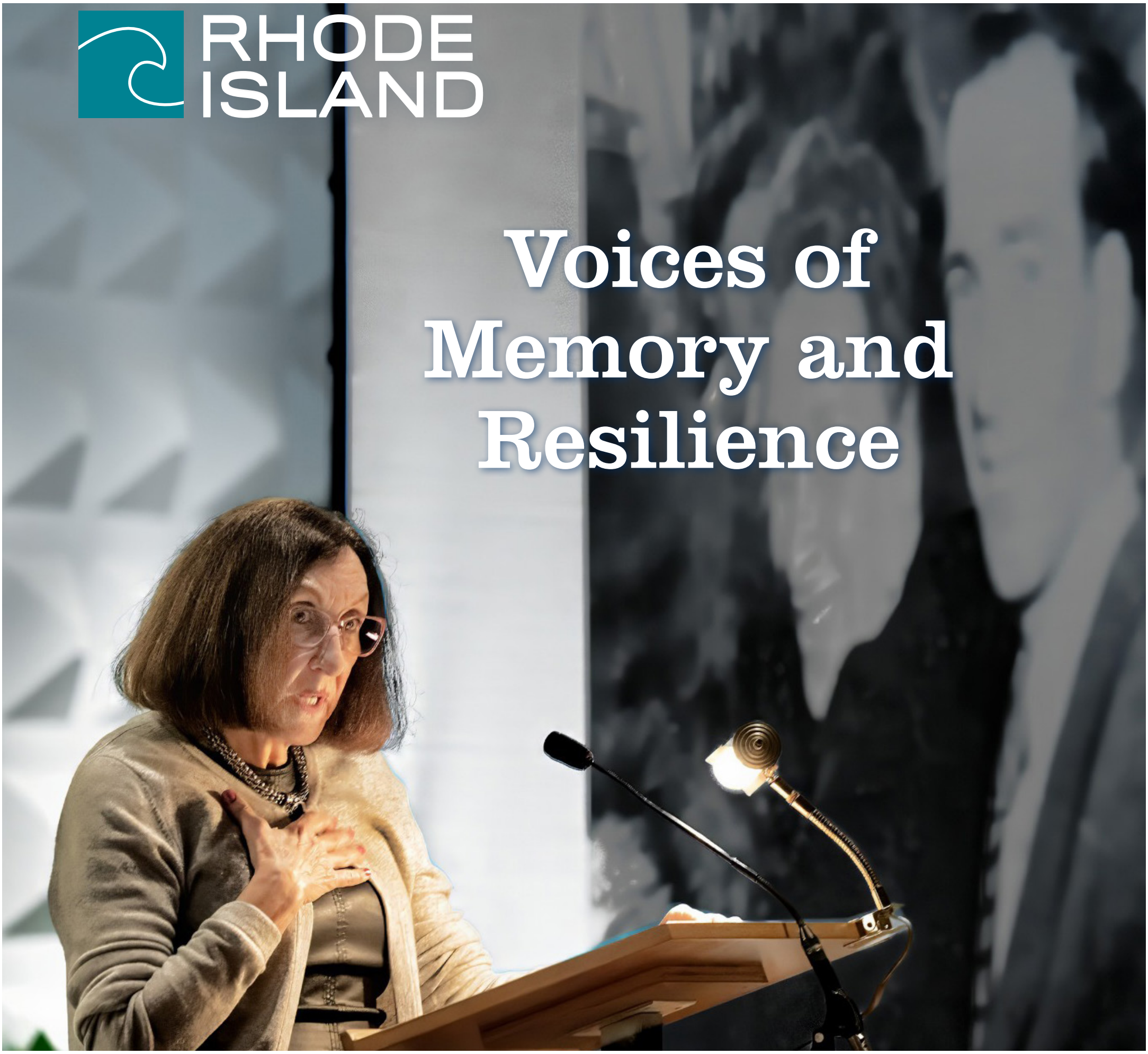
JEWISH
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JEWISH RHODE ISLAND

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ON THE COVER: PHOTO | GLENN OSMUNDSON
Fran Denerstein, daughter of Holocaust survivors Rachel and Meyer Spitzman, speaks April 13 at the Yom HaShoah event.

The Voice of Greater Rhode Island's Jewish Community
JEWISH RHODE ISLAND

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Pets and patrons in May

JEWISH RHODE ISLAND readers love their pets. Just look at the pages in the middle of this issue, and you can see that. Dogs, cats and even a lizard! And our clergy love their pets too. This year, we are featuring a few pets from the pulpit.

I am amazed that each year, our announcement of the May pets issue draws in a new group of respondents along with the loyal pet owners from previous years. We welcome you all!

And that speaks to our role as a community newspaper for all of the Rhode Island Jewish community. We really try to have a little something for everyone.

Sometimes it doesn't seem like it. Your event may not get the coverage you believe it deserves. There may be a milestone that goes by without immediate coverage. But remember, we are small. Tiny by many standards. And we do what we can to get something for everyone over the course of several issues. We are also a monthly. So, if it seems like we have missed something, check the next print paper. Or, look at the electronic newsletter that is sent mid-month.

And if you would like to write for us, or if you know someone who might be a good addition to our group of freelance writers, let us know. The more writers we have, the more news we can cover for the Jewish community of Rhode Island. By referring writers to us, you are helping to sustain your Jewish community newspaper.

Another way to help sustain us is to contribute to our annual patron campaign. I'm sure you have noticed those envelopes falling from this paper. That is always a surefire sign that the patron campaign is underway. Gifts to Jewish Rhode Island's patron campaign go directly into the operating fund for the newspaper and help us meet our budget goals. Printing and postage are key components to a newspaper and the costs continue to rise. We are fortunate that we have generous patrons who contribute each year. But contributions of any size make a difference.

Jewish journalism is alive and well. Let's keep it that way in Rhode Island. Reach out to me with comments and concerns: editor@jewishallianceri.org.

Fran Ostendorf
Interim Editor



Charlotte is 10 and keeps track of the Ostendorfs from her favorite sleeping spot.



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THE MISSION OF JEWISH RHODE ISLAND is to communicate Jewish news, ideas and ideals by connecting and giving voice to the diverse views of the Jewish community in Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts, while adhering to Jewish values and the professional standards of journalism.

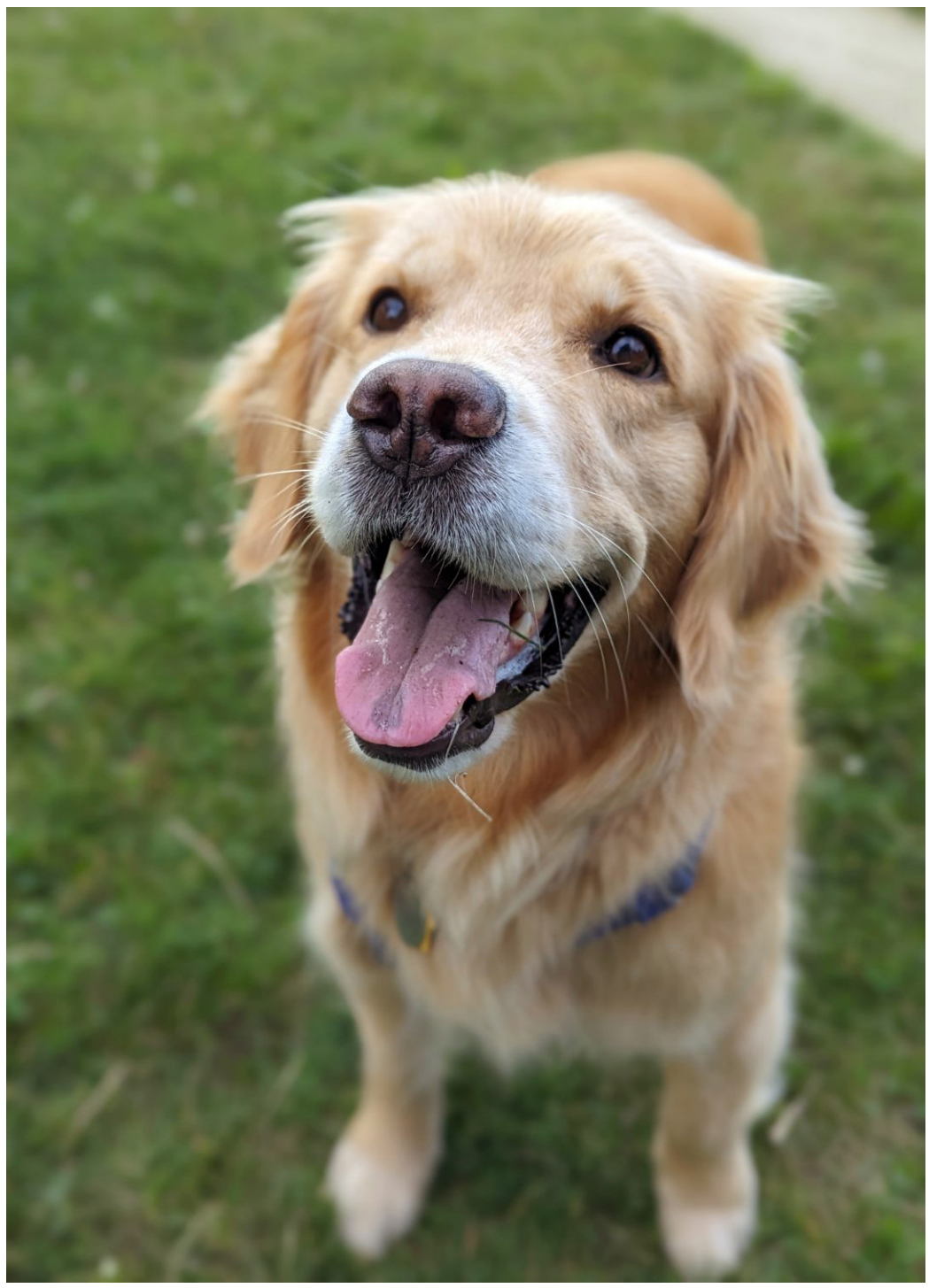
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UP FRONT

Local therapy dog offers comfort and happiness

BY SARAH GREENLEAF

Poppy Roth, 6, was born right after COVID started in 2020. Her human, Rachel Roth, had a golden retriever named Tess growing up and had always planned to add a golden to her family. Her husband, Jonathan, had always wanted a dog growing up, but as one of three boys, his mother hadn't wanted to add one to the mix. "When we got married, we knew we were going to be getting a golden retriever," Rachel said, "and it was just a question of when."



Poppy Roth

THE "WHEN" turned out to be during COVID when Jonathan was offered a postdoc in Seattle for a year. Rachel was raised in the Seattle area and was excited to be close to family, but the couple were still unsure, in those very early days of COVID, of what was going to happen and what the best and safest choice was. It ended up being Poppy, who tipped the scales in favor of the year in Seattle. "My dad, very clever strategist that he is, called the breeder, the same breeder that we had gotten Tess from, found out that she had just had a litter, and sent us a picture of the baby puppies with the text 'I'm a grandpa! Your dog is waiting for you,'" Roth recounted, laughing.

The plan was in motion to move to Seattle because, as Rachel's dad pointed out, their dog was there. After flying across the country and quarantining for two weeks, Rachel's parents picked up Poppy and put her in the yard outside their home. They socially distanced as they picked up their new dog.

"It's very special that she's from the same breeder as my childhood dog, and they have very similar temperaments – extremely friendly, extremely laid back," Rachel said. "It's very full circle for me and for my parents and our family that we now have the golden from the same place."

It was always the intention that Poppy would be a therapy dog. She brought Rachel and her family so much happiness, especially during COVID when people couldn't interact with one another, but they could interact with Poppy. "She could go up to people and interact with them and make them smile," Rachel said. "That always just brought me so much joy."

Poppy has service dog training, public access training and therapy dog training. They went through an organization that at the time was called Peaceful Paws Pet Therapy (now Snug Tail Pet University), also fondly known as Wiggle Butt University. "Which is the best name I've ever heard," Rachel added. There they worked closely with a trainer who did Canine Good Citizen testing levels with them. Poppy ended up getting 3 CGC certifications.

The first client Poppy worked with was a library in Southern Massachusetts, where Poppy would go and listen to kids practice reading out loud. "Kids who might be nervous to read to a grown-up are . . . more comfortable reading to a dog."

After Oct. 7, Rachel was asked by Stephanie Hague, a member of her synagogue, Congregation Beth Sholom, and the chief policy officer at the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island, to bring Poppy into the offices of the Alliance.

"Steph said, 'could you bring Poppy in? I think people really need it.'" Rachel was happy to do something in the face of tragedy. "I was like, yes, of course we'll come in. It's hard being in a position where there's nothing you can do. The level of helplessness is really challenging. Being able to bring some comfort to people even in a really small silly way, like giving them a dog to pet, it just feels like I'm able to do something to give people a little bit of dopamine in their system."

Rachel and Poppy have also offered comfort in non-official ways. The day Roe v. Wade was overturned, Poppy and Rachel went and stood in front of Whole Foods with a sign that said something like "if you need puppy love today."

"We do work through the organization, but then there's also just other times that we'll just look for

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

Lag B'Omer, the Thirty-Third Day of the Counting of the Omer

This week's Torah portion, Emor, contains this law about counting days: "You shall count for yourselves from the day after the holiday [Passover], from the day you bring the omer of grain offering, and they shall be seven complete weeks. You shall count until the day after the seventh week, 50 days, and then you shall bring an offering of new grain to Adonai." (Leviticus 23:15-16)

D'VAR TORAH



RABBI JEFFREY GOLDWASSER

THE COUNTING of the 49 days (a week of weeks) from Passover until the day before the festival of Shavuot has been imbued with different meanings over the course of Jewish history. In the days of the First Temple, it was primarily agricultural – a way to set the date of harvest festivals. The later rabbis of the Talmud made it a period of semi-mourning in memory of Torah students killed by the Romans. In medieval Jewish mysticism, the Counting of the Omer became a journey through 49 gates of divine emanations to reach the transcendent moment in which Torah is received from Mount Sinai on Shavuot.

Those 49 gates are identified with unique pairings of divine emanations, called *sefirot* in Jewish mysticism. The first week is the week of *Chesed*, or "lovingkindness." The second week is focused on *G'vurah*, understood as "strength" and "discipline." The third week is *Tiferet*, the emanation of "harmony," "balance" and "splendor." The fourth week takes us to *Netzach*, meaning "eternity" and "endurance." The fifth week is about *Hod* for "humility." The sixth week is based in *Yesod*, the emanation of "foundation," "groundedness" and "connection." Finally, the seventh week we reach up into *Malchut*, "sovereignty," "nobility" and "leadership."

Each day of the week is also associated with one of these seven attributes, so that, for example, the 29th day of the Counting of the Omer, which this year begins on the evening of April 30, is the first day of the fifth week. That makes it the day that focuses on the quality of Chesed within Hod, or the lovingkindness that is revealed within humility. It's a good day for contemplating how true humility lowers the ego but lifts the soul. It is a good day to ask yourself, "How does my love for the people in my life lift me out of selfishness and up toward selflessness?"

The 33rd day of the Counting of the Omer, which this year will begin on the evening of May 4, has special significance. Many Jews celebrate Lag B'Omer with bonfires and outdoor games. It also is regarded as the yahrzeit, the anniversary of the death, of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. That association gives Lag B'Omer great mystical importance.

Rabbi Shimon is the central character of the Zohar, the greatest book of Jewish mysticism. A famous passage in the Zohar (III, 287b -296b) tells how Rabbi Shimon made his final revelation of the Torah's secrets to his disciples on the night he died, which was Lag B'Omer. The passage is known as the *Idra Zuta*, and it describes how Rabbi Shimon did not just die a normal death that night. He left this world in a torrent of supernatural fire that surrounded him as the words of his revelation came pouring out of him in ecstasy. His disciples heard his words, but they were unable to reach him through the fire.

"The light that is revealed is called the Garment of the King," declared Rabbi Shimon from the midst of the divine fire. In language that is obscured by mystical terms that each resonate with multiple meanings, Rabbi Shimon says that all that we know and experience about God is nothing more than an outer garment that hides an unrevealed truth beyond our understanding. "The light within, within is a concealed light. In that light dwells the Ineffable One, the Unrevealed."Finally, Rabbi Shimon's revelation was crowned with the greatest truth of all about the "High Spark," the most hidden truth that lies at the foundation of all reality. Rabbi Shimon cried out, "There is nothing but the High Spark, hidden, unrevealed!" If we were able to truly know and understand God, we also would know that there is nothing but God. Everything that appears to exist is merely a ripple upon the surface of God. That is the great truth, the only truth, that lies at the center of all.

On this Lag B'Omer, I wish you light and celebration, but also a bit of time for reflection and deepening understanding of yourself and your place in a miraculous universe beyond our ability to conceive and understand. Happy Lag B'Omer.

