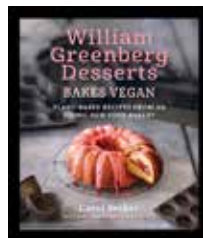




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# WASHTENAW JEWISH NEWS

OCTOBER 2026

Tishrei/Cheshvan 5787

Volume XXVII Number 2

Free

## The Immortal Khazntes: Cantorial legends brought to life – in concert

By Deborah Meyers Greene



**T**he Immortal Khazntes, an international group of the world's leading virtuosos in early cantorial music, will present their only scheduled live performance in the Detroit Metro area on Tuesday, October 13, at 6:30 p.m. The concert will be at Temple Beth Emeth. Presented as a community service, by a long list of co-sponsors (below), The Immortal Khazntes concert tickets are free of charge, but registration is requested on Jlive at <https://jlive.app/events/16669>.

Khazntes is the early-20th century

Yiddish term used to describe Jewish women who sang khazones, the emotionally imbued rendering of traditional cantorial music.

The six-member all-woman troupe will celebrate — in English, Hebrew, and Yiddish — the immortal Khazntes, the women of the early-20th century who dared to express their belief and their talent decades before their voices were accepted in synagogues or temples.

On the same date, from noon to 1 p.m., 2022 South Thayer, University of Michigan students and Ann

Arbor-area community members, will have the amazing opportunity to sing and speak with members of the troupe. Contact [eluchina@umich.edu](mailto:eluchina@umich.edu) with questions.

The concert will feature the four vocalists who recorded the historically significant album *The Return of the Immortal Khazntes* (Dec 2025), which documents the work of contemporary Jewish women's voices who turn to the cantorial gramophone era to help build their own creative practice and personal projects of heritage reclamation. They are: Judith Berkson (California), an unclassifiable singer, cantor, composer, and scholar whose work tears down many barriers between worlds of sound; Shahanna McKinney-Baldon (Wisconsin), a musician and activist who is currently working on a research and performance project dedicated to the groundbreaking career of Madame Goldie Steiner, the only known African American woman performer of khazones in the cantorial golden age period; internet celebrity Riki Rose (New York), a singer who has moved beyond her Satmar Hasidic community to frame a liberatory career as an artist and creative persona; and Rachel Weston (U.K.), a cantor and Yiddishist who applies her deep knowledge of Yiddish vocal music to her approach to khazones.

They will be accompanied by U.K.-

based rising stars in the traditional music world Fran & Flora (Francesca Ter-Berg and Flora Curazon).

Serving as Ann Arbor's 2026 cantors' concert that the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor stages each year, this



all-embracing community-wide event enjoys a sponsorship list that comprises the entire Jewish community and beyond, including the Ann Arbor Community for Traditional Music and Dance (AACTMAD); Beth Israel Congregation; Center for Jewish Studies, EMU; Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor and Community Engagement Fund; Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, U-M; Network | Jewish People of Color; and Temple Beth Emeth, in addition to several individual cantors from around the state of Michigan. ■

## Chamber ensembles play to benefit immigrant rights center

**S**everal Ann Arbor chamber ensembles will play a benefit concert for the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center (MIRC) on Saturday, October 24, at 3 p.m. at Temple Beth Emeth / St. Clare Church, 2309 Packard Street, Ann Arbor. This event is one in a series of events sponsored by the Interfaith Fund for Immigrant Justice (IFIJ) in support of MIRC.

MIRC provides legal counsel for immigrant children in Michigan facing deportation — work



the federal government stopped funding this summer. IFIJ's events take a crucial step to keep MIRC's work going. Performing on October 24 are the

G-Fours String Quartet; Rabbi Gabrielle Pescador (harp and voice); the Chelsea Chamber Players; and the Burns Park String Quartet, with music by Joplin, Shostakovich, Kon, Ljova, Dvořák, Price, and Piazzolla. The music will spotlight immigrants and music of home.

In addition to Rav Gav, the musicians include Ian Cumming, Sara Cumming, Renee Robbins, Matthew Briere, Val Jaskiewicz, Carol Gagliardi, Margo Schlanger, Sonya Nagel Lewis, Val Jaskiewicz, Joe Lange, and Margaret Aleda Weiss.

We'll finish with a "This Land Is Your Land" singalong.

The event is co-sponsored by Temple Beth Emeth, St. Clare's, and the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation, through the Interfaith Fund for Immigrant Justice. The venue is fully accessible, with off-street parking. The requested minimum donation is \$25, but all are welcome regardless. ■

RSVP: <https://forms.gle/PkUFdfbjZ-Vpz8sVK9>

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## Cycles

**T**his October is packed with events; it's almost like there's a consequential election approaching. Oh, wait, there are two: in Israel on October 27 and in the U.S. on November 3. I love the enthusiasm of Jessica Schwalb (page 19) for non-partisan poll watching. Through her article, I learned that, according to the Michigan Municipal League, "There are only eight states in the nation that administer elections at the local level. Michigan's election system, involving 83 county clerks, 281 city clerks, and 1,240 township clerks makes it the most decentralized elections system in the nation." We are an involved citizenry.

This issue of the paper reports on several events to raise money for the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center (MIRC): chamber music, storytelling, Charlie King and Annie Patterson in concert. There are also several events scheduled

in October to discuss antisemitism, see pages 4, 7 and 19. And four separate opinion pieces on the El-Sayed vs. Rogers Senate race (see pages 21 and 22).

When this issue of WJN hits the stands, er, is posted and in your mailbox, we will have celebrated the last day of Sukkot, and Simchat Torah will be upon us. We will begin the telling again. The leaves will still be falling, the morning chill will awaken us, the wind will freshen the air.

I've been spending my spare time reading a biography of the journalist Lincoln Steffens (1866-1936) and I keep finding myself comparing our times to one hundred years ago. Steffens brought to journalism commitments to uncover corruption and moral and systemic failures in politics and commerce. You'll be hearing more about Steffens from me soon, but for right now, it appears to me that while nothing stays the same, political cycles are as repetitive as Torah readings.

I learned this month about the rabbinic teaching that God created teshuvah (return) before the physical world. We keep trying, we keep making mistakes, we keep trying.... ■



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

## Immigrants' stories in their own voices & words in October and November

By Deborah Meyers Greene

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**A 2-Part Series: October 27 & November 15, 2026**

**A Benefit for the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center - MIRC**

*inspired by the Interfaith Fund for Immigrant Justice (IFIJ)*

Part 1:

October 27, 7:00-9:00 pm

w/dessert reception

St. Clare's Episcopal Church/TBE

2309 Packard, Ann Arbor

Part 2:

November 15, 4:00-6:00 pm

w/panel discussion

Beth Israel Congregation

2000 Washtenaw Ave., Ann Arbor

Series Tickets: \$50; for students, \$25

[BUY TICKETS](#)

Sponsored by Beth Israel Congregation in collaboration with St. Clare's Episcopal Church & Temple Beth Emeth (TBE)

We are all aware. We watch and listen to reports about immigrants. We talk with friends and family about immigration policy and sometimes we anguish in shul about it and our ethical engagement in our neighbors' well-being.

But rarely do we have the extraordinary opportunity to hear the first-hand stories of our immigrant neighbors, to witness their lives in their own words.

On Tuesday, October 27 and Sunday, November 15, eight individuals from eight countries — four on each date — will share their journeys to America, the promise and the reality. Stories from Algeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cuba, Hungary, India, Laos, Mexico, and Ukraine will be told. The storytellers, age 24 to a septuagenarian, are from all classes, religions, and occupations: a bank branch manager, a house cleaner, an engineer, a craftsman, a student, a community leader who has addressed the United Nations, and a well-known Jewish entertainer speaking

on behalf of his ancestors.

They will share the fear and sorrow, the utter exhaustion, the days and weeks of war and hunger. They will speak of the quest for safety and stability in today's constantly shifting legal sands. They will tell us about being surrounded by strangers with strange customs — and even stranger foods. There also will be stories of complete joy and love, success and achievement, thriving children, and rewarding work, school, and service.

This two-part event will raise funds for MIRC (Michigan Immigrant Rights Center). Until recently the leading source of pro bono legal representation for under-age immigrant children in Michigan, MIRC's federal contract for that service was cancelled by the current administration as of July 31. Without an attorney present, these young people stand alone before the bench facing a judge without benefit of representation or understanding.

Sponsored by Beth Israel Congregation in collaboration with Temple Beth Emeth and St. Clare Episcopal Church, this two-part series event will occur on October 27, 7–9 p.m., at TBE, and November 15, 3–5 p.m., at Beth Israel. Tickets and donations: <https://bit.ly/4h5r39N>. Additional information: [becomingamericanstories@gmail.com](mailto:becomingamericanstories@gmail.com).

This is part of the continuing efforts of IFIJ (Interfaith Fund for Immigrant Justice), an informal collaboration of five Ann Arbor Jewish communities, and about 20 additional Ann Arbor-area Catholic, Protestant, and Buddhist faith communities pledged to raise substantial funds in support of MIRC.

*continued on page 17*

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# “Rethinking Jewish Peoplehood”: Frankel Institute opens applications for 2027–28



Rebecca Wollenberg

The University of Michigan Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies is accepting applications for the 2027–28 “Rethinking Jewish Peoplehood: Towards a New Archive” theme year, led by Head Fellow Rebecca Wollenberg (University of Michigan). Applications are due on November 2, 2026.

Fellowship applications are accepted from both tenured and untenured faculty as well as from recent PhD s without a tenure-track position and professors emeriti. Where appropriate, applications are also accepted

from independent artists, documentary filmmakers, and writers. For these non-academic applicants, a BA degree is required, and a graduate degree is encouraged.

Here is more information about the 2027–28 theme, Rethinking Jewish Peoplehood:

Who is a Jew? What makes something Jewish? Is Judaism a religion or ethnicity, or both? What is Jewish peoplehood and (if such a phenomenon even exists) how is it constituted? These issues have been interrogated in great depth by scholars of modern Judaism.

Research on premodern Judaism has, of course, considered Jewish identity and how it was constituted. But scholars who have ventured to interrogate these questions have largely focused (albeit critically) on those strains of premodern thought that gave birth to currently hegemonic conceptions of Jewishness. This theme year proposes to (re)visit the premodern past in a different register. We will gather scholars working to complicate our understanding of how concepts such as Jewishness, ethno-religion, peoplehood, Jewish racial and ethnic diversity, conversion, Jewish-adjacent practitioners, and Jewish belonging have been constructed and utilized in premodern Jewish communities and litera-

tures.

While our research will remain firmly rooted within our individual expertise in late antique or medieval Judaism, this theme year will also push participants to consider how we can begin to integrate research of different periods on these questions — acknowledging that the construction of Jewishness has always been complicated, contested, and diverse. Specifically, we will consider how different historical models of imagining Jewish belonging might offer affordances for thinking about present phenomena. Our historical research will be premised on the principle that the archive is not static. Perceptions of the Jewish past are constantly remade as texts, and histories are suppressed and forgotten — through uneven patterns of preservation, publication, translation, and pedagogy. But we work in a moment where more of the archive than ever is available to be reexamined, and Rethinking Jewish Peoplehood invites researchers to engage with the archive in ways that expand and even transform our conceptual frameworks for understanding what it means to be Jewish.

To learn more and apply, please visit <https://lsa.umich.edu/judaic/institute/applications>.

The Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan

provides annual fellowships for scholars and artists from around the world to conduct research in relation to a given theme. Established in 2005 through a generous financial contribution from the Jean and Samuel Frankel Jewish Heritage Foundation, the Frankel Institute is the only one of its kind at a public university in the United States. The Institute is committed to interdisciplinary, multilingual work spanning ancient times through the contemporary era. By combining intellectual autonomy with the ideal of a scholarly community, it offers global leadership in Jewish Studies.

The Frankel Institute provides an intellectually stimulating environment, promotes an atmosphere of openness, and encourages constructive criticism. It seeks to advance Jewish Studies globally, considers diversity and pluralism as fundamental characteristics of a public university, and emphasizes these principles in all endeavors. ■

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## OCTOBER EVENTS

Visit [lsa.umich.edu/judaic](https://lsa.umich.edu/judaic) for more information

### Examining Contemporary Antisemitism A “Rethinking Antisemitism” Frankel Institute Theme Year Panel

**Tuesday, October 13**  
4:00 PM  
Rm 2022, South Thayer Building

**Panelists:** Matt Berkman, Ben Bornstein,  
& Alice Mishkin

Three fellows from the 2026-27  
Frankel Institute “Rethinking  
Antisemitism” Theme Year  
examine antisemitic sentiment  
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# JCLP kicks off the year

By Morgan Hesse



**JCLP '26-27 Cohort: Hava Goldman, Bex Klafter, Jacob Keer, Morgan Hesse, Conrad Becker, Cole Huskey, Niv Fisher-Pinsker, Rhyann Orenstein, Rick Barinbaum (Interim Director), Rabbi Blair Nosanwich (Adat Shalom)**

As August drew to an end, the students of the Jewish Communal Leadership Program in the U-M School of Social Work held their weekend-long orientation. The second-year students warmly welcomed the incoming class, and then all embarked on an overnight visit to Tamarack Camp, the Jewish summer camp where JCLP interim director Rick Barinbaum serves as a senior social worker each season. Students participated in group bonding activities, starting the year off on a positive note by engaging in meaningful conversations, supporting each other on the high ropes course, and collaborating to make an herbal salve with Tamarack's freshly grown herbs. By breakfast time on their second morning together, the JCLP students already felt deeply connected and prepared to spend another year developing a strong Jewish community.

The second day of orientation saw JCLP students traveling around Metro Detroit to meet with the leaders of various organizations and immerse themselves in the Metro Detroit Jewish community. Students began with a visit to Jewish Family Services of Metro Detroit where they spoke with Yuliya Gaydayenko, Chief Program Officer of Older Adult Services; Kerri Lanoue, Senior Director of Mental Health Services; and Perry Ohren, Chief Executive Officer. JFS acts as a safety net in the community to connect people experiencing life challenges or transitions to community resources. The speakers discussed in great detail the different ways in which community outreach occurs, such as delivering kosher Meals on Wheels to senior residents; coordinating backpack and school supply pickup for under-resourced families; and working in partnership with Temple Israel after the violence at the temple's preschool last spring to develop a resiliency program while embedding JFS counselors into Temple Israel's community. After this enlightening visit, students met with Elizabeth Lockwood, Director of Programs at the Friendship Circle, a nonprofit organization which seeks to help children and adults with special needs create strong community relationships. JCLP students explored the building as they learned about the Chabad-Lubavitch of Michigan origins of Friendship Circle, including how it began as an in-home program for disenfranchised families working through addiction and struggling with mental health needs. Students visited the different sensory rooms such as sand, water, art, and music, examining how each space could benefit different individuals. The highlight of this site visit was the time which students had to explore the Ferber Kaufman LifeTown as they learned about Lessons for Life, a program which bridges the gap between classroom learning and lived experience for children by allowing them to practice being in spaces such as movie theaters, doctor's and dentist's offices, and shops. While enjoying all that the center has to offer, students were able to actively connect their social work aspirations with their Jewish communal engagement aspirations.

JCLP students were next welcomed into the Frankel Jewish Academy where they met with Rabbi Azaryah Cohen, Head of School;

Erika Weiler, Principal; and social worker Alex Scheier. Here, the social work students were amazed by the extensive student support team; the school's connection to JFS to offer staff support; and the work being done not only in the school, but also through external programming with their students' families to emphasize the value of Jewish education, especially with regard to community development and an appreciation of curiosity. The school administrators emphasized the feelings of safety and connectedness to staff which their students have, noting that many students either reach out for support themselves because of the social workers' open-door policy or find themselves gently guided to support if an educator notices an emotional shift in the student. After this visit, students met with Rabbi Blair Nosanwich over lunch at Soul Cafe, discussing how the varied Jewish backgrounds and social work/communal interests of the JCLP students can create such a vibrant community, as well as how Rabbi Nosanwich herself cultivates a strong, welcoming Jewish community at Adat Shalom.

The end of the day in Metro Detroit proved to be quite emotional as JCLP students toured Temple Israel with Rabbi Josh Bennett and Rabbi Jen Lader, bearing witness to the scale of their renovation efforts. Students were overcome with pride in the strength of the Jewish community as they watched teachers prepare their classrooms in advance of Temple Israel's preschool reopening only a week later than their school year would traditionally start. Rabbi Josh spoke about the astounding levels of support that the temple is offering to students, families, and all of their faculty in the wake of violence last spring, and expressed hope to have the congregation back in their shul for the High Holidays. After visiting Temple Israel, students ended the day speaking with Barb Giles, the Executive Director of Strategic Initiatives at Jewish Senior Life. She acknowledged that working with older adults is a field in which many social work students do not see themselves, as she felt similarly in school, but she shared that her work has been more rewarding than she could have ever expected. Jewish Senior Life emphasizes the importance of living in place and cultivating community for senior residents, including assisting with transportation to various events outside the center and hosting book clubs, for example.

After two days of emotional, profound connection, JCLP students finally found themselves together in the School of Social Work for the first time in the 2026-27 school year. On Sunday, the second-year students led a day of get-to-know-you exercises, including an exploration into each student's individual Jewish journey, Q&A sessions for the first-year students, and a tour of the school. The second-year students also prepared the first-year students to co-lead the community welcome breakfast, the first outreach event of the year, which took place on the Monday following orientation. At the breakfast, JCLP students led conversations at their tables, asking 50 community members about what comes into focus when they think of the Jewish community from their own perspective compared to others' perspectives. One of the themes of the JCLP this year is looking at Jewish community through a prism, exploring what comes to light and what changes from each angle, so this breakfast conversation was an enlightening way to begin the work that will continue all school year. All in all, the JCLP has had a wonderful start to the year and the 2026-27 cohort is excited to connect deeply with each other and the Jewish community in the greater Ann Arbor area. ■

# Charlie King and Annie Patterson in benefit concert for MIRC

## Charlie King & Annie Patterson in Concert



**Saturday, October 10  
7:30 p.m.**

Genesis of Ann Arbor  
2309 Packard St.

### Tickets

General admission: \$25  
Sponsor: \$50  
Low income: \$10

### Co-sponsors:

St. Clare's Episcopal Church & Temple Beth Emeth

Join us for an evening of powerful singing with two of North America's finest activist folk singers.

Charlie King is a musical storyteller, hailed by Pete Seeger as "one of the finest singers and songwriters of our time."

Annie Patterson is the co-creator of *Rise Up Singing* and *Rise Again* songbooks. "Annie's sparkling presence makes every song she touches come alive" ~ Reggie Harris.



