciated learning both academics and the more practical skills that religious leaders need in the field. In addition to clinical pastoral education, students take a first-year seminar on theology, where they explore a range of Jewish thinking about God.

Nover also cited a class with Prof. Benjamin Sommer in which students examine the Bible from an academic perspective, but also discuss the imperative of discovering “how to live in the world, what is the right thing to do.”

“We can learn all these interesting things about the Bible and biblical Hebrew,” Nover said, “but as rabbis we need to be able to take that a step further and share that in a way that matters to modern Judaism.” ■

Panel, exhibit on Jewish lawyers in Nazi Germany

“LAWYERS WITHOUT RIGHTS: Jewish Lawyers in Germany under the Third Reich,” developed by the Berlin Bar Association and brought to the United States by the American Bar Association, details the challenges of Jewish lawyers in Germany during the 1930s and 40s.

The exhibit will be on display at The Jewish Center (TJC) in Princeton through Jan. 30; the synagogue is closed Mondays.

On Sunday, Jan. 26, from 4-6 p.m., a panel, moderated by constitutional lawyer and TJC member Bruce Afran, will explore implications of the exhibit’s time period when “lawyers and judges still had power to resist Hitler,” Afran wrote in an email to NJJN.

In the early 1930s lawyers of Jewish descent, with a few exceptions, had to reapply for admission to the legal profession. By September 1938 all Jewish lawyers were banned.

“The removal of Jewish lawyers and judges was a part of the Nazi move to break the will of German Jews and eliminate sources of opposition before the regime had gained absolute power,” Afran wrote.

The other panelists include Carol Strauss, former director of The Leo Baeck Institute, Douglas Morris, legal historian, and TJC congregant Keith D. Nunes, former director of the Program on Holocaust and Law at Touro Law School.

For information contact The Jewish Center at 609-921-0100.

ExitRamp

A Talmud page of one's own

Ilana Kurshan
Special to NJJN



On New Year's Day, Jews all over the world completed the daf yomi cycle, a program to study the entire Talmud in seven-and-a-half years at the rate of one page a day. I have been studying Talmud for over a decade, and now, at the conclusion of one cycle and the start of the next, I'm often asked if I plan to continue. I respond by repeating what a friend once told me: Daf yomi is like that boyfriend you've been dating forever whom you just can't break up with because you've been together so long, even though you know it's time to move on.

I carry a volume of Talmud with me everywhere, and most of my adult life has unfolded against the backdrop of what I am reading and learning. Although I've completed the entire Talmud nearly twice at this point, it is hard to imagine stopping. Who would I be if not for the texts that give my life texture?

At end of the previous cycle, in the summer of 2012, I did not participate in any celebratory events, because most if not all of them were not welcoming to women who learned Talmud. At the time I could count on one hand all the women in my social circle who studied daf yomi. When I wanted to listen to a recording of a class about the daily page of Talmud, I could find only classes taught by men, generally men who spoke in Yiddish-inflected Hebrew. I did not know of any-

one who wrote creatively about Talmud, or who regarded their daily study as a dialogue with their personal lives. I would listen to podcasts about the Talmud while jogging through the streets of Jerusalem, or while waiting in line to pick up a prescription at the pharmacy. Although there were hundreds of thousands of fellow daf yomi learners out there, the vast majority of them seemed to inhabit a world very different from my own.

One day recently my kids asked me to explain to them what a page of Talmud looks like, and what it says. I pulled a volume of Talmud off the bookshelf and placed it on the shtender on our kitchen table — the term is Yiddish for stand, and refers to a wooden book stand used to support open volumes of Talmud and other heavy religious tomes. Our shtender is decorated with a calligraphed quote from the Mishna, the earliest part of the Talmud: "Do not say: When I have time, I will study; lest you never have time." With five young children underfoot, there is never an ideal moment to study Talmud — and so I try to view every moment as a learning opportunity. "We just read about Og, a giant who survived the flood in Noah's time and went on to relay to Abraham the news that his nephew Lot had been captured," I told my daughters, choosing a story that appears in a part of the Talmud otherwise focused on bodily fluids and childbirth. My youngest child, who was born on the first day we began learning this tractate, lay calm and alert in his stroller next to us. How marvelous to think that the community of daf yomi learners has expanded to include a newborn as well.

Jews have been studying daf yomi since 1923, when the program to learn a page of Talmud a day

was founded by Rabbi Meir Shapiro in Lublin, Poland. That was nearly a century ago, and yet this time, with the completion of the 13th cycle this January, it feels very different. Students of daf yomi can find websites devoted to haikus and limericks about the daf, as well as a blog with daily drawings offering visual interpretations of each page. Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz's monumental commentary on the Talmud in modern Hebrew has now been translated into English in an elegant and accessible edition that includes both the traditional format of the printed Talmud dating back to 19th-century Vilna, and a clean, modern page design. Now there are women who teach daf yomi to other women in classes in the U.S. and Israel, and there is at least one podcast that consists of a woman's recording of her daily class. A gala celebration of the completion of the cycle was held Sunday at a major conference center in Jerusalem, attracting 3,000 women from across the country and around the world.

Talmud study no longer feels like the exclusive province of any single sector of Jewish society; anyone can tune in to a podcast or set down a shtender on their kitchen table. The more people who study Jewish texts, the more insights into those texts we gain. The start of the new cycle is an opportunity for even more individuals to join what is effectively the world's largest book club. It is a reminder that for all of us, there is so much we have yet to learn. Do not say when you have time you will study. The time to begin is now. ■

Ilana Kurshan is the author of the 2018 Sami Rohr Prize-winning memoir about daily Talmud study, "If All the Seas Were Ink."

AJC New Jersey organizes #JewishandProud day

AS A SHOW OF SOLIDARITY in the midst of an "epidemic" of anti-Semitism in the U.S. and Europe, AJC organized #JewishandProud day on Jan. 6, according to a press release.

"Enough is enough," said AJC CEO David Harris. "We will not shy away from publicly displaying [and] celebrating our Jewish identity and faith."

In October, AJC released survey results which found that 31 percent of American Jews avoid publicly wearing, carrying, or displaying items that would identify them as Jews, and 25 percent avoided places, events, or situations at least some of the time out of concern for their safety or comfort as Jews.

"In the wake of the Jersey City attack, AJC New Jersey's Community of Conscience, a group of over 50 religious and civil society leaders, declared: 'Hate and bias of any kind cannot be tolerated in New Jersey, or anywhere in our country or our world,'" said Rabbi David Levy, AJC New Jersey regional director. "We committed to



Showing their Jewish pride in Siesta Key, Fla., on Jan. 6 is AJC New Jersey regional director Rabbi David Levy and Julie Levy.

proudly standing together to speak out, and up, for one another. #JewishandProud is a moment for Jews and our friends and allies to put those words into action. We will join in solidarity and use the light of our pride to push back the darkness of hate."

For more information, call 973-379-7845 or email levyd@ajc.org.

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