RABBI JEFFREY GOLDWASSER *is the spiritual leader of Temple Sinai in Cranston.*



Greater Rhode Island

May 8	7:31pm
May 15	7:39pm
May 21	7:45pm Erev Shavuot
May 22	7:46pm
May 29	7:52pm

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

opportunities to go bring smiles to people," Rachel said.

Poppy is a calm and happy dog whose favorite food is whatever her 2-year-old sister Av is eating. The two are best friends, and even share toys, taking turns. "Poppy loves having things in her mouth. She doesn't usually destroy the toys; she just likes to carry them around," Rachel explained.

"So she will often take whatever stuffed animal Ava is holding and Ava will say, like, 'oh, it's Poppy's turn! Like, Poppy wants to have a turn.' Poppy will go, like, run around the yard with Minnie Mouse or whatever stuffed animal it is, and then she'll bring it back, and then we'll say, okay, now it's Ava's turn, let me take it back."

As far as favorite games go, for Poppy it is all about fetch. "When she was little, we would take her to the park sometimes three times a day just to let her run," Rachel remembered. Her favorite dogs are anyone who will race her to a ball and her best friend Barley, featured in "Pets from the Pulpit." After Barley stayed with them for two weeks, Poppy and Barley became inseparable, even starring in the fundraising video for Congregation Beth Sholom.

For her birthday treat, Poppy receives a mini cheesecake which combines her love of cheese and sweet things. As a golden, she is very food motivated, which has largely influenced her friendship with her human sister. "When we first brought Ava home, Poppy was sort of like, what is this? Like, what's going on? And then as soon as Ava was old enough to sit in a highchair and throw food off the side, Poppy was like, this is amazing," Rachel said.

For people who are interested in training their own dogs to become therapy dogs Rachel recommended going to the professionals. The best candidates for the job are dogs who are friendly but also calm and unflappable. If you have that sort of dog, "It's so rewarding and fulfilling that I would encourage anyone to look into it," Rachel said.

SARAH GREENLEAF *(sgreenleaf@jewishallianceri.org) is the digital marketing manager for the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island and writes for Jewish Rhode Island.*



CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

FOR COMPLETE MONTHLY LISTINGS, VISIT JEWISHRHODY.ORG

Ongoing

Kosher Senior Café and Programming. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday – Thursday at the Bonnie & Donald Dwares JCC, 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence; Fridays at Temple Sinai, 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. In-person (and usually on Zoom Monday –Thursday) programming 11 a.m.-noon followed by lunch and discussion noon-1 p.m. No café on 5/22 or 5/25. On Wednesdays, programming is chair yoga. For seniors aged 60 and older as well as younger adults with a disability; all faiths and backgrounds are welcome. Suggested donation: $3 per lunch. The Kosher Senior Café is a program of Jewish Collaborative Services and is supported by the Jewish Alliance of Greater RI and Blackstone Health. Information and RSVP, Neal at neal@jcsri.org or 401-421-4111, ext. 114.

Temple Sinai Women in Genesis. Sundays 12:30-2 p.m. thru 5/31. 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Taught by Cantor emerita Deborah Johnson, the course will focus on the women in Genesis and their importance. In the final session, we will create a Genesis heroine through the process of midrash. Information, Templesinairi.org, dottie@templesinairi.org or 401-942-8350.

Temple Emanu-El Mahjong. Tuesdays. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. 99 Taft Ave., Providence. Information, Shoshana Jacob at shosh@teprov.org or 401-331-1616.

Hebrew Classes. Tuesdays twice per month thru 8/18. Introduction to Prayerbook Hebrew 5-5:45 p.m. Other levels 6-7 p.m. Temple Emanu-El, 99 Taft Ave., Providence. Classes offered: Introduction to Prayerbook Hebrew, Advanced Beginners for Spoken Hebrew, Intermediate and Advanced. Offered jointly with the Jewish Alliance of Greater RI. Dates: 5/5, 5/12, 6/9, 6/16, 7/14, 7/21, 8/11, 8/18. Information, Toby Liebowitz at tobyaane@gmail.com.

Temple Beth-El Mahjong. Tuesdays 5:30-8 p.m. 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. This gathering is not instructional; players of all levels are invited. Observers welcome. Sets and cards are not provided. Information and RSVP, Barbara Barry at bebarry@msn.com.

Temple Torat Yisrael Virtual Minyan. Tuesdays 5:30 p.m. Via Zoom. Information, temple@toratyisrael.org.

Temple Sinai Judaism Beyond the Basics. Thursdays thru 5/7. 7-8 p.m. 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Topics will include Jewish mysticism, Jewish views on sexuality, responses to antisemitism, our complicated relationship with Israel, Talmud study and more. Open to perspective and recent converts, people in interfaith relationships and anyone who wants to lift their Jewish learning. Information, Templesinairi.org, dottie@templesinairi.org or 401-942-8350.

Cape Cod Synagogue Family Shabbat Services and Dinner. Second Friday of the month 5:30 p.m. 145 Winter St., Hyannis, Mass. In-person and livestreamed services on website, Facebook, Cape Media, YouTube and Community Television Comcast channel 99. Followed by Community Shabbat Dinner. Information, 508-775-2988 or capecodsynagogue.org.

Temple Torat Yisrael Virtual Kabbalat Shabbat & Torah Services. Fridays 5:45-6:15 p.m. Via Zoom only. Information, temple@toratyisrael.org.

Temple Sinai Evening Service. Fridays 6-7 p.m. 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. In person or on Zoom. Information, Templesinairi.org, dottie@templesinairi.org or 401-942-8350.

United Brothers Synagogue Shabbat Services. 7 p.m. 205 High St., Bristol. Shabbat services first Friday evening of every month. Information, Bradford Louison at bradlouison@gmail.com or 617-512-1978.

Cape Cod Synagogue Shabbat Services. Fridays 7 p.m. 145 Winter St., Hyannis, Mass. With Rabbi David Freelund. In-person and livestreamed on website, Facebook, Cape Media, YouTube and Community Television Comcast channel 99. Information, 508-775-2988 or capecodsynagogue.org.

Temple Beth-El Torah Study. Most Saturdays 9-10:30 a.m. 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. In the library. Information, Jude Weinstein at jweinstein@temple-beth-el.org or 401-331-6070.

Temple Torat Yisrael Shabbat Services. Saturdays 9:30-10:30 a.m. 1251 Middle Road, East Greenwich. In-person service with Zoom available. Information, temple@toratyisrael.org.

Temple Sinai Breakfast and Torah Study. Saturdays 9:15-11 a.m. 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Breakfast followed by weekly Torah study (also on Zoom) at 10 a.m. Information, Templesinairi.org, dottie@templesinairi.org or 401-942-8350.

Temple Habonim Torah Study. Some Saturdays 10-11 a.m. When Shabbat morning services are not scheduled, Online. Information, Adina Davies at office@templehabonim.org or 401-245-6536.

Cape Cod Synagogue Shabbat Services. Saturdays 10:30 a.m. 145 Winter St., Hyannis, Mass. With Rabbi David Freelund. In-person and livestreamed on website, Facebook and YouTube. Information, Cape Cod Synagogue at 508-775-2988 or capecodsynagogue.org.

Temple Sinai Morning Shabbat Service. Saturdays 11 a.m.-noon. 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. In the chapel or on Zoom. Information, Templesinairi.org, dottie@templesinairi.org or 401-942-8350.

Sunday | May 3

Temple Sinai Parenting Group. 9-10 a.m. 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Meet with Rabbi Heather Shore for a discussion about raising Jewish children. Information, Templesinairi.org.

Spring Plant Sale. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Bonnie & Donald Dwares JCC, 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence. Featuring organic and chemical-free garden plants and houseplants. URI Master Gardeners will answer questions and provide free soil pH testing and seeds; Lazy K Ranch will bring alpacas and knit goods; Indie Cycle e-Waste Recycling will collect e-waste (10 a.m.-noon); music by the Rehoboth Sunday Night Jammers. Information, Samantha Kaufman at skaufman@jewishallianceri.org.

Temple Beth-El Annual Meeting. 2-3 p.m. 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. 170th Rosalea E. and Newton B. Cohn Annual Meeting, which will include a celebration honoring Cantor Judy Seplowin's retirement. Congregants are invited to vote on board members, review the budget and discuss the future of the congregation. Information, Jude Weinstein at jweinstein@temple-beth-el.org or 401-331-6070.

Temple Beth-El Cantor Judy Seplowin's Retirement Celebration with Julie Benko. 4-6 p.m. 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. A performance by Broadway star Julie Benko honoring Cantor Judy Seplowin's tenure at Beth-El. Information and RSVP (required), Jude Weinstein at jweinstein@temple-beth-el.org or 401-331-6070.

Tuesday | May 5

Chabad of Providence and Congregation Beth Sholom Lag B'Omer with the Rogers Park Band. 5:30-8:30 p.m. Location upon registration. Family-friendly celebration featuring America's only Hasidic folk-rock band and a delicious barbecue. Cost: $20 per adult, $15 per child, $65 family max. Information, Rabbi Berel Laufer at chabadprovidence@gmail.com or 401-543-5825.

Thursday | May 7

"The Village I Knew" Community Performance. 4-5:30 p.m. Hattie Ide Chaffee Home, 200 Wampanoag Trail, East Providence. Inspired by the stories of Yiddish storyteller Sholem Aleichem. Featuring excerpts from "The Village I Knew," performed by professional dancers from Dancing Legacy, students from Fusionworks Dance Center and members of DAPpersRep (DanceForAllPeople). Free. All welcome. Refreshments served. Information, Hattie Ide Chaffee Home at 401-434-1520.

Friday | May 8

Temple Beth-El Kabbalat Shabbat. 5:45-6:45 p.m. 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. Information, Jude Weinstein at jweinstein@temple-beth-el.org or 401-331-6070.

Tuesday | May 12

Antisemitism and Democracy: An Evening with Amy Spitalnick. 7 p.m. Providence area. The Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island welcomes Amy Spitalnick, CEO of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, for a moderated conversation on countering antisemitism and extremism, protecting democracy and building coalitions across communities. Location provided upon RSVP (by 5/5). Information, Emily Gaudreau at egaudreau@jewishallianceri.org.

Wednesday | May 13

New England Revolution Jewish Heritage Night. 7:30 p.m. Gillette Stadium, 1 Patriot Place, Foxborough, Mass. There will be a co-branded scarf along with your ticket purchase. Information, Brad Swartz at bswartz@jewishallianceri.org.

Thursday | May 14

"The Village I Knew" Culminating Intergenerational Workshop. 4-5 p.m. Collis Family Gallery, Barrington Public Library, 281 County Road, Barrington. Join us for a residency by artists from "Dancing Legacy" based on Sophie Maslow's Dance "The Village I Knew" and inspired by the stories of Yiddish storyteller Sholem Aleichem. Free. All ages welcome. Refreshments served. Information, Hattie Ide Chaffee Home at 401-434-1520.

Temple Beth-El Jewish Tools for Coping and Care. 5:30-7:30 p.m. 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. Second session of three-part Jewish learning and reflection series, led by Rabbi Heather Shore of Jewish Collaborative Services. Blending text study and guided discussion, explore personal and communal responses to Israel and Palestine. New participants welcome at each session. Information, Jude Weinstein at jweinstein@temple-beth-el.org or 401-331-6070.

Broadway Film Series: "Wicked." 6-8 p.m. Bonnie & Donald Dwares JCC, 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence. The Jewish Alliance is bringing the magic of Broadway to the big screen with this final film in our series. "Wicked" reminds us of the Jewish teaching not to judge others harshly but to seek understanding and compassion. Tickets: $5. Information, Samantha Kaufman at skaufman@jewishallianceri.org.

Friday | May 15

Temple Beth-El Kabbalat Shabbat. 5:45-6:45 p.m. 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. Information, Jude Weinstein at jweinstein@temple-beth-el.org or 401-331-6070.

Saturday | May 16

Kids' Night Out: Little Inventors. 5-9 p.m. Bonnie & Donald Dwares JCC, 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence. Parents enjoy a night out while kids enjoy activities including arts & crafts, games and a movie. Dinner included. For grades K-5. Information (including cost), Rachel Accetturo at raccetturo@jewishallianceri.org or 401-4111, ext. 140.

Tuesday | May 19

Temple Beth-El Sisterhood Board Installation. 6:30-8:30 p.m. 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. A special installation with Cantor Judy Seplowin serving as installing officer. We will review the past year's events, install the 2026–27 slate of officers and board members, and enjoy a catered dinner as we celebrate and honor the cantor's years of service. Information, Jude Weinstein at jweinstein@temple-beth-el.org or 401-331-6070.

Wednesday | May 20

JCDSRI Zimriyah. 6 p.m. Temple Emanu-El, 99 Taft Ave., Providence. Listen to the students of JCDSRI share their songs and lift their voices. Information, Allison Gavin at agavin@jcdsri.com.

CALENDAR

Thursday | May 21

Temple Beth-El Confirmation Service. 7-8 p.m. 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. 140th Confirmation Service held in our Chapel. Information, Jude Weinstein at jweinstein@temple-beth-el.org or 401-331-6070.

Friday | May 22

Temple Sinai Shavuot Festival Service. 10-11:30 a.m. 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Join us in the Chapel as we celebrate the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. Information, Dottie@templesinairi.org.

Temple Beth-El Kabbalat Shabbat. 5:45-6:45 p.m. 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. Information, Jude Weinstein at jweinstein@temple-beth-el.org or 401-331-6070.

Saturday | May 23

Temple Sinai presents the Isle of Klezbos. 7 p.m. 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Enjoy some Yiddish music from the band Isle of Klezbos, which has toured from Vienna to Vancouver. Since being formed in 1998, they have been seen on HBO, NPR, CBS Sunday Morning and PBS. Information, Dottie@templesinairi.org.

Wednesday | May 27

Red Sox Jewish Heritage Night at Fenway Park. 4-10 p.m. Bonnie & Donald Dwares JCC, 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence. Ticket holders who purchase through our special offer receive a Red Sox Jewish Heritage City Connect jersey with Red Sox written in Hebrew. A bus (limited seating) will provide transportation to and from the Dwares JCC for the 6:45 p.m. game. Information, Brad Swartz at bswartz@jewishallianceri.org.

Thursday | May 28

Temple Beth-El Jewish Tools for Coping and Care. 5:30-7:30 p.m. 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. Last session of three-part Jewish learning and reflection series, led by Rabbi Heather Shore of Jewish Collaborative Services. Blending text study and guided discussion, explore personal and communal responses to Israel and Palestine. New participants welcome at each session. Information, Jude Weinstein at jweinstein@temple-beth-el.org or 401-331-6070.

Young Professionals Happy Hour. 5:30-8 p.m. Location TBD. Join us for a cozy happy hour filled with good drinks, easy laughter and new friends. Cost: $12 (includes 1 drink). Information, Samantha Kaufman at skaufman@jewishallianceri.org.

Friday | May 29

Temple Beth-El Kabbalat Shabbat. Fridays 5:45-6:45 p.m. 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. Information, Jude Weinstein at jweinstein@temple-beth-el.org or 401-331-6070.

Temple Emanu-El Shabbat Chai honoring Cantor Mayer. 6-9:30 p.m. 99 Taft Ave., Providence. Music-filled Shabbat service and dinner. Free. Information, Shoshana Jacob at shosh@teprov.org or 401-331-1616.

Congregation Beth Sholom Alumni Shabbaton. Friday – Saturday. 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence. Celebration of CBS's 120th anniversary with a special Shabbat welcoming current and alumni members as well as the broader community. Information, office@bethsholom-ri.org.

Sunday | May 31

Congregation Beth Sholom Brunch Gala. 10 a.m. -1 p.m. 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence. The congregation will culminate the celebration of its 120th year with a brunch gala spectacular. Information, office@bethsholom-ri.org.

Temple Sinai Presents Author Joan Leegant. 2-4 p.m. 30 Hagen Ave., Cranston. Leegant's "Displaced Persons" consists of 14 short stories, half set in Israel and half set in the US., in which the Jewish characters face the issue of belonging. The author will speak about her writing process and answer questions. Cost: $36. Information, Templesinairi.org, dottie@templesinairi.org or 401-942-8350.

Rhode Island Civic Chorale and Orchestra Concert. 3 p.m. Temple Beth-El, 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. Leonard Bernstein's Chichester Psalms will anchor RICCO's program exploring Jewish musical traditions across the centuries with elements of a traditional Jewish worship service presented in a universal way. Tickets ($15-$35) at www.ricco.org and at the door. Information, info@ricco.org or 401-521-5670.

Temple Emanu-El Double Chai Concert. 3-6 p.m. 99 Taft Ave., Providence. Join us as we honor Cantor Mayer and his 36 years at Temple Emanu-El with a concert and food. Free. Information, Shoshana Jacob at shosh@teprov.org or 401-331-1616.