## Benefit for Michigan Immigrant Rights Center

Michigan Immigrant Rights Center (MIRC) provides critical legal services for our immigrant neighbors in Washtenaw County.

Online tickets: [CharlieKingConcert.eventbrite.com](https://charliekingconcert.eventbrite.com)  
Info: (734) 476-3399 or [jeffalson56@gmail.com](mailto:jeffalson56@gmail.com)



Support critical legal services for our immigrant neighbors by joining an evening of powerful singing with two of North America's finest activist folk singers. Charlie King and Annie Patterson are performing a benefit concert for the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center (MIRC) on Saturday, October 10, at 7:30 p.m., at Genesis on 2309 Packard in Ann Arbor.

In response to the record number of ICE arrests and deportations, both nationally and locally, all concert profits will go toward MIRC's efforts to hire another attorney to expand legal services for our immigrant neighbors, especially minor children, throughout Washtenaw County. While chaos and secrecy make it impossible to know just how many local residents have had their lives and families torn apart through arrests and deportations, a recent MLive investigation of federal records documented that well over 100 people in Washtenaw County were detained by ICE between January 2025 and April 2026. It is very likely that the numbers are much higher. MIRC provides critical legal services in as many cases as possible.

Charlie King is a longtime local favorite who first performed in Ann Arbor in 1979. He is a nationally known musical storyteller, satirist, and activist who passionately chronicles the extraordinary

lives of ordinary people. Pete Seeger hailed him as "One of the finest singers and songwriters of our time." Charlie has won the War Resisters League's 1998 Peacemaker Award; the 1999 Sacco-Vanzetti Social Justice Award (for which he was nominated by Pete Seeger); the 2014 Joe Hill Award; and the 2017 Phil Ochs Award. Charlie has a new album titled *we'll make it through* which he recorded at a local studio in May.

Annie Patterson is the co-creator of the popular songbooks *Rise Up Singing* and *Rise Again* which are the go-to collections of 2,400 song lyrics and chords used by singing groups all around the world. Over one million copies have been sold since 1988. Annie is a master song interpreter and accompanies herself on guitar and banjo.

Concert sponsors include three local congregations: Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation, St. Clare's Episcopal Church, and Temple Beth Emeth.

Tickets are \$25 for general admission, \$10 for students and low-income, and \$50 for sponsors. To purchase tickets, visit [CharlieKingConcert.eventbrite.com](https://charliekingconcert.eventbrite.com)

Contact: Jeff Alson, [jeffalson56@gmail.com](mailto:jeffalson56@gmail.com), 734-476-3399 ■

## New energy for the New Year

Shoshannah Lenski, Executive Director, Ann Arbor Sustainable Energy Utility



**Y**ou're probably tired of detours after construction season, but here's one I think you will enjoy: Next time you're in the vicinity of the Jewish Community Center, head one minute south on Stone

School and turn onto Champagne Drive to enter the Bryant neighborhood. Mosey your way down a few cul de sacs and look at the roofs. A full 20% of the homes — maybe more by press time — have solar panels! And tucked away on the back or side, they have whole-home batteries, too, providing resilient power during inevitable grid outages. This is a picture of a neighborhood, and an energy system, in metamorphosis.

As we started the secular year in January, I wrote here about the new Ann Arbor Sustainable Energy Utility (A2SEU), a bold idea, but still an idea. As we usher in the Jewish new year now, that idea has turned to reality: the A2SEU is operating — delivering clean,

affordable, and reliable energy to our first customers. More than 80 households in the Bryant neighborhood have signed up to receive service as part of our pilot operations. And we're getting ready to expand city-wide, where only a few percent of households have solar today, though many thousands want it.

In a few years, all of Ann Arbor could be resilient like the Bryant neighborhood, with houses and apartment buildings and businesses all generating and storing their own clean energy. Imagine not worrying about losing your refrigerated food and medicine every time a storm blows through! Imagine the joy of capturing God's first creation — light — to power our lives, while protecting

health and wellbeing for our fellow creatures on earth!

The process is simple: sign up, get A2SEU-owned solar and battery installed at no upfront cost, pay an affordable monthly bill for the energy that's being produced and stored, and, as a result, enjoy lower bills from your other, current utility. The Ann Arbor Sustainable Energy Utility is already operating — your votes two years ago, in the 2024 election, made it happen. Learn more or express interest in service, commitment free, at [A2SEU.com](http://A2SEU.com). ■

## JFS recycles produce and grows new crops for Washtenaw

By Joseph McFarland



**I**n late July, Jewish Family Services (JFS) received an urgent call: local garden crops were being cleared to make room for new projects. Guided by a core philosophy of recycling and upcycling

(whether furniture, household items, clothing, or food), JFS stepped in. Dedicated staff converted flower beds around their main State Street office into vegetable plots, rescuing the plants to supply the Nourish Food

Pantry.

In the U.S., only 30% to 40% of food waste is recovered or redistributed, with the rest heading to landfills. Soaring grocery prices make fresh produce even harder to afford. JFS helps bridge this gap through food recovery, urban cultivation, and distribution via Nourish Nutritional Services, Meals on Wheels, and their growing garden initiative.

JFS currently manages two garden plots overseen by Program Manager Lizbeth Cortes and her team, who handle planting, maintenance, and distribution:

**Matthaei Botanical Gardens:** Launched in 2021 from an idea by University of Michigan graduate Phimmason Kym Owens, this Refugee Garden grows culturally appropriate produce requested by local ethnic groups.

**State Street Office Garden:** Converted office grounds that supply fresh produce directly to pantry clients and provide plants for families to grow in their own home gardens.

Lizbeth emphasizes that fresh, locally grown food is vital for community health and accessibility. "Giving these plants a fighting chance to fill that gap in the community is extremely important," Lizbeth noted, adding that staff have distributed numerous plants for clients to cultivate at home.

Managing the gardens requires months of strategic planning. Staff gather client requests early in the year, select crops suited to Michigan's climate, and time plantings to ensure maturity by harvest. The team must constantly monitor sun exposure, soil fertility, seasonal timing, and pest protection. As seasons change, certain crops are moved into greenhouses to shield them from harsh weather and grazing animals.

Beyond immediate hunger relief, community gardens expand food education, encourage healthy eating, and strengthen food security in underserved neighborhoods. JFS plans to sustain both garden sites to foster long-term health and connection.

"We hope to continue to provide a space for healing and community building by resource sharing with our clients," Lizbeth said. ■

## Climate-related events

### Electronics Collection: Ann Arbor Residents

Saturday, October 24, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

This program collects unwanted electronic devices from the Ann Arbor community and keeps them out of the waste stream by facilitating reuse, refurbishment/repair, and — as a last resort — recycling. Electronics collections align with strategy 5 of the A2ZERO plan: change the way we use, reuse, and dispose of materials.

Registration will open October 3. Please learn more and sign up to be notified when registration opens at [a2gov.org/electronics](http://a2gov.org/electronics).

Location: Zion Lutheran Church, 1501 W Liberty St, Ann Arbor, MI

### Climate-Shabbat Potluck at BIC

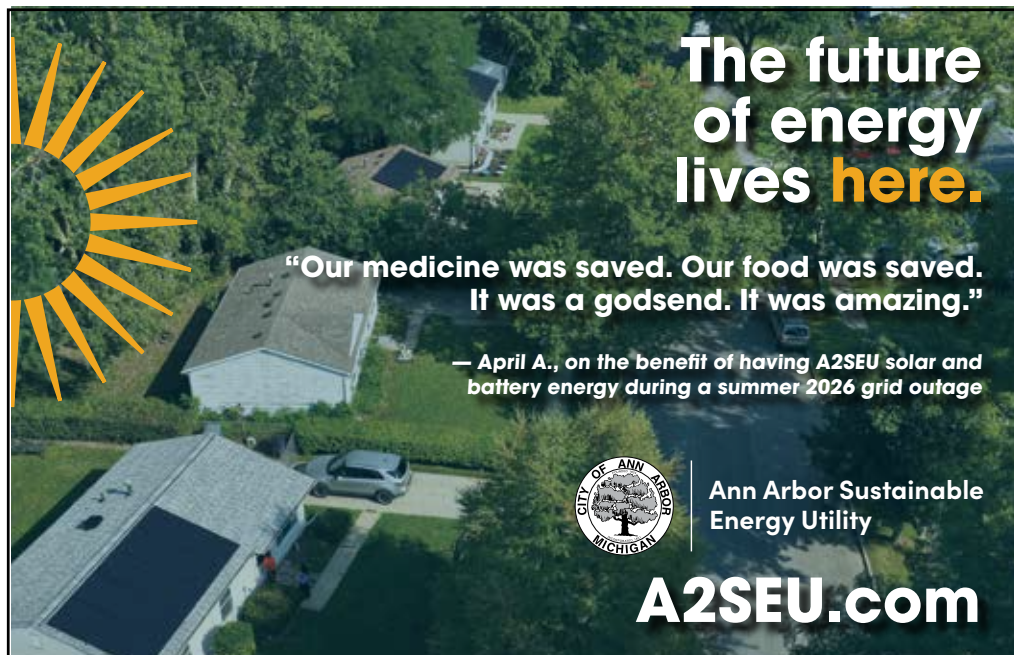
November 13

Save the date for A2J CC's next climate-themed Shabbat potluck at Beth Israel Congregation. Details to come.

### County Cleanup Days: Washtenaw County residents

November 14 in the Scio Township area Registration opens October 5 at 9 a.m. County Cleanup Days are events where Washtenaw County residents can recycle and dispose of many household items, including electronics, household hazardous waste, bulky waste, appliances, and scrap tires. Each year, multiple events are held at different locations in Washtenaw County.

Details at [washtenaw.org/county-cleanup-days](http://washtenaw.org/county-cleanup-days) ■



**The future of energy lives here.**

**"Our medicine was saved. Our food was saved. It was a godsend. It was amazing."**

— April A., on the benefit of having A2SEU solar and battery energy during a summer 2026 grid outage

 Ann Arbor Sustainable Energy Utility

**A2SEU.com**

# Alpha House Gimme Shelter fundraising event



On October 14, Alpha House will celebrate its 31st annual fundraising event, Gimme Shelter, at the Ypsilanti Freighthouse from 6 to 9 p.m. This year's indoor event will also be a celebration of the growing community response to family homelessness, while acknowledging the challenges that lie ahead. The evening will feature a buffet dinner, alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, live music, dancing, and mission moments. Local and regional radio host Martin Bandyke of 107.1 will keep the energy high as event emcee.

The first Gimme Shelter event was held in 1995, just three years after the organization's founding by a group of 12 Washtenaw County congregations in response to family homelessness. The Interfaith Hospitality Network of Washtenaw County (IHN), a not-for-profit organization, began as a rotating shelter, with families moving from one congregation to

the next. The Beth Israel Congregation and Temple Beth Emeth were among the founding congregations, and both remain very active with Alpha House.

Since 1992, the congregational network has grown to 44 members, and IHN is now known in the community as "Alpha House." Dedicated volunteers have consistently stepped up, preparing evening meals, donating food staples and supplies, and offering critical child-enrichment activities and financial resources to ensure families can heal and thrive.

In 2001, St. Joseph Mercy Ann Arbor accelerated IHN's mission by leasing its Jackson Road building — Alpha House — to the organization for \$1 a year. Formerly an inpatient rehab facility, Alpha House became a stable shelter for unhoused families. Since then, Alpha House, in collaboration with its faith-based partners, has adapted rapidly to meet growing community need.

Alpha House is much more than a "bed for the night." From the moment families arrive, staff help them focus on long-term stability. "The primary goal of the services we offer families is to equip and empower them with the resources they need to move from simply surviving to thriving," said Shonagh Taruza,

who has served as Alpha House's Executive Director since 2023 and has championed its exponential growth.

The mission of Alpha House remains: to support families experiencing homelessness in building a better future. Alpha House's goal is to offer immediate and life-sustaining support to unhoused families as they work to secure permanent housing.

Agency growth has been exponential since 2024. Space reconfigurations increased the Jackson Road capacity from six to 14 families, and by 2025, Alpha House began leasing six additional community homes and apartments for larger families to stay temporarily. In 2025, a major partnership with Trinity Health Ann Arbor enabled the opening of a second shelter, this one on the east side of Washtenaw County, adding room for 30 more families.

Today, Alpha House can support up to 50 families at once. The impact is life-changing: between October 1, 2025, and April 1, 2026, Alpha House served 135 families, bringing vital safety, housing, and structural care to 262 children and their guardians. The organization expects to serve well over 250 families in FY2026–2027.

Ms. Taruza continued, "The support Al-

pha House continues to receive from congregations is humbling. We could not do this work without them." Volunteers remain the heart and hands of Alpha House and are always welcome: <https://www.alphahouse-ihn.org/volunteering>.

Gimme Shelter 2026 will be a celebration of these triumphant accomplishments and an opportunity to honor the growing network that has made them happen. Event proceeds will directly fund Alpha House's emergency housing and supportive services. For more information, please contact Peggy Cole, Development Director, at [mcole@alphahouse-ihn.org](mailto:mcole@alphahouse-ihn.org) or 734.201.7440.

**Ticket Price: \$100 per person**

**Donation Match: Thanks to a generous anonymous donor, all gifts made in support of Alpha House (not including ticket purchases) between now and the event date will be matched, dollar-for-dollar, up to a grand total of \$50,000.**

**To purchase tickets or make a donation, please visit <https://www.alphahouse-ihn.org/gimmeshelter26>.**

## Ann Arbor and Nahalal teens go to Canada for Maccabi Games

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



Back in August, I once again served as the Delegation Head of Team Ann Arbor-Nahalal for the 2026 JCC Maccabi Games in Toronto, Canada, an incredible city breaking a 40-year hosting hiatus. JCC Maccabi is the premier engagement program for Jewish teens all over the world, and this year's overall numbers far surpassed those of last year's numbers in Pittsburgh, with nearly 3,000 athletes in attendance in Toronto. As a second-year Delegation

Head with a year of experience under my belt, I was confident in my ability to make sure our athletes had a fun, memorable week in Toronto. Our own team grew from last year as well, this year consisting of 25 awesome teens, 14 from Ann Arbor and 11 from our sister city of Nahalal, Israel.

Our teens from Nahalal arrived in Michigan two days before leaving for Toronto, and all of them stayed with families of Ann Arbor athletes during the weekends before and after the Games. In Ann Arbor, they participated in a wide variety of activities, including a tour of the Big House, a visit to the University of Michigan Museum of Natural History, bowling at Lucky Strike, and a community farewell dinner at the Ann Arbor Senior Center. Staying with Ann Arbor host families allowed Nahalal teens to get to know their teammates, and to get a feel for the host family model in Toronto.

Host families are a core part of the JCC Maccabi experience, providing our athletes with a "home away from home" during the event. From bus rides, sports competitions, and HangTime, to Opening Ceremonies, a trip to Six Flags Canada's Wonderland, Host Family Night, and the closing party, our Ann Arbor and Nahalal athletes forged meaningful friendships while engaging deeply with their Jewish heritage.

The JCC Maccabi Games frequently combine athletes from different delegations to form full teams, which was the case for all of our team sport athletes this year. Team Ann Arbor-Nahalal athletes played on mixed teams with athletes from Detroit, Kentucky, New Orleans, Los Angeles, and even Toronto! Our teens met so many other athletes from all over the world, embracing Judaism together

through their love of sports. In the end, our athletes on mixed teams took home the following medals: bronze for 17U Boys Ice Hockey, silver for 3x3 17U Boys Basketball, and gold for 17U Girls Volleyball.

Our individual sport athletes took home medals as well! Our dancer from Nahalal won gold for his original contemporary piece, and our track athlete won a collection of bronze and silver medals over the course of several meets. We are SO proud of all our athletes for their amazing performances throughout the week.

Information about the 2027 JCC Maccabi Games will soon be released. If your 13–17-year-old teen is interested in participating, please contact me at [drewcoel@jccannarbor.org](mailto:drewcoel@jccannarbor.org) or Eli Abramzon-Levitsky, Assistant Delegation Head, at [eliambramzonlevitsky@jccannarbor.org](mailto:eliambramzonlevitsky@jccannarbor.org).

## "Antisemitism in Michigan: A status report"

The presentation "Antisemitism in Michigan: A Status Report" will be held on Wednesday, October 14, from 3 to 6 p.m. It is a program of OLLI, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Michigan, a volunteer-centered community program designed for adults aged 50 and older. The one-time panel of four includes Elyssa Schmier, Laura Rosenberg, Judy Cohen, and Rabbi Alter Goldstein.

Across the United States and throughout Michigan, in communities and on campuses, Jewish people are experiencing a "new normal" of elevated antisemitism. Historically, hatred focusing on the Jewish community spreads throughout society. This presentation will define traditional antisemitism and

its modern manifestations; the campus situation; and work currently being done to counter these worrisome trends. Participants will learn tangible responses and ways to create allyship as a collective response to this communal threat.

Elyssa Schmier recently joined the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) as the Michigan Regional Director. She is a seasoned professional with a history of advancing justice, equity, and combating hate. Before joining ADL, she served as Vice President of Government Relations and National Budget for MomsRising, a national advocacy organization dedicated to achieving economic security for moms, women, and families.

Laura Rosenberg is the ADL Michigan Associate Director. Her focus includes university



UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

partnerships to improve campus policies, law enforcement relationships, and advocacy to make communities safer and more inclusive. Laura previously taught middle school English for 12 years.

Judy Cohen has been a community activist and held leadership roles in many organizations in Ann Arbor since 1968. Her two major careers were owning a Kosher catering service after which she was one of this area's top producing realtors for almost 20 years.

Rabbi Alter Goldstein was born and raised in Ann Arbor. He is the second-generation rabbi at the Chabad Jewish Center at the University of Michigan and

has worked extensively with U of M students. To register for the class:

OLLI members, <https://mmcommunityprograms.med.umich.edu/umich/course/course.aspx?catId=4>

Non-members, <https://mmcommunityprograms.med.umich.edu/umich/course/course.aspx?catId=120>

Call our office to register over the phone: 734-998-9351

The OLLI website: <https://mmcommunityprograms.med.umich.edu/umich/category/category.aspx>

Or come to the OLLI office: Turner Senior Resource Center (9 a.m. – 5 p.m.) at 2401 Plymouth Rd, Suite C, Ann Arbor, MI 48105.

