



**Civil Rights Mission**  
page 7



**Inter-spiritual seder**  
page 13



**Water usage and AI**  
page 14

WASHTENAW

# JEWISH NEWS

JUNE 2026

Sivan/Tammuz 5786

Volume XXVI Number 9

FREE

## Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival continues 25 Films for 25 Years

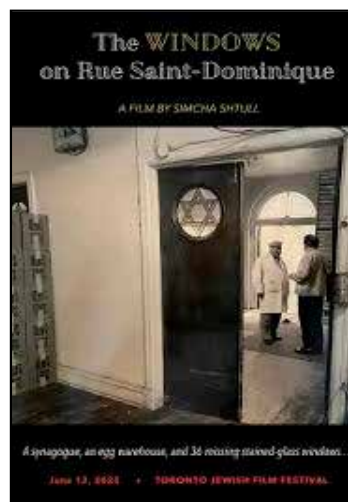
By Marie Pattipati, Director of Cultural Arts and Education, Ann Arbor JCC

The Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival is continuing its landmark “25 Films for 25 Years” celebration with the new addition of the Shorts Series Discussion Panels. Running weekly from May 26 through June 30 at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor, this series moves beyond the screen to offer deep-dive conversations with filmmakers, University of Michigan scholars, and local visionaries.

Each session features a curated selection of additional shorts and guest speakers that enrich the experience and offer a broader look at Jewish cinema. For the full schedule of films and the complete roster of guest speakers for each date, please visit [jlive.app](http://jlive.app). Be sure to select Ann Arbor at the top of your screen.

### Oscars and local legends

The series kicks off on Tuesday, May 26, with a high-profile screening of this year’s Oscar-nominated shorts, including *Butcher’s Stain* and *Children No More*. This is followed by a major highlight of the series on Thursday, June 4, with the screening of *Windows on Rue de St. Dominique*. The film was



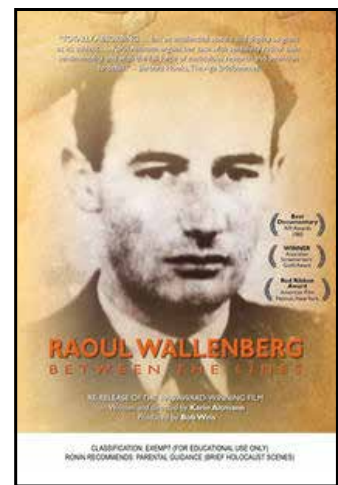
directed by Simcha Shtull, sister of local community member Dina Shtull. Following the film, Simcha will be joined by artist Ron Sussman and Professor Karla Goldman for a candid discussion on art, family, and the shared histories that shape our identity. It’s a rare chance to see these three local perspectives intersect in one room.

### Calling all bakers

On Tuesday, June 9, we’re celebrating “Food & Family” with screenings of *Babka* and *Double Happiness*. We invite



you to bring a homemade babka to enter in our Bubbe’s Best Babka Competition — you don’t have to be a bubbe to enter, you just need to bring your best family recipe to the table! While we watch and discuss the films, we’ll enjoy these sweet treats together and chat about the shared joys of family, tradition, and food. To keep the tradition going, please bring along printed copies of your favorite Jewish recipes to share and swap. It doesn’t have to be your babka recipe; any beloved family dish is welcome as we build a collective



archive of our community’s food history.

### Stories of courage

On Tuesday, June 23, the festival presents a screening of *Wallenberg* and *The Ice Cream Man*, two films that spotlight the University of Michigan’s history and its global impact. These shorts move beyond simple biographies to capture the essence of individuals who help others, even in the most difficult circumstances. Produced in collaboration with the University of Michigan Wallenberg

Continues on page 3

## Latin music and dance celebration to benefit MIRC

Afro-Cuban jazz band Tumbao Bravo will headline an evening of music for listening and dancing to benefit the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center (MIRC) on Saturday, June 13, at the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor.

“In addition to raising money,” said Steve Merritt, one of the event organizers, “we also want to affirm and celebrate the culture and contributions of Latinos at a time when they’re being denigrated and targeted for removal.”

MIRC is a leader in providing legal resources to immigrants whose status is precarious, those in detention, and the

Support our immigrant neighbors!

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6:00 pm Dinner and drinks  
6:30 pm Salsa lesson with Mambo Marci  
7:15 - 9:00 pm Band takes the stage

Registration ends June 6  
Festive attire encouraged!

Sponsored by the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation & First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor with generous support from the Ethyl Hyman & Rose Kaplan Foundation

For more info: [LatinMusicAndDanceCelebration@gmail.com](mailto:LatinMusicAndDanceCelebration@gmail.com)

many more living in fear or coping with the consequences of the current immigration policies. MIRC also represents over 1,000 unaccompanied minors.

In 2025, MIRC fielded over 5,000 calls for assistance, worked on 1,241 cases, and provided rights training to over 1,400 farm workers. Besides detention cases, they assist with asylum, juvenile, and green card applications.

The doors of the event will open at 6 p.m. with dinner provided by Pilar’s Tamales and a cash bar. A salsa lesson with Mambo Marci from YA Salsa will start at 6:30 p.m. The band will take the stage at 7:15 p.m. and play until the evening ends at 9 p.m.


This fundraiser is co-sponsored by the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation and the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor with generous support from the Ethyl Hyman and Rose Kaplan Foundation.

The First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor is located at 4001 Ann Arbor-Saline Rd, Ann Arbor. Tickets for the event are \$50. The deadline for registering is June 6. Those who cannot attend are encouraged to donate. Buy tickets or donate at <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/latin-music-and-dance-celebration!>

For more information contact [LatinMusicAndDanceCelebration@gmail.com](mailto:LatinMusicAndDanceCelebration@gmail.com). ■

# Advertisers

Alex Milshteyn, Realtor.....	3
Ann Arbor District Library.....	17
Ann Arbor Rec and Ed.....	17
Ayse's Café.....	13
Bank of Ann Arbor.....	17
Giraffe Design/Build.....	20
Hurwitz-Greene Real Estate.....	4
Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor.....	4, 8, 18
Purple Rose Theatre.....	2
R. D. Kleinschmidt.....	2
Weiner Financial Group.....	17
Westside ArtHop.....	11
Wolverine Tax & Financial.....	3
Zemyck Pottery.....	11



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# From the Editor



## The current landscape

As WJN editor and overall Jewish news-aholic, I struggle each month with whether and how to include newsworthy events that are "old news" by the time they can appear in this monthly paper. Sometimes, too, the original event has continuing reverberations, making it old but still relevant.

This month, one such event was Professor Derek Peterson's University of Michigan commencement speech and the ensuing controversy. The event took place on May 2, so by time you read this, it's more history than a current event. Yet, I hope there is still value in reflecting back to you a snapshot of our community's reactions. If you haven't read the whole speech, I hope you'll pause now and find it.

The first I heard of Peterson's speech was on Facebook. A Jewish Israeli friend who teaches at the university had posted a transcript; he was concerned that Peterson's words would be disparagingly taken out of context.

It's a short speech that attempts to encapsulate with pride a few eras in which social justice activism changed the U Mich campus, and perhaps the country, for the better. The controversial sentence called for pride, too, in the "pro-Palestinian student activists who have over these past two years opened our hearts to the injustice and inhumanity of Israel's war in Gaza."

Immediately after I read the speech, I saw that Hillel at the University of Michigan had condemned it, claiming Peterson's words had alienated "the Jewish community." In an echo of Hillel, the Jewish Federation of Detroit said the remarks were "deeply insensitive and hurtful to Jewish students and their loved ones, including graduates who have faced years of harassment, intimidation and acts of hate

on campus simply for being Jewish or expressing connection to Israel." Before the end of day Saturday, the University President Domenica Grasso had apologized for the speech. In response, thousands of Jewish UMich students, faculty, staff and alumni signed letters supporting Peterson and calling for Grasso to rescind his apology.

A significant number of local Jewish leaders tried to thread the needle by acknowledging Peterson had the right to say what he wanted while insisting he chose the wrong venue, wrong audience, wrong time.

Over the next few days, a flood of social media comments crescendoed into international editorializing in all directions.

On May 8, the *Forward* published two well written opinion pieces from differing perspectives. Gayle Kirshenbaum's (UMich, '89) piece is grateful to Peterson for his words. She writes, "What I understand, and Professor Peterson understands, is that the student activists that he lauded at the commencement are fighting not against Jewish life but for Palestinians' right to survive daily, as people, and as a people."

The second opinion piece in the *Forward* on May 8 was written by Alanna Cooper, chair of Jewish Studies at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH. Cooper writes with alarm, "Watching the full performance, and the crescendo that greeted the pro-Palestinian invocation, it's clear that Peterson's statement on pro-Palestinian activism was the destination the whole speech built toward..... The speech that began by opening doors ends by pointing a finger, and that act of condemnation was offered as the moral crown of enlightened progress."

I appreciate the *Forward's* acknowledgement that thoughtful Jews heard Peterson's words differently.

After reading the comments, responses, and editorials, what remains of the kerfuffle is a snapshot of a community of individuals with differing and strongly held attitudes. What doesn't show up in the comments sections, however, are those who are grappling with the rush of news about Israel and changing attitudes. The snapshot also leaves out continuing reverberations: as of this writing, Professor Peterson continues to need police protection due to death threats.

*continues on page 9*

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Signed letters to the editor are welcome; they should not exceed 400 words. Letters can be emailed to the editor. Name will be withheld at the discretion of the editor.

Circulation: 4,500  
Subscriptions:  
Free inside Washtenaw County  
\$18 first-class subscription

## Phone numbers, websites, and addresses of organizations frequently listed in the calendar:

- Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan (AAOM): 1429 Hill Street, 248-408-3269, annarborminyan.org
- Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-445-1910, aarecon.org
- Beth Israel Congregation (BIC): 2000 Washtenaw Ave, 734-665-9897, bethisrael-aa.org
- Chabad House: 715 Hill Street, 734-995-3276, jewmich.com
- Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies (EMU): www.emich.edu/jewish-studies/
- Frankel Center: 202 S. Thayer St., Isa.umich.edu/judaic/
- Jewish Community Center (JCC): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 745-971-0990, jccannarbor.org
- Jewish Cultural Society (JCS): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-975-9872, jewishculturalsociety.org
- Jewish Family Services (JFS): 2245 South State Street, 734-769-0209, jfsannarbor.org
- Jewish Federation: 2939 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-677-0100, jewishannarbor.org
- Pardes Hannah: 2010 Washtenaw Ave, 734-761-5324, pardeshannah.org
- Temple Beth Emeth (TBE): 2309 Packard Road, 734-665-4744, templebethemeth.org
- UM Hillel: 1429 Hill Street 734-769-0500, michiganhillel.org



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## Congregational Experiences with Zionism and Anti-Zionism

Sunday, June 7, 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Our synagogues have always held multitudes. We come from different backgrounds, hold different politics, and bring different Jewish journeys to our congregations, and somehow we find a way to be a community, together. But the question of Zionism is testing that capacity in new ways. Across the country, congregations are grappling with how to remain whole when their members hold fundamentally different, sometimes irreconcilable, views.

How do we stay in relationship with one another? How do rabbis and lay leaders create space for genuine disagreement without fracturing the community they've worked so hard to build? These are not easy questions, and there are no simple answers, but they are exactly the questions this program is designed to explore.

Karla Goldman, who directs the University of Michigan's Jewish Communal Leadership Program, will bring her expertise in Jewish institutions to moderate a conversation on that can engage the diverse perspectives within the room. Andrew Lapin will offer on-the-ground reporting on how Liberal Jewish congregations nationally are wrestling with this challenge. Then Rabbi Stella, Rabbi Caine, and Rabbi Whinston will join a panel discussion moderated by Robert Erlewine, turning the lens on our own Ann Arbor congregations.

Come ready to listen, to question, and to be part of the conversation.

### Featured Speakers and Presenters

Karla Goldman, Ph.D. — Professor and Director of the Jewish Communal Leadership Program, University of Michigan  
 Andrew Lapin — Senior reporter with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, covering antisemitism, college campuses, and Holocaust education and memory  
 Robert Erlewine, Ph.D. — Professor and Director of the Center for Jewish Studies, Eastern Michigan University

### Local Rabbinic Leadership

Rabbi Lisa Stella — Senior Rabbi at University of Michigan Hillel  
 Rabbi Nadav Caine — Spiritual leader of Beth Israel Congregation  
 Rabbi Josh Whinston — Spiritual leader of Temple Beth Emeth

### ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS ARE WELCOME

Registration is required. Location provided after registration



### JCC Film festival continues from page 1

Research Center, the event explores the choice to act when the stakes are at their highest. The screening will feature the student cinematographers who helped bring these vital stories of heroism to life, connecting Raoul Wallenberg's legacy as a U-M alumnus to universal themes of courage and compassion.

### Featured experts

Throughout the month, audiences will engage with six unique events and 18 short films showcasing a wide spectrum of Jewish storytelling. This curated series features a distinguished roster of speakers: in addition to the guests highlighted above, the program also includes insights from Professor Julian Levinson, Rabbi Hazzan Gabrielle Pescador, and cinematographer Hannah Engelson. They join a wide range

of academic and community contributors, all of whom bring vital perspectives to the high-level discussions that define this landmark anniversary. We look forward to seeing you there!

### Event details & tickets

All sessions take place from 2 to 4 p.m. at the JCC.

Individual Sessions: \$15 (available upon check-in at the JCC Front Desk).

Full Series Pass: \$72 for all six sessions (available for advanced purchase online).