Tuesday | June 2

Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center and The Miriam Hospital Book Talk: "The Jewish Hospital." 7-8 p.m. Bonnie & Donald Dwares JCC, 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence. Join us for an evening with physician and author Dr. Jonathan Hammel, whose novel was inspired by his grandmother's experience as a nurse at Berlin's Jewish Hospital during World War II. Information, info@hercri.org.

Wednesday | June 3

JCDSRI Annual Meeting. 6:30 p.m. The Goldberg Gym, JCDSRI, 85 Taft Ave., Providence. Celebrate another wonderful year at JCDSRI and look toward the future as a community. Information, Allison Gavin at agavin@jcdsri.com.

Thursday | June 4

Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center 39th Annual Meeting and Art & Writing Awards Ceremony. 7-8 p.m. Bonnie & Donald Dwares JCC, 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence. Share in our accomplishments, install incoming President Francine Denerstein and award students for their excellence in leadership and creativity. Information, info@hercri.org or 401-453-7860.

Friday | June 5

Jewish Alliance Hosts Blood Drive. 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Bonnie & Donald Dwares JCC, 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence. Donations by appointment. (Use sponsor code 1528.) Walk-ins welcome if availability permits at time of arrival. Eat, drink and bring your photo ID. All donors will receive a Pride t-shirt in recognition of Pride month. Information, ribc.org or 401-453-8383.

Temple Beth-El Pride Shabbat Service. 5:45-7:15 p.m. 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. Celebrate community, identity and belonging at our annual Pride Shabbat. The evening will include music, prayer and reflection honoring the intersection of LGBTQ+ identity and Jewish tradition. All are welcome. Information, Jude Weinstein at jweinstein@temple-beth-el.org or 401-331-6070.

Saturday | June 6

Kids' Night Out: Spring into Camp. 5-9 p.m. Bonnie & Donald Dwares JCC, 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence. Parents enjoy a night out while kids enjoy activities including arts & crafts, games and a movie. Dinner included. For grades K-5. Information (including cost), Rachel Accetturo at raccetturo@jewishallianceri.org or 401-4111, ext. 140.







FOOD

A creamy dairy recipe created for families



Strawberry Mousse

Servings: 6-8

INGREDIENTS

1 cup strawberries, halved

2 cups heavy cream

1 cup powdered sugar

1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened

Assorted fruit, for serving

DIRECTIONS

In blender, puree strawberries until smooth. Set aside.

In mixing bowl, whip heavy cream and powdered sugar until fluffy. In separate mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth. Add strawberry puree to cream cheese and mix until combined. Add whipped cream and stir until combined.

Serve in bowl with fruit.

(CULINARY.NET) A lazy afternoon cuddled up with family, playing in the rain with your kids and tasting a perfect, sweet treat can be some of the simplest yet best parts of life.

Recipes that can be made with clean, fresh ingredients in a matter of minutes make some of the best-tasting dishes, snacks and treats. Sometimes keeping it simple is the best route to take as opposed to confusing prep that takes too much time.

And with Shavuot just around the corner, a recipe featuring dairy is perfect.

This Strawberry Mousse, which is made with families in mind, is a perfect recipe to make with your little ones. It's great to take for an outing at the park, a neighborhood party or just to snack on throughout the week. It's sweet, fluffy and smooth all at the same time. Made to serve a handful of people, it only takes a few moments to complete. Moms love it and kids enjoy the taste and texture. To start, puree 1 cup of strawberries in blender until smooth. In a mixing bowl, combine whipping cream and powdered sugar until smooth.

In a different bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth then add the pureed strawberries.

Finally, add the whipped cream mixture to the cream cheese and strawberries. Stir all the components together until they reach the desired consistency before serving with fresh fruit.

It's easy, fresh and delicious. Your kids can help you combine all the ingredients and excitedly try the sweet result. Find more sweet recipes at Culinary.net.

Source: Culinary.net



Coconut cream pie milkshakes are the perfect refresher for Shavuot

(FAMILY FEATURES) Celebrate spring and Shavuot with this delicious dairy coconut concoction.

For more recipes, visit culinary.net

Coconut cream pie milkshake

INGREDIENTS

3 scoops vanilla ice cream

½ cup milk

1/3 cup cream of coconut

2 tablespoons sweetened flaked coconut

1 whole graham cracker

Whipped cream, for garnish

Graham cracker crumbs, for garnish

DIRECTIONS

In blender mix ice cream, cream of coconut, flaked coconut and graham cracker on high until smooth. Pour into glass. Top with whipped cream and graham cracker crumbs.

Recipe adapted from MilkMeansMore.org.

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COMMUNITY VOICES

There is a pet party in the parking lot at Temple Emanu-El

I interviewed Sharon Sock, director of engagement at Temple Emanu-El in Providence, about the Pet Party in the Parking Lot program that she and her team created, now in its fourth year.

How did Pets in the Parking Lot begin and what first inspired the idea?

The Pet Party in the Parking Lot program began with a desire to outreach to members of the community who are pet owners. We were inspired by the way pets naturally bring people together by sparking conversation, connection and joy. At the same time, we wanted to create a program that reflected Jewish values around caring for all living beings. Bringing those ideas together led to an event that feels both deeply communal and purpose driven.

HEALTHY LIVING



PATRICIA RASKIN

What specific need in the congregation or neighborhood does the program address?

We work hard to provide programming and experiences for all members in our community. For many people, pets are cherished companions and an important source of connection and daily joy. The Pet Party in the Parking Lot creates space for that bond to be recognized and celebrated, while also addressing a growing awareness in our community about animal welfare. It gives people a tangible way to support causes like local animal shelters while building relationships with one another.

What does a Pet Party in the Parking Lot gathering look like – from when people arrive to when they leave?

As people arrive, there's an immediate sense of warmth and informality. Dogs greet each other, people chat and there is a relaxed, welcoming energy. Participants mingle,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11



Scenes from Pets in the Parking Lot at Temple Emanu-El in Providence.

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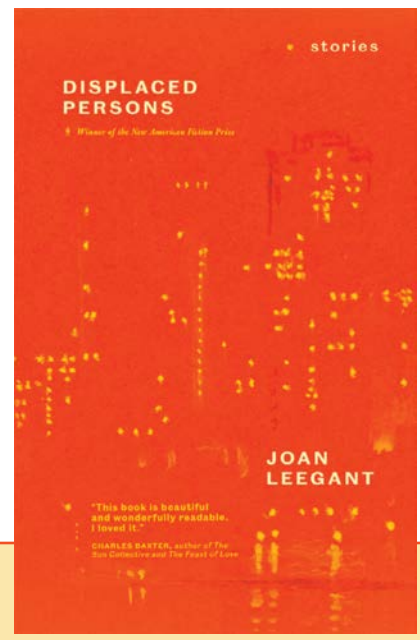
We are thrilled to have Joan Leegant visit our community. She is a riveting speaker who loves engaging with audiences. Her new book, ***Displaced Persons***, is a 2025 Finalist for the National Jewish Book Award for Fiction and a Finalist for the 2025 Association of Jewish Libraries Award for Fiction.

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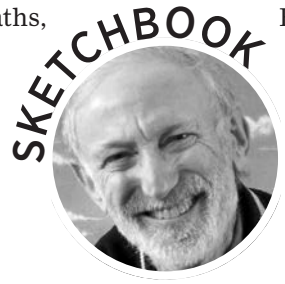
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COMMUNITY VOICES

A window into the Jewish world of Alexander Hamilton

In the final decade of my RISD career, I divided my journeys, my routes, my roads and my readings between the faraway and the nearby. I made it to many but not all, of the Caribbean islands like stepping-stones for my Jewish history all the way to the Touro Synagogue in our Newport. I traveled to Suriname and French Guyana, Curacao, Barbados and Martinique, St. Thomas and St. Croix, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Jamaica, Costa Rica and St. Eustatius...but not Nevis (yet) and not Cuba (yet).



MIKE FINK

THEY ALL HELD and told the story of the mostly bygone chapters of Jewish Sephardic worlds of yore, and I saw the sunken sacred baths, the sinking gravestones, the occasional historical plaques, along with the meandering goats and sheep, the hummingbirds and flamingos, and at times I stopped to purchase a book or a picture to serve as a souvenir.

In a local bookstore right here in Providence I came upon a paperback titled "The Jewish World of Alexander Hamilton," a scholarly study of the legacy of the renowned first Secretary of the Treasury.

Hamilton was many things: an aide to George Washington, a speaker and writer, and, of course, the duelist against Aaron Burr, who shot him dead at age 50, leaving his widow with their seven surviving children aged 2 to 18. The author of this biography, Andrew Porwancher, doesn't flaunt an opinion. Instead, he invites the reader to consider how to judge Hamilton's career and his dream for the new nation of America. In the last paragraph he says,

"Hamilton envisioned a future that belonged not to the sons of plantation aristocrats but to the itinerant, the enterprising, . . . to people like him and his Jewish allies."

Hamilton studied in a Jewish school in his native Nevis; the focus of this book by a professor from Oklahoma is upon the complex question of whether he was Jewish himself. The author never insists on a definition.

Hamilton's mother, Rachel Faucette converted to Judaism before his birth. Her married name, Lavien, was something akin to Levine. Although he later identified as an Anglican Christian, there is no baptismal record for him, and it is likely he was raised Jewish. What fascinated me as a reader and reviewer is how the writer skirts this question and plays fair – perhaps he was Jewish in a sense, and then again, maybe his interactions were a complicated mix of philosophical, political and psychological motivations. Nevertheless, it was Hamilton who defended the testimony of a Jewish witness in court and later helped eliminate mandatory Christian worship at Columbia, never forgetting his origins.

Today many of our concerns are for the health of the planet, properly so. But, like Porwancher, we are also especially focused on the separation of church and state together with the concept of religion as a valuable contribution to civic society. This ties in with Hamilton's own belief in the separation of religious institutions from government control to prevent persecution, and he argued that civil and religious liberties were interdependent.

Porwancher gives careful consideration to this and other dilemmas in the early era of the 13 divided states. He does a great job of it. He makes my voyages seem valuable in retrospect, as though I were joining his search. If I succeed in teaching another class at the Providence Art Club, I will assign a patriotic painting and prose defining "patriotism" and judge their success with some of the dramas and doubts of our collective beginnings.

MIKE FINK *(mfink33@aol.com) is a professor emeritus at the Rhode Island School of Design.*

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

meet new people and often share stories about their pets, including those who may not be able to attend, like cats or other animals at home. We offer homemade vegan dog treats and have a craft station where both kids and adults can make fun pet toys. After some time to connect, we gather as a group. Rabbi [Michael] Fel invites everyone to introduce themselves and their pets and then shares a brief teaching about the role animals play in Jewish tradition and our responsibility to care for them. The experience is both joyful and meaningful.

How do you connect this program to Jewish teachings or spiritual values about animals, creation and compassion?

Judaism teaches that we are stewards of the earth and all its creatures. The story of Noah's Ark reminds us that our covenant extends beyond humanity to include animals and the natural world. Concepts like *tza'ar ba'alei chayim*, the prohibition against causing unnecessary suffering to animals, guide us toward compassion and responsibility. Rabbi Fel often shares passages from *Perek Shira* ("Chapter of Song"), an ancient text that teaches that every part of creation has its own voice and way of praising God. Pets in the Parking Lot brings these values to life in a tangible, accessible way, reminding us that caring for animals is a sacred act.

Who comes to these events, and how has the program helped you reach people who might not walk into the synagogue building?

We see a wide range of participants including families, individuals, longtime members and people who are new to our community. What's especially meaningful is how many attendees might not otherwise engage with synagogue life but feel comfortable showing up for an outdoor, pet-centered event. The program resonates not only with those who bring dogs, but also with people who have other kinds of pets or simply feel a strong connection to animals. It creates a low-barrier, welcoming entry point where relationships can begin naturally and authentically.

Can you share a story about a moment at Pets in the Park that really stayed with you?

I especially love seeing grandparents come with their grandchildren. It is a wonderful way to connect across generations. There's always lots of energy around the craft table, where kids gather to make toys for pets. Another highlight is the moment when people introduce their pets to the group; you can really see the pride and joy they feel sharing that part of their lives with others.

What are the challenges and how have you handled them?

Like any outdoor, pet-friendly event, there are logistical considerations –ensuring safety for both people and animals and being mindful of the weather. We've been very fortunate over the past three years with good weather and smooth events overall. Clear expectations and a shared sense of community responsibility have helped everything run well.

What's your hope for the future of Pets in the Parking Lot?

Our hope is that the Pet Party in the Parking Lot continues to grow as a highlight of the fall calendar. We want it to remain a unique, welcoming and fun event that reflects our values of compassion and connection and continues to bring people together through a shared appreciation for the animals in their lives. Save the date, Sunday, Oct. 17 for the 2026 Pet Party in the Parking Lot at Temple Emanu-El!

PATRICIA RASKIN, *owner of Raskin Resources Productions, is an award-winning radio producer, business owner and leader. She has served on the board of directors of Temple Emanu-El, in Providence. Her "Positive Living with Patricia Raskin" podcast can be heard on voiceamerica.com.*

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COMMUNITY VOICES

Standing out and blending in

GEORGE M. GOODWIN

I suspect some readers think that I say far too much about myself. Perhaps they're right, but somehow, I can't resist. If I were a true New Englander, like my wife Betsey, then perhaps readers would know relatively little about me.

WE'VE LIVED in Providence for nearly 40 years – far longer than anywhere else – but I still don't have the hang of it. That's why I call myself a "Rhode Angeleno." And I'm not referring to my golden personality, but my hometown, Los Angeles.

Some evidence of my proclivities was displayed a few days ago, when Betsey and I went shopping for groceries. I was there primarily to help shlep them home, so what would I do while she traipsed up and down the aisles?



GEORGE M. GOODWIN

I sat on a bench near the check-out area, looking at people. Of course, I also had to talk to as many as possible. Yup, I just stood up, walked over to them and began schmoozing.

I said to two quite elderly men shopping together, "Wow, I'm impressed that you're wearing suits and ties." I didn't comment about the large crucifix hanging around one man's neck. Then the other man, who was obviously worn out, sat down. I did too, and we began chatting. I soon learned that they had come from a funeral, and they didn't usually get so dressed up.

A few minutes later, I noticed a somewhat younger gentleman standing in a check-out line with his wife. He too was wearing a suit and a tie, so I complimented him. He seemed pleased but remarked that he and his wife had also just come from a funeral. I expressed my condolences before asking if it was the same funeral that the two other gentlemen attended. It wasn't.

Then I congratulated a few ladies for the beautiful flowers that they purchased. I told a young man how kind of him it was to hold his infant son while pushing a shopping cart. Next I asked a cashier how many customers she processed during a typical hour. Unsurprisingly , she had no idea, so we tried to figure it out.

Perhaps some of these strangers thought that I was a rabbi, a meshuggener or a public official seeking re-election. By contrast, a week earlier, when I bumped into an elected official I know, he had far less to say than I did.

Last week I finished rewriting a journal article about a relatively new synagogue near Boston. The congregation's previous one had been destroyed by fire in 1994, and a glorious replacement was built two years later. I interviewed the congregation's rabbi, many of its lay leaders and the Gentile architect who received the commission.

I was shocked, however, when my original article was rejected. I was told that not enough time had elapsed for such a topic. Since many of the leaders in the rebuilding effort have recently passed away, I wondered if I could now resubmit my article.

In 1950, my parents built the home in L.A. where my two siblings and I grew up. This was such a new suburb that a nearby freeway was not yet constructed. There were so many young families on the West Side of town that my twin brother and I had to wait until the second semester of kindergarten before enrolling in a new elementary school. Nevertheless, perhaps three decades ago, that new school closed its doors because the same neighborhood had become unaffordable for young families. The passage of time inevitably brings changes, not only in how we relate to different kinds of buildings.

'The passage of time inevitably brings changes'

My brother and I were privileged to attend the opening day of Disneyland, in 1955, but it's still around. Indeed, perhaps too much of the world has become Disneyfied.

But there's another landmark that may better mark the passing years. Our family belonged to Wilshire Boulevard Temple, L.A.'s oldest Reform congregation, which built its third synagogue in 1929. This magnificent, domed edifice, a grander version of Providence's Temple Emanu-El, was intended to evoke millennia of Jewish history, and it did. Our Temple was unique because of the glorious mural adorning the sanctuary's interior. It evoked Jewish history from Creation through Columbus.

Our Temple later built two wonderful summer camps near the beach in Malibu, a satellite synagogue and a day school on the West Side of town and then subsumed another nearby Reform congregation. For decades, Jews haven't lived anywhere near the Temple's Wilshire location, which, though still in use, became engulfed by Korea Town.

My great-uncle, Edgar F. Magnin, led the Temple for no fewer than 63 years, until his passing in 1984. He was followed by two senior rabbis, and a third was recently hired. Today does anybody remember Rabbi Magnin (or me)?

Perhaps an even better measure of the march of time would be our home on Providence's East Side. It was built in 1920 on a vacant lot near Hope and Olney. A fine example of an Arts & Crafts bungalow, it was inspired by a style that Frank Lloyd Wright popularized in the Midwest around the turn of the 20th century. And, for the record, Wright spent a few years of his childhood, during the 1870s, in Pawtucket.