## Aleh summit for Jewish communal early career professionals

Aleh is a three-day summit for Jewish communal early-career professionals (2–5 years) to reconnect with their passion and purpose,

gain insights into navigating the challenges of today's world, and grow their professional skills and network. Aleh is open to those currently working in a Jewish school or com-

munal organization/nonprofit, including programming and engagement roles as well as fundraising, marketing, communications, and other essential portfolios. Held February 16–18 in New Orleans. More info and to ap-

ply or nominate: <https://ieje.org/events/aleh-summit-february-2027/>

Apply by October 4 for a 40% tuition discount.

## Beth Israel events in October

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).

### Fall Hebrew Classes

#### Tuesdays beginning October 13

Come learn Hebrew with Milka Eliav on Tuesday evenings. Classes will take place on Tuesdays except for November 3 or December 18 from 5:15 to 9 p.m. We have classes for many levels, please see below. Registration is required through the calendar on our website by October 6 and costs \$95 for members, \$125 for non-members. Please note that each class must have 5 students registered to run. Advance registration is required at [Bethisrael-aa.org/calendar](http://Bethisrael-aa.org/calendar).

**5:15–6 p.m. Prayer Book Reading:** If you can read Hebrew and want to improve your fluency, speed, and confidence, this is the class for you! We will focus on texts from the prayer book and the Jewish Bible, dedicate some class time to discussing meaning and recurring vocabulary, and learn some reading principles to help with fluency and pronunciation. We will use the book *Prayer Book Hebrew, The Easy Way*.

**6:15–7 p.m. Intermediate Conversation:** This class is meant for people who are comfortable carrying a simple conversation in Hebrew about mundane topics and are looking to expand their vocabulary, increase their confidence in speaking Hebrew, and gain an understanding of some language structures.

**7:15–8 p.m. Advanced Conversation:** If you can carry on a conversation in Hebrew on various topics, this class is for you. Come join a relaxed and welcoming hour of Hebrew only. Participants talk and read together about a wide range of subjects, while highlighting grammatical points, enriching vo-

cabulary, and exploring cultural references. “Hebrew Table” at its best!

**8:15–9 p.m. Beginning Conversation:** This class offers a taste of modern Hebrew for communication. Reading Hebrew is a plus but not a requirement. We will jump right into Hebrew and learn to introduce ourselves, ask questions, describe things like our families, our jobs, and other common topics. We may even learn to order in an Israeli restaurant. Come dip your toes in this modern-ancient language and roll some Hebrew off your tongue!

#### Chavurat Nashim Games in the Sukkah

Thursday, October 1, 2–4 p.m.

Chavurat Nashim invites the women of Beth Israel to join us for games and more in the sukkah. Play, shmooze, nosh, and make new friends! Assorted games provided — bring your favorites like Mahj or Canasta. Register at [bethisrael-aa.org/calendar](http://bethisrael-aa.org/calendar).

#### Hidden Meaning of Shemini Atzeret with Rabbi Elliot Ginsburg

Saturday, October 3, 12:30 p.m.

After Shabbat Services, grab your kiddush lunch and join Rabbi Elliot Ginsburg to learn about the hidden meaning of Shemini Atzeret. Rabbi Ginsburg is a scholar and practitioner of Jewish mysticism and Hasidut bringing experiential learning to his classes.

#### Simchat Torah Morning Minyan in the M & M Chapel

Sunday, October 4, 9:30 a.m.

Simchat Torah Family Service Sunday

Sunday, October 4, 10:30 a.m.

Join us in a joyful Simchat Torah family celebration! We will unroll the Torah, dance with the Torah to live music by Neil Alexander and his band, have festive snacks, and have giveaways for the kids.

#### October 7 Minyan and Remembrance: Readings, Remembrance, and Resilience

Wednesday, October 7, 7 p.m.

Come join us to remember and say Kaddish together.

#### Beth Israel Religious School & Young Families Parents Night Out

Thursday, October 15, 7–9 p.m.

Please join us to enjoy a night out with other BIRS and BIC parents over food and drinks. Meet at Zola Bistro, 3030 Washtenaw Avenue, from 7–9 p.m. Free childcare for 1st–5th grade begins at 6:30 in the G&S 2010 building. Kids will enjoy a fun movie night and snacks. Registration is required at [bethisrael-aa.org/calendar](http://bethisrael-aa.org/calendar).

#### Tot Shabbat

Saturday, October 17 and 31, 11 a.m.–noon.

Join your friends at Beth Israel 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! Please register at [bethisrael-aa.org/calendar](http://bethisrael-aa.org/calendar).

#### Theology Class with Charles Van Heck

Wednesdays, October 21, October 28, November 4, and November 11, 4:30–6 p.m.

Join us for Theology with Charles Van Heck. Sessions include “Taking a Breath,” “There’s a Snake in the Garden,” “Abraham and Sarah’s Travel Log,” and “The Sinai Journey: The Sabbath, Faith, and Inner Conversion.” Advance registration required by October 16 at [bethisrael-aa.org/calendar](http://bethisrael-aa.org/calendar)

Beth Israel Member Charles Van Heck holds both a Masters of Divinity and a Doctor of Divinity degree from Fuller Seminary. With over 30 years of pastoral work and teaching experience, he is passionate about helping people grow in their understanding of faith and apply biblical truth to everyday life. He brings clarity, warmth, and real-world insight to every class.

#### Havdalloween

Saturday, October 31, 7:30–8 p.m.

Have fun trick-or-treating and make Beth Israel your last stop! Enjoy cider & doughnuts at 7:30 p.m. and Havdallah at 7:45. Fun treats for all the kids! Meet on the play-

ground.

#### Talmud Study with Rabbi Dobrusin (via Zoom)

Mondays at 4 p.m.

The class meets on Zoom on Monday afternoons from 4–5:15. We will read the text in the original Hebrew or Aramaic with an accompanying English translation and discuss the text in English. No familiarity with Hebrew or prior experience studying Talmud is required. All are welcome! The Zoom link is available on the BIC 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 Shiffrin at (248) 514-7276 for more information.

#### Beth Israel is looking for a new librarian—a paying position!

Responsibilities include selection and weeding, purchasing and budgeting, answering reference questions, and maintaining the online catalog. The preferred candidate will have library training and knowledge of Jewish literature and history. This is a five hour per week paid position, to be filled on Sunday mornings and any afternoon when school is in session. Please send cover message and resumé to Jerry Sorokin at [gsorokin@bethisrael-aa.org](mailto:gsorokin@bethisrael-aa.org).

#### In Person and Online Services

##### Minyan

Sundays at 9:30 a.m. in the M&M Chapel and online

Mondays–Thursdays at 7:30 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. ■

## World ORT Ann Arbor opening event on October 18

By Joan Levitt



World ORT’s Ann Arbor Chapter is holding its opening event on Sunday, October 18, from 3–5 p.m. The event is an opportunity for members and prospective members to gather and learn about World ORT’s plans for 2026 from Rob Platt, Midwest Regional Director of World ORT.

In addition to learning more about World ORT, attendees will also have an opportunity to learn about the chapter’s book group and movie group and to share delicious appetizers and desserts prepared by the chapter’s members.

Ann Arbor ORT’s focus for its 2026 fun-

draising campaign is support for teachers in ORT’s schools in Ukraine. With attacks in the horrific war continuing to escalate, ORT schools in Kyiv, Zaporizhzhia, and Odessa were advised that only the newest first graders and graduating 11th graders would mark the start of their year underground in shelters. Everyone else is back to online learning until further notice. However, the dedicated teachers in these ORT schools are still providing the best education possible for these students. They know that even in the darkest moments, education lights the way forward.

The Ann Arbor chapter will be supporting the ORT teachers in Ukraine as they

provide instruction no matter where the learning takes place — in the regular classroom or in the schools’ bomb shelters or online. Like all teachers in Ukraine, ORT teachers work for very low wages. Ann Arbor’s contribution will provide additional income which will make a huge difference in these teachers’ day-to-day lives and show the teachers that their astonishing efforts are appreciated.

Contributions to World ORT can be made online at <https://ort.org/>. To receive more information about the Ann Arbor event on October 18, please contact Joan Levitt at [jlevitt2@gmail.com](mailto:jlevitt2@gmail.com) ■

## Pardes Hannah events in October

#### October 3

Shabbat Morning Services. Pardes Hannah. In-person and online. 10 a.m.

#### October 10

Meditation with Rabbi Aura. In-person only. 10 a.m.

#### October 11

Rosh Chodesh Circle. Pardes Hannah. Online only. 7 p.m.

#### October 17

Study Session: The Mystics of Sefat. Pardes Hannah. In-person and online. 3 p.m. ■



# Leadership change in Jewish women’s artists group



Idelle Hammond-Sass

Rona Lesser

ber Karin Frostig on her work as an international memory artist. One of the most successful programs was the Beit Midrash Art Studio, which offered text study, artmaking, and writing using three art practices.

JWAN is delighted to announce that Laura Earle of Washtenaw, a collaborator on the Beit Midrash Art Studio, has accepted an invitation to lead JWAN. She will be bringing new leadership and fresh ideas to JWAN. She comes with a depth of experience as an artist, curator, and JSP (Jewish Studio Process) facilitator, with a talent for bringing people into community and purpose. ■

# Jewish Studio Process Creativity Circles resume in October



**C**reativity Circles are an opportunity to engage with the Jewish Studio Process with intention and intimacy. These groups are offered free — with text support from Jewish Studio Project and art supplies — for anyone interested in exploring ancient Jewish wisdom and creativity. The circles allow time for text discussion, artmaking, and writing. Led by two local artists, Kathryn Kopald and Idelle Hammond-Sass, the circles nourish creativity, connection, and community. Sessions meet monthly at a local art studio or at the Ann Arbor library.

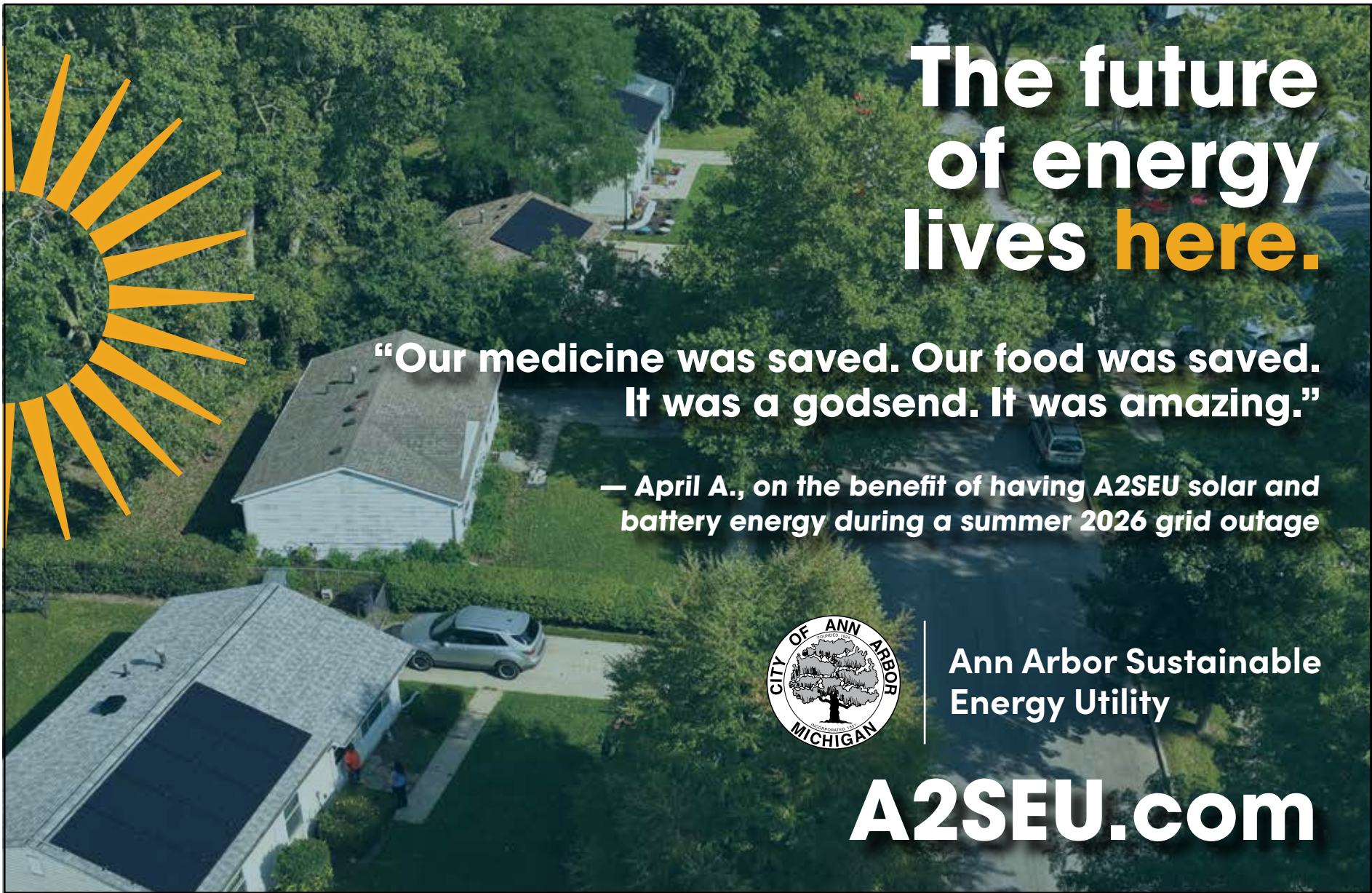
The next circle will happen in the Jewish month of Heshvan, Sunday, October 18, 1:30–3 p.m. To get on our email list for the next session, contact Idelle Hammond-Sass [hammond.sass@gmail.com](mailto:hammond.sass@gmail.com) or Kathryn Kopald [kathrynkopald@gmail.com](mailto:kathrynkopald@gmail.com) ■



Laura Earle

**T**he Jewish Women’s Artists Network (JWAN) of the Women’s Caucus for Art (WCA) has announced a leadership change. Washtenaw artist Idelle Hammond-Sass and her co-chair Rona Lesser of Houston, Texas, are stepping down after more than three years. During that time, they have offered speakers, workshops, and Zoom meetups. When WCA had to move from national conferences and in-person groups, they reached out with newsletters, programs with Art and Scroll Studio, and a presentation by WCA mem-





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“Our medicine was saved. Our food was saved. It was a godsend. It was amazing.”

— April A., on the benefit of having A2SEU solar and battery energy during a summer 2026 grid outage



Ann Arbor Sustainable Energy Utility

# A2SEU.com

# Community

## October events with the AAOM



The Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan is a warm, vibrant, multigenerational Orthodox Jewish congregation. Our membership includes families with babies and school-aged children, young professionals, empty-nesters, and retirees. We hold services in collaboration with the University of Michigan Hillel's Orthodox student minyan, creating a unique community that brings together people of all ages and stages of life. Beyond services, we offer diverse opportunities to learn Torah, celebrate, socialize, and connect with Judaism and each other in meaningful ways. Whether you're a long-time resident, a student, or new to the area, we warmly welcome you to join us!

Join AAOM for warm, welcoming services and family-friendly events. Visit [AnnArborMinyan.org](http://AnnArborMinyan.org) for complete schedule information and to RSVP for special events.

Weekday Shacharit, Mincha/Maariv Services  
AAOM, O-Minyan, and Chabad hold daily joint services.  
Times and locations vary; see [AnnArborMinyan.org](http://AnnArborMinyan.org) for details.

Sukkot VII (Hoshana Rabba) (Friday, Oct 2)  
Hoshana Rabba Services, TBA  
11:56 p.m. (for Shabbat & Shmini Atzeret)  
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat/Maariv, 7 p.m.

Shmini Atzeret (Shabbat, October 3)  
Shacharit, 9:30 a.m.  
Yizkor, ~11 a.m.  
Mincha/Maariv, Hakafot & Dancing, 6:30 p.m.  
11:54 p.m. (for Simchat To-

rah)  
Simchat Torah Dinner following Hakafot

Simchat Torah (Sunday, October 4)  
Shacharit, 9:30 a.m.  
Hakafot & Dancing, ~10 a.m.  
Women's Torah Reading, ~10:30 a.m.  
Mincha/Maariv, 6:30 p.m.  
Havdalah, 7:52 p.m.

Shabbat Parshat Bereishit  
Friday, October 9  
11:44 p.m.  
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat/Maariv, 6:15 p.m.

Shabbat, October 10  
Shacharit, 9:30 a.m.  
Mincha/Seudah Shlishit/Maariv, 6:30 p.m.  
Havdalah, 7:43 p.m.

Shabbat Parshat Noach  
Friday, October 16  
11:33 p.m.  
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat/Maariv, 6:15 p.m.

Shabbat, October 17  
Shacharit, 9:30 a.m.  
Mincha/Seudah Shlishit/Maariv, 6:15 p.m.  
Havdalah, 7:32 p.m.

Shabbat Parshat Lech Lecha  
Friday, October 23  
11:22 p.m.  
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat/Maariv, 6:15 p.m.

Shabbat, October 24  
Shacharit, 9:30 a.m.  
Mincha/Seudah Shlishit/Maariv, 6:05 p.m.  
Havdalah, 7:21 p.m.

Shabbat Parshat Vayera  
Friday, October 30  
11:12 p.m.  
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat/Maariv, 6:15 p.m.

Shabbat, October 31  
Shacharit, 9:30 a.m.  
Mincha/Seudah Shlishit/Maariv, 5:55 p.m.  
Havdalah, 7:12 p.m. ■

## Rabbi's corner

# Adam and Eve were commanded by G-d not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge

By Rabbi Aharon Goldstein, Chabad of Ann Arbor



Rabbi Aharon Goldstein

first people.

We read that Adam was commanded by G-d not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge. But Adam was not able to overcome his temptation and he ate the fruit.

According to the midrash, the command not to eat the fruit was given after three-quarters of Friday had passed and was to be in effect only until Shabbat began. Adam and Eve were not to eat the fruit for only three hours!

When we consider that Adam was created by G-d, Himself, and heard the command from G-d, it seems amazing that he couldn't control himself for a mere three hours.

We learn from this episode the strength and

The Torah portion for the week of October 11 is Bereshit (Genesis), the first portion of the entire Torah. It recounts the entire story of Creation and tells, among other things, about the creation of the

guile of the yetzer hara — that aspect of our psyche which encourages us to go against G-d's will. The yetzer hara may camouflage its aim by trying to convince us that a commandment is too difficult or unimportant. Nevertheless, its real intention is to persuade us to go against G-d's will. Therefore, the more important a certain command is for a particular person, the harder the yetzer hara will try to dissuade the individual from performing the command. Even if the commandment is a very easy one, the yetzer hara will make it seem extremely difficult.