Sponsors and Patrons: This series is complimentary for all Festival Sponsors and JCC Patrons as part of their sponsorship benefits.

For registration and the full list of all featured shorts and speakers, visit JLive.app (be sure to select Ann Arbor at the top!) or contact the JCC at (734) 971-0990. Walk-ins are welcome. ■



GABRIEL SANDLER, EA

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## Communal innovation grants available

By Kadi Swerdlow, Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor

Twice a year, the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor awards grants from the Community Engagement Fund and the Zelma Weisfeld Fund for Arts and Culture. In Winter 2026, the projects funded engaged with themes of nature, identity, and community service. The Jewish Federation is pleased to share information about these grant awardees and details on the next grant cycle.

The Community Engagement Fund grant was created to encourage three or more community organizations or individuals to work collaboratively on innovative initiatives for the Jewish community. The funding aims to incentivize programming and initiatives that cultivate a connected, caring, and vibrant Jewish community in Washtenaw County. Special consideration will be given to projects focused on teen engagement, and on Jewish arts and culture.

The Zelma Weisfeld Fund for arts and culture was set up to honor the late Ms. Weisfeld's dedication to the arts, and to help bring Jewish cultural events to the greater Ann Arbor Jewish Community.

### Fall 2026 cycle details

Letters of Intent for the upcoming fall 2026 grant cycle are due to the Jewish Federation by July 1. Full applications are due by July 15. Guidelines for submission can be found at [jewishannarbor.org/grants](http://jewishannarbor.org/grants) or by contacting Kadi Swerdlow ([Kadi@jewishannarbor.org](mailto:Kadi@jewishannarbor.org)).

Grants of up to \$3,000 per project are available. Proposals will be considered for one-time programs or initiatives submitted by a formal or informal partnership of at least three collaborators.

### Winter 2026 awards

Four projects have been funded in Winter 2026 — two from the Zelma Weisfeld Fund and two from the Jewish Federation's Community Engagement Fund. One of these events has already occurred and the others are working to be implemented over the summer.

### Girls in Trouble with Alicia Jo Rabins

Alicia Jo Rabins is a Jewish writer, musician, author, and Torah teacher who uses her talents to teach about Jewish texts, feminism, and spirituality. This past April, the Jewish Communal Leadership Program at the University of Michigan's School of Social Work brought Ms. Rabins to Ypsilanti thanks to a grant from the Zelma Weisfeld

Fund. The event brought together community members to connect through Alicia's music. The performance was followed by a Q-and-A session where attendees engaged with Alicia about her work. Attendees shared that they found it a night of meaningful music and connection.

### Project Teshuva

Project Teshuva is being brought to the Ann Arbor area by the JCC, HDS, and Camp Raanana. The collaborators hope to create a space at the JCC that invites all to come engage with nature, learn, and connect. A highlight of the project will be a beautiful walking path at the JCC with spots to stop and reflect while learning about native fauna and flora, creating an engaging and meaningful learning environment.

### PACK Program

The PACK program is an effort by Jewish Family Services, Temple Beth Emeth, Beth Israel Congregation, and a growing group of community partnerships. The goal of the program is to bring a meaningful and service-focused Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience to Ann Arbor area youth. The PACK program will combine Jewish values, educational opportunities, and a way to directly see how their effort lightens the burden of those most in need for students and their families.

### Intersection of Two Identities

An effort between Ann Arbor Public Schools, a local Jewish parents group, and the Jewish Community Relations Committee (JCRC) of the Jewish Federation brings a program that fosters self-exploration in children grades 4–8, encouraging them to connect with not only their Jewish identity, but any identity they hold within themselves. The group plans to bring Muscogee and Jewish author Emily Bowen Cohen to Ann Arbor for a program showcasing her graphic novel *Two Tribes*, which delves into her experience growing up both Indigenous and Jewish. Students will interact with the author and get the opportunity to create their own graphic novel about themselves and their identity.

To learn more about these projects or about the grants and how the Jewish Federation can help bring your community project or event to life, contact the Jewish Federation's Grant Administrator Kadi Swerdlow at [Kadi@jewishannarbor.org](mailto:Kadi@jewishannarbor.org). ■

## Shabbat with JCS

All are invited to join the JCS on Friday, June 5, at 6:30 to welcome Shabbat. Dinner from a local restaurant follows a short observance that includes secular readings, songs, candle lighting, wine, and challah. Children are welcome. Dinner is free for JCS members. The cost of dinner for

non-members is \$10/person or \$25/family. Advanced registration on our website is available to help with planning: [www.jewishculturalsociety.org](http://www.jewishculturalsociety.org). 6:30 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center, 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108. ■

## "Every Jew is an actual part of G-d above"

By Rabbi Aharon Goldstein, Chabad of Ann Arbor

Throughout the thousands of years of Jewish history, countless men, women, and children have willingly given up their lives rather than deny their Jewishness. Not only scholars and learned Jews went to the auto-da-fé with the "Shema" on their lips; simple and untutored Jews also chose to die sanctifying G-d's name without hesitation.

This irrational willingness to give up one's life for the sake of G-d seems odd in light of the dictum which states that "nothing



can stand in the way of repentance." With the sword at their throats, who could have faulted our ancestors had they agreed to bow down to whatever idol worship was being forced upon them? Why didn't they save their lives by uttering some meaningless phrase or performing some other seemingly insignificant gesture demanded by their tormentors? Could they not have later fully repented and returned to G-d?

This question may be answered by understanding the special nature of the Jewish soul and the relationship it enjoys with G-d. That inner spark of Jewishness, described in Chasidut as "an actual part of G-d above," exists on a plane above time and space. It cannot bear to be severed from its Source for even a moment;

the threat of separation from G-d is always utter and absolute. The willingness to give up one's life rather than lose that connection is a consequence of the soul's very nature.

This concept is well illustrated in this week's Torah portion, Bamidbar, in which G-d commands that a census be taken of the Jews. Rashi, the great Torah commentator, notes that because of the great love G-d has for His people, "He counts them at every moment."

This comment must be interpreted beyond its literal meaning, for since the exodus from Egypt, there have only been nine censuses of our people. The tenth census will be taken after the Final Redemption. What then, does it mean that G-d counts the Jews "at every moment"?

The act of counting reduces the objects being counted to their common denominator; both great and small are counted as one. The common denominator among all Jews, without regard for educational status, societal standing or wealth, is the Jewish soul, which exists in every Jew to the same extent and renders all Jews equal.

G-d unceasingly "counts" His children and holds each of them dear, all the time. This love is so overwhelming that the Jew cannot endure being cut off from it for even a moment, even with the knowledge that his later repentance has the power to restore the relationship to what it had been. It is G-d's perpetual "counting" of His children which reveals the innate power of the Jewish soul. ■

## Simchas and Sorrows

### The Washtenaw Jewish community sends condolences to the families of:

Robertha Westheimer (Roby) Cohen, wife of Michael Alan Cohen. April 27.  
Judith Davidson, wife of Ed Davidson. May 17.

### The Washtenaw Jewish community sends mazel tovs to:

Noah Blumenthal, son of Beth Dwoskin and Bob Blumenthal, for earning his PhD in Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology at Miami University of Ohio.  
Stephen and Stephanie Brieffoff on the birth of Eden Jude Brieffoff, born on April 15, 2026.  
Leo Carcagno on his bar mitzvah, June 6.  
Leila Harooni on her bat mitzvah, June 13.  
Nicole Renouf on her bat mitzvah, June 20.

## More Than Zero: Two years after the Hamas attacks, Jews must be content to flourish with a certain amount of antisemitism

By Ari Y Kelman, reprinted with permission from *Arc: Religion, Politics, Et Cetera* an online journal covering American religion, politics, and culture. It is a project of the John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics at Washington University in St. Louis.

For American Jews, the past decade has been something between a wake-up call and a nightmare: The 2018 march in Charlottesville, where tiki-torch bearing marchers chanted “Jews will not replace us.” The 2019 massacre at Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. The hostages in Coleyville, Texas. Not to mention the very troubling responses, often callous and indifferent, to the loss of Jewish life in the attack of October 7, 2023. American Jews are horrified by this new reality, which has jump-started a conversation about how to eliminate the resurgence of antisemitism.

But it is short-sighted to expect that antisemitism can be completely eradicated. To expect that it could be legislated or even educated into submission is to perpetuate a fantasy about the world we live in. Indulging in a fantasy about the nature and persistence of hate can end up hurting the people it hopes to protect — and gives license to terrible policy, besides. Indeed, pursuing a zero-tolerance policy for antisemitism expects too much of a country like the U.S., where intolerance has become something of a political virtue.

Instead of taking an approach to antisemitism that tries to silence it entirely, the question Jews ought to be asking themselves is: how much antisemitism is to be expected of a country like the United States? Given the track record of this country, we might take a clue here from Upton Sinclair’s investigation into meat packing plants in turn-of-the-century Chicago: there are always going to be rat parts in the sausage. Like rat parts, antisemitism is undesirable, but also — by necessity — acceptable, at some level. The question is, how much is reasonable to expect? The answer must be “something greater than zero.”

Jews used to be canner when it came to antisemitism. Not legislatively or litigiously, but personally. American Jews flourished in this country at a time when dislike of Jews was even more prominent than today. Bigotry is always painful to endure. But it need not determine one’s prospects, or one’s expectations for flourishing. Our grandparents expected occasional respites from antisemitism, and they expected that things would be better here than in Eastern Europe. But they did not expect utopia. Expecting bigotry might even have been part of the recipe for Americanization; it was certainly an ingredient.

In the introduction to a 1966 book reporting on some thirty years of sur-

veys about American attitudes toward Jews, the sociologist Marshall Sklare observed that “anti-Semitism is no longer a particularly overt phenomenon.” He called it “intellectually embarrassing” to think about antisemitism too much, calling it a “vestige ... of a ghetto mentality.” Sklare was reflecting on what he and the book’s authors called the “sharp decline in prejudice against Jews.” On what grounds did Sklare base his claims? He pointed to a 1962 survey that showed that between 17 and 25 percent of Americans thought that Jews had too much power; between 28 and 38 percent of Americans would consider voting for an antisemitic candidate; 27 percent thought Jews were “unscrupulous”; and 30 percent thought Jews had an admirable facility in business or finance (although respondents may have meant this as a compliment).

These numbers gave Sklare cause for modest celebration. Comparing these numbers to those generated by surveys dating back to the years of the Great Depression, Sklare and Charles Stember, the book’s author, found them to be trending sharply downward. From the perspective of the late 1960s, Sklare’s reporting was good news indeed.

Sklare cheered, but not because he and Stember thought antisemitism had been licked. Antisemitic sentiment persisted, just in much lower amounts than had been previously recorded. They never imagined, and did not suggest, a zero-tolerance approach to antisemitism. Decline was enough. They were satisfied to see the trend moving in what they believed was the right direction.

Some may conclude Sklare had been lulled into a post-war complacency, born of big suburban synagogues and vast front lawns. Or that anything short of outright Nazism was a positive step. But if Sklare could claim that antisemitism was at an ebb tide when only (only!) one quarter of Americans believed Jews had “objectionable qualities,” then Jews today can certainly handle college students holding offensive signs and giving voice to ideas that many only partially understand. Similarly, they should expect to be caught up in the conspiracy theories and apocalyptic fantasies of white nationalists and Christian supersessionists. American Jews would be wise to learn from Sklare’s modest expectations.

Having grown up (as I did) in a world in which antisemitism did not shape our lives, American Jews, encountering it in the past couple years, literally did not know what to do. This was unfamiliar terrain. As a result, the most prominent

response was to demand and expect that it be silenced or legislated away, as if it were possible to return to the relative quietude of Sklare’s day. But those efforts caught too much in their dragnets. By calling nearly everything antisemitic and demanding absolute zero, people and organizations cast their net too broadly, crippling their ability to identify it and, consequently, their capacity to fight it.

Critiques of Israel, wild conspiracy theories, rants about the Rothschilds, teachers scheduling exams on Jewish holidays, baristas wearing “Free Palestine” buttons: treating them all with equal horror perpetuates the false belief that they all require the same sweeping response and that they all signal the same thing. Surely some expressions are more dangerous than others, but if they are all treated the same, it becomes harder to distinguish the real dangers from the inescapable ones.

To hold a zero-tolerance position with respect to antisemitism is to damn American Jews with gauzy expectations about other Americans and low expectations about the collective ability of American Jews to thrive in a country unable to overcome group-based hatred. If Jews are as resilient and Jewish culture is as rich as most Jews believe, then it surely has the resources to deal with persistent antisemitism. History suggests as much.

Baseless hatred and bigotry shape the reality that all Americans must deal with, no matter their ethnicity. Focusing on those who dislike us is, for the most part, fruitless: it’s hard to change people’s minds. While we should always be open to dialogue, we can’t expect to reform our would-be haters. But we can — and if there is to be a future for Jews in America, we must — learn to live with them. And they must learn to live with us.

The fantasy that antisemitism can be driven down to zero has allowed American politicians to use antisemitism as an excuse to pummel American higher education, punish students, and bully faculty. That antisemitism is, often, merely an excuse for draconian actions has been obvious to everyone who was paying attention, and I applaud recent comments by leaders of a handful of leading American Jewish organizations who have opposed the use of antisemitism in this manner, arguing that it harms many of the social and political structures that have benefitted American Jews for so long.

But the impulse to identify everything awful as intolerable is to replace one kind of totalitarianism with another.