Only two other families lived in our home, the first one for nearly 50 years. Despite some small additions and improvements, the home retains its simple utility, comfort and beauty. Betsey and I hope that the next owners will be similarly appreciative.

Despite its Midwestern roots, our bungalow seems just right for New England. Like two nearby examples built at the same time, it blends into our neighborhood as well as the past. Unlike me, as I loiter in a supermarket, these dwellings don't call attention to themselves. They whisper.

GEORGE M. GOODWIN, *of Providence, is the editor of Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes.*

TAKE ACTION: REPORT an INCIDENT

JEWISH ALLIANCE of Greater Rhode Island

At the Jewish Alliance, we believe all people should be treated fairly and justly. If you have experienced or witnessed an incident of antisemitism or extremism, please report it. Antisemitic activity includes overt acts or expressions of anti-Jewish bigotry and hostility. Many incidents are not crimes but are still considered antisemitic and should be reported.

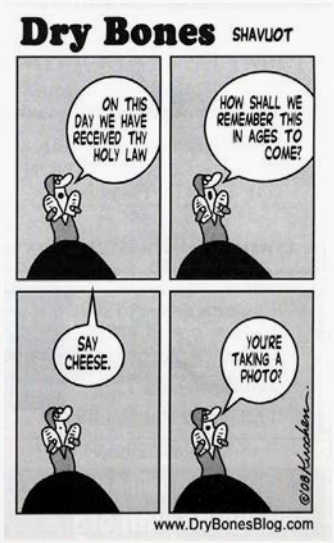
This initiative is meant to help track antisemitic incidents in the state of Rhode Island. Experiencing any type of antisemitism may be traumatic for you or your loved ones. *If you need additional support, please contact Jewish Collaborative Services at 401.331.1244 for guidance.*

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COMMUNITY VOICES

JEWISH RHODE ISLAND's This Month in History



Snapshot

In May of 2008, cartoonist Yaakov Kirschen presents a multi-layered joke: Moses stands on Mt. Sinai, wondering how to commemorate the moment. The divine response, "Say cheese," could refer to snapping a picture or the many dairy products of Shavuot (blintzes, cheesecake, noodle kugel). At the time, the first iPhone wasn't even a year old, and Instagram hadn't been invented yet, so taking pictures of every event was still unusual. "Dry Bones" ran in the Jerusalem Post for 50 years – and intermittently in the Jewish Herald – until Kirschen's passing in April of 2025.

Newspaper courtesy Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association





IN THE NEWS

J.D. Salinger asked publishers to remove references to Jewish heritage

BY JACKIE HAJDENBERG

(JTA) — Acclaimed author J.D. Salinger asked his publisher to remove references to his Jewish heritage in the book jacket of "The Catcher in the Rye," newly surfaced letters from 1951 reveal.

The request came in a letter from Salinger, a notoriously private man, and his editor, John Woodburn at publisher Little, Brown and Co. The correspondence, which took place in early 1951, predates the first publication of "The Catcher in the Rye," Salinger's hit coming-of-age novel.

"I don't know that I'd like to have that Jewish-Irish business slapped on the jacket," Salinger wrote. "Surely if it's catchy, that is."

The letter has come to light because Peter Harrington Rare Books, a bookseller based in London, has listed it as part of a package for sale in the New York International Antiquarian Book Fair, which begins on Thursday.

"The Catcher in the Rye," a contemporary classic following the life of angsty boarding school student Holden Caulfield, is one of the best-selling books of all time.

Caulfield's character is of Irish heritage, like Salinger's mother. But Salinger was the son of Sol, a cheese salesman (whose wares might have been kosher) and the grandson of a rabbi on his father's side. His mother, Marie Jillich, went by Miriam to appease her in-laws who disapproved of the mixed marriage. He learned his mother's real name only around the time of his bar mitzvah.

To Woodburn, Salinger wrote that he worried about being pigeonholed as a Jewish-Irish writer if the book broadcast that information.

"My Jewish-Irishness isn't quite so bizarre, as, say, [James] Thurber's eyesight," Salinger wrote, referring to the American author and cartoonist, who was legally blind by that time. "But nonetheless, second-rate reviewers would probably find the information just provocative enough to use

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

OPINION

Call Me Ishmaelle

Many readers of this column know that I have had a long, complex, and nourishing relationship with Herman Melville's "Moby Dick." My first serious encounter with this book was back in 1961-1962 during my senior year in high school, when I had the privilege of having Dr. Herbert F. Hahn (1924-2009) as my erudite guide through Melville's 1851 epic – a book at one time dismissed as virtually unreadable, but, beginning in the 1920s, valued to this very day as one of the most significant American books ever written.

ONE OF THE many reasons that Dr. Hahn made such an impression upon the 15 or so teenage boys in our Advanced Placement English class is that he treated each of his students with the same profound seriousness and respect with which he treated Melville's writing.

In particular Dr. Hahn found a way to harness our adolescent need to express our barely repressed sense of rebellious defiance against all those "thou shalts" and "thou shalt-nots" that seemed to be threatening our youthful exuberance. For us teenage boys, Captain Ahab of the whaler Pequod was the model rebel par excellence.



RABBI JAMES ROSENBERG

Toward the end of "Moby Dick," in chapter 119, "The Candles," Ahab screams at the gods of heaven and hell, "I own thy speechless, placeless power, but to the last gasp of my earthquake life will I dispute its unconditional, unintegral mastery in me. In the midst of the personified impersonal, a personality stands here." "A personality stands here." – And in our classroom 15 teenage boys – not quite men at that time – with unseeing abandon scream "A personality stands here."

A moment earlier Ahab affirms "I know that the right worship is defiance." DEFIANCE. Pingry School. 1961- 1962. Senior Year. Our adolescent defiance. Against our fathers! Against our teachers! Against our more talented, more successful peers. Against our God?? At least, against our gods…

As I continued to turn back to the pages of "Moby Dick" during stages of continued growing and maturing – young adulthood, fatherhood, middle-age, a not-so-wise old age, I have come to see, as did Ishmael, that Ahab's defiance had its dark side. His humanity was fatally compromised by the curse of his maniacal obsession to rule the members of his whaling crew with an iron fist. If his entire crew needed to be killed in pursuit of the white whale, then let them all die!!! In my journey through the years, I have learned that Ahab, my fake hero, was, in reality, my anti-hero, a dangerous, toxic, evil scourge to the members of the Pequod's crew. To my own horror, I realized that Captain Ahab was a predecessor to Adolf Hitler!

But there is another passage in "Moby Dick" that has challenged me even more than Ahab's defiant cry, "A personality stands here;" this is a passage that I have only truly come to appreciate now that I find myself approaching the age of 82. In the chapter bearing the title "Moby Dick," Melville writes: "(Ahab) piled upon the whale's white hump the sum of the general rage and hatred felt by his whole race from Adam on down."

Ever since I read these words about 65 years ago, I have wrestled with their meaning and wondered what, precisely, was the source of humankind's "general rage and hatred felt by the whole race from Adam on down"? After much soul-wrestling, I would suggest that Ahab's issue – that is to say, Melville's issue – is nothing less than our *mortality*: each of us is born to die. No exit. Each of us is presented with a one-way, non-refundable ticket; we have no hint where the twists and turns of our personal journeys will take us, except that -- in the end, every one of us dies. It is Ahab's undying sense of the inevitability of his own mortality that makes him insane.

When I finished reading "Moby Dick" in its entirety for the 10th time, I vowed that I would never do so again. But I have recently broken my vow, at least in part, by reading a recent feminist version of the Melville classic, "Call Me Ishmaelle" (2025) by the Chinese author, Xiaolu Guo. In her reworking of "Moby Dick," Guo's opening three words are not the well-known "Call me Ishmael" but rather "Call me Ishmaelle."

I confess that my major objection to "Moby Dick" during my lifetime of exploring the book has been the total absence of a feminist – or, at least, feminine – perspective. Xiaolu Guo addresses this issue by changing the narrator Ishmael, a 30-something young man, into Ishamelle, a young woman in her late teens, who, like her male counterpart, lives to tell her story.

I will not spoil the story for you, but I urge you to join Ishmaelle on her journey on the whaler Nimrod, where for several months she passes herself off as a teenage boy! Seneca, the captain of the Nimrod, is an American Indian, who does have his issues; but he is not nearly as troubled or as dangerous as Melville's Captain Ahab. I find Ishmaelle's friendship with Kauri, the first harpooner, a "savage" like Queequeg in "Moby Dick," to be particularly well-drawn.

However, a caveat to the readers of "Call Me Ishmaelle": the narrator, Ishmaelle, is an intelligent, curious, but naïve and inexperienced young woman in her late teens. The language she uses, as well as the language of the author, reflects that lack of sophistication. Do not expect the soaring, almost Shakespearean rhetoric that you will find in Melville. On the other hand, being less than half the length of Melville's masterpiece, Guo's feminist retelling is a far easier read. Sometimes, relative simplicity is its own blessing.

The first words of "Moby Dick" are "Call me Ishmael;" the first words of Guo's new version are "Call me Ishmaelle" – a difference of just two additional letters of the alphabet.

By way of contrast, let us look at their endings: Melville's last words, just before his epilogue, are: "the great shroud of the sea rolled on as it rolled five thousand years ago." Xiaola Guo concludes her book with her "vision" of the white whale, to whom she said " 'yes' to your call and 'yes' to life."

Melville concludes with the sea as "the great shroud," while Guo ends with " 'yes' to life" – and that difference is everything.

JAMES B. ROSENBERG *is a rabbi emeritus at Temple Habonim in Barrington. Contact him at rabbiemeritius@templehabonim.org.*

Jewish Rhode Island publishes thoughtful and informative contributors' columns (op-eds of 500 – 800 words) and letters to the editor (300 words, maximum) on issues of interest to our Jewish community. At our discretion, we may edit pieces for publication or refuse publication. Letters and columns, whether from our regular contributors or from guest columnists, represent the views of the authors; they do not represent the views of Jewish Rhode Island or the Alliance.

OPINION

When truth is stranger than fiction

BY MARJORIE DAVIS

Journalist Allister Heath said, "A nation this small should not be this strong. Israel has no oil. No special natural resources. A population barely the size of a mid-sized American city. They are surrounded by enemies. Hated in the United Nations. Targeted by terror. Condemned by celebrities. Boycotted, slandered and attacked. And still, they thrive like there's no tomorrow - in military, in medicine, in security, in technology, in agriculture, in intelligence, in morality, in sheer unbreakable will. They turn desert into farmland. They make water from air. They intercept rockets in mid-air. They rescue hostages under the nose of the world's worst regimes. They survive wars that were supposed to wipe them out, and win."

INDEED, when it comes to Israel, ironies, inconsistencies and irrationalities abound.

Last year, Austria's JJ Pietsch won EUROVISION, an international songwriting competition. Israel's Yuval Raphael took second place. Saying that Raphael should not have been allowed to compete because she represented Israel, Pietsch complained that the Israeli singer came in second. Had he lost, he would've been considered a sore loser, but taking first place, he was a sore winner. You simply cannot make this stuff up.

Unfortunately, JJ Pietsch is not alone in his quest to boycott Israel. Holding every Israeli responsible for its government's actions, many people around the world have boycotted Israeli-owned businesses, Israeli artists, musicians and films. However, they would most likely find it inconceivable for people to judge all Americans based on the actions of President Trump. Imagine if people who support the Israeli boycott, actors such as Cynthia Nixon, Mark Ruffalo, Emma Stone, Javier Bardem, and Joaquin Phoenix, were boycotted because of the actions of the American government.

Moreover, ignoring the fact that the vast majority of Jews living outside Israel do not have Israeli citizenship and are therefore unable to cast a vote in Israeli elections, many people hold all Jews accountable for every action of the Israeli government. Conversely, in the last election the people of Gaza overwhelmingly voted for Hamas, a known terrorist organization. Those who blame all Jews for Israel's defensive actions are the same ones who collectively absolve the people of Gaza for Hamas' evil actions.

To appreciate the topsy-turvy nature of this type of illogic fully, one need only to follow the money.

Increasingly, people are opposing American funds going to Israel. However, 100% of aid to Israel is spent inside the U.S in manufacturing plants, providing jobs to Americans and producing defense systems that benefit our country. On the other hand, with far fewer benefits to Americans, the U.S. provides billions of dollars in aid for Jordan and Egypt, yet few voice disapproval.

Some complain about Jewish money influencing America yet are not concerned about the influence of money donated from foreign countries to U.S. universities. Qatar has paid $7.7 billion, China $6.4 billion, and Saudi Arabia $4.2 billion. These donations from oppressive countries steeped in inequality, misogyny, racism and homophobia greatly impact campus policies and curricula in ironically the most liberal universities in our country.

Moreover, the international community is expected to donate between 70 and 120 billion dollars to reconstruct Gaza, while the billionaire leaders of Hamas, the terrorists who are responsible for the destruction, will contribute nothing. In addition, no country has agreed to help rebuild the Israeli communities that Hamas destroyed. Israel must shoulder the financial burden itself.

In the news, the disproportionate focus on Israel and the Jews should be called out.

When Arabs kill Arabs and Arabs kill Jews, little attention is given, but when Jews kill Arabs, the world not only takes notice but is enraged.

Rep. Brad Sherman (D-CA) said, "It's very peculiar, because this is not the biggest conflict in the world. From a humanitarian standpoint, from an economic standpoint, this is number six or seven, and most Americans couldn't name number three, four and five. But there we are, we're on the front page. Jews make news."

The strange and unfortunate truth is that antisemitism rises both when Jews are attacked and when Jews defend themselves. However, history has demonstrated our knack for turning setbacks into successes and tragedies into triumphs.

Born out of Israel's unique security challenges, Israel's required military service fosters connections that often lead to its phenomenal achievements. In March 2020 four people who met while serving in the same unit in the Israeli army started a cybersecurity company called *Wiz*. In March 2025, while fighting Hamas in Gaza, Israel announced that *Google* would purchase the startup company. In March 2026, while simultaneously fighting Iran and Hezbollah, Israel completed its largest deal ever, the sale of *Wiz* for the hefty price of 32 billion dollars.

This tendency to transform negatives into positives is nothing new. Comedian Mel Brooks wasn't joking when he said, "The people who had the greatest reason to weep, learned more than anyone else how to laugh." In the 1970s, *Time Magazine* reported that while Jewish people made up less than 3% of the U.S. population, approximately 80% of professional American comedians were Jewish.

Indeed, the story of the Jewish people epitomizes the saying: *Truth is stranger than fiction*. Our history is so remarkable that had the Jews never existed and someone created a work of fiction based on our story, it would seem too far-fetched and too contrived to be possible.

It has been said that the Jewish people are the ever-dying people. Nevertheless, we are also the ones who continue to say the words that have for so long sustained us: *Am Yisroel Chai*, the people of Israel – the Jewish people – live.

Some might find that paradox strange. However, for the people who turned desert into farmland and made water from air, the people who never lost hope of returning to their ancient homeland, the truth of the matter is that it is not strange at all.

MARJORIE DAVIS *lives in Providence. She has a degree in Computer Science from Brandeis University and is a Senior Database Specialist in a large, international technology company. This originally appeared in The Times of Israel blog. It is reprinted with permission.*

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

and misuse over and over again, and I'd end up being expected to wear a Star of David and a Shamrock on the back of my sweatshirt. So, please, let's be careful."

Salinger's other famous works include the 1948 short story "A Perfect Day for a Bananafish," which follows the Irish Catholic-Jewish Glass family, who also make appearances in "Franny and Zooey."

The letters, previously unpublished, were acquired from a private collector and will be on view at the New York International Antiquarian Book Fair at the Park Avenue Armory from Thursday to May 3.

The bookseller is also currently offering a first edition of the script of West Side Story, inscribed by all four writers of the play, book, and music: Leonard Bernstein, Jerome Robbins, Arthur Laurents, and Stephen Sondheim. Peter Harrington has also sold a rare, first printed edition of "De Bello Judaico" by Josephus Flavius, the first-century Roman-Jewish historian.

The triad of letters is currently offered at a set price of $47,500 and includes two typed letters by Salinger, with his signature, and a carbon copy of Woodburn's reply. It also includes a reference to one of Salinger's "lost stories," a prequel to "Catcher in the Rye" that was not to be published until 50 years after his death.

Salinger died in 2010 at the age of 91. The "lost story," "The Ocean Full of Bowling Balls," was set to be published in 2060, but in 2013, it was pirated and leaked online.

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– *Jimmy W., Riverside,* **Porsche Macan**

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PETS SHOWCASE



MIU MIU lives with Dawn E. Salerno in New Bedford, MA. As you can see, she's reading her Jewish Rhode Island.