Thus, we can understand how Adam was tempted to eat the forbidden fruit. The yetzer hara employed its most compelling arguments to convince Adam to sin.

The yetzer hara's arguments are highly evident today. Many contend that if the "burden" of the Torah, the details and laws, would be lightened, all Jews would adhere to them. But this is not true. For, even if there was but one commandment — and that for only three hours — the yetzer hara would make it seem impossibly difficult and repressive.

We cannot overcome the yetzer hara by compromising the Torah. We must, rather, realize that we have all been imbued with the strength to overcome the yetzer hara's arguments and guile. If we draw on our G-d-given inner strength, ultimately we will be victorious. ■

## J Street U forced out of Michigan Hillel.

By Clare Kinberg

The *Michigan Daily* reported on September 15, "J Street at the University of Michigan has disaffiliated from Michigan Hillel after receiving an ultimatum to sever ties with its national parent organization, J Street. The split, which appears to originate from the two organizations' differing positions on Israel, has led to concerns from some left-leaning Jewish students that their views are increasingly unwelcome within mainstream Jewish institutions on campus. Many in J Street UMich are broadly supportive of Israel but remain critical of its various human rights abuses."

On the same day, *Haaretz* reported, "J Street U was barred from Hillel over its national ties, but its leaders question why the new rules do not affect Birthright or Wolverine for Israel."

The *Haaretz* article quotes both Hillel leadership, and J Street U members. "Interim Executive Director Cindy Hughey told *Haaretz* in an emailed

statement, 'We encourage students interested in advocacy to get involved directly with independent advocacy groups outside of Hillel.'"

Eliana Adler, J Street at UMich president, is a junior and also the daughter of poet and chaplain Rabbi Sara Adler. She reported to *Haaretz* that in 2025, J Street had made efforts to conciliate with Hillel. "In fall 2025, the group changed its name to 'Dialogue Across Differences: A J Street Affiliate' after Hillel's leadership first instituted the policy barring student groups from affiliating with outside organizations. The following semester, Adler said, Hillel's leaders canceled a previously approved screening of *No Other Land*, the Oscar-winning documentary about forced displacements of Palestinians by Israel in the West Bank."

Over the summer, Michigan Hillel's executive director, Rabbi Davey Rosen, resigned. *Haaretz* reported that "Two weeks before the start of the semester, Adler and the chapter's board were invited to a Zoom call with their Hillel staff advisers. This time, Adler said, they were told that 'no political action or advocacy is going to be allowed under the Hillel umbrella,' meaning that remaining part of Hillel would require severing from J Street altogether."

In response, J Street has put out a signatory campaign, "Tell University of Michigan Hillel: Welcome J Street U!" The letter says, in part, "By welcoming Jewish students with different perspectives on what it means to be pro-Israel, Hillel could foster community, ease campus tensions and make themselves a welcoming space for everyone, not just those who share their specific worldview. Excluding J Street U is a misguided, short-sighted move that will gravely harm Jewish campus life."

Erin Beiner, the national director of J Street U, is quoted in the *Haaretz* article saying the loss is to Hillel, "My concern is that Hillel at Michigan will lose a lot of really amazing students that could be potential leaders in their space." ■





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**Thursday, October 8**  
6:15–8:45pm

**Ann Arbor**  
(precise location provided upon registration)

**6:15–7:00pm**  
Photography Exhibition open for viewing

**7:00–8:00pm**  
Commemoration Program featuring guest speaker, photographer Erez Kaganovitz, with community musicians and poetry reading

**8:00–8:45pm**  
Photography Exhibition open for viewing



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# Public school educators visit Israel

By Rabbi Asher Lopatin, Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor



**Rabbi Dr. Sharon Shalom, Ethiopian Studies Center, Ono, with an ancient Ethiopian Bible.**

Early in July, the Jewish Community Relations Committee (JCRC) of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor brought to Israel a group of five prominent educators from Washtenaw County, including three principals from local public schools. With this short four-day trip, we hoped for participants to see Israel up close, explore how the country addresses diversity, understand the trauma in Israel after October 7, and to experience firsthand the vibrancy and resilience of Israeli society by visiting Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Ashkelon, Sdeirot, and other cities and towns around the country.

During our trip, the group was fortunate to meet up with the Jewish Federation's Israel and Overseas Programs Manager, Ami-chay Findling, who happened to be in Israel for an unrelated conference. With Findling, himself a teacher, we learned about Israel's diverse population — and the challenges that go along with it — in multiple educational settings. At one stop, we paid a visit to Ono Academic College and its Ethiopian

Studies Center, where we learned about the ancient Ethiopian Jews, their present-day stories, and the nearly 180,000 Jews who have immigrated from Ethiopia in the past 40 years.

Another organization, the Ethiopian National Project (ENP), works to meet the needs of this significant immigrant population in Israel. We were impressed by the ENP's leaders who described how, when the Israeli government noticed the alarming number of Ethiopian immigrants in Israeli jails, they declared, "Nothing is wrong with them, it's wrong with us." With this acknowledgement, the ENP was created as a not-for-profit group that works to ensure the full and successful integration of Ethiopian-Israelis into Israeli society. The organization is a unique partnership with the government of Israel and the Ethiopian-Israeli community itself.

At an ENP school in Ashkelon, we were so inspired by some young Ethiopian girls we met, who spoke fluent English (not to mention Hebrew) after just arriving from Ethiopia five years ago, that our Ann Arbor-based school principals made a pledge to return to Israel for their graduations.

Of course we couldn't talk about the diversity of Israel without seeing an Arab-Jewish school, and the one we visited was called Kulna Yahad, in the integrated Jewish-Arab town of Yaffo. Our Washtenaw principals felt the weight of integrating students from very different religious, economic, and social groups at this school. They got to share some of their own educational philosophies with the Jewish, Arab, and Ethiopian-Israeli teachers we met, and they left inspired by our hosts' efforts on behalf of all children in Israel.

Other aspects of Israel's diversity were on display during our full day in Jerusalem, absorbing life in the city outside the classroom. We visited the city's Christian, Mus-



**New Gate of the Old City (view from the author's simple, but spacious, room at the Notre Dame Jerusalem Center).**

lim and Jewish holy sites such as the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the Temple Mount/Al-Aqsa (a Jewish-Muslim holy site), the Western Wall, and the Tower of David. We did a great deal of walking all over the Old City of Jerusalem, entering the city from the Jaffa Gate — after walking through the posh Mamilla Mall, where we heard Hebrew, Arabic, Russian, and French spoken — and walked from the glorious Damascus Gate (the entrance to the Arab shuk where the locals shop) out through the Dung Gate, and all around Jerusalem to Lion's Gate, the gate the Israelis entered to re-unite Jerusalem in June 1967.

Even our accommodations revealed a diverse tapestry of Israeli culture: Each night, exhausted and exhilarated from the intense activity, we slept at the beautiful, but simple, Notre Dame Jerusalem Center run by Father David.

"Co-existence and harmony," observed members of our group as they watched the streets of Jerusalem. (Notre Dame offered rooms with air conditioning, but not TVs.)

The educators, always aware of the children in our midst, were constantly asking, "Who is watching those children?" as young Arab and Jewish kids of five or six years old freely roamed the winding pedestrian-only streets of the Old City. The children were in reality being watched by... everyone around. Members of our group remarked that they had "never felt safer. Everybody is looking out for everybody else." Not only were the kids riding their bikes and running around freely, but, as a note for children back in Washtenaw: "Cell phones stayed away." We saw with our own eyes how the Jewish state was a safe place for all ages, and how people of a variety of backgrounds — Jews, Christians and Muslims — felt comfortable to be themselves.

Beyond Israel's diversity, we hoped the trip would demonstrate to our educators the profound trauma Israelis experienced on October 7, which we did primarily through a morning at the powerful Nova Festival Forest. The Forest has been turned into a memorial dedicated to the hundreds of young people murdered by Hamas on October 7 as they were enjoying a music festival in southern Israel.

We also heard about the Nova Festival massacre from Rabbi Ari Katz, whose Yeshiva in Sdeirot experienced the attack directly. When Rabbi Katz shared how his students ran from services to try to save lives, one of the trip participants remarked upon a new understanding of "the trauma in the Jewish experience [on October 7], and also the resilience."

Interestingly, there was pressure on some of the group not to go to Israel because there are strong feelings in Washtenaw County that disagree with Israel's policies in fighting the current war, which started with the Hamas attack on October 7 that killed nearly

*continues on page 26*

## Ann Arbor's new shinshinim settle in

By Mia and Hadar, ShinShinim



**Mia and Hadar at the JCC's annual Apples and Honey event.**

Mia and Hadar arrived in Ann Arbor in August as the community's newest cohort of ShinShinim from the Jewish Agency for Israel. They are here as volunteers from Israel, on a year of service after graduating high school before their army service. While in town, they will work to strengthen the connections between Ann Arbor and Israel, sharing Israeli culture through informal education, music, Israeli childhood games, food, and much more. The ShinShinim program is made possible by the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor. Mia and Hadar

share here what they've been up to around town recently.

Since landing in Ann Arbor in mid-August, our days have quickly filled with learning, action, and above all, so much excitement as we get to know wonderful people.

### First steps in education

In August, we took our first steps into our two main educational institutions, Hebrew Day School (HDS) and Early Childhood Center (ECC). We spent time learning all about HDS, getting to know the dedicated teaching staff, gathering valuable information, and absorbing teaching approaches that will propel us forward. We were so excited to meet all the amazing children we'll be spending the year with, and we're so proud to be part of such an impressive, professional team! We also met the sweet children in the ECC for the first time and began building the warm connections that bring us joy every day.

### Getting to Know the Community

A major part of August was dedicated to connecting with the warm and welcoming Ann Arbor community through social

gatherings, conversations, and community events.

Our very first community event was Apples & Honey. We ran a "Wheel of Fortune" booth filled with Israel-themed games and challenges, and we were thrilled to meet so many of you.

We visited Beth Israel Congregation, were hosted at Temple Beth Emeth, and dropped by the Hillel — at every stop, we received the

warmest welcome from incredible people.

We met the wonderful BBYO teens for the first time and got to see inspiring young leadership in action!

### Free Time

Alongside starting our work, we made time to experience the area. We enjoyed kayaking on the Huron River, explored the city and the university campus, and really got to know our new home better!

### Looking Ahead & Thank You

We want to thank everyone for the warm welcome and for the privilege of being part of this incredible community and meeting amazing people every day. We're excited and looking forward to many more activities, conversations, events, and lots of fun ahead!

To learn more about the ShinShinim program and how you can connect with us, visit [jewishannarbor.org/engagement/israel/Shinshinim](http://jewishannarbor.org/engagement/israel/Shinshinim). ■



**Mia and Hadar exploring Ann Arbor's natural beauty**

## Community

### New school year/new staff at HDS

By Orit Aviran, Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor



**From the top left: Rabbi Asher Lopatin, Wies Stern, Rachael Lawrence-Lupton, Nicole Glavocich, Lauren Smith. Bottom row from the left: Hadar Yerichower, Mia Friedman, Aviv Fride-Touitou, Peter Burke, Susan (Sue) Hough**

The 2026–27 school year started off on the right foot for Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor. The school welcomed several new faces to the teaching staff this year, including a school rabbi, a new librarian, a vocal music teacher, new shinshinim, and a newly created position — an enrichment and extension teacher for our expanding curriculum.

Some of our new additions to the teaching staff are here to cover maternity leave (congratulations are in order!), while others

are new but familiar faces in our school community.

Rabbi Asher Lopatin is a familiar face joining us as School Rabbi. In this role, he will serve as a thought partner to the Head of School, Dr. Wendy Lawrence, and to our Hebrew and Judaics faculty. Rabbi Asher will teach Mishnah to our fifth graders and lead Upper El Tefilah from time to time. We are confident that his contributions will enrich Jewish life throughout our community and

strengthen our shared vision of a thriving day school.

Wies Stern steps into the shoes of Janice Liberman, who retired after two decades as our librarian. Wies already knows the school well — she served both as a long-term substitute and, more importantly, as a parent of an HDS student. Alongside her teaching experience, Wies brings an educational approach that served our community well this past year, both with students and with staff.

Rachael Lawrence-Lupton will teach vocal music, joining instrumental music teacher Ben Kessler, who also leads our student KlezKids Ensemble. Music has been Rachael's life's work — as a music therapist, a podcast host, and more. She knows our hallways well, too: Rachael is the daughter of Sari Shifrin (z"l), a former Hebrew Day School staff member. Rachael brings joy and warmth to her work, striving to uplift everyone around her, regardless of circumstance.

The curriculum also expanded this year with the addition of Nicole Glavocich. Nicole, who recently moved from Ohio to Michigan (the right call, Nicole!), brings a rich academic background in science education and in Jewish day schools.

The program includes participation in the Washtenaw Elementary Science Olympiad (WESO) and Destination Imagination — two established initiatives that allow

children to broaden their horizons and take on challenges across a range of fields. WESO brings together elementary schools from across Washtenaw County: students choose a topic each January, form teams with a coach, and prepare for months for the countywide tournament each spring. Destination Imagination takes a different approach, offering hands-on STEAM experiences beyond the traditional sciences, where students engage in project-based learning, independent inquiry, and teamwork. Alongside both programs, the school will continue its commitment to differentiated learning, supporting students across the full range of learning needs, with an emphasis on curiosity, self-efficacy, and the joy of learning.

Bruchim Ha'Baim Rachael, Rabbi Asher, Wies, Nicole, Lauren, Hadar, Mia, Peter, Aviv, and Sue! We welcome all our new colleagues, joining the wonderful, dedicated team leading Hebrew Day School's academic excellence and discovery alongside Jewish life and learning for over 50 years.

For more information about Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor, visit [hdsaa.org](https://hdsaa.org) or contact [office@hdsaa.org](mailto:office@hdsaa.org) ■

#### Israeli Election Series

An in-depth exploration of Israel's election process and the major political issues at play this fall.

##### Pre-Election Experts Forum

Thursday, October 15 | 7pm

###### Experts Panel:

Dr. Victor Lieberman  
Dr. Richard Primus  
Rabbi Josh Winston



Join this conversation to hear more about the political landscape and explore the key issues and dynamics shaping the campaign.

###### Facilitated by:

Amichay Findling, Israel & Overseas Manager

##### Election Results Watch Party

Tuesday, October 27 | 2:30-4pm

Join us to watch exit poll results, commentary, and analysis (English and Hebrew)

##### Post-Election Analysis and Brunch

Sunday, November 8 | 10am

###### Experts Panel:

Dr. Victor Lieberman  
Dr. Richard Primus  
Rabbi Josh Winston



Join for brunch and a conversation to examine what the results could mean for Israel and the Jewish world.

###### Facilitated by:

Amichay Findling, Israel & Overseas Manager

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Upcoming StoryTimes:

11/15

12/6



**Jewish Federation**  
of Greater Ann Arbor

# Comedian Alex Edelman to headline Federation's 36th Main Event

By Rachel Wall, Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor



Comedian Alex Edelman.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor is thrilled to announce that rising star comedian Alex Edelman will headline this year's Main Event taking place on Sunday, October 25. The event will take place in-person in Ypsilanti. For security purposes, the precise location of the event will only be shared upon registration.

Bringing the community together is a primary goal of the Main Event, and with the support of the 2026 Main Event Planning Committee, the event will do just that. This year's planning committee includes a dedicated team of volunteers including Melissa Hauptman, Josh Pasek, and Sierra Imwalle.

This year is also a celebration of the 36th anniversary of the Jewish Federation

of Greater Ann Arbor. To commemorate this milestone, all past Board Presidents and Executive Directors of the Jewish Federation with this year's annual Pillar Award. The Pillar Award is given in recognition to those who exemplify the Jewish Federation's foundational pillars of Philanthropy, Engagement, and Convening.

"We're lucky that, compared to many other communities around the country, our Jewish Federation is relatively young," says Jewish Federation CEO Eileen Freed. "It means that a large number of our community's founders are still with us. We're pleased to be able to honor the leadership of the last 36 years and look ahead to the next 36 and beyond." For a full list of those being honored, visit [www.tinyurl.com/2026MainEvent](http://www.tinyurl.com/2026MainEvent).

With a theme of celebrating the past and building the future, Alex Edelman is the perfect featured entertainer for this year's Main Event. As a self-proclaimed Millennial and one of the most critically hailed comedians of his generation, Edelman will delight attendees of all ages.

Alex Edelman is best known for solo shows that blur the line between his stand-up comedy roots and narrative-driven storytelling. His last offering, *Just for Us*, played more than 500 performances all over the world before premiering as an HBO original comedy special in April of 2024. Along the way, it made award-winning stops in Melbourne, Edinburgh, London, and nu-

merous sold-out runs in New York, where Edelman joined a small group of comedians who have played on Broadway with a three-month stretch at the Hudson Theatre. He has previously won the prestigious Foster's Best Newcomer prize at the 2014 Edinburgh Fringe Festival for his debut one man show, *Millennial*, only the second American ever to have done so and the first since 1997. In 2024 Alex was the recipient of a special Tony Award, was named to the Time100 list of most influential people, and won an Emmy award.

Edelman appeared in Jerry Seinfeld's directorial debut for Netflix, *Unfrosted*, alongside Seinfeld, Melissa McCarthy, Jim Gaffigan, Amy Schumer, Hugh Grant, and more. He is currently developing a movie with A24 that he will write, direct and star in, with Marc Platt and Steven Levenson producing. His debut non-fiction collection, *I DON'T BELONG HERE*, recently sold to Avid Reader at auction. Alex will next be seen starring in Greg Daniels' spinoff of *The Office* for Peacock. He also writes on the show as a Consulting Producer.

Beyond his front-of-camera work, Alex was a staff writer on *The Great Indoors* for CBS, a story editor on *Teenage Bounty Hunters* for Netflix, and the head writer for *Saturday Night Seder*, which raised over \$3.5 million for the CDC COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund, and featured talent such as Andy Cohen, Billy Porter, Dan Levy, Fran Drescher, Idina Menzel, Jason

Alexander, Rachel Brosnahan, and many more. He has written for outlets such as *The Atlantic* and *The Believer*, has written and produced documentaries for the U.S. State Department and ESPN's "30 for 30" series, and spent more than a decade working as a speechwriter for the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Boston Red Sox.

In addition to its aim as a community-building program, the Main Event is the widest-reaching annual fundraising event of the Jewish Federation's Annual Community Campaign. With a record-breaking \$1.8 million raised for Jewish life in 2026, the 2027 Campaign will be able to meet even more needs in the Jewish community, both locally and abroad. In addition to funding organizations in Washtenaw County like the JCC and Jewish Family Services, funds from generous local donors support nonprofits in Israel that focus on a strong shared civil society and underserved populations — critical areas that are neglected by the Israeli government.