Ironically, those who call antisemitism

“the oldest hatred” are also the ones most likely to assert that antisemitism can be quashed completely. But if antisemitism is an age-old hatred and a feature of modern life, then how can anyone believe that it can be eliminated now? It takes some chutzpah to even ask such a question.

And chutzpah can only go so far. Chutzpah should embolden people to call out antisemitism when they see it. Chutzpah should fuel demands that institutions hold their members to established standards of conduct and that they be punished when those standards are violated. Chutzpah should embolden communities to fight white supremacy and call out dog whistles. Chutzpah should drive efforts for dialogue, for engagement, for bridge-building, and for protest.

But American Jews can’t let their chutzpah get in the way of their sense of what is possible. Antisemitism is a problem in contemporary America, on both the political right and the political left, and group-based hatred seems to be an intractable quality of American culture and politics. Wherever possible, it should be identified, addressed, and opposed, and its proponents should be held responsible for their views. But to expect that there is a world in which antisemitism does not exist is not, in fact, chutzpah. It is delusion.

This is not a case for resignation or acceptance. It is precisely because antisemitism is real, awful, and persistent that we must be realistic about the limits of fighting it. Imagining that it can be completely stamped out is not useful either for diminishing antisemitism or for raising a generation of Jews capable of thriving in a hateful world. Cocooning youngsters in Jewish communities will not help them. Raising expectations that every objectionable utterance can be countered by a claim of “antisemitism” will benefit no one. Calling every criticism of Israel antisemitic stretches the meaning of the term beyond comprehension and undermines otherwise credulous claims. Buying into the false logic of “microaggressions” will serve Jews as poorly as it serves other minority groups.

Why expect that antisemitism can be silenced or solved? Why imagine that banning certain words or images is going to make American Jews safer or more secure? Such efforts might make campuses quieter, but all that quiet comes with a high cost. Remember, things were quiet before Charlottesville, too. We live in a hateful world, and American Jews would do well to get used to it.

We Jews might be chosen, but we’re not special. ■

*Ari Y. Kelman teaches at Stanford and is the author of Jewish Education.*

# Washtenaw Black Jewish Coalition Civil Rights Mission to the South

Rabbi Asher Lopatin, JCRC Director, Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor



**Crossing the Edmund Pettus bridge to feel the power of the great marches of the Civil Right**

For three impactful days, 11 members of the Washtenaw community — five Jewish and white, six Christian and African American — set out to experience the history of Civil Rights, Jim Crow, and slavery in the South by visiting Atlanta, Birmingham, and crossing over the Edmond Pettus bridge from Selma on the way to ending the trip with two days in Montgomery. The mission was sponsored by the Washtenaw Black-Jewish Coalition and the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor and its Jewish Community Relations Committee (JCRC).



**Sarah Collins Rudolph addresses the group in Birmingham, Alabama.**

Services Director for State Senator Sue Shink. The trip was organized by leaders of the Black-Jewish Coalition: Pastor Carnel Richardson, of the Metropolitan Memorial Missionary Baptist Church in Ypsilanti, and Rabbi Asher Lopatin, JCRC Director. Joining the local group as scholar was Professor Riggins Earl, who lived through the era of Jim Crow and the struggle for Civil Rights, and spent time in jail with the legendary Civil Rights fighter Rep. John Lewis.

“The trip to the Deep U.S. South with the Coalition of Black and Jewish Unity of Washtenaw County was both refreshing and sobering. My life, ministry, and personal perspective has been permanently impacted by this meaningful experience,” said Rev. Richardson, who was also joined by one of his Assistant Pastors, Renee Hampton. Throughout the trip, Pastor Richardson was called up to say several prayers after participants heard from eyewitnesses in the struggle for freedom and justice for African Americans in both Birmingham and Selma, Alabama.

“It was inspiring to be able to hear directly from different folks that were in the heart of the Civil Rights Movement and how everyone’s story plays a small part, but collectively adds up to a movement that has inspired generations forever,” Representative Jimmie Wilson, Jr., reflected.

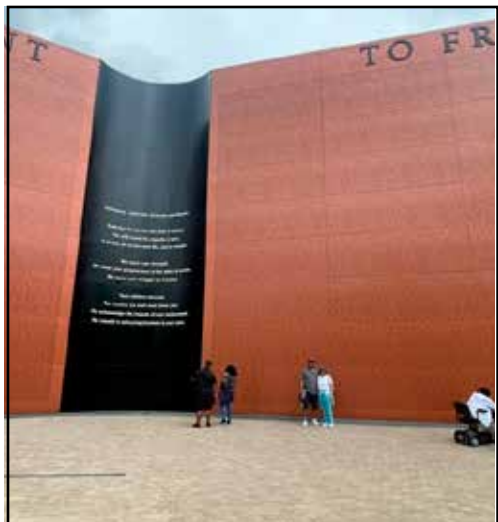
Jewish Federation CEO Eileen Freed has long wanted to have a mission to the South where Afri-

can American and Jewish American participants could reflect together on the struggle for freedom and equality. As she writes:

“One of the most impactful experiences of the trip was hearing directly from people who were at the center of the struggle for Civil Rights. Sarah Collins Rudolph, who survived the 16th Street Church bombing in Birmingham in which her older sister and three other young girls were killed, shared her story and impact of the bombing on her life. In Selma, we were entranced by the story of one of the children — now 76 years old — who was present on Bloody Sunday, when law enforcement attacked marchers on the Edmund Pettus Bridge. And throughout the three days, we were accompanied by Professor Riggins Earl, a classmate, friend, and fellow foot soldier of John Lewis, C.T. Vivian, and other luminaries of this important fight. Professor Earl’s insights and stories added richness and context to understanding the sights we were seeing and stories we were hearing.

“The opportunity to witness these sights and stories together with members of the Black-Jewish Solidarity Coalition was particularly meaningful. Our honest conversations resulted in new understandings of what drives and challenges each of our communities and the need for us to work together against those forces that seek to divide us and marginalize us further in our society.”

This mission will hopefully be only the beginning for the Black and Jewish communities to work together for freedom, justice, and equity for all, while also respecting the values of each community and being supportive of each other — ushering in a new era of allyship that can transform America. ■

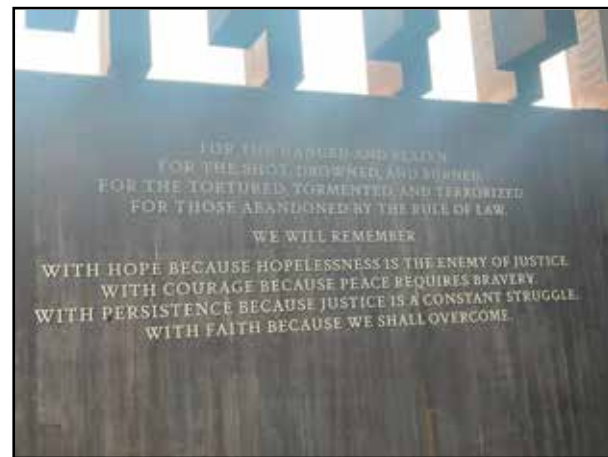


**At the Monument to Freedom, over 100,000 last names of newly freed formerly enslaved people are listed from the 1870 census. Guides help visitors, such as Ypsilanti’s Rev. Renee Hampton, find where her family’s name is on the huge**

The mission included State Rep. Jimmie Wilson, Jr., NAACP Chair for Ann Arbor Andrew Watson, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor Eileen Freed, and Sydney Powell, the Constituent



**Rabbi Asher Lopatin with Prof. Riggins Earl, who lived through the era of the heroism of Rosa Parks and other fighters for equal rights.**



**The itinerary included several museums and powerful outdoor spaces created by Bryan Stevenson, founder of the Equal Justice Initiative, which helped bring home, in a powerful and tragic way, the horrors of slavery, Jim Crow and continued efforts to keep the Black community down and disenfranchised. The sad, bloody history in this country deeply touched everyone on the mission.**



**Bryan Stevenson, founder of the Equal Justice Initiative, with trip participant Andre Watson.**

## Community

### EMU Center for Jewish Studies had eventful year

By Robert Erlwine, Director EMU Center for Jewish Studies



Beyond offering classes and administering the minor in Jewish Studies, the Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies does many things to engage the whole campus community. This was the inaugural year for the Elliot B. Glicksman Undergraduate Research Fellowship, which supports a student to undertake advanced undergraduate research and present their work at the EMU Undergraduate Research Symposium that takes place every March. The Center also: held two coffee hours with Hillel at EMU in the Center for Jewish Studies space in Halle Library; supported a bus tour for students of historic Detroit, which included key Jewish sites; and arranged for students to attend two performances in Detroit, a play and a concert.

The Center's programming engages both the EMU campus community as well as the larger Southeast Michigan community. This academic year, the Center for Jewish Studies held six events, including a screening of the documentary *Nathan-ism*, with a talkback by the film's director, Elon Golod; the travel journalist, Dan Fellner, talked about, and showed photos that he took himself of, Jewish life all around the world; Professor Samira Mehta discussed *Jews of Color* and highlighted how this term contains many different identities; journalist Mike Rothschild talked about conspiracy theories involving Jews; and,

most recently, Professor Rachel Harris spoke about how a group of Polish Holocaust survivors helped found the Israeli film industry. And, on April 13, in partnership with Hillel at EMU and the Hillel Campus Alliance of Michigan, and with EMU's Disability Resource Center and the Disability Revolution Club as co-sponsors, the EMU Center for Jewish Studies hosted comedian and advocate Pamela Rae Schuller, who delivered a brilliant set consisting of comedy and storytelling about life, love, and disability. The students of Hillel at EMU helped with planning and setting up the event, which was a huge success.

In this moment of intense polarization, the Center prides itself on providing spaces where people can come together despite differences in their backgrounds, beliefs, and commitments, to listen to speakers together, to be entertained together, and to learn together. At a time of surging antisemitism, when Jews are viewed more as figments of mythology or ideology than as actual people, educating a broad audience about the complexity and richness of Jewish history is more important than ever. The Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies takes this task very seriously, both for the EMU campus community as well as the larger community of Southeast Michigan. ■

### AARC events for June

For more information about Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation services or events or to receive Zoom links, please email: [info@aaecon.org](mailto:info@aaecon.org) website: [aaecon.org](http://aaecon.org)

#### June 13

**Second Saturday Morning Shabbat Service.** Meditation with Anita Rubin-Meiller 10 a.m. This is a hybrid Shabbat Service led by our Rabbi, Gabrielle Pescador, at the JCC and on Zoom. Zoom link will be sent out the week before the event. 10:30 a.m.–noon followed by Torah study.

**Latin music and dance celebration to benefit MIRC,** 6 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation.

#### June 14

**Book Club.** We will be discussing *Bethlehem Road* by Judy Lev. For more information about the Book Club meeting and the lunch that precedes it, email Greg Saltzman [gsaltzman@albion.edu](mailto:gsaltzman@albion.edu). 1–2 p.m.

#### June 15

**Rosh Chodesh Tammuz Minyan** on Zoom. 9 a.m.

#### June 26

**Fourth Friday LGBTQ+ Kabbalat Shabbat.** This is a hybrid service led by Rabbi Gabrielle Pescador in person at the JCC and on Zoom. Everyone is welcome! Service is followed by a nut-free potluck. 6:30 p.m. ■

### JCLP students bring Jewish joy

By Jordyn Lash

On Sunday, April 12, over 50 community members from the University of Michigan and Ann Arbor gathered for a concert at The Common Cup in Ann Arbor. This event was planned by second-year students of the Jewish Communal Leadership Program (JCLP), a program within the University of Michigan School of Social Work, which prioritizes building personal and professional identities within the Jewish community of Ann Arbor and beyond.

Opener Allie Rosenberg, a student in the JCLP graduating class, performed songs she had written that were inspired by Jewish tradition and concepts she's studied including femininity, sexuality, and the divine. This was Allie's first-ever

performance of a full set before a live audience.

Alicia Jo Rabins, writer, musician, performer, and feminist Torah teacher, performed for her first time in Ann Arbor. She celebrated this new beginning by inviting the audience to join her in the Shehechyanu and then performed an array of songs from "Girls in Trouble," her indie-folk song cycle reconsidering and reimagining women from the Hebrew Bible. She invited Rosenberg to join for a few of the songs and shared some readings from her spiritual memoir, *When We're Born We Forget Everything*, which was also available for purchase.

The event offered a wonderful opportunity to enjoy beverages handcrafted by The Common Cup's baristas, meet others in the community, and enjoy music and insight from two talented singer-songwriters. All attendees left with a feeling of connection to something bigger than themselves, remembering the importance of being present, connecting, and embracing the spirit of Jewish community. The students in the Jewish Communal Leadership Program were proud to celebrate Jewish Joy with the Jewish community of Ann Arbor, a goal they have been working toward in their program. The JCLP thanks all of those who attended, The Common Cup for hosting, Amanda's Kitchen for wonderful desserts, and our co-sponsors — the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, the Jewish Federation of Ann Arbor, and Michigan Hillel — for all their support. \*



The performers with JCLP students and supporters.

**1 in 3 American Jews** say they have been the target of an antisemitic incident.\*

**Have you experienced anti-Jewish hate? When you report it, you are not alone.**

The Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor works tirelessly to address every reported incident of antisemitism.

- Graffiti
- Antisemitic remarks or slogans
- Displays of Nazi or terrorist symbols
- Physical attacks/bullying
- Antisemitic posts online
- Hostile school environments, including
  - Use of Jewish stereotypes
  - Biased curricular materials
  - Disregard for Jewish holidays
  - Verbal abuse

Any incident in which you or anyone else has been made to feel excluded, uncomfortable, or unsafe due to your religion or perceived attitudes about Israel.