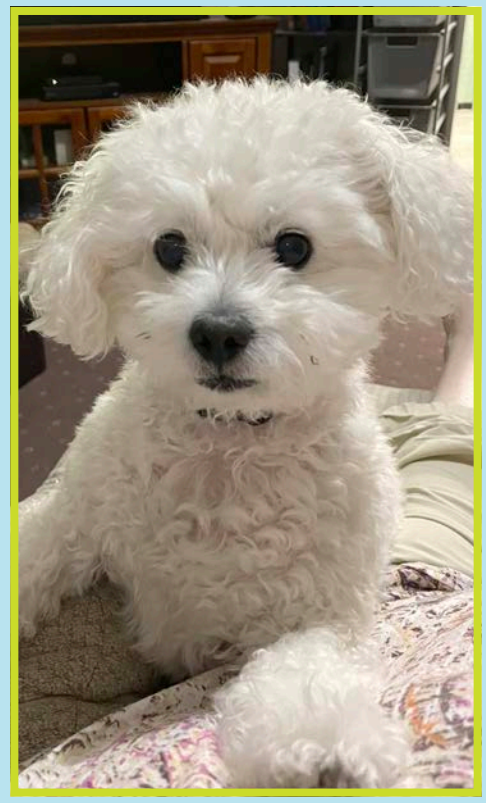
NINA lives with Judith A. (Vernick) Peloquin in North Smithfield. She's 2 years old.



COLETTE lives with Cap & Anne Frank in Narragansett.



WALLY lives with the Goldstein family in East Providence.



NORTON lives with Pam Schiff in Cranston. He is 9 years old and living the high life.



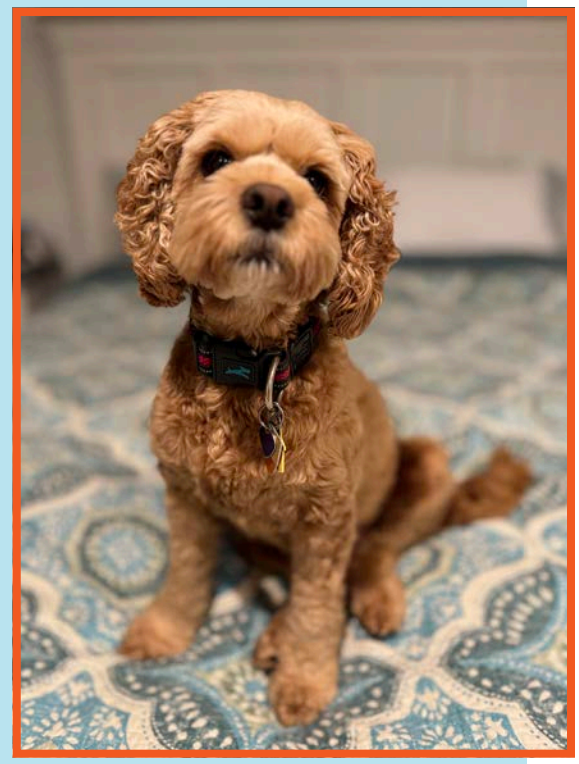
MATEY lives with Arlene Tunney on Block Island.



LIBBY, a bichon, and **LUCAS**, a shichon, live with Mindy and Gary Halpern in East Greenwich.



LINUS and **LILY** live with Neal Cerel and Diane Hanke in Warwick. They enjoy removing the sink stopper and hiding somewhere else in the house.



TILLIE lives with Amy Gaddes in North Kingstown. Together they love reading Jewish Rhode Island's excellent articles each month!

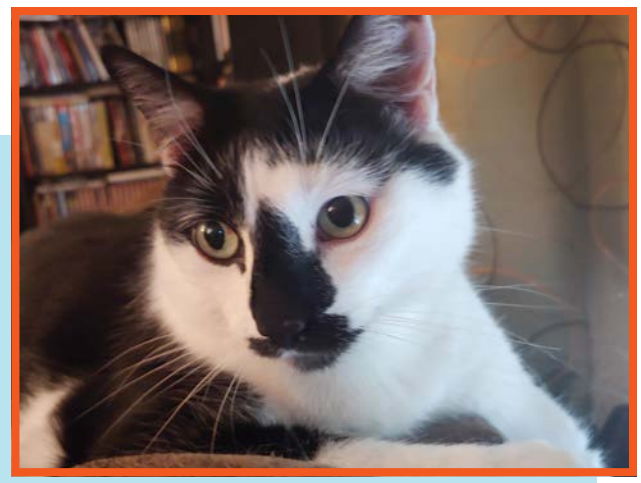
PETS SHOWCASE



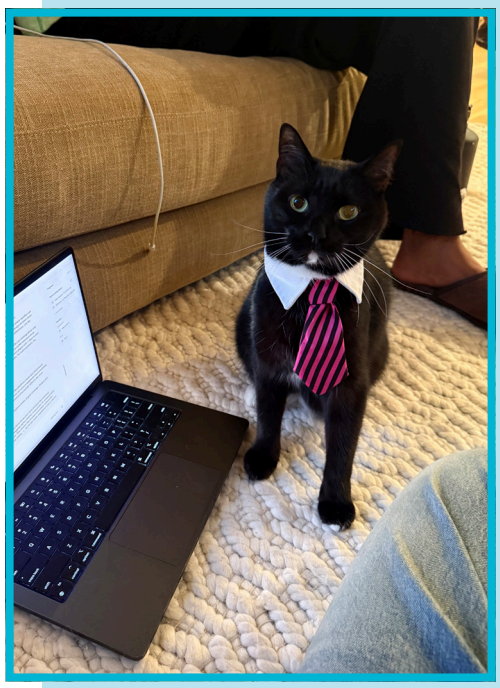
STANLEY. lives with Georgi and Rivka Vogel-Rosen in Providence.



NESSIE lives with Susie and Rusty Mershon in Lincoln. Her favorite toy is a Hanukkah dreidel. She's named for the Nun on the dreidel which stands for “Ness” or miracle.



BUDDY lives with Katya Ginzburg-Bram and Mark Bram in Providence. He has the best nose, a larger-than-life personality, is a music fan, and follows Daddy around everywhere.



MERLOT lives with Robyn Goldstein's daughter, Lyndsay, in Carroll Gardens, Brooklyn, NY. He is 6 years old and the most handsome cat ever!!!



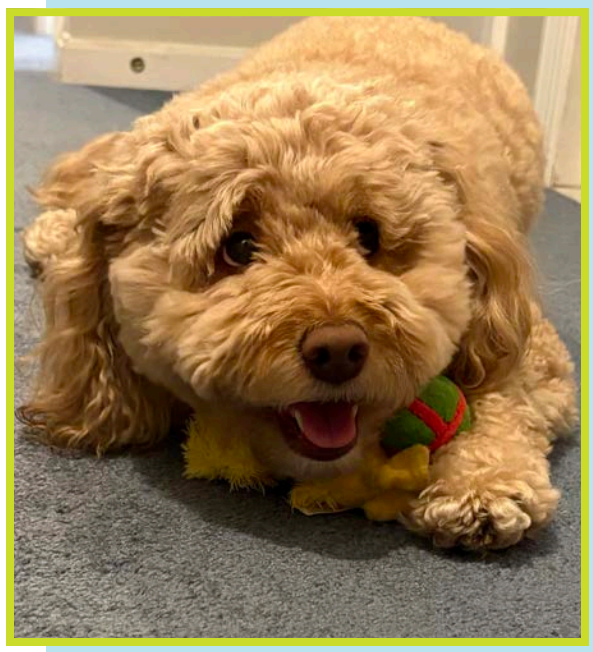
CHUMBLES the leopard gecko lives with Evan, Juliet, and Alex Foster in Providence. She spends her time basking under a heat lamp and eating crickets.



ATHENA lives with Tom and Ida Bochner-Brown in Hopatcong, NJ. She is a lab retriever mix who loves people and brings joy to all she meets.



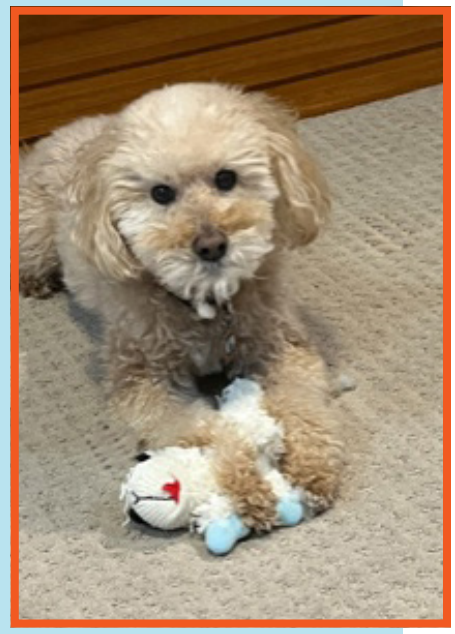
WILLOW and **MILLIE** live with Becca, Sarah, and Phoebe Katz Greenleaf in Providence.



CHLOE lives with Michelle Cicchitelli and her family in Cranston.

CHARLEE lives with Dr.. Michael & Linda Rubinstein in Providence.





TJ is a 11 year old mini australian labradoodle who lives with Cathy and Bob Oresman in Pawtucket.

PETS SHOWCASE



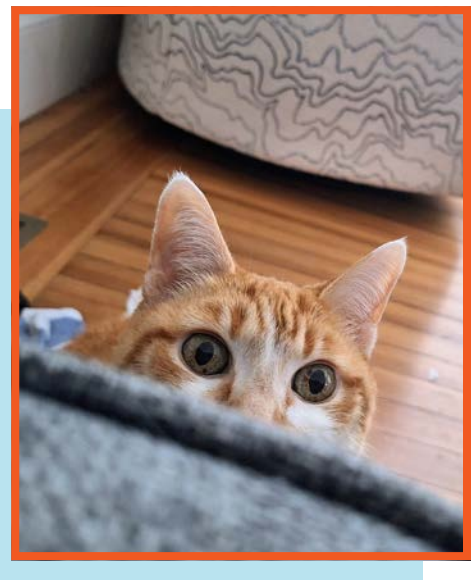
STELLA lives with Rhonda Schwartz in Narragansett.



REID lives with Alicia Cohen, Jason Buxbaum, Abbie, and David in Providence.



KOBE is Sheryl Moran's guest for the week in Cranston.



MAGELLAN (JILLY) lives with Claire Uziel and family in Johnston.

Pets on the pulpit: Rabbis and their dogs

BY SARAH GREENLEAF

While Rabbis support their community, who supports the Rabbis? It might just be a dog! Here are three responses from rabbis about their beloved pets. The responses have been lightly edited for publication.



Barley

R' Emily Goldberg Winer, Director of Spiritual Engagement at Congregation Beth Sholom in Providence, and Barley Goldberg Winer HaLevi Shlit"a

BARLEY (unless it's Passover when she goes by Quinoa) is our lovable, friendly, 75 pound golden retriever who has blessed our lives since October of 2022.

Barley is a font of goodness. She offers only love, licks and a compassionate presence to people of all ages. She has floppy ears that pull back when she sees any other dog to befriend. She runs on adrenaline, the presence of literally any dog or toddler, and blueberries. Hugging Barley is like embracing a human being – she just knows when people need some extra love and she shares it freely without limits.

I love it when Barley sighs on our couch. I always look at her and ask, "What ails you, our sweet golden freeloader??" She'll just mosey on over to the living room, ascend the coziest nook of our couch, and then sigh like every day is Tax Day. I also once saw a child crying outside and Barley just walked directly over to her and licked her face. Despite having likely no brain activity in that head of hers, Barley just shows up in her four-legged fashion and makes people smile!

In addition, Barley was the mascot for our East Side Goldens at Golden Hour gathering, which sounds exactly as ridiculous and wonderful as its title.

When I visit congregants at hospitals, I watch as therapy dogs bring a sense of peace and ease to patients' and staff teams' lives. While Barley is by no means licensed to actually provide trauma therapy, I have found that our dog has mastered naturally a skill that has taken me years to practice: she knows how to show up with her heart, literally zero judgment, and the ability to hold people's tears.

Bernie & Nala

Rabbi Howard Voss-Altman, Rabbi at Temple Habonim in Barrington, and Bernie and Nala



BERNIE IS a golden retriever. He will be 10 years old in June. Nala is a Canaan dog (Israel's native dog) and is 6 years old. Both Bernie and Nala have been with us since they were puppies.

We love that Bernie is so good-natured and flexible, and he balances Nala's strong-willed personality. She is a herding dog and has been in charge of herding our family ever since she arrived.

When we take them to the dog park on Waterman Avenue, Bernie cannot wait to socialize and play with the other dogs and their owners. Nala, who was born just three weeks before COVID began, is much more cautious and tends to watch the other dogs from the sidelines. Still, despite her more reserved personality, Nala receives a lot of attention from the other dog owners, who comment on her unusual beauty and athleticism. They always seem surprised to hear about her Middle Eastern origins.

Now that our children have left home, Bernie and Nala provide us with an ongoing opportunity for caretaking and connection. It's a privilege to live with them, and they are a constant source of joy and fun in our lives.

Rilla

Rabbi Jeffrey Goldwasser, Rabbi at Temple Sinai in Cranston, and Rilla

RILLA IS a 4- year-old Australian labradoodle. I love Rilla's energy. Everything is exciting to her from the moment she wakes up in the morning. She keeps me active.

A favorite moment happens every morning when Rilla rolls over for belly rubs. That is how she likes to begin the day. More belly-rub time usually happens in the evening. Also, my 21-year-old daughter, Eliana, is very attached to Rilla. She frequently sends us text messages from college requesting photos of the dog.

Rilla's excitement, energy and generally joyful way of experiencing life is always a reminder to me to center myself around joy and appreciation of all the good things in my life.

SARAH GREENLEAF *(sgreenleaf@jewishallianceri.org) is the digital marketing manager for the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island and writes for Jewish Rhode Island.*

COMMUNITY

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Rhode Island will never forget



Community members light candles in remembrance. PHOTOS | GLENN OSMUNDSON



The sanctuary at Temple Beth-El in Providence was full for the community program.



Fran Denerstein, daughter of Holocaust survivors Rachel and Meyer Spitzman, speaks to the crowd at the April 13 Yom HaShoah commemoration.

BY LAURA AUKETAYEVA

PROVIDENCE – Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, is one of the most solemn and meaningful moments in Jewish communal life. It is a time not only to mourn the six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust but also to honor the survivors who rebuilt their lives and to recognize the children and grandchildren who now carry those memories forward. This year's commemoration at Temple Beth-El on April 13 reflected that sacred responsibility with depth and care. Organized by the Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center, the evening brought our community together not simply to observe but to remember actively, across generations, through commemoration, testimony and shared commitment.





Members of the audience listen attentively.

THE PROGRAM opened with survivors and children of survivors carrying candles, a deeply meaningful act that honored both those who were murdered and those who lived through the Holocaust. In that moment, memory was not abstract. They were carried by those whose lives are directly connected to that history. Rabbi Ethan Adler then read names aloud, an integral part of Holocaust commemoration. The reading of names restores individuality to those whom the Nazis sought to erase, ensuring they are remembered as people, not numbers. Rabbi Sarah Mack offered a blessing, and The Reverend Patrick Faulhaber gave a prayer for peace, reflecting the broader community's shared responsibility. Rabbi Mack's reflection on discovering that one of Beth-El's Torahs, rescued from the Holocaust, is centuries-old, added another powerful dimension, highlighting the perseverance of Jewish life and faith across generations. Throughout the evening, the music did more than accompany the program. It gave voice to memory in a different register. Drawing on the words of survivors like Primo Levi and on compositions shaped by Holocaust history, the performances created moments where language alone felt insufficient, allowing the audience to sit with grief, resilience and remembrance in a more immediate and emotional way.

At the center of the evening was Fran Denerstein's reflection on her parents, Rachel and Meyer Spitzman. Speaking as the daughter of survivors, she described the courage, grief and resilience that shaped her life. She spoke of the "Shadow" of the Holocaust that lived within her home, the silence, the absence and the weight of memory. At the same time, she spoke of survival, of her parents' decision to rebuild their lives despite everything they had lost. Her words "Silence is not an option" captured the purpose of the evening.

In one of the most powerful moments, Fran turned to her son and, in a symbolic but deeply meaningful act, entrusted him with this legacy, saying, "As the Guardian of Memory, I am asking you to formally accept this unbroken chain – to take the memory you carry and pass the essence of that soul to your children." He accepted and then turned to his own son, continuing that symbolic chain with the words "You are a Guardian of the Soul." In that exchange, memory was intentionally passed forward. It was a visible continuation of memory. When the audience then rose one by one and joined in a collective pledge of "Never Again," it reflected a shared understanding that remembrance carries responsibility.

The evening made clear that remembrance does not end with those who lived through the Holocaust. Two students, Caleb Isenberg and Jamie Bromberg, from the Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center's Leadership Institute for Teens shared original poems they had written under the guidance of Poet Laureate Tina Cane. Their words were thoughtful and deeply felt, showing that younger generations are not only learning this history but beginning to carry it in their own voices.