The Campaign also makes possible the essential work of the Jewish Federation itself. From community-wide security coordination to building bridges with non-Jewish communities, the Jewish Federation is uniquely positioned to meet the needs of the Jewish community as a whole. Main Event attendees will be asked to support the community with a gift or pledge to the 2027 Annual Community Campaign, which began September 1, 2026.

For details and tickets to this year's Main Event, visit [www.tinyurl.com/2026MainEvent](http://www.tinyurl.com/2026MainEvent) or call (734) 677-0100. ■

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| Opposes Trump MAGA agenda                                        | Stands with Trump 100%                                          |
| Relies heavily on individual small donors for campaign funding   | Accepted money from DTE, oil and gas, telecom, banks, superPACs |
| Supports universal health care                                   | Voted against ACA and 9/11 rescuers' healthcare. No M4A         |
| Opposes Medicaid cuts                                            | Supports Medicaid cuts                                          |
| Supports abortion rights                                         | Opposes abortion rights                                         |
| Supports gay marriage equality                                   | Voted against gay marriage                                      |
| Supports LGBTQ equal rights                                      | Opposes LGBTQ equality. Scored 0/100 by Human Rights Campaign   |
| Opposes Iran war                                                 | Supports Iran war                                               |
| Supports stronger EPA regulations                                | Opposes government regulations                                  |
| Supports binding agreements to ensure data center accountability | Supports a one year "pause" before building data centers        |
| Supports limiting US military \$\$\$                             | Supports increasing military \$\$\$                             |
| Supports tuition free public college education                   | Supports market incentives to pay tuition                       |
| Supports humane border security, encourages legal immigration    | Defends ICE terror tactics against immigrant populations        |
| Background                                                       |                                                                 |
| UM valedictorian. Columbia Med School MD. Rhodes Scholar.        | BS Adrian College. FBI undercover agent. Former US Rep.         |

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# CAN ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS TALK THROUGH POETRY?

OCTOBER 6, 2026  
4:00PM RACKHAM AMPHITHEATRE

This conversation, part of the Samantha Woll Dialogues, brings together two writers, Almog Behar and Ayat Abou Shmeiss, both of whom use the language of poetry to explore their own identities: Jerusalem-born Behar looks to his family roots in Iraq and Turkey to advocate for the restoration of Arabic to its place in Jewish culture, and Jaffa-born Abou Shmeiss expresses her dual identity as a Muslim-Palestinian and as an Israeli citizen in her award-winning poetry and human rights advocacy. The panel will be moderated by Raoul Wallenberg Institute Fellow Stephanie Kraver, a scholar of modern Arabic and Hebrew literature who specializes in transcultural exchange, expressions of mourning, trauma theory, and translation.

Stephanie Kraver

Ayat Abou Shmeiss

Almog Behar

# Kosher Cuisine

## Fall into soup ... and salad and cake

By Lonnie Sussman

Leaves changing colors, cooler days and nights, summer gardens nearly shut down, kids back in school, and Michigan is beautiful. I hope everyone is doing well and getting a chance to go out and see the beauty. Soups are firmly on the menus. Thanks to friends offering up some of their favorite recipes. Feel free to send me your favorites or recipes you would like to see in this column.

### Red Lentil and Tomato Soup

Serves 4.

There are lots of red lentil soup recipes, including a famous one from the *NYTimes* decades ago. Here is a basic recipe that would take about 20 minutes to prepare and 45 minutes to cook.

- 1 tbs olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- ½ tsp cumin
- ½ tsp coriander
- 1 15-oz can chopped tomatoes
- ¾ cup red lentils
- 5 cups vegetable broth (or chicken broth)
- Pinch of salt and pepper
- 4 tbs low fat or fat free sour cream (optional)

Heat oil in a large pot and then add the onion and garlic and cook over low heat for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in the cumin and coriander and the tomatoes and lentils. Cook for another 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Add the broth and bring to a boil. Then reduce the heat to medium and simmer gently for 25–30 minutes or until the lentils are soft. Add the salt and pepper to taste. Remove the pot from the heat and allow to cool enough to pour into a blender or food processor and blend until smooth. Return to pot to reheat. You can add the sour cream to the soup bowls if you wish.

### Vegan Mediterranean Lentil Soup

From my girlfriend, Sherry, who says it's like the lentil soup above but with a Mediterranean vibe.

Serves 6

- 2 tbs olive oil
- 1½ cups chopped yellow onions
- 1 cup chopped carrots
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tbs tomato paste (no salt added)
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 1 cup water
- 1 15-oz can no-salt-added cannellini beans, rinsed
- 1 cup dry lentils (brown, green, black or a mix of colors)
- ½ cup chopped sundried tomatoes in oil, drained
- ¾ tsp salt
- ½ tsp. pepper
- 1 tbs fresh dill, and more for garnish
- 1½ tsp red wine vinegar

Heat the oil in a large heavy pot and add

the onions and carrot and stir for a few minutes. Add the garlic and cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the tomato paste and cook, stirring, until the mixture is evenly coated, about another minute. Stir in the broth, water, cannellini beans, lentils, sundried tomatoes, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-low. Cover and simmer until lentils are tender, 30–40 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in the dill and vinegar, garnish with more dill if desired, and serve.

### Curried Couscous Salad

(I don't know where I got this recipe, but I like simple salads with a grain base.)

- 1 cup couscous (if you don't like couscous, use rice, wheat berries, or quinoa)
- 1 cup boiling water
- ½ cup diced red bell pepper
- ½ cup shredded carrots
- ½ cup diced red onion
- ½ cup golden raisins or dried cranberries
- ¼ cup toasted sliced almonds
- ¼ cup chopped parsley (and/or cilantro, optional)
- Salad dressing
- 3 tbs olive oil
- 2 tbs lemon juice
- 1 tbs white wine vinegar (or apple cider vinegar)
- 1 tsp. curry powder
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- ¼ tsp turmeric
- Salt and pepper to taste

Place the couscous and the boiling water in a large bowl and cover with plastic wrap or a plate and let it sit for about 5 minutes while the couscous absorbs all the water. Fluff it up with a fork. If you decide to boil the water and add the couscous to a large soup pot and cook it for 5 minutes, allow the couscous to chill in the refrigerator before adding the rest of the ingredients. Add the rest of the salad ingredients to the bowl and pour the dressing over the salad and toss to coat everything. The salad is good either cold or slightly warm, up to you. More options: add chickpeas or grilled chicken or dried apricots, or even a dollop of Greek yogurt on top.

### Rice and Vermicelli Noodles (Roz bil Shaghria in Arabic)

It is served with all kinds of meat dishes and is also commonly served as a Jewish dairy dish with yogurt and salad. (*The Book of Jewish Food*, Claudia Ruden) There is another rice dish that I'm still working on getting right for a future column, but I'm not there yet.

- ½ cup vermicelli, broken into pieces of about 1-inch
- 2 tbs sunflower or canola oil
- 1¼ cups long-grain rice
- 3 cups water

1 tsp salt

Toast the vermicelli in a dry frying pan or on a baking sheet under the broiler until they are brown. Stir them so that they brown evenly.

Heat the oil in a saucepan over medium heat, add the rice and stir until the grains are well coated with oil. Pour in the water, add the browned vermicelli and some salt and stir well. Simmer, covered, for about 18 minutes or until the rice is tender and the water is absorbed. Turn off the heat and steam with the lid on for another 5 minutes. There are many variations of this simple dish. Here are a few:

Fry 1 chopped onion in the oil until golden and then add the rice.

Stir in a handful of canned chickpeas or other vegetables.

Add a teaspoon of saffron powder or turmeric to the cooking water.

### Apple Harvest Pound Cake with Caramel Glaze

(I saw this online at adrecipes.com)

The recipe doesn't include the information of how many servings it makes other than "1 cake," but it's made in a 9-inch Bundt pan and I think it will depend on who's eating it and how much they like it.

- 2 cups white sugar
- 1½ cups vegetable oil (I use canola)
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 3 eggs
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 medium Granny Smith apples, peeled and chopped
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- ½ cup butter or substitute for butter
- 1 tsp milk
- ½ cup brown sugar

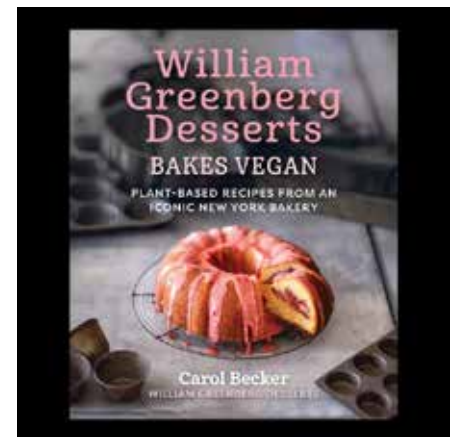
Preheat oven to 350 degrees and grease the 9-inch Bundt pan.

Use a large bowl and beat the sugar, oil, vanilla, and eggs with a mixer until light and fluffy. Combine the flour, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt, and stir into the batter until just blended. Fold in the apples and walnuts using a spoon and pour the mixture into the prepared pan. Bake for 1 hour and 20 minutes in the preheated oven, until a toothpick inserted into the crown of the cake comes out clean (you know, this is usually how to check for doneness for most baked goods), allow to cool for about 20 minutes, and then invert on to a wire rack. Make the glaze by heating the butter, milk, and brown sugar in a small saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar, then remove from the heat. Drizzle over the warm cake after placing a sheet of aluminum foil under the cooling rack to catch the drips.

### Skillet Orange Cake

*William Greenberg Desserts Bakes Vegan* by Carol Becker

Makes a 9-inch cake.



I found this cookbook sitting on a table at the JCC. It must have been part of the Jewish Book Fair last year. The author is Carol Becker, so I think the "Iconic New York Bakery" mentioned on the cover of the book is a real place and Carol Becker is the creator of the recipe and the book. Anyhow, it's been fun to take the challenge of finding vegan recipes but if you want real butter and eggs, go ahead. This recipe is made in a cast iron skillet.

- 1 tbs butter (plant based) for the pan
- ¼ cup something called "Just Eggs" to equal 1 egg or, your favorite replacement, or 1 egg.
- ⅔ cups sugar
- ½ cup olive oil
- ⅓ cup almond milk (or your choice)
- The zest and juice of 1 orange, roughly
- ¼ cup juice
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- Confectioners' sugar for dusting

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Put the butter in the 9-inch cast iron skillet and place skillet in the oven. Use a bowl to beat together the eggs (or the Just Eggs) and sugar until light in color, about 2 minutes. Beat in the olive oil, followed by the milk, orange juice, and zest. In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, and salt and fold the dry mixture into the wet ingredients until combined. Remove the heated cast iron skillet, carefully swirling the pan around to make sure the butter covers the entire surface, including the sides. Pour in the batter and return skillet to the oven. Bake 20–25 minutes until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool completely and dust with confectioner's sugar just before serving. ■

## Restaurant review

### Taste of the farm in a strip mall

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.*



Occasionally, we struggle a bit to hit our editor's requested word count. Not this month! After languishing on our must try list for many months, we decided to venture out to the new White Lotus Farms Cafe (WLFC) after a nudge from a Temple Beth Emeth friend. Perhaps you've visited their stand at the Farmer's Market and have been rewarded with a delicious pastry after standing in a long line. Or maybe you've taken a drive out to the farm off Liberty to see the baby goats and taste some cheese, order a pizza or attend a fundraiser. We had done all the above in the past, but the Cafe is a new experience. In a bright, airy space, tucked at the back of a strip mall, you'll find a multi-level, art-filled cafe that's open from 7 a.m.-7 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. The main part of the space is the cafe, with a smaller market off to the side. You will even find a shelf of books and games to occupy the



little ones or yourself while you're there.

We visited on a bustling Saturday morning. The restaurant was busy, but the wait to order wasn't very long. After first being side-tracked by the pastry window, we focused on actual lunch. We had some tough decisions to make. Orders are taken at the counter by very friendly staff members who are hap-

py to answer questions and share their opinions on menu favorites. A number is given for the table and then the food items are delivered by more friendly staff members. There are pros and cons to this service model, but WLFC staff excelled and did not disappear or forget about us after delivering our food. They checked in, brought extra plates when requested, answered more questions, and cleared the table as our meal progressed.

We ultimately decided on the roasted eggplant sandwich and chicken salad sandwich from the pastry case, a seasonally available Sungold Tomato and Goat Cheese pizza, and the Green Goddess gazpacho. From the drink menu, we chose an iced americano coffee and an iced strawberry matcha. Not being a big fan of many overly sweet big brand flavored syrups, we inquired about the strawberry flavor. Confidently, we were told it is from France and has a lower sugar content and true strawberry flavor. The contrast between the green matcha and the bright red syrup made a visually stunning and delicious drink.

The eggplant sandwich arrived first. Served on the house-made ciabatta, it was warm and toasted from spending some time on a sandwich press. The silky eggplant was perfectly cooked and was classically paired with a roasted red pepper spread, spinach leaves, mozzarella cheese and a drizzle of balsamic vinaigrette. The components were in perfect harmony; we were kind of sad when only the plate remained. The chicken salad sandwich on the legendary WLF croissant was prepared well with shredded chicken, red grapes, celery, and fresh dill with just enough mayo to hold it together. While tasty, it would have benefited from some salt and pepper but it was still solid and there were no complaints about the buttery croissant it was enveloped in. Both sandwiches were served with a bag of chips and fantastic zucchini pickle spear made in the controversial "love 'em or hate 'em" bread and butter style. We thought they were great and a creative accompaniment that utilizes the bounty of one of nature's most prolific plants. The Green Goddess gazpacho was a refreshing cold cucumber and dill soup made vegan by replacing the typical buttermilk or yogurt with coconut cream. It was full of refreshing flavor and was perfect on a hot summer day.

White Lotus Farms has been cooking up pizza at their farm for years and rightfully they have a devoted following. They mill their own wheat and create a wonderful naturally fermented pizza dough. We felt it was our duty to try the cafe version of the Sungold and Goat Cheese pizza — it did not disappoint us! When you start with really fresh ingredients you can't go wrong. The farm-grown golden-hued Sungold tomatoes were sweet and bursting with peak-of-the-season flavor, paired with basil, farm-made fresh mozzarella and goat cheese, and finished with a wonderfully rich olive oil and a syrupy balsamic reduction on a sourdough crust — slightly blistered, chewy, and perfectly cooked. Paired with a salad, this would make a lovely dinner for two. Saving room for dessert, we only had one slice each but

were rewarded with an excellent lunch the following day — it reheated in the oven perfectly.

After ogling over that pastry case, we had to try a couple of selections. With counseling from our server, we chose the special bake of the day — a double baked cinnamon croissant — extra crispy with a deeper flavor and topped with a generous amount of cinnamon sugar, and a Chocolate Oh, a croissant donut topped and filled with rich chocolate. Both were decadent and would have been enough on their own but when eaten together they created a sum greater than its parts. Cinnamon, chocolate, and buttery croissants are a heavenly trio. Maybe we are on to something here!

On our way out, we perused the market and took advantage of samples of the sweet and spicy ginger-lemon iced tea and green olive bread, even though we had no room left. The shop was stocked with local in-season produce, pastas, grab and go foods, drinks, and many other artisan-produced goods. Their own baked goods, breads, and cheeses were available to take home as well.

While chatting with the staff we learned more about White Lotus Farms' commitment to making as much of their food as possible from scratch, using locally sourced ingredients, their local farm partners, milling their own grain and so much more. To learn even more about WLF and why we need to support organizations like this, visit their website <https://www.whitelotusfarms.com/ourstory> ■

**White Lotus Farms Café, 355 S Zeeb Rd, Ann Arbor, (734) 369-3205**

#### Immigrant storytelling to benefit MIRC, continues from page 3

#### MIRC (Michigan Immigrant Rights Center)

Since the Trump administration took office in January of 2025, according to MIRC Communications Officer Christine Suavé, the agency has received an extraordinarily high volume of inquiries. Last year, they took more than 5,000 calls for legal assistance and handled 1,521 cases. They are currently receiving as many as 40 calls a week from newly detained immigrants and recently expanded their intake team to better manage the volume.

MIRC is the only nonprofit legal service provider designated to answer calls from people in immigration detention in Michigan. It is also the only Michigan organization listed on the pro bono list given to people in removal proceedings in immigration court.

With the dramatic increase in detentions in Michigan this year, MIRC has had to shift resources to detention work, specifically including quick support in filing habeas petitions, because policy changes have made it harder for detainees gain release on bond. This critical work is exacerbated by about 700 immigration policy changes enacted under Trump's current administration.

The community is encouraged to help MIRC help our immigrant neighbors. Buy a ticket, donate to Becoming American. Every dollar raised for them will help pay for critically needed legal services. ■

October 6th  
6pm | \$45

## Cooking Up History



One night only:  
A conversation with  
Jewish foodways  
expert, Nora Rubel!

in collaboration  
with  
**CENTER FOR  
JEWISH STUDIES**  
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

*Zingerman's  
roadhouse*  
book event



## Community

### Weather did not deter crowd for Crabapple talk

By Merci Decker, PhD



**Molly Crabapple at the Dearborn Wall of Tears with Mayor Abdullah Hammoud\_09032026\_photo by Barbara Barefield**

Despite a tornado warning two hours before doors opening in Detroit on September 3, and power outages in Ann Arbor on Friday September 4, almost 200 people turned out to hear *New York Times* bestselling author Molly Crabapple discuss her book, *Here Where We Live Is Our Country: The story of the Jewish Bund*. In Ann Arbor, local author of *The Smallest Mistake We Call Human* Issac Pickell opened with an original poem written about Crabapple's book.

Rev. Joe Summer welcomed Ann Arbor attendees on behalf of the Michigan chapter of Friends of Sabeel North America, which works closely with Jewish Voices for Peace. He explained, "While it's clear how much the anti-democratic and antisocial equality movement in this country is rooted in Christian nationalism, I fear the democratic movement in this country is far less clear about our need to unite across our secular/religious divides and how important progressive religious folks continue

to be in the struggle for social equality and to uphold the human rights of all."

Crabapple interspersed readings from her book among questions from the audience and moderators, playwright Stacie Chaiken in Detroit and Alice Mishkin, founder of Chesed Havurah, in Ann Arbor.