To report an incident, visit [JewishAnnArbor.org/IncidentReporting](http://JewishAnnArbor.org/IncidentReporting).

\* According to the American Jewish Committee's report, *The State of Antisemitism in America 2025*.

# Community

## June at Beth Israel

Everyone is welcome to join Beth Israel for services, classes, and events. Services are being held in person and virtually, unless otherwise noted on the calendar. Below is a list of the links to participate virtually in services at Beth Israel. Beth Israel is live streaming services on the Beth Israel YouTube channel (Beth Israel Congregation AA MI). All links are also available on the Beth Israel homepage ([www.bethisrael-aa.org](http://www.bethisrael-aa.org)). Please note that passwords are used. Contact the office to get the passwords at [office@bethisrael-aa.org](mailto:office@bethisrael-aa.org).

### Tot Shabbat

Saturday, June 6, 13, and 20, 11 a.m.  
Join us for a playful morning of Jewish songs and stories. Challah and grape juice kiddush included. For kids age 1 through 1st grade and parents, but all are welcome to join. Please note that in order to participate in Tot Shabbat, all tots must be accompanied by an adult. Thanks for helping to make this fun and safe for everyone!

### Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, June 7, 8 p.m. via Zoom  
Members are invited to attend Beth Israel's Annual Congregational Meeting held via Zoom. Join us as we look back over the last year, elect our new board members, and look forward to the coming year. Registration is required. Register using the link on the Beth Israel website ([bethisrael-aa.org](http://bethisrael-aa.org)).

### Carlebach-Style Kabbalat Shabbat Service and Dinner

Friday, June 12, 6 p.m.  
Rabbi Bair's last traditional-egalitarian Carlebach-style Family Shabbat of the season will be on Friday, June 12, at 6 p.m. with dinner to follow. Families with kids of all ages are welcome as we continue to build community. Please RSVP on the Beth Israel website ([bethisrael-aa.org](http://bethisrael-aa.org)).

### Joint Community Cemetery Clean-Up Project

Sunday, June 14, 10 a.m.–noon

TBE and BIC families with kids, come join us for this important mitzvah project! Bring clippers, gloves, shovels, rakes, knee pads, and water bottles. Wear hats and sunscreen. Meet at Arborcrest Cemetery at 10 a.m., 2521 Glazier Way. Register through this link. <https://www.bethisrael-aa.org/event/cemetery-clean-up>

[project.html](#)

### Community-Wide Juneteenth Kabbalat Shabbat and Oneg

Friday, June 19, 6 p.m.  
The community is invited to join this Juneteenth Kabbalat Shabbat and Oneg. There will be poetry, prayer, and song, followed by a special oneg. This event is sponsored by The Network in collaboration with Beth Israel Congregation, JCRC, and Federation of Greater Ann Arbor.

### Aura of Kabbalat Shabbat

Friday, June 26, 5:30 p.m.  
A Jewish Renewal inspired singing service led by Rabbi Aura Ahuvia. The choir, dubbed the "Holy Levites," will be holding a rehearsal at 5:30 p.m. leading right up to and seamlessly into services. All are welcome to attend.

### Chavurat Nashim Matthaei Meet-Up

Sunday June 28, 10 a.m.  
Looking for an opportunity to move, connect and recharge? Join the women of Chavurat Nashim for a relaxed group hike on the trails at Matthaei Botanical Gardens. Bring an open mind and positive spirit and leave feeling refreshed, grounded, and connected. Wear weather-appropriate clothing and comfortable walking shoes. You may also wish to bring a water bottle. NOTE: There is no rain date for this event. In case of inclement weather, the event will be canceled. Please register on the Beth Israel website.

### Theology Book Club — Online

Wednesdays at 7 p.m.  
Beth Israel Congregation's Theology Book Club welcomes you to join them to read together and discuss books on Jewish thought and beliefs. The books are in English. Contact Paul Shifrin at (248) 514-7276 for more information.

### In Person and Online Services

**Minyan**  
Sundays at 9:30 a.m. in the M&M Chapel and online  
Sundays–Thursdays at 7:45 p.m. online only

### Friday Evening Services — in person and virtual

Kabbalat Shabbat Service at 6 p.m.

### Shabbat Morning Services — in person and virtual

Saturdays at 9:30 a.m. ■

## Lunch & Learn with Yishay Ishi Ron, author of DOG

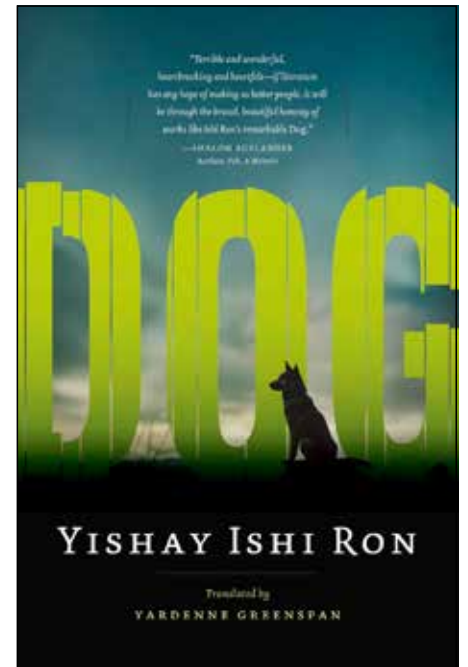
By Drew Coel, Marketing and Program Associate, Ann Arbor JCC

Come join us at the Ann Arbor JCC for the June Book Series event, a Lunch & Learn with a virtual visit from Yishay Ishi Ron, author of *DOG*. The program will take place on Tuesday, June 9, from noon to 1:30 p.m. A delicious kosher lunch will be served at noon, with the author talk beginning promptly at 12:30 p.m.

### Book summary

*DOG* is a raw, unflinching novel, drawing on the author's own experiences as a former elite IDF combat officer suffering from PTSD and addiction. The story follows Geller, a decorated soldier who returns from Gaza to Tel Aviv only to be haunted by the trauma of combat — including the memory of a soldier killing a dog in the field. Haunted and estranged from family and comrades, Geller spirals into heroin addiction, living in the underbelly of Tel Aviv among misfit junkies.

His life takes a turn when a stray dog enters his world. Initially indifferent, Geller eventually rescues the dog, forming an unexpected bond. The narrative alternates between Geller's fragmented, drug-addled



perspective and brief, often humorous, chapters from the dog's point of view, as well as from the perspective of Doris, a lonely apartment cleaner who sees potential in Geller. These shifts broaden the scope beyond Geller's self-absorbed despair, hinting at the possibility of redemption.

The cost of this program is \$12.50 per person. Registration is open now on JLive app! ■

### From the Editor continues from page 2

In a visual record of a similarly fraught subject, the Zohran Mamdani campaign for New York City mayor, the new documentary *Scenes from the Divide* (coming to Michigan soon), director Alison Klayman aims to preserve the current transitional moment — the same moment revealed here in Washtenaw by the multi-vocal reactions to Peterson's speech.

Explaining *Scenes from the Divide*, to *Haaretz*, Klayman said, "Zohran's election was the new landscape that everything was being mapped onto. The basic thesis [for the documentary] was: There are real fault lines within the Jewish community, within families, across generations. It'd be worth remem-

bering what this moment felt like."

This issue of the *WJN* includes several pieces which also record complexities of this moment. Examples include the announcement of a community discussion of Zionism and anti-Zionism (page 3) and educator Ari Kelman's opinion piece, "More Than Zero," questioning the feasibility of attempts to eradicate antisemitism (page 6) alongside Jewish Federation's promotion of their anti-semitism Incident Report form which encourages reporting "any incident in which you or anyone else has been made to feel excluded, uncomfortable, or unsafe due to your religion or perceived attitudes about Israel (page 8)."

If you find it hard to take it all in, you're not alone. I'd love to hear your opinions on any of this. ■

## Pardes Hannah events in June

**June 14**  
Rosh Chodesh Circle. Online only. 7 p.m.

**June 20**  
Study Session with Reb Elliot. In per-

son and online. 3 p.m.

**June 28**  
Study Session with Rabbi Aura: Opening the Siddur. In person and online. 3 p.m. ■

# Kosher Cuisine

## The cook in June

By Lonnie Sussman

I love June, the gardens are growing, lots of family birthdays, weather is good (fingers crossed) and school is out. Despite writing that I didn't love the food in Thailand, I keep reading recipes that do appeal to me, like this one.

### Easy Thai-Style Noodle Salad

*Ultimate Veg* by Jaimie Oliver

Serves 4

This chef/writer is a terrific British cooking icon. I've seen him on PBS making some of the recipes in this cookbook, so I ordered the book. His style is simplicity and positivity and flexibility which gives us the chance to clear our refrigerators.

- 7 oz vermicelli noodles
- 2-inch piece of fresh ginger
- 3 limes
- 1 tbs reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tbs chili jam (or sweet chili sauce, or chili flakes)
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Sesame oil
- 4 scallions, finely sliced
- 1 ½ pounds crunchy veg (the writer's word) like carrots, bok choy, Napa cabbage, radishes, endive, asparagus, or sprouts, cut into small pieces.
- 3 oz unsalted peanuts (unless you have allergies.)
- 1 tbs sesame seeds
- ½ bunch or about ½ oz (use your judgement) mint
- ½ oz cilantro (I know, I know, optional)
- 1 package of silken tofu soaked in soy sauce to your choice. (optional)

Cook the noodles according to the package instructions, drain and refresh under cold running water. Peel and roughly chop the ginger and then mash it in a pestle and mortar. Finely grate the lime zest and squeeze the juice into a bowl with the soy sauce, chili jam, 2 tbs olive oil, and 1 tsp sesame oil. Mix it all up and put it into a large salad bowl. Add the sliced scallions and the cut vegetables. Toast the peanuts and sesame seeds in a dry non-stick frying pan on medium heat until golden. Crush ½ of the peanuts and sesame seeds to a powder and add to the salad bowl. Add the noodles to the bowl and tear rather than cut the mint leaves and add them to the bowl along with the reserved nuts and seeds. Add in the tofu if you choose.

### Roasted Tomato Risotto

*Ultimate Veg* by Jaimie Oliver

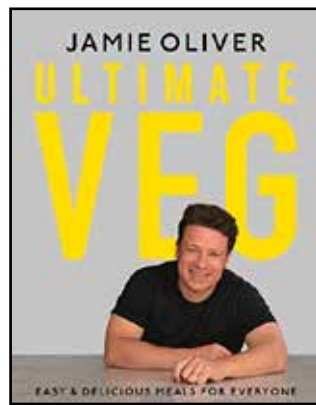
Serves 6

Do you like risottos? I do, and this one is a winner.

- 6 large ripe tomatoes, cut the cores out and place cut-side down in a snug fitting baking dish
- 1 bulb garlic — add the bulb to the baking dish
- ½ oz fresh thyme — scatter the sprigs over the tomatoes and garlic
- Olive oil — drizzle 1 tbs over the tomatoes and season with some salt.
- Roast at 350 degrees for 1 hour or until the tomatoes start to burst open. Keep the juices.

- 5 cups vegetable stock
- 1 onion, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 bulb fennel, peeled and finely chopped and save the fronds
- 2 tbs unsalted butter
- 2 cups arborio rice
- 3 oz Parmesan cheese
- ¾ cup dry white vermouth (or white wine), optional

Bring the stock to a simmer in a pot. Use a separate large pan on medium heat and add 1 tbs olive oil and 1 tbs butter. Add in the onion and fennel



and cook for 10 minutes until the vegetables are softened but not colored. Stir occasionally, then stir in the rice to toast for 2 minutes. Pour in the vermouth and stir until absorbed. Add a ladle of the stock and wait until it's been fully absorbed before adding another ladle. Continue to add ladles one at a time and stir until each is absorbed and the rice is cooked. It will need about 16–18 minutes. Beat in the remaining tbs of butter, finely grate and add the Parmesan, then season with salt and pepper to your taste. Turn off the heat, cover the pan, and leave the rice to relax for 2 minutes until it becomes creamy. Divide the risotto between warm plates, place a tomato in the center with a little sweet garlic by squeezing the garlic out of the skins, and the herby fennel tops. Drizzle the tomato juices over the top.

### Thai Fragrant Rice

*Vegetarian Cooking* by Linda Fraser

Serves 2

Yes, another Thai recipe with rice.

- 1 stalk of lemongrass, finely chopped
- 2 limes, zested
- 1 cup brown basmati rice (or your favorite)
- 1 tbs olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1-inch piece of fresh ginger root, peeled and finely chopped
- 1½ tsp coriander seeds
- 1½ tsp cumin seeds
- 3 cups vegetarian stock
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro (this herb continues to appear in many recipes)
- Lime wedges for serving

Rinse the rice in cold water until the water runs clear and drain. Heat the oil in a large pan and add the onion, ginger, spices, lemongrass, and lime zest, and cook gently for a few minutes. Add the rice and cook for another minute, then add the stock and bring to a boil.

Reduce the heat to very low and cover the pan. Cook gently for 30 minutes and check the rice, or for less time if you are using a different kind of rice. If it's still crunchy, cook for another 3–5 minutes and then remove from the heat. Fluff up the rice and allow to sit for about 10 minutes before serving. Serve with the lime wedges.

### Asparagus Tart with Ricotta

*Vegetarian Cooking* by Linda Fraser

Serves 4

I love asparagus and always look for new ways to use it. I also love ricotta, usually just eating it with a spoon. This recipe includes the tart dough, but you could use puff pastry.