The program also reflected the lived diversity of Holocaust memory within our community. The inclusion of Genrietta Snigereva, a Jewish Ukrainian Holocaust survivor who spoke in her chosen language, was profoundly meaningful, honoring her voice and experience. The inclusion of "Buchenwald Alarm" in Russian resonated deeply with many in the audience from the former Soviet Union, showing how memory is carried across languages and histories.

What the Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center made possible that evening was not just a commemoration but also a collective act of continuation. Survivors, their children and grandchildren, and the community alongside them all took part in carrying this memory forward. Through education and programs like LIFT, that responsibility is not only remembered but taught, shaping how the next generation understands and carries this history into the future.

LAURA AUKETAYEVA Ph.D. *is the director of education and programs at the Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center in Providence.*

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COMMUNITY

Laughter lifts community at 'Laugh with Liz' comedy night



Liz Glazer PHOTOS | MADE YOU LOOK

BY THE JEWISH ALLIANCE DEVELOPMENT TEAM

PROVIDENCE – On April 11, community members gathered for a night of humor, belonging and shared purpose at the "Laugh with Liz" comedy event, a fundraiser supporting the second annual "Lift the J!" campaign at the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island. From the moment guests arrived, there was a palpable sense of camaraderie throughout the Bonnie & Donald Dwares Jewish Community Center —friends reconnecting, new faces meeting and a collective excitement for an evening filled with impact and laughter.

HEADLINED by comedian Liz Glazer, the show delivered sharp, personal and high-energy comedy. Known for appearances on "The Tonight Show" and her widely viewed YouTube special, the New Jersey native brought wit and relatability to the crowd. Comedian Brad Pierce, a native of West Warwick, got the crowd warmed up for Glazer.

The evening also featured a Meet & Greet for holders of VIP tickets purchased in advance; a silent raffle offering a range of prizes, including contributions from Red House Design Build, Dr.



Rabbi Barry Dolinger enjoys the show.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21

COMMUNITY

Showing up: The meaning behind our Jewish Heritage Nights

Jewish Heritage Nights, at sporting events, are about more than cheering for the home team – they're a chance to strengthen community, celebrate our shared identity and gather proudly in public spaces. This spring, the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island is bringing the community together for two events: one with the New England Revolution on May 13 and one with the Boston Red Sox on May 27.

THESE NIGHTS reflect a simple idea: Jewish connection doesn't only happen in formal settings. Alongside our synagogues, schools and community center, Jewish connection grows through shared experiences, connecting socially, building relationships and showing up - together.

Open to everyone from longtime participants to families and young adults, our upcoming Jewish Heritage Nights offer an inclusive, intergenerational way to engage. Gathering in iconic New England venues sends a powerful message: Jewish life is vibrant, visible, and part of the region's cultural fabric.

Each event includes a special Jewish Heritage item, but the real highlight is the shared experience, celebrating openly and expressing Jewish pride. Group transportation will be offered and will add to the sense of community from the start. At a time when visibility and solidarity matter, these gatherings are joyful affirmations of belonging. They remind us that showing up together strengthens the bonds that sustain Jewish life in Rhode Island and beyond.

The Alliance supports Jewish life through formal and informal education, community engagement and human and social services, funded in part by its Community Campaign, which aims to raise $4 million this year.

To learn more about the Community Campaign, our upcoming Jewish Heritage Nights or ways you may contribute, visit jewishallianceri.org/support-us/featured/donate-now or contact Brad Swartz at bswartz@jewishallianceri.org.

Temple Sinai welcomes author Joan Leegant

BY LINDA JOSLIN

"DISPLACED PERSONS," by Joan Leegant consists of 14 short stories – seven set in Israel and seven set in America. Leegant, a former attorney, spent five years as a visiting writer at a university in Tel Aviv while also lecturing on American literature and culture. Over the years, Leegant has continued to divide her time between the US and Israel, giving her a solid perspective to set her latest short stories in both locales.

"Displaced Persons: has won many awards, including: the 2025 Jewish Book Award finalist; the 2025 Association of Jewish Libraries Award finalist; the 2025 "Women's League Reads" finalist; the 2024 Hadassah's "One book/ One Hadassah" selection (one of six books chosen each year); and the 2024 New American Fiction prize winner (out of 500+ submissions).

She is a riveting speaker who loves engaging with audiences. "Displaced Persons" has been called " Prophetic…Leegant ponders the Jewish and Israeli experiences in contemporary life" (Times of Israel); " breathtaking" (New York Journal of Books); " exquisitely written… gorgeous tales of wandering Jews" (Hadassah).

Mark your calendars to hear her speak and entertain a question-and-answer session at Temple Sinai at 30 Hagen Dr. in Cranston on May 31 at 2 p.m. Following that, Leegant will be signing "Displaced Persons" as well as her other books – her novel, "Wherever You Go", and her other book of short stories, "An Hour in Paradise." Contact Dottie at dottie@templesinairi.org or call 401-942-8350 for further information or to register by May 26. The fee is $36 per person. Temple Sinai and Temple Sinai Sisterhood are the event sponsors.

LINDA JOSLIN *is a member of Temple Sinai.*

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

Jason Gagnon at APDerm and local favorites like Pure Barre, Coco Goose and Red Stripe; and a cocktail hour ahead of the opening act. Guests enjoyed food and drinks that added to the evening's festive feel. Special thanks go to Maven's Delicatessen for the catering, Town Wine & Spirits for providing beverages, Signarama, North Kingstown, for providing the signage, and Chex Foods and Quality Fruitland for the garnishes and accompaniments that elevated the experience.

Nearly 200 attendees filled the Baxt Social Hall, a testament to the sense of community and shared commitment in the room. The event's success was made possible in large part through the enthusiasm and dedication of event co-chairs Amy DeBlasio and Katie Ziegler, whose thoughtful planning, careful focus and resounding energy created an evening full of fun and meaning. Their planning committee, including Hadley Bazarsky, Violane Cola, Susan Leach DeBlasio, Jessica Litner, May-Tal Sauerbrun-Cutler and Mel Stupell, worked tirelessly to make the evening a success.

Beyond the laughter, the night had a deeper purpose. Proceeds supported the "Lift the J!" campaign, an initiative focused on sustaining programs, maintaining facilities and strengthening the connections that make the community thrive at the Dwares JCC. DeBlasio's welcome emphasized that these efforts help ensure the beloved community center remains a welcoming home for people of all ages for years to come. "Some of my happiest childhood memories are rooted right here – I went to the ECC, learned to swim in the pool, celebrated my birthdays in the party rooms and spent my summers at J-Camp – just like my mom did before me, and just like my three boys do now. L'dor Vador – from generation to generation."



"Laugh with Liz" benefited the Lift the J Campaign at the Dwares JCC.



The comedy night was filled with laughter as close to $50,000 was raised for the Lift the J campaign.

By the end of the evening, the impact was clear: fundraising efforts reached almost $50,000, surpassing expectations and reflecting the generosity of those in attendance. More than just a comedy show, "Laugh with Liz" was a reminder of what happens when a community comes together – with open hearts, shared laughter and a commitment to supporting one another.

There's still time to participate! The "Lift the J!" campaign runs through May 1 with proceeds going to the Dwares JCC directly, strengthening member experience, class and camp equipment, and general building upkeep required to sustain long-term, high-quality community programming and services. For more information on how you may give and get involved, visit: https://www.jewishallianceri.org/support-us/featured/lift.

COMMUNITY

How a connection at Temple Beth-El changed a life

BY MICHAEL FUCHS

My wife, Nanci Weinberger, and I, joined Temple Beth-El this past June. We had considered joining for some time, we had attended a few Shabbat services, and we have friends who are members; but what ultimately made the difference for us was attending the Racial Justice subcommittee immigration meeting in February 2025. We'd been on the Temple mailing list for a few years, but seeing firsthand the depth of commitment this community brings to issues of equity, dignity, and human rights resonated deeply. We felt immediately welcomed, and it became clear that this was the right community for us.

I GREW UP in the New York City area and was a Bar Mitzvah at a conservative Temple on Long Island. I came to the Boston area to attend law school and moved to Providence in 2015. When we went to the Racial Justice subcommittee meeting, we expected there would be many people horrified at what was going on with ICE/DHS, and there would be people wanting to help. And that is exactly what we found.

I'm a volunteer attorney with the immigration detention program of the PAIR Project – the Political Asylum/Immigration Representation Project – a nonprofit based in Boston that provides free legal assistance to immigrants detained in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. We provide free support to vulnerable people navigating a complex and often unforgiving immigration system.

All four of my grandparents were immigrants from Eastern Europe in the early 20th century and loved this country. I am grateful my grandparents were able to escape persecution from pogroms. I believe asylum for people being persecuted is a fundamental human right. My decision to represent immigration detainees pro bono is grounded in the Jewish values I learned as a child – especially the commitment to *tikkun olam*.

At the Racial Justice subcommittee meeting last February, I shared how critical Spanish-language volunteers are to this work. The response was immediate. Multiple attendees volunteered to serve as interpreters, two of whom ultimately became deeply involved in a particularly challenging bond and asylum case that began in April. Anna Cable was one of them; although not a Temple member, she is Jewish, grew up in Providence and works as a social worker there. The other, a work colleague of a Temple member, prefers to remain anonymous. Our client is a 25-year-old man originally from Venezuela – bright, soft-spoken, and hard-working – who became entangled with overzealous immigration enforcement. He was working as a barber in Pawtucket when he was arrested by ICE. His tattoos, rather than anything he had done, drew the attention of ICE. Based only on them, he was accused of being a gang member and a foreign terrorist.

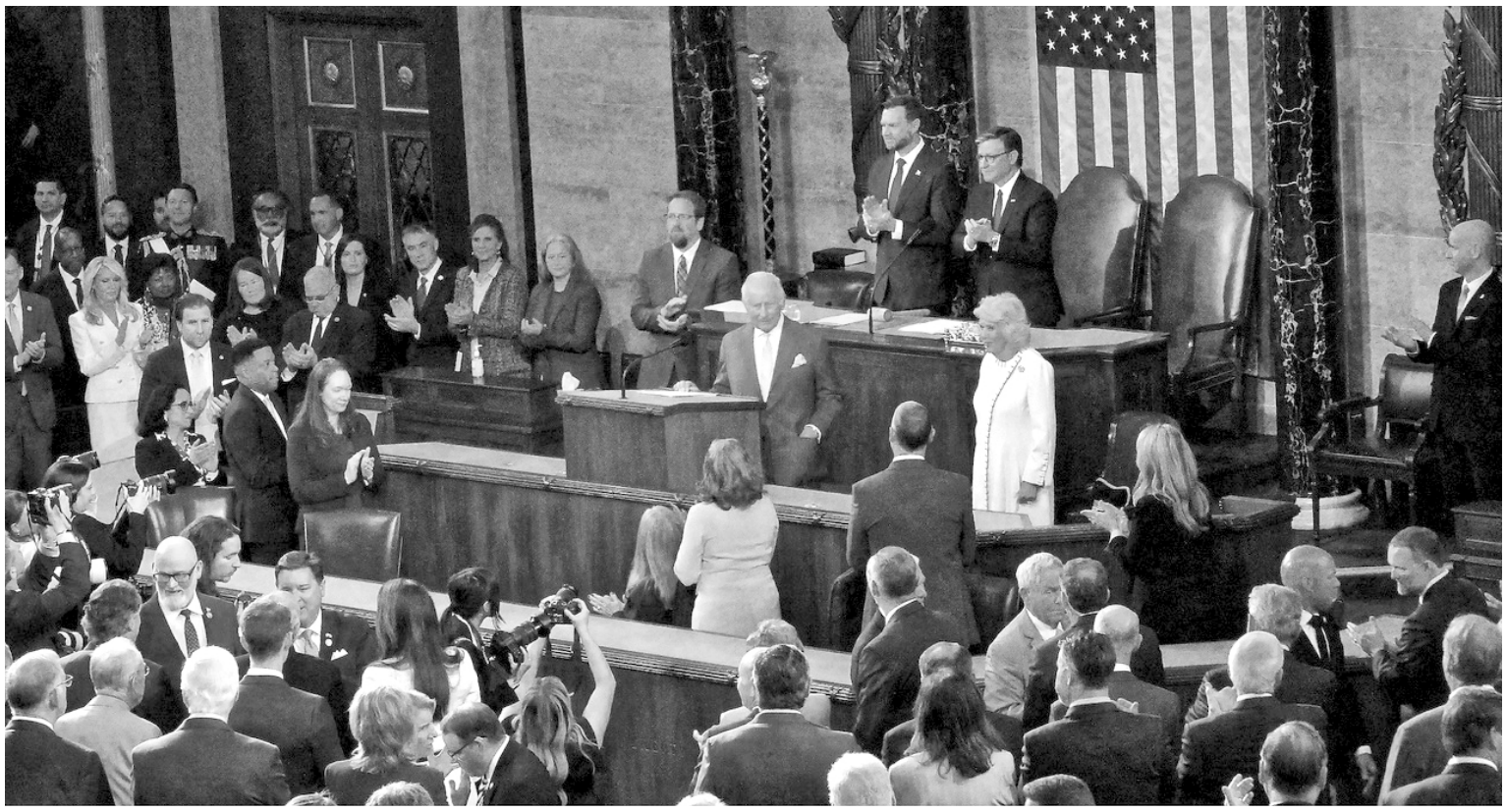
He is thoughtful and caring, completely different from a gang member. He's also a singer and an artist and gives artistic haircuts with patterns. He was tortured as a young teenager after attending a school protest while in high school and later detained many times because of his political opinions and his unwillingness to cooperate with Venezuela's authoritarian government and become a police informant.

Immigration court procedures for detainees at the Wyatt Detention Center in Central Falls, where he was held, take place via Zoom. Conducting detailed legal proceedings by video is difficult under any circumstances; doing so with language barriers and with the client inside a detention center makes it substantially more complicated. Our volunteer interpreters played a crucial role in bridging that gap, visiting the client with me multiple times. They helped me prepare his declaration telling his story, ensured he understood each step of the process, and enabled the legal team to communicate effectively. The asylum hearings – one in August and one in October – were complex and demanding. Once again, the volunteer interpreters were indispensable.

On Oct. 7, 2025, the immigration judge granted asylum. Today, our client is living safely as an asylee, reconnecting with loved ones, and beginning the long path of rebuilding a life interrupted by over six months in federal detention. He will qualify for a green card in a year and now has a path to citizenship.

This case demonstrates how we can repair the world when people show up – lawyers, advocates, community partners, and interpreters. Without the interpreters who stepped forward at our February meeting, it is difficult to imagine this case reaching such a positive conclusion.

MICHAEL FUCHS *is a member of Temple Beth-El in Providence.*



King Charles III speaks to Congress

PHOTO | MARSHALL H. COHEN

King Charles III and Queen Camilla before a joint meeting of Congress celebrating the 250th birthday of the US and the long partnership between our countries.

COMMUNITY

RICI at Brown commencement



THE RHODE ISLAND Coalition for Israel (RICI) is again, in collaboration with Brown Alumni for Israel, organizing a peaceful presence during Brown University's Commencement activities on Sunday May 24. Community membrs are welcome to join in a show of support for Jewish students and their families during both the procession/parade and also the graduation ceremony. Israeli and American flags and signs will be provided. This is also the third year in a row where the aerial banner will be flying overhead that reads "Brown 4 Israel." For times and meeting locations and for more information, email kenschneider33@gmail.com.

Celebrating Israel's birthday!



Community members celebrate Yom Ha'Atzmaut at the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island

PHOTO | JEWISH ALLIANCE OF GREATER RI

ON APRIL 21, the Jewish community came together to celebration Yom Ha'Aztmaut at he Dwares Jewish Community Center in Providence. Sponsored by the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island, the event included folk dancing and Israeli food.



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JewishAllianceRI.org/explore-programs/for-children/summer-j-camp



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COMMUNITY

From the Federation Foundation

Become a partner in strengthening our community

Adapted from a Shabbat message by Harris Chorney, Interim President & CEO of the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island

A question for all of us to consider: What does it mean to leave lasting impact? Not just in memory, but in action – something that will continue to nurture and sustain long after we can no longer guide it. Our children and grandchildren certainly serve as our legacy. Still, what about something even larger that would directly affect others?

IN THE STORY OF NOAH, after the flood (Genesis 9:12–13), G-d sets the rainbow in the sky as a sign of an eternal covenant between G-d and all living beings for generations to come. The rainbow is a promise that transcends any single lifetime. It represents continuity, responsibility, and hope for the future.