Sandra Gross, a volunteer for Detroit Jews for Justice, one of the co-sponsors of the event, explained, "The talk and attendee questions showed our communities still have hope in the ability to heal our world, and take it back from the fascist forces that would treat immigrants like criminals, fund illegal and immoral wars, and support the expulsion of a people from their own land."

Crabapple echoed this sentiment as she closed out the Ann Arbor talk with a final reading, "I want off the samsara wheel of atrocity, and the Bund's demand of solidarity across difference is the only way to get there. Such solidarity is fragile and frequently betrayed but is all we have. It is the only thing that can save us." ■



**Alice Mishkin, Isaac Pickell, Molly Crabapple**

### Jewish ethics and identity: New series makes challenging ideas accessible



**Dr. Elliot Ratzman**

New Perspectives, Timely Conversations, a series proposing to make academic resources and challenging ideas accessible to the wider Jewish community, kicks off on Sunday, October 11. The three fall 2026 offerings take place at the JCC Ann Arbor, 12–1:30 p.m. Future sessions will take place in the winter and spring.

Sponsored by The Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation and organized by Deborah Field and Sarai Brachman Shoup, the series is grounded in Reconstructionist Judaism, which considers Jewish culture and beliefs as

evolving rather than fixed. New Perspectives, Timely Conversations aims to provide fresh perspectives and raise new questions that allow the community to think differently about Jewish identity.

Most sessions consist of interview-style conversations with scholars, journalists, and educators about their work. This Fall, one of the sessions is a film, an Ann Arbor premiere.

On Sunday, October 11, Dr. Elliot Ratzman, a research fellow at U-M's Raoul Wallenberg Institute, and experienced organizer and activist, discusses "Zip-

porah's Sacrifice: Jewish Ethics and Race."

On Sunday, November 15, the acclaimed 30-minute *Scenes from the Divide* screens for the first time in Ann Arbor. *Scenes from the Divide* explores the tensions among New York Jews over identity, history, and responsibility surrounding the Mamdani campaign for mayor in 2024–25. A facilitated discus-

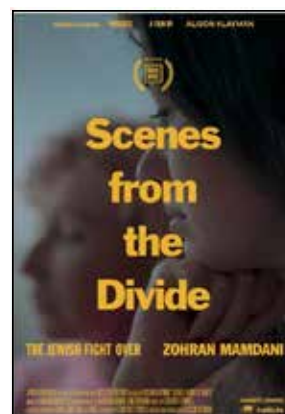


**Mari Cohen**

sion follows the screening.

On Sunday, November 22, Ann Arbor native and senior politics editor at *Jewish Currents* Mari Cohen discusses "The Anti-Defamation League and Today's Crisis of Jewish Politics."

RSVP for each session is required. Email [sbshoup@gmail.com](mailto:sbshoup@gmail.com) for the RSVP link. ■



## A Conversation With



## Dana Nessel Michigan Attorney General

6:00 PM Tuesday, October 13th  
At EMU

Come out and join us for a moderated discussion with Michigan's first Jewish Attorney General, Dana Nessel.



Register by Scanning the QR Code.  
Registration is required for admittance.  
Exact Location Details to Come | Limited Seating

## TBE events in October

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.

### Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Whinston

Fridays at 12 p.m.

### WTBE Gift Shop

Friday at 5:30 p.m.  
Washtenaw County's only Judaica Shop!

### 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.

### 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.)

### Shabbat morning Torah study

Saturdays at 8:50 a.m.  
Join us for this weekly discussion of the Torah portion.

### Saturday Shabbat service

Saturdays at 10 a.m.

### 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.

### Weekly Mahj

Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.  
Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m.

### 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.

### Simchat Torah Service

Friday, October 2, 6:30 p.m.

### Yizkor Service & Luncheon

Saturday, October 3, 10 a.m.



### Antisemitism and Politics

Tuesday, October 6, 6 p.m.

### WTBE Fiber Arts

Monday, October 12, 7 p.m.

### The Immortal Khazntes: Cantorial Legends Brought to Life

Tuesday, October 13, 6:30 p.m.

### WTBE Historical Novel Reading Group

Wednesday, October 14, 1 p.m.

### WTBE Noon Nosh

Thursday, October 15, 12 p.m.

### WTBE Fall Membership Welcome Event

Monday, October 19, 5 p.m.

### Genesis Grounds Clean-up and Savory Soups Potluck

Sunday, October 25, noon (Grounds Clean-up) and 12:30 p.m. (Potluck)

### TBE Teen Scary Movie Night

Tuesday, October 28, 5:30 p.m. ■

## Democracy defense: Nonpartisan poll-watching

By Jessica Schwallb, *Detroit Jews for Justice*

This July, I poll challenged for the first time. My task: to monitor and report any issues that might stop voters from casting their ballots. I watched as young people, adults pushing walkers, and parents towing kids filtered into a windowless room in the Detroit Board of Election's basement. After a young woman fed her ballot into the tabulator, one of the election workers called out that she had just voted for the first time, and the entire basement erupted in cheers. It reminded me of a b'nei mitzvah, when we communally recognize a person taking on the responsibilities that come with belonging to a people.

In many ways, democracy fits within a framework ubiquitous in Judaism: covenant. The Jewish people created a reciprocal, loving relationship with G-d, who demands we follow mitzvot. The Shema states that, if we follow mitzvot, we will receive rain and food while avoiding G-d's wrath. A less literal interpretation: following mitzvot creates the conditions for a good society. The covenant includes all Jews, reminding us that — like high schoolers in a Disney channel movie — we're all in this together.

The foundational texts of the United States — the nation's Torah — claim that a social contract exists between the people and the government. We vote to communicate what we want, and the people we elect thoughtfully enact our desires. As citizens, voting is one of our obligations to each other. We vote with the government's promise that our input will help create a better society for ourselves and other Americans.

But in a country rife with fascism, dark money, and political corruption, many have lost confidence in the government holding up its side of the bargain. A 2018 Pew poll found that almost one in three Americans don't believe that voting affects how the government runs. That number jumps to 41% among those aged 18–29.

The quote “If voting did anything, they'd make it illegal,” often appears around elections attributed to Jewish radical Emma Goldman. [Goldman \(https://jwa.org/blog/suffrage/voting-isnt-enough-look-back-emma-goldmans-radical-anti-suffrage\)](https://jwa.org/blog/suffrage/voting-isnt-enough-look-back-emma-goldmans-radical-anti-suffrage), an ardent anti-suffragist, argued that voting provided the masses an illusion of choice while maintaining a deeply flawed system. I see this argument sometimes appear among the many who, like myself, feel despair at the seemingly endless stream of horrors those in power have either failed to solve or actively created.

I don't believe we can solely vote our way

out of the messes confronting us: climate change, stagnating wages, the racial wealth gap, the housing crisis, and the list goes on. But that doesn't mean that who we elect doesn't matter. As someone who works in politics, I have seen the difference that legislators of conscience can make, whether that's sitting for hours listening to community leaders' input on bills or helping constituents in crisis find help. And if voting carried absolutely no power, why would those with money and power devote millions toward taking that right away?

Voting alone won't build a true American covenant, but direct action and voting can support each other. A social contract implies that, if we vote and the government fails to uphold their end of the deal, we should say or do something about it.

I don't believe in kvetching unless I intend to act. That's why I joined the Democracy Defense Team, a group of local Jews and their neighbors working to protect all our democratic rights, starting with voting. It's why I poll challenged in the primary, and why I'll poll challenge again during the general election.

What I've learned from organizations that work every day to protect democracy is that elections are very human. In Michigan, more than 1,600 local clerks work every day to make sure we have a say in the issues that matter to us.

However, this system has increasingly come under attack. Election workers are bombarded by death threats. In 2020, the Wayne County Board of Canvassers almost refused to certify more than 800,000 votes.

Each year, hundreds of nonpartisan poll challengers and monitors across the state protect our elections. We're there to make sure that every citizen, including seniors and people with disabilities who often must deal with inaccessible polling places, can cast their ballots, and that all of those ballots are counted. You can find more information and pledge to join us at [bit.ly/PollChallengeDJJ](https://bit.ly/PollChallengeDJJ)

I could tell you that this is a pivotal time in our democracy, but I've heard that phrase thrown around during every election for the past decade. It doesn't persuade me because democracy is not an end in and of itself. Democracy does not feed or house people, it does not stand between ICE and our neighbors, and it does not care for our children. But by expanding the peoples' power and holding our elected leaders to their end of the bargain, we move one step closer to the world we need. ■





## ANNIVERSARY BENEFIT

HONORING SUSAN & DAVID FEBER  
*and*  
FRIEDA & DR. JOSEPH H. <sup>z"l</sup> LANGNAS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2026 HUNTINGTON PLACE DETROIT



### Celebrate 42 Years of Holocaust Education with Keynote Speaker Mayim Bialik

**Sunday, November 8, 2026  
Huntington Place, Detroit**

Join us for an inspirational evening with award-winning actress and proud Jewish community leader Mayim Bialik, whose grandmother and great-aunt were the only surviving members of her immediate family after the Holocaust. Mayim has used her public platform to speak openly about the importance of standing up against antisemitism and is a strong voice in support of the global Jewish community.

**For tickets, sponsorships, or more information,**  
visit [HolocaustCenter.org/Benefit](https://HolocaustCenter.org/Benefit)  
or call (248) 553-2834.

### Honoring Susan & David Feber and Frieda & Joseph H. <sup>z"l</sup> Langnas

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Photo courtesy of Les Gorback



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# Jewish Washtenaw speaks out on Senate race

## Thinking about El-Sayed vs. Rogers Senate race

In September, two groups of Michigan Jews circulated signature campaigns focused on the U.S. Senate race.

The “Nonnegotiables” petition ([www.nonnegotiable.org](http://www.nonnegotiable.org)), initiated by more than a dozen Michigan rabbis and congregational leaders, came out amid a big media splash with coverage in the *New York Times*, CBS, and others. The Nonnegotiables petition is presented by Jews who have consistently voted Democratic but now present “baseline needs” to support the Michigan Democratic nominee for Senate, Abdul El-Sayed. The petition includes five nonnegotiables for El-Sayed: his commitment to Jewish safety, Jewish right to self-define Jewish identities, Jewish sovereignty in Israel, welcoming of Jewish participation, and an affirmative vision for a better future Middle East.

Another signature campaign circulat-

ing as an open letter under the “Michigan Jews for Democracy.” The moniker is organized by Jewish volunteers in Michigan who support El-Sayed for Senate. The signatories to the open letter intend to vote for El-Sayed because as Jews and Americans, they “believe in accessible science-based healthcare, democracy and voting rights, access to abortion, public schools, immigrant justice, and the rigorous protection of vulnerable residents. ... In Abdul, we see someone who understands what it is to live in the minority, who is open to listening and learning.”

In the September issue of the *WJN*, the article “Thinking about El-Sayed vs. Rogers Senate race,” summarized the opinions of 15 Washtenaw Jews about the race, and invited readers to submit further thoughts. We gratefully received the four opinions published here.

determination alongside Israel. It describes itself not as an ultimatum, but as an invitation.

That last part matters to me. An invitation. Make the tent bigger.

This issue is still enormously important. But it exists inside a much larger political landscape: climate, healthcare, housing, guns, immigration, inequality, civil rights, democratic institutions, environmental policy, and the rule of law. These priorities will suffer even greater damage if Democrats don’t win back the Senate — and Michigan is a critical step on that path.

And this is where I think we have to recognize two emergencies at once:

The basement is flooding. And the roof is on fire.

The flooding basement represents the larger crises I believe threaten the country and planet our children will inherit. If the Trump administration is allowed to continue its rampage, if Mike Rogers joins the Senate and makes guns easier to access, gives more tax cuts to the rich and worsens inequality, takes healthcare from people who need it, and ignores the climate crisis, our grandchildren may not have a livable planet in 50–100 years.

The burning roof represents the fears many Jews are expressing about antisemitism, Jewish safety, Israel’s security, and whether Zionist Jews still belong in the political coalition they helped build.

Ignoring either one can destroy the house.

We have to fight the fire and stop the flood at the same time.

And that is where my own vote lands: I am voting for Abdul El-Sayed.

Not because my concerns about him have disappeared. They haven’t. Not because I think Jewish voters should simply swallow those concerns. I don’t.

I’m voting for him because this is how I personally weigh these competing and simultaneous emergencies. I believe the larger crises facing our country require urgent attention, while I also expect Abdul to listen, make amends where necessary, reject antisemitism unequivocally, and make genuine room for Zionist Jews.

I understand why some Jews may reach a different conclusion, particularly unless or until Abdul goes further. I respect that. I’m not telling anyone else how to vote. I’m explaining how I can cast mine with a clear conscience while continuing to challenge him.

Because ultimately, the idea running through all of this is pretty simple:

I refuse to erase Israel to care about Palestinians. I refuse to erase Palestinians to care about Israel. I refuse to hold Palestinians responsible for Hamas. I refuse to hold Jews responsible for the Israeli government. I refuse antisemitism disguised as anti-Zionism. And I refuse Palestinian suffering being waved away in the name of Zionism.

Two peoples can belong. Two children can have an equal right to safety. Two truths can be true at the same time.

Maybe “pro-Palestinian Zionist” sounds awkward. Fine. Sometimes we need new words when the old categories stop describing reality.

I am a pro-Palestinian Zionist. And I bet I’m not the only one.

## What Jewish history warns us about this Senate race

By Rachel Jacobson

Jews deserve to live safely in the U.S. with the freedom to express our communal, religious, and ethnic identities. A healthy democracy is perhaps the single most important condition for our safety and freedom. Republicans in Congress are allowing our democracy to erode at a terrifying pace, with pillars such as equal treatment under the law and fair and free elections becoming critically endangered. Shifting the Senate to Democratic control is one of the most important steps to preserve and rebuild our democracy, which is why Michigan Jews should vote for Democratic Senate candidate Abdul El-Sayed.

Whether Jews held precarious status from the start, as in medieval England and Inquisition Spain, or lost hard-won legal equality, as in 1930s Germany and 1950s Iraq, Jewish history makes it clear to us that legal exclusion often precedes worse harm. Here in 2026 America, the Trump Administration is using the Alien Enemies Act and related tools to deport people without due process. Democratic control of the Senate is a critical safeguard: it means both a majority in judicial confirmation votes and control over which judges get a confirmation hearing. In 2019 and 2020, a Republican-controlled Senate confirmed judges Neomi Rao and Justin Walker. In June 2026, those two judges formed the majority allowing the Trump administration to resume fast-track deportations nationwide, which can happen without the person ever appearing before a judge. Once a government asserts it can decide unilaterally whose due process rights count, no minority is safe from being the next exception, and the judges who will decide whether your rights as a minority are protected are confirmed years earlier, by whoever controls the Senate at the time. Where Abdul El-Sayed has called for ending the current deportation system and defended immigrants’ right to a hearing, Mike Rogers has defended ICE’s fast-track tactics, floated sending the National Guard into Detroit, and has taken over \$20,000 from private prison companies that profit directly from expanded detention.

The ability to fully and equally participate in public life has been hard-won for Jews and other minority groups in the U.S. Those fights, underpinned by access to voting rights and the ability to hold public office, secured the political standing American Jews needed to later organize, litigate, and legislate against university quotas, restrictive housing covenants, and employment discrimination. Which is why current efforts by the Trump Administration to restrict minority access to voting, aided by Republicans in the House and Senate, are so dangerous for us. Currently, Republicans are blocking minority groups from gaining political power, an effort led by Senate-confirmed Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Harmeet Dhill-

*continues on page 22*

## I am a pro-Palestinian Zionist.

By Andrew Bank

I am a pro-Palestinian Zionist.

If those words sound contradictory, this post is for you.

Especially if you’re a Jew or Zionist who hears “pro-Palestinian” and thinks anti-Israel or antisemitic.

Or if you’re pro-Palestinian and hear “Zionist” and think Netanyahu, Gaza, occupation, or someone who doesn’t care whether Palestinian children live or die.

Both are caricatures.

I am a Zionist because I believe Jews are a people with a right to self-determination in our ancestral homeland, and that Israel has a right to exist in peace and security.

But Zionism does not require me to support everything the Israeli government does.

I oppose the displacement and dehumanization of Palestinians. I do not believe Jewish sovereignty requires Palestinians to be homeless. And I am horrified, infuriated, and saddened by the enormous civilian suffering in Gaza.

A Jewish state should not require a Palestinian people without a home.

I am pro-Palestinian because Palestinians are people — not Hamas, not a slogan, not a demographic problem.

They are mothers and fathers who want their children to grow up. Kids who want boring Tuesdays, careers, homes, friends, and futures.

Palestinians deserve dignity, safety, and political self-determination. Being pro-Palestinian does not require me to support Hamas, excuse October 7, or believe Palestinian liberation requires Israel to disappear. And being Zionist does not require me to defend every Israeli policy or military action.

A people is not its government.

That applies to Palestinians and Hamas. It applies to Jews and the Israeli government. And it applies to Americans and whatever administration happens to be in power.

Here is the simplest version of my position:

An Israeli mother should be able to put her child to bed without fearing rockets, kidnapping, or murder. A Palestinian mother should be able to put her child to bed with-

out fearing bombs, displacement, or hunger.

You do not have to choose which child deserves safety.

Human empathy is not a pie. Giving another family a slice does not leave less humanity for mine.

That is why I call myself a pro-Palestinian Zionist.

And I think our politics badly needs room for this position.

Which brings me to Abdul El-Sayed.

I think two things are true at once.

Some of his rhetoric has legitimately frightened and alienated many Jews. The concern is not merely that he might be “bad for Israel.” For many Jews, the deeper question is whether Zionist Jews will be safe, respected, and fully welcome in the political coalition they have long called home.

At the same time, Abdul has condemned antisemitism, met with Jewish leaders, apologized for his response to the Temple Israel synagogue attack, and distanced himself from Hasan Piker.

Jewish leaders involved in the current Nonnegotiable effort have acknowledged those steps while saying he still has further to go.

I agree. But he does not have to become less pro-Palestinian to make Zionist Jews feel welcome. That is the false choice.

He can condemn Palestinian suffering and affirm Jewish self-determination. He can condemn Israeli settlement expansion and rhetoric suggesting Israel should cease to exist. He can support Palestinian statehood and Jewish statehood. He can criticize Israel fiercely without using language that carries centuries of antisemitic baggage.

None of these positions cancel one another out.

That is also why I’m proud of my friend, Rabbi Josh Whinston, for helping launch the Nonnegotiable petition.