- 6 tbs butter
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- Pinch of salt
- Cold water
- 8 oz asparagus, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces, but reserve the tips separately
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup ricotta cheese
- 2 tbs strained plain yogurt (so it's not too wet)

- 6 tbs grated parmesan cheese
- Salt and freshly ground pepper

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Rub the butter into the flour and salt and add cold water to form a smooth dough. Knead it lightly and roll it out into a 9-inch tart pan. I don't have one so use a pie plate or another pan of that size. Press it firmly down and prick it all over with a fork. Bake for about 10 minutes or until the pastry is firm but still pale. Remove from oven and lower the heat to 350 degrees. Simmer the chopped asparagus in boiling water for 4–5 minutes and then drain. Reserve the tips of the stalks. Meanwhile, mix the beaten eggs, ricotta, yogurt, and parmesan with the salt and pepper together, add the chopped asparagus except the tips, and then pour into the pastry shell and place the tips on top. Bake for 35–40 minutes or until golden and serve warm or cold.

### Halibut Plaki — Greek styled halibut

*Sephardi Heritage Cookbook*, recipes from the members of the Sephardic Temple of Or Chadash (New Light), Sisterhood. The recipe was submitted by Linda Capeloto Sendowski, whose grandparents were from Rhodes and Turkey.

Serves 3–4 as a main course or 6–8 as an appetizer or first course.

- 2 tbs olive oil
- 1½ pounds skinless halibut fillets or other firm, white-fleshed fish about 1 inch thick (alternatives are black cod, sea bass, or haddock), rinsed and patted dry
- 2 tbs freshly squeezed lemon juice
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 rib of celery, cut into a small dice
- ¼ medium Spanish onion, or white or red, cut into a small dice
- ½ small fennel bulb, trimmed, cored, and cut into a small dice (about 1 cup)
- 1 thin carrot, cut into a small dice
- ¼ large red pepper, cut into a small dice
- 10 yellow or red grape tomatoes, each cut in half
- 10–14 large seedless green grapes, each cut in half
- ½ cup packed flat-leaf parsley, rinsed, dried and finely chopped

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Oil a baking dish slightly larger than the fish. Place the halibut in the dish and sprinkle the lemon juice evenly over the fish and then season the fillets with salt and pepper to taste. Combine the chopped vegetables and tomatoes in a medium bowl, stirring to mix well. Scatter evenly over the fish, covering it as much as possible, and then scatter the grape halves evenly over the vegetables. Sprinkle with the parsley. Bake uncovered for about 30 minutes. If the vegetables seem undercooked, cover the dish with aluminum foil and bake for up to 10 more minutes. You can serve warm or at room temperature or cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days.

### Gondi, Persian Sabbath Meatballs

This recipe is from the same cookbook as the halibut recipe. It is from Dalia Beroorkhim Melamed who was born in Iran. Her mother, Azizeh Melamed Beroorkhim, made this traditional meatball to put into her chicken soup or as a separate dish with fresh herbs, radishes, or bread as an appetizer, or on top

of saffron rice, a sandwich, or any other way you like.

Makes 12–15 Gondi.

- 1 cup dry garbanzo beans, soaked in cold water overnight
- 1 large onion
- 3 tbs olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 tbs turmeric, or to taste
- 2 tbs cardamom, or to taste
- ¼ tsp baking soda (optional)
- 1 tsp cornstarch (optional)
- 1 pound ground meat (chicken or turkey)
- 10–15 cups chicken soup

Process the onion completely in a food processor. Add oil, salt and pepper, turmeric and cardamom, baking soda and cornstarch, and mix well. The cornstarch and baking soda help keep the Gondi firm in shape and the texture fluffy. Transfer the mixture to a large bowl. Drain the soaked garbanzo beans, put in food processor, and process until the mixture becomes soft to the touch. Hint, it should feel more like sand and not small pebbles. Add in ¼ to ½ cup cold water if needed to make it smoother. Transfer the beans into the bowl with the onion mixture and add the ground meat. Mix all ingredients very well until the beans and the meat are incorporated. Cover the bowl and chill in the refrigerator for a few hours. When ready to cook, wet your hands and roll them into small balls of 1-inch diameter for the soup or 2 inches for a sandwich or a meal. Bring the chicken soup to a boil or a bowl of broth so the Gondi soak up the flavors. Cook for 30 minutes to 1 hour or until they rise to the top of the bowl.

### Chickpea and Vegetable Stew

My effort at an African style stew.

Served my husband and me for several days. I'm unsure how many people this would have fed but I used about 2 ½–3 cups of the chickpeas and the broth and vegetables I list below.

I got carried away with energy to make some hummus from the dark brown dried chickpeas that I think have more flavor than the canned chickpeas, although it would be fine to use them. I put them in a large pot and covered them with water to soak. Then my energy lagged so I drained them and put them in the refrigerator to think about them another day. When I took them out of the refrigerator I realized there were some vegetables in the refrigerator that deserved to be used sooner rather than later. I decided that the ½ onion and ½ peppers were in dire need of a boost of flavor, so I sautéed them in olive oil. The chickpeas needed some more liquid, so I added 2 cups of vegan broth (my favorite, Zoup). Hmm, what else? I didn't have a can of tomatoes, but I did have some tomato sauce left over from Passover along with a small jar of dried tomatoes. The sautéed vegetables and the tomato sauce and dried tomatoes went in the pot along with ½ tsp each of cardamom, paprika, and cumin. Oh, and a little salt. It took another 15 minutes to get all the flavors to meld and the chickpeas to soften. It turned out to be delicious. ■

## Restaurant review

### 42 North is a delight in Dexter

By Candace Bulkley and Trina Fuller  
Candace and Trina became friends in the Temple Beth Emeth adult b-mitzvah class that graduated in 2022. They will be honing their palates, visiting, and writing about a variety of independent, locally owned Washtenaw County restaurants, catering to a variety of dietary preferences.



When looking for a place to dine with family and friends to celebrate a festive occasion, can you go wrong with a restaurant with “social” in its name? In this case, you can’t.

42 North Social House in Dexter, which takes half of its name from the latitudinal coordinate of Dexter, MI — approximately 42.3363 N — and the other half “social house” from what the owners Andy Copp and Jamie Schmunk envisioned for this historic landmark which opened in 2024. You may recognize it from its previous incarnations, most notably Cousins Heritage Inn, but believe us when we say 42 North Social House has set itself apart and has cultivated a gem of a space to enjoy really good food and company. Our party of five enjoyed an evening in a spacious private front room away from the din of the nearby bar and with a front row seat to a massive thunderstorm rolling through town. It was simply delightful.

A few of us started with cocktails while we socialized. The birthday girl enjoyed a sweet Red Cherry Sangria, deceptively potent from the tequila in the recipe — one was enough! The others chose classic cocktails, which were thoughtfully reimagined with delicious results. The Wild Blossom Martini — gin, kissed with grapefruit and elderflower; Cucumber Gimlet, with the fragrant French liqueur St. Germaine; and the 42N Woodford Smash — bourbon with honey, lemon, and fresh mint. We were off to a fantastic start! We put in an appetizer order to protect ourselves and chose the 42N Biscuit Board. Six miniature homemade biscuits were lined up across from four spreads: honey butter, red pepper jelly, pimento cheese, and bacon jam. Our request for double pimento cheese rather than the bacon jam was honored without a problem. The honey butter was especially delicious with the tender, warm biscuits. Rounding out the appetizer course were the very tasty NOLA BBQ Shrimp, dressed in a smoky sweet and spicy glaze, a smooth bowl of sweet and

savory pureed carrot and curry soup and a basket of piping hot rolls, served with cups of soft whipped butter.

Our entree selections were a varied cross-section of the menu. We ordered Tenderloin Medallions Diane, with a deeply flavored mushroom, brandy, and dijon mustard sauce accompanied by first-of-the-season Michigan asparagus and mashed potatoes. Next was the stunningly presented and perfectly cooked Bronzed Atlantic Salmon served with fergola (a traditional Sardinian toasted pasta), broccolini, and mushrooms. Both entrees were deemed outstanding and resulted in clean plates. Two diners ordered salads which were beautifully composed and they remarked that the greens looked and tasted impossibly vibrant. The Roasted Beet Salad had spinach and baby kale tossed in a light vinaigrette with goat cheese, generously topped with both golden and red beets, pickled strawberries, and walnuts. Unfortunately, the kitchen was not so generous with the goat cheese and left us searching for more. The Green Salad with an add-on of perfectly prepared beef tenderloin had fresh mixed greens, watermelon radish, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, and crispy chickpeas tossed in a homemade buttermilk dressing. A highlight was the Rigatoni with Sunday Gravy, made with a braised beef short rib tomato sauce using freshly made Carosello’s pasta from just down the street



in Dexter. It was simply delicious and comforting — no other words needed. In the same vein we were compelled to try a side of the Truffle Mac & Cheese, also using pasta from Carosello’s. The bubbling dish arrived topped with crunchy panko breadcrumbs and Gemelli pasta baked in bechamel sauce. It was perfectly creamy and delicious but oddly enough, truffle was nowhere to be found. Although we were disappointed no complaints were filed — we ate and enjoyed it as it was. It is asparagus season here in Michigan so we had to take advantage of this narrow window and enjoyed a side order of that too. The fresh spears were roasted and tossed in a lemony beurre blanc and topped with shaved parmesan. They were heaven on a plate.

Finally, the dessert. We hesitated to order, but we were celebrating a birthday after all and our server advised that one

piece of carrot cake would be plenty for the 5 of us to share. So what did we do? Ordered it *and* the warm beignets with chocolate sauce. The carrot cake arrived big as a house with a candle on top. It was made with plenty of warm spices and was frosted with vanilla icing, not the expected traditional tangy cream cheese style of icing which would have enhanced the experience. Yet we pressed on with it and sure enough there was plenty for all of us to sample and take home. The warm beignets with chocolate sauce disappeared in the blink of an eye. All of the desserts at 42 N. are made on site and worth the calories if you share them with loved ones!

When presented with the check, we were delighted to find out they offer a birthday discount. With the purchase of another entree, the lowest priced entree is free! While such birthday deals were commonplace before the pandemic, they seem to have disappeared at most restaurants around town — replaced by a free dessert or small discount.

Our service was attentive, pleasant, and thoughtful throughout our meal. We learned our well informed and spirited server had been with 42 North Social House since its opening. Despite a couple of execution hiccups along the way it will not be long before we return to this beautifully appointed dining room for another happy occasion — and while the stormy Michigan weather prevented us from enjoying the large and comfortable looking patio on our first visit, we look forward to trying it on a sunnier day, too. ■

42 North Social House

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## Discovering fire for the second time at my interspiritual seder

By Lauren Zinn

When Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer (1698–1750), aka the Baal Shem Tov, saw that the Jewish people were threatened by tragedy, he would go to a particular place in the forest where he lit a fire, recited a particular prayer, and asked for a miracle to save the Jews from the threat. Because of the Holy Fire and faithfulness of the prayer, the miracle was accomplished, averting the tragedy. Later, when the Baal Shem Tov's disciple, the Maggid of Mezrich, had to intervene with heaven for the same reason, he went to the same place in the forest where he told the Master of the Universe that while he did not know how to light the fire, he could still recite the prayer, and again, the miracle was accomplished. Later still, Rabbi Moshe Leib of Sasov, in turn a disciple of the Maggid of Mezrich, went into the forest to save his people. "I do not know how to light the fire," he pleaded with God, "and I do not know the prayer, but I can find the place and this must be sufficient." Once again, the miracle was accomplished. When it was the turn of Rabbi Israel of Rizhyn, the great grandson of the Maggid of Mezrich, who was named after the Baal Shem Tov, to avert the threat, he sat in his armchair, holding his head in his hands, and said to God: "I am unable to light the fire, I do not know the prayer, and I cannot even find the place in the forest. All I can do is to tell the story. That must be enough."

This legend teaches us that traditions evolve; storytelling isn't just for remembering but for connecting with holiness; sincerity overrides ritual adherence allowing for re-enchantment; and while "fires" of tradition may seem to burn out, they carry enough power to kindle new ones.

In today's political climate, I felt the need to kindle a new experience for Passover. Over the years, I've led many seders; written haggadahs with different themes for groups of all ages, sizes, and cultures; designed a Passover simulation game for an elementary school; led an online Seder for international students; and more. The Ba'al Shem Tov's story gave me permission to kindle a new tradition for Passover 2026, an "interspiritual seder."

### Creating a shared experience with diverse women

A successful interspiritual gathering results in spiritual solidarity and shared humanity. It can be an opportunity for all to learn from each other and deepen interconnection. Such learning is not about facts, beliefs, or knowledge, but experience. How might an interspiritual seder, I wondered, contribute to my understanding of freedom, of the exodus from slavery, of liberation from narrow places? To find out, I invited seven American women to a non-traditional seder. They included: an Iranian Muslim (Shi'ite); an Atheist, raised as a Hindu, from India; a Mexican Catholic of Maya ancestry; a Buddhist-Leaner of German Protestant ancestry; an Evangelical Christian (authentic, not nationalist); a Presbyterian Christian



(Liberal); and me, an Interspiritual Jew of Russo-Polish ancestry. Most did not know each other. Here's what happened.

At my table, adorned with sculptures of female figures, I gave an overview of what we would *not* do: all 14 steps and sub-steps of the traditional seder (although by naming them and their purpose, maybe we fulfilled the tradition). Rather than follow a haggadah (the guide to these steps), we would be the content of our seder.