Endowing what we care about most is a natural extension of this idea. When we create an endowment, we do more than fund programs – we ensure our values live on and that the community we cherish continues to thrive beyond our lifetime. At the Jewish Alliance, we see every day how legacy gifts help sustain the fabric of our community. At the same time, many ongoing initiatives would be strengthened even further through endowment support, *your* endowment support. These include efforts that:

- Educate our children
- Keep our community safe
- Fight antisemitism and hate
- Develop future leadership
- Support arts and culture
- Care for our most vulnerable

These initiatives and others bring us together in times of celebration and challenge. They are acts of faith – faith in our people, in our traditions, and in the future. We invite you to consider helping to grow the Jewish Alliance endowment. Think about which initiative resonates most deeply with you. And if none of these immediately speak to you, we welcome the opportunity to connect and explore what does. By doing so, you become a partner in securing the strength and vibrancy of our community for generations. Whether through a legacy gift, a planned contribution, or a commitment in your estate plan, your support ensures that the Alliance will continue to be here – serving, connecting, and caring – into the future.

Our tradition speaks of *"l'dor v'dor"*– from generation to generation – not only as a hope, but as a responsibility. Legacy is not only about what we leave behind; it is about what we intentionally pass forward. We encourage you to reflect on these questions:

- What am I passing on?
- What will endure because of me?
- What do I care most about today that will make a difference tomorrow?
- And how might I take a step – be it large or small – to ensure it continues?

Our development team is here to support you as you reflect on the impact you wish to make and explore meaningful ways to bring that vision to life. When you're ready, we would be honored to help you take the next steps – whether by establishing an endowment, a bequest, or another form of legacy gift. Please reach out to endowment@jewishallianceri.org or 401.421.4111.

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JEWISH ALLIANCE of Greater Rhode Island

MAY 12 | 7:00PM

Antisemitism and Democracy:
AN EVENING WITH AMY SPITALNICK



Join the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island as we welcome Amy Spitalnick, CEO of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, for a moderated conversation on countering antisemitism and extremism, protecting democracy, and building coalitions across communities.

Providence area location provided upon RSVP

JEWISH ALLIANCE of Greater Rhode Island

JewishAllianceRI.org/events/an-evening-with-amy-spitalnick

A legacy that runs deep.



Every gift tells a story. Yours can tell one of hope, connection, and community — a story that continues long after today.

A planned gift or bequest to the Jewish Alliance ensures that future generations inherit not only our traditions but a strong commitment to one another.

Because when we invest in the future, we honor the past — *and we keep our community anchored in what truly matters.*

For more information on ways to leave your Jewish legacy, please contact Endowment@JewishAllianceRI.org visit JewishAllianceRI.org/JFF or scan the QR Code

JEWISH FEDERATION FOUNDATION of Greater Rhode Island

Part of the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island

COMMUNITY

Dwares JCC TigerSharks swim to win

The Jewish Community Center's own TigerSharks swim team made a huge splash this past weekend at the Boys & Girls Clubs National Championships in St. Petersburg, Florida! Eight of the JCC swimmers joined forces with teammates from across the league to compete as part of the Rhode Island/Massachusetts United (RIMA) team, which includes the East Providence Tidal Waves, Foxpoint Riptides, Pawtucket Sharks and Powers Aquatics. Altogether, more than 80 swimmers proudly represented the RIMA league.

AND WHAT A RESULT – it was a historic moment as RIMA captured First Place for the very first time! Even more impressive, this victory ended a 21-year winning streak by a powerhouse team from New York. It was truly an unforgettable weekend filled with fast swims, personal bests and plenty of team spirit.

Leading the way for the TigerSharks was Piper Stock, who claimed the championship title in the Girls 9-10 100 Freestyle and finished as the 3rd highest overall point scorer in her age group. Her sister, Mia Stock, also had an outstanding performance, earning 4th highest point scorer honors in the Girls 11-12 division.

Several other TigerSharks delivered strong performances as well. Grace Beckman (13-14) advanced to finals in the 100 Butterfly, 200 IM and 200 Butterfly, while Abby DeMelin (11-12) qualified for finals in both the 50 & 100 Breaststroke. Additional standout swims came from Eden Gaetano, Stella Schulman, Drew Curlett and Charlotte Beckerman.

Congratulations to all of the swimmers on an incredible achievement! We are so proud of your hard work, dedication and team spirit!

SUBMITTED BY *Emily O'Connor, director of aquatics at the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island*



PHOTOS | EMILY O'CONNOR

Coach Emily O'Connor from the TigerSharks and coach Jackson from Fox Point Boys and Girls Club.



Swimmers Abby DeMelin, Mia Stock, Grace Beckerman and Piper Stock.

The Voice of Greater Rhode Island's Jewish Community

JEWISH RHODE ISLAND Business & Professional Directory

APPLIANCES

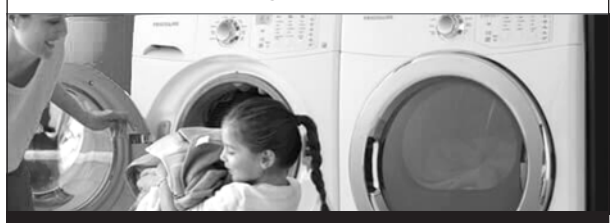
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COMMUNITY

From the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island

Attorney General and Smithfield School Department reach agreement

Six months ago, an antisemitic hazing attack on a Jewish student at Smithfield High School made the news.

LAST WEEK, the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office and the Smithfield School Department reached a formal agreement requiring the district to implement a comprehensive five-part remediation plan. This is a significant step, and it didn't happen on its own.

From the outset, the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island centered its response on what the victim and his family actually wanted — listening to them, following their lead and protecting their confidentiality throughout. Its partners at the Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center engaged the school with expertise and in good faith, but the administration's lack of accountability made clear that more was needed.

The Rhode Island Department of Education and the Attorney General's Office were brought in as partners in pursuing accountability. A press conference with interfaith, civic and elected leaders — including Rep. Gabe Amo — made clear that hazing and hate have no place in the schools. The Alliance told this story loudly and repeatedly in the media, situating it within the troubling rise of antisemitism across our state and nation. And last November, more than 100 community members filled the Smithfield School Committee meeting to speak on behalf of the victim and the community's values.

The remediation plan requires the district to revise its harassment and hazing policies, provide mandatory staff training, implement anti-discrimination programming for students, survey school climate and establish a formal protocol to support victims.

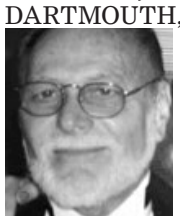
An agreement is only as meaningful as its implementation. The Alliance will monitor this process closely, maintain its relationships with RIDE, the Attorney General's Office and elected partners, and continue to support the victim, his family and the Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center as the key providers of education in our school districts

Antisemitism must have consequences. When a community organizes with purpose and persistence, change can happen. This milestone belongs to the entire community.

Submitted by the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island

OBITUARIES

Aaron Bor, 89

DARTMOUTH, MASS. – 
Aaron J. Bor died peacefully at his home in Dartmouth on March 24, 2026, after a short illness. Born in New Bedford, Massachusetts, to Edward and Esther (Falk) Bor, he rarely strayed far from his birthplace, except for the many vacations he enjoyed with his wife, Susan, the Patriots' games he attended as a season ticket holder, or the time he attended his beloved Atlanta Braves' Fantasy Camp and passed out his baseball card to everyone for years after.

He attended Providence College and graduated from Boston University School of Law in 1961. Upon graduation, he served two years in the U.S. Army and remained in the Army Reserve until 1996, having earned the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and Judge Advocate General.

The Diocese of Fall River honored Aaron with the Thomas More Medallion. At a Red Mass dedicated to those in the community whose work promoted justice in the legal system, he was given the Ecumenical Award in 2023.

Aaron maintained a general practice of law in the firm of Falk and Bor in New Bedford for over 60 years. He dedicated much of his legal work to the youth of that city and practiced for many years in New Bedford Juvenile Court. He was honored with a plaque and dinner given by the Massachusetts Bar Association for being a 50-year member.

Aaron, predeceased by his son Jonathan, is survived by Susan (Schick), his wife of 54 years; his daughter, Rebekah Sciuto and her husband, Joseph; two grandchildren, Sophie and Joseph; his sister, Wilma Bor Davidson and her husband, Stephen; sister-in-law, Sheila Parker; loving nieces and nephews Katie, Alexis, Nick, Lisa, Eric; and dear friend Emile Morad.

Donations may be made to the Minyan Breakfast Club at Tifereth Israel, 145 Brownell Ave., New Bedford, MA 02740 or the charity of your choice.

Ruth Gold, 89

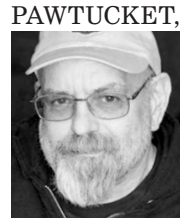
WARWICK, R.I. – Ruth Gold 
passed away on April 9, 2026, at her home in Warwick with her loving family by her side. She was the beloved wife of Herbert Gold for 70 years. Born in Providence, she was a daughter of the late David and Florence H. (Markel) Mermelstein. She attended West Warwick High School, graduating in 1954. Ruth and Herb set roots in Warwick, where they remained for over 65 years.

Ruth was a devoted member of the former Temple Beth Am Sisterhood; she served as one of the first members of Temple Beth Am. After its closing, she focused her energies on her family and friends who made it all worthwhile. Ruth was considered a traditional mother and spouse; she was a talented needleworker who found joy in knitting sweaters for her four grandchildren.

She was the devoted mother of Jerry Gold and his wife, Bonnie, of Central Falls; Eric Gold, of Miami, Florida; and Rhonda Cohen and her husband, Anthony, of London, England. She was the dear sister of Hal Mermel, of Pembroke Pines, Florida; and Lea Solomon and her partner, Robert Holsten, of Tarpon Springs, Florida. She was the loving grandmother of Rebecca (Adam), Emily (Ian), Rachel (Paul) and Sarah (Adam). She was the cherished great-grandmother of nine.

Contributions may be made to Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island, 401 Elmgrove Avenue, Providence, RI 02906 [hyperlink: https://www.jewishallianceri.org/support-us/featured/donate-now] or Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center, [hyperlink: https://form.jotform.com/221265710853150], 401 Elmgrove Avenue, Providence, RI 02906.

David Goldstein, 69

PAWTUCKET, R.I. – David 
Michael Goldstein, a beloved brother, dedicated professional, and cherished member of the community passed away on April 8, 2026, leaving behind a legacy of intelligence, humor and unwavering commitment to the place he loved most – the Blackstone Valley.

David was known for his brilliant mind and natural talent with computers. Whether creating intricate websites or helping others navigate an increasingly digital world, he approached every challenge with curiosity, precision and a quiet confidence. His work not only reflected his skill but also his generosity – he was always willing to lend his expertise to anyone in need.

David was a passionate advocate for the Blackstone Valley. A founding member of the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council and the RI Music Hall of Fame, he cared deeply about the community's growth, preservation and future, and he worked tirelessly to enhance and support the region he called home. His efforts made a meaningful and lasting impact that will continue to benefit others for years to come.

While he was admired for his intelligence and dedication, those who knew him best will remember him most for his remarkable sense of humor. David had a way of bringing lightness to any situation, offering quick wit, thoughtful observations and laughter when it was needed most. His humor was a gift that uplifted family, friends, and colleagues alike.

He is survived by his brother, Richard J. Goldstein of Pawtucket, and he was the son of the late Marvin and Ruth (Ullian) Goldstein.

Donations may be made to the Rhode Island Music Hall of Fame, Hope Artist Village, 999 Main St., Suite 100, Pawtucket, RI 02860.

Irene Goodman, 89

CRANSTON, R.I. – Irene Ann 
Goodman, a cherished mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, wife, daughter and friend, passed away peacefully on March 30, 2026.

Irene lived a life defined by love, devotion and deep care for those around her. She will be remembered for her unwavering dedication to family and friends, always

OBITUARIES

putting others before herself. She lovingly cared for her parents, her husband, her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and many dear friends. She took great joy in celebrating life's milestones – bar and bat mitzvahs, graduations, weddings and the births of new generations. She was especially proud to be a devoted grandmother to her accomplished and caring grandchildren, and even more so to be "Gigi" to her five adored great-grandchildren.

A lifelong Rhode Islander, Irene found great happiness in summers spent at Narragansett Beach with family and close friends. Sundays at the beach were a cherished tradition, often marked by her arrival with a cooler full of food for everyone. She loved to say her tan began on Memorial Day weekend and lasted through Labor Day. Irene also enjoyed playing mahjong with her lifelong friends, a passion she began at age 19 and continued into her 80s. She treasured friendships that dated back to her junior high school years and felt their loss deeply over time.

Irene loved to travel, especially to the Caribbean, with favorite destinations including St. Maarten and Aruba. For many years, she made an annual trip to Aruba each December, where she delighted in gathering with friends for a festive beach photo with Santa Claus.

Professionally, Irene had a passion for fashion and spent much of her adult life working in retail, including at the former Cherry & Webb. She took pride in her keen eye for style, often noting that she helped dress many well-known individuals in Rhode Island's business and media communities, as well as her daughter, Laurie, always with elegance and care.

In her later years, Irene found her greatest joy in time spent with her immediate family – at holiday dinners, celebrations and sporting events – surrounded by the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren she loved so dearly.

Born on Dec. 10, 1936, Irene was the daughter of the late Ethel and Samuel Phenes and the beloved wife of the late Sidney Goodman. She was also predeceased by her brother, Frederick Phenes. She is survived by her devoted daughter, Laurie Robinson, of North Kingstown; her son, Greg Goodman, of Boynton Beach, Florida; her loving grandchildren, Amy and Jeff Raymond, of North Kingstown, and Brad and Jennifer Robinson, of North Kingstown; and her treasured great-grandchildren, Noah and Bowen Raymond and Emma, Roman and Sydney Robinson. She will also be deeply missed by many extended family members and dear friends.

Contributions may be made to HopeHealth Hulitar Hospice, 1085 North Main St., Providence, RI 02904.

Herbert Katz, 86

CRANSTON, R.I. – Herbert N. Katz, of Cranston, passed on April 1, 2026.



Rhode Island born, Herbie was the son of Beatrice (Klemer) Katz and Jacob Katz. He was the devoted husband of Deborah (Gurwitz) Katz for 57 years and loving father of Matthew J. Katz and Jonathan A. Katz. He was the loving brother of Joel Gurwitz. He was the loving brother of Fredda Levitt and her husband, Dr. Richard Levitt. He was the loving uncle of Julie Levitt, Nancy (Levitt) Davis and Scott Davis, and loving grand uncle of Spencer, Joshua and Bradley Davis. Herbie had a very close family relationship with his cousin, Joyce Nelson, and her family. Herbie leaves many dear, close friends, some like family to him. Herbie was known for his beautiful, contagious smile, optimistic nature, quick wit, lover of facts and lover of "old" music – knowing most of the words to much of the "Oldies But Goodies" music and many of the old radio ads of the past. He had a beautiful, velvety singing voice and enjoyed participating, with Debbi, in a chorus. Herbie's love of music can be seen in son Matthew's ongoing love of, and participation in, music, including its technical aspect, since his youth. Herbie's enjoyment of food can be seen in son Jon's weekend developing business of specialty barbecue sauces, enjoyed by many people, including Herbie, who has been seen, in the middle of the night, snacking on that sauce, straight, by tipping the bottle into spoonsful. Herbie was a people person and had a wonderful "warmth" to him. Through the years, he was comfortable and happy to be in most social atmospheres, anywhere he and Debbi went. When his sons were young, Herbie was an active supporter of both sons' baseball teams: acting as coach for one of Matthew's teams and participating with Jonathan in the trips of his travel baseball team. Herbie's academic and work experience include the University of Rhode Island, Boston University and some URI graduate courses. From a young age, Herbie was involved in his family's business, started by his father. Along with his mother, who ran the business from its office part, Herbie, in the manufacturing part, helped his father achieve his dream of a successful business in the chemical manufacturing of detergents, soaps, etc. for many years. When that business was sold, Herbie had his own business in developing soaps, etc., which he enjoyed. Herbie's greatest enjoyments were his family, friends and singing "Oldies But Goodies" any old time. There are no words to express how much Herbie Katz will be missed by so many. Contributions may be made to a charity of your choice.

Steven Lerner, 80

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – Providence-born lifelong mischief-maker Steven A. Lerner died recently, outliving his own expectations by several decades.



Steve was many things – a father, brother, grandfather, partner, prankster, collector, accountant, and storyteller – often all in the same afternoon. He believed a good story was better than the truth.

Born in 1945 to Martin and Charlotte Lerner, Steve grew up in Providence with his siblings Phil and Marge and his best friend Neil. Mischievous from the start, he and Phil spent much of their youth pranking their little sister.

At 14, Steve was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes, a challenge that could have slowed him down but instead fueled his determination. A proud recipient of the Joslin Clinic's 50-Year Medal, he was a champion of diabetic education, clinical trials and finding ways to get free diabetic supplies.

A born entrepreneur, Steve always had a side hustle: from a college-era pregnancy testing lab to a biker bar, to an ever-expanding trove of gambling paraphernalia. Even his official career as a Certified Public Accountant was another way to stay involved with his hobbies - he was the treasurer for both SAM #9 Harry Houdini Chapter and the New England Magic Collectors Association.