The petition asks candidates to recognize Jewish safety, Jewish self-definition, Jewish sovereignty in Israel, full Jewish participation in American political life, and a future that includes Palestinian self-

# Jewish Washtenaw speaks out on Senate race

## Senate Jacobson continues from page 21

lon. Dhillon opposed restoring full Voting Rights Act protections before she was confirmed and has since used her position to direct states to redraw majority-minority districts. The Senate plays a crucial role in preventing the passage of damaging legislation, such as the SAVE Act, which could disenfranchise the 1 in 10 eligible voters who don't have easy access to certain identification documents. While Abdul El-Sayed backs pro-democracy reforms such as overturning Citizens United and term limits for a Supreme Court that has provided for dangerous, unchecked Presidential power, Mike Rogers has embraced election denialism, and a PAC supporting his campaign accepted \$5 million from a Texas oil magnate who has said only Christians should hold legislative leadership.

Due process and fair elections are just two of the pillars of our democracy that are threatened by Republican control of the Senate. A vote for Mike Rogers is a vote against an independent judiciary willing to check the president. It's a vote endangering the wall between church and state that has long protected religious minorities from a government aligned with one faith's vision of the country. And it's a vote to further fray the basic communal safety net — including health care and food for children — that reflects our shared obligation as Jews to the most vulnerable among us.

As American Jews we cannot afford to waver on our commitment to a democracy that protects everyone equally: our individual and communal safety and our ability to live freely as Jews in this country depend on it. That is why I implore Michigan Jews to vote for Abdul El-Sayed by November 3.

## Chesed havurah brings together 70 families for solidarity

By the Chesed Steering Committee

In the fall of 2023, a small group of Jews gathered in Ann Arbor to call for a ceasefire. We believed that only a diplomatic solution would end the massacres of Palestinians and free the hostages. In our calls for a ceasefire, we found community — with fellow Jews, with Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim neighbors, and with other people in Southeast Michigan who believe in freedom and equality. Out of this, we founded the Chesed havurah (chesed-havurah.org), which is now home to over 70 Jewish families in Washtenaw County.

We come to this conversation as American Jews who are active in local Jewish institutions. Some of us have sent our kids to preschool at the JCC. Many of us are members of, were raised in, and are raising our kids in local congregations. Some of us attend Shabbat services regularly, some of us read Torah on High Holidays alongside our children. Some of us have left local Jewish institutions with deep pain and sadness because we were ostracized for our political opinions and/or our identities. We are made up of Jews of color, queer Jews, Zionist and anti-Zionist Jews, and Jews in inter-

faith partnerships. Many of us are involved in local organizing: fighting for reproductive justice; organizing in anti-ICE movements to protect our neighbors; promoting racial justice and inclusivity in our Jewish institutions and in the broader community; working in solidarity alongside Muslims and other marginalized religious groups.

It is with this investment in our local Jewish institutions, Jewish community, and Jewish values that we write on the eve of Rosh Hashanah, as the Days of Awe invite us to reflect on our actions, offer teshuvah for the harm we have caused, and recommit ourselves to live and act in alignment with our values. As we enter into this time of reflection and growth, we are deeply troubled by our local Jewish institutions and leaders' response to the 2026 Michigan senatorial race. We write to offer an alternate way to think about our identities, our safety, and our solidarity than the ones that have been offered to us by the mainstream Jewish community.

Since 2023, Israel has killed, by its own estimates, over 70,000 Palestinians, though many human rights organizations believe the number is much higher. Over 17,000 Palestinian children have been orphaned as a direct result of Israel's bombardment. Gaza has the highest population of child amputees. In the West Bank, Jewish Israelis have rampaged Palestinian villages, setting hundreds of Palestinian homes on fire, torching fields of olive trees, smashing windows, and throwing stones and shooting at Palestinians. Nonviolent Palestinian activists, who have worked for years alongside Jewish Israelis and Jewish Americans, have been killed and tortured by Jewish settlers and by the Israeli army. Israel has beaten and attacked Jewish Americans and Jewish Israelis who stand in nonviolent solidarity with Palestinians.

Here in southeast Michigan, local Jewish leaders have justified these massacres in the name of Jewish safety. They have taken the horrifying and devastating Hamas massacres in Israel on October 7, 2023, and turned them into a justification for the utter destruction of Palestine and Palestinians. When activists — Jewish and not — called for a ceasefire and a diplomatic path towards freeing the hostages and ending the violence in Gaza, local Jewish leaders put all their effort into shutting down these calls for peace and accusing the activists of antisemitism. Time and again, we have seen Jewish institutions devote financial, political, and emotional resources into shutting down any public conversation or campaign to stop the bombings and forced expulsions of Palestinians. These Jewish leaders often claim to speak for all of us, but they do not. In fact, increasingly, American Jews are rejecting the false claim that strong criticism of Israel threatens their Jewish identity and their safety.

While local Jewish leaders focus exclusively on protecting Israel and, in doing so, imply that American Jewish safety is contingent upon Jewish sovereignty in Palestine and Israel, the Republican party and the MAGA movement (if the two are not already synonymous) have fueled antisemitic conspiracy theories. Politicians and public commentators have blamed Israel for America's participation in the war on Iran. Former counterterrorism director Joe Kent publicly claimed that the U.S. engaged in the war, "due to pressure from Israel and its powerful American lobby." In July, Vice President

JD Vance said that "beyond a shadow of a doubt" the Israeli government was "manipulating and trying to change American public opinion to keep the [Iran] war going on indefinitely." White Christian American leaders are actively propagating antisemitic conspiracy theories to hold American Jews and Israel responsible for the unpopular war in Iran. These are the same milieu of leaders who called antisemitic marchers in Charlottesville "very fine people." These are the same type of conspiracy theories that drove a white supremacist to massacre eleven Jews at the Tree of Life synagogue nearly eight years ago. They are the same conspiracy theories that have fueled decades of anti-Jewish hatred and violence in the United States.

When we think about the world we seek to build in alignment with Jewish values, it includes safety and dignity for all peoples. Jewish people and communities deserve to live in safety — domestically and internationally — without fearing persecution. However, we know that this does not require the oppression of people from other religions, national identities, or worldviews. As a historically persecuted people, we take seriously our responsibility to stand up for other vulnerable and minoritized groups wherever and whenever we find our homes in this world. We believe that the fusing of Jewishness and political nationalism need not be the route we seek to achieve Jewish safety.

We reject the idea that those who passionately criticize the state of Israel's violence against Palestinians do so because they are antisemitic by default. We also reject the idea that those criticisms should be the primary or sole focus of Jewish political organizing and communal effort. We reject the idea that Jewish safety is reliant on the oppression of Palestinians or any other group. We have all borne witness to the creation of Israel and how the implementation of political Zionism has led to displacement, ethnic cleansing, and genocide of the Palestinian people, communities, and culture. We reject any ideology that insists upon privileged Jewish entitlement to the land. We believe that we must find a way forward together where all displaced people have the right to return home and build collective safety.

We are invested in building a Jewish life in Southeast Michigan that is intentional, meaningful, joyful, and driven by our commitment to building an equitable and just world. We will fight for the safety and protection of all marginalized people in our community, working in solidarity with others against all forms of hatred, including but by no means limited to: racism, antisemitism, homophobia, Islamophobia, and xenophobia.

As we watch our world become more divided, more violent, and more hateful, we seek to build a world filled with chesed, with loving kindness. We hope in this season of reflection we can reflect on where we have missed the mark in our efforts towards justice, freedom, and safety for all. We hope we can recommit ourselves to aligning our actions with our Jewish values, even when it is uncomfortable and challenging. We need everyone in this struggle together. ■

## On this hand and the other

By Neal Elyakin

Dr. Abdul El-Sayed's win in the Michigan U.S. Senate primary resulted in much discussion throughout the political spectrum, in Michigan and elsewhere.

On the one hand, Democrats are working toward and hoping for wins nationally that would create a Democratic majority in the U.S. Senate. Dr. El-Sayed could help insure that possibility with a win in November against his Republican adversary, Mike Rogers.

Democrats, primarily moderate, centrist, pro-Israel voters, are concerned that a vote for Dr. El-Sayed is a vote against Israel; a vote that increases anti-Jewish hatred. Dr. El-Sayed is on record being against aid to Israel; he has been open about his relationship with Hasan Piker, a progressive activist who supports Middle Eastern terrorist organizations. It is difficult to come to terms with supporting a candidate with such views, especially if you're a staunch supporter of Israel.

On the other hand, Mr. Rogers states very clearly that he fully supports Israel, he supported the actions of President Trump against Iran, and the U.S. coordinating with Israel against Iran. Moderate, centrist, pro-Israel Democrats compare these two candidates and their stances on Israel. When Israel is the central focus of decision making regarding elected officials, these voters will mostly go with a clear supporter of Israel.

On the other hand, Mr. Rogers is also a supporter of scaling back reproductive rights, voting rights, women's rights, civil rights, health care. He would work with President Trump to install right-wing activist federal judges and will work to continue to shape the federal bench as well as the Supreme Court to ensure decades of right-wing activist decisions.

A vote for Mr. Rogers, while it may alleviate some concerns about support for Israel, will continue a Republican majority in the U.S. Senate for the rest of President Trump's term, allowing a continuation of chipping away the country's citizens' rights.

On the other hand, electing Dr. El-Sayed, possibly resulting in a shift and a majority in the U.S. Senate, will disallow, to a certain extent, some of President Trump's right-wing activist agenda. It could be argued that, if elected, Dr. El-Sayed will only be one of a hundred, a junior Senator with no prior experience with the national political system, and although being a Senator will give him a powerful voice, chances of him restructuring U.S. foreign policy may prove difficult if not impossible.

Of course, on the other hand, it could be argued that a "foot in the door" is a first step toward more elections of more like-minded local and national legislators.

So, what to do?

There are many other nuances related to this, and I am confident that many will read these words and argue, dispute, advise, and comment on how wrong I am in many aspects of my opinions.

The decision is a tough one. Perhaps not for some, on either end of this dilemma. For some, I fear for many, it may become a "frozen by indecision" moment, and not voting for either candidate may benefit the one you most vehemently oppose.

Will our democracy survive, regardless of outcome? Absolutely.

Will Israel survive, regardless of outcome? Absolutely.

Does this knowledge help in deciding? It might, for me. ■

# Exhibit showcases AARC creativity

By Emily Eisbruch



One of the pleasures of being part of the Ann Arbor Jewish community is meeting people engaged in fascinating intellectual, political, musical, and artistic endeavors. Recently, the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC) had an opportunity to showcase the artistic talents of its members in an exhibit at the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor. The range and quality of the work on display were impressive.

According to Rabbi Gabrielle Pescador, “Last year, the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC) launched AARC Creatives, giving members of our community an opportunity to share their creative work and talk about their artistic process. This year, we wanted to build on that idea by creating an exhibit. Since the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation — the home of AARC’s High Holy Day

services — displays artwork throughout its building, we asked whether they might be open to exhibiting work by AARC members. They enthusiastically welcomed the idea and generously offered some of their exhibition space.”

Many wonderfully creative people in the AARC community — artists, artisans, and makers working in a wide range of media — embraced the opportunity to participate. AARC Executive Director Elizabeth Brindley served as the point person and coordinator for the exhibit. “It’s been wonderful to see the immense talent of our congregants, and the variety of emotions and moments captured in their pieces,” comments Elizabeth. “The High Holidays are a time for reflection, and I think our art exhibit added to the depth and meaning of our High Holy Days together.”

Here are some of the featured artists

and artworks:

**Alan Haber**, a carpenter, exhibited a peacetable that was used at The Hague Appeal for Peace in 1999 and hosted Nobel Peace Prize winners and, since then, notables of many faiths and traditions.

**Leora Druckman**, an emerging ceramic and multimedia sculptor, exhibited several examples of her work.

**Margot Neuhaus**, a painter, sculptor, and photographer, displayed two photographs: “Galapagos” and “Sandwater.”

**Jack Edelstein** displayed designs that incorporate the ancient symbol of yin and yang — also known as the Taijitu or Cosmic Dyad — an emblem of complementary polarity.

**Janet Kelman**, a glass artist, displayed a piece titled “Rushing Water.”

**Paulo Neuhaus**, a digital photographer, displayed photographs of peonies in his Ann Arbor garden and a flamenco dancer in Málaga, Spain.

**Idelle Hammond-Sass**, a sculptor, jewelry maker, and painter, displayed a necklace and two watercolor paintings.

**Mollie Meadow**, a talented high school student (and our youngest participating artist), displayed a ceramic vase she created at Interlochen Center for the Arts.

**Sally Goldberg**, a ceramic artist who is a member of the Ann Arbor Potters Guild, displayed a raku mask.

**Janet Greenhut** displayed her painting “Tricolored Heron.”

**Dale Sass** displayed a box made of select hardwoods.

## AARC Events for October

The AARC is a caring, inclusive, and music-

and art-loving community of people who want to practice and study Judaism or simply be around people who share a commitment to Judaism’s values. The AARC’s spiritual leader, Rabbi Gabrielle Pescador, is known for her warmth, her collaborative spirit, and her incredible voice and harp playing. You are invited to visit <https://aarecon.org/> or email [info@aarecon.org](mailto:info@aarecon.org) to learn more about the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation.

### October 3

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.

### October 11

Book Club. We will be discussing *My Thirty-minute Bar Mitzvah: A Memoir* by Denis Hirson.

For more information about the Book Club meeting and the amazing lunch that precedes it, email [Greggsaltzman@albion.edu](mailto:Greggsaltzman@albion.edu). 1–2 p.m.

### October 11

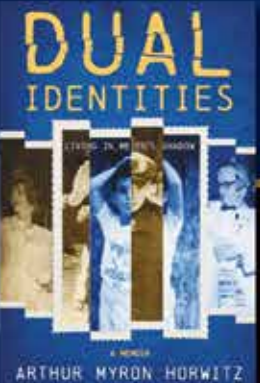
Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan Minyan. 10–11 a.m.

### October 11

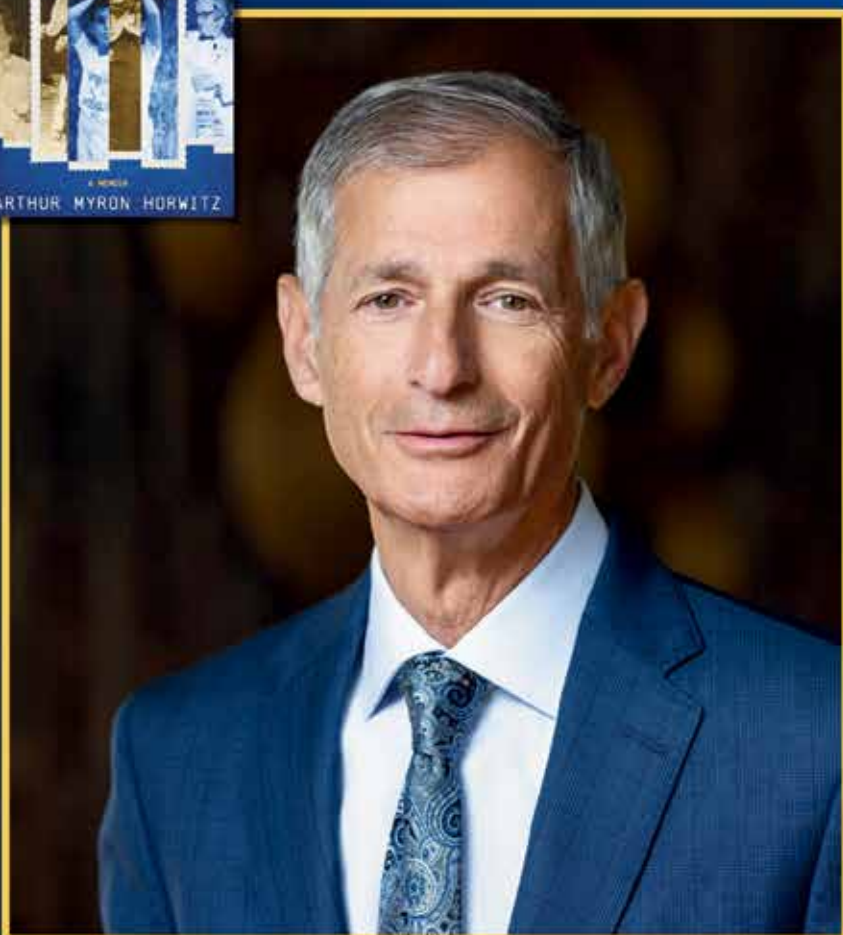
“New Perspectives, Timely Conversations”: Elliott Ratzman, speaker. JCC. Noon.

### October 23

Fourth Friday 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. ■



**DUAL IDENTITIES**  
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# Calendar

## October Calendar

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

**Thursday 1 Last day of Sukkot**

**Friday 2**  
Candlelight 6:57 p.m.

**Saturday 3 Shemini Atzeret**  
Havdallah 7:54 p.m.

**Sunday 4 Simchat Torah**

**Monday 5**

**Tuesday 6**  
**Antisemitism and Politics** at TBE. 6 p.m. (see page 19)  
**Cooking up Jewish History.** A Zinger-man's and EMU CJS event. 6 p.m. (see page 17)

**Wednesday 7**

**Thursday 8**

**Friday 9**  
Candlelight 6:45 p.m.

**Saturday 10 Bereshit**  
Havdallah 7:43 p.m.  
**Charlie King and Annie Patterson** in benefit concert for MIRC. 7:30 p.m. (see page 5)

**Sunday 11 Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan**  
**Jewish Story Time at the AADL.** 10:30 a.m. (see page 13)  
**Zipporah's Sacrifice: Jewish Ethics and Race.** 12-1:30 p.m. (see page 18)

**Monday 12 Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan**

**Tuesday 13**  
**Examining Contemporary Antisemitism** with Matt Berkman, Alice Mishkin, Ben Bornstein. S Thayer Bldg. (see page 4)  
**A Conversation with AG Dana Nessel.** EMU CJS. 6 p.m. (see page 18)  
**The Immortal Khazntes:** Cantorial legends brought to life – in concert. 6:30 p.m. (see page 1)

**Wednesday 14**  
**"Antisemitism in Michigan: A status report"** 3- 6 p.m. (see page 7)  
**Alpha House Gimme Shelter** fundraising event. 6 p.m. (see page 7)

**Thursday 15**  
**Divine Bodies, Human Questions: How Ancient Jews and Christians Imagined God.** 6th Annual Padnos Engagement on Jewish Learning: GVSU Campus. 7 p.m.  
**Israeli Election Series.** Federation. 7 p.m. (see page 13)

**Friday 16**  
Candlelight 6:33 p.m.

**Saturday 17 Noach**  
Havdallah 7:43 p.m.

**Sunday 18**  
**Jewish Studio Process Creativity Circle.** 1:30 p.m. (see page 9)  
**World ORT Ann Arbor opening event.** 3 p.m. (see page 8)

**Monday 19**

**Tuesday 20**

**Wednesday 21**

**Thursday 22**

**Friday 23**  
Candlelight 6:23 p.m.

**Saturday 24 Lech Lecha**  
Havdallah 7:21 p.m.  
**Chamber ensembles** play to benefit MIRC. 3 p.m. (see page 1)

**Sunday 25**  
**Comedian Alex Edelman** to headline Federation's 36th Main Event. (see page 14)

**Monday 26**

**Tuesday 27**  
**Israeli Election Series.** Federation. 2:30 p.m. (see page 13) ■



## Nourishing women through breast cancer treatment

This October — National Breast Cancer Awareness Month — Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County (JFS) is launching its “Nourish Healthy Snack Program for Breast Cancer.” JFS is one of 8 recipients nationally of a Supportive Oncology Initiative grant selected to participate in Sharsheret and The Network’s [NJHSA] 2026 Community of Practice, funded through a grant from the Gilead Foundation. The grant program supports local organizations in developing innovative supportive care services for individuals facing breast cancer while increasing access to education, resources, and culturally meaningful support.