I recited a couple blessings in Hebrew and explained the seder plate. And then, over a first course of Passover foods (matzah ball soup, hard boiled eggs, celery, parsley, saltwater, matzah, charoset, horseradish); a second course of dishes contributed by all including organic kosher wine; and a third course of special teas, macaroons, and almond flour cake, we took turns. Talking. Sharing. Listening. In bits and pieces, we gleaned our religious, cultural and historical backgrounds; personal faith journeys; lessons from our own or other traditions, challenges and achievements; and insights into freedom. There was no holding back.

Through deep listening, shared inspiration, reflections on human nature, spirituality, societal ills and gains, and our lives as women, we explored freedom. Freedom from different forms of bondage and patterns including patriarchy and the resources within to create the freedom we want. We dove into freedom as love through relationships with God, family, estranged loved ones, strangers, the self, nature, and the planet. As our conversation broadened and deepened, I felt

wisdom drip forth, cascade, and like a waterfall, cleanse and renew.

### Lighting a candle to take home

At the end of our Seder, each of us lit a candle (that we took home) as we read and reflected on a randomly received quote.

"None of us can be free until all of us are free" reinforced our need to share ways to free each other.

"When a woman whispers her fears to her ancestors, a thousand grandmothers answer her call," validated the power of multiplying the support we can receive.

"I am told by Spirit that we have to build a belief system in which we carry the law in our hearts — not one where we look over our shoulder to somebody else," by Black Elk, a Lakota Medicine Man, affirmed that the growth of freedom comes from looking into our hearts rather than from authority figures or books.

Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi's (1745–1812) interpretation of the biblical verse, "A perpetual fire shall be kept burning on the altar, not to go out" (Leviticus 6:6), as a metaphor where the altar is the heart and the fire the flame of love, caring, and connection to the holy lit within us, confirmed our shared humanity.

An Indigenous quote, "I am made of sacred fire. I am not hollow. I am being emptied to be filled," reflected the seder

coinciding (always) with the full Pink Moon, filling us with the abundance of solidarity and belonging.

I believe our personal stories fanned the embers of tradition with a new practice. As Hadar Cohen, an Arab Jewish scholar, mystic, and artist, wrote in a recent Substack post:

"The view that religions are isolated from one another is ... a product of colonialism. Colonial powers always recognized the power of religion — which is why they would target spiritual leaders first, as they are the heart of the community. But more than that, they used religion and distorted its meaning to control the masses and separate religions from each other. This was particularly applied to Jewish and Muslim communities, which have shared a theological and historical context for centuries. Today, this context is almost buried in the books of history as a consequence of colonialism."

### Something new restoring something old

In hosting an interspiritual seder, perhaps I was not doing something new but restoring a former, lost yet valuable, part of history.

For me, the intention of the final proclamation of a traditional seder, "Next year in Jerusalem" (and something I have not been able to say for years) was more appropriately captured by the French Jesuit priest, paleontologist, and philosopher Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881–1955) who said, "The day will come when, after harnessing the ether, the winds, the tides, gravitation, we shall harness for God the energies of love. And, on that day, for the second time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire." I believe that we who joined in this interspiritual seder discovered fire for the second time.

As our gathering ended, we each held a polished stone (symbol of permanence) for what we would remember from the night. The next day, one woman wrote, "Lauren, I learned so much and it so reinforced that I crave thoughtful conversation with women of all ethnicities and belief systems. Thank you so much for a terrific and eye-opening experience!" Another expressed how moved she was by "our shared belief in a spiritual self, guided by love and honored in humility ... There seems to me to be beliefs we hold in common, regardless of upbringing, nationality, or faith traditions." Everyone wrote to me with gratitude for the experience. Recognizing that more time was needed, we agreed to a sleepover! "Next year in Pajamas."

We left feeling empowered, enriched, and affirmed. I am basking in the afterglow and cannot convey how fortunate and grateful I feel to have such friends in my life. Who is to say that the women who came to my house for an interspiritual seder did not enter a forest, light fire together, and share prayers powerful enough to change the world. Dayenu. (It will have been enough.) ■

## Community

# Shabbat Unbound: A new podcast that gives each Shabbat prayer its own world

Judaism Unbound has announced the launch of *Shabbat Unbound*, a new podcast that reimagines the Friday night Shabbat service as a yearlong, eight-episode journey, one prayer at a time. The trailer drops May 11 with the first full episode premiering on May 22, 2026.



Hosted by Miriam Terlinchamp and Lex Rofeberg, the team behind Judaism Unbound's popular weekly podcast, and joined by an ensemble of extraordinary musicians, *Shabbat Unbound* gives each prayer of the Friday evening liturgy its full, undivided attention. Where most Friday night services move through 15 prayers in a single sitting, the podcast asks a different question: what if we took just one prayer and really stayed with it?

"Jewish prayer has no single author. No one true melody," says Terlinchamp. "Just like jazz. Just like love. We want people to feel that expansiveness and to discover something new in prayers they may have said a thousand times."

Each episode weaves together three elements:

**Song:** exploring how a prayer sounds across communities, centuries, and continents;

**Study:** unpacking the Hebrew, rabbinic debates, and layers of meaning; and

**Story:** the people who wrote it, prayed it, and found themselves

changed by it. Episodes are designed to be entered anywhere, and to accompany listeners wherever Shabbat finds them: while cooking, walking, resting, or setting the table as sundown arrives.

New episodes drop on the fourth Friday of every month. The eight prayers of the series are: *Ye-did Nefesh*, *Shiru L'Adonai*, *Ana Bakoach*, *Lecha Dodi*, *V'ahavta*, *Oseh Shalom*, *Aleinu*, and *Kaddish*. Each episode connects to a companion resource page with further tunes, translations, creative interpretations, and opportunities for study between Shabbatot. *Shabbat Unbound* is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, YouTube, Overcast, and RSS.

### About the hosts

Rabbi Miriam Terlinchamp (she/her) is the Executive Director of Judaism Unbound and host of the *Tales of the Unbound* and *Door to Door* podcasts. Previously, she served as Senior Rabbi of Temple Shalom in Cincinnati, Ohio, for 13 years, founded JustLOVE, a multi-faith movement for activists, and teaches in Jewish communities across the country. She is past president of Cincinnati's Board of Rabbis and serves on the National Clergy Advisory Council for Faith in Action. Ordained in 2010 at HUC-JIR, Los Angeles, she holds a BA in Philosophy of Religion and Studio Art from Scripps College.

Rabbi Lex Rofeberg (he/him) is Senior Jewish Educator of Judaism Unbound, co-host and producer of its weekly podcast, and overseer of the UnYeshiva a digital center for Jewish learning and unlearning. He holds a degree in Judaic Studies from Brown University and was ordained in 2021 by ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal. Previously, he worked for the Institute of Southern Jewish Life in Jackson, Mississippi. He serves on the boards of The Shalom Center, Tikkun Olam Productions, Evolve: Groundbreaking Jewish Conversations, and Mitzvah Matzos, and lives in Providence, Rhode Island.

### About Judaism Unbound

Judaism Unbound is a digitally-driven Jewish organization — home to a family of weekly podcasts with over three million downloads, the UnYeshiva center for Jewish learning, and live community gatherings — that empower seekers, innovators, and curious Jews to reimagine and redesign Jewish life for the 21st century. Learn more at [judaismunbound.com](http://judaismunbound.com). ■

## TBE events in June

Events and services are both in person and/or virtual. Please see [www.templebethemeth.org](http://www.templebethemeth.org) for full details, location information, and links.

### Tot Shabbat Service & Dinner

Fridays at 5:45 p.m.

Join the clergy to celebrate Shabbat with fun activities, stories, songs, and age-appropriate learning for children ages 0–5. Registration requested.

### Elementary Shabbat Service & Dinner (every second Friday of the month)

Fridays at 5:45 p.m.

A short service, song session, and community building! Most appropriate for children ages 5–10 and their parents, grandparents, and other adults. Everyone is welcome! Registration requested.

### Wine & Cheese Shabbat Reception

Fridays at 6 p.m. (except for the second Friday of each month)

### Shabbat Service

Fridays at 6:30 p.m. (Every second Friday of the month is at 7:30 p.m.)

### Saturday Shabbat service

Saturdays at 10 a.m.

### Shabbat morning Torah study

Saturdays at 8:50 a.m.

Join us for this weekly discussion of the Torah portion.

### Weekday morning blessings

Weekdays at 9:15 a.m.

Join TBE lay leaders each weekday morning for a short service of song, poetry, and meditation.

### Twenty-five-minute mindfulness with Jewish spiritual director Linda Greene

Tuesdays at 8:30 a.m.

Zoom room opens at 8:15 a.m. for optional check-in. Blessing and intention setting 8:30–8:35 a.m. Meditate 8:35–9 a.m. Start your day centered and connected.

### Queer Torah Study

Tuesdays at 7 p.m.

Join us on Zoom for a discussion of queer themes in the weekly Torah portion! Led by Ari Marcotte, Zelda Marcotte & Ari Smith. Guest leaders welcome! Contact Zelda ([zeldamaybiz@gmail.com](mailto:zeldamaybiz@gmail.com)) for more information.

### Back Door Food Pantry

Thursdays, 4 to 7 p.m.

### Meditation with Claire Weiner

Thursdays at 5 p.m.

Join Claire Weiner for a 40-minute meditation session.

### Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Whinston

Fridays at 12 p.m.

### Weekly Mahj

Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.

Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m.

### WTBE Gift Shop Open

Friday at 5:30 p.m. (Every second Friday of the month is at 7:30 p.m.)

Washtenaw County's only Judaica Shop!

### Talking About Israel Together

Mondays, June 1, 8, 15 and 22, 6:30 p.m.

### Jewish Medical Ethics

Tuesdays, June 2, 9, and 16, 10 a.m.

### TBE Annual Meeting

Wednesday, June 3, 7:30 p.m.

### Jewish Book Club

Thursdays, June 4, 11, 18, and 25, 11 a.m.

### Pride Shabbat

Friday, June 5, 6:30 p.m.

### Congregational Experiences with Zionism and Anti-Zionism

Sunday, June 7, 2 p.m.



### Genesis Picnic

Sunday, June 7, 4:30 p.m.

### Genesis Annual Meeting / Tri-Board Meeting

Sunday, June 7, 6 p.m.

### WTBE Fiber Arts

Monday, June 8, 7 p.m.

### WTBE Historical Novel Reading Group

Wednesday, June 10, 1 p.m.

### Family Camp

Friday, June 12, 6:45 p.m.

### Monthly Rosh Chodesh Circle

Wednesday, June 17, 5:30 p.m. ■

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## Data centers, AI, and water usage

By Mike Shriberg, Director of University of Michigan Water Center



As a steering committee member of the Ann Arbor Jewish Climate Circle and an environmental professional, I believe that we in the Jewish community have a responsibility to be good stewards of our planet. And I'm proud of the leadership our community has shown to date. Data centers are the next level of challenge I hope we can collectively lead on. My

particular focus is on water.

When I have given public talks as Director of the University of Michigan Water Center over the past year, I can all but guarantee that the first question will be about data centers. The issue has risen so fast in the public consciousness because proposals for new, large data centers seem to be springing up everywhere, raising critical questions for the communities they target.

From the perspective of water — one of many important factors — the first key thing to understand is that there is wide variability in water usage. Some data centers use immense amounts of water through evaporative cooling, consuming up to 5 million gallons per day (as much as a city of 50,000 people). Others use technology more like your home air conditioning system, consuming more like 100,000 gallons per day. Yet others use fluids other than water for cooling, thus

reducing water usage to levels more typical of a commercial building.

With these differences, it would seem there's an easy choice for communities facing data center proposals: require the most water-efficient technology to ensure that resources are not depleted. Unfortunately, it's not that easy. The more water-efficient technologies onsite at data centers typically lead to higher energy usage, which in turn causes much higher offsite water usage to generate that electricity, assuming the energy comes from fossil fuels or nuclear power, as most of our electricity in Michigan does. The best solution? Combine water-efficient technologies with renewable energy to power those technologies, requiring companies operating data centers to pay for energy acquisition and grid upgrades. That can be a win for a local community — but it requires transparency and good-faith efforts from the company proposing the data center and strong local government enforcement of

zoning ordinances, which is the primary leverage point.

Beyond water impacts, the other question that I nearly always get when discussing data centers is how we can reduce demand for them. Again, the answer isn't easy because demand is being driven largely by advances in AI, which is becoming embedded in many things we have little or no control over. However, we can limit our own AI usage. While there are too many variables to reliably equate specific water usage to a specific AI search, the simple rule of thumb is to use AI only when truly needed and to turn off the automatic AI search functions in browsers.

At the individual level, in addition to advocacy for reduced impacts from data centers, that's the best way to limit water usage. Overall, as Jews, I hope we can lead in both individual responsibility and as a collective force for positive policy and practices during this time of immense transition and change as AI takes off and data center proposals to power AI keep emerging. ■

## Food choice as a mitzvah

By Steve Merritt, Michael Solomon, and Annie Wolock, A2J CC team

The Torah teaches that we were placed in the Garden of Eden *Lovdah u'l'shomrah*: to serve and to guard it. Today, our global food system generates approximately 30% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. By framing our food choices through the lens of sustainability and Jewish values, we see that individual choices can be understood as an act of *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world).

### The modern vicious cycle

Diets high in meat (especially beef) and dairy, along with significant food waste, are primary drivers of global emissions. Animal agriculture contributes to

methane levels, deforestation, and water depletion. This creates a cycle in which climate-driven droughts and floods reduce the very crop yields we rely on for sustenance.