In the early 1970s, Steve met Aleda Zitzer in Boston. They married and shared over 30 years together, raising two daughters, Cara and Rachel. As a father, he turned math into cribbage and backgammon lessons and language into crossword puzzles, teaching his girls that life is unpredictable. You roll with the punches and play the hand you're dealt.

Later in life, he found joy with his partner, Trudy Burdman, who inspired "Renaissance Dad," a man who traveled, laughed and loved deeply.

He is survived by Trudy; daughters Cara (Chris) and Rachel (Nate); grandchildren Mathilde and Gavin; sister Marge; sister-in-law Carole; nieces, grand-nephews, dear friends and fellow magic lovers. He was predeceased by his brother Phil.

Donations can be made in his name to Breakthrough T1D at https://www2.breakthrought1d.org/site/Donation2?2373.donation=form1&df_id=2373&mfc_pref=Tand or to the New England Magic Collectors Association's Steve Lerner Fund for Magic History at https://www.paypal.com/ncp/payment/QE55YEMGMDVZG

Leonard Levin, 95

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – Leonard I. "Len" Levin, who as the news editor for The Providence Journal for more than three decades was the newsroom's arbiter of grammar and usage, style and accuracy, has died. He was 95.



Mr. Levin died on April 6, 2026, in the HopeHealth Hulitar Hospice Center, Providence, of complications from a hip fracture suffered the morning of Dec. 21 when he fell outside his home, on Providence's East Side, while gathering up the Sunday newspapers.

A co-author of the hefty Journal Style Book, a copy desk bible, Mr. Levin became the newsroom's acknowledged go-to guy for thorny questions.

He paired an unwavering dedication to newspapering – he was inducted into the Rhode Island Journalism Hall of Fame in 2016 – with a lifelong passion for baseball. He never dreamed of pursuing it as a career, but he always watched and studied. Over time his recall of players' performance, team and league histories, and arcane statistics became encyclopedic.

Mr. Levin served several terms as a national officer and was the long-time archivist of the Society for American Baseball Research

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OBITUARIES

(SABR), which generates articles on all aspects of the sport and is a key provider of statistics to the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y. He joined SABR in 1977 and served as co-editor of dozens of SABR's publications. They gave him their highest award The Bob Davids Award.

Leonard Irving Levin was born on March 4, 1931, in Providence and grew up in Pawtucket. He was the only son of Samuel Levin and Beckie (Nozick) Levin, both Jewish immigrants from Russia. He had two older sisters, Doris Kelman and Beatrice Morgenlender.

He began his newspaper career after earning a bachelor's degree from Providence College, in 1952, and a master's in journalism from Boston University in 1953. His first job was as a reporter at the Pawtucket Times. In 1963, the Journal recruited him for its copy desk. Many years later, the New York Times tried to do the same; Mr. Levin politely declined, saying he was happy where he was.

Mr. Levin met his wife, Linda Lotridge Levin, when she was a young reporter at the Journal. Later when she was a University of Rhode Island journalism professor and then department chairwoman, the couple developed free seminars and workshops on writing and editing for newspaper staffs throughout New England. Throughout the 1970s, he taught a copy-editing class in the journalism department at URI.

As a member of the New England Society of Newspaper Editors (NESNE) he was part of a delegation that twice visited the Soviet Union to meet with journalists. He was president of NESNE and was given its Yankee Quill Award which included induction into the Academy of New England Journalists. It is the region's highest journalism award. Later he was inducted into the New England Journalism Hall of Fame.

Mr. Levin retired from The Journal in 1996, accepting a buyout as the paper began slimming its ranks in the face of declining circulation, a nationwide trend. But a few days later he went back to work, this time for the Quincy Patriot-Ledger; the paper offered a full-time position; he opted instead to work part time.

For the last decade, he copyedited decisions handed down by the Rhode Island Supreme Court. He was still editing for the court and for SABR until shortly before his death.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by two daughters, Sara E. Levin, her husband Jeff Davis and their daughter Ellie, all of Seattle, and Rachel F. Levin of Alexandria, Va.

The summer after Mr. Levin left The Journal, former colleagues threw him a retirement party. After several speakers lauded his career, he mused aloud about what his parents would have thought of it. "I guess I did all right," he said.



Jordan A. Liner, 92

COVENTRY, R.I. – Jordan



A. Liner passed away peacefully on April 11, 2026, surrounded by family at Riverview Healthcare Community, Coventry. He was the beloved husband of the late Helene (Blasbalg) Liner for 64 years. Born in Roxbury, Massachusetts, son of the late Edward and Margaret "Molly" (Yanes) Liner, he had lived in Coventry since 1994, previously living in Framingham, Massachusetts.

He graduated from Brookline High School and the University of Massachusetts and received a master's degree in Engineering from Northeastern University. He was honorably discharged from the US Army.

Additionally, his greatest joy was being involved in his children's and grandchildren's activities.

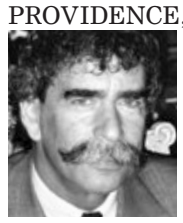
He was the owner of Central Procurement, Inc., retiring over 15 years ago. He was a member of the former Temple Am David and a dedicated Rotarian in Framingham.

He was the devoted father of Dr. Rick Liner and his wife, Karen, of Coventry; Robin Liner, of Charlotte, North Carolina; and Dr. Tom Liner and his wife, Judi, of Coventry. He was the dear brother of Karen Greenfield, of Norwell, Massachusetts; and the late Audrey Secular. He was the loving grandfather of Jamie (Garrett), Alexandra (Ilan), Jessica and Briana. He was the cherished great-grandfather ("Papa2") of Benjamin and Eli.

Contributions may be made to the charity of your choice.

B. Gordon Lisker, 82

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – B.



Gordon Lisker, of Providence, passed away peacefully on March 22, 2026, at his home. He was the beloved husband of Nancy Rozendal-Lisker, with whom he shared 58 years.

Born in Providence, Gordon was the son of the late Abraham and Geraldine (Gordon) Lisker, and brother of the late David Lisker. In addition to his wife, Gordon is survived by two nieces, Livia Lisker-Blount (Joel McCrum) and Alexia Watts (Brett Watts), and two great nephews, John McCrum and Tanner Watts.

Gordon graduated from Gordon School, Providence Country Day and Union College. As president/owner of Jonette Jewelry Co. he was highly respected in the industry for the success of his brilliant designs and manufacturing acumen, as well as his honesty and kindness to his employees.

Gordon's true passion, however, was his love for all things sentient - from spiders to elephants. This proclivity was reflected in both his jewelry designs and his own collection of cats and dogs.

Donations may be made to any animal charity.

Ann Morse, 88

NEWPORT, R.I. – A woman



of understated strength, Ann Morse left a profound and lasting mark on many. The first of two children of Marty and Sadie Roth, Ann was born in Newark, New Jersey, in 1937. Even in her early years, she demonstrated a keen intellect, a sharp wit and a deep empathy that made her a natural sanctuary for others.

Ann shared a long and loving partnership with her husband, Howard. She and Howard became engaged months after their first date and were married when Ann was just 20 years old. Their brief but decisive courtship led to a 56-year marriage that flourished until Howard's death in 2013. With Howard, Ann raised a family and built a life of great substance across three states, including 16 years in North Caldwell, N.J.; 40 years in Amherst, New Hampshire; and Ann's last 15 years in Bristol, a community she came to love deeply and in which she felt truly at home.

An alumna of Brown University and Columbia University (Barnard College), where she earned a degree in literature, Ann's formal education was simply one facet of her commitment to a lifetime of learning. Ann was remarkably curious, and her thirst for knowledge was insatiable. She was an avid reader, and her beloved book clubs were testimony to her devotion to the written word and the vibrant discussions it sparked. She also found great joy in the arts, from film to canvas to live theater. That same zest was reflected in her love for food and family travels, each of which she viewed as opportunities for both discovery and connection.

Ann was an early and committed advocate for social causes, which she supported generously and humbly. Her most significant impacts, however, were often private. Defined by a gentle but powerful gravitas and unwavering values, Ann was a steadying, magnetic presence. Her door and her heart were open to all, but especially to those navigating hardship. Ann was a trusted confidante to many who found in her boundless compassion, sincere respect and counsel that was wise and non-judgmental.

To her children, Carolyn, Bill and Nesha, as well as her daughters-in-law, Julie and Liz Beth (her "bonus daughters"), Ann was a steadfast source of wisdom and support. She nurtured a personal and deep bond with each of them, offering love that was absolute and unconditional. She established the same kind of meaningful connections with her cherished grandchildren: Sam, Eli, Hannah and Emerson. Always the attentive grandmother, Ann found unique ways to connect with each grandchild whether it was sharing an artistic experience, cheering on the Red Sox, enduring horror movies (certainly not her favorite genre) or tucking herself away on the couch with a grandchild for an afternoon of laughter and heartfelt talk. Through example and gentle influence, Ann created a model for living that will guide her children, her grandchildren and generations to follow.

Ann passed away comfortably and peacefully in Newport on March 25, 2026, surrounded by many loved ones. She faced her final days with the strength, clarity and courage that defined her life. Donations be made to the ACLU Foundation of Rhode Island or the Rogers Free Library in Bristol.

OBITUARIES

Robert Oppenheim, 82

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – Robert



Henry Oppenheim, known to family and friends as Bob, died on April 2, 2026, after a courageous three-year battle with a glioblastoma. Born in Providence on Oct. 19, 1943, he built a life defined by family, art, teaching and friendship.

Bob received a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design and later earned an MFA from Michigan State University. He devoted much of his professional life to Simmons University, where he began teaching in the late 1960s and remained for more than 40 years, retiring as Professor Emeritus. He founded the Simmons College Art Collection and was appointed curator in 1975. In 1982, he became the inaugural director of the Trustman Art Gallery, serving in that role until 2006. In 2011, his retirement was honored by the exhibition Simmons Collects ... In Honor of Robert Oppenheim. As teacher, curator and gallery director, he played a significant role in the artistic life of the university and in the wider Boston art community. His own work was exhibited widely, including at the Howard Yezerski Gallery, and he was twice awarded fellowships in painting by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

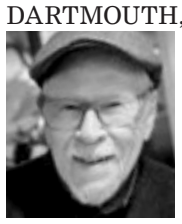
A distinguished artist in painting, mixed media and drawing, Bob made thread and stitched canvas central elements of his mature work. Over time, his art became a way of exploring fragility, repair, loss and healing, with sewing and mending serving not only as technique but also as metaphor.

Bob was a man of rare kindness, grace and steadiness. He was thoughtful, unassuming and deeply generous. He loved jazz and embodied some of its finest qualities: subtlety, warmth, intelligence and quiet depth. He was profoundly admired not only by family and friends, but also by students, colleagues and all who had the good fortune to know him.

He was predeceased by his beloved wife, Roberta, and his son, Joshua. He leaves behind his daughter and son-in-law, Drs. Heather and Christopher Davidson, his cherished grandchildren, Zachary, Sophia and Carter Davidson, and many other loving family members and dear friends who will miss him greatly.

Daniel Schwartz, 80

DARTMOUTH, MASS. –



Daniel R. Schwartz, of Dartmouth, passed away on April 9, 2026, at Sippican Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center in Marion, Massachusetts. He was the loving husband of Kate Rose.

Born in New Bedford, he was the son of the late Herman and Mary (Blum) Schwartz. He attended Betsey B. Winslow Elementary School, New Bedford High School and graduated from Dartmouth High School. He went on to study at Chamberlain College in Boston, the University of Baltimore and the New England School of Acupuncture.

Dan was a dedicated acupuncturist for 38 years, maintaining his own practice, The Acupuncture Clinic of Daniel Schwartz. In addition to acupuncture, he was also an herbalist and practitioner of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), bringing a holistic and deeply thoughtful approach to healing. He cared deeply for his patients and their well-being, forming lasting connections with many of those he treated. He remained connected to the field throughout his life and later served on the Board of Trustees of the New England School of Acupuncture.

In addition to his work in healing, Dan was a lifelong musician and accomplished percussionist, performing for over 50 years with numerous bands and ensembles throughout the South Coast and beyond. Known affectionately as "Dr. D," a nickname earned not from his holistic work but from his role as "the rhythm doctor," he had an amazing ability to shape and elevate the sound of any group he played with. He performed with many groups over the years, including Bobby Green & Coleus, The Whaling City Sound Super Band, the Stan Strickland Band, the Joel Hiller Band, The Nelson Brothers, Shaman John Meyerson, The Dori Rubicco & Butch McCarthy Band, Armistead Christian & Peaceful Flight, Dori Rubicco & Chris Richards, Neal McCarthy and Kenny Richards band, The Unitarian Church Bobby Greene Ensemble, The Corner Temple Choir with John Harrison, The Tifereth Israel Band, Olamot, where he performed alongside his sister, Jessica Schwartz. He also toured Cape Verde with the New England Cape Verde All-Star Review, and more recently performed with Last Day on Earth, the Southcoast Jazz Orchestra, and the Southcoast Brass Band.

Dan was known not only for his extraordinary musical ability, but for the spirit he brought to every performance. A deeply intuitive and versatile percussionist, he had a rare gift for listening and responding in the moment, blending seamlessly across styles and lifting the musicians around him. He approached music with humility and joy, always crediting others and remaining a lifelong student of his craft. Those who played with him knew his presence made the music more alive and connected.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by his sister, Jessica Schwartz, daughter Rebecca McDonald and her husband, Jeremy; grandchildren Carson and Marlee McDonald and Damien Montague; his stepson, Eoghan McDonagh; his stepdaughter, Nicole Montague; his son-in-law James Montague III, and his former spouse, Joyce Schwartz.

Donations can be made to the newly created Dan Schwartz music scholarship, at https://www.gofundme.com/f/honor-dan-schwartz-through-music?attribution_id=sl:a33261e2-e9c1-4fd2-89a5-df234a904694&lang=en_US&ts=1775847619&utm_campaign=man_today_first_time_share&utm_content=amp17_ta&utm_medium=customer&utm_source=sms or to Tifereth Israel Congregation, 145 Brownell Avenue, New Bedford, MA 02740

Tillie Selenger, 106

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – Tillie



Selenger, of Providence, passed away peacefully at her residence on March 17, 2026. She was the wife of the late Paul Selenger.

Born in Providence, Tillie was the daughter of the late Samuel and Dora (Sarser) Strashnick. After residing in New York for two decades, she returned to Rhode Island in 1992.

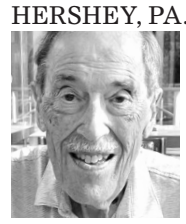
Throughout her life, Tillie was an active member of various organizations. She was a long-time congregant of Temple Emanu-El, a dedicated member of The Miriam Hospital Women's Association, the National Council of Jewish Women, the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association and the Simon Wiesenthal Center.

Tillie is survived by her numerous nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her seven siblings: Shirley Leibow, Katherine Pedlikin, Mildred Bloomberg, Doris Arbeitman, Irma Friedlander, Louis, and George Strashnick.

Memorial contributions in her honor may be made to a charity of your choice.

Robert Sholler, 90

HERSHEY, PA. – Robert



"Bob" M. Sholler, of Hershey, PA, formerly of Barrington and Bristol, passed away on March 25, 2026. He was the beloved husband of the late Carol Diane (Halperin) Sholler, with whom he shared 55 years of marriage. He is survived by their two sons, Daniel Sholler and his wife, Maja, of Westport, Connecticut; and Peter Sholler and his wife, Giselle, of Hershey. He had four cherished grandchildren: Rebecca, Harrison, Chloe, and Rafe. He is preceded in death by his brother Lawrence "Larry" Sholler.

Born in Boston, Massachusetts, he was the son of the late Samuel and Rebecca (Wilson) Sholler. Robert graduated from Harvard University in 1957 and from Harvard School of Dental Medicine in 1961. He practiced as an oral surgeon in Rhode Island, caring for his community for more than 30 years. He lived in Barrington from 1971 to 2000, later retiring to Bristol, where he remained until 2017.

Robert deeply enjoyed time with his family, especially sailing, traveling and sharing life's moments together. In 2017, he and Carol moved to Connecticut to be closer to their son Daniel and his family. After Carol's passing in 2019, Robert remained in Connecticut until 2022, when he moved to Charlotte, North Carolina, to live with his son Peter and daughter-in-law Giselle. There, he stayed active at the JCC and was often seen walking through the neighborhood.

In 2024, he moved with Peter and Giselle to Hershey, where he continued to lead an active life and enjoyed traveling with his children and grandchildren.

Robert found joy in sailing, painting and sculpture, puzzles, games and watching football with his family. He especially treasured time spent in Harbor Springs, Michigan, weekends in New York City and Boston, and visits to Quebec.

He will be remembered for his kindness, warmth and the deep love he shared so freely. His greatest joy was his family, and his presence will be profoundly missed but forever felt in the lives he touched and the memories he helped create.

Contributions may be made to Beat Childhood Cancer Foundation (https://beatcc.org/) or the ACLU (https://www.aclu.org/).

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