Upon analysis of local supportive oncology programs and offerings, JFS identified a gap in the provision of local nutrition support. JFS’ expertise as a provider of medically tailored meals, meals on wheels, and snacks, and JFS’ commitment to Food is Medicine principles and practices, helped shape the program design. JFS Chief Program Officer Sarah Schneider Hong had this to say: “As it regards supportive oncology, we

know that those who have their non-medical cancer needs met can have better medical outcomes and less stress. Our healthy snack program enables women and their support network to conserve energy for their most important/preferred activities, knowing that healthy snacks are already at hand. Our snacks are Kosher style and nutrient rich, and are a great resource for those experiencing reduced energy, appetite changes, and food aversion.” Hong adds that breast cancer affects the entire household and can present extra challenges for women navigating their own treatment while serving as caregivers for children or other adults in their home: “Whether women in treatment eat our snacks or provide them to others in the household, we hope that our weekly home-delivered snacks will reduce stress and improve nutrition by reducing the demands of food procurement and preparation.”

Women living in Washtenaw County and receiving any type of breast cancer treatment can enroll in the program online. Participants will receive a free, home-delivered Snack Pack weekly and can opt to include a

6-pack of liquid nutrition as a supplement. All snacks are prepared at JFS’ Shalom Kitchen at its State Street headquarters and feature nutritious items such as hummus and whole wheat crackers, yogurt parfait, chia pudding, chicken bites with guacamole, and more. All snacks were designed by JFS’ Registered Dietitians and Culinary Services team to ensure they are nutrient rich with a variety of macro-nutrients.

While there is no financial cost to participate, enrollees will complete a brief pre- and post-survey to help JFS improve the program. Hong notes that since the snack program is a pilot program, funded by a small grant, gathering participant feedback will be useful in consider whether future iterations

of the program continue and if yes, how best to optimize the program to offer the best support.

Those interested in enrolling in the Nourish Healthy Snack Program for Breast Cancer can do so online at [bit.ly/snack-program](https://bit.ly/snack-program). Or, for more information, please inquire by emailing [christinet@jfsannarbor.org](mailto:christinet@jfsannarbor.org). To make a charitable donation to Nourish Nutrition or learn more about the Nourish program at JFS, please visit [www.jfsannarbor.org/Nourish](https://www.jfsannarbor.org/Nourish). ■

### Supportive Oncology Initiative

SHARSHERET Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies

Made possible through a generous grant from GILEAD Foundation

# 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.



**Ethan David White**, 22, of Ann Arbor, died August 31 after a lengthy and courageous battle with Diffuse Midline Glioma, an aggressive form of brain cancer.

Ethan was the adored and beloved son of Michelle Sherman and Dr. Eric White and was an amazing big brother to his sister Rebecca White and the late Lauren White. He was the adored grandson of Gail White. He was preceded in death by his grandfather Edward White and grandparents Shirley and Jerry Sherman. He will be missed by aunts and uncles, his close-knit Chicago cousins, and a group of friends who loved him fiercely.

Ethan was a graduate of University of Michigan - Ann Arbor (2025, BA, Psychology cum laude), an especially significant achievement as he spent more than half of his college years fighting cancer. He was an inspiring snare drummer for the Michigan Marching Band drum line and he took immense pleasure from his time on the drum line and in the hockey band. Ethan was a beautiful writer and enjoyed branching out trying his hand at covering various sports for the *Michigan Daily* as well as being a part of co-hosting the Highway to Hail podcast covering University Michigan sports.

Ethan loved the people in his life and was the first to extend himself to so many others wherever he found himself. He made friends easily and those friendships often became deep and long lasting. Those that knew him well were often recipients of one of his wonderful hugs. Ethan had an amazing sense of humor and was quick with a joke or a clever one liner. He loved to travel, was a thoughtful travel partner, and never passed up an opportunity to venture someplace he had never been, soaking up the people, culture, and food wherever he roamed.

He derived great joy from living at the drumpad and all the post football season marching band opportunities including playing in the Tournament of Roses Parade, the Rose Bowl, and the College Football National Championship as well as the NCAA Hockey Frozen Four.

While Ethan lived a full 20 years before DMG took over his life, his incredible tenacity in facing brain cancer, his never-ending sense of humor in the face of a terminal illness, and the love he gave so freely and in so

much abundance will forever inspire all who knew him. Ethan's motto was "beat the odds at all costs," and he lived each day of his life doing just that.

Ethan will be missed in every breath we take forever. A memorial service was held Thursday, September 3, 2026, at Temple Beth Emeth, Ann Arbor, Michigan.



**Lewis Jeffrey Israel**, a loving son, brother, uncle, and beloved member of his family, passed away peacefully on August 19, at the age of 64.

Lewis lived his life in his own unique way, experiencing the world differently from most of us. He had cognitive disabilities and was mostly non-verbal, but those who knew Lewis understood that his lack of speech never meant a lack of thoughts, feelings, personality, or love. He was gentle, kind, and remarkably resilient, and he touched the lives of countless people simply by being himself.

Lewis grew up surrounded by a family who loved him deeply. During his childhood, his father, Jerry, devoted countless hours to teaching him to read, do basic math, and develop the everyday skills that would help him throughout his life. Their relationship remained especially close throughout Lewis's life. His dad never seemed concerned with the way others might perceive Lewis. What mattered to him was making his son happy. His mother Tanya was not only a loving mother but a fierce advocate for Lewis during his educational journey. His siblings Laurie and Dan attribute much of their life outlook to the determination Lewis showed throughout his life.

As a young teenager, Lewis attended Woods School in Pennsylvania, a school for children with special needs where he continued to learn and develop important skills. After completing school, he lived in a series of loving group homes, sponsored by Washtenaw County Community Health where he was cared for by people who became an important part of his extended family.

Among those who cared for Lewis, two people held a particularly special place in his life. Juliette, who ran his last group home, helped create a loving and supportive home for him. And Odell, his beloved caregiver and best buddy, shared an extraordinarily close relationship with Lewis. They did so much of life together — running errands, grocery shopping, and simply being out in the world. Odell knew Lewis better than almost anyone and understood his unique ways of communicating, his routines, and what made him happy. Lewis loved Odell dearly, and his family will always be profoundly grateful that the two of them found each other.

Lewis was a true fighter. He rarely complained and often gave little indication when he was in pain. Five years ago, he unexpect-

edly collapsed and was found to need major heart surgery, despite having shown no warning signs. Two years ago, he broke his femur simply getting out of bed. He quietly got back into bed without saying a word. Through every challenge, Lewis continued to move forward with the remarkable determination that characterized his entire life.

He also knew how to have fun. As a child, Lewis loved to mimic things he saw on television. He would playfully "hypnotize" people, telling them, "You are in my powers," while the neighborhood children happily played along. He loved to eat — McDonald's was a particular favorite — and he loved old rock music, cartoons and, above all, Michigan football. His father took him to Michigan football games, and some of Lewis's happiest times were spent watching football with his dad and brother.

One of his family's last special memories of Lewis was just a month before his hospitalization. His sister Laurie picked him up from his group home and brought him to visit their 92-year-old father. The two watched reruns of Michigan football together, and Lewis was very happy. It was a simple moment, but one that captured so much of what Lewis loved: his dad, football, and being with the people who made him feel at home.

Lewis is preceded in his death by his mother Tanya Israel. Lewis leaves behind a family who will carry his memory with them always, including his father, Jerry; his siblings, Laurie Israel Cubell (Allen) and Daniel (Molly); his nieces and nephews Josh, Haley and Allison Cubell and Matthew, Ryan Rose and Kate Israel; and many extended family members and friends.

Lewis's family is especially grateful to the many caregivers, teachers, medical professionals, and friends who supported and loved him throughout his life. Their care allowed Lewis to live a life filled with dignity, companionship, and moments of happiness.

Lewis taught the people around him lessons that cannot easily be put into words. He taught them patience, empathy, determination, caring, and selflessness. He taught them that there are many ways to communicate and many ways to experience the world. Most of all, he taught his family what is truly important: love.

His family hopes that Lewis's life will continue to inspire compassion and understanding for people with disabilities and special needs. His legacy will live on not only in the hearts of those who knew and loved him, but also in his family's enduring commitment to making the world a more accepting and caring place for others who experience it differently.

Lewis's family takes comfort in imagining that he is now reunited with his beloved mother, Tanya, who passed away just eight months ago, as well as his grandparents, great-uncle, and other loved ones who went before him. Perhaps, finally, Lewis is free from the limitations that made it difficult for him to communicate all that was inside him — and perhaps he can now experience the world with a freedom he could never fully have in this life.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Lewis' memory to either of the following organizations: Aarons Acres (<https://aaronsacres.org/donate/>) or Malan Syndrome Foundation (<https://www.malansyndrome.org>)

Lewis was deeply loved. He will be deeply missed. And his family will carry him in their hearts forever.



**Leslie Jean Morris**, 86, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, died on August 16. Beloved wife of Michael Morris. Cherished mother of Susannah (Leo) Keegan, David (Kathryn Ferriell) Morris, Rebecca Morris, and Ari (Angela) Morris. Proud grandmother of Isaac and Carmen Morris and Sarah Keegan. Loving sister of the late Carol Tuttle. Funeral services were held Wednesday, August 19, at Beth Israel Congregation. Interment at Washtenong Memorial Park, Ann Arbor. Contributions may be made to Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County or a charity of choice.



**Benedette Anne Palazzola**, beloved daughter, sister, and friend, passed away on August 6 following a long illness.

Benedette was born in Ann Arbor, Michigan, to University of Michigan professor of art Guy Palazzola and his wife, Louise W. Palazzola. Ben, or Benjy, was the fourth and youngest daughter and one of five children. She attended Pioneer High School, where she excelled in academics as well as gymnastics, swimming, and diving. Following high school, Benedette attended the University of Michigan, where she majored in dance, eventually earning a Master of Fine Arts degree in dance and later, a degree in librarianship from U-M. She pursued a career in dance and choreography in New York City, receiving favorable notice in the New York Times, while also working as a librarian in Brooklyn. After returning home to Ann Arbor, Benedette was employed as the librarian for the U-M English Language Institute, eventually retiring and finding much enjoyment in part-time work with children at several Ann Arbor daycare centers.

Benedette was a highly creative person who wrote poetry, painted, and quilted. She also loved to read, attend classical mu-

*continues on page 26*

**Obituaries continues from page 25**

sic concerts, and was an inveterate collector and completer of jigsaw puzzles — the more pieces, the better. She was a lovely, loving person with a gentle spirit who will be deeply and forever missed by her siblings and friends.

Services were held privately. Donations in Benedette's name may be made to The Nature Conservancy or the Alliance for the Great Lakes. Readers may visit the website of Nie Funeral Chapel to post a remembrance.■

**Public school educators visit Israel continues from page 12**

1,200 people, targeting mostly civilians who lived in small communities, kibbutzim and moshavim, near Gaza. However, our educators said that they wanted to come on this trip to experience Israel for themselves to gain, “real world, authentic perspective sharing.”

As a group they urge others in Ann Arbor: “See for yourself!”

While so much of the trip was seeing the diversity of Israel and how civil society in the Jewish state was meeting current challenges, many in the group had no idea about the vibrancy and beauty of Israel. We saw the stunning Haas Promenade overlooking the Old

City of Jerusalem. And we experienced the gorgeous beaches of Ashkelon and Tel Aviv. Just as in Jerusalem, Arabs and Jews together were enjoying the city and the soothing waters of the Mediterranean Sea. Together they could unwind from a stressful world with beach volleyball, in the shadows of the huge skyscrapers of Tel Aviv's hotels and business centers. In fact, the beach became a spiritual moment for many in the group — bathing in the waters of the Holy Land, where all human beings could come together, in their complexity and nuance.

This was the ultimate message and chal-

lenge of this mission, which brought hope and strength to our wonderful educators who work with diverse groups of students right here in Washtenaw County. If Arabs and Jews can learn together in Israel, if the sounds of churches and mosques can be heard at the Western Wall while Jews are praying, then our community here can come together in peace and appreciation for all of our own diversity. ■

**Simchas and Sorrows**

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

Ethan White, son of Eric White & Michelle Sherman and brother to Rebecca White. August 31.  
Bernice Torch, mother of Debbie Torch (Ken Ishii).  
Helen “Jake” Fried, mother of Harry Fried.  
Michael Brooks on his death.  
Julius S. Cohen on his death.  
Leslie Morris, wife of Michael Morris. August 16.  
Lewis Jeffrey Israel. August 19.

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

Helaine and David Reid on the birth of their grandson, Elio Mershimer, on July 11, 2026. He is welcomed by his parents, Stephanie Reid and Jon Mershimer.  
Abby Sauler on her bat mitzvah, October 10.  
Emily Finkel on her bat mitzvah, October 17.

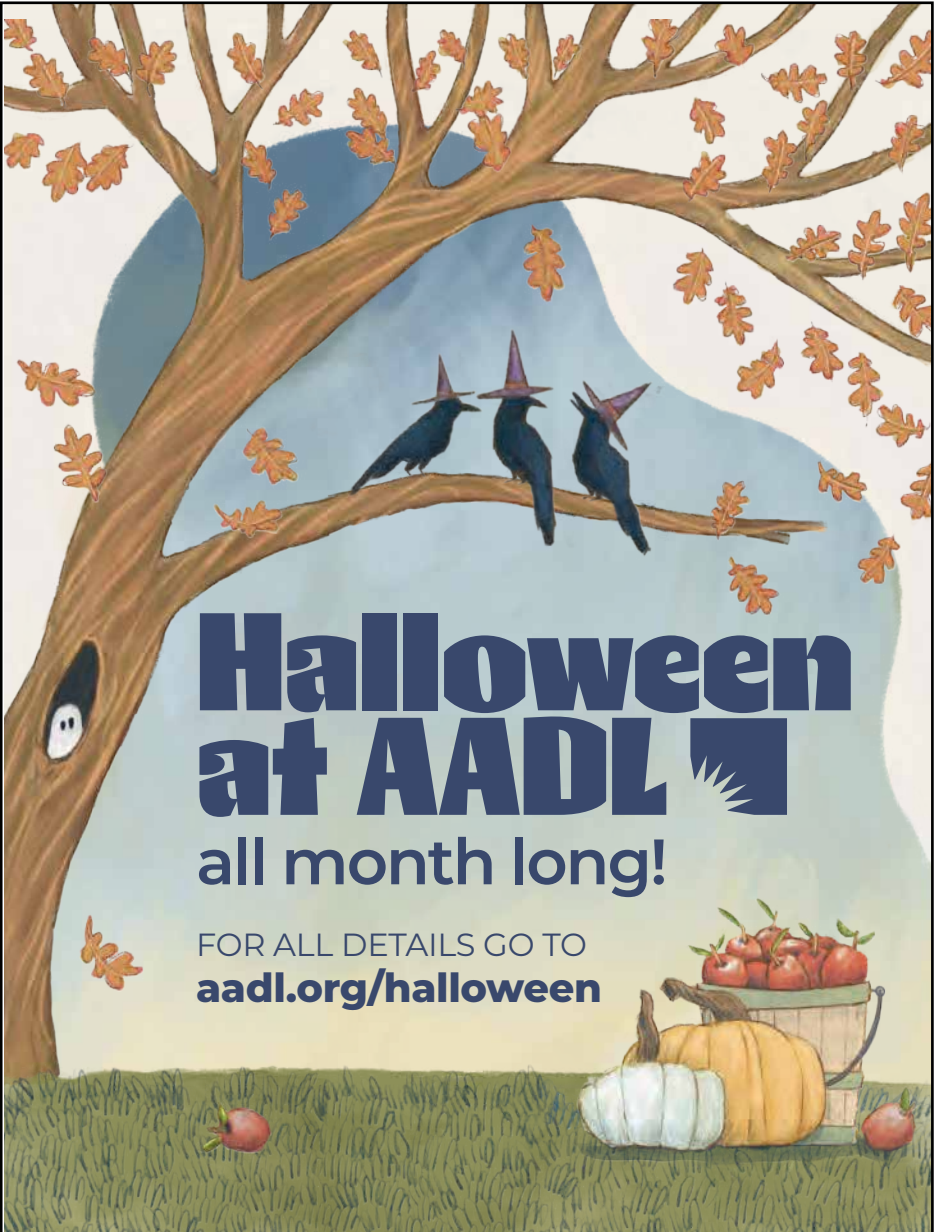
“Mmmmm,  
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Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor's 36<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

# Main Event

**Sunday, October 25, 2026**

**Featuring Alex Edelman: Comedian. Jew. Sweetheart.**

**NEW!**

**Check out the online auction, even if you can't come to the Main Event!**

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to bid. Services and goods from these sponsors, and many more.  
Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra | Blue Lion Fitness | Lewis Jewelers | Toledo Zoo

**Thank you to this year's  
Event Planning Committee**  
Melissa Hauptman | Sierra Imwalle  
Josh Pasek

**Celebrate 36 years of Jewish community.  
With your help, we can build for the next 36 and beyond.**

Attendees are expected to make a meaningful gift to the  
2027 Annual Community Campaign.

**Ticket sales close October 18**

For tickets & details, scan the QR code or visit  
[www.tinyurl.com/2026MainEvent](http://www.tinyurl.com/2026MainEvent)