### Bal Tashchit: the ethics of waste

The Jewish principle of *Bal Tashchit* began as rules against the destruction of fruit-bearing trees during war but has been expanded in the Talmud to forbid senseless waste of all kinds. In the United States, an estimated 31% of purchased food is wasted. If the combined amount of global food waste were a nation, it would be the world's third-largest emitter of GHG. Every time we discard food, we ignore the impact of what we are discarding, and the impact of our waste on resource-intensive

food items such as beef.

### The path towards eco-kosher

Pioneered by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi and Rabbi Arthur Waskow, "eco-kosher" suggests that for food to be truly "fit" for consumption, it must not at the same time destroy the earth. We can embrace the umbrella of eco-kosher through several actions:

**Plant-Forward Living: Replacing meat as much as possible with plant proteins honors the earth and reduces climate impact. Meat should be thought of as another "side dish".**

**Meatless Mondays: This strategy raises awareness and lowers demand for high-**

**emission foods (if you can do a meatless Monday, move on to a meatless Tuesday and Wednesday).**

**Mindful Consumption: Planning meals, shopping more often for less, and using leftovers upholds the mandate against waste.**

**Eating Locally: Choosing seasonal foods reduces emissions from energy-intensive transportation. The majority of the produce we buy should be grown in Michigan or the Midwest.**

In the coming months, the A2 JCC will share a series of climate-friendly recipes. Together, we can nourish our bodies, protect our shared home, and improve our health. ■

## The wisdom of wild things

By Rabbi Sara Adler, Staff Chaplain at the University of Michigan Hospitals, and Certified Michigan Naturalist



It's 7:30 a.m. and the house wren pierces the air with his startling song. How can such a tiny body blast the morning open so loudly? The wren has been busy flitting through the branches of the old crabapple, bringing twigs through the openings of the bird houses our daughters painted at the JCC when they were little. He builds not one, but a few nests in various places around the neighborhood and is an aficionado of birdy real estate. He will find a mate and bring her on a tour of these possible homes to see what she chooses. I hope she picks ours. (I've planted goldenrod and wild bergamot to make it more enticing.)

I can't help but be charmed by their antics. I'm also amused by the scientific name for the wren family — *Troglodytidae*, but they are anything but troglodytes. These house wrens are sassy and bold and throw frequent tantrums of song.

I watch the little guy pull more twigs through the door. If his partner says yes to the house, they will finish it together and fluff the nest with spider sacs. Spider silk is

strong material, but there is greater wisdom in this choice. When the teeny spiders emerge, they will devour any parasites that might put young nestlings at risk. It's an astonishing fact and I remain in awe of the deep wisdom of ecology. It's another lesson in the balance and interdependence of all creatures.

As June leads us into summer, the days will be long and likely hot and tiring at times. We will soon read the story of Moshe's weariness and burnout from carrying the full burden of responsibility for the Israelite community. God helps by imparting Moshe's wisdom and spirit to 70 elders in the community, so he doesn't have to do it all alone.

In this season when I crave wisdom for how to navigate this difficult world, it's easy to feel isolated. But the wren is a reminder to look outward and recognize that God's wisdom is shared and reflected in several places, including in the wisdom of wild things. In our own backyards, we can learn about partnership and interdependence, and perhaps feel less alone. May we all find encouragement and hope in the living world, that simply seeks to do what it knows is best. ■

# Community

## From question marks to exclamation points

By Rav Will Keller



**Rav Will Keller**

When my family and I first considered joining the Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor community, I had never actually been to Michigan. Like many people from the coasts, I carried my assumptions about the Midwest. What I did not expect was that a place I had never visited would so quickly become home.

My first “day” at HDS wasn’t even in person. I joined my interview by Zoom while a laptop was wheeled through the halls — past classrooms filled with laughter — so I could meet students and faculty. Even through a screen, I could sense the Hebrew Day School spirit, ruach, and that this place will be like no other.

I came to Ann Arbor privileged to serve as Head of School. But in many ways, I have been a student here.

A few weeks into my time at HDS — at a moment when I still felt completely all over the place trying to settle into a new role — my wife Yael made an observation that has stayed with me. She noticed I was becoming a more patient parent — bringing more presence, thoughtfulness, and poise into our home. It struck me as both generous and, given how I felt internally at the time, a little bit funny. But she was right.

I was learning — from teachers, from administrators, and from families.

At HDS, I saw master educators at work — not only teaching content but also shaping children. They listened deeply, guided thoughtfully, and held high expectations alongside genuine care. I heard teachers speak with parents not only about progress or challenges, but about their love for each child and their focus on what each child needed to grow into a good human being. This is what it looks like when education is rooted in relationship, in heart, and in responsibility for one another.

Over the course of my career, I have visited many Jewish day schools across North America. Those experiences only deepened my appreciation for what exists here. Hebrew Day School is right-sized — intentionally built for connection. Students are known by many adults. Families and teachers are true partners. Relationships are not a byproduct; they are the foundation. These are qualities to preserve and strengthen, even as the school continues to grow.

During my time here, I also became a student of this broader Jewish community.

Ann Arbor is a place of movement. People arrive, people build, people move on — and yet something enduring takes shape. There is an ebb and flow here, and with it, a quiet understanding: our time together matters. That awareness invites presence.

People show up for one another with care, relationships take root quickly and deeply, and each person is seen as someone who matters.

That sense of shared responsibility became especially clear during moments that asked something real of us.

During COVID, HDS was nimble and able to keep its doors open throughout nearly the entire pandemic — providing continuity, stability, and community when much of the world could not. It required resilience from our teachers, our families, and our students. Together, we built something steady in the midst of instability.

That experience clarified something essential. We were not simply trying to get through a difficult moment — we were building strength.

Not question mark Jews, but exclamation point Jews!

Young people grounded in identity, confident in who they are, and ready to engage the world.

In the years that followed, we worked to name and strengthen what was already true about this school. We articulated three core values: academic excellence and curiosity, character and belonging, and Jewish life and learning. These were not slogans — they were reflections of what we saw in our classrooms, in our relationships, and in our community. Naming them allowed us to align our work more intentionally: how we teach, how we hire, how we support one another, and how we welcome families into this space.

We also invested in the future of HDS. We grew enrollment to more than 70 students, strengthened our faculty in a time of national shortage, and enhanced our physical space — including new spaces for gathering, learning, and celebration. Our 50th anniversary brought generations of families back into the building, a powerful reminder of the enduring impact of this school and the responsibility to carry it forward.

And always, this work was done together — with teachers, administrators, families, board members, and community partners — each contributing to a school that continues to grow not only in size, but in purpose.

As an educator, a parent, and a person, I have been shaped by this place. Jewish day schools, at their best, do more than educate. They shape how we see children, how we build community, and how we take responsibility for one another. Hebrew Day School embodies that vision in ways that are both quiet and profound.

As I prepare to step away, I find myself thinking about what I will carry — and what I trust will continue:

A commitment to relationships as the foundation of learning.

A belief that every child deserves to be fully known and deeply cared for.

A responsibility to show up for one another in small, steady ways.

And a conviction that even in a diverse community, we can build something cohesive, connected, and deeply meaningful when we center what we share.

These are the teachings I have received here. They are the ones I will carry forward.

Thank you for welcoming my family, for trusting me, and for allowing me to be part of this sacred work. It has been a privilege to grow alongside you — and to be part of a community that lives its values every day. ■

## June Calendar

Always check websites or call for updates before planning to attend anything listed here.

**Monday 1**

**Tuesday 2**

**Wednesday 3**

**Yidish tish:** (Virtual) (Yiddish Conversation & Reading Group): Zoom. About 45 minutes each of conversation and reading. Free and open to all those interested in Yiddish language, literature, and culture, no matter what level of proficiency. For more information email Elliot H. Gertel at egertel@umich.edu at least one day before scheduled meeting day every Wednesday (except major Jewish holidays). 2 p.m.

**Thursday 4**

**Friday 5**

Candle Lighting 8:50 p.m.

**Saturday 6 Behaalotecha**

Havdallah 10 p.m.

**Sunday 7**

**In Step in Sam Legacy Run. 9 a.m. Congregational Experiences with Zionism and Anti-Zionism. At TBE. 2 p.m.**

**Monday 8**

**Tuesday 9**

**June Book Series event, a Lunch & Learn with a virtual visit from Yishay Ishi Ron, author of DOG. At the JCC. Noon**  
**AAJFF “Food & Family” with screenings of Babka and Double Happiness. At the JCC 2 p.m.**

**Wednesday 10**

**Yidish tish:** (Virtual) (Yiddish Conversation & Reading Group, see above): Zoom. 2 p.m.

**Thursday 11**

**Friday 12**

Candlelight 8:54 p.m.

**Saturday 13, Shlach,**

Havdallah 10:05 p.m.

**Latin Music and Dance to benefit MIRC at the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor. 6 p.m.**

**Sunday 14**

**Joint Community Cemetery Clean-Up Project, 10 a.m.–noon**

**Monday 15 Rosh Hodesh Tammuz**

**Tuesday 16 Rosh Hodesh Tammuz**

**Wednesday 17**

**Yidish tish:** (Virtual) (Yiddish Conversation & Reading Group, see above): Zoom. 2 p.m.

**Thursday 18**

**Friday 19**

Candlelight 8:56 p.m.

**Community-Wide Juneteenth Kabbalat Shabbat and Oneg at BIC. 6 p.m.**

**Saturday 20 Korach**

Havdallah 10:07 p.m.

**Sunday 21**

**Monday 22**

**Tuesday 23**

**AAJFF: Stories of Courage. Wallenberg and The Ice Cream Man, two films that spotlight the University of Michigan’s history and its global impact. At the JCC. 2 p.m.**

**Wednesday 24**

**Thursday 25**

**Friday 26**

Candlelight 8:57 p.m.

**Saturday 27 Chukat-Balak**

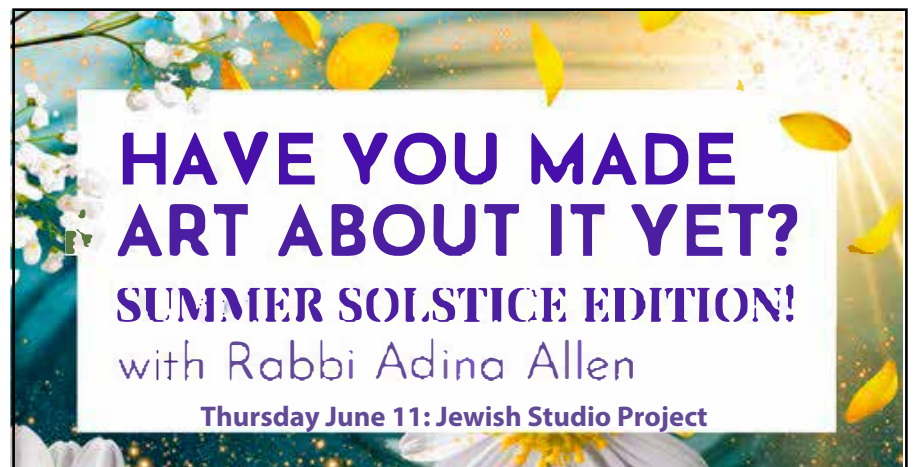
Havdallah 10:08 p.m.

**Sunday 28**

**Top of the Park Jewish Community Meet Up. 5 p.m.**

**Monday 29**

**Tuesday 30 ■**



# Obituaries

The WJN prints obituaries, memories, and eulogies free of charge for family members of Washtenaw Jewish community members as a service to the community and to honor the lives of those who have passed away. When local congregations send condolence notices to the WJN, the editor searches for obituaries online. Also, community members are invited to send obituaries to the editor.



**Robertha "Roby" Westheimer Cohen**, 73, of Dexter, Michigan, died April 27. Roby, Rachel bat Marla Margot ve Elchanan ha Levi, was born 1952 in Greene, New York. Her parents, Berthold and Ellen Margo Stern Westheimer, were Holocaust survivors, and Ellen had been on the Kindertransport. They lived on a 100-acre chicken farm they owned, and resided in an 1830s farmhouse, arguably the oldest residential structure in the county. By 1960, they moved to Detroit, then to Southfield, where Bert worked in the world of finance.

Roby doggedly pursued academics and biology, and, after graduating with a baccalaureate from Eastern Michigan University, notably was awarded a competitive and prestigious medical technology internship in a Detroit hospital. She was at Macomb Hospital in Warren, MI for 20 years, then for 25 years at St. Joseph Mercy Medical Center in Ann Arbor, where she became charge technologist in the Microbiology Laboratory, and responsible for the continuing medical education of all 450 med techs across the Trinity Hospital system in SE MI; she died at St. Joe's.

Roby was also Reddy the Clown. She went to clown college, performed at parties, and was in parades with her clown troupe. She reveled in ridiculous clown jokes and skits, and was well-regarded in the SE Michigan clown alley to which she belonged (Klassie Klowns, Alley #70, Royal Oak, MI – Clowns of America International). She delighted in recounting the vignette of agreeing to clown at an event at Julie and Josie's middle school. A teacher asked her "if she would dress up like a clown?" Roby instantly replied, "I AM a clown." And indeed she was, complete with her absurd clown shoes and Minnie Pearl flowered hat. Clowning was just another way for her to do something nice for other people. She was warm, whimsical, and artistic.

She loved plays, musicals, and the theater buildings themselves. She appreciated the hidden meanings in the stories, the musical melodies, and although she could not sing, she saw how special these shows were and how they added a certain type of magic to life. Most people who love the theater get season tickets or go to Broadway annually to enjoy the shows; Roby went as a volunteer usher and attended every show she could. She would go to the theater to usher, help people get to their seats, and navigate the theater. She was an usher Group Leader at the Detroit Fox Theater for 15 years (responsible for 160 ushers), 10 years at the Fisher Theater, as well as

the Dexter Encore, the Chelsea Purple Rose, and others. She rarely did anything for herself, even at the theater.

She was an active person. She swam throughout her life and in the past several years became an avid pickleball player. Until her sudden cardiopulmonary illness, she played pickleball three times a week, two hours each session. She often was the player assigned to train newbies in the complexities of the game and scorekeeping.

She always instinctively assessed any situation and came up with the right solution. And did so so sweetly. Selecting where to live our lives. Finding the right house for our dispirit styles. Renovating and designing our home together. Raising children. Cooking food that delighted everyone's palate. She was the epitome of Michael's grandmother Gussie Bernstein, always knowing instantly the right way, designed to touch all bases and hearts. A credit to her family and community.

Roby is so proud of her Jewish daughters, Julie Anna Cohen Mormol, a veterinarian, and Josie Ruth Cohen Ziegler, an optometrist. Roby never really believed she would have children, let alone wonderful grandchildren. She is incredibly proud of Josie and Alexander's children, Robert Harrison and Elena Blake, and Julie and Jeremy's son-on-the-way.

The family has gone through her text messages, recent phone calls, and contact list in her phone to make sure everyone important to her was contacted. All are special because you've been graced with her by way of food, hospital work, pickleball, theater, clowning, or whatever else she did. We are so grateful to everybody for being part of her life.

Roby cared for others throughout her life. She showered people with cards, gifts, parties, food, and so much unconditional love. She would frequently kick everyone out of her kitchen, unless you were daughter Josie, sons-in-law Alex and Jeremy, Hannah Kagan, or friend Dr. Judith Wismont — and even they had limited access. She cooked for everyone, and rarely accepted help. For her daughters' weddings, she insisted on addressing each invitation by hand in her special calligraphy writing. She never took a calligraphy class; she could just do it. Her family tried to take this off her plate by ordering online, but she insisted on doing this herself, and she did. She designed the center pieces at each wedding. No one was going to take these things from her. She was stubborn and particular like that.

She was frustrated when she became sick. Not only because she wanted to do things like see the Grand Canyon, but also because she was not able to cook for everyone or get people gifts. While hospitalized, she maintained this part of her. She kept asking if her pickleball friends received their hamantaschen cookies. She kept up with her daughters' friends' lives, and loved all of them too. She even hosted a Jewish Young Professionals event at the rural Dexter house because she was that cool of a mom. Prior to her death, she made an entire menu for a Kentucky Derby party she wanted to throw at the house. This was not just any menu, it had her perfectly cursive handwriting describing in incredible detail the recipes for the special drinks, each of the 5 courses, and there are doodles of horses and drawings on the menu. She worked so hard at everything she did.

She found a way to take care of the people

who did not live with her. It will remain a mystery how she remembered everyone's birthdays, anniversaries, and celebrations. She always remembered to send everyone cards for special occasions. She would never arrive at a home without food even if she was asked not to bring anything. She would make these extravagant desserts and treats when it was someone's birthday, retirement, or some hospital occasion.

Roby loved holidays and always decorated the house despite not always having people over. We decorated for Halloween and had bowls of candy just in case there were trick-or-treaters in the middle of nowhere Dexter — a ¼ mile back from the dirt road. She threw us these grand, over-the-top, themed birthday parties. She loved life and all the things that came with it, and she brought more to life than life brought to her.

Roby loved her husband dearly — and we know she still does. Their love lasts past death and into eternity. Their daughters watched them while growing up. Roby and Michael were always the best versions of themselves because they had each other. It was not uncommon to find them dancing in the kitchen or the living room. Michael would play music from the home theater and Roby would dance around in her own special way. They held hands in the car, and went on dates because they were always still dating. They made the house a very special home, and provided a very special childhood for their children because of their love and how they showed it to each other. The Dexter house still feels like one big warm hug from Roby.

Roby worked nights. She would rise at 6:30 a.m., pack everyone lunch, make breakfast, and then see everyone off to school and work. She would spend the day cleaning the house, chaperoning a field trip, bringing baked goods to school for someone's birthday, running errands, cooking, etc. She picked the girls up from school and there would always be snacks in the car, and Josie's Dolly. Then, Roby would set up dinner, and leave. Dinner was always extravagant. Roby cooked enough to serve 10 people when there were only 4. If you have ever been to the house for anything, you've had Roby's cooking and enjoyed the "quick bite to eat" — which was really a massive smorgasbord.

She was the quintessential representation of tikkun olam — making the world a better place. She did this by loving everyone she brushed shoulders with. Before her veterinarian brother, Jeff, passed away, he said "always make a difference" — leave a mark here, appreciate life. Roby did not need anyone to tell her that. She spread so much light, and it is still bright here in this world because of her. Roby's husband Michael and daughters Julie Anna and Josie Ruth will always try to embrace and embody that part of her. That is how they will keep her memory alive.

Beloved wife of 35 years of Dr. Michael Alan Cohen. Mother of Dr. Julie Anna Cohen (Dr. Jeremy David) Mormol and Dr. Josie Ruth Cohen (Alexander Craig) Ziegler. Grandmother of Robert Harrison Ziegler and Elena Blake Ziegler. Sister of the late Dr. Jeffrey Russel (the late Judith) Westheimer. Sister-in-law of Barbara Ina Cohen (Allen) Lerman. Devoted daughter of the late Ellen Margot Stern Westheimer and the late Berthold Westheimer. Survived by many loving nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Arrangements were by The Ira Kaufman Chapel with interment at Washtenaw Me-

morial Park in Ann Arbor. Contributions may be made to Zekelman Holocaust Center, Huron Valley Ambulance, Huron River Methodist Church pickleball, or any Jewish or Israel-related charity.



**Judith Boigon Davidson**, 76, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, passed away on May 17 surrounded by the love of her family and community. Born on July 28, 1949, in Detroit, Michigan, Judith lived a life rooted in compassion, education, family, and service to others. She was the beloved wife of Ed Davidson and a devoted mother to AJ Davidson and Abby Seeb. She warmly welcomed their spouses, Mara Davidson and Ean Seeb, into the family she cherished so deeply. Judith was a proud and loving grandmother to Stella Seeb and Skylar Seeb, who brought immense joy and light into her life.

She is also survived by her brother Howard Boigon (Carol); her sister Irene Newman and brother-in-law Jon Newman; her sister-in-law Patti Pathman and Patti's husband Joel Pathman; nieces and nephews Jared (Kimberly), Hannah, Andrew (Danny), Justin, and Amalia; along with many loving relatives, lifelong friends, and members of the Ann Arbor community whose lives she touched throughout the years.

Judith was preceded in death by her parents, Irving and Frances Boigon.

A graduate of the University of Michigan, Judith dedicated much of her professional life to special education, where her patience, kindness, and advocacy positively impacted countless students and families. She also worked at the Jewish Community Center and remained a deeply committed member of the Ann Arbor Jewish community throughout her life.

Judith will be remembered for her warmth, intelligence, generosity, strength, and unwavering love for her family and community. Her presence brought comfort and connection to those around her, and her legacy will continue through the many lives she shaped.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made in Judith Davidson's memory to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. To plant trees in memory, please visit the Sympathy Store, <https://www.legacy.com/sympathy/plant-trees>.

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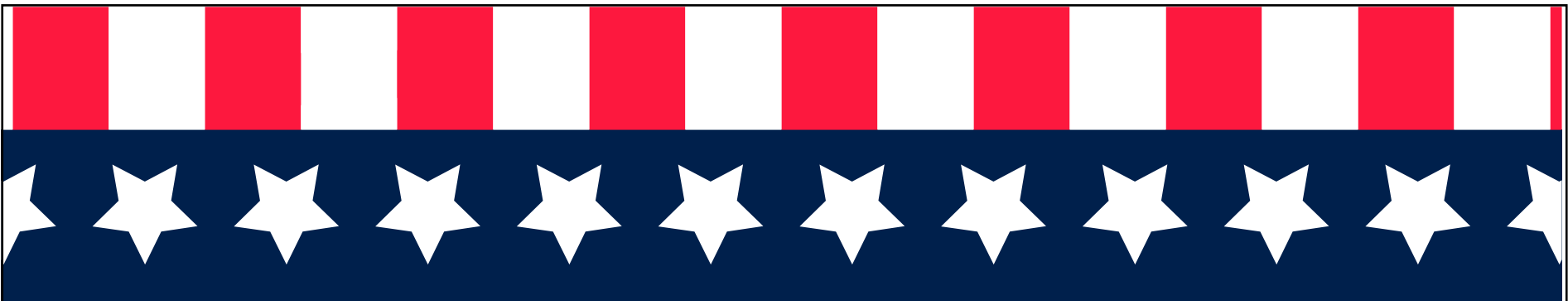
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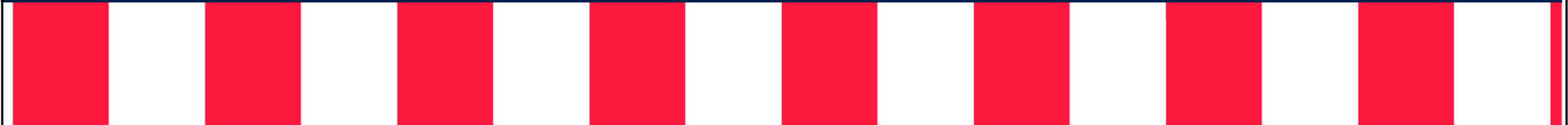
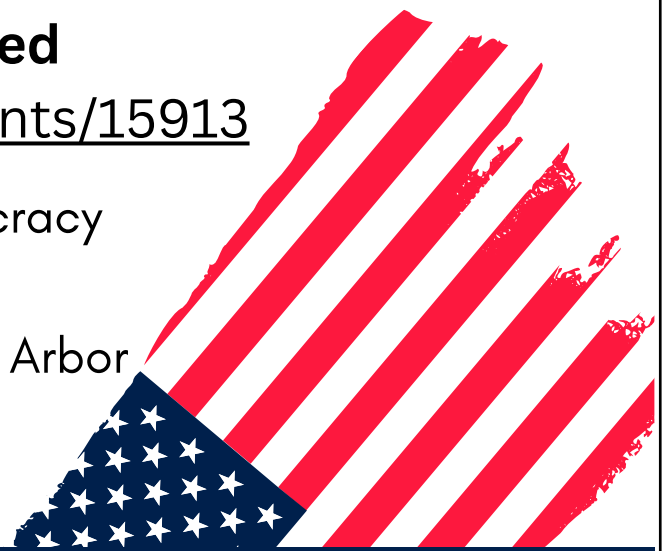
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# Community

## April's Israel commemorations and celebrations

By Amichay Findling, Jewish Federation of Ann Arbor

The week of April 19–25 held a significant meaning for Israelis in the greater Ann Arbor Jewish community, and for all locals who care about Israel. Community gatherings were held to commemorate and to celebrate, first on April 20 for Yom HaZikaron (Israel's Memorial Day) and again on April 22 for Yom Ha'Atzmaut (Israel's Independence Day).

The Yom HaZikaron community ceremony was held at Beth Israel Congregation. Focused on victims of antisemitic terror worldwide, community members were invited to share stories of those lost with whom they have personal connections. Among the victims commemorated were Rabbi Eli Schlanger (cousin of Rabbi Alter Goldstein and Shternie Zwiebel), who was murdered in the attack on Sydney's Bondi Beach during Chanukah 2025, and Vivian Silver, dear friend of Ann Arborite Linda Jo Doctor, who was murdered at Kibbutz Beeri on October 7. The ceremony was made even more emotional with musical contributions from volunteers from around the Ann Arbor area, including Avishay and Cantor Regina Hayut, the "Mizmoret" band, Rabbi Gabriel Pescador of Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation, and Hebrew Day School's Orit Aviran, who also co-produced the event with the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor.

Two evenings later, a collaborative team made up of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, the JCC of Greater Ann Arbor, and Jewish Family service of Washtenaw County invited the local Jewish community to gather again, this time to celebrate at the second annual Israeli Block Party. More than 200 community members of all ages gathered at the JCC for a rich program of Israeli cultural immersion. The evening included Israeli food, art, and family activities. The centerpiece of the night was an energetic concert by "Ha-Shayara Project," an Israeli band that came to Ann Arbor specifically to lead the celebration. Their specialty is a "mashup" of classic Israeli and classic American songs to create a unique cultural, communal experience. ■



At the Yom HaZikaron ceremony, Rabbi Alter Goldstein honored the memory of his cousin Rabbi Eli Schlanger, who was killed on Bondi Beach, Sydney, in the December 2025 attack during a Chanukah celebration. (Photo by Orit Aviran)



At the Yom HaZikaron ceremony, Ann Arborite Linda Jo Doctor honored the memory of her dear friend Vivian Silver, who was murdered at Kibbutz Beeri on Oct. 7. (Photo by Orit Aviran)



Cantor Regina and Avishay Hayut led the room in song at the Yom HaZikaron ceremony. (Photo by Orit Aviran)



Participants at the Yom HaZikaron ceremony. (Photo by Orit Aviran)



Children dancing to the music of HaShayara Project at the Israeli Block Party. (Photo by Abi Schmidt)



The JCC was decorated in full celebration of Israel for the Israeli Block Party. (Photo by Abi Schmidt)



The Israeli Block Party featured myriad activities for all ages, including outdoor lawn games and a petting zoo. (Photo by Abi Schmidt)

